

New challenges and goodbyes

By Sarah Weibert

leadereeditor@hmgnews.com

This is a difficult week for me because, it's the last edition of the Lake Mills Leader I will put out as the managing editor. I've accepted a public relations position with the City of Fort Atkinson and am looking forward to new challenges and career goals.



Sarah Weibert

Three years ago, when I started as editor, for my hometown newspaper, I was excited and nervous to get to the business of telling the stories of Lake Mills, and I think we've told some great stories over the last several years. For that I have to thank you, the readers and people who have come to me with ideas both big and small for stories. It's been difficult in some ways and easy in others to be the editor here. My hope is while I was here, I taught you something in a

story, informed you or gave you a laugh.

From stories about addiction and recovery to crime and tragedy and breaking news to profiling local veterans, it's been the privilege of my life to tell these stories.

For the last year and a half, it's felt like we've only told stories about COVID and how COVID has affected our daily lives. It's my hope we've moved beyond some of those stories and back to high school sports, first day of school photos without masks and features about the amazing people doing good in and around Lake Mills.

I've told the stories of so many amazing veterans during my time here and I will be forever grateful that I had the opportunity to speak with them and share their stories with you.

This week we will hear from a couple of friends who made their way through the Vietnam era virtually together the whole way. I'm honored to tell their story.

Several years ago, I was lucky enough



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This photo was taken on a July evening in 2020 at Bartel's Beach.



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This photo won an award in the 'Best Spot News' photo category with the Wisconsin Newspaper Association in 2020. It was taken on a cold February morning.



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I snapped this silhouette in the fall of 2019.



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I took this photo in 2013 when Michelle Obama visited Watertown High School. I was a reporter for the Watertown Daily Times. It is one of the many highlights of my career.

to speak about the "We Shall Not Forget" publication, which is a compilation of all these veteran stories published in November, at the Memorial Day ceremony and it was one of the great honors of my life to speak among veterans and their families.

I've been lucky enough to win awards for my writing from the Wisconsin Newspaper Association and I have to tell you it's an honor to be recognized. I was also honored by the Lake Mills American Legion Post for my work with local veterans.

In an effort to tell you a little bit more about some of my accomplishments and stories written while I've been at the Leader a quick search of my name on our website yielded over 700 entries. It's hard to boil down what all those stories were about, but when I scan through them it's

a mix of city government, school, crime, features and so much more. Prior to being editor in Lake Mills I was the education reporter for the Watertown Daily Times a quick search of my name on that site yielded another 759 entries, which I'm sure is only a portion of my work over my last nine years in journalism.

I would also like to thank all of the staff over the years in the Lake Mills office and especially Becky Weber, who has been a mainstay in the office for over 30 years. She is truly the glue that holds this paper together.

If I've told your story in my time at either paper, thank you. It's been an honor and a privilege to be here and I will miss telling stories as I move on to new horizons.

Thanks, Lake Mills.