



Elm Grove NEWS-

INDEPENDENT



Vol. 15 No. 4

Serving Elm Grove, Wisconsin & Neighboring Communities

December 2024

Freedom of the Press is Essential. Community News Matters.

On the Ballot

A 2025 Elections Preview
By Lisabeth Passalis-Bain
elmgrovenews@yahoo.com

Village of Elm Grove ---

Residents who wish to take an active role regarding current and future issues of importance to our community may want to consider running for a seat on the Board of Trustees next year.

Village Board seats up for election in April, 2025 include those currently held by **Village President Jim Koleski and Trustees Tom Castile, Kristina Sayas, and Thomas Shepherd.** The two-year terms for those elected will begin on April 16, 2025. These are volunteer / unpaid positions.

A Primary Election, if needed, will be held on February 18, 2025, with the Spring Election and Presidential Preference Primary set for Tuesday, April 1, 2025.

To qualify as a candidate, you must be age 18 or older, a resident of the Village of Elm Grove for at least 28 days before any election, and an eligible elector.

The first day for circulating nomination papers for office is December 1, 2024; 20-100 signatures are needed for all elected offices. A candidate may circulate their own nomination papers. A Registration Statement must be filed with the Village Clerk regardless of whether the candidate accepts contributions and/or makes disbursements. **The last day for filing nomination papers, Declaration of Candidacy, and Campaign registration Statements with the Village Clerk is not later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 7, 2025.** Qualified electors of the Village of Elm Grove may sign as many nomination papers as there are vacancies for any office. Candidates' packets are available at Village Hall, 13600 Juneau Blvd.

School District of Elmbrook ---

Two school board seats, one in Area II – within the District's northwest quadrant (currently held by **Kathy Lim**), and one At-Large seat (currently held by **Linda Boucher**), will be up for election.

School Board members serve three-year terms. These are paid positions. Those wishing to become a candidate and have their name appear on the 2025 Spring Election ballot must file all necessary forms at the District Office, 3555 North Calhoun Road, Brookfield by no later than 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 7, 2025.

Contact **Christy Westfall** with questions at westfalce@elmbrookschoools.org or (262) 781-3030 x 11124. Additional information about school board elections is available at www.elmbrookschoools.org/elections.



A selection of vintage cards. **SEASONS GREETINGS** to one and all!



You're Invited!

PLEASE JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE ELM GROVE LIBRARY AT VILLAGE HALL
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, FROM 3:30-5:30PM
TO CELEBRATE THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF LIGHTS OF LOVE AND ILLUMINATE THE VILLAGE TREE!

LIGHTS OF LOVE WILL FEATURE A VISIT FROM SANTA,
STORYTIME WITH MRS. CLAUS, AND A MAGICIAN!

*Caroling and Tree Lighting Ceremony to begin approximately 4:55pm,
followed by refreshments in the Village Courtroom*

We **THANK** all of our ADVERTISERS & these **Friends of The News**

- * Fredric Wolden / *Jane McMullen / *Geri Fotsch
- *Kiwanis Club of Elm Grove-Golden K / *Dana Cable
- *Elm Grove Beautification Committee / *A Faithful Reader
- *Elizabeth & James Lange / *Lacey, Herbie, Gus Gus & Toby
- *Anonymous Reader

for helping to **Sponsor** this edition.

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"I Know Where You Live!"



Lisabeth Passalis-Bain



From Our Family to Yours ...

PEACE.
LOVE.
HAPPINESS.
GOOD HEALTH.

During the Holidays & Throughout the Years to Come.



Photo courtesy: School District of Elmbrook

PPMS Associate Principal **Elizabeth Nelson** (at right) with Principal **Kelly Szesterniak**.

Pilgrim Park's Associate Principal Honored

(ELM GROVE) The Association of Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA) has named **Elizabeth "Liz" Nelson** as its 2024 Wisconsin School Associate Principal of the Year.

As Associate Principal of Elmbrook's Pilgrim Park Middle School, Nelson has helped to oversee more than 900 students and 125 teachers and staff throughout her five-year tenure.

"Liz exemplifies outstanding leadership and dedication..." said **Principal Kelly Szesterniak**. "Her commitment to building a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment has made a significant impact on both students and staff. This award is a testament to her commitment, hard work, integrity, and dedication to excellence."

Nelson holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and a master's degree from Cardinal Stritch University.

Nelson will be formally recognized at the Associate Principals Convention in January 2025. She will also receive \$1,000 for use on a project of her choice at PPMS. Additionally, she will represent the state of Wisconsin at a celebration in Washington D.C. in spring 2025, where the Associate Principals of the Year from middle and high schools across the country will be honored.

A School District of Elmbrook-produced video, highlighting Nelson's and Szesterniak's comments to PPMS staff members about the award can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/YDV43DIMaBM>

How to Volunteer in Elmbrook Schools

(BROOKFIELD) - The School District of Elmbrook welcomes family and community volunteers to support our students and staff throughout the year. Volunteer opportunities exist in school classrooms and libraries, as well as through participation in school and district committees, focus groups, athletic or performing arts events, and several parent organizations.



Volunteers provide supervision on field trips, plan school community events, offer fundraising and donation support, and actively engage in classrooms to support student learning. Each year, Elmbrook families and community members contribute thousands of hours of service and raise hundreds of thousands of dollars in support of our students, programs and schools.

For more information visit www.elmbrookschoools.org or call (262) 781-3030.

Dixon School Secretary Announces Retirement

(BROOKFIELD) – **Julie Johnson**, who has served as Dixon Elementary School's secretary for the past 34 years, retired on Tuesday, November 26, 2024. Reminiscing, Johnson said, "I often wonder how many students I've enrolled over the years. I wish I had written a book of things that were said and happened along the way. I think about the three generations of families I've had the privilege of knowing. Being a small part of your "Dixon life" has truly been an honor and privilege for me. Thanks again for the incredible years!"

Don't be crying when the snow starts flying...

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Elm Grove's Best Kept Secret for 30 Years!
Also serving the surrounding communities.

'Twas the Month Before Christmas
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December 5 - 12, 2024

MERRY AND BRIGHT
The Songs of Irving Berlin
December 5 - 8, 2024

SUNSET PLAYHOUSE
SunsetPlayhouse.com
262-782-4430

KENNY LOGGINS & FRIENDS: A Tribute
December 9 - 10, 2024

Village Update

By Jim Koleski, Village President / jkoleski@elmgrovewi.org

Winter has arrived in Elm Grove with the recent snowstorm reminding us how we need to take care while driving on slippery and snow-covered streets. Sharing the roads with our snowplows can be a challenge and please use extra care. Speaking of our snowplows, the November storm provided a good test run for all our equipment and crews and proved we are ready for winter.

Community Events

The Friends of Elm Grove Library will be hosting the "Lights of Love" Tree Lighting celebration on December 8th starting at 3:30 p.m. Events include a visit from Santa, story time with Mrs. Claus and a magician! Caroling and the tree lighting ceremony will follow at approximately 4:55 p.m. with refreshments in the Village Courthouse after the ceremony. This important annual fundraising event for the library supports library material purchases throughout the year. I look forward to seeing a great turnout!

Volunteer Opportunity

A new program called Adopt Your Drain has been launched by Sweet Water, Southeastern Wisconsin Watersheds Trust, to help maintain the flow of Stormwater in our community. There are over 200 Elm Grove locations that can be adopted to keep clear of debris. You can go to Adopt Your Drain for further information. The Beautification Committee will provide further updates in coming letters. (See story – Page 6)

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP)

The Recreation Committee has started the work on the CORP, and everyone can help shape the path forward and influence the next steps, including the future investments and direction of the Village, by sharing their input in upcoming meetings. The Village has hired the planning firm Vandewalle & Associates, to help lead this effort to benchmark the Village's current recreational assets to other comparable communities and to facilitate discussions.

Underwood Creek Daylighting Project

I would like to thank residents for their strong support in favor of moving forward with the Daylighting Project. Please know that your Village Board will be cost conscious in executing this project to deliver an aesthetically pleasing and quality result.

The Public Works and Utility Committee currently is focused on a couple of critical next steps. The Committee is working with its Engineering and Design Firm, Stantec Engineering, to finalize the Drawings. The Committee is looking to maximize the use of quarry stone banking on the north end of the project. This is a cost saving and aesthetic improvement. The Board is also finalizing its approach to acquiring the 2-plus acres of abandoned railroad land required for the Project. Additionally, staff and our consultants are working with the impacted property owners to redesign the parking lot layout at the Park and Shop location. Finalizing easements to support the Project during and after construction is



also underway. The critical item now that the Project is approved is the land acquisition so our Engineers can do further environmental soil testing.

Public Works Updates

For those visiting the recycling center dropping off some leaves, a construction project may have caught your eye. There is a new storage building under construction that will house Public Works equipment that would otherwise be stored outside in the elements. The building will help improve the longevity and protect our investments in this equipment.

Unfortunately, the Highland Pathway was not able to be completed in 2024. We expect to receive final permitting from the Railroad over the winter and anticipate completion of the pathway in May, 2025.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee has been working throughout the Fall to finalize a 2025 budget. I want to thank the entire committee and Village Staff for the thoughtful work finding solutions to balance the budget. Led by **Brian Lahey**, our new Finance Director, the budget required significant give and take which meant all the requests could not be funded. I appreciate the cooperation by everyone in this challenging process.

As a reminder, the State limits the Village's ability to increase the levy. In 2025 the allowable increase was 1.04%. With wages and benefits increasing at a much higher rate, this presents a challenge. The Village Staff was creative in bridging this gap in 2025; however, going forward the Village may need to explore other ways to increase revenue to maintain its current high level of services for all residents.

The budget was approved at the November Village Board Meeting and your property tax bills will be arriving in December. Please be aware all tax bills must be paid directly to Waukesha County.

Wishing everyone a happy, joyous and peaceful holiday season!

Business & Club Directory

* Community Organizations



Elm Grove Golden K Kiwanis Club

Come Join with Us, Men & Women, to serve the children of our community. We meet each Friday at 9:30 a.m. in the St. Mary's Senior Center in Elm Grove. We have stimulating speakers each week and offer socializing among all present.

See us on Facebook
kiwaniselmgrove@gmail.com
www.kiwaniselmgrove.org

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Classifieds

GREETINGS!

Happy Birthday
CHRIS!

(13,140+ days old on December 17th)

Love
Mom & Dad



American Legion Post 449 COOKIE WALK Sale

Saturday, December 14th, Noon to 3 p.m.
3245 N. 124th Street, Brookfield
(Across from Briggs)

This cookie, candy & bread sale is one way the Auxiliary can raise funds for our Veterans.

All offerings are homemade!!!

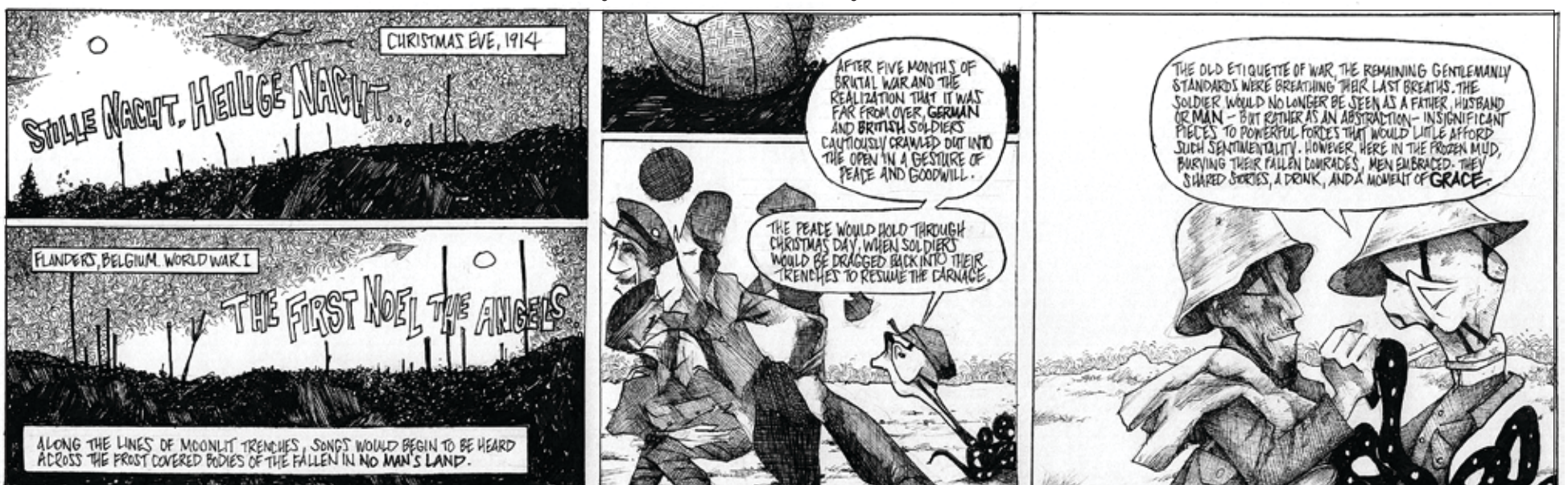
Thank you for your support. It makes many happy tummies. It is a wonderful way for you to have a great selection of goodies!

Each plate or package is \$5.00

Thank You!

Co-chairs Colleen Gotowitz & Carol Jensen

MR. HUGH'S HISTORY by Drew Sternitzky asternitzky@wi.rr.com



Our History: *Remembrances of Things Past*



Photo courtesy: Tom Ramstack and Craig Black

THE TELEGRAPH OPERATOR, c. 1915. At the west end of the village of Elm Grove stood this small home occupied by **William and Ida Olson**, immigrants from Norway. William was a telegraph operator for the railroad. Shown at left, are three of Ida's sisters. The three young girls are **Elsie Reinders, Miss Dwyer, and Gertrude Reinders**. Standing in back are William and Ida Olson.



Photo courtesy: Tom Ramstack

A HEAVY SNOWSTORM, 1923. An Elm Grove resident's Ford Model T is stuck in a few feet of snow. Following the storm, *The Waukesha Freeman* reported on April 17, "**Mr. and Mrs. George Bresnan** opened their doors to fourteen snow-bound motorists last Saturday night, who enjoyed their hospitality until late Monday afternoon, when with horses and sleighs they were safely taken to the train at Elm Grove and returned to their homes at Merton, Watertown, and Oconomowoc."



Photo courtesy: Tom Ramstack and Dorothy Haley

END OF PROHIBITION, 1934. The 21st Amendment, ratified on December 5, 1933, officially ended prohibition. Following ratification, Brookfield-area farmers park in front of **Reinders mill** at Elm Grove, ready to unload large bags of homegrown barley (sold at \$1.23 to \$1.28 a pound) to be shipped by train to Milwaukee's world-famous breweries, including **Schlitz, Miller, Blatz, Gettleman, and Pabst**. The companies were able to get back to the business of brewing beer after a 13-year hiatus.

In Memoriam

*Honor the Life
of a beloved
family member or friend.*

To place an Obituary Notice in this newspaper,
e-mail: elmgrovenews@yahoo.com
or call: (262) 782-6193
for Rate information.

Imperial Hair Care of Elm Grove

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Watertown Plank Road
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Elm Grove
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United Women in Faith 2024 COOKIE WALK & MORE!

Homemade cookies
and hand sewn gifts
**Community United Methodist
Church**

Sat. Dec. 14- 9:00 am

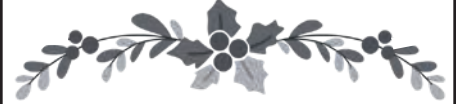
14700 Watertown Plank Rd.
Elm Grove

All proceeds go to missions.



Unitarian Universalist Church West

13001 W. North Ave. Brookfield
In-person or online services
uucw.org/livestream



Join us for our Holiday Services

**Annual Holiday Music Service
December 15, 10 am**

- Celebrating music of multiple faiths
- Performance by the UUCW Choir
- All ages welcome in service
- Childcare available

Winter Solstice Ritual December 21, 4 pm

- Featuring the Solstice Singers with Director Ruben Piirainen
- Childcare available
- Followed by a Yuletide Potluck

"Gift of Presence" December 22, 10 am

- Sermon by the Rev. Jill Braithwaite
- Music by Kaleidoscope Band
- Childcare available

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services December 24, 4 and 8 pm

- Multigenerational Choir at 4 pm
- Singing of carols - old and new
- All ages are welcome in service



Learn more at uucw.org

53 one 22

Elm Grove Community Foundation

www.elmgrovefoundation.org

NEW at the Community Foundation

Community Foundation Sponsors Carriage Rides

The Elm Grove Community Foundation sponsored the horse drawn carriage rides again at the recent Elm Grove Business Association Holiday Open House. Our mission is to support these types of events and other activities that enhance community life in the village.

This month the Elm Grove Community Foundation will be mailing its annual appeal letter to all residents of the village. Please consider a tax-free donation to the Foundation to help us fund projects that enhance community life and make Elm Grove such a special place in which to live.



BOOK IT! Oktoberfest - September 19 & 20, 2025

Calendar of Events – December 2024

Sunday – DECEMBER 1

- Elm Grove Beautification Committee Invasive Species Task Force Meets at 11 a.m. at Elm Grove Village Park. Volunteers welcome. beautification@elmgrovetwi.org

Friday – DECEMBER 6

- Elm Grove Kiwanis Club – Golden K Meeting: 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary’s Senior Center; Speaker: **Ben Pliskie** Topic: Scout Pack 156 Update kiwaniselmgrove@gmail.com

Sunday – DECEMBER 8

- “Lights of Love” 30th Anniversary celebration presented by the Friends of the Elm Grove Library, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. at Village Hall / Elm Grove Village Park (See details – Page 1)

- Elm Grove Beautification Committee Invasive Species Task Force Meets at 11 a.m. at Elm Grove Village Park. Volunteers welcome. beautification@elmgrovetwi.org

Thursday – DECEMBER 12

- OWLS – Seniors’ Group Annual Holiday Luncheon at Westmoor Country Club; Sponsored by Community UMC Guests are welcome. <http://www.cumceg.org/owl>

Friday – DECEMBER 13

- Elm Grove Kiwanis Club – Golden K Private Meeting: 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary’s Senior Center. kiwaniselmgrove@gmail.com

Sunday – DECEMBER 15

- Elm Grove Beautification Committee Invasive Species Task Force Meets at 11 a.m. at Elm Grove Village Park. Volunteers welcome. beautification@elmgrovetwi.org

Friday – DECEMBER 20

- Elm Grove Kiwanis Club – Golden K Meeting: 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary’s Senior Center; Speakers: **Beth Dobrzynski and Dr. Mark Hansen**; Topic: Elmbrook Education Foundation / Hydroponic Farms Initiative. kiwaniselmgrove@gmail.com

Saturday – DECEMBER 21

FIRST DAY OF WINTER

Sunday – DECEMBER 22

- Elm Grove Beautification Committee Invasive Species Task Force Meets at 11 a.m. at Elm Grove Village Park. Volunteers welcome. beautification@elmgrovetwi.org

Wednesday – DECEMBER 25 CHRISTMAS



HANUKKAH begins at Sundown



Thursday – DECEMBER 26 FIRST DAY OF KWANZAA

Friday – DECEMBER 27

- Elm Grove Kiwanis Club – Golden K No meeting. **Happy Holidays!** kiwaniselmgrove@gmail.com

Sunday – DECEMBER 29

- Elm Grove Beautification Committee Invasive Species Task Force Meets at 11 a.m. at Elm Grove Village Park. Volunteers welcome. beautification@elmgrovetwi.org

Tuesday – DECEMBER 31

NEW YEAR’S EVE

Elm Grove Recycling Center Hours

The Department of Public Works Recycling / Yard Waste Facility

900 Wall St.

(off Elm Grove Road, between Watertown Plank & Bluemound)

DECEMBER 2024

Saturdays --- 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

www.elmgrovetwi.org (262) 782-6700



Christmas at the Inn
ELMBROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TOURS
December 7 10:00 to 4:00
December 8 1:00 to 4:00
CASH ONLY

BAKE SALE
held on the grounds at AGGIE'S ANTIQUE SHOP

ADMISSION
Adults - \$6.00, Children 3-12 - \$3.00

Dousman Stagecoach Inn Museum
1075 Pilgrim Parkway, Brookfield



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with
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Sharon Lynne Wilson Center
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wilson-center.com

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News Briefs

Local Drive to Benefit Homeless Community

By Terry Steiner

Woller-Anger, A Relation Company is collecting winter coats to help Mr. Bob's Under the Bridge provide these much-needed items to Milwaukee's homeless during the holiday and winter season. Mr. Bob's Under the Bridge is an outreach based in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, serving the homeless community in the City of Milwaukee and surrounding communities.

Every Saturday Morning, Mr. Bob (Bob Burmeister) and dozens of volunteers gather at Kosciuszko Park in Milwaukee where they distribute a variety of essentials to men, women and children. Mr. Bob's also provides warm coffee and snacks, encouraging fellowship and creating a sense of community.

Mr. Bob's Under the Bridge started in September 2007 with six backpacks and



open hearts for distribution to their friends in the city. In 2012, Mr. Bob's Under the Bridge became a non-profit to better serve the community. The vision of Mr. Bob's is to create a community in which every person receives basic necessities, guidance and hope. As the winter months are upon us, we ask that you open your hearts, so our friends have what they need to stay warm.

Please consider donating new or used winter coats for men, women and children! We will be collecting at our office: 930 Elm Grove Road, Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

'Adopt Your Drain' Project Needs Community Support

By Nicci Sternitzky / Elm Grove Beautification Committee

beautification@elmgrove.org

To quote Gill from *Finding Nemo*, "All drains lead to the ocean Nemo!", or in the case of Elm Grove...all drains lead to Lake Michigan!

Everyone lives in a watershed. Contrary to the name, a watershed includes both land and water and is named for the waterbody into which the rainfall hitting that area of land will flow. All Elm Grove residents live in the Underwood Creek tributary of the Menomonee River Watershed. Every time it rains, pollutants left on streets, parking lots, and lawns are picked up by moving stormwater and brought into nearby storm drains. This untreated water is then discharged directly into our local Underwood Creek and eventually into Lake Michigan.

SweetWater has recently added nearly 200 drains within Elm Grove to the Adopt Your Drain map. Visit: <https://www.adoptyourdrain.com>

Take a minute to check the map and see if there is a drain near your house or on your walking route. Just a few minutes a month are needed to keep your drain clear and report what you've removed, especially before and after rainfall events.

How quickly can we get 100% of the drains in our community adopted?



Adopt Your Drain

in

Elm Grove!

Scan the QR code below or visit our website [adoptyourdrain.com](https://www.adoptyourdrain.com) to adopt a drain in front of your home or business!




Twice a month, clean your drain of leaves, trash, and other debris!

The Village of Elm Grove needs your help!

Adopting a storm drain is an easy way to help prevent water pollution and flooding

Elm Grove Birders Club Offers Citizen Scientist Opportunities, Activities

By Patricia Donohoue and Jennifer Morris

Do you love to watch birds, hear their sounds, learn about their behavior and environment? Do you want to help nature and support the habitat of birds? You can meet like-minded people by participating in the Birders of the Grove Club! We meet on the third Monday at 9 a.m., every other month (January, March, May, July, September and November). We have several ongoing activities such as helping our Village achieve "High Flyer" status, building upon our recognition as a "Bird City USA" (<https://elmgrove.org/399/Bird-City-Wisconsin>).



Our members have participated in several free citizen Science projects that anyone can join, such as these:

- The **Christmas Bird Count** is the world's longest running community science project, and started in 1900. This event runs from December 14 to January 5 every year, and involves the entire Western Hemisphere documenting numbers and species of birds in the Northern winter and Southern summer (www.audubon.org/community-science/christmas-bird-count). Join some EG Birders on December 28th at 9 a.m. at the Village Park to walk the trail and count!
- **Project Feeder Watch** is an annual citizen research study sponsored by the Cornell Ornithology Lab that gathers data on the numbers of individual birds in each species observed in your own home or other community location from November 1 to April 30. It does have a fee of \$18/year, which supports the analysis and interpretation of data. Other data collected include features of the environment (mammals, number of feeders, predators, plants, water sources, etc).
- The **Great Backyard Bird Count** is a worldwide effort to count and document bird species. This can be done as an individual or in groups. The dates for 2025 are February 14-17 (www.birdcount.org). Members of our club met and documented birds spotted at the Village Park in February 2024, including 30 Cedar Waxwings!
- The **Great Wisconsin Birdathon** is a statewide effort to document the bird species in Wisconsin. It is a fundraiser to support bird conservation through the Natural Resources Foundation. Participating groups or individuals count birds on any day(s) from April 15 – June 15, and request donations from friends and relatives that are based on the number of species counted (www.wisconsinconservation.org/great-wisconsin-birdathon).
- **World Migratory Bird Day** occurs in the U.S. and Canada on the second Saturday in May, and will be on May 10, 2025 (www.worldmigratorybirdday.org). It celebrates the hundreds of species that migrate between nesting habitats in North America and nonbreeding habitats in Mexico, Latin America and the Caribbean. Elm Grove Celebrates this event with a Village wide festival for people of all ages in the Village Park.

We also have a goal to educate our community about important environmental efforts that impact birds and their migration, such as **Lights Out** (<https://elmgrove.org/746/Birds-Lights>) and **Leave the Leaves** (www.cbs58.com/news/leave-the-leaves-zoological-society-of-milwaukee). We'll be organizing several spring walks around the Village pond to identify migrating waterfowl (dates TBA).

For more information about the Birders of the Grove, just come to one of our meetings in the Parkview Room at the Village Hall, read about us (<https://blog.egbirders.org/>), or email the club at egbeautification@gmail.com.

100+ Women Who Care – MKE Metro West Distributions Exceed \$250,000

(ELM GROVE) 100+ Women Who Care – MKE Metro West was established 8 years ago and strives to strengthen local communities by providing funds to local charities according to the group's organizer, **Jane Condon**.

Donations of \$10,286 were presented to Adaptive Community Approach Program of Waukesha at the August, 2024 meeting. The amount given brings the group's total donations to over \$250,000. ACAP was the 24th local charity selected to receive funding.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 3, 2024, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at O'Donoghue's Pub, 13225 Watertown Plank Road, Elm Grove, when another deserving area charity will be selected. Overflow parking will be available in the Town Bank lot.

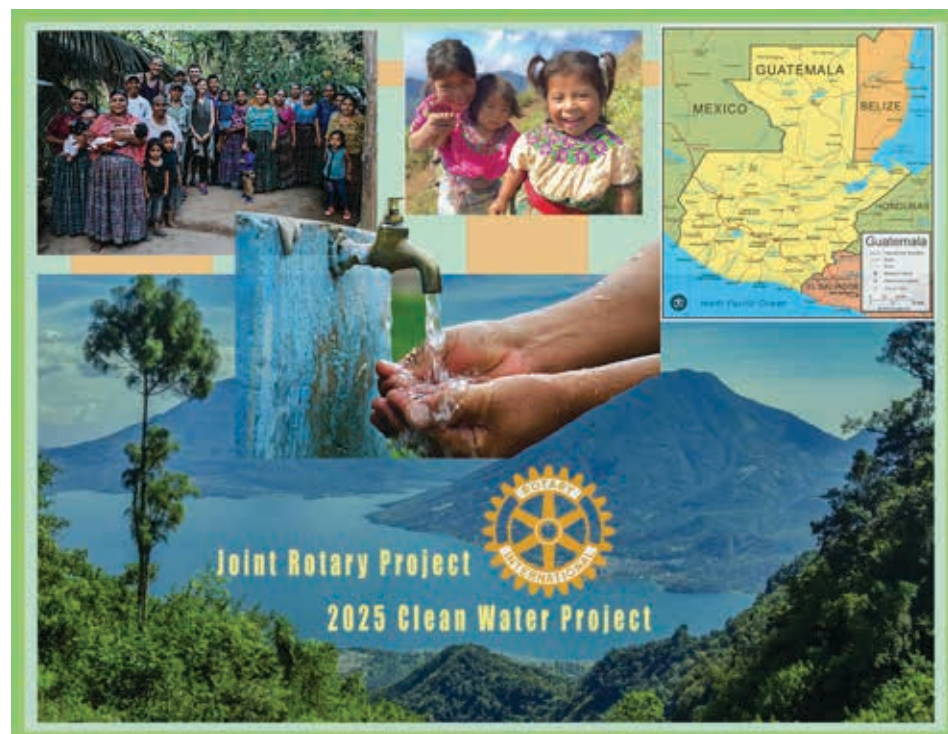
The meeting coincides with GIVING TUESDAY, the world's biggest day for generosity. GIVING TUESDAY, launched in 2012, reimagines a world built upon shared humanity and generosity. This global network collaborates year-round to inspire generosity around the world, with a common mission to build a world where generosity is part of everyday life.

"Helping a neighbor or stranger out, showing up for an issue or people we care about, or giving some of what we have to those who need our help, every act of generosity counts, and everyone has something to give," said Condon.

New members are welcome. Visit www.100wcmkemetrowest.org for details.



News Briefs



Elmbrook Rotary Project to Help Bring Clean Water to Guatemalan Communities

By Doug Jacobson

In the highlands of Guatemala, people washing their clothes in a stream is a daily task. As is carrying water in buckets from the same stream, sometimes for several miles, then gathering firewood to boil the water before it might be safe to drink. Disease from waterborne contaminants is widespread, and in some cases patients in hospitals are forced to bring their own water because the local hospital does not have clean water. Clean, safe water, a commodity we take for granted, is unknown for thousands of the proud, hard-working people of Guatemala.

Elmbrook Rotary Club is stepping in to help. Our International Services Committee will be leading a project in 2025 to bring clean, safe water to two communities in the Guatemalan highlands. **Cruz Chich and Chumisa** are home to 3,700 indigenous Mayan people who have never had access to clean water. Partnering with the people of these two communities, as well as the local **Vista Hermosa Rotary Club, the Marquette University chapter of Engineers without Borders, the Rotary Club of Milwaukee,** and other potential Rotary clubs in Wisconsin and elsewhere, we are on our way to raising the funds for this exciting \$260,000 project.

The initial phase of this project has already begun through the efforts of the people in the communities. The task is significant. Trenches must be dug, and pipelines constructed to

bring clean water to the villages from a spring seven kilometers away. Storage tanks and treatment facilities will be constructed, and more than 400 connections will be made to individual homes. The people of these two communities, who are supplying some of the funding and all the labor, purchased the spring several years ago and now, with help from Vista Hermosa Rotary Club and Elmbrook Rotary Club, look forward to a day very soon when they will finally have clean, safe water available in their homes.

As indicated above, we are still in the process of raising all the necessary funding for this project and donations of any size will be greatly appreciated.

Contact: info@elmbrookrotary.org if you want to help.



Christmas Clearing Council Seeks Donations

The Brookfield Public Library and City of Brookfield Fire Department are donation sites for the collection of toys and other needed items for the Christmas Clearing Council of Waukesha County.

The drop off deadline is Tuesday, December 17th.

Some of the most needed items include:

- New mittens and gloves (especially waterproof) and hats for children, newborn to age 11.
- New books: birth to age 11, including Spanish or dual-language books.
- Licensed items: Disney, Star Wars
- Infant and toddler toys, especially riding toys for toddlers.
- Sleeping bags and blankets
- STEM-related craft items.

Children ages 12-18 who are not sponsored will receive gift cards in lieu of toys.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.christmasclearingcouncil.org> or call (262) 771-0909.



News' Hounds & other beloved creatures

Adopt a Pet at the Elmbrook Humane Society

By Morgan Pelon

Introducing **Wishbone**, the sweet and snuggly boy who's ready to embark on his next great adventure---finding his home! Much like the classic TV pup with the same name, Wishbone loves to dive into exciting tales, but instead of books, his favorite adventures involve snacks, toys, and people.

This lovable dog adores his humans and has a heart full of affection to give. He's always up for a cuddle session or a game of fetch, but sometimes his excitement gets the best of him, and he could use a calm, steady home to help him relax and flourish. With a little guidance, Wishbone will become the loyal companion you've always dreamed of.

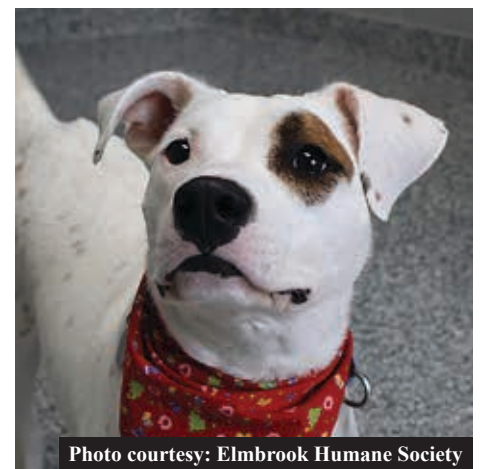


Photo courtesy: Elmbrook Humane Society

Wishbone

If you're looking for a best friend to share cozy nights and fun-filled days, Wishbone is ready to be the star of your story. Adopt him, and let your next chapter together begin!

The EBHS is located at 20950 Enterprise Avenue, (off Barker Road) Brookfield. (262) 782-9261.

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News Briefs



Photo courtesy: UUCW

Ministers attending Unitarian Universalist Church West's recent ordination ceremony gather for a group photo.

Unitarian Universalist Church West Welcomes Reverend Jill Braithwaite

By Kelly Bognar

Unitarian Universalist Church West (UUCW) is delighted to announce the formal installation of **Reverend Jill Braithwaite** as their new minister. This milestone event and celebration took place on Friday evening, November 1, 2024 at the church located at 13001 W. North Ave. in Brookfield. Reverend Jill has been serving the church since August 1, 2024.

The event also included Rev. Jill's ordination into the Unitarian Universalist (UU) ministry. Ordination recognizes a minister's call to ministry and marks the culmination of extensive discernment, study, experience, and preparation. In the UU tradition, authority to ordain ministers rests solely with congregations.

Reverend Jill's ordination ceremony featured a sermon by **Rev. Lisa Friedman**

titled "Answering the Call of Love." Messages were also delivered by several of Rev. Jill's ministerial colleagues. They included a community blessing by **Rev. Jennifer Nordstrom**, Senior Minister at First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee, and an interfaith blessing by **Rev. Marilyn Miller**, Moderator of Good Shepherd Trinity Church in Milwaukee. To commemorate this special occasion, UUCW members **Susan Endes** and **Karen and Sharon Van De Loo** presented Rev. Jill with two beautifully crafted minister stoles.

The ceremony was enriched by musical performances from the UUCW Adult Choir, Kaleidoscope Band, and soloist **Petra Musante**. The evening concluded with a celebratory dinner attended by over 150 guests, marking a joyous start to Reverend Jill Braithwaite's ministry at UUCW.



Photo courtesy: UUCW

Reverend Jill Braithwaite



Women & Girls Fund of Waukesha County Award Nominations Open

(WAUKESHA) The Women and Girls Fund of Waukesha County is seeking nominations for its prestigious 2025 awards. Do you know a woman who should be honored as a Woman of Distinction or a Young Woman of Tomorrow?

- **Women of Distinction:**

Recognizing women who have demonstrated their passion and commitment to improving the quality of life in Waukesha County while inspiring other women and girls to do the same.

- **Young Woman of Tomorrow:**

Recognizing a young woman in high school, college, or advanced training in Waukesha County, age 25 or younger, who has demonstrated a commitment to improving the quality of life in Waukesha county through extracurricular and academic involvement.

The 2025 award honorees will be recognized at the 41st annual Women of Distinction event on May 16, 2025. Nomination forms must be submitted by January 31, 2025.

Visit: <https://womensgirlsfund.org>.

Contact **Nicole Wagner** at nicole@womensgirlsfund.org or call (262) 955-1765 for more information.



Holiday Train to Make Stops in Area Communities

The 2024 Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Holiday Train is set to travel through Milwaukee and Waukesha County from December 7-9, raising money, food and awareness to support food banks across our network.

Professional musicians, including **The Lone Bellow** and **Tiera Kennedy** will play free concerts from the brightly decorated train's stage. CPKC donates to the local food bank at each stop and encourages all attendees to make a monetary or heart-healthy food donation.

Since its inaugural journey in 1999, the CPKC Holiday Train has raised more than \$24.3 million and collected approximately 5.3 million pounds of food for community food banks in Canada and the U.S.

On **Sunday, December 8**, stops will be made at the following locations:

- **Wauwatosa:** 4:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. at Harwood Avenue
- **Hartland:** 5:45 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. at Cottonwood Avenue
- **Oconomowoc:** 6:45 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. at South Silver Lake Street

Library News and Programs

December 2024

13600 Juneau Blvd., Elm Grove, WI 53122
262-782-6717 | elmgrovelibrary.org

A World Ablaze in Sunlight: A Turner Landscape / Tuesday, December 10, 6:30 p.m.

According to Payne Knight, a great collector of his works, if there was ever an epithet for J.M.W. Turner, it was "the eye and the intellect" firing on all fronts, and "his sun" – the great destroyer and the great renovator. "By the magic of his pencil, we are brought to regions of such bold and romantic magnificence, and introduced to effects of such rare and awful grandeur...for design, for coloring, for strength of conception, for depth of feeling and felicity of execution – for originality, truth and variety, it places him indisputably...at the head of all English artists." (Walter Fawkes)



Join us as we survey the life and works of the English master famous for his romantic landscapes, J.M.W. Turner. Presented by Professor Karri Fritz-Klaus of Cornerstone History Symposium.

Now available: Two New Adventures!

The Elm Grove Library's Experience Pass collection opens a whole region of entertaining and educational experiences, from the Harley-Davidson Museum to the Mitchell Park Domes. Now there are two new experience "kits" that will have you exploring and enjoying Elm Grove's own Village Park.

Have you ever wanted to try geocaching? Geocaching is an outdoor recreational activity in which participants use GPS to find hidden containers, called geocaches, at specific locations marked by coordinates. The Elm Grove Library now has a geocache kit ready to be checked out. The "Geocaching Story Quest" was designed and donated by Team Alpha Geek, Pilgrim Park Middle School Lego League, specifically for use in Elm Grove Village Park. The quest was designed to tell a story, and each cache you discover on the way adds to the plot. The kit checks out for three days and contains a course description and settings, an introduction to geocaching from Team Alpha Geek, and a preprogrammed GPS device. Everything you need for an adventure close to home!

Another new addition to the library's experience collection is the bird watching backpack. The backpack was donated to the library by the Birders of the Grove, which works closely with the Village of Elm Grove to establish and maintain the community as an official Wisconsin Bird City. The backpack checks out for three days and contains one pair of adult binoculars, two pairs of children's binoculars, a laminated Wisconsin birds pocket guide, and an observation notebook. See how many birds you can spot in Village Park and beyond!



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Young Writers & Reporters

Tonawanda Elementary

By Lainey Jacobs - 4th Grade

Have you ever heard about the elementary school, Tonawanda? Well, it's a great school. I should know because I go there. The principal is **Mrs. Olson**. The school has many fun things for the students to join. They have a newspaper that the students write in that goes around the school, a choir that has many performances, a musical, a drawing class, and more. They have many fun fundraisers like the Tiger Trot, where kids walk/run/jog laps with their friends. I can't forget about dances! They have many kinds of dances. They also have a big playground, but we have been missing balls, so if you find one on the playground or bin please after you're done using it, put it in the gray bin near the office.

Here are some quotes from students & teachers:

"The teachers are so caring at Tonawanda Elementary." - **Nova Bowe**

"It is the best school in the whole state of Wisconsin." - **Katya Ganos**

"Tonawanda is such a fun school and the staff is so nice to their students! Bye!"

- **Anya Ganos**

"I love coming to Tonawanda each day and working with such wonderful students and teachers." - **Mrs. Leffler, Teacher**

The "Oh, Dear" Poem

By Anya Ganos

4th Grade - Tonawanda

Oh dear
Christmas is here!
Into the chimney
Up to his sled
We try to chase him
But it's no use
'Cause he's gone to another bed!

Christmas

By Emmitt Winter and Hayes Neubauer

4th Grade - Tonawanda

Cookies
Hot fire
Reindeer
Igloo
Snow
Tree
Making food
Asking for presents
Santa Claus



My Favorite Christmas Tradition

By Julia Connolly

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

My favorite holiday tradition is going to church with my family on Christmas Eve.

Every year, I go to church at an old cathedral in Milwaukee with my mom, dad, and two brothers, Andrew and Daniel. When we walk into the grand church, there are several large, ivy-colored Christmas trees, decorated with silver tinsel, little red ornaments, and a golden angel on top. The entire church is illuminated by the soft, warm glow of many bright candles in tall, silver holders. My family always arrives early to hear the choir practice singing different Christmas songs, and to hear the beautiful sound of the organ fill the church with music. Once the mass has begun, incense can be smelled all throughout the cathedral, accompanied by many voices singing together in harmony. After church, the choir performs a piece from *Handel's Messiah*, which my brother Daniel loves to hear. In conclusion, going to church with my family is a special Christmas tradition that I will treasure forever.

White Winter

By Caroline Heerey

4th Grade - Tonawanda

Snowflakes falling down
Snow pants, jacket, and boots on
Snow being rolled into balls
Snowballs being stacked
Snowmen being made
Snow is winter

If I Could Buy a Christmas Gift...

By 3rd grade students at St. Mary's Visitation School

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **Mr. Spelter** a Corvette that has a Mexico sign on it, and I would buy him a penthouse with a butler and a free pool. I will buy him the Corvette because if he is ever running late, he will still get there on time. I would have a Mexico sign on it because he loves Spanish. I would buy him a penthouse with a butler so he can live in a good house with his family, and he and his family could just chill out. I would also buy him a pool so he can go swimming with his family. That's what I would buy Mr. Spelter. - **Joey**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy a sewing kit for my **Grandma Stich**. I would buy her this because she loves to sew my broken stuffies. She's amazing and I love her so much. She is kind and special! - **Sloane**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **my class** a trip to Disney World as a field trip! I would buy them a trip to Disney because then we can go on a ton of rides! We would buy toys, clothes, and hats, maybe even blankets if they had any. We would be there for a week in a hotel! That is what I would get my class. - **Bridget**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **Santa** a whole year's supply of cookies and milk and elves. I would buy him cookies and milk because he loves to eat them and he would not have to wait until Christmas Eve to eat cookies and milk. I would also buy him elves to help him work and read letters from kids. That is why I would buy him a whole year supply of cookies and milk and elves. - **Abby**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **Beau** a trip to Hawaii because Beau is a very good friend. I would do it because I would go with Beau. We would fly first class with a TV and snacks. It would be very long, but that's okay. - **Adler**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **my dad** a set of Kentucky stuff like kitchen knives and some clothes. I would do it because he has lived in Kentucky and really likes it there. He likes the Kentucky teams for many sports like basketball. I would do it because I love him. - **Audrey**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **Mr. Fix-It** a hammer. He works so hard, and he just needs a hammer. Also, he fixes so much stuff all the time. He can fix anything at our school! He is so good at fixing stuff. - **Madeline**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **my Dad** a new car. It is dirty in my Dad's car. We had the car for 8 years. When he drives it, it makes a weird sound. He needs a new car. It is small and we need it to be big. I want it to be comfortable. - **Jude**

Christmas and Hanukkah

By Cameron Schwartz

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

I always feel like the luckiest kid in the world because I celebrate Hanukkah and Christmas every year. For Christmas, my grandparents travel to Wisconsin from Massachusetts to visit for a week, and my siblings and I have the best time being spoiled. Hanukkah is a delightful holiday too because instead of opening gifts for the eight nights of Hanukkah, my family celebrates by going to fun experiences. In the past, me and my family have gone to Yale hockey games, fun restaurants, museums, and even trips into cities. Having two celebrations means I get to enjoy double the presents, traditions, and special moments, and I idolize learning and experiencing new things from both holidays!



If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **my Grandma** a box of paints for painting. I would buy my Grandma a box of paint because she likes to paint. She also paints really good pictures and boards. My Grandma and I also like to paint rocks together and when we do, she puts the rocks out in the summer and spring for decoration. - **Reagan**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **my Mom** a diamond ring. I would buy my Mom a diamond ring because she helps me and my sister with homework. I would buy my Mom a diamond ring because she makes dinner for everyone in my family and takes me to fun places. - **Genevieve**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **Miss Grajek** a movie theater. I would give Miss Grajek a movie theater because then she can have a lot of fun with her family watching a movie. She can also take the class to a movie. It would be a lot of fun for her family, the class, and her. - **Annelies**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **my Brother** a picture of my family. I would give him a picture because he is in the Navy and when he goes far, far away he could bring the picture and look at it. I would give it to him because he is my brother and it is important to remember his family. - **Alia**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **my cousin Emma** an American Girl doll. I would buy Emma an American Girl doll for Christmas because last year at my Grandma's Christmas party, Emma played with one of my American Girl dolls almost the whole party. She has been wanting one for a while. - **Lucy**

If I could buy a Christmas gift for anyone, I would buy **my Mom** a bunch of flowers. I would buy my Mom a bunch of flowers because the bunch of flowers might have Lily of the Valleys. My Mom loves Lily of the Valley flowers and loves it when I bring her flowers. I think a bunch of flowers would be a great present. - **James M.**

My Favorite Tradition

By Anna Recht

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

One of my favorite holiday memories is to bake batches upon batches of Christmas cookies. Some of our family favorites include two chocolate cookies with a refreshing peppermint filling in the middle, a vanilla sugar cookie crusted with a generous topping of sprinkles, and my personal favorite, the chocolate crinkle cookie. This is a rich chocolate base rolled in first regular sugar, and then powdered sugar, resulting in beautiful fissures decorating the cookie. Once all the cookies have been baked, and my dad has stolen one or two, we box up the cookies in decorative tins from Target or Hobby Lobby. The final step in our plan to spread Christmas cheer is to go door-to-door and hand out the tins of cookies. Christmas is a time of giving, and sharing yummy cookies is a great way to show it

Malala Yousafzai

By Amal Iqbal

6th Grade - Pilgrim Park Middle School

Do you know any inspirational women? There are many who have changed this world, but one that stands out for me is Malala Yousafzai. Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist and first pashtun Nobel Prize winner — also the youngest one. She is also Pakistan's most "prominent" citizen.

Her Story

Malala lived in Swat, and the Taliban didn't allow girls to attend school. She immediately began to protest against these restrictions. In 2008, her father took her to the local press club in Peshawar. She had a speech talking about how unfair it was that the Taliban took away her educational opportunities.

A year later, she posted a blog about her life while Swat was occupied by the Taliban. It was around this time that Malala became more known throughout the world. This is when she was awarded the Nobel Prize Award.

A Devastating Day

One day, a tragic thing happened. In 2012, October 9, Malala was on a bus after taking an exam. A gunman from the Taliban shot her in the head. Thankfully, she got better after two hospital stays.

Family

Malala was born on July 12, 1997 in Swat. She has 2 younger brothers. Her parents are Ziauddin Yousafzai and Toor Pekai Yousafzai. She married Asser Malik.

A Special Christmas Morning

By Maddie Sikorski

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

"Maddie! Merry Christmas!" my mom exclaims.

My eyes immediately blink open, my heart filling with immense happiness. I toss my comforter off of me and sprint down the upstairs hallway. I hop down the stairs, frolicking through the dining room. Suddenly, a large pile of perfectly wrapped presents glistening under the tree intrigues me.

Stockings are hanging on the fireplace, and rainbow-colored flashes from the Christmas tree fill the room. The Christmas tree is a sage green, fake evergreen tree that is covered in homemade ornaments and rainbow string lights. The smell of delicious breakfast fills the air. Not just any breakfast, but Christmas breakfast. The waffles, syrup, eggs, and best of all, bacon.

I immediately gasp, surprised with how much effort my parents put into Christmas morning. They always make sure it's special, something I'll always remember.

My brother, Nolan, shreds the wrapping paper into pieces while I, on the other hand, delicately unwrap each present. I see the AirPods I've been wanting forever.

"Oh my gosh! Thank you!" I cheer as excitement fills my body.

"Of course! Merry Christmas!" My dad responds.

Christmas in my family is always special, which is a memory I'll have forever.

Sledding in Mitchell Park

By Aarya Ghuge

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

Every year, my brother, my friends and I go to Mitchell Park to sled. When the snow is perfect for sledding, we take our sleds and proceed to Mitchell Park. Last year, we used each other's sleds and determined that the tube sled was the best one. We kept sledding down the tall hill until it got dark. We were very hungry, so we stopped at a nearby Culver's. We got ice cream and it was especially good because it was cold outside. Then we went to my house and had hot chocolate and watched a movie. This was a very fun event and I am grateful that it happened to me.

Letters to the Editor

*Letters regarding issues of concern to the Elm Grove/Elmbrook /Waukesha County community will be considered for publication on a space-available basis.

*Submissions (about 200 words max) must include the writer's name, community of residence & phone #.

*Mail to: EGNI, 14420 Watertown Plank Road, Elm Grove, WI 53122-2423. *E-mail: elmgrovenews@yahoo.com (Subject line: Letters to the Editor)



Post-Election Commentary from District 13 Assemblyman

On election night, during what I now call my "Dewey moment," the headline of the *Waukesha Freeman* reported, "Michalski retains Assembly District 13 seat". Then, at about 3 a.m., Milwaukee County's Central Count reported their tabulated votes. In what feels like a familiar theme, these additional votes moved my opponent ahead.

As I acknowledge my loss, I do not feel defeated. However, I do believe the Elmbrook community has suffered a defeat, shattered by the politically motivated redistricting initiated by the Wisconsin Supreme Court. The new 13th Assembly District was explicitly designed to be a 60% Democratic stronghold, and politically speaking Elm Grove has effectively become a part of Wauwatosa.

I urge you to consider the current issues

challenging Wauwatosa: rising taxes, increasing crime, and declining schools. These problems have emerged from mimicking Milwaukee's poor management, and our community is poised to face similar challenges.

Elm Grove, the home of the state's first woman Lieutenant Governor, Republican Margaret Farrow, is unlikely to see conservative leadership at the state level again in my lifetime. Much like Wauwatosa, which has changed drastically over the years, this defeat will profoundly impact our community, making Elm Grove hard to recognize in the not-too-distant future.

Reflecting on the past two years, I feel a sense of pride. My top priority was to provide more funds to local governments, and I succeeded by increasing District 13's

State Shared Revenue by almost two and a half million dollars per year. I also had three bills signed into law, two of which fulfilled my commitment to voters regarding election security. I made it a point to listen to the community's concerns, fears, hopes, and dreams by welcoming anyone who visited my office and having coffee with many constituents at local District restaurants. The past two years have been an unforgettable journey. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have served as your representative.

I want to thank the many who have helped me along the way, providing me with their time, money, and energy. I especially want to thank my wife, Jennifer. She's been my rock for over 25 years, and I couldn't have done this without her.

Lastly, I would like to make a request of Robyn Vining. You have previously represented a relatively small portion of Waukesha County, and you know that many people there have opinions that differ significantly from your own. As a result of redistricting, the number of conservative voters has grown substantially to nearly half of your constituents. Please take the time to listen to everyone, regardless of their views or ideologies. I hope you provide them with the support and assistance they need. Serve them well.

Tom Michalski
Elm Grove

Editor's Note: Robyn Vining, who has represented Wisconsin Assembly District 14 for the past 6 years, will represent Assembly District 13 beginning on January 6, 2025.

Young Writers & Reporters

A Winter Wonderland

By Claire Lee

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

I'll always remember the day I finally saw pearl-colored circles falling from the sky in Suwanee. I woke up and, as always, looked out the clear glass window to see chirping birds, a beautiful sun, or noisy neighborhood kids. This time, it was different. I saw white, fluffy spheres and thought it was nothing. "Wait!" I thought, and as I looked back, I couldn't believe my eyes. It had finally snowed in Georgia!

This was exciting for me because I was born in Illinois but had moved south. I often missed the fun I experienced for those four years. "Mom! Mom!" I yelled as I sprinted towards her. She quickly helped me into my winter gear. I went outside with my friends, and it was cold, alright! Who was I to care? We played snowball fights and spent an hour making a giant snowman.

That big creature of soft ice made me sprint from the bus to check if it was still there. However, one day it was completely gone—nothing left but plain water. Although it was devastating, that was one unforgettable winter in the south.

Basketball Time

By Henry Dorrington and Jonah Cawrse

3rd Grade - Tonawanda

Five kids take the court with a bouncing ball. They dribble, pass and shoot through a hoop. The hoop is tall. They block shots and slide their feet. Sometimes they set a pick or two. They run and jump and play defense in front of all the people.

We love to play basketball more than any other sport. We practice alone or 3 on 3 or with the whole team. I practice to get better every day and to improve my conditioning and skills. We have loved this game all of our lives and we always will.

I'm a Scaredy Tooth

By Elizabeth Allen, 3rd Grade - Tonawanda

It was the first day of school. I was really excited that I had a wiggly tooth. I couldn't stop wiggling my tooth. I bit into my chicken but then I felt a crack! I could taste blood and the chicken I had for lunch. My heart stopped when I felt something hard on my tongue! I put my hand in my mouth and pulled out my tooth! My mouth was so bloody! I ran to get a teacher. I went to the health room. They gave me a little box and some water.

On the bus ride home, I kept looking at my tooth. Then the bus hit a big stop and my tooth went flying through the air and onto the ground. I picked it up just in time. I got off the bus and showed my Mom. The end.

Christmas Joy

By Audrey Klein

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

On Christmas day, my family and I go to my Nana and Papa's house. Most of my aunts and uncles on my dad's side live far away, so it is delightful that they come to share the joy of this holiday. A priest, a good friend of my Nana and Papa, visits to help us honor Jesus on his birthday and give communion to the family. I was selected to give a short speech about Jesus and his kindness he brought to the world. I learn a lot each year about Jesus, and I have learned to love my heritage.

On this grateful day, there is so much joy with giving, reunion conversations, and my aunt's delicious baking. She creates wonderful treats, and you know when they are done by the sweet, chocolaty smell of her homemade desserts. Being with family on our Savior's birthday makes me feel safe and comforted like a joey snuggled in its mother's pouch.

One of my favorite parts is watching my little cousins open presents, their astonished and happy expressions bringing pure joy. Christmas is a great excuse to come together and see relatives I don't often see. Though it may not be my favorite holiday, it's a fun, cheerful time filled with cherished memories.

Christmas Morning

By Lilyana Tatek

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

Springing out of bed, I yelled, "IT'S CHRISTMASSSS!" I rushed to my siblings' rooms to wake them up, bursting with joy. We then went downstairs to prepare breakfast. My sister and I were in charge of desserts, while Mom and my brother made savory foods like omelets and diced potatoes. After breakfast, we sat down to eat. The food tasted delicious and was even better accompanied by my family's joy and laughter.

Next, we gathered in the living room around the Christmas tree. It was time for presents! Giggling with glee as we opened gifts, we finally got to the last one. When we finished, we rushed to our rooms to store the gifts. This is by far my favorite Christmas memory. Even though getting presents is fun, the most important part is giving and spending time with loved ones.

Something new and special happens each December. Two years ago, my three brothers, sister, and I went outside in the snow to make snow-angels, snowmen, and have snowball fights. We rushed outside to make snow-angels and see whose was the best. Then we built a snowman and yelled to my parents, "Get the carrot!"

New Year's Eve

By Ira Khatri

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

New Year's has always been a special time, especially because it's my mom's birthday. Every year, we celebrate with our closest family friends. One year, we decided to go sledding at the park. I rushed to slip on my snow gear and jumped into the car with my bright blue sled. After about ten minutes, we pulled into the parking lot, and I watched intricate snowflakes land on the white snow.

Leaping out, I grabbed my sled and trudged up the hill with my friends. After clambering up, we collapsed on our sleds and glided down the hill. Again and again, we rode down the snowy mountain. Eventually, we got worn out and asked our parents, who were in the car drinking hot chocolate, to take us home. As they drove, the clock turned 11.

We lumbered out of the car, waiting for midnight. As we regained our strength, we anticipated the new year. Finally, it was 2023. The knife sliced through the creamy vanilla cake with "Happy New Year" in pink letters. Confetti flew everywhere, and the loud shrieks of children echoed from miles away. It was another fresh chapter in everyone's life.

The Jump

By Jack Foley

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

Last December, my brother and my friends, Henry and Max Kuehn, came to my house to hang out and sled. After a while we got bored of sledding on a plain hill and then we had the idea to build a massive jump. We spent over three hours building, testing and improving the huge jump. Finally, the jump was finished and I was the first one of us to test the final result of our hard work. I ran as fast as you could in snow gear and soon was on the top of the hill. While positioning myself on the sled, someone shoved me from behind and the sled started to pick up speed. I hit the jump and got a minimum of two feet of air underneath me. As soon as the sled collided with the ground I wiped out. My face made full-force contact with the snow and my head dug a fifteen-foot long trench on the hill. Everyone came down the hill to help me up. We went inside and had hot chocolate by the fireplace after sledding. I will never forget this funny memory and hope to do it this year.



Christmas Morning

By Decker Priebe

Level 6 - Brookfield Academy

My eyes flash open. It's Christmas! I sprint down the steps accompanied by my younger brother, Everett, to wake our parents. They take around 15 minutes to completely wake up and climb out of bed. While waiting for them, Everett and I wake up our three other brothers, and we all take turns to open our presents. Once we finish, my mom turns on *The Polar Express* while us kids play with our gifts. We finish the movie, and my four brothers and I play outside for an hour or two. We wrestle, build snowmen and forts, throw snowballs, and try to catch up to our dogs with all of our snow gear on. My mom steps outside and yells, "The football game is on!" We all make our way to the house, not hesitating to pelt our brothers with snowballs when they aren't looking. We change into dry clothes and snuggle up under warm, cozy blankets to watch the fun, enjoyable football game. The game finishes and we all mess around with our entertaining presents and eat our delicious candy for the rest of the day. This is my favorite holiday because it encourages people to come together and continue their traditions.

The Christmas Star

By Hebel Ayalew

6th grade - Brookfield Academy

I can't look at the sky without living it all over again.

The serene landscape of the night washes away until I'm back in the hospital again. The beep of the heart monitor is back too.

Everything is back. And I can't stop it. But I'm not running from it. Not now.

This day five years ago I lost everything. Or my mother at least. And it's Christmas.

My mother told me that in the Christmas star everyone you've ever lost was waiting for you. Ever since...since she left, it hurt too much to look at it. She used to take me to look at it every Christmas.

I lifted my eyes up to where the star was, all those years ago. I brace myself for pain unlike any other.

But it never comes. No pain or sadness. Nothing. Until a light comes from the darkness. Until I know I'm at peace.

"I miss you, mother," I whispered, needing to say the words. But they don't hurt anymore. No, they don't hurt because I know she's watching me.

Yes, I know by the light of the Christmas star.

News Briefs

Elmbrook School District Announces Lego League Season Successes

(ELM GROVE / BROOKFIELD) - 32 Burtleigh Elementary School students participated in the 4th annual Elmbrook First Lego League Explore Festival at Pilgrim Park Middle School on November 12. Each of the 6 teams was tasked to learn WeDO or Spike Robotics and integrate those learnings into an ocean exploration scene.

Elmbrook First Lego League Challenge teams #60302 Technobots, #60095 Power Voltage, #55696 Team Alpha Geek, #60861 Parallel Gravity and #53650 Lightning Bolts competed in the early November set of Wisconsin Regionals.

Team Alpha Geek 55696 won the 1st place Champions Award and placed 1st in the robot game at the Franklin Regional. This team created the Kelper Helper Buoy to help monitor and restore coral reefs affected by ocean acidification. Learn more about how ocean acidification negatively affects

ocean explorers and the team's solution to this problem on their website (<https://sites.google.com/elmbrookstudents.org/team-alpha-geek>)

Team Lighting Bolts 53650 won the 1st place Core Values Award at the Madison Regional. This team developed «Smart Buoy», designed to harness energy from various sources like wind, wave, and solar. This ensures that the buoy has enough power stored for continuous operation throughout the year.

Team Technobots 60302 won the 1st place Core Values Award in the Mukwonago Regional. This team designed an Autonomous Boat and an ROV which will be used for data collection underwater. This data will be sent to Marine Biologists studying these Coral Reefs real time for their study on preservation of Coral Reefs.

WADA Distinguished Service Award Winner Named

(BROOKFIELD) - Brookfield East's Athletics Manager, **Cheryl Waffenschmidt**, recently received the Gregory A. Smith Distinguished Service Award for District 7 from the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association. Cheryl has served the student-athletes and coaches of Brookfield East and Elmbrook for nearly 20 years, including coordinating all matters of athletics such as transportation, athletic registrations, creating schedules, paying officials, reserving facilities, and more. "Cheryl has had a tremendous impact on Brookfield East over her many years of service," reflected **Ben Westphal**, Brookfield East's Associate Principal for Athletics and Activities. "She has served many students, teachers, coaches, advisors, administrators, parents and the community. Cheryl's above-and-beyond efforts even extend to transportation, where she secured her license to drive a bus for teams in need. Simply put, Cheryl has dedicated her time and energies to create a culture of student-athlete excellence."

Green is Good!

How to Recycle Amazon Packaging

By the Elm Grove Green Team

It's the holiday season, when festive lights glow, neighbors say hello, and Amazon trucks abound around town. Amazon delivered nearly 6 billion packages in the U.S. in 2023. Spread evenly over a year, that's 16.4 million packages delivered per day—but we know it skews higher during the holidays.

If you want to reduce the amount of packaging coming to you this season, we have a few ideas. First, order less. Buying locally, giving experiences rather than material gifts, and e-gift cards are good alternatives. When ordering from Amazon, choose "ships in own container" when it's offered. And, if you're a Prime member, use the "Amazon Day" delivery option to have all of your eligible orders arrive together.

Here are some tips for recycling holiday packaging in our blue bins:

- **YES:** Cardboard boxes, padded paper mailers, and brown packing paper can be recycled in our blue bins. Be sure to flatten the boxes and remove the tape.
- **NO, BUT:** Take plastic bags, air pillows, and bubble-lined plastic bags to places where plastic bags and film are recycled, like Kohl's, Sendik's and Pick 'n Save.
- **NO:** Bubble-wrap and bubble-wrap lined paper mailers can't be recycled. They go into the waste stream.

Visit Amazon's Second Chance website at <https://sustainability.aboutamazon.com/recycle-your-amazon-packaging> for a quick packaging recycling guide with pictures.

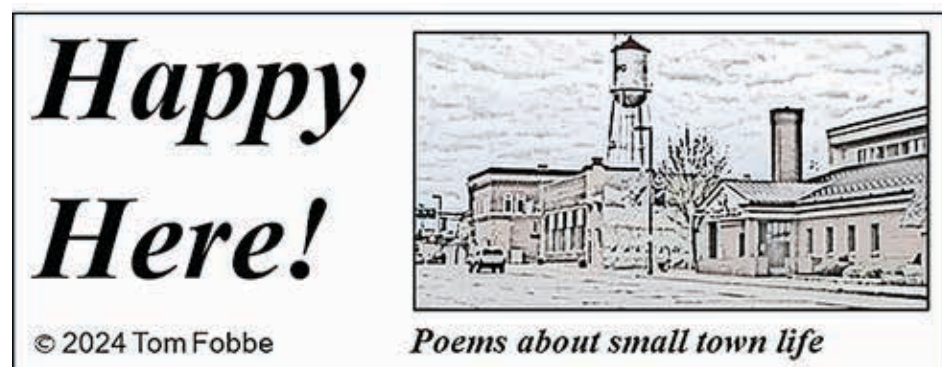
Happy holidays!

Celebrating December's Waste Warriors

Each month we recognize neighbors doing an exceptional job of recycling. Our amazing JOHNS trash pickup team of **Aaron, Greg, José and Nathan** were impressed by the recycling-to-trash ratio and cleanliness of recycling items at 2005 124th Street, 14425 Thomas Jefferson Court, and 585 Rosedale Drive. Keep up the good work!

SAVE THE DATE:

April 26, 2025 - 2nd Annual Elm Grove Recycling Day. Watch for info. to come!



Happy Here!

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Poems about small town life

*Thirteen years, from K through 12,
Same kids together grow.
Along the way, and still today,
Not one that you don't know.*

Public Safety Reports

From the files of the Elm Grove Police, Fire, and Emergency Services Depts.

EGPD Acquires New E-Bike

"We're so thankful for a \$3,000 grant from **Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation!** The grant was used to purchase a 20" Element Step Thru Police Edition E-Bike, helping us keep the Village of Elm Grove safer than ever.

A huge thank you to the generosity of the Foundation, our local Firehouse Subs restaurant, and the generous donors who made this grant possible."

-- EGPD



Photo courtesy: EGPD

Take Control. Stay Safe. Don't Be Scammed!

We Energies is partnering with police and sheriff's departments across the state to share the warning signs of utility scams on social media. The goal is to flood newsfeeds with this important information — and keep anyone else from falling victim.

Pay attention to these red flags. Scammers are relentless.

They may:

- * Pretend to be from We Energies by spoofing caller ID to display "We Energies" or using a recording that sounds authentic.
- * Threaten to turn off your energy in a short amount of time.
- * Demand immediate payment — often with a prepaid debit card, third-party digital payment app like Zelle or Venmo, or an unusual payment method such as cryptocurrency.
- * Buy sponsored posts on search engines with We Energies' name. Be careful — scammers use these to get you to call a fake phone number and share sensitive information with them.

If you think a scammer is targeting you, hang up! It's not rude; it's safe.

When in doubt, hang up and call 800-242-9137.

<https://www.we-energies.com/scam-warnings>



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* Additional contribution = \$ _____

A check for a total of \$ _____ is enclosed.

BLOOD DRIVE

Neighbors Need Neighbors

**Wednesday
January**

1

**8:00AM -
1:00PM**

Helpful tip:
Make sure to eat a
healthy meal and
drink plenty of
water before
donating.



**ELM GROVE JUNIOR GUILD
NEW YEAR'S DAY BLOOD DRIVE**

Elm Grove Village Hall
13600 Juneau Blvd

Schedule your appointment today!



Scan code or visit
elmgrovejuniorguild.org/blood-drives

QUESTIONS? Contact Hillarey Knabel at
blood.drive@elmgrovejuniorguild.org or
402-216-3188



WINTER

WORD SEARCH

M	I	X	P	B	E	D	Z	Q	T	D	D	W	M	R	Z	R	L	T	F
S	N	V	O	L	X	K	N	E	V	N	E	Q	T	N	S	P	E	N	
N	K	O	C	M	E	L	T	K	Z	B	O	N	C	F	Y	Q	B	K	S
P	T	I	J	V	L	G	A	U	P	M	K	U	N	E	C	V	G	N	W
S	C	D	I	N	B	L	I	Z	Z	A	R	D	E	B	M	P	H	A	I
I	X	Q	P	N	F	P	G	U	S	Q	A	Q	A	R	B	B	O	L	N
T	U	V	L	W	G	L	R	I	J	L	M	X	U	U	S	O	E	B	T
E	Q	F	O	L	Z	L	E	D	W	A	E	V	F	A	S	M	W	R	E
G	C	N	M	X	A	U	H	F	D	U	F	D	T	R	X	R	I	S	R
M	S	A	A	S	H	B	O	B	Z	M	H	F	H	Y	W	H	T	E	S
F	U	X	L	S	N	O	W	I	N	G	T	O	V	C	J	G	W	T	W
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R	N	W	E	V	E	Y	R	L	N	C	L	I	Z	P	X	V	K	A	
E	I	O	Y	V	R	R	O	A	O	S	L	N	E	Z	O	R	F	S	T
T	C	U	W	A	O	C	I	C	C	L	P	G	Q	A	Z	A	P	E	E
A	E	O	U	M	O	L	O	F	Y	S	T	X	I	D	N	G	U	C	R
E	T	N	C	N	A	A	G	G	A	V	A	F	Z	N	D	W	E	I	P
H	A	L	O	P	F	N	C	F	E	W	O	O	J	W	N	J	A	G	U
J	L	E	P	M	O	Q	G	V	Z	F	C	E	E	T	S	S	X	X	S
Y	R	E	P	P	I	L	S	T	S	O	R	F	M	K	C	B	P	S	M

- BLANKET
- BLIZZARD
- BOOTS
- CHILLY
- COAT
- COLD
- DECEMBER
- FEBRUARY
- FIREPLACE
- FROST
- FROZEN
- GLOVES
- HEATER
- HOT COCOA
- ICE
- ICE SKATES
- ICICLE
- JANUARY
- MELT
- SCARF
- SHOVEL
- SKIING
- SLED
- SLIPPERY
- SNOWING
- SNOW BALL
- SNOWFLAKE
- SNOWMAN
- SWEATER
- WINTER

