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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2022

TWO SECTIONS

\$1.50

Judge dismisses Helfert case

Prosecutor plans to refile in the future

By ANN MEYER
EagleHerald Staff Writer
ameyer@eagleherald.com

MENOMINEE—Former Menominee County Sheriff's deputy Brian Helfert received a reprieve Friday from a "John Doe" trial scheduled for this week after a judge dismissed without prejudice the counts, including first-degree criminal sexual conduct, against him, but he faces new felony charges involving several other alleged victims, and the Menominee County prosecutor said he planned to refile the John Doe. See HELFERT, A3



EagleHerald/Dan Kitkowski

Cleaning for a cause

Peshtigo Police Lt. Jared Phillips cleans a windshield after filling a car with gas for a customer at the Krist service station Sunday on Maple Street in Peshtigo. Law enforcement officers pumped gas for customers at three gas stations in Peshtigo—Peshtigo Shell and The Store were the other two—as part of the Pumping for a Purpose fund-raising event. The officers gave customers a "full-service" experience. Proceeds go to two area families struggling with childhood cancer. The patients are Kody Klimek, 18, and Vega Ellis, 2. See another photo inside.

Supervisors speak highly of Mans

County board veteran died early this month

By DAN KITKOWSKI
EagleHerald Editor
dkitkowski@eagleherald.com



Mans

MARINETTE—The Marinette County Board lost "a real good guy" earlier this month when supervisor Allen Mans died on Feb. 1.

Mans, 82, represented District 30 (Ward 8 in the City of Marinette) since 2004. The post will remain vacant until after the April 5 election. The new board is seated on April 19. Mans had filed to run for re-election. Denise Oleszak is on the ballot for that seat.

Supervisor Ted Sauve, who has been on the board for about 50 years and is not seeking re-election, talked about Mans.

"I encouraged Al to run for the county board many years ago because that was one of my districts," Sauve said following the meeting. He explained that reapportionment came about and that opened the door for Mans to get on the board.

"I think he was a real good credit to the county board," Sauve continued. "Over the (relative) short period of time he was on the county board he expressed his

knowledge and so forth to become a committee chairman. I think it's a great thing that Al was on the county board and contributed. I think he represented the county board and his constituents very, very well."

Board chairman John Guarisco said he sat next to Mans his first six years on the board. "I had the opportunity to discuss things not everybody gets to talk about," he said. "He was such a good guy. He would ask my opinion; he would tell me his opinion. We didn't always vote the same of course. He had his views, I had mine."

Guarisco described Mans as soft-spoken, but not meek. "He was soft spoken, but when the occasion came up that he thought he had to say something to get a point across or let his beliefs be known, he wasn't timid about it," he said. "He was a real good guy. I really liked Al."

Supervisor Ken Keller agreed. "I don't think he would look for arguments, but he would take his stand. It's always a loss when you lose someone that's been

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"First and foremost, he was a gentleman, a real gentleman—a kind person."

Supervisor Don Pazynski
Marinette County Board

around that long."

County Administrator John Lefebvre said Mans always listened to agenda topics and gave everybody a fair shake. "Al was a great supervisor and a very good friend," he added. "He was kind and easy going."

Supervisor Don Pazynski echoed that thought. "First and foremost, he was a gentleman, a real gentleman—a kind person," he said of Mans.

"He always had time for any question that you could present to him," Pazynski continued. "He was knowledgeable. It was a pleasure to deal with him. We're going to miss him."

Peshtigo students tour flooring company

Special to the EagleHerald

PESHTIGO—Peshtigo High School students recently toured the Aacer Flooring facility to learn more about job opportunities. Teachers Tammy Lesandrini, Janet Terp and Scott Skarda took high school students on a tour of the 350,000 square foot facility led by Peshtigo graduate Aaron Olson.

Lesandrini said, "Aacer taught students about the work environment, the tasks of the employees and potential for employment opportunities." She added that it's important for teachers to help students "learn more about different jobs within our community."

Currently, Aacer Flooring—a locally owned company—employs 140 people who work together to produce high quality northern wood flooring.

Aacer general manager Ray Webb also donated seven pallets of flooring valued between \$10,000 to \$15,000 to the Peshtigo Schools. Technology education teacher Beth Roque and cross-curriculum teacher Kay Sodini are working to develop projects for students to create.

"Now I've got to come up with more projects for students," said Sodini, who

See STUDENTS, A2

Good morning, Mark Aubry!
Thank you for subscribing to the EagleHerald



6 67288 18092 5

DEATHS

Bancroft, Ilah
Boivin, Gerald T.
Dezie-Exferd, Christine A.
Erickson, Duane R.
Geerlings, Lee L.
Kartheiser, Frank N.
Uecke, Norma M.

INSIDE

World: Queen Elizabeth tests positive for COVID but has mild symptoms. **B8**

Sports: Maroons clinch GNC title. **B1**



TODAY: Partly cloudy with light flurries possible.
HIGH: 20 **LOW:** 3

TODAY'S INDEX

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EagleHerald/Dan Kitkowski

Fill 'er up

Oconto County Sheriff's deputy Brandon Miller pumps gas for a customer at the Krist service station Sunday on Maple Street in Peshtigo. Law enforcement officers pumped gas for customers at three gas stations in Peshtigo—Peshtigo Shell and The Store were the other two—as part of the Pumping for a Purpose fund-raising event. The officers gave customers a “full-service” experience. Proceeds go to two area families struggling with childhood cancer. The patients are Kody Klimek, 18, and Vega Ellis, 2.

FROM A1



Special to the EagleHerald

Peshtigo students tour Aacer Flooring led by Peshtigo graduate Aaron Olsen.

STUDENTS:

works with teachers at all grade levels.

Rocque said she is excited about the community support from Aacer which will free up money to help with other STEM projects.

“We can focus on buying more other supplies and tools with money previously used for lumber.

Essentially, this donation provides lumber for my biggest woodworking class,” she said.

Webb, along with Laura Thomson and Kate Oehler, love what they do. Aacer has openings in all production departments and positions range from line specialist to line operator.

Editor's Note: This article was submitted by the Peshtigo School District.

NATION

Beekeepers using trackers to protect precious hives

By DAISY NGUYEN

Associated Press

WOODLAND, Calif.—For a few frenzied weeks, beekeepers from around the United States truck billions of honeybees to California to rent them to almond growers who need the insects to pollinate the state's most valuable crop.

But as almond trees start to bloom, blanketing entire valleys in white and pink flowers, so begin beehive thefts that have become so prevalent that beekeepers are now turning to GPS

tracking devices, surveillance cameras and other anti-theft technology to protect their precious colonies.

Hive thefts have been reported elsewhere in the country, most recently three hives containing about 60,000 bees taken from a grocery chain's garden in central Pennsylvania. They happen at a larger scale and uniquely in California this time of year because bees are most in demand during the largest pollination event in the world.

In the past few weeks, 1,036 beehives worth hundreds of thousands of dollars were reported stolen from orchards statewide, authorities said. The largest heist involved 384 beehives that were taken from a field in Mendocino County, prompting the state beekeepers association to offer a \$10,000 reward for information leading to their recovery.

“It's hard to articulate how it feels to care for your hives all year only to have them stolen from you,” Claire Tauzer wrote

on Facebook to spread the word about the reward. A day later, an anonymous tipster led authorities to recover most of the boxes and a forklift stolen from Tauzer's family business some 55 miles (88 kilometers) away, at a rural property in Yolo County. One suspect was arrested.

Investigators also found frames, the kinds used to hold the honeycomb, belonging to Helio Medina, another beekeeper who lost 282 hives a year ago.

Medina said the theft devastated his apiary, so

this year he placed GPS trackers inside the boxes. He also strapped cable locks around them and installed cameras nearby. As the almond bloom approached and the hives became most valuable, he drove around patrolling the orchards in the dark.

“We have to do what we can to protect ourselves. Nobody can help us,” Medina said.

Theft usually happens at night, when no one is in the orchard and the bees are back in their hives. The rustler is usually a

beekeeper or someone familiar with the transportation of bees.

“More often than not, they steal to make money and leave the bees to die,” said Rowdy Jay Freeman, a Butte County sheriff's detective who has been keeping track of hive thefts since 2013.

A tightening supply of bees and soaring pollination fees—jumping from less than \$50 to rent a hive two decades ago to as much as \$230 per hive this year—are likely motivating beekeepers to go rogue.

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PRINTED WITH
SOY INK

Vol. 158, No. 23
Wednesday, February 23, 2022
USPS 012-581



PRINTED ON
RECYCLED
PAPER

EagleHerald Copyright © 2022 by EagleHerald Publishing is published three times per week (Monday/Wednesday/Friday, unless altered because of postal holidays) by EagleHerald Publishing.

1809 Dunlap Avenue, Marinette, WI.

Periodicals postage paid at Marinette, WI 54143. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to EagleHerald, PO Box 77, Marinette, WI 54143.

Subscription rates: By mail, per 4 weeks, \$19.70. Call 715-735-6611 to subscribe. Certain editions of the EagleHerald will be considered premium day editions and incur additional charges. These additional charges will change the paid-through date of your subscription.

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