

New defendant named in PFAS lawsuit

BY HEATHER SCHAEFER
EDITOR

A new defendant has been added to a federal lawsuit brought by a group of Town of Stella property owners who have alleged the long-standing practice of spreading sludge/fibercake from the Rhinelander paper mill on local farmlands caused their properties to become contaminated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).

On April 14, the 48 named plaintiffs in the putative class action lawsuit filed a fourth amended complaint adding the chemical company BASF as a defendant. The move comes nearly two years after their original complaint, listing Ahlstrom Munksjo, Wausau Paper, and the chemical giant 3M as defendants, was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin.

Ahlstrom is the current owner of the Rhinelander mill, having purchased it from Wausau Paper in 2018.

“At the Rhinelander facility, Ahlstrom and its predecessors used PFAS products manufactured by 3M and BASF,” the newly amended complaint alleges. “Ahlstrom then improperly disposed of PFAS-containing waste by spreading tons of this waste on farms in the Rhinelander area.”

Ahlstrom, Wausau Paper and their predecessors “knew or should have known about the inherent risks and dangers involved in applying PFAS-containing waste on farmlands, and at all relevant times, defendants 3M and BASF knew or should have known about the inherent risks and dangers involved in the use of PFAS compounds in products sold to other companies, like Ahlstrom and Wausau Paper — including that both PFOA and PFOS are mobile in water, not easily biodegradable, highly persistent in the environment, and present significant and unreasonable risks to both human health and the environment,” the complaint states.

Nevertheless, the complaint alleges, the defendants “made a conscious choice to manufacture, market, sell, and dispose of PFAS products and waste in a way that caused harm to Plaintiffs.”

PFAS are a group of man-made, fluorinated chemicals

See **LAWSUIT** page 5

Police pursuit ends in rollover crash

FOR STAR JOURNAL

A male suspect was injured Thursday evening following a police pursuit from Vilas to Oneida County.

According to the Vilas County sheriff's office, at approximately 5 p.m. Thursday, deputies responded to a welfare check in the Township of Lincoln.

“Upon their arrival, they encountered an armed male sitting in a vehicle,” sheriff's officials said in a press release. “The subject became agitated and aggressive with deputies. The subject then fled the residence in the vehicle. An Eagle River police officer who was requested to help attempted to stop the vehicle from fleeing by using spike strips. Contact with the vehicle was lost immediately after deploying the spike strips due to the road conditions and limited visibility.”

By the time officers found the man, he had gained access to another, according to the release.

“Upon seeing deputies, the suspect fled in the stolen vehicle. A pursuit occurred where the suspect fled west on Highway 70 and then turned south on Highway 45. Oneida County sheriff's office and the Three Lakes Police Department were notified and assisted with the pursuit. The pursuit continued for more than 20 miles and eventually resulted in the crash/rollover of the suspect vehicle on Highway 17 in Oneida County,” the release states.

According to the release, the suspect continued to refuse to cooperate and various non-lethal measures were deployed before he was ultimately taken into custody.

The suspect, whose name was not immediately released, was transported to St Mary's Hospital in Rhinelander for treatment of injuries. He was later flown by helicopter to Aspirus Hospital in Wausau, the release states.

The incident remains under investigation by the Vilas and Oneida County sheriff's offices.

Three alderpersons participate in ethics workshop

BY HEATHER SCHAEFER
EDITOR

The turnout was much lower than expected as only three members of the Rhinelander Common Council, as well as two members of the city's administrative team, participated in a scheduled ethics workshop at City Hall April 21.

Amber Rehberg of the University of Wisconsin Extension led the 50-minute session which focused on “serving with integrity, honesty, accountability and fairness.”

The three alderpersons present — Tom Barnett, David Holt and Luke Kramer — were asked to consider their “core values” and then participate in a gallery walk where they moved from station to station answering questions and responding to prompts written on



City of Rhinelander alderpersons Luke Kramer and David Holt listen as Amber Rehberg of the UW-Extension discusses the group's responses to the gallery walk portion of the city council ethics workshop held at City Hall on Monday evening, April 21, 2025. City attorney Steve Sorenson, seen on the monitor, appeared via video. **Heather Schaefer**

See **ETHICS** page 2



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A chat with the city forester

City forester Tom Jerow speaks with attendees at the annual Earth Day Sustainability Fair at the Nicolet College Lakeside Center April 22. The college, the Nicolet Community Garden and other organizations hosted the event which included crafters, vendors, displays and hands-on demonstrations. Additionally, there were small group discussions covering topics ranging from energy saving and solar power ideas for homeowners. Local author Carol Dunbar completed the event with a discussion of the challenges and successes she and her family faced during their move to an off-grid northern Wisconsin homestead. **DAVE MELANCON**

Ahlstrom Rhinelander mill marks Earth Day with site clean-up day

FOR STAR JOURNAL

In celebration of Earth Day, employees from Ahlstrom’s Rhinelander Mill participated in a site clean-up initiative on April 22. Thirty-four employees from different departments throughout the Mill participated in collecting litter and debris from the mill properties spanning more than 65 acres, Ahlstrom officials said in a press release. The clean-up activities were conducted on the mill properties from 10 a.m. until noon and over 50 bags of trash were collected. Health, Safety, and Environmental manager Tom Emond was both an event organizer and participant. “Our site

clean-up efforts acknowledged Earth Day, reaffirmed our commitment to sustainability, and demonstrated the impact a small group can have in a few hours,” Emond said. Founded in 1970, Earth Day is globally recognized and acknowledges the importance of environmental conservation and sustainability. “We use our technology and capabilities to innovate products that help our customers shift to sustainable solutions,” Rhinelander plant manager Dan McGreaham said. “Our site clean-up was about more than picking up litter on Earth Day, it’s acknowledging that all actions, everyday - big and small - can lead to lasting impacts.”

Rhinelanders Community Foundation awards nearly \$50,000 to local organizations

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The Rhinelander Area Community Foundation (RCF) has announced the recipients of its 2025 Grant Awards. This year, a total of \$48,440 was awarded to 20 qualified local organizations that demonstrated an outstanding commitment to serving the Rhinelander community, RCF officials said in a press release. According to the release, grants were made possible through a combination of funding from the Rhinelander Community Endowment, Community Impact Fund, Non-Profit Support Fund, Rhinelander Cultural Arts Fund, Rhinelander Youth Project Fund, Ron and Elsie Gaber Grants for Greater Good and several donor-advised funds. The awards were presented at the Rhinelander Chamber of Commerce’s Business After 5 event, held on April 16 at the Rhinelander Country Club. “We’re excited to have delivered nearly \$50,000 in grants to 20 local organizations, knowing the impact this will have across our community,” said Gina Heck, president of the Rhinelander Community Foundation. “Each grant represents not just funding, but a commitment to building a stronger, more vibrant Rhinelander.” RCF grants are awarded based on criteria that ensure meaningful and sustainable impact. Eligible organizations must be a 501(c)(3), governmental unit, school, hospital, or religious institution. Applications are evaluated based on their alignment with RCF’s mission to enhance the quality of life in Rhinelander, the organization’s ability to serve a broad community need, collaborate with others, and demonstrate financial responsibility with a realistic plan for execution.

2025 RCF GRANT AWARD RECIPIENTS:

- \$2200 Headwaters Elevated Excursions Club
- \$1000 Hodag 4-Wheelers Trail work Made Easy
- \$1350 Junior Achievement K-12 Programming
- \$1500 Lets Go Fishing Poly Dock Purchase and Installation
- \$2000 Lights of the Northwoods
- \$1200 Master Gardeners of the North for Downtown Planting
- \$7500 NATH (Northwoods Alliance for Temporary Housing) New Bunks
- \$2000 Oneida County 4-H Leaders Association for Youth Summer Theater
- \$2000 Oneida County Fair Committee Fair Entertainment
- \$1000 Personal Essentials Pantry
- \$2340 Partners in Education (PIE) Career Experiences for RHS and JWMS Students
- \$5000 Rhinelander Area Food Pantry for Hodag Kids Expansion Project
- \$2500 Rhinelander Area Silent Sports Association (RASTA) Cassian Trail Boardwalk
- \$1500 Rhinelander Community Band Sound System and Honorariums
- \$2500 Rhinelander District Library Special Community Programming
- \$2500 Rhinelander Police Department Thermal Drone
- \$2500 Salvation Army of Rhinelander Emergency Assistance Program
- \$3850 School District of Rhinelander Culture Tap and Science Department
- \$2000 Saluting Heroes Balloon Rally
- \$2000 Hodag BMX Facility Improvements (with fundraising contingency)

The Rhinelander Community Foundation is dedicated to fostering charitable giving and, in partnership with its donors, enhancing the quality of life in the Rhinelander area—today and for future generations. To learn more, visit www.rhinelanderscommunityfoundation.com or follow RCF on Facebook and LinkedIn.

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ETHICS from page 1

large posters. Mayor Kris Hanus and city administrator Patrick Reagan also participated. At the meeting’s outset, committee chair Michael Miller indicated the independent ethics panel was advised that April 21 was chosen as the date for the workshop based on feedback from the alderpersons as to their availability. He did note that alderman Steven Jopek, who serves on the ethics committee, did advise that he had a potential conflict and was unsure if he would be able to attend. The Star Journal reached out to all of

the alderpersons who were not present to offer them an opportunity to explain why they did not attend. As of press time for this edition, alderpersons Carrie Mikalauski, Gerald Anderson and Leann Felton responded. Mikalauski advised that she was unable to attend due to illness while Anderson said he was occupied with household chores and simply forgot. He stressed that he’s supportive of the ethics committee’s work. Felton explained that she was out of town for the Easter holiday.

Through the gallery walk, the participants were asked to consider the Rhinelander community with respect to educational and occupational diversity, culture, religion, ethnic and racial makeup, and generational differences. During discussion, the participants noted that the Rhinelander community is exceptionally open and welcoming and the people are very willing to work together to help solve problems or assist those in need. Holt and Barnett, who both relocated to Rhinelander from other states, said they appreciate residents’ willingness to help others feel at home. Rhinelander has a “hometown feel, even if it’s not your hometown,” Barnett said.

“I think what really drew me to stay here is the fact that although I wasn’t born and raised here everyone has made me feel as if I’ve always been here,” he explained.

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Luke and Emma Roberts with their son, Hudson.
Submitted photo

HOSA Color Run to benefit Roberts family

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The Rhinelander High School chapter of HOSA (Health Occupation Students of America) will host its third annual color run on May 17. All proceeds from this year's event will benefit the family of Rhinelander High School teacher and coach Luke Roberts. In December, Roberts and his wife, Emma, welcomed a son, Hudson, who has been diagnosed with cystic fibrosis.

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a progressive, genetic disease that affects the lungs, digestive system, and other organs. It's caused by a gene mutation inherited by both parents, leading to thick, sticky mucus buildup that clogs airways and traps bacteria. This can cause lung infections and respiratory decline. It also impacts digestion by blocking enzymes needed to absorb nutrients, which may lead to malnutrition and poor growth if left untreated.

While treatments have improved, CF remains a lifelong challenge, requiring daily therapies, medications, and frequent medical care.

The RHS HOSA Color Run is focused less on speed and more on color fun, organizers said in a press release.

This event will start at Mike Webster stadium and racers will run throughout the surrounding area. This is a fun run where participants will be full of color by the end of the race. It is suggested that runners wear white so the color shows up.

Registration information:

If you sign up before May 1, the price is \$25 (includes T-shirt). After May 1, the price is \$35.

The cost for all RHS students to participate is \$15, which includes a T-shirt.

Children 13 and under cost \$15 (includes T-shirt).

1-mile fun run: Chase Doctor Hodag starts at 9 a.m.

5K run/walk: 10 a.m. (children only need to register for one even if they want to participate in both).

Route information:

Mile markers along the route- start at the Mike Webster Stadium.

Water/aid stations are available along the route.

Chip-timing: Top overall male and female finishers (1-3) will receive a wooden plaque made by RHS Hodag Fab Lab.

Age groups: 13 and under, 14-19, 15 year increments, (50+)

Bring money for the chance to win a raffle basket. Drawings will take place during the 10 a.m. race. Refreshments and snacks will be provided after the race.

HOSA is a global student-led organization, whose mission is to promote career opportunities in the health industry and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people.

A&W restaurant returning to Lincoln Street

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The A&W restaurant chain is returning to the Hodag city.

A new All-American Eats A&W restaurant is scheduled to be built at 1120 Lincoln Street, the chain announced in an April 24 Facebook post.

"We're proud to once again join this beautiful historic community and share our tradition of over 100 years of amazing food and service," the post reads. "Our new facility will be built at 1120 Lincoln Street, at the old Wash Works building, and we couldn't do it without the help of KSW Construction and Peoples State Bank."

Longtime Rhinelander residents will remember an A&W Restaurant was previously located at 601 Lincoln St.

Nicolet students pitch business ideas at 'Shark Tank' style competition



The winners of the local business and product pitch contest at Nicolet College will advance to a regional competition against student teams from five other technical colleges. From left to right: Curt Drumm, competition organizer; Karina Slizewski, second place winner and Business Management student at Nicolet College; April Stine and Allysa Scheuermann, first place winners and Culinary Management students at Nicolet College. Submitted photo

FOR STAR JOURNAL

Earlier this month, two Nicolet College student teams took top honors at a local business and product pitch contest, similar to the ABC television show "Shark Tank." The teams will now advance to a regional competition against student teams from other Wisconsin technical colleges.

The NEW Ideas Pitch Challenge regional event will be held on Thursday, May 1 at 2 p.m. at the Nicolet College Theatre. The event is free and open to the public.

The local competition was recently held in Rhinelander as part of the NEW Ideas Pitch Contest being held in conjunction with five other Wisconsin technical colleges. The contest is an educational experience intended to help student entrepreneurs improve their skills organizing and presenting their business ideas, according to a Nicolet press release.

The first-place pitch at the local competition was

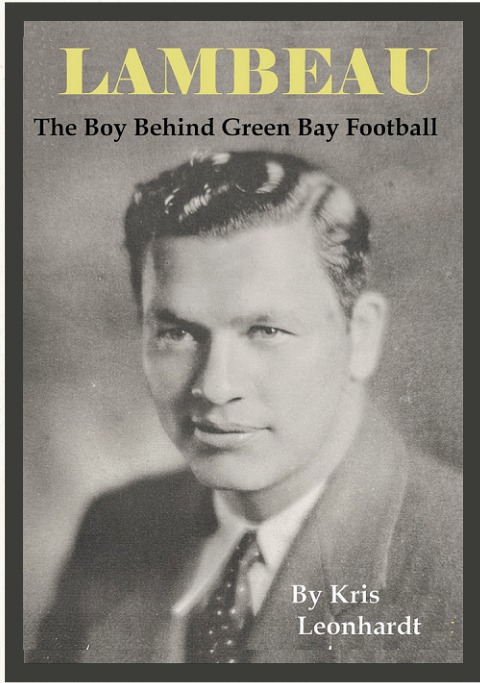
awarded to Allysa Scheuermann and April Stine, with their product idea of sippy cups and handles targeting senior adults. They won \$500 and will move on to the regional event. Both students are enrolled in the Nicolet College Associates of Applied Science Culinary Management program.

Taking second place was Karina Slizewski, with her idea for a flight simulator business to advance pilot training and education in northern Wisconsin. She won \$300 and will also advance to the next competition. Slizewski is enrolled in the Associates of Applied Science Business Management program.

In total, 12 student teams will compete for the winning honors and cash prizes. They will be competing against other competitors from Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, Fox Valley Technical College, Moraine Park Technical College, Lakeshore College and Mid-State Technical College.

The regional contest is sponsored by Nicolet College, the Nicolet College Foundation and Kwik Trip.

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The story of the beginning of the Green Bay Packers and the life of Earl Louis "Curly" Lambeau are so intertwined that it is hard to imagine one without the other.

From the streets of Green Bay, Lambeau developed a passion for football and grew that yearning into a football team that would exist long past his lifetime.

Like the Packers, Lambeau's story is a tale of adversity and challenge, but also a story of triumph and perseverance. While his personal life and professional career were wrought with challenge, his legacy continues to resonate in the Green Bay community, including a massive structure along Lombardi Avenue that shines a light on his contribution to the professional team.

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Rhinelanders High School to host Senior Signing Day

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The atmosphere inside the Jim Miazga Community Gymnasium is expected to be electric on the morning of Thursday, May 1 as the School District of Rhinelanders hosts its Senior Signing Day — a celebration of the post-graduation plans of the Rhinelanders High School Class of 2025.

Beginning at 8:30 a.m., the event will shine a spotlight on seniors as they publicly announce their next steps in life, which include a diverse range of pathways such as attending four-year universities, enrolling in technical colleges, joining the military, or entering the workforce directly, district officials said in a press release.

Serving as Master of Ceremonies will be Aaron Kraemer, who will lead the audience through a morning full of pride, purpose, and celebration. The event has been organized by Lexi Allen, the district’s College and Career Counselor, whose mission is to support all students in identifying and pursuing their postsecondary goals.

“We’re so proud of the Class of 2025,” said Allen. “This day is all about recognizing every student’s path and showing them that their hard work and dreams matter — whether they’re headed to college, the military, or straight into a career.”

Representatives from eight colleges will be in attendance, along with members of the U.S. Army, Air National Guard, and U.S. Air Force, to support and celebrate the commitments made by students. The community and families are warmly invited to attend this milestone event. Following the Senior Signing Day ceremony, a College Fair for underclassmen will be held in the gymnasium, offering younger students an opportunity to connect with college representatives and explore future options. This celebration is a great tradition for Rhinelanders High School, honoring all postsecondary choices and highlighting the importance of supporting every student’s unique journey, the release states.

For more information, contact Allen at Rhinelanders High School at allenale@rhinelanders.k12.wi.us or (715) 365-9500.



Work in progress

Workers from Arizon, manufacturer of the Hodag Dome, were on scene Thursday, April 24, 2025 working to repair damage the facility sustained after a backup generator failed during an ice storm on March 30. School District of Rhinelanders officials hope to have the Hodag Dome restored and ready for use by late May.

Bob Mainhardt photo

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April 30, Rhinelanders Area Food Pantry: 4-6 p.m., distribution. Donation drop-off hours, 8 a.m.-noon, Mondays through Fridays. 627 Coon St. Rhinelandersareafoodpantry.org.

April 30, Line Dancing: 6-8 p.m., The Haven, Rhinelanders. Every Wednesday. For more information, call Diane at 715-282-5226.

April 30, The Table-Free Community Meal: 4-6:30 p.m., St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church, 39 S. Pelham St., Rhinelanders. Doors open at 4 p.m. Serving takes place at 5:30 p.m. 715-420-0066.

May 1, Builders’ Club: 1-5 p.m., Rhinelanders District Library. Legos, Magna-Tiles, and more available in the children’s department. 715-365-1070 or rhinelanderslibrary.org.

May 1, Thursday Night Trivia: 7-10 p.m., Backwaters Bar and Grill, Rhinelanders. Join teams of up to six to compete in a live hosted trivia game of 50 questions. Weekly on Thursdays through May 15. 715-369-5645.

May 2, Denim and Diamonds Fundraiser: 5-9 p.m. The Pines

Event Center. An annual fundraising event presented by the YMCA Board of Directors to include heavy hors d’oeuvres, cash bar, dancing, 50/50 raffle, raffle baskets, and auctions, all with a theme of Denim & Diamonds. All proceeds from the event will benefit the YMCA of the Northwoods Annual Support Campaign.

May 3, Rhinelanders Area Food Pantry: 9-11:30 a.m., distribution. Donation drop-off hours, 8 a.m.-noon, Mondays through Fridays. 627 Coon St. Rhinelandersareafoodpantry.org.

May 3, Indoor Farmers Market: Saturdays, 9 a.m.-noon, throughout the fall and winter at the YMCA of the Northwoods, 2003 E. Winnebago St., Rhinelanders. 715-362-9622 x 118.

April 26, Rhinelanders Area Food Pantry 20th Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser: 11:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. Pines Event Center (5840 Forest Lane). Tickets are \$20 each. (715)369-7237

May 3, Northwoods Cross Stitchers: 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Grace Foursquare Church basement,

4360 Highway 17 N. Open to all cross stitchers; please bring supplies and projects to work on. 715-369-4779.

May 3, Mother’s Day Vendors Market: 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. The Hilgermann Center for Community 25 Brown St, Rhinelanders. A pop-up market featuring vendors and artists selling a wide variety of beautiful gifts for Mother’s Day.

May 3, Derby Party: 12-9 p.m. Rondele Ranch (8958 County K). A day of Kentucky Derby-themed fun. Cheer on your favorite horse and rider team! Prizes for best hat, derby attire; hobby horse racing and other activities. Food and drinks available. Free admission.

May 4, Community Open Swim: 9 a.m.-noon, Sundays through May 19, Heck Family Community Pool, Rhinelanders High School. Visit the community section at rhinelanders.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelanders.k12.wi.us.

May 5, Overeaters Anonymous: 1 p.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, 235 N. Stevens St., Rhinelanders. 715-362-4258.

May 5, Bridge Games: noon, American Legion Hall, 121 W. Front St., Minocqua. \$4. Call Lee at 715-356-4243.

May 5, Rhinelanders Area Food Pantry: 3-5 p.m., distribution. Donation drop-off hours, 8 a.m.-noon, Mondays through Fridays. 627 Coon St. Rhinelandersareafoodpantry.org.

May 5, Tiny Tot Time: 10 a.m., Rhinelanders District Library. Caregivers can connect with each other and their little ones as they play and learn. 715-365-1070 or rhinelanderslibrary.org.

May 6, Preschool Storytime: 10 a.m., Rhinelanders District Library, 106 N. Stevens St., Stories, flannels, songs and fun for ages 2 and up. 715-365-1070 or rhinelanderslibrary.org.

May 6, Teen Art Experience: 4-5:30 p.m. at ArtStart. Youth ages 13+ are invited for open studio time with local artists. Participants can expect a casual art making experience with a wide variety of materials and projects to explore. Registration required. 715-362-4328.

May 7, Coffee and Company:

8-10 a.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, Rhinelanders. A free community breakfast.

May 7, Rhinelanders Area Food Pantry: 9-11:30 a.m., distribution. Donation drop-off hours, 8 a.m.-noon, Mondays through Fridays. 627 Coon St. Rhinelandersareafoodpantry.org.

May 7, Line Dancing: 6-8 p.m., The Haven, Rhinelanders. Every Wednesday. For more information, call Diane at 715-282-5226.

May 7, Watercolor Color Painting, Solitude: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Rhinelanders High School, room 134 (art room). Registration deadline: May 5. Visit the community section at rhinelanders.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelanders.k12.wi.us.

May 14, Acrylic Painting, Sunny Day: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Rhinelanders High School, room 134 (art room). Registration deadline: May 12. Visit the community section at rhinelanders.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelanders.k12.wi.us.

DEATH NOTICES

Vernon Edgar Storm, 94, of Rhinelanders, died on April 19, 2025. Carlson Funeral Home.

Mike Drivas, 72, of Rhinelanders, died on April 14, 2025. Carlson Funeral Home

Julie Jean Braeger, age 59, of Rhinelanders, died on April 20, 2025. Carlson Funeral Home

Joyce Ann COUNTER, age 92, of Rhinelanders, died on April 23, 2025. Carlson Funeral Home

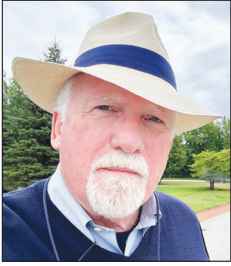
Daniel Jay Fritz, Sr., 63, of Rhinelanders, died on April 19, 2025. Carlson Funeral Home

PUBLISHER LETTER

The Human Condition And Its Many Variations

Dear Reader,

Remember the song “Just Dropped In (to see what condition my condition was in)” by Kenny Rogers and the First Edition? In today’s world, rare indeed is the person who enjoys what we might call perfect health. It seems that nearly everyone is managing some condition, whether it’s asthma, high blood pressure, cholesterol issues, diabetes, heart disease or one of countless other ailments. The human condition itself appears fraught with conditions, ranging from the mild to the severe.



We try our best—eating well, exercising, following doctors’ orders—but even with all our efforts, good health isn’t guaranteed. It can be elusive, slipping through our fingers no matter how tightly we try to hold on. And so, we adapt. We manage. We roll with the flow, accepting that our bodies, like our lives, are imperfect.

Perhaps it’s this imperfection that makes the human experience all the more poignant. Life is never entirely smooth, nor is health, but we endure and continue on, adjusting as we go. In a way, the conditions we face are just part of the larger condition we all share: being human.

PATRICK J. WOOD
Publisher

Author of “Reflections” a new book now available on Amazon.

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24 West Rives St. • Rhinelanders, WI 54501
866-369-3331 • www.starjournalnow.com

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LAWSUIT from page 1

manufactured and used since the 1940s. Because they are designed to be stable and unreactive to water, grease, heat, and other elements, they are often referred to as “forever” compounds. Studies have shown a link between human exposure to PFAS and adverse health effects and some of the Stella plaintiffs allege they have experienced health issues they attribute to PFAS contamination.

“PFAS concentrations in plaintiffs’ private wells and nearby lakes are among the highest in the country and have been found at levels that are thousands of times greater than EPA health limits,” the amended complaint notes.

The plaintiffs filed their original complaint August 2023, several months after a DNR-conducted statewide study revealed the dangerously high levels of PFAS in some private wells in the eastern Oneida County township.

All of the defendants have mounted vigorous responses to the allegations, including BASF.

“BASF is aware that it has been sued in a putative class action pending in the Western District of Wisconsin involving the alleged use of PFAS-containing products at a paper mill,” company officials said in a statement to the Star Journal. “BASF does not believe the allegations have merit, and it intends to defend the case vigorously. BASF regards protection of health, safety, and the environment as an important responsibility and is dedicated to operating its facilities in a safe and

environmentally responsible fashion. As always, the company is committed to coordinating with federal, state, and local regulators concerning PFAS substances, potential remediation measures, and the continued development of appropriate and scientifically sound regulations and public communications.”

For its part, Alstrom has insisted that it has not used PFOA or PFOS in its manufacturing process since purchasing the mill seven years ago.

“The Rhinelander Mill and its employees are important for Ahlstrom, producing some of the company’s most important products utilizing our proprietary FluoroFree® technology,” a company statement reads. “These products are an important part of Ahlstrom’s vision to be the preferred sustainable specialty materials company for all our stakeholders.”

The defendants have also argued that land-spreading is a common practice, regulated by the DNR, that does not meet the legal definition of a “hazardous activity” as is required for the plaintiff’s strict liability claim to prevail.

They have also signaled their opposition to the plaintiffs’ desire to have the lawsuit certified as a “class action” as it is their belief that none of the plaintiffs’ claims meet the “rigorous standards” for class certification.

Court records indicate Judge William M. Conley is not expected to rule on the question of class certification until late next year. The case is not scheduled for trial until March 2027.



RHS competes at FCCLA state

Family Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) students competed in the State Leadership Conference at the Wisconsin Dells Kalahari April 6-9. FCCLA is a national Career and Technical Student Organization for students in Family and Consumer Sciences education in public and private schools. Students used their talented presentation and demonstration skills to compete for state. This year Wisconsin had over 700 state competitors. Pictured are Rhinelander High School FCCLA members Kayla Oldenhoff, Madison Michel, Brooklyn Zivko, Margeaux Zohimsky, Lexi Skubal, Hailey Skubal, Pyper Zelechowski, Isabel Hartman, Sophia Pearson. submitted photo

ONEIDA COUNTY WARRANTS OF THE WEEK

The Oneida County Sheriff’s Office is asking for your assistance in locating these individuals. If you have seen or have information regarding their whereabouts, please contact the Oneida County Sheriff’s Office at 715-361-5100.



Brady A. Debroux, 32, m/w; Merrill; Fail to appear; BODY ONLY



Dakota Z. Vetter, 26, Wausau. Fail to appear. BODY ONLY



Lisa M. Olivas, 37, Phoenix, Ariz. Fail to appear. BODY ONLY



Kenneth R. Guerrero Jr., 39, Rhinelander. Fail to appear. BODY ONLY



William C. Chapman, 41, Lac Du Flambeau. Fail to appear. BODY ONLY

ONEIDA COUNTY COURT REPORT

APRIL 17-23

Alexander J. Schewe, 32, Rhinelander, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of THC, \$1000 signature bond, AIA May 19.
John David Schreindl, 53, Rhinelander, lewd/ lascivious behavior-exposure, \$2500 signature bond, AIA May 20.

Bryon Ernest Childers Jr., 42, Rhinelander, nine charges of bail jumping-misdemeanor, \$1000 signature bond, AIA May 6.

Vincento Escalno Perez Jr., 48, Pelican Lake, OWI (4th), resisting or obstructing an officer, \$2500 cash bond, AIA May 2.

Robert K. Faga, 60, Woodruff, OWI (5th or 6th), bail jumping-felony, \$500 cash bond, AIA May 5.

Jason D. Foley, 41, Rhinelander, child abuse-intentionally cause harm with domestic abuse modifier, criminal damage to property with domestic abuse modifier, two charges of resisting or obstructing an officer, two charges of bail jumping-misdemeanor, operating a firearm while intoxicated, \$2500 cash bond, AIA May 5.

Larry A. Felten, 63, Rhinelander, disorderly conduct/cause disturbance, guilty due to no contest plea.

Marjorie A. Meyers, 58, Woodruff, animal running at large-1st offense, guilty due to no contest plea.

Hope L. Shawano, 53, Rhinelander, failure to report to county jail (10+ days), guilty due to no contest plea, fines due.

Christopher Lee Hogan, 36, Baraboo, two charges bail jumping-felony with repeater modifiers, both charges dismissed on prosecutor’s motion, bail jumping-felony, bail jumping-felony with repeater modifier, both charges guilty due to no contest plea, 214 days jail

ABBREVIATION KEY:
DPA - Deferred Prosecution Agreement
DEJ - Deferred Entry of Judgment
WSP - Wisconsin State Prison
ES – Extended Supervision
PAC - Prohibited Alcohol Concen-

tration
IID - Ignition Interlock Device
DL – Driver’s license
AIA - Adjourned initial appearance
PTAC - Party to a crime

WHS/POP - Withhold sentence/ period of probation
DRI – Dismissed but read in
PTC – Pre-trial conference
PH – Preliminary Hearing

SUDOKU

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		4	6		7	3	8
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		3		1	5	7	4
	1				6	9	3
6				4			1

@MetroCreative

Level: Intermediate

Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

1	2	8	3	4	7	6	9	9
3	9	6	9	2	8	7	1	4
4	9	7	9	1	6	3	8	2
6	1	9	4	3	2	9	7	8
2	8	3	7	9	9	4	6	1
7	4	9	6	8	1	2	3	9
9	7	4	8	6	9	1	2	3
9	6	1	2	9	3	8	4	7
8	3	2	1	7	4	9	9	6

CLUES ACROSS

1. McCarthy acolyte Roy
5. Ancient Korean chiefdoms
10. Not soft
14. Jai __, sport
15. Philosophy
16. Do what you’re told
17. Gaffe
18. Widely known and esteemed
19. Amusement park attraction
20. Popular comic strip Viking
22. Usually has a lid
23. American sportscaster
24. Lung fibrosis
27. General’s assistant (abbr.)
30. Pouch
31. Upset
32. Partner to hem
35. Astronomy unit of distance
37. Witch
38. Gradually disappear
39. Regions
40. Possesses
41. Body parts
42. A way to comprehend
43. Defraud
44. Sandwich type
45. Expression of disappointment
46. Popular Dodge truck model
47. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
48. Soviet Socialist Republic
49. Songs to a beloved
52. Custom
55. Partner to cheese
56. West Indies trees
60. Member of a Semitic people
61. Plant that originated vegetatively
63. Squandered one’s money
64. Ethiopian river
65. Excessive fluid

- accumulation in tissues
66. Acquire by one’s efforts
67. Irish goddess
68. Hungarian village
69. Cereal grasses

CLUES DOWN

1. Currency
2. Ceramic jar
3. Reagan’s Secretary of State
4. God worshipped in Kanesh
5. One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
6. Semitic
7. About blood
8. Benign tumors
9. Move one’s head
10. Hours (Spanish)
11. Hebrew calendar month
12. Advise someone
13. Colors clothes
21. The sun does it
23. Concealed
25. City of Angels hoops team (abbr.)
26. Droop

27. Away from one another
28. Challenges
29. A harsh scraping sound
32. Attaches to a wall
33. Capital of Ethiopia: __ Ababa
34. German river
36. Disappointed
37. Star Wars character Solo
38. Supervises flying
40. Not mass-produced
41. Nonsense
43. Automobile
44. Hogshead (abbr.)
46. Soak in water
47. Flower cluster
49. Romanian city
50. A parent is often one
51. Fencing sword
52. Body part
53. Region
54. Farm building
57. Ali’s surname at birth
58. Waxy bird beak covering
59. Stiff bristles
61. VCR button
62. Small amount

S	E	A	H		D	E	H	E	O		N	V	D
N	H	V	E		V	W	E	D	E		I	E	N
M	E	T	B		L	E	W	V	H		B	V	V
V	O	O	V	A		O	V	W		L	I	B	H
				S	E	D	V	N	E	H	E	S	
H	S	S		O	H	H		W	V	H		K	S
E	I	G	V	O	H		N	O	O		D	V	E
S	D	N	V	H		S	V	H		S	V	E	H
E	D	V	F		G	V	H		O	E	S	H	V
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H	E	B	V	H		N	I	B		H	V	G	V
E	D	I	H		D	E	W	V	F		P	I	T
A	E	B	O		O	D	E	H	O		I	V	T
D	R	V	H		N	V	H	V	W		N	H	O

| CLASSIFIEDS |

General Employment7110

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General Employment7110

Employment Opportunity: Cashier Position at Stein's Liquor

Stein's Liquor is currently seeking a dependable individual to fill a full-time cashier position. Candidates must be eligible to obtain a local liquor license. The schedule includes 40 hours per week, with two evening shifts and every third Saturday required.

Compensation is negotiable based on experience.

Benefits include paid vacation and profit sharing upon successful completion of the probationary period.

To apply or inquire further, please contact Ben at (715) 369-1248 to schedule an interview.

General Employment7110

Full-time Office Assistant position. Must have high proficiency with computers, Excel, Word, Outlook. Duties include, but not limited to, answering phones, ticket order processing, filing, payroll, and accounts payable. Accounting software knowledge required; Sage BusinessWorks experience a plus. Vacation, sick and holiday pay. We would also be open to candidates interested in part-time employment. \$15-20/hour. Please submit resume with references through Indeed, via mail to Hodag Country Festival, P.O. Box 1184, Rhinelander, WI 54501, or drop off at 4270 River Road, Rhinelander.

Roofing and Siding7370

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Entertainment7035

Community Choral Performance: The performance will be on May 3, 2025 at the First Congregational Church, 135 Larch Street, Rhinelander at 2:00pm. The following choral groups will be the Northwoods Choraliers, Rhinelander Male Chorus and the Hymns and Hyrs. Each group will perform several selections for the listening pleasure for all who attend. No Charge - Free Will Donations are appreciated. Hope to see you there. Director/Bonnie Dawson, 715-362-2485. grandmabon6@yahoo.com

City Wide Rummage Sale7000

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Rummage Sales Upcoming7202

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Miscellaneous Sales7212

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Wanted to Buy7268

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Miscellaneous for Rent7442



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Foreclosures 7488

Oneida County owned Real Estate For Sale: A detailed list of the properties, bid form, and other information can be obtained from the County website at <http://www.oneidacountywi.gov> under 'Announcements click 'Real Property Sale Offerings', or contact Land Information Office, email lho@oneidacountywi.gov PH 715-369-6179. Bids due June 6th, 2025, 4PM. Parcel and minimum bid: MI-2392 \$375.00; PE-177-1A \$150,000; PL-659-3 \$101,500; RH-808-1 \$1,000.

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Find It in the CLASSIFIEDS

Hodag Highlights

HODAG SOCCER ENDS LAKELAND’S WINNING STREAK

The Lakeland Thunderbirds welcomed the Rhinelander High School girls soccer team to on Tuesday, April 22. It was a low-scoring affair but Rhinelander ended Lakeland’s 27-game winning streak with a 1-0 win.

Lindsey Hoerschler scored in the sixth minute of the game to give Rhinelander the victory. The Hodags controlled the ball for the majority of the game. Keeper Rylee Mickevicius recorded only two saves as the Hodags outshot the T-Birds 14-6 but with only 2 on net.

On April 24, the Hodags entertained Medford, a team they have had problems with in the past. The Raiders like to load the box which makes it difficult to score. The Hodags used speed and accurate passing to get on the board.

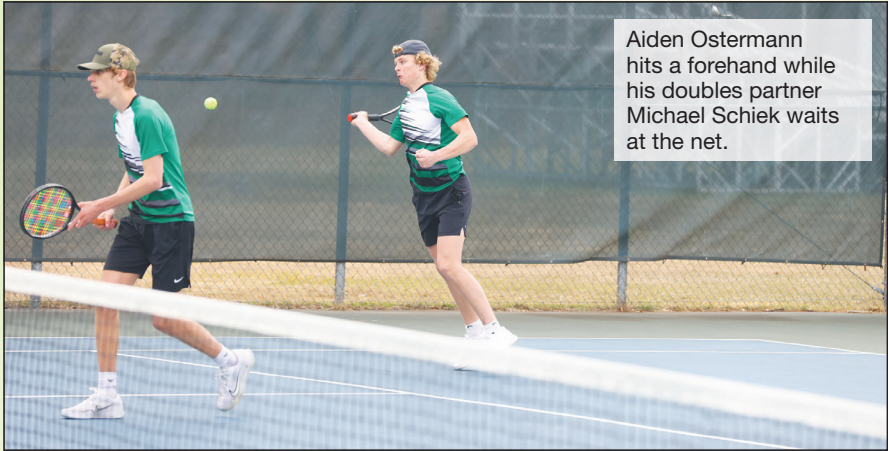
Vivian Lamers had 3 goals and Ella Miljevich 2, giving the Hodags a 5-0 win. The Hodags outshot the Raiders 46-2.



Sophomore Lindsey Hoerschler passes the ball back in front of a Lakeland defender. Hoerschler scored the only goal in the Hodags’ victory over Lakeland on April 22.



Vivian Lamers approaches the ball on a penalty kick after Medford had a handball in the box. The ball got by the Medford keeper for Lamers' third goal of the night to make the score 3-0.



Aiden Ostermann hits a forehand while his doubles partner Michael Schiek waits at the net.

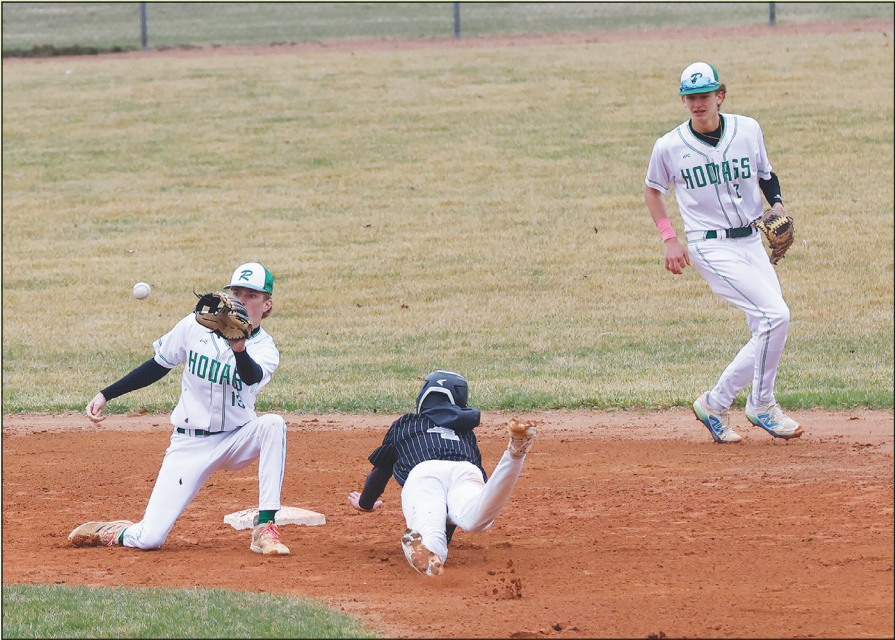


Calvin Loomis returns a backhand shot during the tiebreaker.

HODAG NETTERS OUTLAST LAKELAND 5-2

The Rhinelander High School boys tennis team faced Lakeland on Tuesday, April 22 in a key matchup in the conference. The Hodags swept the doubles flights and won the Nos. 3 and 4 singles matches to win the meet by a 5-2 score.

The No. 1 doubles team of Aiden Ostermann and Michael Schiek and the No. 3 pairing of Donek Koniar and Braydon Lorman tallied key victories for Rhinelander. The Hodags’ two losses came in the top two singles flights, Payton McCue at No. 1 and Karter Massey at No. 2. Calvin Loomis had the longest match of the day. He lost the first set 1-6 but rallied to take the second 7-5. He won the tiebreaker 11-9 to give the Hodags win number 5.



Shortstop Seth Nofftz takes the throw from catcher Jackson Waydick. The Lakeland baserunner beat the tag and was safe.

HODAG BASEBALL GOES 1-1

The Rhinelander High School baseball team split a pair of games last week. On Tuesday, April 22 the Hodags defeated Tomahawk 10-3, with Dylan Vanderbunt earning the win pitching 6 innings at home. Seth Nofftz, Rowan Wiczek and Sawyer each had 3 hits in the contest.

On Thursday, the Hodags hosted Lakeland and lost 4-0. The Hodags mustered only 4 hits in the game, two of them came courtesy of sophomore Sawyer Bishop to give him 5 for the week. Conner Rappley was the starting pitcher and took the loss. Lakeland scored single runs in the 1st, 2nd, 5th and 6th innings.



Brynn Teter was part of the pole vault winning trio and the 4x1600 and 4x400 meter relays.



Senior Greyson Gremban hands off the baton to Avrom Barr who ran the anchor leg of the winning 4x800 relay.

HODAG GIRLS WIN AT NORTHLAND PINES

BOYS SET NEW RECORDS

The Rhinelander High School boys and girls track teams had a good day in Eagle River Thursday. The Hodag girls won the meet at Northland Pines and the boys set a few new records on their way to a second-place finish in the relay-focused track meet. The top 3 times, heights and distances were added together to determine the winners in the events.

The girls won the meet with 114 points to, besting Northland Pines by 13, while the boys placed second to Northland Pines by a margin of 10 points, 117 to 110. Eight teams participated in the meet.

The Hodag girls won the 4x1600 and 4x400 with Luna Grage, Kara Monk, Brynn Teter and Macy Meyers running the events. The 4x100 was won, by Lexi Bishop, Emeline Hintz, Olivia Ruetz and Violet Biolo. The foursome set a new meet record in the process.

Myers and Teeters, along with Emeline Hintz, won the pole vault relay with Meyers winning the event. The 4x100 throwers relay was won by Samantha Aschenbrenner, Tatiana Vadis, Josie Stella and Taylor Dahlquist.

The 300 meter hurdles was won by Averie West. Avrom Barr, Dean Gillingham, Jackson Weinatzl, and Greyson Gremban set a new record in the 4x1600. Barr, Weinatzl, Gremban and Shawn Denis also set a new mark in the 4x800. The Hodags had the top-three finishers in shotput. David Houg took first with a new meet record, Logan Schwinger took second and Reid Schultz third. Truman Lamers set a new meet record in the triple jump. Finally, the 4x100 throwers relay was won by Houg, Schwinger, Schultz and Dominic Lehmann.