

BRIDGES

CONNECTING OUR CITY OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE COMMUNITY



- ▶ City Welcomes New Staff
- ▶ MATC: Experiencing College, Enjoying High School
- ▶ School District Launches Legacy Campaign for Athletic Fields



AUTUMN 2022

BRIDGES

CONNECTING OUR CITY OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE COMMUNITY

Bridges is the official magazine of the City of South Milwaukee and the School District of South Milwaukee. *Bridges* provides news and feature stories about the people, businesses, places and events that make our community a very special place to live, work, visit and invest in.

Funded by the City and School District, the magazine receives additional financial support from local advertisers.

We welcome story ideas, content suggestions and advertising inquiries, but reserve the right to reject or edit content to assure compatibility with our editorial mission, advertisement criteria and other publication standards. Please email all inquiries and suggestions to info@smbridgesmagazine.com.

This publication is guided by a professional advisory committee comprised of representatives from the City of South Milwaukee and the School District of South Milwaukee.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Patrick Brever (City of South Milwaukee), Dan Bader (South Milwaukee School District), Mark Feldmann (MATC) and Barb Caprile (Caprile Marketing/Design).

CITY OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE

Jim Shelenske, Mayor

Tamara Mayzik, City Administrator

Patrick Brever, Assistant City Administrator

2424 15th Avenue • South Milwaukee, WI 53172

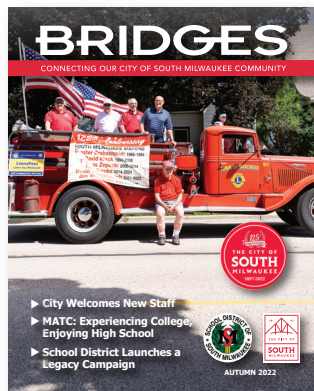
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Bridges magazine design/production: Caprile Marketing/Design



ON THE COVER

The Heritage Days Parade featured this vintage firetruck carrying the past five mayors and current mayor of South Milwaukee. Read more about this event and the 125th anniversary events starting on page 6.

Photo by Julie Arnold, Pier Light Media

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Proudly Celebrating 125 Years!

I hope you had a great summer and enjoyed the many things to do with your family in South Milwaukee – like Heritage Days, the Downtown Market, DARE Golf Outing, Veterans' Appreciation Day, SM Lionsfest, Friends of Mill Pond Duck Race, Community Night Out, and of course, the South Milwaukee Heritage Day Parade! (See page 6.) Fundraisers for these events are held throughout the year, so let's make sure we support them. And please consider volunteering, as well!



South Milwaukee is pleased to be celebrating its 125th anniversary this year! On July 6, 1897, Wisconsin Governor Scofield presented South Milwaukee with its official City status. I hope you had an opportunity to attend some of the special 125th anniversary events, including the historical trolley tour of our City, Open Doors, the SM High School Theater performance of *Proud Past 125 years*, the displays by the South Milwaukee Historical Society, the Library's Recording Local History initiative, and Moran's Pub's 125th lager.

Wisconsin Governor Evers proclaimed August 10 to be South Milwaukee Day in Wisconsin. Proclamations were also presented by Milwaukee County and the Milwaukee County Historical Society. Visit the 125th Anniversary Facebook page at "South Milwaukee 125th Anniversary Celebration" for more details.

Congratulations to resident Gary Wetzel who was honored at the New War Memorial Center exhibit (see pg. 14). He was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor while serving in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. Thanks to Mr. Wetzel – and to all of our men and women who have served in our armed forces!

This year's street construction projects will soon be finished. And the new Bucyrus Commons is coming along nicely and on target for completion by spring. Drive by 11th Ave. and Madison and see the progress as it is happening (see pg. 18).

Congratulations to Steele Solutions on being named "2022 Best Places To Work" by the *Milwaukee Business Journal*. You are a welcome addition to our community!

The gorgeous fall season has arrived, and we look forward to Trick-or-Treat from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on October 31. Veterans Day is also around the corner on November 11. Then, looking ahead, we anticipate the arrival of the old-fashioned Christmas Parade, the Lions' Christmas Parade, our tree lighting, and even Santa's arrival in our town!

Happy autumn and holidays from the Shelenske family to yours. **May 2023 be our best year yet!**

Sincerely, Jim Shelenske-Mayor
City of South Milwaukee

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▶ Table of Contents

CITY OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE NEWS

- 6** Our City Celebrates 125 Years
- 8** November 8 General Election Information
- 10** Welcoming New City Staff
- 12** South Milwaukee Public Library Programming
- 14** Honoring Medal of Honor Recipient Gary Wetzel
- 15** Creating an Emergency Supply Kit
- 16** Business Spotlight: American Legion Post #27
- 18** Bucyrus Commons Construction Moves Ahead
- 19** Mental Health Emergency Center Community Information
- 39** South Milwaukee 2023 Garbage/Recycling Schedule

SOUTH MILWAUKEE SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS

- 24** Launching a Legacy Campaign for Athletic Fields
- 26** New Principal at Blakewood Elementary
- 27** Sports Highlights
- 27** Alum Takes Third Place in Design Contest
- 28** High School Debt Paid Off: How That Impacts Your Taxes
- 30** New Chromebooks for Student Body
- 32** New School Resource Officers Serve and Protect
- 34** Learning Together About (And For) Students
- 36** Out and About in South Milwaukee
- 38** Community Calendar

MILWAUKEE AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE NEWS

- 22** MATC: Experiencing College, Enjoying High School

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James Moran, owner of Moran's Pub, invites you to taste his 125th anniversary lager.



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Please see southmilwaukee.gov/451/coins to purchase your 125th commemorative coin for \$6.



Four past South Milwaukee mayors and current Mayor Jim Shelenske rode in an old-time fire truck in the Heritage Days Parade on Saturday, July 30.



Eaton participated in the Heritage Days parade.



Photos by Julie Arnold, Pier Light Media

The Heritage Days Parade was a high point of the summer, with dozens of floats, vehicles and marching bands.

► City of South Milwaukee Celebrates 125 Years!

August 10 Was Declared South Milwaukee Day!

The City of South Milwaukee transitioned from a village to a city in 1897. To celebrate our 125th anniversary of cityhood, a committee was established by the Common Council to host commemorative events. Previous events this year have included a pop-up theatre, assembling all living mayors for the Heritage Days parade, an open doors event, and a historical trolley tour. Remaining events include a Gala Night to be held October 27 at the Bucyrus Club and a Veterans' Celebration on November 11.

Learn more here: southmilwaukee.gov/438/125th-celebration.

In celebration of the 125th anniversary, Governor Evers issued a proclamation declaring August 10 to be South Milwaukee Day throughout the state of Wisconsin!

Ronny Rocket and South Milwaukee students helped to celebrate the City's 125th anniversary.



Track your ballot on MyVote.wi.gov

The City will offer in-person absentee voting at City Hall located at 2424 15th Ave. The dates and hours of in-person absentee voting and voter registration are:

- Tuesday, October 25 through Friday, October 28, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Monday, October 31 through Thursday, November 3, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Friday, November 4, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.



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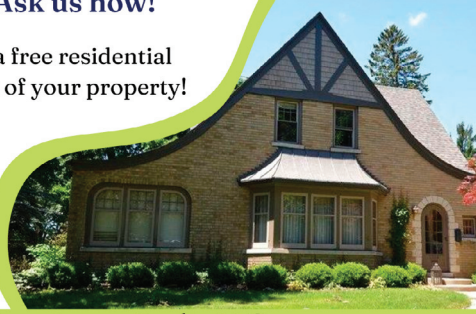
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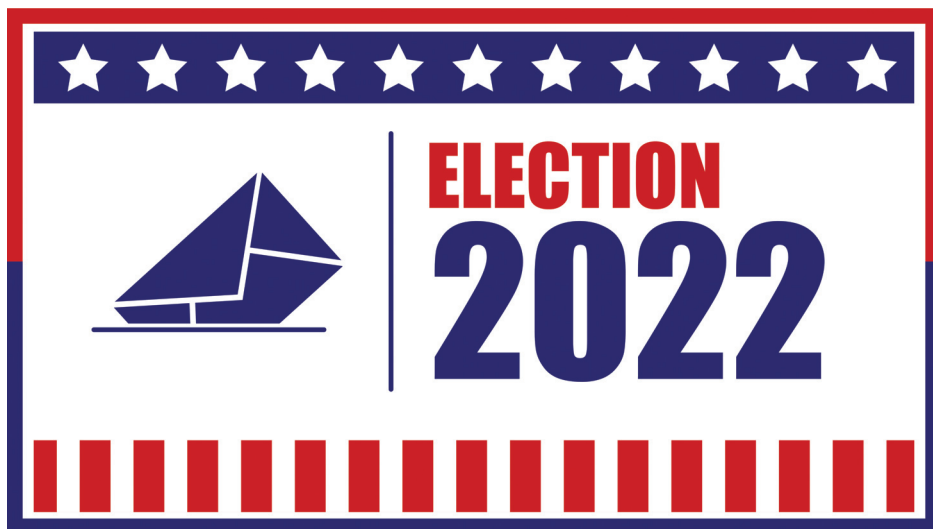


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► November 8 General Election Information

Please Take Note of the Following When Planning To Vote

Many special interest groups are sending mailings that appear to have been sent by the Clerk's Office. They are not from the City – **please disregard these notices**. If you believe that you are already registered or have already requested an absentee ballot, you can check the status of both by going to MyVote.wi.gov.

MyVote.wi.gov has all of the information you need to plan to vote:

- You may check the MyVote.wi.gov website to see if you are registered to vote at your current address and register if you are not already. You will be required to upload a photo I.D. when registering online.
- Information on voter I.D. and proof of residency requirements can be found on MyVote.wi.gov.
- Your polling place can be found on MyVote.wi.gov.
- MyVote.wi.gov has more information on deadlines for the election.
- October 19, 2022: Deadline to register by mail.
- October 19, 2022: Deadline to register online.
- November 3, 2022: 5 p.m. Deadline to request an absentee ballot
- November 4, 2022: 5 p.m.: Deadline to register in our Municipal Clerk's Office.
- November 8, 2022: 8 p.m. Deadline to return absentee ballot. You must return your absentee ballot by mail or deliver it to your municipal clerk.

- November 8: Election Day – Polls open from 7 a.m.- 8 p.m.
- Find out what's on your ballot at MyVote.wi.gov.

Some things you should know about when planning to absentee vote:

- If you are interested in voting by absentee ballot, please go to MyVote.wi.gov and click on the vote absentee icon to have a ballot sent to you through the mail. Absentee ballots are only mailed to those residents who request a ballot be sent to them.
- If you requested a ballot in August, requested for the calendar year, and returned your ballot you will automatically be sent an absentee ballot for November.
- If an absentee ballot was issued to you, you should not go to the polls.
- When you receive your absentee ballot, be sure to read all the instructions on the ballot and those enclosed with the ballot. Failure to follow the proper requirements could cause your vote to not be counted.

There is pre-paid postage on the return envelope. Mail your ballot early, and allow 5-7 days for it to get to us. If you plan to drop off your ballot at the Clerk's Office, we are only allowed to accept ballots from the person who voted them. You may not drop off another person's ballot and drop boxes are no longer allowed.

Listening)” and “Code Name: Chaos.”

“I Think You’re Wrong” is a book that discusses how people should be able to discuss any topic, no matter what it is. The conversation can and should happen. While I haven’t finished reading the book, the overall belief is that people can have differing opinions while still respecting, and living, in the same community.

“Code Name: Chaos” is a book written by General Mattis, a retired Marine, who held many different roles in government. I haven’t opened it yet, but I am looking forward to when I can sit down and read his words.

NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER ERICKA LANG

Ericka Lang started with the City in April as our Economic Development Project Manager. In addition to assisting with our economic development initiatives and serving as a resource to our business community, Ericka will manage the Bucyrus Commons space and grant programs funded by the Bucyrus Foundation.

Lang was the planning & development director for the Village of Shorewood for 11 years and then the executive director of the Shorewood Business Improvement District for two years. She has a bachelor’s degree in retail management and a master’s in urban planning. In addition to her municipal experience, she spent two years in residential property management.

Lang has a deep understanding of what makes strong downtowns. “I have a passion for retail and small businesses, and I’ve always had ideas about what makes a vibrant downtown,” she says. “Business recruitment is a priority as well as building strong relationships with area businesses and property owners.”

What was your first job? Cleaning my dad’s hardware store while in middle school.

What is your favorite thing about working in local government?

Building community is important to me. While there are hundreds of ways to build community, how the environment is built plays a huge role, which is done at the local level. Great placemaking and good policies can support social connections, which are critical for flourishing communities.

What do you love most about South Milwaukee? South Milwaukee has the best of everything an urban city can offer. It has a downtown main street, is pedestrian and bike-friendly, has a variety of convenient businesses, and most of all, nature is two-steps away.

Describe South Milwaukee in three words. I’ll go with three phrases. Friendly and personable community, proud history, and where nature and the city connect.

If you were to check out one book from the South Milwaukee Public Library, what would it be? Thriller-type “who-done-it” books highly entertain me. The next book on my list is “The Cockroach” by Jo Nesbo, who writes various detective series.

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Photos by Julie Arnold, Pier Light Media

WELCOMING NEW CITY STAFF

NEW FIRE CHIEF JOHN LITCHFORD

John Litchford was appointed to the position of Fire Chief/Emergency Management Director in June 2022. Litchford has worked in the fire service for over 25 years, retiring from the Milwaukee Fire Department in 2021 as a Deputy Chief. Prior to this experience, he served in the United States Marine Corps for four years. He earned his bachelor's degree in emergency management/administration from UW- Oshkosh and he is currently pursuing a master's certificate in non-profit management from UW- Milwaukee. He is also a member of the Milwaukee and Wisconsin Chief Officers Associations.

Community involvement has been a priority for Litchford throughout his career as he started his own non-profit named Warm-Up Winter in 2011. The organization is dedicated to providing winter coats to children in need. Additionally, John also serves on the board of directors for the Milwaukee chapters of the March of Dimes and America SCORES.

What was your first job? I haven't had many jobs. My first regular job was at Skyway Cinema (on Howell), back in 1989. I had numerous roles working at Skyway, such as ripping entry tickets, making popcorn, and starting the projectors, as well as general clean-up of the cinema. My favorite role was making popcorn because I got to sample as I worked. Movie popcorn is still a weakness of mine, I must have it every time I go to the movie theater. After graduating high school, I joined the U.S. Marine Corps, where I served four years, before returning home to go to college. In 1997, I started working for the Milwaukee Fire Department, and after my retirement in 2021, I have found myself with the South Milwaukee Fire Department.

What is your favorite thing about working in local government? My favorite thing about working in government is the direct connection you get with the community. I normally get to meet someone different every day, and there is no better way to hear what the communities' needs are than a direct line of communication. The other component I enjoy most about the fire service is working the problem. I have always enjoyed providing solutions and solving problems, which we face all the time.

What do you love most about South Milwaukee?

I have so many memories of South Milwaukee. Even though I grew up in Oak Creek, I spent a considerable amount of time in South Milwaukee – so much fun spending time at the old Taco Bell, the Sweet Shop, and at wrestling tournaments held at the high school. However, the thing I love about the City of South Milwaukee is the independent feel regarding the community. South Milwaukee truly has its own identity, which differs from all the other surrounding community's. I look forward to seeing how the City continues to grow.

Describe South Milwaukee in three words. Strength, independence and character.

If you were to check out one book from the South Milwaukee Public Library, what would it be?

I recently visited the South Milwaukee Library and was impressed by its selection of books. There were several cookbooks, and as I am a firefighter, cooking and firefighters normally go hand-in-hand. However, I didn't check out a cookbook, but instead checked out two other books! The books were *"I Think You're Wrong (But I'm*

Gingerbread Houses

Wednesday, December 7 • 4 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Stop by the Library to make your own gingerbread house.

Holiday Party

Thursday, December 15 • 5-6:30 p.m.

Stop by any time between 5-6:30 p.m. to celebrate the holiday season with the Library.

RECURRING YOUTH PROGRAMS

September 6 through December 13

Drop-In Craft

Fridays from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

(No craft November 25)

Stop in at the Library to make a fun craft while supplies last.

For ages 2-12.

Storytime & Craft

Tuesdays from 10-11 a.m.

For ages 2-5.

Music & Movement

Wednesdays from 10-11 a.m.

This program combines music, dance, and storytime. For children ages 0-3 and their caregivers.

LEGO Club

Third Wednesday of the month • 4-5 p.m.

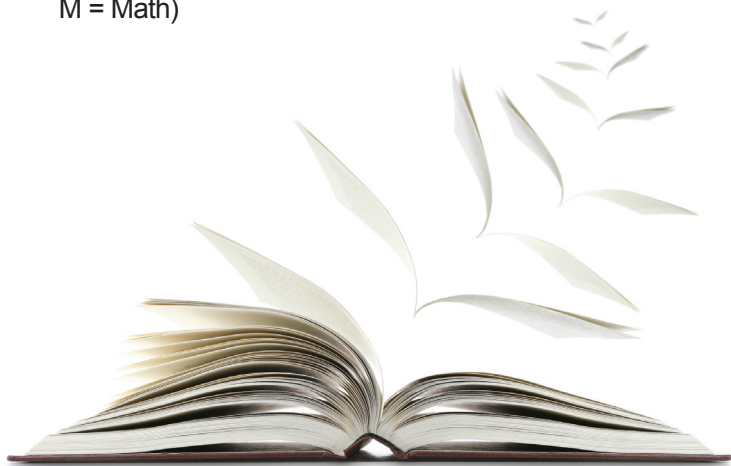
Bring your own bricks or use ours! For ages 5-12.

Take-Home STEAM Kits

First Wednesday of the month • 4:30-5:30 p.m.

STEAM kits will be available the first Wednesday of every month; for ages 5-12.

(S = Science; T = Technology; E = Engineering; A = Arts; M = Math)



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► City of South Milwaukee Public Library Upcoming Programming

Here is a sampling of fall/winter Library programs for children, teens and adults. Please visit smlibrary.org or call 414.768.8195 for more information – dates/events are subject to change.

Using the South Milwaukee Digital Archive

Monday, October 24 • 5:30 p.m.

Learn more about the resources available in the South Milwaukee Public Library's digital archive and how you can best use it for historical and genealogical research.

Hand Sewing Basics: Heart Hand Warmers

Tuesday, November 29 • 5:30 p.m.

Make your own hand warmers by hand! Learn the basics of hand sewing and create hand warmers for yourself or to give as a gift. Registration required as space is limited; registration begins Wednesday, November 16.

Getting Started with Libby

Monday, December 12 • 5:30 p.m.

Learn how to access our Library's digital collection of e-books and audiobooks through the free Libby app. Libby can be used on devices with Android, iOS (Apple) or Windows 10. Registration required as space is limited; registration begins Monday, November 28.

Mindful Eating

Wednesday, January 11 • 5:30 p.m.

Annie Wegner LeFort, trained chef, yoga teacher and integrative nutrition health coach, will explore how to approach food with more mindfulness from procurement to preparation to consumption to waste reduction. In this class, we'll explore mindful eating practices and discuss steps we can take to make more intentional choices.

The Joy of Birding

Wednesday, February 22 • 5:30 p.m.

Over 50 million people consider themselves bird watchers and

enthusiasts. Learn about local birding in Wisconsin and how to identify our local birds by sight or by sound, as well as how to encourage and assist birds who might visit your yard. Presented by the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center.

RECURRING ADULT EVENTS

NEW! Banned Books Club

Second Monday of the month at 1 p.m. or 6 p.m.

In the past school year, there have been more than 1,500 book bans in U.S. schools. Join us to read and discuss some of them – snacks provided! Copies of the book are available for checkout three weeks prior to the meeting. This book club is geared toward adults.

November 14: The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

Fiber Arts with Friends

Select Tuesdays from 5-6:45 p.m.

Drop in at the Library for our Fiber Arts Club. Enjoy gathering with other people while you work on your projects.

Take & Make Crafts for Adults (Select Wednesdays)

Pick up a kit to make a craft at home. Kits are available first-come, first-served. One kit per person; must be present to pick up. For adults 18+.

November 2: Leaf Bowl

December 7: Sock Snowman

January 4: Lunar New Year Lantern

February 1: Mug Cake

TEEN EVENTS

Teen Take & Make: Rope Rainbow Tuesday, November 8

Pick up a rope rainbow kit at the Library! Kit requires a glue gun (while supplies last, first-come first-served, must be present to pick up)

Teen Craft: Confetti Party Poppers Tuesday, December 27 • 4-6 p.m.

Stop by any time from 4-6 p.m. to make your own confetti popper for the New Year!

Teen Take & Make: Bullet Journal Tuesday, January 10

While supplies last, first-come first-served, must be present to pick up.

Teen Take & Make: Superhero Magnets Tuesday, February 7

While supplies last, first-come first-served, must be present to pick up.

RECURRING EVENTS

Anime Club

First Thursday of each month • 4-6 p.m. November 3, December 1

Come watch anime, have a snack and engage in discussion at the Library. All anime will be reviewed by staff before being shown. The club content will be rated PG or PG-13/TV14. Any episode can be vetoed upon viewing by either the librarian or club members.

Dungeons & Dragons

Second Tuesday of each month • 4-7 p.m. November 8, December 13

Join us for an epic one-shot adventure! Choose a premade character upon arrival (you create the personality). New players welcome. For teens and adults. Registration is required as space is limited.

YOUTH EVENTS

Halloween Party

Thursday, October 27 • 5-6:30 p.m.

Put on your Halloween costumes and come on down to the Library for our annual Halloween party!

Milwaukee County's War Memorial Center is located at 750 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive. It is the focal point for various veteran, patriotic, cultural, art and educational activities, all to support its mission "To Honor the Dead by Serving the Living."

Wisconsin's 64 Medal of Honor recipients were honored at an official ribbon-cutting event in August. South Milwaukee resident Gary Wetzel was one of those recipients. 50,000 veterans rely on the War Memorial Center each year.



► Creating an Emergency Supply Kit

Putting together an emergency supply kit is one of the best ways to prepare yourself and your family for an emergency. The purpose of an emergency supply kit is to make sure that you have enough food, water, and other essential supplies to last at least three days if you experience loss of power or isolation. In order to be fully prepared when disaster strikes, gather the following items ahead of time in a large tote:

Water One gallon per person, per day for three days.

Food At least a three-day supply of nonperishable foods (including ready-to-eat canned meat, fruit, or vegetables, granola bars, cereal, nuts and crackers) and basic utensils.

Tools/Safety Supplies Manual can opener, battery-powered radio, flashlight, extra batteries, matches, whistle, first-aid kit, multi-purpose tool, cell phone, and chargers.

Personal Items Prescription medications, change of clothes, shoes and personal hygiene items.

For Infants Formula, bottles, baby foods, diapers, wipes, clothes and toys.

For Pets At least a three-day supply of food and water, collar, leash, harness and crate.



Documents Copies of insurance policies, bank account records, IDs, medical information, immunization records and pet license/medical information.

Money Extra cash or a traveler's check.

Miscellaneous Map of the area, cleaning supplies, comfort items, extra set of car keys and house keys.

Remember: it is important to personalize your emergency supply kit to fit the unique needs of your family. To learn more about how to prepare for an emergency, including how to create a family emergency plan, please visit ready.gov.



Above: The ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Medal of Honor exhibit at the War Memorial Center on August 23.

Right: Gary Wetzel (left) is seen with new South Milwaukee Fire Chief John Litchford, who also attended the ribbon-cutting event.



► Honoring Gary Wetzel, A Medal of Honor Recipient

Veteran of Vietnam War Cuts Ribbon on New Exhibit

On August 23, South Milwaukee resident Gary Wetzel was honored as a part of Milwaukee County's War Memorial Center's new Wisconsin Medal of Honor exhibit. Wetzel is one of 64 Wisconsinites to have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Wetzel served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. He was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Johnson on November 19, 1968. Fire Chief Litchford, a Marine Corps veteran, was present for the ceremony.



Wetzel's Medal of Honor Citation Described His Heroics

"Sp4c. Wetzel, 173d Assault Helicopter Company, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Sp4c. Wetzel was serving as door gunner aboard a

helicopter which was part of an insertion force trapped in a landing zone by intense and deadly hostile fire.

Sp4c. Wetzel was going to the aid of his aircraft commander when he was blown into a rice paddy and critically wounded by two enemy rockets that exploded just inches from his location. Although bleeding profusely due to the loss of his left arm and severe wounds in his right arm, chest and left leg,

Sp4c. Wetzel staggered back to his original position in his gun-well and took the enemy forces under fire. His machine gun was the only weapon placing effective fire on the enemy at that time. Through a resolve that overcame the shock and intolerable pain of his injuries, Sp4c. Wetzel remained at his position until he had eliminated the automatic-weapons emplacement that had been inflicting heavy casualties on the American troops and preventing them from moving against this strong enemy force.

"Refusing to attend his own extensive wounds, he attempted to return to the aid of his aircraft commander but passed out from loss of blood. Regaining consciousness, he persisted in his efforts to drag himself to the aid of his fellow crewman. After an agonizing effort, he came to the side of the crew chief who was attempting to drag the wounded aircraft commander to the safety of a nearby dike. Unswerving in his devotion to his fellow man, Sp4c. Wetzel assisted his crew chief even though he lost consciousness once again during this action.

"Sp4c. Wetzel displayed extraordinary heroism in his efforts to aid his fellow crewmen. His gallant actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Army and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of his country."

Learn more about the War Memorial Center at warmemorialcenter.org.

constitutional topic. Students should contact their school counselor for details.

• **Badger Boys State** The South Milwaukee American Legion Post #27 is also a proud sponsor of this weeklong summer camp in Eau Claire, Wis. Scholarships are offered to Wisconsin students who will complete their junior year of high school by June of the summer session they wish to attend. School leaders (administrators, teachers, counselors) select students who have demonstrated leadership potential to attend Badger Boys State where they develop interpersonal skills and the confidence needed to feel empowered and become future leaders in their own communities. The Post also sponsors a Boy Scout Troup.

• **South Milwaukee Little League Sponsorship**

The South Milwaukee Post has been sponsoring a South Milwaukee Little League team going back to the 1940s. Who doesn't remember the great times they had as youngsters playing Little League baseball?

• **Honor Guard**

Acknowledging the sacrifices of our departed veterans, our American Legion Post members are called upon to act as an Honor Guard at veteran funerals, where a welcome message is given, along with a firing salute and a bugler playing of "Taps."

• **Camp American Legion**

Veterans and their families can take advantage of this special healing place located in Lake Tomahawk, Wis. You must be a Wisconsin resident and an honorably discharged veteran, spouse or family to take advantage of this seasonal camp. Truly a "Northwoods experience," Camp American Legion helps families reconnect with each other with opportunities to relax, unwind and rejuvenate.

What Our Building Offers

The South Milwaukee Legion Post #27 has been located at the same 920 Monroe Avenue address since 1938. The spacious clubhouse includes a bar that is open to the public, and a hall available for rental (with a discount for veterans). The bar is a great spot to meet friends, new and old, and to watch your favorite sports teams on TV. Plus, free Wi-Fi.

The large hall in the back of the building can be rented any day or night of the week. It comes equipped with a stage, tables, chairs, an overhead projection screen, bathrooms, adjustable overhead lighting and a separate entrance that is ADA-compliant. Two taps and private bartenders are also available upon request. While a cooking kitchen is not available onsite, renters can bring in all of their own food, with the exception of alcohol that needs to be purchased directly from The Post. Need an affordable place to hold a business meeting, birthday or anniversary party, or just about any other type of meeting? The Post will meet all of your needs.



The Legion Post #27 hall is equipped with a second bar area, stage, tables, chairs, overhead projector screen, and a separate entrance that is ADA-compliant.

• **Woman's Auxiliary**

This separate group is open to male or female spouses or any direct family member of a veteran.

• **Sons of the American Legion**

Another separate group of males whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. Military and were eligible for American Legion membership.

Are you a veteran who is not a member of the American Legion? With so many opportunities to network with fellow veterans, support the South Milwaukee community, and even enjoy discounts related to travel, health care, moving and more, now is the time to sign up! A membership drive is going on right now. Your support can make a positive impact on our veterans and their families!

"We welcome any veteran with a passion for our country to join our group," says Commander Grabowski. Visit wilegion.org for more information or call 414.764.1827. Meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month.

South Milwaukee American Legion Post #27
920 Monroe Ave. • wilegion.org
Bar hours: Fri., Sat., Sun. and Mon. open at 2 p.m. • Closed Tue., Wed. and Thurs.



Sheri Rudoll is the bar manager.



The spacious Post #27 clubhouse includes a bar that is open to the public, and a hall available for rental.

Many recognize the mural on the south side of the building visible from 10th Ave.



The exterior of American Legion Post #27 as seen from Monroe Ave. (at Chicago Ave.)

Photos by Julie Arnold, Pier Light Media

Business Spotlight: American Legion Post #27 More Than 100 Years of Supporting Our Service Men and Women

Army veteran Raymond Grabowski has dedicated his life to serving his country and community. He began his army career as a paratrooper with the 101st Airborne Division in October 1973 and served in a variety of locations around the world. For the past eight years, he has proudly served as Commander of South Milwaukee's American Legion Post #27, at 920 Monroe Ave. And there is no one more passionate about the Legion and the services it provides for veterans and their families.

What Is the American Legion?

The American Legion is the nation's largest organization of U.S. wartime veterans and their families. There are more than 2 million members and 12,000 Posts in the U.S. and throughout the world. Since its inception by Congress in 1919, American Legion members have worked together to support their local communities. The organization is recognized as a leader in transition assistance from the military to civilian life, providing a variety of resources to support your patriotism and camaraderie with fellow service men and women.

Why Join the American Legion Post?

Commander Grabowski is quick to point out the many reasons that South Milwaukee's Legion Post is such a valuable asset to the City. "With over 150 members, our group is a great supporter of the community as well as its individual members and their families. For those looking to make a difference in South Milwaukee, the American Legion Post is a great place to start," he shares.

Here are some of the many reasons that the American Legion is an important part of our City, through its scholarship programs, veterans' camps, Little League support, Honor Guard, member discounts and more. Volunteers are also welcome in these programs – if you are a community leader who wants to get involved, please let us know. And financial donations are always welcome and appreciated.

• A Place for Camaraderie and Friendship

The American Legion Post is a convenient spot in South Milwaukee to meet friends, share stories and enjoy a welcoming and relaxing atmosphere. The public is always invited to stop in! The bar is open Fri., Sat., Sun. and Mon.

• Oratorical Scholarship Program

Open to all high school students, this program is sponsored by the South Milwaukee Post. Participants deliver an 8-10 minute oration about some phase of the U.S. Constitution, emphasizing the duties and responsibilities of U.S. citizens. A second part consists of a 3-5 minute speech on a randomly assigned



Commander Raymond Grabowski
American Legion Post #27



Check out the personalized bricks in front of Post #27 and ask how YOU can recognize a special serviceman or woman.



Mental Health Emergency Center Community Information

The Mental Health Emergency Center (MHEC) is the new county-wide psychiatric emergency department located at 1525 N. 12 Street in the City of Milwaukee.

The MHEC will serve voluntary patients starting September 6, 2022, and both voluntary and involuntary/emergency detention patients beginning September 9, 2022.

The MHEC replaces the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) Psychiatric Crisis Service (PCS) emergency department currently located on Watertown Plank Road. PCS will stop accepting patients and permanently close on September 9.

The Care We Offer

- 24/7/365 emergency mental health services for adults, children and adolescents
- Assess, stabilize and treat mental health emergencies
- Connect patients and families to ongoing treatment and supportive services
- Separate child and adolescent treatment area
- Timely emergency treatment, stabilization and transfer to appropriate continuing care
- Patients are stabilized and transferred to care in a community hospital
- Six adult inpatient beds for short-term stabilization, if needed
- Children/adolescents are promptly transferred to a pediatric mental health facility if inpatient services are required
- No appointments are taken
- Does not provide prescription refills
- People experiencing both serious mental health and medical conditions go to the closest medical hospital emergency department
- MHEC does not provide emergency medical services.





Photo by Patrick Brever

► Bucyrus Commons Construction Moves Ahead

Construction at the Bucyrus Commons began in May 2022. The construction team, led by Project Manager and former Mayor Dave Kieck, has been working diligently on the project. The space at 11th and Madison Avenue is currently used for the Downtown Market, European Beer Gardens, and as the home of events like Crusherfest and the Festival of Trees. Once construction is completed, the site will include an open-air pavilion, permanent rest-rooms, and an event stage. A grand opening ceremony is expected to be held next spring.

Those interested in hosting events at the Bucyrus Commons can contact the City's Economic Development Office. The City will start accepting applications on January 1, 2023.



Photo by Dave Kieck



Photos by Julie Arnold,
Pier Light Media



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Who We Care For

- Children, adolescents and adults experiencing a mental health emergency putting them at risk to themselves or others
- Voluntary patients who chose to come to the MHEC or are referred by a family or friends
- Involuntary patients brought to the center by law enforcement
- All patients, regardless of insurance or ability to pay (uninsured or with insurance - Medicare, Medicaid, or private health insurance)

Not sure if you need Emergency Mental Health Services?

Call the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Crisis Services line if you experience the following:

- You have racing thoughts and are talking faster than you remember
- You feel like you might harm yourself or others
- You feel others are planning to harm you
- You feel unable to cope with daily problems or activities
- You hear voices others don't seem to hear
- You feel very agitated, restless, or irrational

BHS Crisis Service Line: 414-257-7222

When to go to The Mental Health Emergency Center

Patients and families should go to MHEC if they are experiencing a serious mental health emergency and are at risk to themselves or others. Examples of mental health emergencies may include:

- Thoughts of suicide, self-harm or harming others
- Violent, erratic or aggressive behavior
- Significant worsening of mental health disorders

Mental Health Emergency Center

1525 N. 12 Street

Milwaukee, WI 53205

mentalhealthmke.org





Left: Oak Creek High School senior Bella Paladino officially signs up for MATC's Dual Enrollment Academy in which she will earn college credits while taking MATC classes during her senior year.



Right: A high school student shows off his new MATC shirt he received after officially declaring his intent to enroll in MATC's Dual Enrollment Academy.

officially declared their intent to enroll in the program.

"This was the first time we held this event and it was a huge success," Cherney says. "The number of students who will start with us in the fall is the most we have ever had in the program."

Paladino, who plays on the school's soccer team, wrestles and acts in plays, was among the signees. When she graduates from Oak Creek High School next spring, Paladino will have earned 24 college credits and be prepared for college classes.

Some of the dual enrollment programs prepare the students to earn a technical diploma from MATC at the end of the school year.

DEA participant Marissa Schleicher graduated from Franklin High School in June and from MATC in May. She was one of six Dual Enrollment students who received a technical diploma in welding at the college's Spring Commencement.

Schleicher plans to take a second year of welding at MATC and earn an associate degree. From there, she hopes to get into a union, find a company that will train her as an apprentice, and eventually start a full-time welding job.

Evaluating career priorities is a key goal of the DEA. "Whether students are continuing on with their education or joining the workforce right away, they feel that having been a part of the dual enrollment program has truly prepared them for what's to come," explains Megan Poytinger, coordinator of MATC's dual enrollment programs.

Being a welder has been Schleicher's goal since her freshman year in high school, when she took her first welding class. Through the DEA at MATC, she is now on a quicker path to attaining that goal.

MATC Dual Enrollment Academy Student Benefits

High school seniors earn college credits and high school credits. Students attain an introduction to the college experience.

MATC's labs and work spaces feature state-of-the-art technology, and students benefit from their instructors' professional industry experience.

Credits earned through DEA can be applied to MATC programs in the future, which shortens the time and reduces the cost to complete a technical diploma or associate degree.

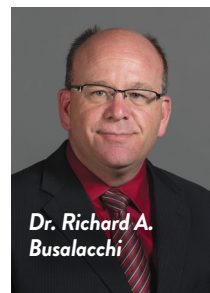
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- Criminal Justice
- Culinary Arts
- Dental Assistant
- Fire Technician
- Hospitality Management
- Health Unit Coordinator
- Information Technology
- Nutrition & Dietetic Technician
- Practical Nursing
- Pre-Health
- Welding

For more information, contact Erin Cherney at cherneye@matc.edu or (414) 297-6068.

See eligibility requirements and details at matc.edu/dual-enrollment.

Richard Busalacchi, Ed.D., interim executive director of MATC's Oak Creek Campus, sums up the dual enrollment program this way: "Dual credit offers the ability for high school students to get a head start earning college credit while still in high school. In some cases, students can earn a credential that applies toward a higher degree at MATC, or apply the credits toward other articulated programs. It's a great advantage for parents and students!"



Visit matc.edu

MATC OAK CREEK CAMPUS

6665 S. Howell Ave.

414.297.6969 • matc.edu

**Dr. Richard A. Busalacchi,
Interim Executive Director**



MATC hosted its first DEA signing day on May 3 at the Downtown Milwaukee Campus. More than 60 high school juniors declared their intent to enroll in MATC's Dual Enrollment Academy.

▶ EXPERIENCING COLLEGE, ENJOYING HIGH SCHOOL



MATC's Dual Enrollment Academy Gives Students a Great Start for College and Careers By Mark Feldmann

Bella Paladino is getting a good jump on the bad guys. The Oak Creek High School senior aspires to join the FBI someday and become a profiler, a behavioral analyst who specializes in forming theories about unidentified criminals to help police narrow their search for suspects.

To help attain her career goal, Paladino is starting her criminal justice education as soon as she can – by taking courses offered by Milwaukee Area Technical College during her senior year in high school.

Paladino is one of 65 high school students taking college courses this fall through MATC's Dual Enrollment Academy (DEA), in which participants receive college-level training to begin careers in high-demand fields. During their senior year of high school, DEA students earn high school and college credits while spending the majority of their school day, both fall and spring semesters, at MATC.

"This program helps ease the transition from high school to postsecondary education, giving insight into college academics and a jump start on programs," says Erin Cherney, MATC's manager of high school relations and university transfer. "It also allows students to maintain a connection to their high school and extracurricular activities."

The DEA offers courses in many different fields including fire technician, culinary arts, practical nursing, dental

assistant and information technology. "Our more popular programs are welding, criminal justice and pre-health," Cherney says.

The Dual Enrollment Academy is designed for students attending high schools within MATC's district, which includes Oak Creek, Franklin and South Milwaukee high schools.

"The Dual Enrollment Academy program is an excellent opportunity for students to use equipment that is not readily available on a high school campus," notes Candis Mongan, principal at Oak Creek High School. "Students with career goals in healthcare, culinary and technology fields benefit from the hands-on lab lessons and instruction from professors with real industry experience."

"Dual Enrollment students get a head start on college without sacrificing the end of their high school career. Unlike early graduation, Dual Enrollment allows students to continue with extracurriculars and build a strong college resume," Mongan adds. "Our students enjoy being able to earn both high school and college credit at the same time. DEA offers students the advantage of understanding what is expected in college, while learning time management and study skills."

In May, MATC hosted its first DEA signing day at the Downtown Milwaukee Campus where high school juniors

PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS AND POSSIBILITIES

- Artificial turf at the football field.
- Recreation (youth) football moved to Bucyrus Stadium.
- Graduation ceremonies (weather permitting)
- A new scoreboard that will allow for stats of football, soccer, and track and field.
- Return of the nearly century-old tradition of hosting marching band competitions.
- The artificial turf will include a highly engineered, organic infill that will improve traction, reduce artificial turf heat and be environmentally friendly.
- An artificial turf infield for the upper softball diamond.
- Leveling of Galewski Baseball Field that will include artificial turf.
- Upgrading track and field facilities.
- Moving the pole vault pit from the parking lot .
- A non-slippery surface for the Pom team to perform.
- Safe area on the track for the Cheer team.
- Soccer will be able to be played in Bucyrus Stadium.

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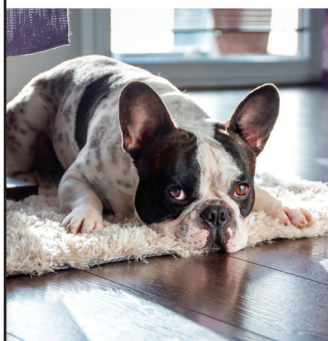
In 1938, the South Milwaukee students voted to change the school's nickname from the Cardinals to the Red Rockets. In the 1950s, it was changed to The Rockets.

Improved South Milwaukee School District outdoor athletic facilities will benefit a variety of sports, including football, softball, track and baseball, plus the Marching Band, Poms and Cheerleaders.

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Photos by Jana Dojbictake

▶ South Milwaukee Launching a Legacy Campaign To Revitalize Outdoor Athletic Facilities

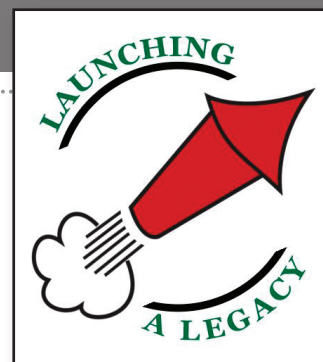
South Milwaukee student-athletes give their all in the classroom and to their teams. The athletic fields, on the other hand, have taken it all – from decades of students pounding up and down the field or around the bases. Mother nature has taken her toll, too. Flooding and poor soil have meant inferior field conditions, and as a result they are often not available to use. For example, the marching band can't practice on the current field because of the fear of damaging it. The same goes for Poms and the cheerleaders, and during the school day, physical education classes can't use it.

"They're not the quality our students or the community deserve," Athletic Director Ante Udovicic explains. "They can, and should, be better for our students, and to showcase South Milwaukee as a place where students want to come and play."

There's a groundswell of support to change things building in the community. It's led by a group of South Milwaukee leaders and fueled by donors who want to make a difference for students.

Recently, the Bucyrus Foundation announced it was donating \$1 million to help replace the football field with artificial turf. That generous gift served as a catalyst for the "Launching a Legacy Campaign" – an effort to raise enough money (\$4.4 million) – to put artificial turf on the football field and the infields of the softball and baseball fields. The campaign would also replace the surface of the track, move the pole vault pit out of the parking lot, and improve the drainage on all of the fields to mitigate future flooding.

"Launching a Legacy is a whole community effort to get our kids the playfields and track they deserve," says Jeff Dess, who co-chairs the Launching a Legacy committee along with John Galewski. "This is a once-in-a-generation



opportunity to make South Milwaukee's sports facilities truly remarkable. Not only is that great for our students, but it makes it easier to attract new residents and businesses to the City."

The committee has applied for grants with the NFL and MLB to add to the big start from the Bucyrus donation, and is offering naming opportunities for large donations, like the football press box, various scoreboards, ticket booth and more.

"We're already on our way," Galewski shares. "We have almost \$1.7 million in commitments from our initial donors." Those donors, many of whom took the opportunity to add their names to the parts of the field, were at the last home game in October and presented the Launching a Legacy committee and School District with ceremonial checks for the project.

"We hope the community sees the opportunity we have right now. This will attract new students to our District while providing an amazing athletic experience for our current students. In addition to football, from track to Poms, softball and baseball to marching band, and our day-to-day physical education classes and recreation activities, these revitalized fields will be a source of pride for South Milwaukee," Dess says.



Photos by Jana Dojbictake

▶ South Milwaukee Sports Highlights

Rocket Runner Wins Druckery Invite

Congrats to June Lesinski who won the junior varsity girls' race and to Eliana Jamel who took 10th place in the overall competition at the Rocket Stan Druckery Invite on September 10. The 40-year-old invitational race was renamed after retired physical education teacher Stan Druckery. Druckery has been a coach for South Milwaukee for 51 years.

Rocket Swimmers Break School Record

The girls' swim team broke the school record for the 200-medley relay race at a competition in West Allis on August 31. The team broke a 12-year-old record by 1.55 seconds.

Girls Volleyball Wins SM Rocket Triangular Tournament

The girls' volleyball team beat Racine and St. Catherine's in two sets and then beat Ronald Regan's team in three sets to win the South Milwaukee Rocket Triangular Tournament on August 25.

▶ South Milwaukee Artist Takes Third Place in State Contest

It's a sweet, stolen moment frozen in an image – a mother or father fox bends down to nuzzle her pup in the woods. The orange foxes stand out against the green and blue background. It's a complete thought. The image, created by South Milwaukee alumnae Yushan Zeng, class of 2022, before she graduated in the spring, won third place in a design contest for the Annual Wisconsin State Park Forest vehicle admission sticker.

"The sticker was a project that the whole class had to make, but it was optional whether you submit the sticker or not. It was my last year at SMHS so I thought it would be a good idea to leave some memories behind," Zeng says.

Zeng is a freshman biology student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison who pursues art in her free time. She made her sticker design in Adobe Illustrator, but mostly uses a program called Procreate on her tablet computer. She said the idea for the sticker was born from her love for foxes and the importance she puts on family.

"Though foxes are portrayed as sly and mischievous in stories, I like them for their cleverness," Zeng explains. "This sticker was made the year students started coming back to class from the pandemic. It was a struggle for students, but even more for those who lost someone they loved during that time. I wanted to establish the importance of family with my design and how we should treasure every moment we have with them."



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New Principal Brings a Career of Compassion and Caring to Blakewood Elementary School

Sometimes an offhand suggestion or just a few words from someone can change your life's path. That's what happened to Lee Waechter, the new principal at Blakewood Elementary School.

Waechter was home after graduating from St. Norbert College with a business degree when two friends who were special education teachers suggested he substitute teach to make some money.

"I just saw what they were doing and kind of fell in love with it," Waechter remembers.

Special Education is specialized instruction for students who learn differently or have a physical or mental condition that presents a barrier to learning. Students who need special education get individualized education plans, or IEPs, that are designed to deliver meaningful instruction so students can learn, grow and succeed.

For Waechter, it became a lifetime passion to bring dignity and attention to a group of students who might feel marginalized in school.

"I just wanted to be great to people who weren't treated well and give them a voice," Waechter says.

Waechter enrolled in Milwaukee Teacher Education Center (now called the Urban Living Collaborative) – a resource for people to earn their teaching certification and started working in schools at the same time. Outside his classroom, he could see his students standing apart from their peers and empathized with their feelings of being excluded.

"I could feel it on the kids' behalf," he remembers. "They were struggling."

Waechter says he started getting involved at recess playing games with all the students. If he was seen as a fun teacher, it might help raise the esteem of the students he worked with.

"The (other students) saw it as my students **got** to work

with Mr. Waechter, not that they **have** to work with Mr. Waechter."

His attitude toward whole-school culture and acceptance earned Waechter a role as an assistant principal in Milwaukee. He completed a master's degree and is deep into a doctoral program focused on special education. Before being hired as Blakewood's principal, he had an administrative position in Racine as a special education supervisor. He started looking for other positions when he realized he missed working directly with students.

At Blakewood, Waechter spent the summer and early fall getting to know South Milwaukee, the students and teachers. As a former college baseball pitcher and quarterback at Madison College, Waechter knows the value of having a vision and a team with a common goal. "My most crucial role is as an instructional leader, and that has a lot of components to it," he shares. "Teachers can't really engage until they believe that we're all moving in the same direction."

When it comes to the students, he wants them to believe in what they're doing, to build a culture and community that brings families into the school. If that happens, he says students will meet the challenges they're given – on tests and in their social and emotional lives.

"How do we make ourselves and our school a little bit better today than it was yesterday? That's what I'm really focused on building this year."

About Principal Lee Waechter

Age: 37

Hometown: Kewaunee, Wisconsin

Lives in: Oak Creek, Wisconsin

Family: Nikki (spouse), four children (1st grader, 4th grader, 5th grader and a high school junior)

7 cents goes to transfers to ensure Special Education and other unique programs are funded. The rest, just under 15 cents, pays for insurance, debt, supplies and more.

"For every dollar we collect in taxes, about 4 cents goes to our debt – and that's set to disappear in its entirety in the next couple of years. Currently, the District has less than half of the debt that most other districts have. The residents of South Milwaukee should be proud that its School District has stayed out of debt, kept its buildings in great shape, and employed great teachers and staff with a relatively lean budget," Arnold says. "It's even leaner than it looks."

While the numbers aren't finalized for this school year, \$854,848.50 in state and local tax dollars were paid for South Milwaukee students to go to private schools last year.

"We have to make this payment because of the Wisconsin Parental Choice program and the Special Needs Voucher program," Arnold shares. "When the District receives these dollars, they get turned around and sent to private schools. Basically, our budget is almost \$1 million less than it seems because of those laws."

Looking Ahead

Of course, city residents don't pay for the entire school budget. \$7.7 million is raised locally, while \$27.6 million, about 68 percent of the general fund revenue, comes from the State. The remainder comes from federal sources, students coming to South Milwaukee from other school districts, and other sources.

For two straight years, the State Legislature neglected to pass an increase in the District's revenue limit. That may sound fiscally responsible, but when costs rise because of inflation – be it the electric bill in the District's six schools or the cost of grass seed for the playing fields – it means that revenue doesn't go as far as it used to. A zero dollar per pupil increase to the revenue limit amounts to a cut. The biggest expense for schools is salaries – people who work with and for children. No increase in revenue plus higher costs may amount to reductions in staffing or other budgets.

"We're still in a manufactured crisis," Arnold reports. "The state has \$5 billion in excess funds the legislature is sitting on. If our elected officials in Madison had acted in the best interest of our students, we would have been exploring where to improve education at South Milwaukee, not tightening our belts and shrinking services to our students."

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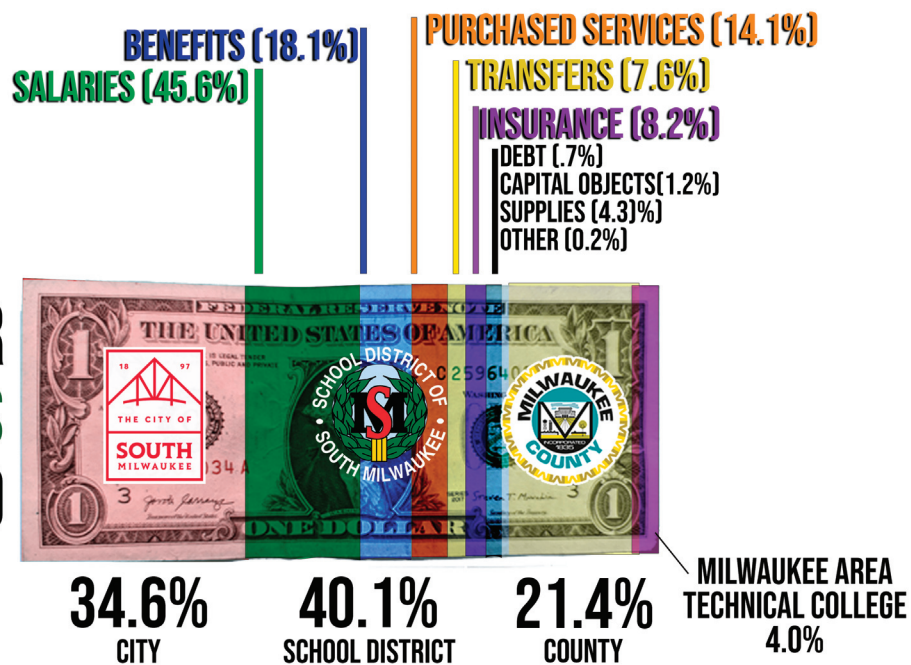
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► High School Debt Paid Off: How That Impacts Your Taxes

There was excitement in the air and celebrations when the doors opened to the new South Milwaukee High School in 2004. Superintendent David Ewald told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* that he hoped the building would usher in a “new era of academic excellence.” Thousands of students have passed through its doors since that first day, and four years later walked across its stage with a diploma.

A smaller, but no less significant milestone has been reached in the history of South Milwaukee. In April, a staff member in the Business Office pressed ‘enter’ on their keyboard and made the final bond payment on the \$42 million (in 2004 dollars) building. One can imagine some bits of hole-puncher confetti raining onto the office floor or a satisfied sip of sparkling water as the last payment went through.

“That last payment means we’re virtually debt-free,” reports Dan Arnold, the District’s new Director of Business Services. “I think it’s an example of how fiscally responsible this district has been for almost two decades.”

The end of that particular debt payment comes at a good time for residents of South Milwaukee. The mill rate – the amount a piece of property is taxed per \$1,000 of value – is projected to drop this year to \$7.96

from \$10.17 a year ago and \$11.35 in 2018-19.

That means a family with a house worth \$230,000 may see their tax burden decrease by \$500 this year. That’s some relief to taxpayers whose home values have gone up due to a housing shortage and inflation. Unfortunately, increased home values might mean the tax bill is higher, too, maybe just not as much as it might have been if the mill rate hadn’t decreased.

“If there were no shortage, if inflation wasn’t so high, a house worth \$230,000 might see its tax burden decrease by \$500 this year,” Arnold says. “That \$230,000 house is worth more now, though.”

How Your Tax Dollars Are Used

According to the City of South Milwaukee, for every \$1 in taxes, 40 cents goes to the School District, 34.6 cents goes to the City, 21.4 cents goes to Milwaukee County and 4 cents goes to Milwaukee Area Technical College.

For every \$1 the District receives, about 64 cents pays for teacher and staff salaries and benefits and 14 cents goes to purchased services like electricity and water. Hidden in that category are school vouchers – money the School District pays to private schools for South Milwaukee residents who enroll in them – that accounts for 1.6 cents of every dollar year). About

This summer, South Milwaukee IT staff spent their time assessing the usefulness of the old machines and unboxing and assigning the new machines.

"Step one was to unbox 1,500 devices for the middle and high schools," Gannon says. "The remaining 1,300 boxes were sent to the elementary schools to be distributed to students."

One-to-one computing – that is giving each student a laptop – made remote learning during the pandemic possible. "It's also likely that not every South Milwaukee family has a computer at home – let alone one for each of their children to do homework at the same time, so providing one is a necessity," Middle School Principal Jim Hendrickson says.

"Students – particularly at the secondary level – use their computers for notes, writing papers or preparing presentations. These are skills they'll need in the career and professional world. I'm encouraged and thankful that we can provide new, trouble-free computers so our students can focus on their work and not technology issues," he exclaims.

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Students test their new Chromebooks.

► New Chromebooks for Entire School District

Emergency Connectivity Fund Grant Offers Students Latest Technology

The lights were off in Alisa Brantz's seventh-grade classroom at South Milwaukee Middle School, and a sign on the door asked for quiet in the halls as her students took the i-Ready assessment. Brantz glided through the room, checking on her students, whose faces were lit by the sleek new black Chromebook computers they used to take the test.

If just one class were issued the new computers, that might not be big news, but this school year every single South Milwaukee student in grades 1-12 was issued a new computer thanks to a \$1.1 million federal Emergency Connectivity Fund grant designed to support remote learning and connectivity in schools.

"We bought them so that we would have one model throughout the District, instead of four different makes/models. This makes repair, replacement, and troubleshooting much easier," explains Brian Gannon, the District's Student Learning and Technology Coordinator.

Chromebooks are laptop computers that use Google's operating system and have word-processing, video, presentation, and email software (among others) built right in. They update themselves, have strong security

safeguards, and can be managed as a group for things like giving or restricting student access to non-school-related content.

There is also software for classroom management for teachers (Google Classroom) and from the student perspective, all work the same way so a teacher can help an individual student with a project or give instructions to the whole class without worrying that it might look different on different machines.

Though Chromebooks all run the same software, models from varied manufacturers behave differently, might have unique chargers, etc. South Milwaukee had four different models in circulation among students that were between one and four years old (relatively ancient for a computer) and in various conditions from everyday wear-and-tear.

The new devices cost \$395 each and were purchased in April. At the end of the 2021-22 school year, students turned in their old devices, which were put to good use.

"Many were sold to a vendor for parts, others are being used as loaners in classrooms and school libraries," Gannon says.



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Officers Jakob Horsley (left) and Adam Harnen will be keeping students and the school community safe this year.

► New School Resource Officers Serve and Protect in South Milwaukee

It takes a certain type of person to work with children – especially when you are a police officer. This school year, the District was assigned two new school resource officers (SRO) by the South Milwaukee Police Department. They are officers Adam Harnen and Jakob Horsley.

Horsley, a South Milwaukee alum, is new to the profession – he was sworn into duty in January, while Harnen has been an officer for three-and-a-half years. Both received specialized training to work in schools.

“We’re here to keep students and the school community safe,” Harnen says. “But I want to make a difference with kids and be a role model for kids.” Horsley agrees. “I became an SRO in an effort to build a positive relationship with my students and their families while maintaining a safe learning environment. It’s a chance to interact with law enforcement in ways other than traffic enforcement and emergency situations.”

Harnen works at the Middle School, and Blakewood and E.W. Luther Elementary Schools, plus Divine Mercy Catholic School. Horsley works in the South Milwaukee High School, Rawson and Lakeview Elementary Schools, and Zion School and Early Learning Center. Both officers agree the experience serving in schools is pretty much what they expected.

“Training and speaking with previous SROs helped guide my mindset from the first day of school forward,” Horsley says.

“Having these officers here is extremely valuable,” says District Safety Manager William Wesley. “Having an officer who is familiar with the building, with the staff and with the students is critical in an emergency. More broadly speaking, for the students to see a friendly face in uniform that they can interact with might give them perspective when they see police in the community or have an interaction with the future.”

For William Jessup, Chief of the South Milwaukee Police Department, the officers are part of the cross-agency school safety team.

“They help to promote a safe, supportive and peaceful school environment while developing positive relationships with students, educators and parents,” he says. “The work of our educators and staff is vitally important to the overall health of our community, and we are privileged to be included as part of the District team.”

For Officer Horsley, an alumnus whose graduation ceremony wasn’t all that long ago, it’s been a homecoming. “Many teachers still remember me from being in school and I met the children of a friend of mine that I have not spoken to in a while. It’s been great to be back.”

student learning – not just ‘what are we going to teach,’” Gajewski says. From an administrative standpoint, it requires coordination and guidance to make the most out of collaborative time. For the 2022-23 school year, eight early-release days have been planned where teachers are meant to get together and support each other and students regardless of whose room they’re sitting in.

“We want them to have really good conversations about the whole child,” Gajewski says.” At the middle and high school levels, with more teachers and more-staff student interactions, it gets more complicated.

“The time needed to pull all those educators together gets tricky.

So we’ve started small and our Collaborative Teacher Teams in grades 6-12 start by looking at their curriculum and courses first to make sure they’re aligned to standards and

“...what’s different with strategic collaboration is that teachers look at specific data sets to identify strengths and areas for growth.”

have common assessments,” Gajewski says. The goal is to move away from the top-down approach that has dominated education for 200 years.

“Our vision is the org itself moves toward a system where we’re all learning from each other and growing together,” Gajewski shares.

E.W. Luther Principal Eric Wightman says he understands families might be frustrated when an early-release day comes around. No one wants students in school more than the teachers, but he promises it will pay off. “There aren’t enough hours in the day to do this kind of work. We just need a little bit of time to make instruction more personalized for their kids,” he notes. Gesturing around the room and noting the focus of the teachers and their discussions, he says, “We know we’re making good use of that time.”

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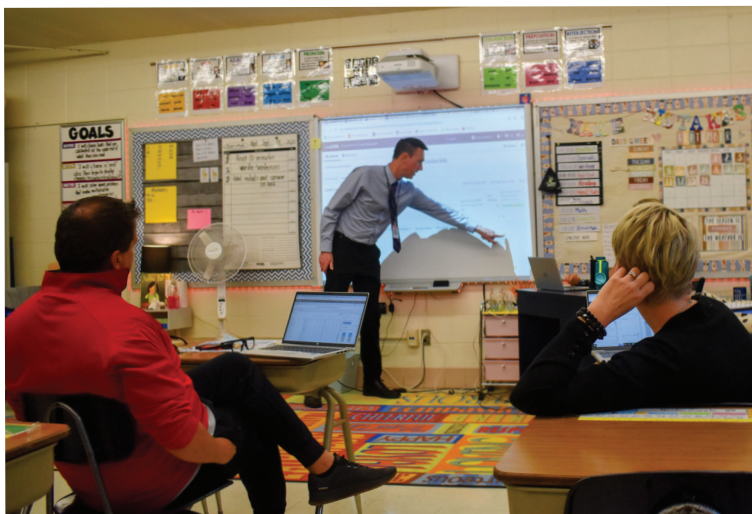
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Above: Principal Eric Wightman points to data during a PLC meeting.

Instructional Coach Jennifer Fischer and Principal Wightman discuss a student's progress.



▶ Learning Together About (And For) Students

Third grade teacher Aaron Jones held up a progress chart to show the other teachers in a classroom in E.W. Luther Elementary. Even though the school year just recently started, he said his students are eager to show him how much they've filled it in. The charts track how much progress they've made in an immersive online reading program.

Jones says he celebrates each student who fills theirs in completely. "For how long it takes, I make it a big celebration," he shares.

Fourth grade teacher Julianna Bauhs lights up. "Oh, that's great. Last year the fifth graders weren't that into it. Maybe since you got them excited last year, my fourth graders will be excited to do it."

Also in the room were new fourth grade teacher Lorin Rienzi, fifth grade teacher Lisa Gokey, special education teacher Natalie Eiting, and Principal Eric Wightman, plus instructional coach Jennifer Fischer.

That's a lot of names and titles, but that's the point. The meeting is an example of a Professional Learning Community or PLC. PLCs bring multiple voices and expertise together to review student successes and struggles. That might not sound like a new idea, but it is.

Schools typically work like a ladder. Finish first grade and take that knowledge up a rung to second grade where you build on the knowledge you have and grow it. So on and so forth until graduation. In that old system, there was limited dedicated time for school staff to focus holistically on students.

"Teachers assess students all day long and make adjustments as they learn," says Director of Instruction Christie Gajewski. "However, what's different with strategic collaboration is that teachers look at specific data sets to identify strengths and areas for growth. They work together to set specific goals and then monitor those goals and student growth towards

those goals by collaboratively reviewing the data three times a year. They then pass that data on to the next year's teacher so that the new teacher and students can start off strong."

Each teacher and each PLC should examine four main questions:

- What do we want students to know/learn?
- How will we know if they learned it?
- What will we do if they didn't learn it?
- What will we do for the students who already know it?

"They'll sit down and look at that information and see who's on track, who's struggling and then they bring all those pieces together to meet student needs," Gajewski explains. It's not just classroom teachers that are members of a PLC, either. Special education teachers and staff have input, as do social workers, therapists, instructional specialists, and school counselors.

"It's strategic collaboration around

6. Lee Waechter (far left in photo to the right) is the new principal at Blakewood Elementary School. Read more about this passionate educator on pg. 26. **7. and 8.** The Friends of the Mill Pond and Oak Creek Watercourse, Inc., hosted their annual duck race on July 30. The grand prize for the winning duck was \$500.



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OUT AND ABOUT IN THE CITY OF SOUTH MILWAUKEE

Welcome to the new fall season! Shorter days, cool and crisp weather, and color foliage remind us that the holidays will soon be here. Enjoy these beautiful days and take advantage of all the great happenings right here in South Milwaukee! Check out the Community Calendar on pg. 38 for upcoming special events and activities.

1. One of the creative illustrations by South Milwaukee alumnae Yushan Zeng, class of 2022. Yeng took third place in a design competition for the annual Wisconsin State Park Forest sticker competition (see pg. 27). **2.** Members from the Eaton Charitable Fund recently donated \$5,000 to the South Milwaukee Fire Department. **3.** An old-time fire truck carried South Milwaukee's last four mayors, and the current mayor, during the Heritage Days Parade in July (see pg. 6). **4.** Teachers at E.W. Lutheran Elementary School recently met as part of the South Milwaukee School District's Professional Learning Community (PLC). PLCs bring multiple voices and expertise together to review student successes and struggles (see pg. 34). **5.** An Honor Guard marches in the Heritage Days Parade (see pg. 6).



2023 City of South Milwaukee Garbage and Recycling Schedule

Garbage Pickup Weekly: So. Milwaukee Street Dept. 414.768.8075
Recycling Pickup Bi-Weekly: GFL Environmental 262.679.0860

Garbage and Recycling Pick-Up Dates for 2022-2023 Holidays

Holiday	Regular Pick-up	Rescheduled Garbage Pick-Up	Rescheduled Recycling Pick-Up
Thanksgiving Day	Thur., Nov. 24, 2022	Sat., Nov. 26, 2022	Sat., Nov. 26, 2021 Orange Week
<i>Note: Regular garbage will be picked up on Saturday; recycling will be on Friday.</i>			
Christmas Eve	Sat., Dec. 24, 2022	No schedule change	Orange Week
Christmas Day	Sun., Dec. 25, 2022	No schedule change	Yellow Week
New Year's Eve	Sat., Dec. 31, 2022	No schedule change	Yellow Week
New Year's Day	Sun., Jan. 1, 2023	No schedule change	Orange Week
Martin Luther King Day	Mon., Jan. 16, 2023	No schedule change	Fri., Jan. 20, 2023 Orange Week
<i>Note: Regular garbage will be picked up on Monday; recycling will be on Friday.</i>			
Memorial Day	Mon., May 29, 2023	Fridays, May 26 & Jun. 2, 2023	Fri., June 2, 2023 Yellow Week
4th of July	Tue., July 4, 2023	Fridays, June 30 & July 7, 2023	Fri., July 7, 2023 Orange Week
Labor Day	Mon., Sept. 4, 2023	Fridays, Sept. 1 & Sept. 8, 2023	Fri., Sept. 8, 2023 Yellow Week
Thanksgiving Day	Thur., Nov. 23, 2023	Sat., Nov. 25, 2023	Sat., Nov. 25, 2023 Orange Week
<i>Note: Regular garbage will be picked up on Saturday; recycling will be on Friday.</i>			
Christmas Eve	Sun, Dec. 24, 2023	No schedule change	Yellow Week
Christmas Day	Mon., Dec. 25, 2023	No schedule change	Yellow Week
New Year's Eve	Sun., Dec 31, 2023	No schedule change	Orange Week
New Year's Day	Mon., Jan 1, 2024	No schedule change	Orange Week

2023 RECYCLING SCHEDULE

To identify the recycling week where you live, check the recycling collection map on the City's website or call the Street Department.

2023

January							February							March							April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	29	30	31	1
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
29	30	31	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
																					30	1	2	3	4	5	6

May							June							July							August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
30	1	2	3	4	5	6	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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28	29	30	31	1	2	3	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31	1	2
														30	31	1	2	3	4	5							

September							October							November							December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
27	28	29	30	31	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
																					31	1	2	3	4	5	6

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Special events and activities are subject to change.
Please call ahead or visit digital platforms to confirm dates and times.

OCTOBER

- **Sat., Oct. 1: Fall Leaf Collection Begins** (through Nov. 15)
- **Tue., Oct. 25: In-person Absentee Voting Begins** at City Hall
- **Thur., Oct. 27: 125th Anniversary Gala** at Bucyrus Club (see pg. 6)
- **Mon., Oct. 31: Trick or Treating** 5:30-7:30 p.m., throughout the City of South Milwaukee

Trick
or
Treat

NOVEMBER

- **Tue. Nov. 1: Winter Parking Pass Sales Begins**
- **Fri., Nov. 4: Last Day to In-person Absentee Vote** at City Hall
- **Fri., Nov. 4: End of Quarter Half Day** for Middle School and High School dismissed at 11:55 a.m. Full day for Elementary School students
- **Sun., Nov. 6: Daylight Savings Time Ends**
- **Tues. Nov. 8: Election Day** (see voting info on pg. 8)
- **Fri., Nov. 11: Veterans' Day** 125th Anniversary Event
- **Tues., Nov. 15: Fall Leaf Collection Ends**
- **Nov. 16: Early Release Day** MS/HS dismissed at 1:30 p.m., Elementary Schools dismissed at 2:05 p.m.
- **Sat., Nov. 19: Old-Fashioned Christmas Celebration**
- **Thur., Nov. 24: Thanksgiving** All City Offices Closed
- **Fri., Nov. 25: All City Offices Closed**
- **Nov. 23-25: Thanksgiving break** for South Milwaukee Schools

DECEMBER

- **Thur., Dec. 1: Winter Parking Restrictions Begin**
- **Fri., Dec. 2: No School for Students** Professional Development Day.
- **Fri., Dec. 9: Elementary Schools End of Trimester** Elementary Schools dismissed at 11:45 a.m., full day for Middle and High School students

- **Fri. Dec. 23-Mon., Jan 2: Winter Break** for South Milwaukee School District
- **Fri., Dec. 23: All City Offices Closed**
- **Sun., Dec. 25: Christmas Day**
- **Mon., Dec. 26: All City Offices Closed**
- **Sat., Dec. 31: New Year's Eve**

JANUARY

- **Sun., Jan. 1: New Year's Day – All City Offices Closed**
- **Mon. Jan. 2: All City Offices Closed**
- **Wed., Jan. 11: Early Release Day** MS/HS dismissed at 1:30 p.m., Elementary Schools dismissed at 2:05 p.m.
- **Fri., Jan. 20: Half Day South Milwaukee School District** End of the Semester for Middle and High School students, MS/HS dismissed at 11:55 a.m. Elementary Schools dismissed at 11:45 a.m.

FEBRUARY

- **Fri., Feb. 3: No school for Students** Professional Development Day.
- **Wed., Feb. 8: Early Release Day** MS/HS dismissed at 1:30 p.m., Elementary Schools dismissed at 2:05 p.m.
- **Wed.-Thur., Feb. 22-23: Full School day** Parent-Teacher Conferences in the evening.
- **Fri., Feb. 24: Schools closed**

MARCH

- **Fri., Mar. 3: No School for Students** Professional Development Day.
- **Fri., Mar. 10: Elementary Schools End of Trimester** Elementary Schools dismissed at 11:45, full day for Middle and High School students
- **Wed., Mar. 15: Early Release Day** MS/HS dismissed at 1:30 p.m., Elementary Schools dismissed at 2:05 p.m.
- **Mon.-Fri., Mar. 27-31: Spring Break**

31
OCTOBER
2022

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TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE TURN ON
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NIGHT



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