



**January 15, 2016**

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## **State Senate Takes the Floor**

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On Tuesday, the Wisconsin Senate met for the first time this year to debate and pass a number of bills. In total, five joint resolutions, fifteen Senate Bills, and three Assembly Bills were passed - ALL with bipartisan support.

A number of bills on the agenda dealt with increasing public safety with an emphasis on protecting children. This included legislation granting a victim advocate to victims of sexual assault, human trafficking, or child abuse, a bill to increase the penalty for engaging in repeated acts of child abuse, and two bills that expand the protections for children in out-of-home care.

Two pieces of legislation that I co-authored were also on the agenda.

The first bill, Senate Bill 392, prohibits the Department of Trade and Consumer Protection from making rules requiring a gas station from installing an emergency telephone for the public.

Since the early 2000's gas stations have been required to have a phone if there were no employees on site. This came from a rule adopted by the then Wisconsin Department of Commerce. Now that DATCP is regulating, the interpretation has expanded to ALL gas stations (that close for a period time) to have phones.

It made sense back in the early 2000's that a gas station have a phone, however, with the prevalence of cell phones it really has become unnecessary and burdensome. This change does not impact the requirement for a gas station to have an emergency shut off button. It is recommended that in the case of a fire, a customer should hit this button (if possible), get to safety, and then call for help. It certainly doesn't make much sense for someone to stick around near the pumps if there is a fire.

The second bill, Assembly Bill 372, relates to the membership of the board of commissioners of lake districts. This legislation came at the request of a constituent and I authored the bill with Representative Swearingen.

Many of you are probably aware, but a county can establish a lake district, or more than one lake district, in the county. The lake district is governed by a board of commissioners and the board is made up of five members.

Earlier this session, there was a bill passed by the legislature that had some unintended consequences to lake district boards. The bill required that the municipal appointment to a lake district board be a resident of the lake district itself. Previously, the appointment was a member of the governing body - think town/village/city board. The bill I authored with Representative Swearingen would allow the appointment be either a resident of the lake district or a member of the governing body where the district lies.

The bill will provide more flexibility and allow town board members to continue to serve on a lake district board even if they are not residents of the lake district itself.

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## Ministry Health Care

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This week, Representative Rob Swearingen and I met with leaders from Ministry Health Care to learn more about the role telemedicine plays in providing medical services to rural areas of Northern Wisconsin.



(l to r: **Kathy Richard-Bess**, Regional Administrator, Ministry Medical Group; **Shish Sheth**, MD, Regional Vice President for Ministry Medical Group; **Representative Rob Swearingen**; **Paula Havisto**, PA-C; **Laurie Oungst**, Regional Vice President-Operations, Ministry Health Care; **John Almquist**, M.D., Regional Medical Director, Hospitalist Services, Ministry HealthCare; **Senator Tom Tiffany**; **Connie Schulze**, System Director, advocacy and Public Policy, Ministry Health Care)

Telemedicine uses telecommunication and information technologies to eliminate distance barriers and allows patients to see a physician located elsewhere. Ministry Health Care's telemedicine hospitalist program is nationally recognized as a leader in low readmission rates. The program uses the latest technology to gain access to specialist physicians throughout the Ministry system under the direction of Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioners (NP) who have received specialized, extended training.

The program helps address the physician shortage and challenging winter weather in Northern Wisconsin. It seems to be doing a good job expanding access to services in our area.

We also had the chance to talk with a few physician assistants about their role in rural healthcare. They are a big part of the health care system and really do a lot. It was a great opportunity to talk with PAs from various departments within the hospital.

I want to thank Ministry and everyone who made the visit possible. It was a great experience for myself and I appreciate them taking time out of their day to discuss these issues.

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## Snowmobile Derby

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Just a friendly reminder that this weekend is the 53rd AMSOIL World Championship Snowmobile derby. It is one of the largest gatherings of snowmobiles in the world. I will be attending tonight along with Governor Scott Walker and Representative Rob Swearingen.



I'd encourage you all to head over to Eagle River and enjoy the races. It's a great time and a whole lot of fun. Sunday is the final race!

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## DNR's Outdoor Report

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In the past week temperatures dropped markedly, ice formed and reformed across the state and snow in many areas finally held. Temperatures were on the rise again, but another cold snap is in the forecast for the weekend.

The cold temperatures finally have lakes in the southern half of the state making ice, but conditions remain highly variable. Lake Mendota and Monona froze over this week, but officials are urging people to use extreme caution as there are many areas of thin ice.

The freeze over was timely for [Free Fishing Weekend](#) in Wisconsin on Jan. 16 and 17. People can fish anywhere in Wisconsin without a license or trout stamp, including Wisconsin's side of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River. Other fishing rules, such as size and bag limits apply and any seasons when you must release certain fish species. Search the DNR Website for Free Fishing Weekend for events. In the north, walleye seem to be eluding many ice fishers recently, though some panfish anglers have been having more consistent success, with perch still being caught above crappie and bluegill. Managed trout lakes continue to see pressure, with browns, rainbow and brook trout still biting.

The cold snap was also good news for Sauk Prairie's Bald Eagle Watching Days, Jan. 15 and 16, and for A Day With Eagles Along the Fox River, held Jan. 16 and 17 in Appleton. Lake and river freeze-up is concentrating eagles at open water below dams. A Wisconsin River eagle survey found 165 eagles, nearly tripling the numbers reported in each of

the last two years when the river froze much earlier. Both events offer eagle watching opportunities as well as indoor activities to see eagles up close through live raptor shows, presentations and displays. Search the DNR website for "[bald eagle watching](#)" for details.

With snowfall in the forecast, things are looking up for the winter sports lovers. Additional counties have now opened snowmobile trails, including some in central Wisconsin, according to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism's [Snow Conditions Report](#). Trails along the most northern tier of counties are now being reported as good to very good. Trails in the central portion of the state are generally fair to poor.

Cross-country ski conditions are generally good to very good throughout the northern half of the state and along southern Lake Michigan counties, including the Kettle Moraine State Forest. The Horicon Marsh Visitor and Education Center is holding a candlelight event this Saturday, and people planning to attend are being urged to take shuttle busses that will be leaving from Horicon and Mayville. Last year the event attracted more than 2,000 people and parking at the center is very limited. A candlelight event is also being held at the Nordic trail in the Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine on Saturday. For a complete list of candlelight events, search the DNR website for "candlelight."

With all but the metro archery deer zones closed, and those finishing up in January, deer are on the move once again and highly visible throughout the state.

Snowy owls continue to be spotted and the calls of the great horned owl are beginning to echo, as their late January laying season approaches. Backyard feeder watchers report an uptick in activity with the cold, snowy conditions. Most notable are widespread reports of common redpolls, a small northern finch that enjoys thistle and sunflower seed alongside its goldfinch and siskin relatives.

#### **Antigo DNR Service Center area**

**Langlade County** - Most of the Antigo Area has less than 6 inches of snow on the ground. With the recent cold snap lakes have put on decent ice. Fishermen have reported up to 8 inches of ice on area lakes. However, the earlier rain and melting and freezing again have produced some "poor" ice conditions on some spots. Use caution. Snowy owls continue to be seen in the farm fields around Antigo. Cedar waxwings, pine siskins, chickadees and finches are common visitors to local bird feeders.- Eric J. Borchert, wildlife technician, Antigo

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## **Route 51**

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On Thursday, I was a guest on Glen Moberg's Route 51 radio show on Wisconsin Public Radio. I joined Glen and Representative Katrina Shankland (D-Steven's Point) to discuss our top legislative priorities moving forward.

I'd like to thank Glen for having me on the show.

If you'd like to listen to the show, you can check it out here: <http://www.wpr.org/shows/jan-14-2016-sen-tom-tiffany-and-rep-katrina-shankland>

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## **Governor Scott Walker Seeks Applicants for Langlade County District Attorney**

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Governor Scott Walker announced today that he is seeking applicants for appointment as Langlade County District Attorney.

The new appointee will replace outgoing District Attorney Ralph Uttke, who will be leaving office on March 13, 2016. The new appointee will serve out the remainder of the unexpired term and will be up for election in November

2016.

Please submit the following:

**I. Cover Letter**

**II. Short Resume**

**III. References (list of 3-4)**

**IV. D.A. Application:** found on Governor Walker’s website: [www.walker.wi.gov](http://www.walker.wi.gov). (Select “Governor’s Office” at the top of the page, “Apply to Serve,” then “District Attorney Applicants.” Click to download the online application.)

Resumes, cover letters, and applications must be received no later than **5:00 p.m., Friday, January 29, 2016**. Following submission, applicants will receive an email confirming that we have received the application and describing the general process for the appointment.

Potential applicants with questions about the appointments process should email their questions to [govdistrictattorney@wisconsin.gov](mailto:govdistrictattorney@wisconsin.gov). If you need to speak with someone immediately, you may contact Jennifer Roades at 608-266-1212.

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## Legislative Leaders Seek Ethics, Election Commission Applicants

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Assembly Speaker Robin Vos and Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald are seeking applications for their individual appointments to the newly created Ethics Commission and Elections Commission. Additionally, both leaders are requesting applications from former county clerks and former judges who would like to be included in the recommended pool of candidates for the governor to consider for his appointment to each of the commissions. Commission members are asked to serve five-year terms.

Applicants should submit the following for consideration:

**I. Cover Letter**

**II. Resume**

**III. References (Minimum of 3)**

Applications for the Elections Commission should be submitted to: [ElectionsCommission@legis.wi.gov](mailto:ElectionsCommission@legis.wi.gov)

Applications for the Ethics Commission should be submitted to: [EthicsCommission@legis.wi.gov](mailto:EthicsCommission@legis.wi.gov)

All applications must be received by the close of business on Friday, January 22, 2016. Appointees may begin duties on February 1. The new commissions, in accordance with 2015 Wisconsin Act 118, will take effect July 1, 2016.

Questions regarding the application process can be directed to the offices of the Assembly Speaker and Senate Majority Leader.

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## Calendar of Events

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### Upcoming Events

Start Date		Location
January 14 - 17	<a href="#"><u>AMSOIL World Championship Snowmobile Derby</u></a>	Eagle River
January 14 - 16	<a href="#"><u>Women on Snow</u></a>	Lakewood
January 16	<a href="#"><u>Merrill Ice Drags</u></a>	Merrill
January 17	<a href="#"><u>Broomball Tournament</u></a>	Antigo
January 23	<a href="#"><u>Great Northern Ice Fishing Tournament</u></a>	Phelps
January 23	<a href="#"><u>Merrill Winterfest Sled Dog Race</u></a>	Merrill
January 29 - 31	<a href="#"><u>Women on Snow Weekend &amp; Tour</u></a>	Eagle River
January 30	<a href="#"><u>Blindfold Snowmobile Races</u></a>	Phelps
January 30	<a href="#"><u>Fibber's Annual Ice Fishing Tournament</u></a>	St. Germain
January 30	<a href="#"><u>Ice Cold Beer Fest</u></a>	Minocqua
January 30	<a href="#"><u>Langlade County-Wide Snowmobile Ride</u></a>	White Lake
February 3 - 4	<a href="#"><u>Annual Groomer Show</u></a>	St. Germain
February 5 - 7	<a href="#"><u>Labatt Blue US Adult Pond Hockey Championship</u></a>	Eagle River
February 7	<a href="#"><u>Manitowish Waters Sno-Skeeter Breakfast</u></a>	Manitowish Waters
February 14	<a href="#"><u>Manitowish Waters Sno-Skeeter Winterfest Rendezvous</u></a>	Manitowish Waters

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As always, if you have any comments or thoughts regarding the subjects of this e-update, please feel free to contact me.

If you would like to be removed from future mailings, [email me](#) and ask to unsubscribe.

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