



ROBERT W. WIRCH

STATE SENATOR TWENTY-SECOND DISTRICT

March 21, 2021



Dear friend,

This is one of the best times of the year. The days are longer, the temperatures are a little warmer, and the sun is a little brighter. The birds are coming back, and we're starting to see bits of green in the yard. This year, in addition to the improving weather, we're feeling some relief with the increased Covid vaccination numbers. While we aren't out of the woods yet, I'm hopeful that we'll be able to have a much more "normal" summer. We can do more than "hope", though. We have the power to make that a reality. Continue masking and taking the necessary precautions. When it's your turn, get the Covid vaccination, and encourage any hesitant family or friends to get theirs, as well. If we all do our part, we can put this nightmare in our rearview mirror. Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bob".

In Case You Missed It

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



Swede's Brings a Bit of the Northwoods to Kenosha

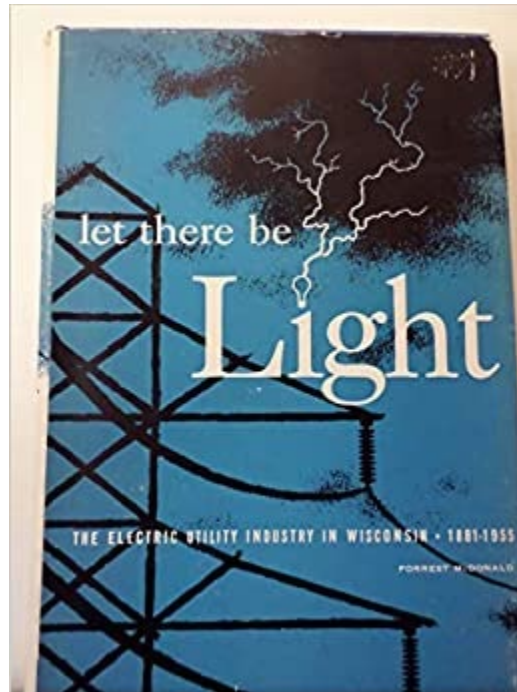


Eric Olson believed in three core values: love others; support the community; and behold traditions. Eric was known for the longstanding Tom and Jerry Christmas Eve fundraiser at tg's in Kenosha. After he passed away in 2016 after a long illness, his nephew, Jon, kept Eric's spirit alive at his new bar and restaurant, Swede's, named for Eric's nickname, "The Big Swede". Family is key at Swede's, as Jon's brother, Frank, and his aunt, Joan, as well as family friend, Vinnie DeMarino, Jr., are co-owners. They have carried on the Christmas Eve Tom and Jerry fundraiser in their new establishment. They keep their menu small and simple, focusing on doing a few things but doing them really well. With a relaxed vibe and Northwoods decor, everyone will feel comfortable and welcome at Swede's. They have lunch and dinner specials and open early for Badger and Packer games. Check out their Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/Swedescenosha/?ref=page_internal, and website, <https://www.swedescenosha.com/>.



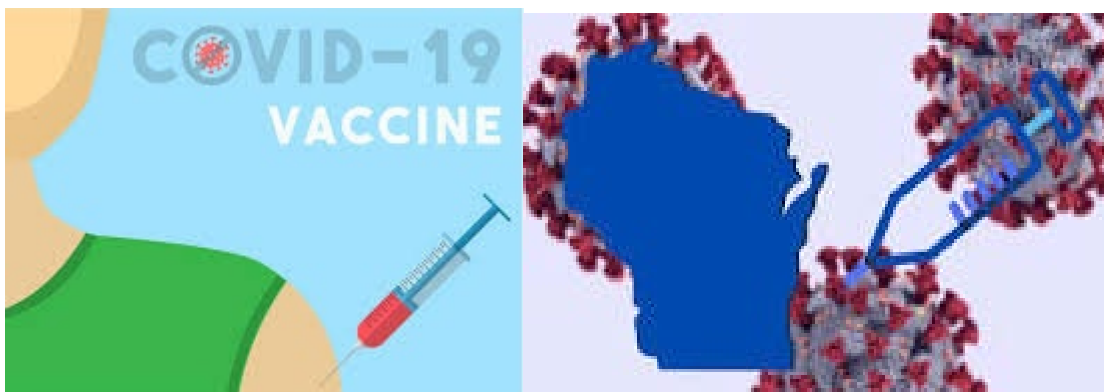
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Utility Disconnection Moratorium Will Come to an End in April

Beginning April 15, residential and business utility customers in Wisconsin can once again have their services shut off for nonpayment. A statewide moratorium on disconnections had been in place for the last year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, with case numbers leveling off and more people being vaccinated each day, the state Public Service Commission voted to allow disconnections to resume next month. The news gives customers behind on their bills almost a month to set up a payment plan with their utility provider to avoid disconnection.



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Wisconsin Still Among National Leaders in Vaccine Distribution

Wisconsin remains one of the best states in the nation in terms of vaccine distribution, as the Department of Health Services announced that the people with certain pre-existing medical conditions will now become eligible on March 22, a week earlier than originally planned. You can see a list of these conditions at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-about.htm>.

Kenosha County operates a Covid-19 Vaccine Call Center. The call center is open to people who don't have access to schedule a vaccination appointment online. These people can call (262)605-6799 to speak with someone who will walk them through the appointment process, if they are eligible. The online list of Kenosha County Covid vaccine providers is still available, at <http://bit.ly/KCCCOVIDHub>, as well. The new Kenosha County Covid Vaccination Clinic site, located inside the former Shopko at 5300 52nd St., is now operational. You can use the above link to find appointment times.

People in Racine can sign up for email updates on vaccination progress at <https://crchd.com/covid-19-vaccine>. A list of Racine area vaccination providers is available at <https://crchd.com/covid-19-vaccine#Locations>. Festival Hall has been opened up as a vaccination clinic site. Use the first link to receive information on vaccination appointment availability.



Legislative Republicans Again Force Unemployed Wisconsinites to Wait a Week Before Receiving Benefits, Put Federal Money in Jeopardy

Republican leaders in the State Legislature continue to toy with out-of-work Wisconsinites, again allowing Wisconsin's unemployment benefit one-week waiting period to go back into effect. This has been a pattern of Republicans throughout the pandemic, at both the state and federal level - constantly changing rules, regulations, requirements and deadlines have created confusion among the unemployed and difficulty in keeping the state's UI system up-to-date. Making matters worse, the federal government is offering enhanced funding specifically to states without a waiting period; last spring Wisconsin lost out on \$25 million because Republican leadership waited too long to suspend the waiting week here. Last month, as part of Governor Evers' special session to modernize our state UI system, Republicans reinstated the waiting week waiver through March 14; Democrats attempted to amend the bill to keep the waiting week waiver in place as long as the federal government was offering the enhanced funding but were voted down by Republicans. At the federal level, where Republicans held a majority in the Senate until January, Mitch McConnell, former President Trump and others



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allowed federal unemployment programs like Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation to expire, only to reauthorize them weeks later, leading to confusion and delays in payments to millions of Americans.



Housing Assistance

Racine County Housing Voucher Waiting List to Open for Three Day Window

Beginning on Monday, March 22 at 8 am and running through 4 pm on Wednesday, March 24, the Racine County Housing Authority will be taking applications for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program Online Lottery. Only online applications will be accepted. Out of all applications received, a random computerized selection program will select 1,500 applications, with priority given to locals. Those will be added to the existing Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list. If you are interested, you can apply at waitlistcheck.com/WI1383. For more on the program, including eligibility guidelines, visit <https://www.rcha.org/>.

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Republicans on State Building Commission Vote Against Governor Evers' Planned Projects, Including Kenosha Innovation Center

In a blow to the project's prospects, all Republican lawmakers on the State Building Commission voted against each of the ninety projects proposed by Governor Tony Evers as part of his Capital Budget, including nearly \$10 million in funding for the Kenosha Innovation Center project. This isn't a deathblow to the future of the projects, however. The Legislature's Joint Finance Committee (JFC) will next have a chance to decide which projects to include in the new two-year state budget. The JFC is also controlled by Republicans, so if you'd like to tell the committee's co-chairs how important the Kenosha Innovation Center is, you can find their contact information [here](#).

BADGER BOUNCEBACK

LIVE SESSIONS

Budget News and Details, Including Listening Sessions

To read a detailed and in-depth analysis of Governor Evers' budget proposal, you can visit the Department of Administration's Executive Budget page, <https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/2021-23%20Executive%20Budget.aspx>. You can also find a nonpartisan analysis of the Governor's budget proposal by the Legislative Reference Bureau at https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/misc/lrb/010_2021_budget_bill_analysis.pdf. On March 18, Evers held his first of six budget listening sessions, this one on Economic Recovery & Opportunity. **Governor Evers will hold five additional listening sessions on different budget topics: Accessible and Affordable Healthcare; Transportation and Infrastructure; What's Best for Our Kids; Justice Reform and Marijuana Legalization; and Climate Change & our Environment.** You can find dates and times, as well as instructions for registration, [here](#).

The Legislature's Joint Finance Committee will be holding four public hearings on the budget; three will be held in person, in different parts of the state, and one will be virtual, allowing for participation from all parts of Wisconsin. You can find the locations, dates and times, and more [here](#).



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Questions About Your Federal Stimulus Payments?

If you have questions about the latest round of federal stimulus or have reason to believe that your check was misdirected or lost in the mail, contact Congressman Bryan Steil. His staff is best positioned to offer assistance. Congressman Steil's Kenosha office can be reached at (262)654-1901, and his Racine office number is (262)637-0510.



Local Covid Testing Options

There are a number of options locally for anyone looking to get tested. Your primary health care provider is always an option, but there are many community testing sites available, as well.

CVS Pharmacy: Drive-through testing available at CVS in Kenosha (3710 57th Ave.) and Racine (3915 Durand Ave.); advance registration required at <https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing>

Froedert South: Drive-through testing is available to those who qualify after completing an initial phone evaluation at (262)671-7777 between 8 am and 4:30 pm Monday-Friday

Kenosha Community Medical Center: A drive-through testing site at the former Chase Bank, 5506 Seventh Ave., is open to patients who complete a quick registration process at

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<https://www.kenoshachc.org/covid-19-resource-center/>. Testing is conducted Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 am to 4 pm.

Old Kenosha Fire Station No. 3: Free, drive-through testing will be offered during the following hours at the former No. 3 Fire Station, 2121 Roosevelt Rd., Kenosha: Tuesdays, 2-6 pm; Thursdays, 2-6 pm; Saturdays, 9 am - 1 pm. This testing is being offered in a partnership between locally-owned Modern Apothecary, the Wisconsin DHS, and the Kenosha Fire Department. An appointment and preregistration is strongly encouraged, with appointment times available at <https://modernapothecary.10to8.com> and registration available at <https://register.covidconnect.wi.gov>. Anyone who lives or works in Wisconsin, ages 5 and over, can be tested.

UW System schools statewide, including Parkside, have been provided with a limited number of rapid-result Covid-19 tests. These tests provide results in 15-30 minutes. The tests are free of charge and available to the public, and you don't have to have symptoms to get a test. A positive rapid test will need to be confirmed with the regular Covid-19 test but will provide you some guidance on whether or not you need to quarantine during that period. Registration at <https://www.doineedacovid19test.com> is required. The tests are administered in De Simone Gym in the SAC on the Parkside campus Monday-Thursday, 9 am - 5 pm, and Friday, 9 am - 1 pm. Testing is expected to last at least several weeks.

<https://www.uwp.edu/explore/news/surge-testing.cfm>