



ROBERT W. WIRCH

STATE SENATOR TWENTY-SECOND DISTRICT

March 26, 2021



Dear friend,

April 1 is Opening Day for Major League Baseball. That brings with it a lot of excitement, even more so this year as a limited number of fans will be able to attend each game. This is great news not just for baseball fans, but symbolically for all of us who are anxious for a return to “normal”. With more and more people being vaccinated every day, that goal is fully within our reach. Our actions over the next few weeks and months will determine where we go from here. The temptation is there, with cases somewhat lowered and vaccines in arms, to think that we can all go back to how things used to be. We aren’t there yet. We must continue to mask and take precautions, at least until we reach “herd immunity”. What we do now will determine the course of the virus from here on out. Stay safe, and stay healthy.

Sincerely,

Bob

In Case You Missed It

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



Orange Thread Collection Gives New Life to Retro Fashions



In May of 2020, Kristyn Bartlett took over Orange Thread Collection and breathed new life into a dormant business. In taking over the resale shop, she aims to also breathe new life into some retro fashions. Taking over a small business during a global pandemic was definitely risky, but the risk seems to be paying off. Bartlett says she appreciates the support she has received from other local business owners, and she has adapted her business model on the fly to best serve her clientele in these “interesting” times. By offering private shopping times, increased online shopping and curbside pickup, as well as capacity limits and stringent sanitation guidelines, Bartlett has been able to keep the shop going. Orange Thread offers unique and interesting pieces and garments that you won’t find anywhere else. Check them out on their [website](#) or [Facebook](#) to find out more, including store hours.



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Early, In-Person Absentee Voting Begins for April 6 Election

In-person absentee voting has now opened up for the April 6 election. Hours and locations vary by municipality, and Covid is still causing some locations to be open by appointment only, so your best bet is to contact your local clerk. See below for contact information:

City of Kenosha Clerk Matt Krauter: (262)653-2040, clerk@kenosha.org

City of Racine Clerk Tara Coolidge: (262)636-9171, <https://www.cityofracine.org/Clerk/Contact-Us/>

Village/Town of Somers Clerk Mary Ann Cole: (262)859-2822, mcole@somers.org

Village of Mount Pleasant Clerk Stephanie Kohlhagen: (262)664-7800, skohlhagen@mtpleasantwi.gov

Village of Elmwood Park Clerk Christophe Jenkins: (262)707-3959, chris.jenkins@vil.ep.wi.us



Republican Leaders Applaud Evers Administration's Vaccination Progress

Wisconsin remains one of the best states in the nation in terms of vaccine distribution, with even Republican leadership in the State Legislature, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) and Senate

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Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu acknowledging the tremendous progress that has been made by the Evers administration (https://madison.com/wsj/news/local/govt-and-politics/wisconsin-gop-leaders-praise-states-vaccination-efforts/article_15130334-abba-5b6d-b360-b0c12c4ce044.html). People with certain pre-existing medical conditions are now eligible. 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.



City of Racine Schedules Spring Leaf Collection

The City of Racine's Public Works Department will hold its spring leaf collection from Monday, April 5, through Friday, April 16. Residents can place leaves, yard waste and branches, no greater than 4" long and 3" in diameter, bundled with rope or twine to no greater than 2' diameter into the street gutters for collection. These materials can be placed no earlier than the day before and no later than 7 am the day of your scheduled collection dates. Leaves or yard waste in bags or containers will not be accepted, and you may not rake leaves or yard waste into alleys. For a guide to collection dates for your area, visit

https://www.cityofracine.org/uploadedFiles/_MainSiteContent/_Home/News/_Documents/2021%20Spring%20Leaf%20Collection.pdf.



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Equal Pay Day 2021 Puts Spotlight on Gender Wage Gap

It's hard to believe that in the year 2021 we are still talking about a very-real pay discrepancy between men and women, but here we are. This year, March 24 marked Equal Pay Day, the point into the current year that a woman, working full-time, year-round, must continue to work to earn what a man would have made in the previous year. Nationally, women earn \$0.82 for every dollar earned by a man; in Wisconsin, it is \$0.81 for every dollar. The gap is even greater for Black, Asian American, Latinx and Native women.

In 2019, Wisconsin women made up 48% of the state's labor force. In 2009, Wisconsin Democrats, led by my friend former State Sen. Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay), passed the Equal Pay Enforcement Act. I was proud to co-sponsor this bill, which then-Governor Doyle signed into law. The act gave workers greater access to the court system to challenge pay discrimination based on gender, age or military status. To our delight, it was working - between 2010 and 2014, Wisconsin caught up to and even performed better than the US as a whole in terms of pay gap. That changed, however, when Scott Walker and his Republican allies in the State Legislature repealed the Equal Pay Enforcement Act. In 2015, the trend toward progress in Wisconsin reversed, and the state's gender pay gap widened, falling behind the national average, where it remains today. You can find more [here](#) and [here](#).

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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, and on March 25, the session on Accessible and Affordable Healthcare took place.

Governor Evers will hold four additional listening sessions on different budget topics: 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](#).



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.



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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 <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.

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