

July 2, 2021



Dear friend,

Happy Independence Day. I was able to participate in the Kenosha Civic Veterans Parade last weekend, and it was so nice to be back among the people. I hope that you and your families are able to get out and celebrate a little bit this weekend, as well. The 4th of July is often recognized as the midway point of summer, even though summer officially started just a couple of weeks ago, so enjoy it while it lasts. Wishing you all a safe and happy 4th.

Sincerely,

Bob

In Case You Missed It

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



Summer's Garden Has the Perfect Arrangement for Your Special Occasion or "Just Because"



Owners Kevin and Lyna Postuchow have nearly 60 years of experience in the floral industry between them, making A Summer's Garden the perfect place to get your arrangement for any occasion. A Summer's Garden offers same-day hand-delivery of premium floral arrangements and gift baskets to meet your every need. Ordering is quick and easy and available 24/7 through their [website](#), and more information can be found on [Facebook](#).



Legislature Passes "Missed Opportunities" Budget

The 2021-2023 state budget bill has now been passed by both houses of the State Legislature. The version of the budget that made it through the Legislature is far different – far inferior – to the budget proposed back in February by Governor Tony Evers. In the last update, I outlined a number of areas where the budget bill was lacking, including an underfunding of K-12 and special education; almost no money for homelessness prevention programs that have had bipartisan support; removal of \$10 million for the Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood which had been recommended by the Governor; failure to expand Medicaid and capture the \$1.6 billion in federal funds over the biennium that would come with it; a \$3.4 billion giveaway to the rich; and a failure to fund upgrades of the state's 50 year old, outdated

unemployment benefit claim processing system. There are others, of course, just as there are things in the budget that I support; with the previously-unexpected \$4.4 billion in new revenue, this budget could have been transformational for the people of Wisconsin. During the Senate floor debate, my Democratic colleagues and I offered an amendment which would have substituted the Governor's budget proposal, modified to include a true middle-class tax cut, for the Joint Finance Committee-approved budget, but the motion was defeated along party lines. Given that I have but one vote on the budget, yes or no on the entire document, and the inadequacies in the budget bill, I had to vote "no". You can read my statement on budget passage [here](#).



Budget Bill Awaits Governor's Action

With the full Legislature's passage of the 2021-2023 state budget bill, it now heads to Governor Evers' desk. With most bills that are approved by the Legislature, the Governor can either sign them into law or veto them. The budget bill is a little different, however, where line item, or partial, vetos are possible. The Governor of Wisconsin's partial veto power on budget bills dates back to 1930, following a five year process begun with the intention of checking the power of massive "omnibus" bills full of policies attached to budget bills that the Governor might be reluctant to veto in their entirety. For several decades after this, Governors used their partial veto power to simply strike out sections of larger budget bills to avoid vetoing the whole thing. Over the decades, Governors have gotten creative, striking sentences or even single words to change the meaning of a provision. Governor Tommy Thompson was especially prolific; in 1991 he issued 457 partial vetoes, which is still the record today. In 1990, the state's voters approved an amendment to the partial veto clause that eliminated what some called the "Vanna White" veto, whereby a Governor (again, Tommy Thompson was most known for this) would strike out letters to create whole new words, radically altering the meaning of the text. In 2008, the issue of the "Frankenstein Veto", whereby a Governor would create a new sentence by striking out portions of other sentences, was put before state voters, who approved an amendment banning the practice with 71% of the vote. The courts have somewhat narrowed the gubernatorial partial veto powers over time, but Wisconsin still retains one of the more powerful partial vetoes in the nation. It's always an interesting time waiting to see what actions a Governor takes once a state budget is passed by the Legislature.



City of Kenosha Moving Forward with Innovation Neighborhood after Republicans Cut Funding from State Budget

Despite the best efforts of Rep. Tip McGuire, Rep. Tod Ohnstad and me, along with our Democratic colleagues in the Senate and Assembly, the Republican version of the state budget was passed, and it removed the nearly \$10 million that Governor Tony Evers has proposed for the Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood project. Mayor John Antaramian isn't letting that stop him, though, as he is continuing to search for new funding sources. Mayor Antaramian remains optimistic about the future of the project, and I will do all that I can to help make it a reality.



Racine's Jennifer Schmidt Crowned 'Miss Wisconsin', Will Compete in 'Miss America' Pageant

Continuing a proud recent tradition of Southeast Wisconsin excellence, Jennifer Schmidt of Racine has been named Miss Wisconsin 2021; she will next represent the state at the prestigious Miss American pageant in Uncasville, Connecticut, this December. Jennifer is a 2014 graduate of The Prairie School and ran on a platform titled, "Diabetes, YOU have the Control". She says she was inspired by her grandmother's struggle with Type 2 diabetes; she will spend the next year promoting and educating people all around the state about her initiative. Schmidt has already been active in efforts to combat the illness, spending eight years as a volunteer with the American Diabetes Association; serving as a liaison for the ADA and the state of Wisconsin as a National Ambassador; managing donor relations for the ADA; and serving as Director of Donor Relations for Operation Not Alone. Jennifer has earned over \$13,000 in scholarships through her pageant competitions. She is a first generation college graduate, earning a Bachelor's Degree in Rehabilitation/Psychology from UW-Madison.

You can follow Jennifer as she travels the state – and beyond – on Instagram [@MissAmericaWI](https://www.instagram.com/MissAmericaWI) or [@MissWIOrg](https://www.instagram.com/MissWIOrg) or on Facebook at the [Miss Wisconsin page](https://www.facebook.com/MissWisconsin).



Find Local Independence Day Celebrations

Racine will hold its 4th Fest parade and fireworks on Monday, July 5; find more on these and Racine's other weekend Independence Day activities [here](#). In Kenosha, there will be music and fireworks along the lakefront this weekend; read more [here](#).