

**July 16, 2021**



**Dear friend,**

**We're back. Post-budget passage, the news slowed down a bit, but I am here to update you on the Governor's signing of the budget and what it means, as well as a few other stories of local and statewide interest. I hope you are all having a safe and healthy summer. July 11 through 17 has been designated Operation Safe Driver Week across the country. This is a safe-driving awareness and outreach initiative aimed at improving driving behaviors. The focus of this year's Operation Safe Driver week is speeding because, despite the drop in roadway travel last year due to the pandemic, traffic fatalities nationwide actually increased. Since 2008, speed has been a factor in more than a quarter of all crash deaths, and speeding of any kind is the most frequent driver-related crash factor. Crashes due at least in part to speeding kill more than 25 people per day. You can learn more about Operation Safe Driver Week [here](#). Stay safe and cool.**

**Sincerely,**

*Bob*

## In Case You Missed It

# small business **SPOTLIGHT**



### *Lornacopia is a Clothing Store for All Occasions*



Lorna Revere, owner of Lornacopia, 310 Sixth St. in Racine, has always had a passion for fashion. She loves helping people look and feel their best for any occasion, from the fancy dinner party to the backyard barbecue. A “Best of Racine” award winner year after year, Lornacopia offers a unique selection, with one-of-a-kind items imported from around the world. The store offers both designer and everyday brands at affordable prices; many of their items are on consignment, gently used but looking brand new. Lornacopia has a friendly and knowledgeable staff, led by general manager Sandy Volpintesta, which keeps their loyal customer base coming back again and again. In addition, you can browse their items on their website, [Lornacopia.com](http://Lornacopia.com), or their [Facebook page](#).



### *Using Veto Pen, Governor Evers Improves, Signs Budget Providing Tax Cut; Pledges More Money for Schools Budget Bill Awaits Governor's Action*

After issuing fifty full or partial vetoes, Governor Evers signed the 2021-2023 state budget bill into law late last week. At the bill signing, the Governor acknowledged that the budget doesn't

go far enough in many ways and misses some opportunities. A Wisconsin Supreme Court decision from last year made substantially changing the budget through partial vetoes more difficult, and if the state had gone without a new budget for any real length of time, billions of dollars in federal Covid aid would have been at risk. This left the Governor one choice – improve the budget that was passed by the Legislature, the first to receive votes from members of both parties since 2007, as much as he could. While campaigning for the job in 2018, Evers promised to cut taxes by 10% for middle-class families; with the tax cut in his budget, middle-class families will have their taxes cut by 15% since Evers took office.



Personal care givers, hard working men and women who take care of our seniors and people with disabilities, allowing them to stay in their homes, will get a long-overdue pay raise, in both January 2022 and January 2023, helping address a shortage. Medicaid reimbursement rates for nursing homes and dentists will get a boost.



The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program is safe for another four years. Expansion of I-94's east-west corridor will finally be completed. There is increased reimbursement for mental health services and autism treatment; more money for opioid treatment programs; additional funds to help bring down Wisconsin's health care premiums. Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) programs are getting more; so is the Alzheimer's Family and Caregivers Support Program. The state will resume 2/3 funding of our neighborhood schools for the first time in two decades. You can read more [here](#).



He didn't settle for "good enough", however; he used another tool at his disposal to make it better. a big problem that many of us had with the budget bill that passed the Legislature was the underfunding of K-12 education; Governor Evers has pledged to use \$100 million of the state's federal Covid relief funds for schools. "Other people playing politics hasn't stopped me from doing what's best for our

kids before, and it's not going to stop me today," Evers said in announcing the budget signing and new school funds.



## ***Republicans Strip Funding for MIA Recovery Project from State Budget, Reject Attempts to Restore It***

One area of the budget bill that the Governor couldn't fix with his pen was funding for the UW-Madison Missing in Action Recovery and Identification Program (known as the MIA Program).

Started in 2015, the program allows a team of faculty, students and other staff from a number of different fields to assist in the discovery, exhumation, identification and return of remains of missing-in-action American service members. As of May 2020, the U.S. Department of Defense officially listed 81,900 American service members as still "missing in action". The MIA Project has brought relief and closure to a number of families who have waited decades for answers on what happened to their loved ones. During the 2019-2020 legislative session, I co-sponsored bipartisan legislation that would have provided \$180,000 per year in state funding for the MIA Project; the bill was passed in different forms by the two houses of the Legislature, and Covid hit before a compromise could be reached. Governor Evers included annual funding for the project in his budget proposal as part of his commitment to veterans and military families; however, the Republican-controlled Joint Finance Committee removed this provision as they voted on the individual aspects of the budget proposal. On the Senate floor, my colleague, Sen. Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee) offered an amendment, which I co-sponsored, that would have restored the funding; the amendment was defeated on a party-line vote. I think it is shameful that Republicans in the Legislature have put partisan politics ahead of military families who have sacrificed so much and simply want to know what happened to their lost brother, father, aunt, wife or son.



## ***Racine County, Feeding America, Giving to the Nations Team Up for Food and Household Care Package Giveaway***

Racine County, in partnership with Feeding America, Giving to the Nations and other community sponsors, invites you to pick up a **FREE** care package with essential items to help your family. Items include: pasta, ready-to-go meals, canned items, etc.; cleaning supplies, toiletries and other household items; and some other fun additions. Supplies are limited, so it's one box per family. A mobile vaccination clinic will be present, as well, if you or someone you know still needs your Covid-19 vaccination. See details below:

**DATE/TIME:** *Wed., July 28, 2021*

*10 am – 1 pm*

**LOCATION:** *1220 N. Ohio St., Mount Pleasant (at the Intersection of Spring St. and Green Bay Rd.)*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** *Contact Travis Richards, (262)636-3721*



## ***Evers Commits \$130 Million to Address Workforce Shortage***

Many employers in Wisconsin are having trouble finding people to fill positions. There is no denying that; it was a problem before Covid, and it's a problem now. Our state's aging and shifting populations are partly to blame; a lack of transportation and/or affordable child care, made worse by Covid, are also factors. Earlier this week, Governor Evers announced that he is putting \$130 million of Wisconsin's federal Covid relief money toward tackling the problem.

Of the money, \$20 million will go to the state Department of Workforce Development to administer a worker advancement initiative, which will provide subsidized employment and skills training with local employers. Another \$100 million will be used to establish a workforce innovation program that will offer up to \$10 million in grants to at least 10 local and regional collaborations that develop initiatives to help connect employers and workers. The final \$10 million will create a worker connection program to assist individuals attempting to find work and reduce barriers preventing full participation in the workforce. According to WEDC Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes, the \$100 million grant program could support a whole host of projects, including addressing child care needs or transportation barriers. The grant program is expected to launch as early as this fall. You can read the full announcement [here](#).



## ***City of Kenosha Now Accepting Applications for CDBG Funds***

The Kenosha Department of City Development is now accepting proposals from eligible not-for-profit organizations for grants through the 2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Each funded activity must meet at least one of the national objectives of the CDBG Program: a) Benefitting low and moderate income persons; b) Aiding in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight. Proposals will be accepted until 10 am on Friday, August 6, 2021, and must address the City of Kenosha's 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan. Application forms, the Consolidated Plan and the Fund Allocation Plan are available at: the Dept. of City Development, 625 52<sup>nd</sup> St., Room 308; online at [kenoshacdbg.org](http://kenoshacdbg.org).