

**August 6, 2021**



**Dear friend,**

**August is National Black Business Month, a time when we recognize Black-owned businesses across the country. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there are approximately two million Black-owned businesses in the U.S., accounting for about 10% of all businesses, proportionally below the 13.1% Black or African American share of the U.S. adult population. The last 18 months have hit Black-owned businesses particularly hard. Researchers at UC-Santa Cruz found that 41% of Black-owned businesses had been closed due to the pandemic, versus just 17% of white-owned businesses. That makes it especially important that we take time this month to recognize and lift up Black-owned businesses in our community. Stay safe and healthy.**

**Sincerely,**

*Bob*

## In Case You Missed It

# small business **SPOTLIGHT**



### *Cheryl Farrand Channels Her Passion for Decorating into The Pine Blossom*



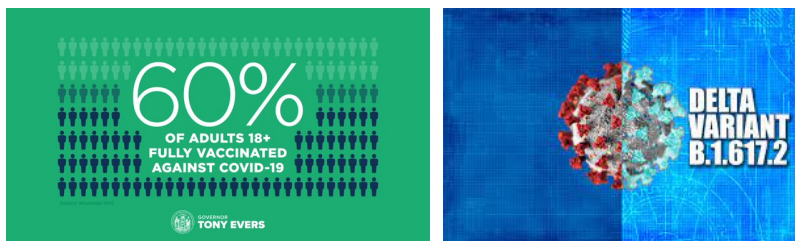
The Pine Blossom, 5925 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. A in Kenosha, offers an assortment of products ranging from locally handcrafted home décor items and jewelry, to refurbished furniture pieces, seasonal displays and women's clothing. Twenty carefully-chosen local consignors offer a variety of one-of-a-kind items. If you are looking for unique and affordable, The Pine Blossom likely has something for you. Find out more, including hours, on [Facebook](#).



## ***Republican Legislative Committee Votes to Prohibit UW Schools from Taking Covid Precautions***

Earlier this week, the State Legislature's Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules (JCRAR), controlled by Republicans and co-chaired by Sen. Steve Nass (R-Whitewater) and Rep. Adam Neylon (R-Pewaukee), voted along party lines to require all UW System schools to get the Committee's approval before implanting any preventative measures against Covid-19.

The prohibited measures include but are not limited to mask requirements, mandatory vaccinations, and required Covid testing. It's important to note that not a single UW System campus has put a vaccination requirement in place, though some are requiring unvaccinated individuals to undergo weekly testing. Following the vote, the University of Wisconsin – Madison announced a new mask requirement on campus, with Chancellor Rebecca Blank signaling that she believes she has the authority to act on her own without JCRAR approval.



## ***Sixty Percent of Wisconsin Adults are Now Fully Vaccinated against Covid-19; Delta Variant Continues to Drive Surge in Cases Locally and Nationally***

Some progress is being made, as more than 60% of Wisconsin adults (age 18+) have completed their Covid-19 vaccination series. This is great news, but there is still a long way to go before we reach “herd immunity”. In addition, with Delta and potentially other variants causing repeat or breakthrough infections, it is still important to take precautions. It's important to keep in mind that a smaller unvaccinated population means less of an opportunity for the virus to hang around, spread and potentially mutate into something stronger. Here in Wisconsin, the number of new reported Covid cases is nearly eight times higher than it was just a month ago. There are currently four times the number of people hospitalized with Covid in Wisconsin as there were one month ago.

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## ***491 Covid Cases Linked to Milwaukee's "Deer District"***

Contract tracing and testing have identified nearly 500 cases of Covid-19 linked to the "Deer District", an area outside the Fiserv Forum in Milwaukee that was packed with cheering fans last month as the Milwaukee Bucks won the NBA Championship. Tracing is ongoing, and the numbers could increase, as officials say the preliminary number is likely an undercount. Milwaukee County as a whole saw a 155% increase in Covid cases in the span of one week, in large part due to the Delta variant.



## ***WI Sec. of Financial Institutions Offers Tips for Effective Saving***

The State of Wisconsin, led by the Department of Financial Institutions and Sec. Kathy Blumenfeld, has launched a "Wisconsin Saves" initiative to educate Wisconsin residents on the value of saving money and ways to do so. The initiative is also meant to encourage employers to set up voluntary automatic-deduction savings programs for their employees. You can find a list of over 50 ways to save money at the "[America Saves](#)" site; to register as a "Wisconsin Saves" participating employee, click [here](#) or read more information [here](#).



## ***Eviction Moratorium Back in Effect for Racine, Kenosha Counties, Among Others***

Days after the original moratorium expired, President Biden and the CDC have issued a new eviction moratorium, applying to counties nationwide designated "high" in Covid activity and "growing" case trajectory. This applies to both Racine and Kenosha Counties. The new moratorium is set to run through Oct. 3.



## ***Federal Child Tax Credit Payments Have Begun***

Payments for the federal child tax credit have begun going out to families across the country. Many people have questions about whether their families are eligible for the credit, how it works, etc. Here is a bit of information that might be helpful:

- The federal Child Tax Credit was expanded and made refundable by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), signed into law by President Biden. ARPA raised the maximum credit in 2021 to \$3,600 per child under age 6 and to \$3,000 per child ages 6 through 17. Qualifying families will receive half of their credit in advance, divided into monthly payments, and the rest as a refund on their 2021 income tax return. Because the credit is now fully refundable, eligible families can get it even if they owe no federal income tax.
- ARPA also lowered income limits for the Child Tax Credit. Qualifying families will have incomes less than \$75,000 for a single-filer parents; \$112,500 for head of household filers; or \$150,000 for joint filers. Above these income amounts, the credit is reduced by \$50 for each \$1,000 over these limits.
- To qualify, a child must be under age 18 at the end of 2021. The child must be your own child; a stepchild; or a foster child placed with you by a court or authorized agency. You can also claim your brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister. You can also claim nieces, nephews and grandchildren if they meet all other requirements.
- To qualify, a child cannot have provided more than half of his or her own financial support during the tax year.
- To qualify, you must claim the child as a dependent on your tax return. The child must also be a U.S. citizen, a U.S. national, or a U.S. resident alien.
- Finally, the child must have lived with you for more than half of the tax year for which you claim the credit, with limited exceptions.
  - You can find more about the credit and how to qualify [here](#).
- **If you or someone you know is eligible for the federal child tax credit but hasn't begun receiving payments or think there is a problem with your credit, contact Congressman Bryan Steil and his staff for assistance. Congressman Steil has offices in Kenosha (262-654-1901) and Racine (262-637-0510); you can also email him through his website, <https://steil.house.gov/>.**