

September 24, 2021



Dear friend,

An active and engaged electorate is key to the success and survival of our democracy. In every state other than North Dakota, registration is required in order to vote. Wisconsin is one of a few states that allows potential voters to register on Election Day. The fourth Tuesday of September has been recognized as National Voter Registration Day; this year, that falls on Sept. 28. More than 300,000 Americans registered to vote on the inaugural day of observance in 2012; that number jumped to 800,000 by 2018. Timed to fall an appropriate time before major elections traditionally held in November, the day places information in the hands of voters at the right time. In recognition of the day, make sure you and all of your eligible friends and family are registered at your current addresses. It's better not to wait until the last minute. In Wisconsin, you can check your voter registration or even register to vote online at <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Register-To-Vote>. Stay safe, and stay healthy.

Sincerely,

Bob

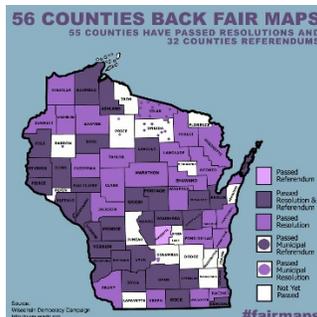
In Case You Missed It

small business SPOTLIGHT

Continue “Small Business Week” All Year Round



National Small Business Week is usually celebrated in May of each year. In 2021, however, the recognition was held September 18-21. Small Business Week is an opportunity to show some extra love and support to our locally-owned stores, restaurants, and service providers, it's a time to recognize the importance and impact of small, locally-owned businesses in our community. The State of Wisconsin, under Governor Tony Evers, has set up a directory of locally-owned businesses in the state. If you'd like to find a locally-owned business near you or would like to register your business with the directory, visit <https://www.mainstreetwi.com/>.

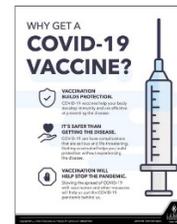


Legal Fights Heating Up as Redistricting Takes Center Stage

Probably the biggest, most consequential political and governmental happening in the next few months will have to do with the redistricting process. Every 10 years, following the U.S.

Census, states are required to redraw their Congressional and state legislative district maps; counties and municipalities also redraw their district lines. In Wisconsin, this process is accomplished through legislation; both houses of the Legislature must pass a bill establishing new districts, and the Governor must sign it, for the new districts to take effect. In most instances in Wisconsin history, we have had split government (different parties controlling the Legislature and Governor's office), resulting in the courts drawing the state's new maps. In 2011, Republicans had complete control of state government and enacted some of the most partisan, gerrymandered maps in the history of the country. This year, Covid delayed release of the Census data, providing states, counties and municipalities with a shortened timeline to enact their new maps. As a result, the court battles have already begun on two tracks, both state and federal court. Just this week, the judicial panel overseeing the federal lawsuit indicated it wants to see Wisconsin's new political maps in place by March 1, in order for candidates to begin circulating nomination papers on the statutory date of April 15; a trial has been scheduled for January. The following day, the conservative-controlled Wisconsin Supreme Court agreed to take the state-level redistricting case, voting along ideological lines. The conservatives who filed the suit did so directly with the state Supreme Court rather than starting with a lower court, where most cases begin, citing the shortened timeframe.

Legal experts say that if the federal court imposes maps of their own, regardless of what happens in state court, the federal maps would take precedence, due to the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution.



FDA Approves Pfizer Booster for Seniors, High-Risk; State Health Officials Say Delta Variant Surge in WI Hasn't Peaked Yet

The federal Food and Drug Administration has signed off on the targeted use of booster doses of Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccination to protect seniors and those in certain high-risk categories. Advisers to the CDC are currently holding their own discussions before making their specific recommendations on boosters.

Meanwhile, during a media briefing held Wednesday, Wisconsin Department of Health Services Secretary Karen Timberlake warned, "We are not at a plateau yet; we are not at a leveling off. We are still seeing a concerning rate of growth." Dr. Ryan Westergaard, the state's

chief medical officer and state epidemiologist for communicable diseases, followed up with, “We have not seen a turning of the corner.”
As of Wednesday of this week, just over 56% of the state’s population was fully vaccinated, and nearly 64% of adults 18 and over were vaccinated.



New Agreement Makes Credit Transfers Between Tech College and UW System Even Easier

The University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) have reached a terrific new deal that will make it easier for students to transfer from among up to 72 credits between the two systems. Previous transfer agreements smoothed the way for up to 30 transfer credits. The UW System will make the transfer details available on its [Transferology](#) page, which will allow students to explore course equivalencies and which credits will transfer. Additional courses from both systems could be added when the agreement comes up for review in 2023.

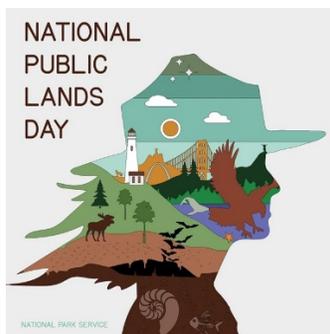


Over Widespread Disapproval, GOP Moves Forward with Sham Election “Investigation”, Wasting Taxpayer Dollars

Republicans in the State Legislature continue to move forward with their plan for a partisan, political sham election “investigation”, despite growing outrage over the blatant waste of taxpayer money and clear results of the 2020 Presidential election. Assembly Speaker Robin Vos has signed a contract with former conservative state Supreme Court Justice Michael Gableman to oversee the “investigation”. The contract calls for expenditures totaling \$676,000, but Reince Preibus indicated this could be just the beginning.

An opinion column this week by the Wisconsin Editorial Board of the USA Today Network called out the partisan and wasteful nature of the “investigation” and encouraged readers to call their legislators and “...Tell them to stop.”

This waste of funds is particularly egregious following so closely the budget deliberations where Republicans eliminated nearly \$70 million in funding for homelessness prevention and mitigation programs; increased investments in mental health services, particularly in children; and the historic increase in K-12 and special education funding that Governor Evers had proposed.



Get Outside This Weekend to Celebrate “National Public Lands Day”

Saturday, Sept. 25 is recognized as National Public Lands Day, meant to celebrate the connection between people and the environment while encouraging the use of public spaces for education, recreation and volunteering.

Wisconsin is home to more than six million acres of public lands, offering endless recreation opportunities. Here are a few ways you can celebrate National Public Lands Day:

- Explore Wisconsin’s state park properties using the DNR’s improved [Find a Park](#) online tool that provides state park, forest, and trail location information in one place. Visit the [Find a Park](#) website to search accessible features and services, activities, campsite type, amenities, and rental offerings at a state park, forest or trail.
 - Travel to a [State Park system hidden gem](#) property from all corners of the state.
 - Go on a [fishing adventure](#) to one of the many fishing areas in the state.
- Visit a [State Natural Area](#) in celebration of the 70th anniversary of these native landscapes, the nation’s oldest statewide system of natural areas.
- Volunteer at a State Natural Area, State Wildlife Area or State Park to help protect and conserve Wisconsin’s natural resources. Find opportunities near you by visiting the [DNR’s volunteer](#) webpage.

For more information on Wisconsin public lands and for ways to connect with nature, visit dnr.wisconsin.gov.