

**April 8, 2022**



**Dear friends,**

**Governor Tony Evers has issued a proclamation in recognition of National Library Week, April 3-9, 2022. Evers called libraries “the hearts of cities, towns, schools, campuses and communities throughout Wisconsin,” and he couldn’t be more right. The theme for National Library Week 2022 is “Connect with Your Library”. Libraries of all types throughout the state and country will be holding special events, social media campaigns and displays to encourage people to visit their local libraries. Libraries are places for communities to connect, through things like broadband and computers, programs and classes, books, movies, video games and more. Most importantly, libraries connect us to each other. Please, this week and always, support your local library.**

**Stay safe and healthy.**

**Sincerely,**

*Bob*

## small business **SPOTLIGHT**



### ***At The Woof, Your Dogs Will Get the Royal Treatment***

If you are a dog owner, you know how hard it can be to entrust your furry friends in someone else's care. The Woof, 5326 Durand Ave. in Racine, takes the worry out of it with their caring and knowledgeable staff; large yard for playing; and even pools for your dogs to splash around in. Staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, you won't have to worry about your pet being lonely. Indoor and outdoor play spaces give your dog with plenty of options, and an online doggie cam provides clear views of your four-legged pals. Need longer-term care? They offer boarding, with pickup and drop-off times available 7 days a week. Interested in a tour? Call or text (262)497-8787 or stop by. For more information, email [info@the-woof.com](mailto:info@the-woof.com) or visit their [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

### **In Case You Missed It**



### ***Governor Evers Puts Additional \$15 Million into K-12 Education***

#### ***KUSD, RUSD Each Receive Significant Funding***

Proving once again that he is the "Education Governor", this week Tony Evers announced a new, \$15 million investment in K-12 education. The funds will be distributed to each school district across the state as part of the Governor's "Get Kids Ahead" initiative announced during

the 2022 State of the State address. Kenosha Unified School District will receive \$272,343 in additional funds, while Racine Unified will get \$250,352. Schools will be able to use the funds to provide direct mental healthcare, hire and support mental health navigators, provide mental health first aid and trauma-based care training, or provide family assistance programs.



## ***Biden Administration Extends Pause on Federal Student Loan Payments***

President Joe Biden has extended the student loan payment freeze through the end of August 2022. The moratorium had been set to expire in May. Interest on these loans has been frozen, and that will continue through August, as well. Borrowers seeking information about their loans and the pause should visit [StudentAid.gov](https://StudentAid.gov).



## ***AG Kaul, State DOJ Crack Down on Nuisance Phone Calls***

Unsolicited, nuisance spam phone calls are the most common consumer complaint and have been for several years. We all get them, and some days it seems like the phone will never stop ringing. This week, Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul and the state Department of Justice (DOJ), working in partnership with the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), announced an enforcement action against telemarketers “selling” extended vehicle warranties. DOJ has filed an enforcement action against New Jersey-based firm NCWC, Inc., for violations of Wisconsin telemarketing laws in marketing extended vehicle service plans to automobile owners in Wisconsin. As alleged in the complaint, NCWC

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markets extended vehicle service plans to automobile owners throughout the country. NCWC made thousands of telemarketing calls to Wisconsin numbers without being registered as a telephone solicitor as required by state law. In addition, several thousand of the the calls NCWC made to Wisconsin consumers were to numbers listed on the Do Not Call registry, also a violation of state law.



## ***Wisconsin DOR Holds \$600 Million in Unclaimed Property; Learn How to Claim What's Yours***

The Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) is tasked with holding unclaimed property and funds for safekeeping until the rightful owners are found or step forward. Currently, the value of this unclaimed property is around \$600 million. Unclaimed property includes funds from savings and checking accounts, uncashed dividends, insurance policies and other accounts the owner may be unaware of or forgotten. Banks, credit unions, insurance companies and other businesses must report unclaimed property to DOR by November 1 of each year. The state attempts to match unclaimed funds and property to their rightful owners; nearly 23,000 claims were processed by state workers. DOR says last month it returned about \$6.6 million in previously unclaimed funds and property to its rightful owners. Anyone curious if they might have a stake in part of that \$600 million can do a free search at <https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/UnclaimedProperty/Home.aspx>.



## ***Utility Disconnection Moratorium Ends on April 15***

Those behind in utility payments, particularly gas, electric and water bills, are encouraged to contact their providers to set up a payment plan as soon as possible, as the moratorium on disconnections will come to an end on April 15. Each year, between November 1 and April 15, utilities are prohibited from disconnecting customers' utility service for nonpayment when that service is used for home heating. If customers are having difficulty paying their energy bills, they may qualify for assistance from the Department of Administration's Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program, which provides assistance with emergency energy needs, emergency furnace repairs, conservation services and weatherization for low-income

households. For more information on applying for this or emergency rental assistance, call the Statewide Customer Care Center at 1-800-506-5596 or my office at (608)267-8979.



### ***Local Elections Held***

This week, elections were held across the state for a variety of municipal, county and court races. Use these links to find results for contests in [Kenosha County](#) and [Racine County](#).



## ***Racine Gamer Shop Aims to Keep Youth of the Streets and out of Trouble***

Ivette Camarano and Ramsin Zaia grew up in Chicago, in neighborhoods where gang violence was commonplace. Working together, they have combined an interest in video games with a passion for helping kids to open Gamestersbay in Downtown Racine, a place where young people can come to game and to escape the streets. Along with the shop, Camarano is leader of the nonprofit organization Get Off the Streets, which aims to provide solutions and educations to keep kids away from gang violence and substance abuse. The organization is dedicated to the memory of Cleveland police officer Wilson Velazquez, Camarano's brother who died in 2021 of a heart condition while on duty. In the short time they've been active in Racine, Getoffthestreets.org has been incredibly busy. They have been working to outfit Racine COP houses with TVs, video games and gaming systems, board games, puzzles, etc.; they've been undertaking similar efforts at the Dr. John Bryant Community Center and the Cesar Chavez

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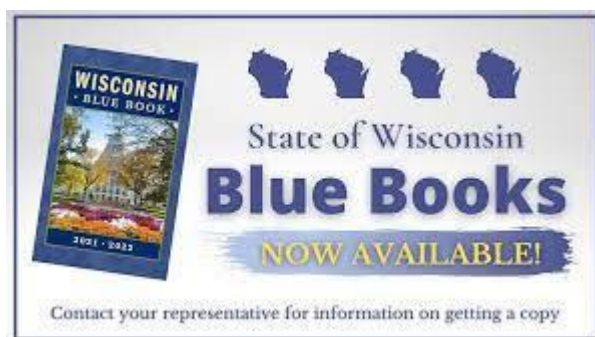


Community Center. The group recently hosted a gaming event at the Villa Street COP House and have created a REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE Program, allowing community members to donate and repair used gaming equipment which can be used throughout the community. The Racine Gamestersbay is actually the second location of the business; the first opened in Evanston, Illinois, in 2018. Find more at [getoffthestreets.org](http://getoffthestreets.org).



### ***Free Covid Tests Available***

You can now sign up to receive two (2) sets of four free Covid-19 tests per household, thanks to an order from the Biden administration. With just your name and address, you can order the tests for your household at <https://www.covidtests.gov/>; you can also use this site to find nearby testing locations. If you already ordered your first set of 4, you can use the above link to order your second set. Additionally, because of actions taken by both President Biden and Governor Evers, your insurance may be required to cover up to eight at-home rapid tests per month. If someone you know either doesn't have or doesn't use a computer, please call my office at (608)267-8979 for assistance ordering your household's tests.



### ***Reserve Your Copy of the 2021-2023 State of Wisconsin Blue Book***

The latest edition of the State of Wisconsin Blue Book has arrived. If you would like to have a copy sent to you, contact my office at (608)267-8979 or [sen.wirch@legis.wisconsin.gov](mailto:sen.wirch@legis.wisconsin.gov). These books are free and contain interesting and valuable information about our state's culture, history and government.