

**May 20, 2022**



**Dear friends,**

**National Armed Forces Day is held annually on the third Saturday of May, which falls on May 21 this year. This day pays tribute to men and women who serve across all six branches of the United States military. The first Armed Forces Day was announced by Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson following World War II; it was made a national holiday in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy. Numerous events take place on this day across the country to pay homage to those who serve, including parades, air shows, educational exhibits and bike rallies. Some military families host parties and show military-themed movies. This Saturday, take the time to thank the service members in your life. To learn more about National Armed Forces Day, click [here](#) or [here](#).**

**Stay safe and healthy.**

**Sincerely,**

*Bob*



## ***Racine, Kenosha Area Small Businesses Helped by State Bounceback Grants; Evers Commits an Additional \$25 Million to Program***

In April 2021, Governor Tony Evers established the Wisconsin Main Street Bounceback Grant Program to help new and existing small businesses open a new location or expand operations to a vacant commercial space. The program awards \$10,000 grants to eligible businesses. Since that time, the program has been a big success. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation recently announced that businesses in all 72 Wisconsin counties had been aided by the program and more than 3,400 small businesses have received grants. Our community has seen firsthand how helpful these grants can be. Twenty-seven businesses in the city of Kenosha have applied for and received \$10,000 grants; that number is 84 in the city of Racine and 41 in the village of Mount Pleasant. That adds up to a lot of jobs.

Last week, Governor Evers announced an additional \$25 million investment into the Main Street Bounceback Grant Program. A recent analysis of federal Covid-19 funds to the states found that Wisconsin under Governor Evers ranks second in the country for aid directed to economic development and first in the country in aid allocated to businesses. Business owners interested in applying or just looking for more information can find it [here](#).

## **In Case You Missed It**



### ***Indian Trail Students Win 2022 Wisconsin Civics Games State Championship***

A two-person team from Indian Trail High School won the 2022 Wisconsin Civics Games State Championship, held at the State Capitol on Friday, May 13. The winning team was comprised of Joshua Cao and Alexandra Maldonado and was advised by social studies teacher Marla Day. The Indian Trail team bested students from Ashwaubenon High School in a tie breaker round to take the title.

The Wisconsin Civics Games is a competition launched by the Wisconsin Newspaper Association in 2019; due to Covid cancellations, this was the first competition held since then. More than 150 students competed in regional events, and 45 students from 12 schools made it to the state finals. Broadcasts of the competitions [1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> rounds](#) and [3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and Tiebreaker rounds](#) can be accessed using the links. Congratulations to Joshua, Alexandra and Ms. Day!



### ***Judge Rules GOP Lame Duck Law on AG Settlements Unconstitutional***

In the period between the November 2018 election, in which Tony Evers and Josh Kaul elected Governor and Attorney General, respectively, the Legislature's Republican majority rushed into Special Session to pass an omnibus bill stripping the Governor and Attorney General of a number of powers and authorities and vesting more power in the Legislature. This was a blatant power grab that mirrored GOP actions against incoming Democratic Governors and

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Attorneys General in North Carolina and Michigan. Several of the provisions of that lame duck law have been challenged in court. In the latest action, a Circuit Court Judge this week ruled a requirement that the Attorney General get legislative approval to settle certain lawsuits is unconstitutional. The judge put the ruling on hold while attorneys for the Legislature prepare a stay request; an appeal is likely headed to the state Supreme Court.



## ***UW Study Finds Eliminating Air Pollutions Could Save More Than 50,000 American Lives Per Year***

A study conducted by researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison found that eliminating air pollution from energy-related activities in the United States could prevent more than 53,000 premature deaths every year and provide \$608 million in benefits. The pollution types examined in the study have been linked to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), lower respiratory infections, tracheal bronchus and lung cancer, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. The study shows that the Midwest would likely see the biggest benefit from elimination of air pollution, with 11,000 fewer premature deaths each year.



## ***AG Josh Kaul Makes 975,000 Child ID Kits Available to the Public Free of Charge***

Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul announced this week that 975,000 National Child ID kits will be distributed across the state as part of a partnership with the Green Bay Packers, Alliant Energy, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) and the National Child ID Program (NCIDP). The kits will be distributed to all K-12 Wisconsin school children and are a new tool to help parents protect their children if something ever does happen.

Each year, more than 800,000 children go missing in the United States. Child ID kits allow parents to safeguard their children's vital information in the event that the unthinkable happens.

Families can expect to begin receiving kits soon.



## ***Covid Cases Once Again Rising Statewide and Locally***

It's beginning to feel a little bit like Groundhog's Day as the state and nation are once again experiencing a surge of Covid-19 cases. Kenosha and Racine Counties are currently considered to have "high" community levels of Covid-19 activity, along with five other counties; residents are encouraged to wear masks while in public indoor spaces, regardless of vaccination status.

Also this week, the federal Food and Drug Administration approved vaccine booster doses for children ages 5 to 11. According to the state Department of Health Services, only 1 in 4 children in Wisconsin who are 5 to 11 years old have received both of their shots of the Covid-19 vaccine.



## ***Free Gun Locks Available to Racine Residents***

Racine residents are able to get a gun lock, also known as a trigger lock, free of charge. Effective gun locks prevent a firearm from being fired unless the lock is unlocked with a key.

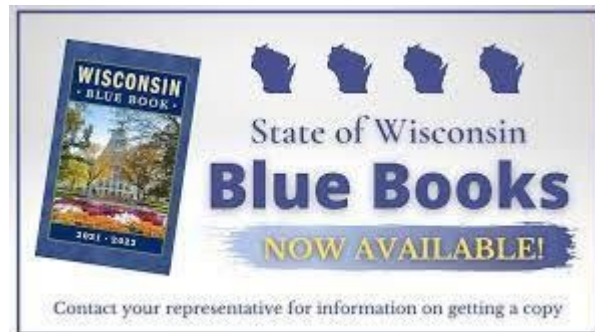
To obtain a free gun lock, make an appointment by contacting the Community Oriented Policing officer at the Anthony Lane COP House, 2437 Anthony Lane, by calling (262)619-2511 or sending a message through [cityofracine.org/Police/AnthonyCOPContactUs](http://cityofracine.org/Police/AnthonyCOPContactUs).





## ***EIGHT MORE Free Covid Tests Available***

With Covid cases again on the rise, the Biden administration has is offering households eight additional at-home Covid tests, free of charge. You can order the eight tests at <https://www.covidtests.gov/>; you can also use this site to find nearby testing locations. The administration had previously made four at-home Covid tests available per household; you can still claim those using the same link if you haven't already done so. Additionally, because of actions by President Biden and Governor Evers, your health insurance provider may be required to cover up to eight at-home rapid tests per month.



## ***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.