

January 27, 2023



Dear friends,

January 27 marks the 78th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. Every year, the world recognizes January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day in honor of the millions of Jewish men, women and children and members of other targeted groups murdered during the Holocaust. The day is important in keeping alive the memory of the atrocities that occurred and in trying to prevent future genocides from happening. It's especially critical at this time of increased anti-Semitic hate and violence, as well as threats and hate crimes directed at other ethnic and religious groups. We must all make a commitment to never forget and preserve the memory of all victims and their suffering.

Until next time, stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Bob

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



Herbert's Has Been Making Fine Jewelry Accessible for Almost 90 Years

In 1938, Herbert N. Block traveled the world, looking for just the right location to open a jewelry store before deciding Kenosha was the ideal place. The store was originally called “Herbert’s Credit Jewelers” because the store offered credit to all customers, which was unusual at the time. Herbert was known for charging “a dollar down and a dollar a week”. Lisa Block is now the third generation of the Block family to run Herbert’s Jewelers. Learn more at <https://herbertsjewelers.com/>.

In Case You Missed It



Request Your Absentee Ballot for Spring Primary Before the Deadline

The 2023 spring primary election will be held on Tuesday, February 21, 2023. The deadline to request an absentee ballot for this election is fast approaching, with 5 pm on Thursday, Feb. 16 being the absolute latest you can make the request. If you would like to request an absentee ballot for this and/or future elections this year, visit myvote.wi.gov or contact your municipal clerk.



Governor Evers Delivers 2023 State of the State Address

Calls on Republicans to Work across the Aisle in Annual Speech

Tuesday, January 24 was a big, busy day at the Capitol. That evening, Governor Tony Evers delivered his fifth State of the State before a joint convention of the Legislature, the State Supreme Court, and Cabinet members. The speech centered on the need for bipartisan cooperation, particularly in the upcoming budget, to address issues ranging from mental health, PFAS, and education to shared revenue and public safety. You can watch the full speech [here](#) and read the speech [here](#).

Earlier in the day, Governor Evers met briefly with Senate Democrats to discuss the budget and other priorities for the legislative session.

Meeting with New DNR Secretary Appointee

I also had a full day of meetings on Tuesday. I was happy to meet with the new Secretary-Designee at the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Adam Payne. He is very personable, and it's exciting to have a DNR Secretary who hunts and fishes. We discussed the Kenosha harbor and the importance of ensuring that the habitat remains good for shorefishing. I appreciate Secretary-Designee Payne taking the time to meet with me.



Sen. Wirch with DNR Secretary-Designee Adam Payne

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Credit Union Employees Visit the Capitol



Austin from Educators Credit Union, Sen. Wirch, Brett from Educators Credit Union, and Juan from Landmark Credit Union

I'm always happy when constituents make the trip to Madison for a visit to the State Capitol.

On Tuesday, I met with local employees from Landmark and Educators Credit Unions to discuss the good that credit unions do. The visitors even came at just the right time to meet Governor Evers. Thanks to Brett, Austin and Juan for coming in. I always welcome visitors in my office, whether it's to discuss an important issue or just to say hello. If you are going to be in Madison, call my office at (608)267-8979 or just stop on by, Room 127 South.



Wirch Office Hours at Northside Library on Feb. 10

On Saturday, February 10, from 11 am to 12 pm, I'll be holding an "Office Hours" listening session in Activity Room A of Kenosha's Northside Library, 1500 27th Ave. Stop in to share your thoughts on the happenings in our state.



Expert Tax Analyst Says Flat Tax System Would Benefit the Wealthy, Harm the Rest of Us

Here in Wisconsin, the richest among us pay a smaller share of their incomes in state taxes than the rest of the population; replacing our current, progressive income tax with a flat tax would expand that disparity, according to national tax expert Carl Davis of the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP) in Washington, DC. According to Davis's research, Wisconsin families making \$198,000 a year or less pay 10.1% to 10.6% of their income in state and local taxes; those families make up 95% of the state's population. Meanwhile, Wisconsin families with annual incomes of \$512,000 or more – the top 1% – pay just 7.7% of the income in state and local taxes. Families in the middle pay 8.5% of their incomes in taxes.

According to the paper written by Davis, "Flat taxes tend to favor those with the highest incomes – including the largest and most profitable businesses, rather than the smallest." The paper also states that besides increasing income and wealth inequality, a flat tax will also lead to pinched resources for services like public education and road repair.



Apply Now to Enter Racine's 2023 Miss Juneteenth Pageant

Applications are now being accepted for Racine's 2023 Miss Juneteenth Pageant. The contest is open to high school students ages 16 to 18 who are residents of Racine. To apply or find out more, contact the Miss Juneteenth Committee at (262)456-7427 or pwns@dls.net.

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Deadline for Governor's Business Plan Contest Approaches

The 20th Annual Wisconsin Governor's Business Plan Contest is accepting entries online for the 2023 competition until 5 pm, Monday, January 31, 2023. The contest links up and coming entrepreneurs with a statewide network of community resources, expert advice and mentoring, management talent, and possible sources of capital. The contest leads to valuable public and media exposure for the top business plans. Finalist will share in more than \$125,000 in cash and service prizes. There is no cost to enter. For their initial entries, contestants are required to submit a 250-word idea abstract online at govsbizplancontest.com. Contestants who advance to subsequent rounds will expand their plan in stages. About 70 judges drawn from the finance, sales, marketing, research and technology sectors across Wisconsin will score the entries and provide feedback on submissions. Contest categories are Advanced Manufacturing, Business Services, Information Technology, and Life Sciences. Wisconsin residents 18 years old and older are eligible, as are teams of Wisconsin-based businesses and organizations. The final round of judging will take place at the Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Conference in June.



Photo Credit: Kenosha.com

Kenoshan Betsy Ade Sings National Anthem for Milwaukee Bucks Pride Night

On Wednesday, January 25, Kenosha singer Betsy Ade, of the band Betsy Ade & the Well-Known Strangers, performed the National Anthem at Fiserv Forum as part of the Milwaukee Bucks' Pride Night celebration, which included their game against the Denver Nuggets. Betsy has had quite a month; on January 3, she performed at the Inaugural Gala for Governor Tony Evers.



Wisconsin Families Can Get 5 Free Covid Tests Each Month

Wisconsin residents can now get Covid-19 tests sent to them free of charge from the state. The Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services (DHS) says that the [Say Yes! Covid Test website](#) is now live and operational. The site allows households to order five rapid tests for free **each month**.

Households can still get up to eight rapid Covid tests per month through their insurance providers, as well.



Take My Legislative Survey

It's very important to me as a legislator to hear what you think about the important issues of the day. I've put together a survey on a variety of topics that I am hoping you will take the time to complete. You can find an online version of the survey at <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/22/wirch/surveys-and-petitions/2022-legislative-survey>.

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