



ROBERT W. WIRCH

STATE SENATOR TWENTY-SECOND DISTRICT

December 4, 2020



Dear friend,

December 7, 1941 - according to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, “a date which will live in infamy”. This day is a good time to reflect on the tremendous sacrifice that so many have made for our way of life. Today we are all being called on to make a much easier, much smaller sacrifice, by staying at home when we can and wearing a mask when we do go out. As we see the state and national Covid-19 death numbers continue to accumulate, it’s clear that this is the honorable, selfless and patriotic thing to do, for yourself, for your neighbors, and for the country. Be safe, and be well.

Sincerely,

Bob

State Capitol, P.O. Box 7882, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7882 • (608) 267-8979

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In Case You Missed It

small business
SPOTLIGHT 

Milo's Custom Jewelers in Kenosha Has You Covered for All of Life's Special Occasions


MILO'S
CUSTOM JEWELERS

Milo Ochoa and his wife, Kristina Piehl-Ochoa, may still be young, but they've already got decades of knowledge and experience to offer each customer seeking their services. Owners of their own business, located in the Southport Shopping Plaza at 7000 Green Bay Rd. since 2017, they specialize in custom design, computer-aided design (CAD), diamond setting and jewelry repair. They bring an artistic flair to their work and love a challenge. One of Milo's greatest joys is bringing his customers' visions to life. Selecting just the right piece can be overwhelming; let Milo and Kristina help.

<https://www.miloscustomjewelers.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/miloscustomjewelers/>



With a Vaccine on the Horizon, Covid Continues to Ravage the State and Nation



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The Thanksgiving holiday caused a pause on large scale Covid testing, meaning a dip in the numbers for a few days, but we are far from out of the woods. Even with warnings to stay home, we know that many people chose to gather with others outside of their households for the holiday. This will likely mean continued widespread spread of the virus. Meanwhile, the number of Covid deaths in the state and nationally has reached all-time highs. Wisconsin reported its highest number of Covid deaths in a single day this week, topping 100 for just the second time, while nationally, the single-day death count topped 3,100 for the first time. Racine and Kenosha Counties haven't been immune; the case numbers, hospitalizations and deaths remain among the highest in the state. There is good news in that deployment of a vaccine will likely begin before the end of the year. However, health experts warn it will be a number of months before enough people are vaccinated for it to truly be effective, and those months will likely be incredibly trying, physically, mentally and emotionally.



Increased Covid Testing Options

While the state Department of Health Services cites “Very High Covid Activity” in **all 72 counties**, **AND 65 of 72 COUNTIES NOW AT CRITICALLY HIGH LEVELS**, there are currently an increased number of options locally for anyone looking to get tested. Your primary health care provider is always an option, but there are many community testing sites available, as well.

National Guard Drive-through testing in Kenosha: The Wisconsin National Guard will be conducting free, drive-through testing from 10 am to 6 pm each Monday from October 12 - Dec. 7 at both the Kenosha County Job Center, 8600 Sheridan Rd, Kenosha, and the Kenosha County Center at Highways 45 and 50 in Bristol (no testing at Bristol site on Nov. 27). No appointments are necessary, and symptoms are not required in order to get tested. Testing is open to any person who lives or works in Wisconsin and is age 5 or above. Online pre-registration is recommended at <https://register.covidconnect.wi.gov>.

National Guard Drive-through testing in Racine: Each Tuesday and Wednesday from now until December 9 (excluding November 11), from 10 am - 6 pm at the Central Racine County Health Department, 10005 Northwestern Ave., Franksville, and on Thursdays from November 4 through Dec.

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10 (excluding Nov. 26), at the Cesar Chavez Community Center, 2221 Douglas Ave., Racine. No appointments necessary, and symptoms are not required. Testing is open to any person who lives or works in Wisconsin and is age 5 or above. Online pre-registration is recommended at <https://register.covidconnect.wi.gov>.

Modern Apothecary: Each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday through at least Nov. 15, the locally-owned independent pharmacy will host drive-through testing in the parking lot south of the Simmons Island Beach House, 5001 Fourth Ave., in Kenosha. Hours are from 2-6 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays and 9 am - 1 pm on Saturdays. Testing is free of charge; [pre-registration](#) and an [appointment](#) are strongly encouraged.

CVS Pharmacy: Drive-through testing available at CVS in Kenosha (3710 57th Ave.) and Racine (3915 Durand Ave.); advance registration required at <https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing>

Froedert South: Drive-through testing is available to those who qualify after completing an initial phone evaluation at (262)671-7777 between 8 am and 4:30 pm Monday-Friday

Kenosha Community Medical Center/Gateway Kenosha Campus: A drive-through testing site is open to those who complete a quick registration process at (262)925-1325

Ascension: Offering testing by appointment, (833)981-0711 or choose.ascension.org/onlinecare
To find other testing sites in the state, visit

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/community-testing.htm>.

Advocate Aurora has halted their drive-through testing in Kenosha, as well as Milwaukee and Green Bay. They say the decision was made to redirect staff to patient care, as their inpatient counts continue to rise exponentially.

In some good news, UW System schools statewide, including Parkside, have been provided with a limited number of rapid-result Covid-19 tests. These tests provide results in 15-30 minutes. The tests are free of charge and available to the public, and you don't have to have symptoms to get a test. A positive rapid test will need to be confirmed with the regular Covid-19 test but will provide you some guidance on whether or not you need to quarantine during that period. Registration at <https://www.doineedacovid19test.com> is required. The tests are administered in De Simone Gym in the SAC on the Parkside campus Monday-Thursday, 9 am - 5 pm, and Friday, 9 am - 1 pm. Testing is expected to last at least several weeks.

<https://www.uwp.edu/explore/news/surge-testing-faq.cfm>

<https://www.uwp.edu/explore/news/surge-testing.cfm>

The Kenosha Fire Department will be offering free Covid-19 testing on Wednesdays and Fridays through the end of the year. Anyone who lives or works in Wisconsin, ages 5 and above, can get a test. Testing will be conducted at vacant Fire Station #3, 2121 Roosevelt Rd., from noon to 6 pm. An appointment is strongly encouraged through <https://10to8.com/book/modernapothecary>. After making an appointment, please register in advance at <https://register.covidconnect.wi.gov/en-US/>.



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Governor Evers Offers Legislation to Provide Covid Relief, While Legislative Republicans Debate Either Doing Nothing or Forcing Employees, Students Back Out in Public

After months of begging and pleading from the Governor, public health groups, religious leaders and Democratic legislators, the legislative Republicans finally offered up their thoughts on how best to deal with the Covid pandemic ravaging the state. However, the approaches they are considering will do little to address the real problems caused by the pandemic. Governor Evers released a Covid relief package which would, among other things: fund testing, contact tracing and other Covid response measures currently paid for with federal CARES Act funds through April 2021; prohibit insurers from charging co-insurance for Covid-related health treatments; allow critical frontline workers, including police and fire, to claim worker's compensation for Covid exposure; prohibit foreclosures and evictions through 2021; continue the one-week waiting period waiver for unemployment benefits throughout 2021; allow Social Security Disability recipients to claim unemployment benefits; and relax UI work-search requirement through 2021. Meanwhile the Senate Republicans, led by Majority Leader Devin LeMahiue (R-Oostburg) have said they don't plan to return to vote on any Covid legislation this year. Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) and Assembly Republicans offered a package of their own, which takes a far different approach from the Governor's. This package would, among other things: require teachers providing virtual instruction to do so from school buildings; require school districts to pay parents \$371 per child if they provide virtual instruction; require state agency employees to return to their offices instead of working from home; prohibit local health officials from enacting closures or restrictions on gatherings; and require a two-thirds vote of school boards to authorize virtual instruction. Read more about each of these approaches at:

http://www.thewheelerreport.com/wheeler_docs/files/120120voslfb.pdf

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<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/wisconsin/articles/2020-12-02/wisconsin-senate-not-coming-back-this-month-for-virus-relief>

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2020/11/17/tony-evers-releases-new-covid-19-relief-package/6327210002/>



Governor Continues “People’s Budget” Virtual Listening Sessions

Continuing a tradition started during his campaign, but with a twist to adapt to the age of Covid, Governor Tony Evers will be holding a series of virtual listening sessions to gather input on the upcoming state budget. Participants must register ahead of time [here](#); registration is available one week before the scheduled session date. Wisconsinites are also welcome to send their thoughts on this, or any other topic, at any time [here](#).

Budget Listening Session on Criminal Justice Reform
Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 6 pm

Budget Listening Session on Our Schools and Education
Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 6 pm



Evers Announces New Round of Financial Assistance to Restaurants, Hotels, Entertainment Venues



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With the hospitality industry hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic, Governor Tony Evers has announced a new allocation of Wisconsin's CARES Act funding to help restaurants, hotels and other lodging facilities, and music and entertainment venues. More than 650 Wisconsin lodging operators were awarded Covid-19 Lodging Grants, with each facility receiving an average award of \$350 per eligible room. Award recipients include at least sixteen in the Kenosha and Racine areas. You can find more, including a full recipient list, [here](#).

An additional \$45 million will go to Wisconsin restaurants impacted by Covid through the "We're All In for Restaurants" Grants. It's expected that about 2,000 Wisconsin businesses will receive one of these grants. Businesses will not have to apply for the grants; rather, they will be identified and contacted directly by the state Dept. of Revenue based on the businesses' state tax records. Read more [here](#).

Finally, ninety-six Wisconsin music and entertainment venues will split \$15 million in Covid-19 grants to help them survive the pandemic. Local recipients include Renaissance Entertainment Productions, the company behind the Bristol Renaissance Faire, and The Racine Theatre Guild. Find a full list [here](#).

These announcements bring the total assistance distributed to Wisconsin businesses this year to more than \$220 million.



Medicare, Healthcare.Gov Open Enrollment Periods End Soon

If you are still looking for healthcare coverage for 2021, you've got just days left to sign up for coverage through Medicare (for those eligible) or the federal healthcare exchange at healthcare.gov. Medicare enrollment is open to those age 65 and older or younger people with disabilities or End Stage Renal Disease; open enrollment ends on Dec. 7. Healthcare.gov plans are open to anyone, and subsidies are available for lower-income individuals and families; open

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enrollment ends on December 15. Find out more about your options at <https://www.coveringwi.org/>.