

January 28, 2022



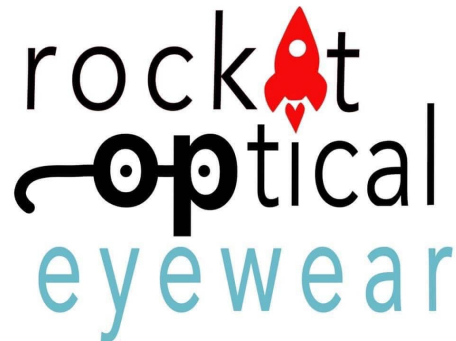
Dear friends,

Members of our community recently suffered a tragic loss in the fire at the Saxony Manor apartment complex. Three people lost their lives, several others were injured, and numerous individuals and families were displaced. KAFASI is teaming with Mercy Housing to collect donations of cash or household items, other than furniture and clothing, to help those impacted by the fire. Desired items include newly purchased bath towels, bedding, hygiene items, cleaning supplies, storage containers, laundry baskets, garbage cans, cookware and dishware. Financial contributions can be made at www.mercyhousing.org/KenoshaSeniors; checks or cash with a note specifying “Kenosha Seniors” can be mailed to: Resource Development, ATTN: Kenosha Seniors, Mercy Housing Lakefront, 120 S. LaSalle St., Ste 1915, Chicago IL 60603. Donated items can be dropped off at the KAFASI office, 7730 Sheridan Rd., between 11 am and 1 pm, Monday-Friday. You can find more information [here](#) and [here](#). Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Bob



Rokit Optical Eyewear to Hold its Grand Opening

Rokit Optical Eyewear will be celebrating its Grand Opening in Downtown Kenosha this Sunday, January 30, from 12 to 3 pm. Rokit is located at 815 57th St. The open house will feature fun and unique frame designs; refreshments; and an introduction to Oscar, the bearded dragon who will serve as the business's mascot.

Rokit is an unconventional eyewear company founded by Kenosha's Josie Rodriguez and her husband, Laurentiu Sarbu. The couple brings with them over a decade of optician experience and a long artistic background.

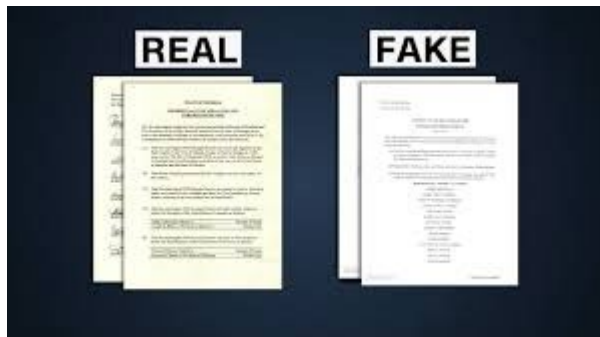
Come to Rokit for unique frames, sunglasses, hard to find specialty items like swim goggles and readers, sunglass bifocals, and blue light readers, all in a professional but relaxed environment. Find more about this exciting new business [here](#).

In Case You Missed It



State Projected for \$3.8 Billion Budget Surplus

Wisconsin received another bit of good economic news this week, as the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau released its latest report, projecting the state to finish the current biennium with a \$3.8 billion budget surplus, more than \$2.8 billion higher than previously expected. On Thursday, Governor Evers held a press event, where he unveiled his plan to use part of the surplus to address rising costs for consumers and barriers to employment for Wisconsinites looking for work. The plan includes: \$150 to every Wisconsin resident, including children, to help defray the rising cost of goods; a nonrefundable caregiver tax credit for family caregivers; an investment of \$611 million in K-12 education and an increase of \$172.6 million in special education funding; \$20 million for lead testing and remediation on school grounds; \$20 million for a new reading professional aid program; \$18 million toward mental health programs in schools; \$111 million for the UW System; and \$28 million for the Wisconsin Technical College System. You can read the Governor's full plan at <https://evers.wi.gov/Pages/Home.aspx>.



Fraudulent Electors in Wisconsin and Elsewhere Must Be Investigated

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In December 2020, as electors across the country gathered in their relative statehouses to cast their state's Electoral College votes as their state's voters had directed, another group gathered in secret in seven of the most closely-contested states in an attempt to subvert democracy. This second group represented themselves as official electors, even signing documents swearing to that fact, and cast their states' Electoral College "votes" for Donald Trump, even though Joe Biden had actually won their states. The fraudulent documents signed by these phony electors were submitted to various state and federal agencies and archives, as if they were legitimate and official. As additional evidence emerges, it is becoming more and more clear that this was a coordinated effort, with orders coming from the top of the Trump campaign, flowing through state Republican parties, down to grassroots activists who filled the role of "electors". This was an unprecedented effort to ignore the will of the voters and change the results of a Presidential election. We cannot allow this action to go unchecked. That's why I have authored a letter to U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland, requesting that he use the full resources of the Justice Department to investigate. Some have called for action from local District Attorneys and the state Attorney General; however, because this scheme was coordinated across multiple states and involves fraud in a federal election, I believe that the U.S. Department of Justice is the agency best equipped to handle this case. I fear that if this scheme isn't at least investigated, these folks will try again next time, and they just might succeed. You can read my letter [here](#).



Judge Reinstates Use of Ballot Drop Boxes, as State Supreme Court Considers Weighing In

This week, an appeals court temporarily blocked a lower court ruling that would have banned the use of absentee ballot drop boxes in Wisconsin. If the ruling stands, it would mean drop boxes could be used for the February 15 primary election. Because the court issued its order as a temporary stay, the order is only valid through the Feb. 15 election. The state Supreme Court will likely have the final say.



Mobile Food Pantry in Racine

On the fourth Wednesday of every month, Park High School in Racine will be hosting a Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin mobile food pantry. Free family food boxes will be provided. Pickup will be in front of the school, under the cover by the bike rack. Follow [this page](#) for updates, including any possible weather-related cancellations.



Free Covid Tests and Masks Available

You can now sign up to receive 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. Additionally, as a result 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. Additionally, the Biden and Evers administrations have made hundreds of millions of N95 masks available to Americans for free. The masks are distributed through a number of pharmacies, libraries and community health centers, with the program expected to be fully operational by early February. [This site](#) has a full listing of mask distribution sites in southeast Wisconsin. Those picking up masks will be limited to three per person.

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.

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Toll-Free Office Hotline: 1-888-769-4724

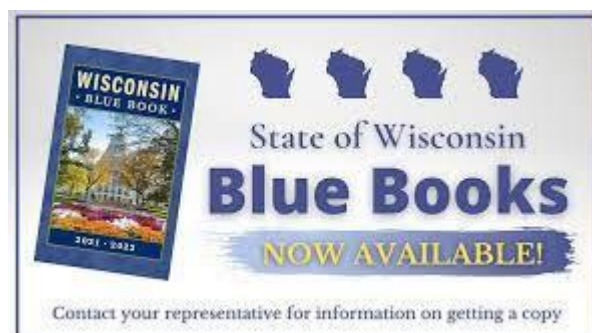
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IRS Now Accepting Tax Returns What to Know Before Filing Your Taxes

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) began accepting 2021 tax returns earlier this week. There are a few things you'll want to know before you file your return. 1) The IRS is warning that the Omicron Covid surge could make this filing season challenging. Avoiding a paper tax return will be more important than ever this year to avert processing delays. 2) Filing returns electronically and receiving your refund through direct deposit are the quickest ways to get your refund. Refunds can be deposited into bank accounts, prepaid debit cards or mobile apps, as long as the routing and account numbers are provided. 3) W-2s are due to be mailed no later than January 31. A 2015 law made it a permanent requirement that employers file copies of their Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statements, and Form W-3, Transmittal of Wage and Tax Statements, with the Social Security Administration by January 31. 4) The deadline to file 2021 income tax returns is Monday, April 18, for most people. The later deadline is due to the Emancipation holiday in the District of Columbia. By law, Washington, D.C. holidays affect tax deadlines for everyone the same way federal holidays do. 5) April 18 is also the deadline to request an extension, which gives taxpayers until October 17 to file their 2021 returns. 6) If your adjusted gross income was \$73,000 or below for 2021, you can use free tax software to prepare and electronically file your tax return. Go to [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) to learn more. 7) The IRS anticipates most taxpayers receiving refunds will get them within 21 days of filing electronically if they choose direct deposit. 8) The IRS says using the "Where's My Refund" tool on [IRS.gov/refunds](https://www.irs.gov/refunds) and the IRS2Go mobile app are the best ways to track the status of your refund.



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. These books are free and contain interesting and valuable information about our state's culture, history and government.