

February 4, 2022



Dear friends,

Each February, we honor the achievements, contributions and sacrifices of African Americans who helped shape our nation with Black History Month. This year's theme is Black Health and Wellness and recognizes the efforts and accomplishments of health care professionals and medical researchers and scholars, especially fitting as the Covid-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted minority communities. Some argue that we should teach and celebrate Black history all year round, and they are right. The purpose of Black History Month isn't to limit this; it is meant to focus and broaden the nation's attention. In officially recognizing Black History Month for the first time during the country's 1976 bicentennial, President Gerald Ford said that Americans should "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history." February was chosen primarily because the second week of the month coincides with the birthdays of both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. Given the climate in our country over the last several years, the efforts to erase the scourge of slavery and other racist institutions from our national history and the attacks on voting rights, it's important that we all take time out to honor Black history and work toward a more equitable future.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

*Bob*

# small business **SPOTLIGHT**



## ***“InMoxicated” Serves Up Plenty of Sober Fun***

New nightspot InMoxicated, 329 Main St. in Racine, has most of the things you’d expect to find at a bar - darts, pool, music, drinks in a variety of sizes, colors and flavors. The only thing it doesn’t have is alcohol. That’s because InMoxicated is a sober bar, or as they call it, a “sobar”. That doesn’t mean that this is a place to bring the kids, however. Jeff Gustin, manager of InMoxicated, says that the idea is to create a nightclub-like atmosphere where adults can feel comfortable, whether they drink or not. They use the phrase “Sober without sacrifice.” InMoxicated officially opened on December 14. Each Tuesday from 6 to 8 pm, they offer “Tasting Tuesdays”, sharing samples of different products. Learn more about InMoxicated, including a listing of upcoming events, at <https://inmoxicated.com/>.

## **In Case You Missed It**



***Wisconsin Republicans Fast Track Bills to Give Them  
More Control over Elections***

Early this week, Republicans in the State Legislature released a package of bills they say are based on recommendations made by the nonpartisan Legislative Audit Bureau. However, buried amongst some minor technical changes are some major red flags. One provision would give the Legislature's Joint Finance Committee, currently controlled by the Republican majority, the power to eliminate staff and funding from the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) or any other state agency that the committee deems has run afoul of election laws or if the WEC provides “erroneous guidance” on election administration. Another would make the Legal Counsel for the WEC a partisan position. A third would give the Republican-controlled Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules final say over guidance issued to local clerks by the WEC. These bills were released around the same time that both major Republican candidates for Governor offered their support for complete elimination of the WEC and handing over full election oversight to the Legislature and follows more than a year of Republican attacks on election integrity and administration. You can read more on the full slate of bills [here](#).



## ***Unexpectedly Large Surplus Provides Opportunity to Address Homelessness***

For years now, Republicans have refused to address the state’s growing homelessness problem. They’ve settled for half-measures, at best, authorizing \$1.2 million of Governor Evers’ recommended \$70 million for homelessness prevention and mitigation programs and passing legislation with no funding to operate new programs. With the news last week that the state projects a \$3.8 billion budget surplus at the end of the biennium, GOP lawmakers have no excuses. Funding for these important programs would be a drop in the bucket of the surplus funds. We should not let another frigid winter come and go before we act. You can read a statement I issued on the issue [here](#).



## ***The Unvaccinated are 97 Times More Likely to Die from Covid than Vaccinated***

A new study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows unvaccinated people are 97 times more likely to die of Covid-19 than those who are fully vaccinated and boosted. In a White House Covid response meeting on Wednesday, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky also provided data demonstrating that 54% of people hospitalized for Covid over the age of 65 are unvaccinated, despite the fact that just 12% of Americans in that age group are unvaccinated. These findings are based on information collected in December 2021.



## ***South Side Lou Perrine's Location to Serve as Drive Through Covid Testing Site***

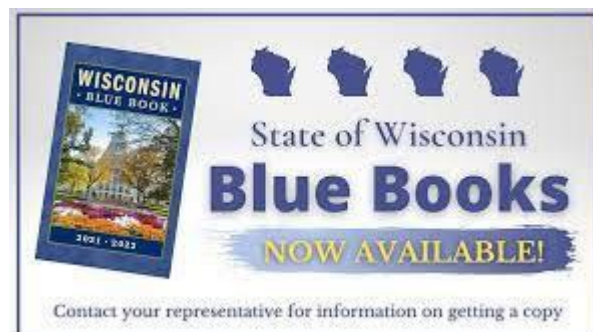
Lou Perrine's new, south side location, 8004 22nd Ave., is not open for business quite yet. In the meantime, it will serve as a Covid-19 drive through PCR testing location on Wednesdays from 9 am to 5 pm and Saturdays from 9 am to 1 pm. Online pre-registration at [whatagreatpharmacy.com](https://whatagreatpharmacy.com) is required.



## ***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. [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.



## ***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.