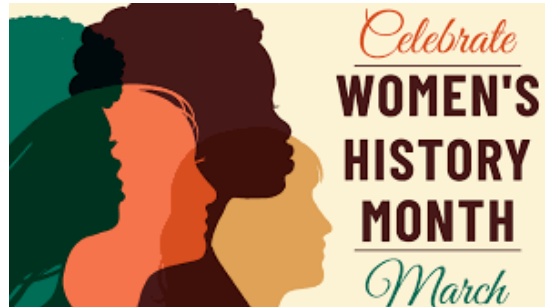


March 4, 2022



Dear friends,

Every year, March is designated as Women’s History Month by presidential proclamation. This month is set aside to honor women’s contributions throughout American history. March was chosen to coincide with International Women’s Day, held annually on March 8. The theme for Women’s History Month 2022 is “Providing Healing, Promoting Hope”; this was meant as both a tribute to the tireless work of caregivers and frontline workers throughout the Covid pandemic and a recognition of the thousands of ways that women of all cultures have provided both healing and hope across time. This year, in proclaiming Women’s History Month, President Joe Biden called on Americans to recommit to the fight for a more equal society, where every person has an opportunity to pursue the American dream.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Bob

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



Plumb Gold
DOWNTOWN RACINE



Plumb Gold and Plumb Silver Put Quality and Service at the Forefront

In 1975, the Racine Artist Workshop opened. A year later, Judy K. Olsen became the sole owner and transformed the business into Plumb Gold Ltd, where she would create original jewelry designs alongside a carefully curated selection of designer jewelry for the next thirty-nine years. Austin Schultz, an employee of the store beginning in 2001, purchased the business in 2015, and he has maintained the quality and commitment to customer service that Judy emphasized. He expanded, opening Plumb Silver in 2019. Plumb Gold was awarded the Racine Journal Times “Best of Racine County” title in 2018 and 2019. Use these links to find more about [Plumb Gold](#) and [Plumb Silver](#).

In Case You Missed It



Governor Evers Visits Kenosha, Awards Millions in Funding for Innovation Neighborhood, County Human Services Building

On Thursday, Governor Tony Evers made a stop in Kenosha where he announced \$15 million in funding for the City of Kenosha’s Innovation Neighborhood Project and \$10 million to help Kenosha County move its Human Services and Job Center building to a facility on 52nd Street,

where it will be more easily accessible to residents needing services. This is great news, and I want to thank Governor Evers for his commitment to Kenosha.



Republican-authorized, Taxpayer-Funded “Report” Calls for Decertifying 2020 Election

Following a months-long, taxpayer-funded partisan witch-hunt, former WI Supreme Court Justice Michael Gableman released his findings this week during an informational hearing of the Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections. During three and a half hours of testimony, Gableman espoused conspiracy theories and downplayed the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection in the U.S. Capitol. In addition to urging the Legislature to “take a hard look” at decertifying the 2020 election, which legal experts say is not possible, Gableman recommended disbanding the nonpartisan Wisconsin Elections Commission and strictly limiting early and absentee voting. The “investigation” and report were funded with \$676,000 in state taxpayer funds, authorized by Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester). Gableman has a long history of comments casting doubt on the 2020 elections results, going so far as to attend a conspiracy theory-fueled conference hosted by “MyPillow” CEO Mike Lindell in August. Republican Assembly Rep. Timothy Ramthun (R-Campbellsport), who has authored resolutions calling for the Legislature to decertify the election and been lauded by Donald Trump, attended Lindell’s conference. At the conclusion of his testimony, Gableman said that his work will continue, though it remains to be seen if Vos is willing to shell out more taxpayer money in order to try to appease Trump and his most ardent supporters.



Governor Evers Announces New Recommendations to Address Homelessness

Governor Tony Evers, in his role as chair of the state’s Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH), announced this week that the ICH has unanimously adopted and released their “Welcoming Wisconsin Home” report, providing new recommendations for tackling homelessness in the state of Wisconsin. Recommendations and strategies outlined in the report include:

- Creating a permanent rental assistance program for veterans;
- Focusing on equity for renters and home owners who have faced historic disadvantages;
 - Improving housing access for people experiencing homelessness;
 - Providing additional support to landlords to repair affordable housing units;
 - Increasing the state Housing Tax Credit Program;
 - Increasing housing stability with targeted support services; and
- Collecting data about the pandemic impact and outline recommendations for future pandemics.

“Welcoming Wisconsin Home” builds on the Governor’s investments, announced late last year, to provide \$6 million of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to address homelessness and ensure safe shelter for individuals experiencing short- or long-term housing instability during the winter months. You can view the full report [here](#).



Racine, Kenosha Libraries to Host Discussion and Education Program on Voting

Public libraries in Racine and Kenosha are preparing to host “Who Gets to Vote”, billed as “a community-wide education program” featuring presentations and discussions centered around why each vote is important and how to get involved in the process. A

grant from the nonprofit Wisconsin Humanities was used to purchase copies of the best-selling book, “The Soul of America: The Battle for our Better Angels”, by historian Jon Meachem, to distribute to attendees and others who are interested. The events are free and open to the public, but registration is required. The Kenosha discussion will be held on Monday, March 7, at 6 pm at Kenosha’s Southwest Library, 7979 38th Ave.; register [here](#). The Racine session will be a virtual event held on Wednesday, March 9, from 6:00 to 7:30 pm; you can register [here](#).



State Consumer Protection Officials Warn of Ukraine Charity Scams

Officials with the state Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and the Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) are urging consumers to do their research before sending money to a charity claiming to help those affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. “Scammers see tragedies as a way to line their pockets at the expense of well-meaning citizens. Give generously to a charity if you are inclined, but always research an organization before sending money,” said Lara Sutherlin, administrator for DATCP’s Division of Trade and Consumer Protection. Fake charity schemes will use any available means of soliciting “donations” – they may make their pitch over the phone, by mail, or online. They will often use names and website addresses that are nearly identical to those of major established charities, so pay close attention to the wording in a donation pitch. Keep in mind that most legitimate charity websites end in “.org” rather than “.com”.

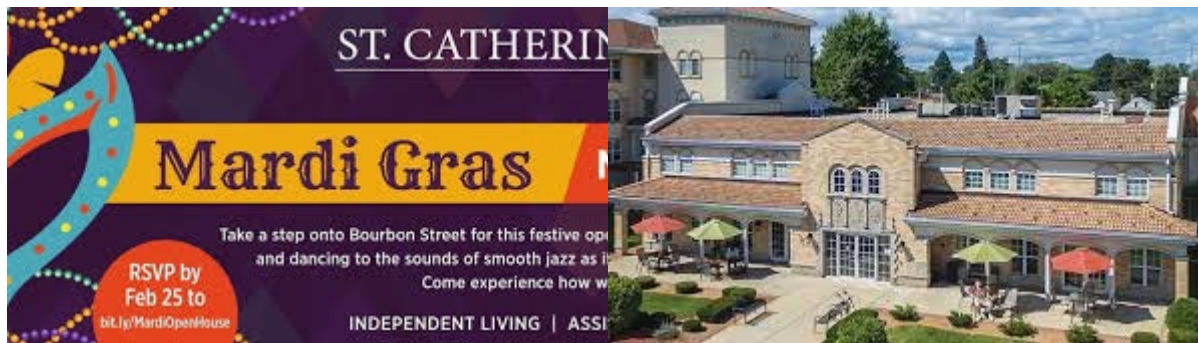
DATCP provided the following tips to help consumer protect themselves from charity scammers:

- Watch for social media messages, emails or text messages that claim to have exclusive information or photos; clicking on attachments or clicking on links in these communications can expose your computer or phone to malicious software.

- Look up charities by name at www.charitynavigator.org or www.give.org.
- Use caution with any charities that have popped up since the invasion began. Research who will administer the funds, how they will be used, and if donations are tax-deductible.
 - Be leery of high-pressure pitches and requests to wire money.
 - Avoid donating cash or wiring money to people or organizations you don't know.
- If you are donating via a public fundraising website (often called crowdfunding) review the site's safety and security policies before making a payment. While these sites typically have a number of safeguards in place for users, understand that there is no way to guarantee that the information posted is completely accurate or truthful.
- If you question the legitimacy of a charity, seek out contact information for the operation rather than using the contact information provided in the pitch or search listing.

Under Wisconsin state law, most organizations soliciting for charitable donations must register and file an annual report with the DFI. To check if a charity is registered, visit the [DFI website](#), email DFICharitableOrgs@dfi.wisconsin.gov, or call (608)267-1711.

For additional information or to file a complaint, visit DATCP's Consumer Protection Bureau at <http://datcp.wi.gov>, send an email to DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov or call toll-free 1-800-422-7128.



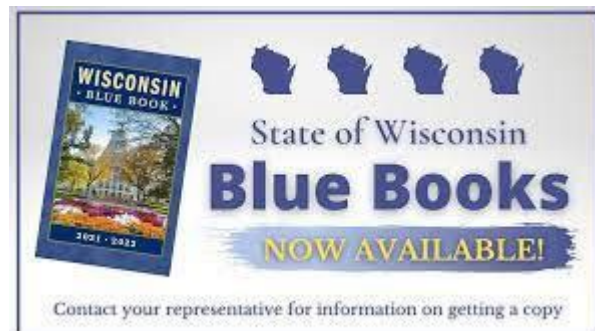
St. Catherine Commons Hosts Mardi Gras Open House

This week, St. Catherine Commons, an independent, assisted living and memory care facility in Kenosha, hosted a Mardi Gras-themed open house, and I was pleased to be able to attend. The event offered a chance for members of the public to learn more about the facility and for residents to interact with a wider group of people after two years of the Covid pandemic. Most of us won't be lucky enough to make it to New Orleans for Mardi Gras, so St. Catherine Commons brought a little bit of Mardi Gras to Kenosha, featuring jambalaya and dancing to smooth jazz music. I had a great time talking with residents and staff and thank the people at St. Catherine Commons for their hospitality.



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