

**March 18, 2022**



**Dear friends,**

**St. Patrick's Day is celebrated annually on March 17, the anniversary of his death in the fifth century. The Irish have observed this day as a religious holiday for more than 1,000 years. On St. Patrick's Day, Irish families would traditionally attend church in the morning and celebrate in the afternoon. People would dance, drink and feast. With the growth of Irish immigration to America, St. Patrick's Day parades and other events became commonplace throughout the country. In 1948, President Harry S. Truman attended New York City's St. Patrick's Day parade, becoming the first American President to do so. This was a proud moment for the many Irish Americans whose ancestors had to fight stereotypes and racial prejudice to find acceptance in America. Today, one of the most well-known St. Patrick's Day traditions in our country is the dying green of the Chicago River. As the saying goes, "Everyone's a little Irish on St. Patrick's Day".**

**Stay safe and healthy.**

**Sincerely,**

*Bob*

# small business SPOTLIGHT



## *They're Always Cooking Up Something Good at Jaramillo's Home Cook'n*

For years, Racine's Jaramillo family – Bri and Reuben Jaramillo – have been known for their delicious home-cooked meals, which they loved to make for their many family and friends. They got so popular, and demand grew so much, that they eventually started their own food truck. Having outgrown the food truck, Bri and Reuben have gone the brick and mortar route, opening up Jaramillo's Home Cook'n at 301 Hamilton St. in Racine. Reuben credits his grandmother for teaching him how to cook, and they serve plenty of comfort food, with traditional steak tacos being one of their most requested items. They believe deeply in supporting other local businesses, even serving Esperanza Coffee Collective from Racine's Uptown, and they allow aspiring restaurateurs to use their kitchen in off hours. Fine more, including their hours and menu, [here](#).

## **In Case You Missed It**



***Governor Evers Stops in Racine, Presents \$20 Million for New Community Investments***

The proposed Racine Community Health Center got a big boost when Governor Tony Evers visited the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center to announce a state investment of \$20 million in the project. As a result of the money from Evers, Mayor Cory Mason says that construction on the new health clinic could break ground this year. The clinic will be located on a vacant site next to Julian Thomas Elementary School. Racine is currently the largest city in Wisconsin without a federally qualified health center, which serves low income families who are uninsured or underinsured. The project will feature a new Dr. King Community Center on the site, which will house the health clinic. An additional \$15 million in state funds has been allocated to address affordable housing in the Lincoln-King neighborhood.



### ***KAFASI Seeking Springtime Volunteers***

Kenosha Area Family and Aging Services, Inc. (KAFASI) is again seeking volunteers to help senior citizens and people with disabilities with basic yard work for the spring season. If you like being outdoors and making a difference, call KAFASI at (262)658-3508 and ask for Mary.



### ***Evers Commits \$50 Million to Public Safety Efforts***

On Wednesday, Governor Tony Evers announced a more than \$50 million investment in public and community safety. The package will fund evidence-based initiatives meant to keep Wisconsin safe, add to mental health supports and diversions, and eliminate a pandemic-related backlog of cases in the state court system, among other programs. Combined with a separate, \$45 million investment announced last October and several others, this brings the Governor's overall funding for violence prevention and public safety to more than \$100 million. You can read a statement I issued on the matter [here](#).



## ***What You Need to Know if You Haven't Yet Filed Your Tax Returns***

The April 18 individual income tax filing deadline, for both federal and state of Wisconsin tax returns, is just one month away. Taxpayers who have already filed and are receiving a refund can track their refunds' status at [revenue.wi.gov](https://revenue.wi.gov) (state) and <https://www.irs.gov/refunds> (federal). Anyone owing money must file and pay by the April 18 deadline to avoid interest and fees. Anyone unable to pay in full should pay what they can by the deadline and request a payment plan.

The state Department of Revenue (DOR) encourages electronic filing as it is the fastest, most accurate and most secure way to file a tax return. DOR also offers these tips to help taxpayers better protect themselves:

- Use Identity Protection (IP) PINs – Taxpayers should consider signing up for the federal IP PIN at [irs.gov](https://irs.gov) and Wisconsin IP PIN at [revenue.wi.gov](https://revenue.wi.gov). Both IP PINs help prevent unauthorized persons from using taxpayer personal information to fraudulently file federal and state returns in their names.
- Be alert – Know that DOR will never call, email or text message anyone without first sending them a letter either through the mail or registered My Tax Account. A call, email or message received without having first received a letter from DOR is a red flag for fraud.
- Be proactive – Keep firewall, malware and anti-virus software up to date; encrypt tax and other sensitive records stored on electronic devices; use strong and unique passwords for online tax preparation accounts; use two-factor authentication; never send tax information through unencrypted email or a public wi-fi connection; choose reputable tax preparers; and file electronically.
- Help is here – Free tax services through Wisconsin's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs are offered to low- and moderate-income individuals, older adults, persons with disabilities, limited English speakers and military members. Search VITA on the DOR websites for details on these programs and to find the closest VITA or TCE site.
- Hours will be extended in DOR's customer service call center until 5:45 pm on April 5, 7, 12 and 14.



## ***United States Senate Passes Bill to Make Daylight Savings Time Permanent***

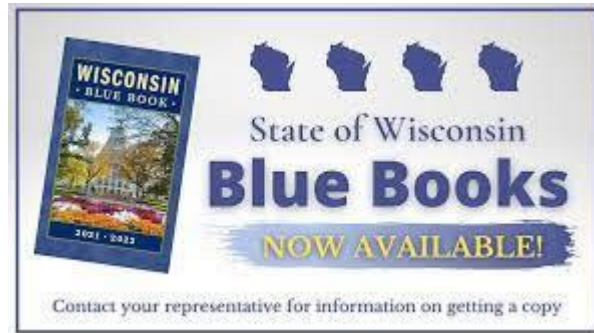
On Tuesday, the United States Senate (not to be confused with the Wisconsin State Senate) passed what supporters are calling the Sunshine Protection Act, which would make daylight savings time (DST) permanent across the country beginning in 2023. Currently, eighteen states have moved to adopt year-round DST but cannot do so without congressional approval. It's unclear if the U.S. House of Representatives will vote on the bill, which must pass both houses and be signed by the President before it can become law.



## ***Free Covid Tests Available***

You can now sign up to receive two (2) sets of 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. If you already ordered your first set of 4, you can use the above link to order your second set. Additionally, because 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](mailto:sen.wirch@legis.wisconsin.gov). These books are free and contain interesting and valuable information about our state's culture, history and government.