

July 22, 2022



Dear friends,

Aviation pioneer Amelia Earhart was born on July 24, 1897; July 24 is now recognized as National Amelia Earhart Day to honor her achievements. While she is probably best remembered for her mysterious disappearance during a flight around the world, Earhart was a true trailblazer. In 1932, she became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean and became the first female awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross by Congress. Her life remains an inspiration in the field of aviation and for women's rights.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Bob

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



BBQ'd Productions Started as Backyard Grilling and Became a Big Hit

Kris Schoenberger loves to entertain and is particularly fond of having friends and family over to his backyard for cookouts. During a period where he was looking for work, and after some prodding from his mother, Kris turned that passion into a business, starting BBQ'd Productions. It started as a mobile catering business with one single trailer, but demand quickly grew. They added more trailers to fleet and eventually opened their first brick and mortar location. Now, there are three locations, with Kenosha being the first in Wisconsin. They still offering catering but serve a dine-in or take-out lunch and dinner. In Kenosha, you'll find BBQ'd Productions at 4235 Green Bay Rd., Unit 7. Peruse their menu or get more information [here](#) or [here](#).

In Case You Missed It



Hard Rock and Menominee Tribe Renew Push for Kenosha Casino

It feels a little like déjà vu, but some exciting news was announced this week – the Menominee tribe will again partner with Hard Rock International in another attempt to open a casino complex in Kenosha. Hard Rock has purchased about 60 acres of land located on the east and west sides of 122nd Avenue in Kenosha; the land had been owned by the Village of Bristol. Efforts to bring off-reservation gaming to the Kenosha area date back to the 1990s. A joint venture between the Menominee and Hard Rock received federal approval in 2013. That

project would have created 5,000 direct and indirect family-supporting jobs and been a financial win for the city, county and state as a whole. However, under pressure from conservatives and the Potawatomi Tribe during his short-lived Presidential campaign, former Governor Scott Walker rejected the plan in 2015. The current plan calls for a slightly scaled-down version of that project but would still bring jobs and a financial windfall.



Evers, Kaul File Suit over PFAS “Forever Chemical” Contamination

Governor Tony Evers and Attorney General Josh Kaul have filed a lawsuit against eighteen total defendants stemming from PFAS contamination in Wisconsin. The defendants are accused of “wrongful, deceptive and tortious conduct, which led directly to the contamination. The lawsuit argues the defendants knew or should have known about the harmful effects that PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals”, have on our natural resources and public health. In a press conference announcing the suit, Evers said, “Every Wisconsinite deserves access to clean, safe water – free of lead, PFAS and other contaminants that have long been known to harm our kids, farmers, communities and industries across the state.” PFAS are a group of man-made chemicals first used in non-stick coatings for cooking pans, fast food wrappers, firefighting foam and many other products. They are called “forever chemicals” because they are persistent and don’t break down in the environment or human bodies. They have been linked to many chronic health problems, such as cancer, thyroid disorders, birth defects and high cholesterol.



Wirsch Receives Score of 100% from Wisconsin State AFL-CIO

I was honored to earn a perfect score – 100%- from the Wisconsin State AFL-CIO on their 2021-2022 Legislative Session Scorecard. As a former member of organized labor and a staunch labor advocate, I could not be more proud to receive this acknowledgement. Over the

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last 11 years, the Legislature’s Republican majority has worked to strip organized labor of its power and deprive Wisconsin’s working men and women of union representation. I have stood with labor every step of the way, and I am thrilled that the AFL-CIO has recognized this.



National Study Finds No Problems with Use of Dropboxes in 2020 Election; Wisconsin Republicans Continue Making it Harder to Vote

An Associated Press survey of state election officials across the country found no cases of fraud, vandalism, threat or other major problems with the expanded use of absentee ballot drop boxes during the 2020 election. The findings were consistent through both red and blue states and refute claims of fraud by Republicans. The Wisconsin Supreme Court recently heard a case supported by state Republicans in which the court ruled the use of absentee ballot drop boxes illegal. Drop boxes are considered by most election officials to be safe and secure. In other voting rights news, this week the Republican-controlled Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules (JCRAR), a committee in the Wisconsin Legislature made up of both Senators and Assembly Representatives, struck down a rule that would allow elections clerks to correct minor mistakes on absentee ballot envelopes so that the votes inside could be counted. Supporters of the rule say that killing it will deprive thousands of voters from having their votes counted simply because of an accidental, incidental error. Advocates for seniors and people living with disabilities supported the rule, saying that its elimination will make it harder for members of the communities they represent to have their votes counted.

**RACINE
SPEAKS**

Real Data. Real People.



AT WINGSPREAD

“Racine Speaks” Holds Community Briefing, Releases Report

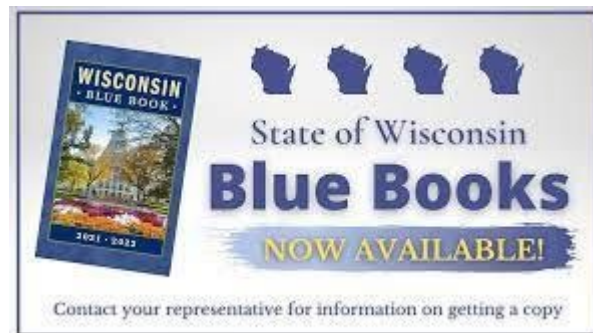
“Racine Speaks”, a project of The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread, held a community presentation and conversation earlier this week where they released a report and launched a website on ways to build an more equitable and prosperous community for everyone. The project came about following a 2017 Wisconsin Policy Forum report, which found disturbing trends across Racine. The Johnson Foundation’s Resilient Communities Initiative spoke with hundreds of community members and gathered bundles of data on racial disparities and other issues, which is highlighted in the new report. You can read the full report, as well as watch

some informational videos and a recording of the presentation, at <https://www.johnsonfdn.org/racine-speaks>.



EIGHT MORE Free Covid Tests Available

With Covid cases again on the rise, the Biden administration has is offering households eight additional at-home Covid tests, free of charge. You can order the eight tests at <https://www.covidtests.gov/>; you can also use this site to find nearby testing locations. The administration had previously made four at-home Covid tests available per household; you can still claim those using the same link if you haven't already done so. Additionally, because of actions by President Biden and Governor Evers, your health insurance provider may be required to cover up to eight at-home rapid tests per month.



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.