

September 9, 2022



Dear friends,

It is hard to believe that twenty-one years have passed since one of the darkest days in our country's history. None of us who were alive that day will ever forget where we were when we first heard the news or saw it on TV. Following the events of that day, the country was united in a way that we haven't been since. It remains a day of somber reflection and a reminder that you can't take life for granted.

Until next time, stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Bob

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



Donna's Gym-nastics in Kenosha

Donna Gunn-Newkirk has been involved in gymnastics in one form or another since 1975. She also taught Dance and PE for eleven years through RUSD and worked as a PE teacher for students with special needs for 23 years. Since 1993, she has owned and operated Donna's Gym-nastics, where she puts her experience to use teaching youngsters gymnastics, tumbling, cheerleading and dance, specializing in developing all-around movement and motor skills. Find out more at <https://www.donnasygmnastics.com/>.

In Case You Missed It



State Department of Health Services Urges Residents to Get Boosted Against Covid this Fall

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) is urging Wisconsinites to make a plan to get boosted against Covid-19 this fall. People 12 and older are now eligible to receive updated Covid-19 boosters, also known as bivalent boosters. Doses have started arriving in Wisconsin and will continue to be delivered to providers over the next several weeks. Pharmacies, health centers and clinics are expected to make appointments available as their booster doses arrive.

The updated boosters have been authorized by the FDA and recommended by the CDC and are the first Omicron-specific vaccines to be made available in the United States. They target the original strain of

Covid-19, as well as the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron subvariants. The highly contagious BA.5 subvariant is currently the dominant strain of Covid-19, accounting for about 90% of cases nationally.

The updated boosters are recommended as a single dose for people 12 and older who have received their primary Covid-19 vaccine series and have not received a Covid-19 vaccine dose in the last two months. People 12 and older are eligible to receive the updated Pfizer booster, while those 18 and older are eligible for the updated Moderna booster. DHS also notes that people can safely receive their Covid-19 vaccines and other vaccines at the same time, including the annual flu vaccine.



Governor Evers, DPI Superintendent Underly Release K-12 Budget Priorities, Including Increased Investment in Public Education

With the state now projected to finish the current budget cycle with a \$5 billion surplus and the next budget quickly approaching, Governor Tony Evers and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jill Underly have released their K-12 priorities for the 2023-2025 budget.

The key provision of the plan is an increased state investment in public schools of \$2 billion. Using the projected surplus, the plan is able to increase school funding without raising property taxes. The plan includes increases in aid per student; revenue limit increases for school districts; a \$750 million increase in special education funding; and \$240 million for school mental health services.

The plan aims to improve student reading and literacy, with a new \$10 million aid program and an emphasis on helping 4- and 5-year old students who are just learning to read. Another key part of the plan would expand access to free meals for students through creation of a state-funded program to reimburse districts for breakfast, milk, snack and lunch expenses. According to Evers, the plan would provide free meals to students who qualify for free and reduced price meals, while also lowering costs for other students. You can read the full proposal [here](#).



Kenosha AFL-CIO Names Six as “Labor Person of the Year”

With Covid causing a two year hiatus of the annual LaborFest celebration, the Kenosha AFL-CIO Council this year has awarded its “Labor Person of the Year” Recognition to six Kenosha locals. President Rick Gallo called the recipients “truly inspirational” and said their actions represent “important contributions individuals can make to today’s labor movement.” The six recipients are: **Rep. Tip McGuire**; **Peggy Applegate-Peplinski**, President of UAW Local 72; **Bradley Kalcic**, President of the SE Wisconsin Building and Construction Trades Council; **Tanya Kitts-Lewinski**, immediate past President of the Kenosha Education Association; **Ricardo Lebron**, President of the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 414; and **Joey Sielski**, Vice President of International Association of Fire Fighters Local 414. Congratulations to all, and thank you for your contributions to the labor movement.



Recognizing National Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week

September 5-9, 2022, is National Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week. Substitute teachers are a critical but often-overlooked part of the education of our children. It is a difficult and mostly thankless job, so I suggest that you take time this week to show your thanks to any substitute teachers in your lives.



Wisconsin Dept. of Justice, 32 Other States Reach \$438.5 Million Settlement with e-Cigarette Manufacturer JUUL

This week, Attorney General Josh Kaul announced that the Wisconsin Department of Justice, as part of a 33 state lawsuit, had reached an agreement with JUUL Labs requiring the e-cigarette manufacturer to pay \$438.5 million and to comply with a series of terms

limiting the company's marketing and sales practices. This stems from a two year bipartisan investigation into JUUL over claims the company targeted its marketing toward youth. As part of the agreement, Wisconsin's share of the funds will be more than \$14.4 million.

Until recently, JUUL was the dominant force in the vaping market. The investigation revealed that JUUL willfully engaged in an advertising campaign appealing to youth, even though its e-cigarettes are both illegal for them to purchase and unhealthy to use. The investigation found that JUUL relentlessly marketed to underage users with launch parties, advertisements using young and trendy-looking models, social media posts and free samples. It marketed a technology-focused, sleek design that could be easily concealed and sold its products in flavors known to be attractive to underage users. Additionally, JUUL relied on age verification techniques that it knew to be ineffective.



Wisconsin Launches Program to Send Out Free Covid Tests

Wisconsin residents can now get Covid-19 tests sent to them free of charge from the state. The federal government had been offering free Covid tests, but the funding for that program has run out.

The Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services (DHS) says that the [Say Yes! Covid Test website](#) is now live and operational. The site allows households to order five rapid tests for free. Households can still get up to eight rapid Covid tests per month through their insurance providers, as well.



Take My 2022 Legislative Survey

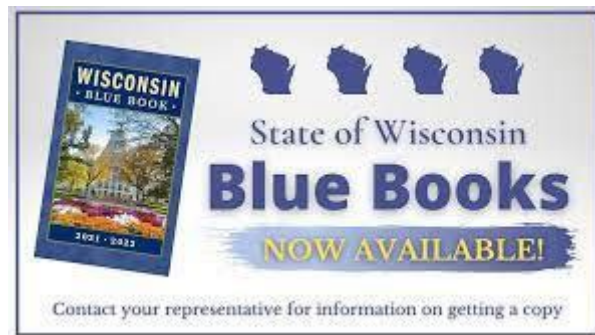
It's very important to me as a legislator to hear what you think about the important issues of the day. I've put together a survey on a variety of topics that I am hoping you will take the time to complete. You can find an online version of the survey at <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/senate/22/wirch/surveys-and-petitions/2022-legislative-survey>.

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