

October 21, 2022



Dear friends,

National Make a Difference Day is dedicated to helping others through community service and volunteerism. It is held on the fourth Saturday of October, which this year falls on October 22. On this day, millions of people throughout the world unite in the common mission to improve the lives of others. There are any number of great local organizations who could use volunteer help. If you'd like to help "Make a Difference" by volunteering, use [this website](#) to find an organization in the community that interests you.

Until next time, stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Bob

small business **SPOTLIGHT**



Cooper's Uptown Bringing a Sense of Familiarity to Former Jack Andrea's Location

After more than 100 years in business, Jack Andrea's – formerly known simply as Andrea's – closed its doors for the final time in June 2021. The unique gift shop, soda fountain and cafe was a local institution, and its closure left a hole in the community. Now, later this month, the site is scheduled to reopen with new owners and a new name but the same spirit and homey feeling. Jockey International has purchased the building and transformed the spot into Cooper's Uptown, which is holding its Grand Opening on October 26 and beginning normal business hours on Thursday, October 27. The Cooper's name is in honor of Jockey's founder, Rev. Samuel T. Cooper. Vicki Seebeck, General Manager of Cooper's Uptown, says, "Our hope is Coopers Uptown will be a place for families and friends to gather, shop and eat. A place to be nostalgic about the past yet make new memories together." Cooper's Uptown will be open seven days a week. Learn more at CoopersUptown.com.

In Case You Missed It



Wirch Office Hours Friday at Northside Library

Today, Friday, October 21, from 2:30 to 4 pm, I'll be holding an "Office Hours" listening session in Activity Room A of Kenosha's Northside Library, 1500 27th Ave. Stop in to share your thoughts on the happenings in our state.



State Finishes Year with Record Budget Surplus

The state Department of Administration (DOA) has released its report on the state's fiscal condition at the end of the 2022 fiscal year, and the news is exciting and promising. The state ended the fiscal year with a record \$4.3 billion budget surplus, and the state's "rainy day fund" – money set aside for an emergency situation – is also the highest in history at \$1.73 billion. At the same time, a report from the nonpartisan Wisconsin Policy Forum found that Wisconsin's tax burden hit its lowest level in decades. DOA projects that the state will finish the current budget cycle in June 2023 with an estimated \$5 billion surplus.



1972-2022

The Next 50 Years

Clean Water Act Reaches 50th Anniversary

The federal Clean Water Act has reached 50 years old. The landmark law designed to address water pollution passed in 1972 when Congress overrode a veto by then-President Richard Nixon. It has been considered one of the greatest successes in environmental law, creating big improvements in water quality. It's still tested on a regular basis, however, including a case heard just two weeks ago by the U.S. Supreme Court that could chip away at these protections.

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Evers Administration Begins Effort to Collect PFAS-Containing Firefighting Foam

The state of Wisconsin, under the administration of Governor Tony Evers, has begun a program to collect and dispose of at least 25,000 gallons of PFAS-containing firefighting foam from fire departments across Wisconsin. Departments in more than 60 counties have identified unwanted firefighting foam for disposal. The collection program is funded through a \$1 million allocation in the 2021-2023 state budget to the Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Dept. of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP).

PFAS are a type of cancer-causing compounds known as “forever chemicals” because they don’t break down easily in the environment or the body. PFAS are commonly found in household goods such as non-stick pans and some food wrappings, but the largest sources have been firefighting foam. PFAS pollution has affected drinking water in municipalities across the state.

In addition to the collection effort, the DNR has released an interactive map detailing PFAS contamination in water sources and wildlife across the state. The map tracks PFAS testing, levels in drinking water and fish consumption warnings and is a way for DNR to inform residents about what’s going on with the water in their area. The map can be accessed at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/PFAS/DataViewer>.



Local Trick or Treating Times Set

Area municipalities have set their trick or treating times. Last minutes changes may occur due to weather.

Racine – Oct. 31, 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Elmwood Park – Oct. 31, 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Mount Pleasant – Oct. 31, 5-7 pm

Kenosha – Oct. 31, 4-7 pm

Somers – Oct. 31, 4-7 pm



October is Filipino American History Month

Filipino Americans are the second-largest Asian American ethnic group in the United States, and Filipinos were the first documented Asian people to arrive in the U.S. To recognize their long and distinguished history, in 2009, Congress recognized October as Filipino American History Month.

October holds a special place in Filipino American history. October 18, 1857, marks the first recorded arrival of Filipinos in the continental U.S., in Morro Bay, California. October is also the birth month of Filipino American labor leader Larry Itliong, who partnered with Cesar Chavez to create the United Farm Workers (UFW) of American labor union.

For 2022, the Filipino American National Historical Society has chosen the theme, “Past, Present, and Future”, with an emphasis on celebrating Filipino legacies. 2022 marks:

- The 60th anniversary of the first Tagalog course taught at the University of Hawai’i
 - 50 years of Filipino American Studies in U.S. colleges
 - 40 years of the Filipino American National Historical Society
 - 30 years of Filipino American History Month



Some Libraries to Offer Free State Park Passes

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has created a pilot program to make state park and forest vehicle admission day passes available to 1,000 library cardholders at twenty libraries across Wisconsin, including the public libraries in Kenosha.

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Starting Tuesday, November 1, library cardholders can check out a pass from participating libraries. The passes will be valid for free admission for one vehicle at any state park, forest or recreation area where admission is required. Along with the day pass, the cardholder will receive an informational kit of state park system materials and maps, a Wisconsin Explorer Program book, stickers, accessibility information and more. The goal of the program is to expand access to the Wisconsin state park system to new park visitors. Participants who complete a survey after using the pass will be eligible to win one of ten 2023 annual state park and forest vehicle admission stickers paid for by the Friends of Wisconsin State Parks. The pilot program ends March 1, 2023.



Wisconsin Launches Program to Send Out Free Covid Tests

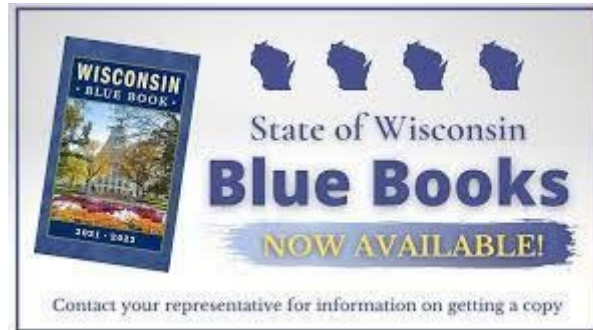
Wisconsin residents can now get Covid-19 tests sent to them free of charge from the state. The federal government had been offering free Covid tests, but the funding for that program has run out.

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>.



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.