

**December 2, 2022**



**Dear friends,**

**Each year on December 7, we honor and remember the 2,403 U.S. service members and civilians who were killed and the 1,178 injured during the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. On August 23, 1994, Congress designated December 7 as National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. Each year, events are held at the Pearl Harbor National Memorial, as well as in cities and towns across the country. The goal of the commemoration and supplemental events is to ensure that future generations will understand the sacrifice and legacy of those who lost their lives and those who fought throughout the war. The main December 7 ceremony featuring the USS *Utah* will be live streamed and captioned at <https://www.dvidshub.net/webcast/30572>. There will also be a number of events in the Kenosha and Racine areas. Until next time, stay safe, healthy and warm.**

**Until next time, stay safe and healthy.**

**Sincerely,**

*Bob*

## small business **SPOTLIGHT**



### *Racine's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Kris Kringle Tour to Feature More than 30 Downtown Businesses*

On Saturday, December 10, from 11 am to 2 pm, the Downtown Racine Corporation will hold its 5<sup>th</sup> annual Kris Kringle Tour. More than 30 downtown businesses will feature samplings of different Kringle flavors in celebration of Racine's heritage. Tour maps can be found at [racinedowntown.com](http://racinedowntown.com) or can be picked up at the Downtown Racine office, 425 Main St.



### *New Lego-Themed Store Opens in Kenosha*

A new aftermarket Lego store, Bricks & Minifigs, will have its Grand Opening this weekend in Kenosha's Southport Plaza, 7300 Green Bay Rd. Bricks & Minifigs is a national chain that allows customers to buy, sell or trade both new and used Legos, including sets and minis. The store will primarily deal in aftermarket Lego products but will also carry some new products, as well. Store hours for Saturday's Grand Opening will be from 10 am to 7 pm.

## **In Case You Missed It**



### ***Wirch Office Hours Saturday at Northside Library***

This Saturday, December 3, from 1 to 3 pm, I'll be holding an "Office Hours" listening session in the small conference room of Kenosha's Northside Library, 1500 27<sup>th</sup> Ave. Stop in to share your thoughts on the happenings in our state.



### ***WE Energies Approved for Smaller-than-Requested Rate Increase***

WE Energies had requested that the state Public Service Commission (PSC) approve a 13% increase in their electric customer rate. The issue became quite contentious. The PSC extended the period for public comment on the proposed increase after a request I made with my colleague from Milwaukee, Sen. Tim Carpenter. More than 1,200 public comments came in, and it looks like they had an impact. On Thursday, the PSC approved a smaller rate increase, 10.9%. The PSC also reduced WE Energies' profit limit for energy and gas operations to 9.8%, down from 10.2% for energy and 10% for gas operations. Additionally, WE Energies agreed to write off more than \$34 million in unpaid bills and late fees stemming from a prohibition on utility disconnections during the height of the Covid pandemic; extend a pilot program for low-income ratepayers known as the Low-Income Foregiveness Tool (LIFT); reduce a fixed monthly service charge from \$16 to \$15; and work with consumer organizations to develop a pilot program for a scaled rate based on household income.

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## ***Flu Cases Soaring; RSV, Covid also Causing Major Problems***

Three viral illnesses with surging activity levels in the state are causing respiratory and other health problems at higher than average rates. Flu, Covid-19 and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) cases are causing headaches at local doctors' offices and emergency rooms. If you haven't already done so, you can still get up to date on your Covid vaccinations and get your flu shot for the year. It could prevent you from ending up in the ER.



## ***December is National Impaired Driving Prevention Month***

The holiday season is a festive time, with many gatherings of family and friends. That makes it the appropriate time for National Impaired Driving Prevention Month. December is often a deadly month for impaired driving. The National Highway Safety Traffic Administration (NHTSA) reported that in 2019, during the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, 210 lives were lost due to alcohol-impaired driving crashes; that same year, more than 10,000 people died from drunk driving crashes. Alcohol-impaired driving crashes increase throughout

December as more people travel. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) conducted a survey in 2020 that showed over 26 million people ages 16 and older drove under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs during the previous year. Prevention is the key. Educate yourself and others on the risks of driving while impaired and take steps to stay safe. Communicate honestly with your children, friends, family and colleagues about expectations of behavior and safe choices when attending holiday events. The rise of ride share services has made getting home safely easier than ever. Speaking up is okay; if you think someone is too impaired to drive, say something. You could be saving their life or the lives of others.



## ***Wisconsin Families Can Get 5 Free Covid Tests Each Month***

Wisconsin residents can now get Covid-19 tests sent to them free of charge from the state. 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 **each month**.

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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