

SUMMER 2021

O A K C R E E K

CURRENT

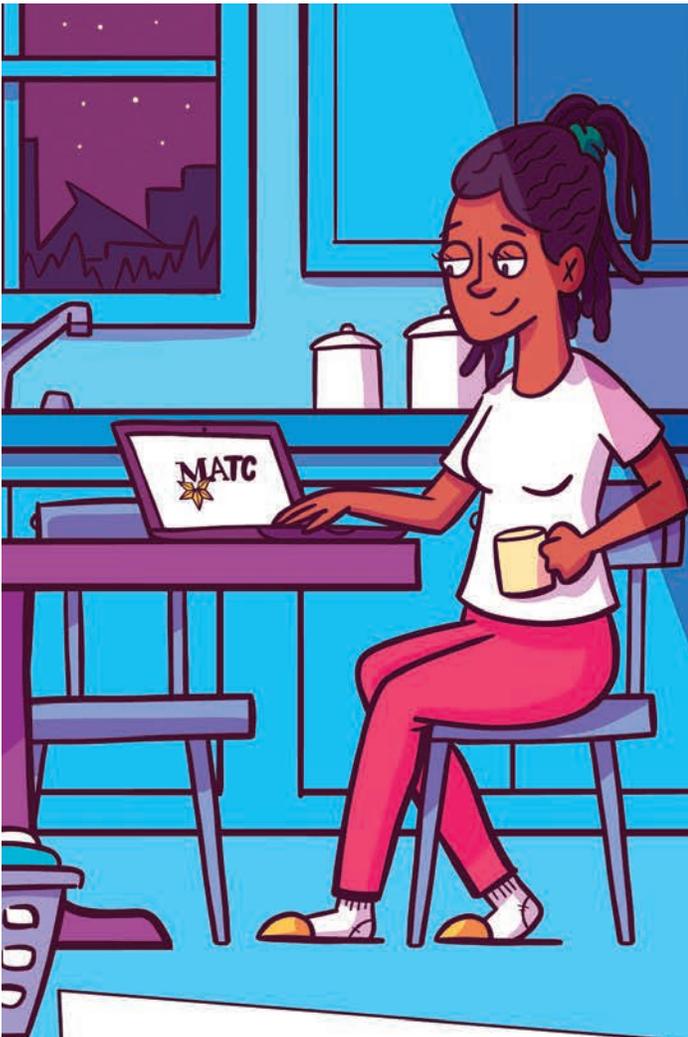
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ON THE COVER

2021 grads of Oak Creek High School reflect on their senior year during the pandemic (see pg. 6). *Photo by Emily DeBaker*

O A K C R E E K

CURRENT

M A G A Z I N E

The **Oak Creek Current** is the official magazine of the City of Oak Creek, and is mailed for free to all households and businesses in the City. The **Current** is published four times per year by the City of Oak Creek and the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District, with additional financial support from the MATC-Oak Creek campus. The magazine also receives funding from local advertisers.

This publication is guided by a professional advisory committee comprised of representatives from the City, the School District, and residents and business owners. Please email all inquiries/suggestions to info@oakcreekmagazine.com.

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From Dan Bukiewicz, Mayor-City of Oak Creek

Cautious Optimism Prevails as We Welcome Summer

Dear Oak Creek Residents,

More than a year has passed since the word coronavirus entered our vocabulary and changed our way of life. We've all been affected by COVID-19 in some way, and without a doubt, living through a pandemic has taught us a thing or two about resilience, flexibility and the power of community.



As we enter the summer season, we can all feel cautiously optimistic about our lives returning to some semblance of normal. The arrival of the COVID-19 vaccine to our area gives us hope we will shortly be able to resume the things we miss the most – hugs from extended family members, the ability to safely spend time with friends we've missed, and being able to attend special events and travel once again. I want to applaud the Oak Creek Health Department, along with the Cudahy, South Milwaukee and St. Francis Health Departments for joining forces to offer the South Shore COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic to our communities. Check out the article on page 24 to learn more about this impressive operation.

I'm truly proud of all of our City staff for how they shifted gears in innovative ways to keep themselves and our residents safe, while continuing to provide the top-notch service that everyone expects. Change is never easy, but they found unique ways to do their jobs, and have even added some valuable efficiencies that will continue into the future! Learn about their efforts as we give these dedicated public servants the recognition they deserve on page 22.

As the summer season begins, we're eager to bring back some of our regular community events. The Farmers Market returns to Drexel Town Square beginning in June, and we've got a fun Beer Garden lineup in the works. Dog Days at Drexel will also return for a fun family weekend in July. See the calendar on page 37 for a tentative schedule of events (as of the date of this publication). Make sure to follow the City's website and social media for the most current details on all of these popular events. We are still working on creating events that are both safe and enjoyable for our residents and visitors alike.

Stay safe and be well this summer!

– Mayor Dan Bukiewicz

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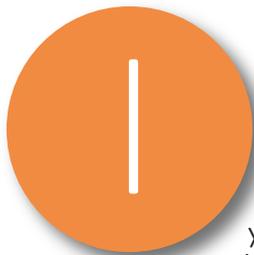
OCHS senior
Craesean Slaton



OCHS senior Sophia Azim

CUE THE POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE: WE'RE CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2021

High School Seniors Recall Year of "Firsts" – and the Many Lessons Learned



It should have been a year of lasts. The last first day of school. The last school dance. The last high school exam.

Instead, the Class of 2021 has experienced a year of firsts. Its first virtual classes. The first time socially distanced from friends. The first time to

worry about not when, but if, there would be a graduation ceremony.

Craesean Slaton, Sophia Azim, and Ashley and Grace Hanel are all seniors at Oak Creek High School. Set to graduate in June, these four students sat down to tell the story of their high school careers. One that has been plagued by a global pandemic, but that's not what will define their experience.

CRAESEAN SLATON missed the crowd noise the most. The Oak Creek football player finished the season his junior year already excited for next year.

"The stands were always full and I remember thinking that my senior year, seeing those faces in the crowd, would be one of the best feelings ever."

But, in March 2020, COVID-19 changed all of that. Schools were shut down, sports were canceled – life as we knew it was changed.

"At first we were all happy that we would have two weeks off of school," Slaton recalls of those first few days last March. "No one had any idea we'd be gone for the remainder of the school year. But, after a few weeks it just clicked. Like wow, I am really not going to be able to finish my junior year. It ended so abruptly and quickly. I was sad."

SOPHIA AZIM HAD A SIMILAR STORY.

"It wasn't until those two weeks were up that things started to get serious," Azim says. "The news covered it more. Everyone was saying we should wear masks. And we still weren't back at school." Her once busy life filled with school work, extra-curriculars and band practice had come to a screeching halt.

"I would actually call my friends, like on the phone," she recalls. "It might sound silly, but I never would have done that before. I just needed to hear their voices."

ASHLEY AND GRACE HANEL FOUND DIFFERENT WAYS TO CONNECT WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

According to the twin sisters, "We would FaceTime, group chat and when the weather got nicer spend time outside." In addition, they both also had full-time jobs – Ashley working at a local grocery store.

"It was crazy," Ashley said. "They switched most everyone to a night crew because the stock that was coming in was too big to put out during the day. During the day we would organize the shelves so the night crew could quickly stack the new product. If we got paper goods in, we put them out on the floor right away and they were gone within the hour."

That spring, the then-high school juniors watched upperclassmen miss out on special events. "That won't happen to us," they thought. But, in fall 2020, things were still up in the air. And for Azim, it was a test of her character.



“Last fall I struggled to stay on task. I was not doing well. I had to regroup and structure a new way of learning.” Needing some stability, Azim stayed virtual until January 2021 when OCFSD welcomed back all students, face-to-face, five days a week. With safety measures in place and masks on, students got to walk the halls together for the first time in almost a year.

“We are all doing what we can to make it as normal as possible,” Azim explains. “Sure, it looks different and feels different, but we’re thankful we’re able to be here in person safely and have these last several months together.”

And determined to make the most of their senior year, regardless of current events, the group has re-evaluated what is truly important.

“We were able to have a football season,” Slaton says. “Our coaches came up with a plan so we could still play. Even though there were no fans, we were able to play together one last time and that meant everything. It was closure to memories we had with all the guys we’ve been playing, and competing, with for four years.”

“I didn’t go to a lot of events and do the normal high school thing my first three years. I was planning on doing all those things my senior year,” Azim explains. “So now I am trying to be part of as much as I can to get as close to those missed opportunities as I can.”

“I am more motivated,” Grace reports. “Just by seeing people – it’s crazy how much that means now. We try to live in the moment, try new things and adapt to change.”

This fall, each of these four seniors has big plans. Creasean is off to the University of Minnesota-Duluth to play football and major in business. Sophia is still weighing her post-secondary options, and is excited for what the future holds. Ashley and Grace are on track to pursue their passions – Ashley to Cedarville University in Ohio to study marketing, and Grace to the University of Sioux Falls to study business administration.

Each member of the Class of 2021 has his/her own story to tell. And a lot of that story does revolve around COVID-19 and the events that followed. So, you might wonder why we started this story saying this global pandemic does not define their high school career.

HERE’S WHY.

When asked what they’ll remember most about high school, Creasean, Sophia, Ashley and Grace didn’t even say the words COVID, pandemic or social distancing. They said they’ll remember the lessons they learned – like “make the most of what you have at the moment.”

They said they’ll remember the connections they made with teammates, classmates and staff. They said they’ll remember the time they got to sit at American Family Field in their royal blue caps and gowns, turning that tassel from right to left knowing they can get through anything. They have, after all, already been through so much.

Best wishes to every member of this year’s graduating Class of 2021! We applaud your accomplishments and bravery!



New Oak Creek Performing Arts and Education Center Set To Be a Showstopper



Picture this. 1,000 seats are filled. The lights go down. The music plays. The state-of-the-art facility comes alive with anticipation and excitement. The curtain opens ... and the show begins. What show you ask? Well, there will be many to choose from – because everyone is welcome at the new Oak Creek Performing Arts and Education Center (OCPAEC).

The Oak Creek Performing Arts and Education Center is set to open its door this fall. Under the direction of Lyn Hulgán, a decades-long entertainment and event industry professional, the multi-purpose facility will serve the surrounding communities by showcasing student performances, offering educational opportunities, providing rental options to community groups and spotlighting world-renowned entertainment.

“It’s an absolute joy to watch a group of performers come together and create magic on the stage,” Hulgán says. “I am excited to support our students and surrounding communities by showcasing their performance talents, while assisting our local businesses with their multi-purposed presentation needs. Our state-of-the-art facility and dedicated, award-winning production staff and designers can accommodate most any form of presentation, from music and dance, to martial arts and book signings.”

In 2018, the Oak Creek-Franklin community supported a referendum that allowed this facility to be a reality. For the past year, construction crews have been working diligently to ensure it’s ready for the 2021-2022 school year.

“By connecting our students with some of the most talented individuals in the music, performance, management and production industry, our students will have unique educational opportunities that can prepare them for whatever their future aspirations may be,” Hulgán explains.

In addition to stage performances, members of the community will have the opportunity to take part in a variety of unique opportunities:

- **Student Internships** Students internship opportunities include production, marketing/PR and venue management, and run from October through June.
- **Music and Mocktails** Join District performance groups and local musicians on the stage for this unique onstage event. Guests enjoy a performance with the performers on our stage, which has been converted into a relaxed club-like lounge atmosphere, complete with a large dance floor, lounge seating, mood lighting, mocktails and sweets! Interested groups should contact the OCPAEC director for more information.
- **Senior Sneak Peek** Community seniors enjoy a morning of coffee and sweets with friends in the lobby, followed by a brief sneak peek rehearsal offered by a district performance group. Upcoming Senior Sneak Peek dates can be viewed on our Performance Calendar.
- **“Light Up the Season” Fundraiser** Each year, student groups are invited to creatively decorate a holiday tree for the OCPAEC lobby, which will be auctioned off throughout the month of December. Trees may be viewed one hour before all public

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events, and all proceeds go to the student groups for programming activities.

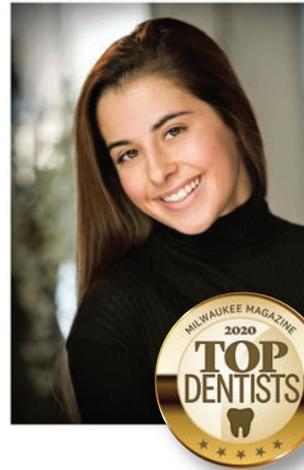
"Our goals are to meet the multi-purpose needs of our local businesses and community, as well as an entertainment destination for both fans and performers," Hulgán says. "We will create an environment for self-expression, confidence, collaboration and achievement."

Want to get involved? Applications are now being accepted for those wishing to serve on the Oak Creek Performing Arts Board (OCPAB). The OCPAB is a group of community members and students that help select entertainment, fundraise, market and build community through arts programs and performances that enrich the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District and surrounding communities.

Performing Arts Board Members Needed – PLEASE CONTACT US!

Anyone wishing to serve on the Performing Arts Board – or if you would like more information, please contact OCPAEC Director Lyn Hulgán at l.hulgan@ocfsd.org.

Or visit us online at
[ocfsd.org/community/
performing-arts-and-education-center](http://ocfsd.org/community/performing-arts-and-education-center).



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Cedar Hills student William Bonow interviews art teacher Sabrina Weiland for an upcoming segment on Eagle TV.

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!

Cedar Hills Elementary School's Video Announcements Highlight Community and Connectedness

“

have been to 26 countries. I had a dog named ‘Dog.’ And, I know how to breakdance.”

“Well, Cedar Hills, can you guess what the lie is?” Fifth grader William Bonow asks that a lot. And usually, he has the right answer.

“I guess it’s 26 countries?” he says to art teacher Sabrina Weiland off-camera as to not ruin the game for his classmates.

Ms. Weiland is the newest featured guest on William’s Eagle TV series, “Two Truths and One Lie.” Eagle TV, a daily teacher- and student-driven news program at Cedar Hills Elementary School, started as a way to replace the traditional morning announcements. In its second year, it has evolved into so much more.

“The principal came to us and asked if we’d be interested in doing it. He thought we’d make a good team,” Kelly Simon, a kindergarten teacher at Cedar Hills explains.

“When we were first asked to do this, I was like, ‘every day?’

It seemed like a lot,” music teacher Katie Franecki adds. “But, the kids love it. We change the intro every month, and kids are so excited to see what the new intro is going to be.”

Every day, Eagle TV features a construction update, a daily joke, birthday shout-outs, announcements, and on Wednesdays – “Two Truths and a Lie” with William.

“It gives me good feelings,” William said of his special segment. Each week, William chooses a different staff member and asks them to tell him three things about themselves.

“Two things are true and one is a lie – and we have to guess which is which,” William explains. “It’s pretty fun to do. I like being part of the videos.”

“I just always appreciated William. He has a mind for things like this,” Franecki says. “I knew it would be a magical combination. He is a natural in front of the camera.” William is a natural behind the camera, too – the fifth grader edits his own segment every week.

“We wanted to keep that connection to the school.

It was something that was familiar to them. It gave them hope ... knowing we’ll be back! And this year, even though they are back in classrooms, it’s still brought a sense of togetherness.”

"I used to not be able to do a lot of it, but now I have my own program and it's fun to put it together," William reports. Other staff have gotten in on the fun, too. Teachers will submit ideas for stories or put together their own videos and send them in.

"It helps build our community, our "You Belong Here" brand . . . our mission . . . it really helps," Franecki adds.

So, last year, when COVID-19 forced schools to close and staff and students had to teach and learn from home, Franecki and Simon knew they had to keep Eagle TV going.

"We were asking for submissions from the students at home," Simon explains. "We would ask for jokes, talents, etc., to try to engage kids and keep it going. We wanted to keep that connection to school. It was something that was familiar to them. It gave them hope, knowing, yeah, we'll be back!"

And this year, even though they're back in classrooms, it's still brought a sense of togetherness.

"This year, people are so separate and in cohorts, we don't really see each other and this helps keep people connected," Franecki adds. And for William – well, he's become somewhat of a celebrity.

"My kindergartners think he's so cool. They recognize him right away," Simon says. "Yeah, they high-five me in the hallway," William adds with a smile.

So, what happens next year when William is off to middle school? Don't worry, he has a plan.

"I am going to record an episode every week and send it to them even though I am not here," William explains. "You're going to keep it going?" Franecki asks.

"I sure am!" William says. AND THAT'S NO LIE!

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PINNED IN THE RECORD BOOKS OCHS WRESTLER IS ONLY SECOND STATE CHAMPION IN SCHOOL HISTORY

E

very day for the last four years Ben Kawczynski has walked by the same plaque outside the gymnasium at Oak Creek High School.

**“Joe Aperi, 1992 – 160 lbs.”
it reads.**

“I will be the next one up there,” Kawczynski would say to whoever he was walking with. “That will be me.” And on February 13, Kawczynski made those words a reality.

The OCHS senior took first place at the WIAA State Wrestling Tournament, only the second state champion in school history and the first since 1992.

“It was surreal,” Kawczynski recalls. “I was so happy because all the hard work I have put in over the years was finally worth it.”

Kawczynski began wrestling in the 6th grade. His brother had told him he should try it out. So, he did. And he liked it. “It teaches you a lot of life skills like perseverance,” Kawczynski explains. “That’s what I like most about it. It breaks you down, and then builds you back up.”

And he was good at it, too. In 8th grade Kawczynski qualified for the youth state tournament and did well before he got sick and couldn’t compete. In high school, he made varsity as a freshman, took 6th place at the state tournament as a sophomore and was ranked #2 in the state his junior year.

“Going into the state tournament my junior year I really believed that was my year,” Kawczynski remembers. “I was ranked #2, I had worked hard. I felt like I was ready.”

But, Kawczynski came up short. He lost in the semifinal match. “I just couldn’t bounce back,” Kawczynski adds. “I didn’t place and ended up tearing the ligaments in my ankle.”

He was out for 6 weeks. “It was tough. I was so close. I knew I could have done it. I felt like it was just taken away from me and it wasn’t fair.” But, what is it he said wrestling teaches you? Perseverance.

“That feeling of hopelessness was motivation to never let it happen again,” Kawczynski explains. “I did a lot of rehab, I worked

out every day. I wasn’t going to let anything stand in my way.”

And then, on March 13, 2020, the COVID-19 global pandemic changed everything. Schools were closed. Sports were halted. Kawczynski and his teammates were left with little to no answers about what the future would hold.

“It was sad,” he said. “No one knew what it would all mean or how long it would last. Were we even going to have a state tournament this year?”

That was Scott Holler’s question, too. Holler, OCHS Athletic Director, watched the COVID-19 pandemic take its toll on his student-athletes.

“Our coaches and athletes take great pride in coming in each day with great practice plans, work ethics, establishing routines, etc. that will set us all up for success. So, when COVID had to come to the forefront of our mind each day, it certainly was stressful. But, in the end, we adapted and turned in outstanding fall and winter sports seasons,” Holler said.

“We were able to put safety protocols and procedures in place and have a safe and successful regular season,” OCHS Wrestling Coach Terry Nachtigall said. “We showed the WIAA it could be done. And because of that, and the work of other teams across the state, a state tournament, although very different, was a reality.”

Heading into that weekend Kawczynski was ranked #1. “Going into that first round I was pretty nervous,” Kawczynski recalls. “I felt like the weight of the entire school was on my back and I had to get all those nerves out.”

Kawczynski won the first round effortlessly. In the second, he pinned his opponent. And then he found himself in a place he had never been before. Sure, he had made it to state several times. But, now, this was it.

“I remember thinking, ‘oh my gosh, I made it. This is real.’ But, it was bittersweet, too. Because no matter the outcome, this would be my last match of my high school career. Walking up there I knew I had done everything I could to prepare.”

“I kind of left him alone. He was ready,” Coach Nachtigall recalls. “Ben wrestled his opponent as perfectly as you could.” With 30 seconds left in the match a timeout was called – Ben was up 3-0.

“He comes over and starts thanking us for everything we did for him,” Nachtigall recalls. “But, here’s the thing, even if he would have been losing in that moment, he still would have thanked us.” The match ended. Kawczynski was a champion. He pointed at his family, a smile from ear to ear.

“The support from my family and my coaches has been everything to me. I wouldn’t be where I am today if it wasn’t for them,” he exclaims.

Word quickly spread about Kawczynski’s impressive accomplishment. Dozens of comments from people all over the community flooded social media. His picture and video were shared hundreds of times.

Even Joe Aperi had something to say. “It’s about time!” he wrote. And it was about time the two met, too.

Kawczynski and Aperi connected on Facebook and got together for an in-person meeting that Kawczynski had always hoped for. “It was so cool to meet someone that I looked up to for so long,” Kawczynski says. “We talked a lot about wrestling and how the sport has changed.”

This summer, Kawczynski will graduate with the class of 2021 and head off to the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse where he will continue his wrestling career and study physical therapy.

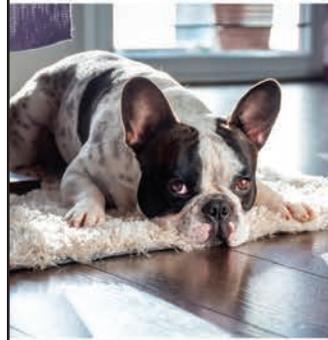
“The sky’s the limit for Ben,” Coach Nachtigall says. “It’s tough to lose him, tough to lose all our seniors. They’re phenomenal leaders and they will be missed. But, our young guys will pick up where they left off and create their own story.”

So, when a new generation of wrestlers walk by the gym, it will still be the same plaque in the same place. The only difference is now, it has two names. And for that younger generation of wrestlers, Kawczynski has some advice.

“Don’t give up on it. It gets hard. It will hurt and you will get beat up. But, hop back up and keep fighting.”

Fight for your name next to his.

OCHS state wrestlers (from left to right): Luca Paladino (4th place), Ben Kawczynski (1st place) and Sam Paar (4th place).



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Jerry Krist



Kelly Ganiere



Michael Dudzik

WELCOME NEW OCFSD SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

On April 4, the Oak Creek-Franklin Joint School District community elected three new school board members. OCFSD welcomes Mr. Michael Dudzik, Mr. Jerry Krist and Ms. Kelly Ganiere to the Board of Education.

All three candidates were sworn in at the April 26 Board of Education meeting held at the District Office.

A sincere thank you goes to our outgoing Board members, Ms. Leah Schreiber-Johnson, Ms. Sheryl Cerniglia and Ms. Jane Eickhoff for their continued commitment, dedication and passion to the students and families of OCFSD.

Welcome, new members. We look forward to continuing our important work together!

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RUN, GIRLS, RUN!

Carollton Elementary School's Girls on the Run Program Inspires Confidence and Connection

Let's make one thing clear – this isn't a running club. In fact, the physical act of running has very little to do with it. This is a connection club. A build-each-other-up club. A 'we-got-girl power and we're-not-afraid-to-show-it' club.

In fact, when asked why she joined Girls on the Run, Carollton Elementary School 4th grader Lucia Zimmerman didn't even mention running.

"I joined because it's a place where girls can express their inner feelings," Lucia explains. "I get to meet new people and we all find something we have in common with each other."

Girls on the Run is an organization dedicated to helping young girls activate their potential and pursue their dreams. Their mission is to inspire girls to be joyful, healthy and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum that creatively integrates running.

Carollton art teacher Sara Magaña and school counselor Whitney Palatino started the Girls on the Run club at Carollton five years ago.

"When I came here I told Sara I wanted to start this program, and she was like, 'oh my gosh, I have been dying to do this – let's go!'" Palatino explains.

Over the last five years they've grown the program from one team to two, and have several staff members also volunteer as coaches.

"We see everybody at school, but it's a different kind of closeness, a different type of bond that we all have being part of this club," Magaña shares. "These girls have the opportunity for their uniqueness to shine through more than it would in the classroom. All of a sudden you see them start to raise their hand a little more, or share a story, and it lets you know you're making a difference."

Lucia's mom, Andrea Zimmerman, has seen that difference. "Especially at this age, self-esteem is so important and it's such a fragile thing right now," Zimmerman notes. "To be able to be all together and just build each other up as a team has proven to be such a positive experience in my daughter's life."

"I feel confidence," Lucia explains after practice one day. "Sometimes I have a certain feeling that maybe not all my friends



Left and below: Girls at Carollton Elementary School participate in the Girls on the Run Program that helps build self-esteem and confidence while connecting with their peers.

feel – or I feel that I have a certain life that other people don't. But some girls here do, so I feel included." And that's exactly the point, says Palatino.

"It's not about comparing yourself to other people. It's about crossing the finish line – which you can hop, skip or jump across – doing it with the support of other people."

Two days a week, the group meets after school. They start in the classroom in a circle talking about the events of the day – what went well, what didn't – and then usually do some type of team bonding activity. From there, it's straight outside (or through the halls if it's raining) to start the workout.



"It's so important to have the time to work on such valuable topics like social-emotional health, which is good for their spirit to then be able to transition into the physical aspect of it, too. It's the best of both worlds," Palatino explains.

Each season comes to an end with a fun, non-competitive 5K giving the girls a sense of accomplishment and confidence. "In years past, people have been out there cheering us on, honking their horns. It's such a fun experience and we truly look forward to it every year," Magaña says.

And this year will be no different. With COVID protocols in place, the girls will be back out there – showing off their skills, their connections, their confidence and their ability to do anything they set their mind to.

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Visiting the MATC Oak Creek Campus are (from left to right): Wesley Walker, MATC Veterans Specialist, U.S. Army veteran; Colonel Adria Zuccaro, 128th Air Refueling Wing commander, Wisconsin Air National Guard; Brian Stout, Ed.D., MATC Community & Human Services Pathway dean, U.S. Army veteran; and Chief Master Sergeant Thomas J. Fredrickson, 128th Air Refueling Wing command chief, Wisconsin Air National Guard.

MATC SERVES ITS VETERANS



An individual's service and occupation in the military helps throughout their service career, but what about in the civilian workplace?

Milwaukee Area Technical College has equipped its students who are military veterans with the tools and resources they need to successfully transition into the next chapter of their careers. MATC has a proud tradition of helping veterans further develop their skills and abilities to thrive in the careers they pursue.

Over the past three years, MATC has served more than 1,000 veterans from all service branches, including Brittany Hill, a retired Coast Guard petty officer third class and automotive maintenance student at the college.

"As a veteran, MATC has a ton of resources and programs for me to take advantage of," Hill says. "There are definitely programs in place for any need that you may have. Not only are the resources there, but MATC helps connect you to them and is willing to help you succeed at all costs."

MATC also has many student-led organizations for those seeking to maintain the camaraderie that was fostered while out in the field. Leadership opportunities are also available for those interested in leading a student group.

"I'm serving as the treasurer for the Veteran Student Organization (VSO) at MATC, and that's just one of the resources I've taken advantage of here," Hill says. "Once I got on campus,

I was reached out to immediately to join a VSO meeting. Now here I am on the executive board, trying to set up and produce programs to help other veterans succeed."

A veteran's years of service, sacrifice and experience are a valuable piece to the college's success. Each year, MATC's veteran-students graduate with a skill set and knowledge that supplements, not replaces, the skills they developed during their time of service.

The college's strong history of serving former military members includes the late MATC alumnus William Coffey, who was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal for his service as a Montford Point Marine. In 1948, he became one of the first African Americans to join the U.S. Marines. After his service, he used the GI Bill to fund his MATC tuition and graduated with an accounting degree in 1957.

From PowerPoints to Powerful Points of Contact



Education at MATC goes far beyond some of the routine checks on learning and annual classes delivered through PowerPoint presentations and modules that many experience in a military career.

MATC's services to its veterans start with the Military Education Support Office (MESO), a veteran's ultimate point of contact. MESO provides students with educational services and facilitates connections to resources and support services. "We have a dedicated staff who works with individuals in so many different ways," says Dr. Brian Stout, MATC dean of Community and Human Services Pathway. "One example is how our MESO helps students from a



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Dr. Mark Felsheim,
Campus Executive Director

Visit matc.edu

financial perspective to help them utilize their federal and state education benefits so that no money is left on the table.”

Dr. Stout served 23 years of active duty in the U.S. Army as an officer. He says that the support offered by MATC goes beyond just the classroom.

“MATC connects our veterans with additional support – the intangibles,” Dr. Stout says. “Some of our veterans need mental health support; some of our veterans are homeless and need those types of resources. MATC is there to assist in whatever way they can.”



Military members can also connect with each other by visiting the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) at

the Downtown Milwaukee Campus. Just like the USO, computers, coffee, snacks and other resources are available to students each time they stop in.

2021-22 Military Friendly School

Each year, the organization Military Friendly designates a list of schools, organizations and businesses based on extensive research using public data sources from more than 8,800 schools.

To earn the designation as Military Friendly, an institution must showcase a level of excellence in the service it provides to its veterans. Once again, MATC has earned the Military Friendly designation. This means that veterans are more than just the numbers on their dog tags. They are valued members of the college’s community.

“The bottom line is our mission is to take care of the process for obtaining the education benefits you earned whether you served or are still serving. Once you become a student, we are here to help you cross any barriers that you may encounter,” Dr. Stout says. “Our veterans’ success is the only box we are trying to check.”



Brittany Hill, retired Coast Guard petty officer third class, is now an MATC automotive maintenance student.



Chief Master Sergeant Thomas J. Fredrickson (left) tours MATC’s Aviation Center with Douglass Golden, MATC Airframe and Aircraft Technology instructor.



Colonel Adria Zuccaro is the 128th Air Refueling Wing’s first female commander.

“Not only are the resources there, but MATC helps connect you to them.”

– Brittany Hill, retired Coast Guard petty officer third class and MATC student

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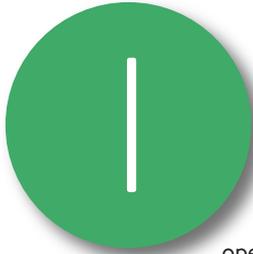


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Government Departments Offer Innovative Ways To Safely Provide Services



In a pandemic world, agility is the name of the game. Every one of us has had to adjust how we work, learn, shop and spend our leisure time. Even as businesses had to close their doors temporarily, your local government operations remained working at full capacity while looking for innovative ways to safely provide the services our residents regularly rely on. From our front-line heroes in our public safety agencies to those less visible to the public in the “back-of-house” operations, Team OC showed its true steel during these difficult times!

Although the Civic Center was initially closed to public walk-ins during the Governor’s Safer at Home order, the departments housed within it quickly shifted gears, creating new ways to conduct business that had previously been in-person. Utilizing old-school methods like telephone and mail to current

technology like email and the now-ubiquitous video conference, residents continued to interact with the City with minimal disruption. There are countless examples of how departments flexed operations to continue “business as usual” despite the unusual conditions we found ourselves in.

Building activity in Oak Creek did not slow down due to the pandemic. Our building inspections, engineering and planning staff utilized “live” virtual property inspections to keep themselves and the public they interact with as safe as possible. With the assistance of our Information Technology staff, public meetings moved from in-person to virtual, allowing residents to participate from the comfort and safety of their homes. And our Administrative Support team fearlessly staffed the front counter,

knowing that “shutting down” government operations is never an option.

2020 was a busy election year, and the City Clerk’s office was tasked with administering three separate elections under pandemic conditions; no small task! During each cycle, the Clerk’s office remained open to the public for in-person voter registration and early voting and to facilitate absentee voting by mail requests. Additionally, they worked diligently to ensure the safety of voters and poll workers on election day with personal protective equipment (PPE) and plastic dividers, strict cleaning protocols, and single-use pens for completing ballots. With extensive planning, preparation and communication, the City’s elections went off without a hitch; this, despite ever-shifting political winds and court rulings that changed regular election processes.

Even though thorough planning for all scenarios is our emergency service providers’ general practice, Oak Creek’s Police and Fire Departments also had to add new protocols to their operations during COVID-19. For example, dispatchers began to ask callers COVID-19 screening questions before sending an officer to a location. If a caller had symptoms, dispatch would advise the officers to use PPE and proceed with caution. Similarly, EMS staff utilized increased protective measures such as masks and gowns when responding to calls. They also purchased additional equipment to disinfect and clean apparatus following patient care transports.

Both departments worked hard to ensure that they were able to handle an increase in pandemic-related medical incidents while maintaining resources for normal day-to-day responses. They created contingency plans in the event that their departments faced staffing issues related to the pandemic. Careful planning ensured that Oak Creek residents were able to receive the emergency assistance they needed at all times.

Maintaining adequate staffing also became a top priority for the Health Department when its workload increased exponentially as public health moved to the forefront of everyone’s mind! Through emergency grants, the department was able to bring on additional part-time, temporary staff, including school nurses and library staff, to assist with the high volume of COVID-19 related activities, such as answering phones and performing contact tracing. As the face of the pandemic changed over time, the Health Department continued



Oak Creek’s Environmental Health Specialist Dale Pittman

Oak Creek fire fighters are dedicated to safe training and also cross-training with other communities.



to work diligently, delivering the most current information available and providing both testing and vaccination sites to serve the community. In the heart of the pandemic, most regular Health Department staff worked weeks without a day off and months without any extended time off.

Public Works is another function of government that many times requires in-person interaction to get the job done. This department's top priority was to keep their crews, who are usually required to work closely or share a vehicle, as safe as possible. Staggered start, end and lunch times, allowed staff to maintain some distance from each other, instead of everyone coming and going simultaneously. They, too, implemented additional cleaning protocols for their building, trucks, and equipment. Increasing their safety practices ensured their work could continue without interruption throughout the year.

The City's Public Library and Recreation Departments found themselves in the position of having to reinvent how they deliver their services to our community. Both departments rose to the challenge and found creative ways to connect with our residents in a time when gathering wasn't safe. While the Library was closed to the public, they expanded their digital resources and heavily promoted their use via social media. As soon as it was safe to do so, they introduced curbside pickup of library materials. Even now, with the Library open to the public and safety protocols in place, this valuable service is still a popular option for those looking to minimize interpersonal contact or to just have a more convenient option to utilize Library services. Despite the challenges, 2020 was a successful year for the Library, with more than 135,000 items circulated in total!

The Recreation Department, too, celebrated successes as they found ways to keep the department running and focused on recreation. Moving away from in-person classes, they created online programs featuring everything from cooking and fitness classes to science experiments, kids' activities and crafts. They promoted safe outdoor activities such as walking and biking and kept seniors informed about home-delivered meals and other important information. When in-person programming began again, staff implemented additional safety protocols such as having sessions outdoors or in larger spaces and not allowing participants to share sports equipment.

Paula Nevarez, acting recreation supervisor, observes, "I am proud of how staff pulled together to keep the department running. Even when I know they were worried about contracting the virus themselves, they still came to work every day with a smile on their face and did the best they could."

This sentiment neatly sums up how the entire organization pulled together to serve the public during this challenging time – with professionalism, hard work, and dedication to their jobs and community!

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WORKING TOWARD A COMMON GOAL: Local Communities Join Forces To Fight COVID-19 Together

N

ever in recent history, until now, has the topic of public health been so important and at the forefront of our collective attention. Before COVID-19, local health departments quietly provided essential services to the public – like flu shots, blood pressure checks and childhood immunizations.

They also offered numerous health and wellness programs that support the well-being of the communities they serve, such as child car-seat inspections, developmental screenings and falls prevention programs. At every stage of life, individuals can find support from their local health departments.

Beyond the forward-facing services they provide, behind the scenes, health departments also work on emergency preparedness, planning and practicing for events that pose a substantial risk to the health of the residents they serve. The National Association of County and City Health Officials states that local health departments play a crucial role in achieving national health security by preparing their communities for disasters, responding when emergencies occur and lending support through the recovery process. This aspect of public health became critical during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The communities of Oak Creek, Cudahy, South Milwaukee and St. Francis – designated as “Zone E” communities by the Milwaukee County Office of Emergency Management – began working in concert during the early days of the pandemic, sharing data and resources to gain a better understanding of how COVID-19 was affecting the region.

They joined forces to offer a long-term COVID-19 testing site in South Milwaukee, utilizing the former Bucyrus campus for a local, accessible testing option for south shore residents. When Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines received emergency authorization, these local communities’ continued partnership was a natural progression of their efforts.

Initial vaccine clinics were offered at several locations, including the now-closed testing site, the Civic Center and the Oak Creek Assembly of God church. The health departments knew, however, that a more permanent solution was necessary. The constant set-up and take-down was just not sustainable long-term. Fortunately, the perfect location existed in the area, in the vacant, former Kmart building on Packard Avenue in Cudahy. The South Shore COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic opened there in early March.

“The building needed a bit of cleanup before we could begin to use it for a long-term clinic,” notes Oak Creek Health Officer Darcy DuBois. “Thanks to the assistance we received from various departments in our respective organizations, and the generosity of several local businesses, we were able to get the clinic running in a month’s time.”

Oak Creek’s Aim Transfer and Storage donated its time and resources to clear out shelving and other items from the former Kmart property. Cudahy’s S&P Equipment and Papa Luigi’s Pizza donated refrigerators and other equipment. The City of Cudahy’s Engineering Department created renderings of optimal flow for the clinic space, and their Department of Public Works was instrumental in transforming the space into an operational clinic.

Even while maintaining many of their typical pandemic day-to-day operations, the health departments utilize their current employees and additional hired workers to staff the clinic. Community partners such as retired nurses, local Lions Clubs, the Alverno College School of Nursing, the UW-Oshkosh School of Nursing and other community members also volunteer their time to be greeters, assist with traffic, administer vaccines, and help with overall clinic operations. The South Shore COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic is truly a collaborative effort and has been well-received by the greater community it serves.

As one can imagine, the logistics involved in running a mass vaccination clinic are complex. The South Shore COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic was one of the first community vaccine facilities to open in the region, so the south shore health departments had to

work without a tried-and-true model. Not only did they have to figure out how to send invitations and schedule and track appointments, they also had to determine how to safely and efficiently move hundreds of people through the clinic each day – no small task!

If there is an adequate supply of the vaccine available, the clinic space can accommodate more than 800 people per day. This factor alone can complicate matters. Each week, the Zone E Health Departments learn how much vaccine they will receive from the state. Not until they know how many doses of which vaccines – Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson – they will receive can they begin to plan for the upcoming week’s clinics.

“Initially, we were administering fewer than 500 vaccines per week,” says DuBois, “Now we’re doing more than 2,500 per week.”

On clinic days, the process moves like a well-oiled machine. To the casual eye, you would not notice the flurry of activity as staff confirm appointments and work to fill openings in the schedule due to cancellations and no-shows. Making sure that no vaccine goes to waste is a top priority. Even with the serious mission at hand, staff and volunteers at each step of the process are friendly and helpful; they are genuinely glad to play a part in getting their community vaccinated and back on the way to a more normal way of life!

Oak Creek Alderman Steve Kurkowski, who had the opportunity to not only be vaccinated at the South Shore COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic but to volunteer there, praised the operation during a recent Common Council meeting. “The clinic is a model of efficiency – it’s phenomenal the way they’ve got it set up.”

Area residents, like Alderman Kurkowski, are grateful to have an easy, nearby option for getting their COVID-19 vaccine. Some individuals pause as they enter the space and look around; it certainly looks nothing like it did during the many years it served as their local Kmart store. But the consensus is that this is a perfect use for the building. And despite many people’s aversion to needles, the mood inside the clinic is jovial. A “selfie station” sits near the exit, inviting individuals to snap a photo of themselves, proudly wearing their “I got my COVID-19 vaccine” stickers. People are excited to join the ranks of the vaccinated, eager to spend time with their family and friends safely.

The past year has been challenging for everyone. Local health department staff have worked hard to provide urgently needed information, resources and services to their communities. The South Shore COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic is a strong example of successful cross-community and cross-sector collaboration. The pandemic has offered local health departments the opportunity to strengthen relationships with many community members, businesses and other organizations.

While local health departments look forward to transitioning back into providing more traditional public health programs and services over the next few months, they will also continue to collaborate with new and previously existing partners to support the health of the community. Additionally, they will incorporate their new knowledge of pandemic response into existing emergency preparedness plans and activities, doing everything they can to be prepared for the next public health emergency.

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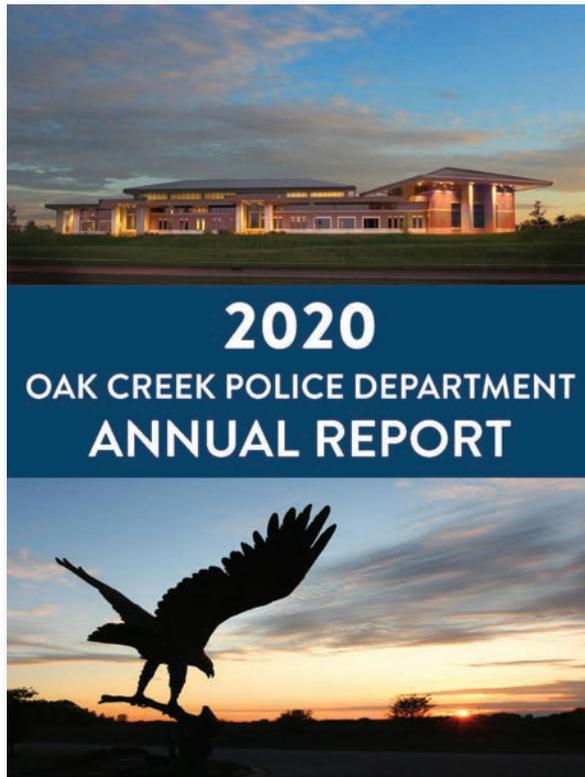
• WEDNESDAY FOOD TRUCK NIGHTS
June 9, June 23, July 14, August 11

• SATURDAY OUTDOOR RUMMAGE SALES
May 22, June 5, June 26, July 10, July 24, Aug. 7, Aug. 21

• SATURDAY, JULY 17: FREE OUTDOOR CONCERT
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2020 OAK CREEK POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT

By Lisa Wytrykus Kleppek and
Taylor Parry



Creating a publication that encompasses the events and activities of a busy police department over the last 365 days was a challenging assignment, but one that we welcomed for the opportunity that it offered – to share the good works being done every day by the men and women of the Oak Creek Police Department (OCPD).

The 2020 Oak Creek Police Department Annual Report, released in early March, reflected on the extraordinary events of 2020 and the changes that the City and the OCPD made in the face of the ongoing pandemic. In addition, the publication addressed many of the changes that have occurred in the department since the last annual report was published in 2003.

The report highlighted the department's newly revised mission statement and the changes that the department has made to meet the challenges of policing in a modern world. In addition to providing a year-in-review of some of the department's significant events and cases, the report also featured a timeline of OCPD's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A review of crime statistics featured data comparisons provided by our crime analyst, a position created in 2019. Also highlighted was the position of training officer, who oversees the scheduling and conducting of all internal and external training. The creation of this position, which has saved the department more than \$50,000 in overtime costs each year, also ensures that Oak Creek Police Department officers receive significantly more training than what is currently required by the state.

Writing the annual report allowed us to showcase many of the important specialty units that ensure that our officers are ready to respond to our community's needs. The officers of these units

undergo specialized training and practice that go above and beyond their already elevated levels of training. The annual report also features new hires and retirements and anniversaries of many of our employees. We also highlight the vital work being done by our dispatch unit in providing telecommunications support to not only the Police and Fire Departments in Oak Creek, but also to the first responders in St. Francis.

One of our favorite features of the report is the section in which we get to acknowledge all of the accolades that members of the department have received, both internally and from outside agencies, who recognized the excellent work being done by the department. We also enjoyed showcasing some of the alternative programming being produced by the community resource bureau, that sought different ways to reach the public when regular programming and events were canceled because of the pandemic.

But, for us, the best part of the report was acknowledging all the people who make up this department through the number of photos that were taken throughout the year. From swearing-in ceremonies to the training sessions – and welcoming our newest K-9, Revi – a picture does say a thousand words, and we hope that the public enjoys taking a look at these moments with us.

If you have not had a chance to read the annual report, please visit the Police Department webpage to download a copy. Go to oakcreekwi.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=15016.

The authors of the annual report would again like to thank all the employees of the Oak Creek Police Department who helped in the research and development of this report.



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Friday 4-8 p.m. • Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

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See visitoakcreek.com for more information.



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The Case for Keeping Oak Creek Beautiful

Oak Creek Develops Comprehensive Neighborhood Preservation /Code Compliance Program: Creek Code

By Andrew J. Vickers, City Administrator



ur homes are likely the single largest investment our families will make in a lifetime. In general,

housing costs can account for roughly 30% of our incomes, generally our largest monthly expense. Most of us expect investments in our homes and property to appreciate over time. While many factors play a role in how and why properties appreciate (or depreciate) in value, surely immediate neighborhood factors impact property values. According to the Appraisal Institute, a “bad” neighbor could potentially reduce the value of one’s home by up to 10%.

While overall yet a young community with relatively newer homes and businesses, Oak Creek must seek to mitigate, and where necessary, reverse any trend that leads to the deterioration (or misuse) of property, both structures and premises, that contribute to the overall decline of property values or quality community aesthetics. All communities need to rely on a certain standard level of aesthetics and maintenance to protect our property value and our investment. This

is done by establishing standards in our municipal code and then working in partnership with our residents on what is, and what is not, up to the community’s standard.

Foremost, the Mayor and Common Council value residents’ right to use and enjoy their property as they choose, especially when community standards outlined in the municipal code are met. The City’s code regarding aesthetic preservation is very minimal and akin to what the majority of communities regulate. However, using one’s property in a manner that is a nuisance or aesthetically offensive may prevent your neighbors or a larger neighborhood that same right to enjoy their property. This is where a basic community standard and a system of public education and, where needed, enforcement of codes comes in.

So, what types of aesthetic nuisances and property maintenance issues is the community trying to resolve? The most visible include:

- Junked, inoperable or abandoned vehicles.
- Accumulation of outside junk, debris, old appliances, automobile parts, or household waste.

- Noxious weeds and overgrown lawns.
- Homes missing siding panels, roof sections, or that have structural integrity issues causing not only unsightly conditions, but are also safety concerns.
- Conditions conducive to harboring vermin.
- Improper parking and accumulation of equipment and recreational vehicles.
- Illegal home-based businesses.

The City has had minimum standards in the code for years – these are nothing new. The issue is the way the City went about educating the public on the code. First, numerous agencies currently have a role to play. Some property maintenance issues are the responsibility of the building inspectors – others are the zoning administrator, and even the City engineering and health department have a role. This was a “web” of activity and a model that did not provide the best customer service to residents attempting to take care of neighborhood aesthetic issues. The idea that our building inspectors or City planning staff could effectively absorb these additional



A new Oak Creek program addresses nuisances like overgrown weeds/lawns, discarded waste materials and structural integrity concerns.



duties into their primary responsibilities was not realistic. The past approach led to property maintenance issues falling by the wayside and growing worse in our community.

As part of the City's Strategic Action Plan, the Common Council directed City staff to "develop and implement a Comprehensive Neighborhood Preservation/Code Compliance Program." A cross-departmental employee team consisting of the police and fire departments, attorney's office, community development department, and City administrator's office met over the last several months. The goal was to review the current code compliance practices, determine new program goals and best practices, establish resources needed to get the job done, and set the expectation that public education and voluntary compliance will always remain the goal over making use of fines and fees for non-compliance. The staff presented

the new program called "Creek Code" to the Mayor and Common Council in early April.

Creek Code is an intentional community program to ensure Oak Creek remains a safe, welcoming and beautiful City into the future. Most residents take great pride in care in keeping their property looking respectable. Creek Code is designed to help the small minority of our neighbors who fall short of those minimum aesthetic standards, and that can negatively impact our neighborhoods.

Creek Code is designed with several features in mind to help lift it off the ground toward success. First, the City will have a dedicated resource, a Neighborhood Preservation Officer, that will handle the majority of nuisance, aesthetic and property maintenance issues. No more confusion on who's responsible for what, and someone who can devote the time to implement Creek Code. Second, the municipal code will be streamlined and

clarified for the benefit of both the public and the code-related staff. Third, a panel of citizens will hear appeals to notices of violations a resident may receive for an aesthetic or nuisance issue. Should a resident disagree with a violation, a group of his/her peers, non-elected citizens, will be available to hear and decide on whether a violation exists.

The main goal for Creek Code, and our new Neighborhood Preservation Officer, is to work with and educate the public, and where possible, avoid issuing violation letters or municipal citations. In the end, though, the City is vested in reversing any trend that leads to disinvestment and deterioration of our neighborhoods. We've all been to "those places;" they're memorable, but in a bad way. After a period of trying code-compliance in different ways, the community needed to find a new way forward in achieving our goal: **To Keep Oak Creek Beautiful.**

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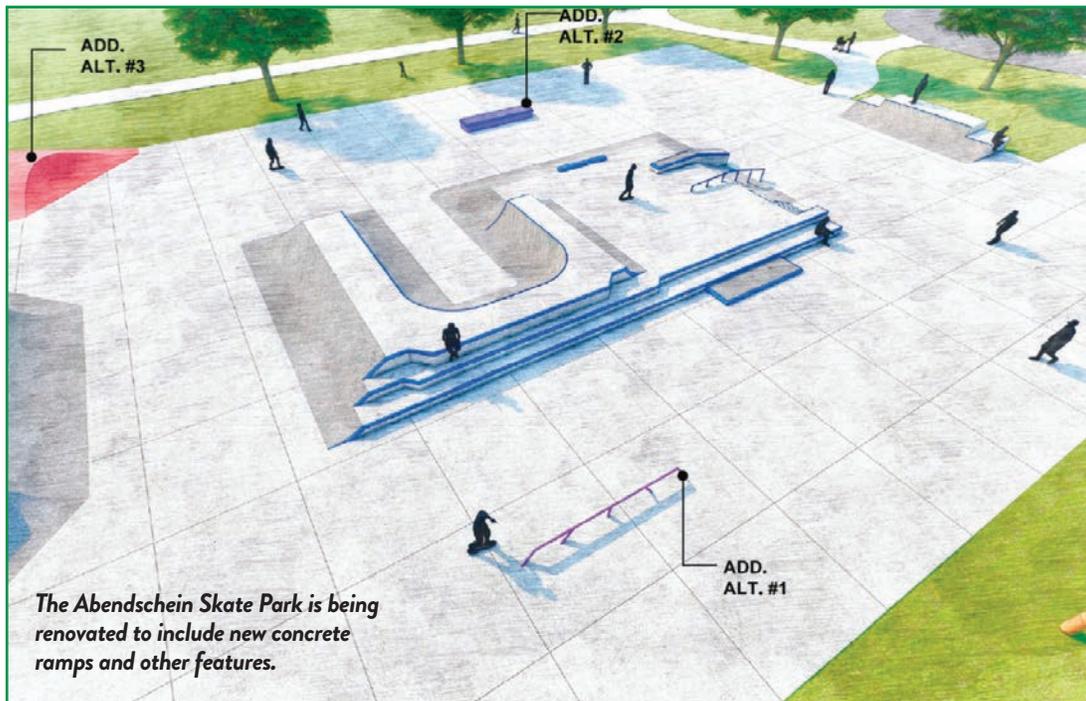
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CITY OF OAK CREEK HIGHLIGHTS



City-Wide 4th of July Celebration

Join us on Sunday, July 4, for the annual City of Oak Creek 4th of July festivities. The day will kick off with the parade starting at 9 a.m. at the corner of Groveland and Verdev Drives. It will wind its way through the heart of the City and end at the American Legion Post, 9327 S. Shepard Ave. Fireworks begin at dusk at their new location on the City's lakefront at Lake Vista Park. Please see visitoakcreek.com for the parade route map and additional details as they are made available.

Abendschein To Get Newly Redesigned Skatepark

The Abendschein Skate Park renovation project is about to be in full swing. Proposed in the Abendschein Master Plan Update, the process to redesign and renovate the skate park began late in 2019 and is now coming to fruition.

The project, designed by Newline Skate Parks, will be constructed by Hunger Skate Parks. The skate park was closed to users in mid-April to allow for the removal of the existing ramps. Hunger Skate Parks, the contractor for this project, began installing

the new concrete ramps and features shortly afterward, and are expected to complete the work at the end of June.

A grand opening event is anticipated to occur in July. Watch the City's website, ocwi.org, and social media for more details.

Check Out e-Books and More with Your Library Card

Did you know that you can read e-books and e-audiobooks for free through your local library? In 2020 alone, Wisconsin's Digital Library broke records by lending nearly 7 million e-materials!

Try it out yourself with the Libby app on your mobile device or through OverDrive on your PC. All you need is a valid library card and a mobile or desktop device to get started borrowing digital materials anytime, anywhere. Visit oakcreeklibrary.org/overdrive for more details.

Wisconsin's Digital Library now also features thousands of popular magazine publications. What's more, you can browse the 'Media Do' collection to check out e-materials like manga, comics and works written in Japanese. Find hundreds of titles in the 'Lucky Day' and 'Always Available

Classics' collections, all of which are available for immediate checkout.

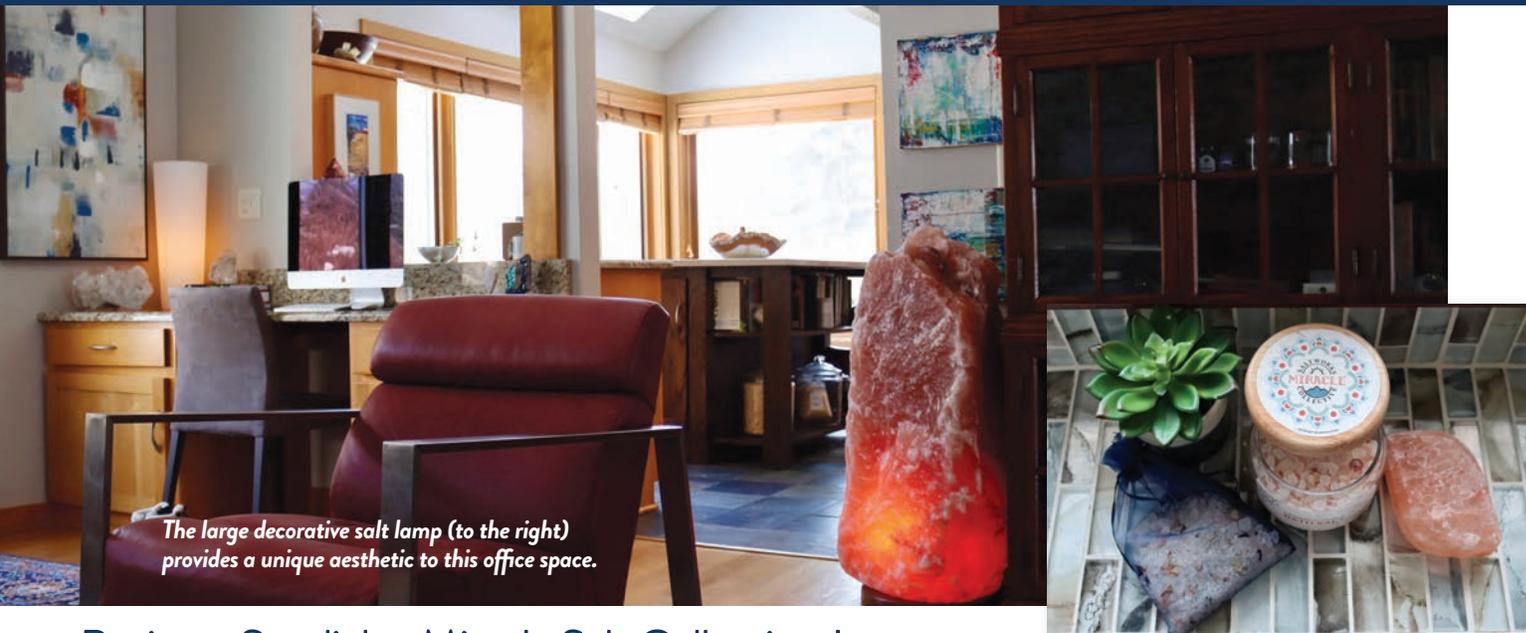
Want some help getting acquainted with the Libby app on your mobile device? Learn how to use Libby by visiting the OCPL's tutorial page at oakcreeklibrary.org/library-online-resources-tutorials.

Splash Pad To Open Memorial Day Weekend

The splash pad located in Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way, is scheduled to open for the season for the Memorial Day Weekend holiday. The splash pad will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. through Labor Day.

For the health and safety of all, we ask that you practice good hygiene before and after using the splash pad area. Please do not use the splash pad if you feel sick or have a fever. And do your best to leave 6 feet of space between you and other patrons!

Public restroom facilities are available at 332 W. Town Square Way, near the splash pad, for your convenience.



The large decorative salt lamp (to the right) provides a unique aesthetic to this office space.

Photos courtesy of Miracle Salt Collective, Inc.

Business Spotlight: Miracle Salt Collective, Inc. Blazing the Trail of Multiple Uses for a Universal Mineral

There is little wonder why salt has been one of the most sought-after resources in the world for centuries. This universal mineral is one the human body cannot live without. Among its many uses, salt is needed to transmit nerve impulses, contract and relax muscle fibers, and maintain proper fluid balance in the body. It also helps the body regulate blood pressure. While the importance of salt in our daily diets is widely known, many people may be unaware of its many other uses, including spa and wellness therapies, animal feed products, decor creations and pharmaceutical applications.

With demand for salt rising worldwide, the call is being answered by a newly formed Oak Creek business, Miracle Salt Collective, Inc. This unique business, located at 7730 South Sixth St., is leading the industry in innovative ways to mine this precious mineral and to promote its usage.

Founded in 2018 by Ahmad N. Khan, his son Muhammad (“Moe”) M. Khan, and Ted Ballantyne (a local businessman/investor),

Miracle Salt’s core product is Himalayan crystal salt found exclusively in the mineral-rich country of Pakistan. This crystal salt, commonly known as “rock salt,” became trapped in the region during the land formation of Asia more than 250 million years ago. After millions of years of natural crystallization, these deposits are the most pure salt reserves on earth, and can be classified as crystal.

The Miracle Salt Collective was started when its founders hired a consortium of international consultants to survey this Salt

Range, explore the industry, and evaluate the resource and its global potential. From Pakistan to the Americas, China, Europe, and the Middle-East/Africa, all markets were considered. The group, who worked with the Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation, ultimately chose Pakistan as its primary source, largely because it has the world’s 6th largest population and the world’s third largest English-speaking population – two attractive features for opening new markets.

CRYSTAL ROCK SALT HAS A VARIETY OF USES

Miracle Salt’s crystal salt is organically formed and is used in a variety of industries, including:

- **Culinary and Edible Salt Products:** Himalayan crystal rock salt is the most pure source of organic edible salt in the world. This salt is found as is, and requires no chemical processing or additives to achieve the level of purity needed for human consumption. It is naturally purified through millions of years of exposure to elements and crystallization. With a simple process that requires traditional mining techniques, washing, crushing, and sorting, this salt finds its way from the source to the consumer. Miracle Salt is also the largest producer of animal feed licks (using the same salt), and the company is working to unveil its own private label edible salt.
- **Decor:** One of Miracle Salt’s most popular products is its exclusive line of decorative salt lamps. This collection of large Himalayan crystal salt lamps boasts crystals varying in weight from 100-600+ lbs. from all ends of the Salt Range. They each retain their unique shape and hue and are carefully transported to the U.S., where they are cleaned, re-weighed and measured. They are then assembled with a proper base and stored before shipping throughout the country. These distinctive salt products are not only attractive, they also feature added health benefits that enhance their value.

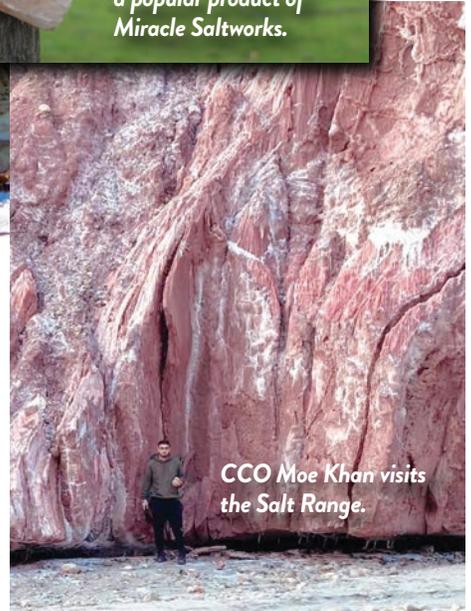




The Pakistan Salt Range



Salt licks for livestock are a popular product of Miracle Saltworks.



CCO Moe Khan visits the Salt Range.

• **Health and Wellness Uses** As more people seek salt therapy as a way to heal the body and mind, Himalayan salt products for the spa industry are also gaining popularity. Salt therapy, better known as halotherapy, is a holistic method that recreates the microclimate of a salt cave experience. Salt rooms, where the walls and floors are covered by layers of salt, offer individuals a treatment environment in which they breathe-in dry salt aerosol.

Halotherapy can relieve and treat symptoms of various respiratory conditions, including asthma, chronic bronchitis and allergies. Experts also claim that it eases smoking-related symptoms, treats depression and anxiety, and is beneficial for skin conditions such as psoriasis, eczema and acne. Salt rooms take health and wellness to an entirely different level and remain a top spa trend.

With so many uses for salt today, the future for Miracle Salt appears to be bright. In fact, Miracle Salt is pleased to offer its products for direct purchase online through its e-store, and at its Oak Creek showroom. Information on its direct-to-the-consumer pricing is available on its website. And for wholesale business opportunities, the company encourages inquiries through its website. Retail partnerships continue to be formed in the Midwest, with around 200 retailers already established. These range from animal feed stores to gift stores, decor stores, CBD stores, flower shops and others.

So how did this up-and-coming business choose Oak Creek for its headquarters? According to President Ahmad Khan, the core of the company is Wisconsin raised. Prior to the pandemic, company executives realized the significant opportunities for growth in southeast Wisconsin, thereby motivating them to stay in the City. “We like that our community is unique and diverse, with the potential to be one of the best places to work and live in the country. Miracle Salt is proud to be part of the Oak Creek business community,” he says.

General Manager Clayton J. Shimetz, who has served in that role since the company’s inception, agrees. “I love the fact that we established a global headquarters in beautiful Oak Creek,” he says. “And I take great pride that Miracle Salt’s manufacturing is both ethical and sustainable.”

He’s gratified that the company is starting a foundation to direct a portion of its proceeds to the Himalayan mining communities where this ancient mineral is harvested. This so-called “Miracle Foundation” will partner with both the government and the mining community at large to provide community development assistance. By donating a portion of its profits and raising funds, Miracle Salt aims to support socially responsible projects for current and future developments in the mining community.

And according to CCO Muhammad Khan, “The support from our local community members means so much to us here at Miracle Salt Collective. We encourage Oak Creek residents to visit our showroom and website to gain a deeper understanding of this remarkable mineral.” Miracle Salt looks forward to growing its company and operations, and making Himalayan salt available in all its forms to the global community.



President Ahmad Khan (far left) greets Mayor Dan Bukiewicz (front right) and other guests from the City of Oak Creek.



CCO Moe Khan explains the Miracle Salt process to Chinese dignitaries.

Miracle Saltworks Collective, Inc. • Corporate Headquarters USA • 7730 S. 6th St. • Oak Creek (414) 301-5001 • miraclesaltcollective.com

Let's Get Crafty!

By Rachel Rose, Librarian



S

taying safer at home has led many of us to a variety of new pastimes. Fostering an interest in art, cooking, or exercise is a healthy diversion when spending so much time indoors. With millions of idea boards and video tutorials available across social media, it's no wonder that everyone wants to try out some fun projects, be they accessible to beginners or catered to the more adept. But where, exactly, is the best place to start?

There are endless options to choose from, so deciding where you should invest your time can feel overwhelming. A good starting point is to consider what you enjoy doing in your everyday life. Do you like prepping family meals? Then perhaps perfecting your culinary skills or experimenting with new recipes is the way to go. If you prefer to occupy your hands while watching TV – consider knitting or crocheting! If you love listening to music, why not write a song or learn to play an instrument? By applying some consideration to your personal tastes will help carve out a niche in no time.

Keep in mind that new hobbies can be costly, so be sure to plan ahead. Gardening necessitates plants and landscaping tools. Creating a scrapbook or folding origami requires plenty of paper. And, of course, anyone would be hard-pressed to take up embroidery without a needle or spools of thread. Limiting the cost of basic materials is important, especially if you just want to

try something out or are starting from scratch. This is where your local library can help!

Attending a free, instruction-led class is a great way to dip your toes in the water. You will also be able to meet like-minded individuals who can share ideas, provide insight and hone your burgeoning skills. Patrons at Oak Creek Public Library know this very well; in seasons past, OCPL has promoted both drop-in and take-away crafts for all age groups and interests. There are still plenty of options, even in a post-pandemic era where most activities have switched over to become virtual or remote.

Take Out Family Fun, Imagination Stations and more are popular among parents with young children. Members of the Library's Youth Services Department assemble a wide variety of thematic activity kits that provide registrants with hours of DIY entertainment.

Teens, adults and seniors are also welcome to take part. In fact, monthly craft programs geared toward older audiences are an absolute hit at OCPL. One of our talented reference librarians, Leah Kriebel, is well-versed in producing kits for the perfect crafting experience. "I grew up doing all sorts of arts and crafts," Kriebel tells us, "and I'm incredibly pleased to combine my planning skills with my love of putting together programs – and now kits – for the community." Past participants have fashioned their own 'fall mosaics' using dried beans and seeds as a way of celebrating autumn. 'DIY gnomes' and 'custom bath bombs' came just in time



during the holiday gift-giving season, and not long after that, ‘mug candles’ lit the way into the new year. Relaxing painting crafts, miniature Zen gardens, salt dough magnets, and so many others have allowed amateur and experienced crafters alike to enhance their creativity.

Oak Creek Public Library’s ‘take out’ kits contain all of the materials needed to complete a particular craft, such as dried flowers for a bath soak or wax pellets used in candle making. Please note that adult supervision is required, as kits may contain choking hazards, skin irritants, or products that can be harmful if swallowed or

misused. Registrants use their own basic tools like scissors, drawing supplies, and their imaginations to add personal flair. Detailed instructions are always provided, and most take-away kits can be altered to suit special requirements by looking up related tutorials online.

Want a little more background knowledge? OCPL offers a huge selection of hobbyist books that will give you enough confidence to take the next step! Browse the catalog by visiting countycat.mcfls.org. You can sign up for the Library’s upcoming craft programs by visiting the events calendar at oakcreeklibrary.org/events.



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Parterre at Emerald Row offers brand new one, two and three bedroom apartment homes located in the heart of Drexel Town Square. Parterre is a W-shaped building with dual courtyards featuring a pool and entertainment area on the north, and outdoor space adorned with the property’s namesake, a “parterre.”

For more information, please visit ParterreAtEmeraldRow.com, or scan the QR code.



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OUT AND ABOUT IN THE CITY OF OAK CREEK



WE'RE READY FOR SUMMER – ARE YOU?

There is so much going on in Oak Creek during the summer months, and we are excited to share all the special events and activities with you! Check out the Community Calendar and save the dates you are interested in right away so you don't miss out. We LOVE our summers in Oak Creek!

1. The Girls on the Run Program at Carrollton Elementary School inspires confidence and connection (see pg. 16). **2.** Oak Creek is a partner in the South Shore COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic in Cudahy (see pg. 24). **3.** MATC has a proud tradition of helping veterans further develop their skills and abilities to thrive in the careers they pursue (see pg. 18). **4.** Miracle Salt Collective, Inc. is a unique Oak Creek business that is leading the industry in innovative ways to mine salt and to promote its usage, including this salt lamp (see pg. 32). **5.** Our popular Farmers Markets inside Drexel Town Square will be back again this summer starting Saturday, June 12, and continuing every Saturday throughout the summer.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

During our current ever-changing environment, some community events may be cancelled/modified. PLEASE CALL AHEAD TO CONFIRM EVENT DETAILS OR VISIT THE CITY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT WEBSITES.

APRIL

- **April-August: ASPIRE Before- and After-Care Registration Open Online for Fall 2021** (visit ocfsd.org).

MAY

- **Mon., May 10: Online Registration Opens for Summer Sports and Enrichment Programming** through the School District (visit ocfsd.org).
- **Mon., May 17: Spring Cleanup Begins** No charge for pickup of most items for residential homes and condos that have City-provided garbage and recycling pickup. See oakcreekwi.org for list of accepted items.
- **Sun., May 23: Guzi's Hunt for the Cure 5K Run/Walk for Huntington's Disease, 9 a.m.** Lake Vista Park, 4001 Lake Vista Pkwy. Visit guzis.5k.run for information and registration.
- **Mon., May 31: City Offices and Library Closed for Memorial Day Holiday. No School for OCFSD.**

JUNE

- **Tues., June 1: Summer Reading Challenge Begins** Oak Creek Public Library, 8040 S. 6th St. Read for 10 hours to have your name added to a mural located on the Library windows overlooking Drexel Town Square. All ages welcome. Challenge ends August 31. Register at oakcreeklibrary.org/scr.
- **Wed., June 9: Last Day of School in OCFSD**
- **Sat., June 12: Oak Creek Farmers Market Opens for Season, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way. Check out the many unique retailers offering you high-quality, handmade and homegrown products. See visittoakcreek.com for details.
- **Mon., June 14-Fri., Aug. 27: Summer Camp OC, Clinics and Enrichment Programs Begin** (visit ocfsd.org).
- **Thur.-Sat., June 17- 19: Oak Creek Pop-up Biergarten, 3-9 p.m. Thur. and noon-9 p.m. Fri. and Sat.** Abendschein Park, 1311 E. Drexel Ave. Featuring your favorite German drafts, food, live entertainment and family-friendly games. See visittoakcreek.com for details!
- **Sat., June 19: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way
- **Sat., June 19: OCHS Graduation, 10 a.m.** American Family Field
- **Mon., June 21-Fri., July 23: K-8 Summer School**
- **Mon., June 21-Fri., July 30: High School Summer School**
- **Sat., June 26: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way. In addition to the farm-fresh faire, this date is also Makers Market!

- **Wed., June 30: Traveling Food Truck Tour, 4-9 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way. Milwaukee's best food trucks and carts along with local restaurant favorites. Live music, lawn games and a Kids Zone. See milwaukeefood.com/ for more info.

JULY

- **Thu., July 1: Branch pickup begins** Please see oakcreekwi.org for more details.
- **Sat., July 3: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way.
- **Sun., July 4: Fourth of July Festivities** Parade starts at 9 a.m. at the corner of Groveland and Verdev. Fireworks at dusk at Lake Vista Park, 4001 E. Lake Vista Pkwy. See pg. 31 and visittoakcreek.com for details.
- **Mon., July 5: No Summer School** (all grades)
- **Mon., July 5: City Offices and Library Closed** for July 4 Holiday
- **Sat., July 10: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way.
- **Thur.-Sat., July 15- 17: Oak Creek Pop-up Biergarten, 3-9 p.m. Thur. and noon-9 p.m. Fri. and Sat** Abendschein Park, 1311 E. Drexel Ave. Featuring your favorite German drafts, food, live entertainment and family-friendly games. See visittoakcreek.com for details.
- **Sat., July 17: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way.
- **Fri.-Sat., July 23-24: Dog Days at Drexel** Drexel Town Square. A splashing good time with Pier Pups Canine Dock Jumping, pet-related vendors and more. Bring the family – and your pup – for a day of summer fun! Find out more at visittoakcreek.com (see ad on pg. 27).
- **Sat., July 24: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way.
- **Wed., July 28: Traveling Food Truck Tour, 4-9 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way. Milwaukee's best food trucks and carts along with local restaurant favorites. Live music, lawn games and a Kids Zone. See milwaukeefood.com/ for more info.
- **Sat., July 31: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way. This date is also a Makers Market!

AUGUST

- **Tue., Aug. 3: National Night Out, 6-9 p.m.** American Legion Grounds, 9327 S. Shepard Ave. An evening of food, fun and safety information for the family and the community.
- **Sat., Aug. 7: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way. (continued)



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

CONTINUED

During our current ever-changing environment, some community events may be cancelled/modified. PLEASE CALL AHEAD TO CONFIRM EVENT DETAILS OR VISIT THE CITY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT WEBSITES.

- **Sat., Aug. 14: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.**

Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way.

- **Thur.-Sat., Aug. 19-21: Oak Creek Pop-up Biergarten, 3-9 p.m.**

Thur. and noon-9 p.m. Fri. and Sat. Abendschein Park, 1311 E. Drexel Ave. Featuring your favorite German drafts, food, live entertainment and family-friendly games. See visitoakcreek.com for details.

- **Sat., Aug. 21: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.**

Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way.

- **Wed., Aug. 25: Traveling Food Truck Tour, 4-9 p.m.** Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way. Milwaukee's best food trucks and carts along with local restaurant favorites. Live music, lawn games and a Kids Zone. See milwaukeefood.com/ for more info.

- **Sat., Aug. 28: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.**

Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way.

- **Mon., Aug. 30: Fall 2021 Community Education & Recreation Registration Opens Online** (visit ocfsd.org).

SEPTEMBER

- **Wed., Sept. 1: Branch Pickup Begins** Please see oakcreekwi.org for more details.

- **Sept. 1: First Day of School for the 2021-2022 School Year**

- **Sat., Sept. 4: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.**

Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way.

- **Mon., Sept. 6: City Offices and Library Closed for Labor Day Holiday. No School for OCFSD.**

- **Sat., Sept. 11: Oak Creek Farmers Market, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m.**

Drexel Town Square, 361 W. Town Square Way. In addition to the farm-fresh faire, this date is also Makers Market!

- **Mon., Sept. 13: Fall Community Education & Recreation Programming Begins** (visit ocfsd.org).



SPIRITS

BAR & GRILL

Daily Specials • Food Served 'Til 1:00am

Happy Hour • M-F 2-6:30pm

- \$2.50 Domestic Bottles
- \$1.25 Domestic Tappers
- 2-for-1 Rail Drinks

Monday

- \$3.00 Cheeseburger & Fries
- \$0.50 Wings (min. 10)
- \$3.00 White Claw or Craft Beer Pints

Tuesday • Happy Hour 'Til 9pm!

- \$1.50 or 3-for-\$4 Beef Tacos
- \$2.25 or 3-for-\$6 Steak/Chicken Tacos
- \$2.00 Margaritas
- \$3.00 Coronas & Patrón Shots

1st & 3rd Saturdays • 2-6pm Karaoke

Drinks 2 Go • Buzztime Trivia • Malört • 14 TVs • Free Pool

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Wednesday

- \$7.50 Philly Cheesesteaks
- \$4.00 Chicago-style Footlongs
- \$5.00 Tall Calls

Thursday

- \$0.50 Wings (min. 10)
- \$12.00 12 Wings & Pitcher

Friday Fish Fry • 4-9pm

- \$9.75 3pc. Cod Dinner

Saturday • Happy Hour 11-3

- \$7.50 Godfather Sandwich

Sunday

- \$3.00 or 2-for-\$5 Ham Sandwich
- \$3.00 Craft Beer Pints

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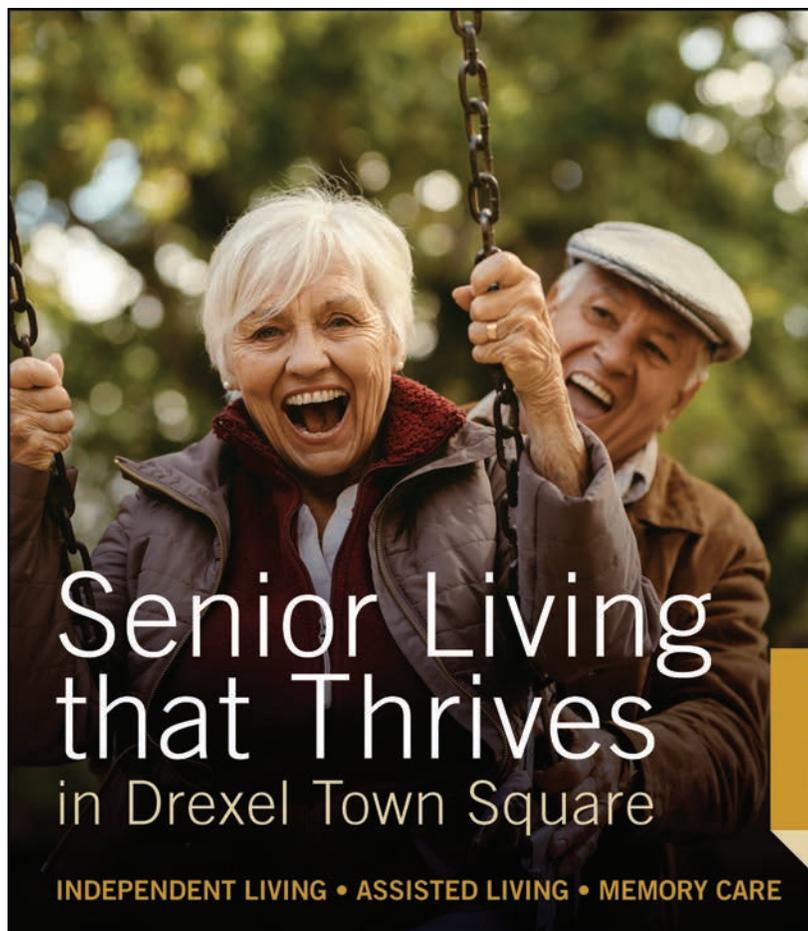
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Call **414-533-2417** or visit TheWatersSeniorLiving.com/oak-creek to find out about upcoming events or schedule an in-person or virtual tour.

8000 South Market Street, Oak Creek, WI 53154





CITY OF OAK CREEK

8040 S. 6th St.
Oak Creek, WI 53154



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LET'S GET STARTED



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