

Winner's Showdown at the Park is Aug. 17



Chad Olson wins second place for participating in the most Open Mic nights at Vannie Gogh's since January 2019. He will be the break performer for Quest at Central Park on Saturday, Aug. 17, at 1 p.m.

Photo by Amy Trees

By Amy Trees
Special to the Reporter

The winner's Showdown will be held at Central Park in Menhall Pavillion on Saturday, Aug. 17 at 1 p.m. The concert in the park will be showcasing Quest, a local Madison band, who won the Showdown at the Depot competition at Vannie Gogh's on July 27.

The concert will be opened by Dino Ante, the first place winner for the Open Mic night competition, which was awarded to the top two musicians who participated in the most open mic nights at Vannie Gogh's since last January. Chad Olson came in second and will be doing the break performance.

Ante says he began playing music in high school. After a long break, he got his guitar back out when some friends of his started getting together to play music a few years ago. "There are a bunch of talented artists in our group," says Ante.

He learned about the Open Mic nights at Vannie Gogh's after reading an article in the newspaper. "The guys at Vannie Gogh's are super-supportive," says Ante of Brian Dudgeon, owner, and Alan Lemke, president of the Arts Council of Edgerton. He says they encourage musicians to keep on trying and give helpful advice. "I'm going to do my best on Saturday," says Ante. "And I'm scared to death." He adds that he is excited about watching the other performers at the event. Ante expressed his appreciation for what the Arts Council and Vannie Gogh does in supporting the arts community. "Alan and Brian are really great people," he says. "I'm glad the Arts Council is supporting artists in the community."

When asked how he felt about the opportunity to perform at the Aug. 17 concert, Chad Olson replied, "I feel pretty good about it." Olson grew up in Fulton and graduated from Edgerton High

School in 1994. He was pointed in the direction of music when a friend loaned him a guitar and showed him some chords. Olson said he began practicing at home. He later started doing some jam sessions.

"The music I play is different than most peoples," said Olson who likes playing bluegrass. He said because his voice is too low, he blends it with country. "I like that type of music, too." Olson adds that it is hard to play bluegrass by himself because he lacks the other instruments needed, so blending the two genres of music works for that.

Olson learned about the Open Mic nights when getting some coffee one day at Vannie Gogh's and has been attending Open Mics for a couple of years.

"My main goal is to get beginners out on stage," says Olson. He says that there are more musicians in Edgerton than time available, but he would like to get them all in at



The Madison-based classic rock band, Quest, will be performing at Central Park on Saturday, Aug. 17, at 1 p.m. after winning the Showdown at the Depot competition on July 27.

Photo by Amy Trees

the open mic jams during the Lions Fireworks Festival at Racetrack Park. "I plan to organize more," he says. Another goal he has is to get his own sound system. "A lot of musicians don't have a sound system," says Olson, adding that it would open more opportunities for beginning musicians.

Olson has two sons who are exploring music. His older son, Stephen, plays percussion at

Edgerton Middle School. His younger son, Samuel, is interested in playing the drums, but his parents are starting him on the keyboard. "He wants to be a rock-and-roll star," says Olson. "And an author."

For more information about the Aug. 17 concert, contact Vannie Gogh's at vanniegogh@yahoo.com or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/vanniegogh.

SCHOOL DISTRICT

that are much different than what they're used to. They'll still be the same great kids they would have been over at Community, so let's make sure whether they're in the basement of the high school or at the middle school that we still give them the great teaching experience."

Towns also asked electors to be patient with him and his fellow board members and school district administrators "as we monitor and execute a \$40 million project over the next year."

He was referring to the \$40.6 million capital referendum passed by voters last November. In addition to

Continued from page 1

renovation of Community Elementary School, the money will pay for district-wide infrastructure upgrades, new secure entrances at Yahara Elementary School and the middle school, upgrades to the high school's science labs, and upgrades to the commons, band/choir room and office at the high school.

Stolen vehicles recovered in Porter

Submitted by
Captain Jude Maurer
Rock County Sheriff's Dept.

Deputies investigated four stolen vehicle complaints in Northwestern Rock County. One of the four stolen vehicles was recovered after fleeing from deputies; however, the remaining three had not been recovered, which prompted Sheriff's Office officials to announce the thefts in order to solicit information from the public and elimi-

nate continued victimization.

On Aug. 11, 2019, at 1:30 p.m., deputies were called to a cornfield off of North Wilder Road in the Town of Porter after the property owner discovered one of the three stolen vehicles. Further, at 4:09 p.m., another property owner discovered the remaining two stolen vehicles in a field off of Casey Road in the Town of Porter. The vehicles in both locations were well hidden and undetectable from passing motorists.

Again, the Sheriff's Office encourages everyone to lock their vehicles and remove valuables, as all four vehicles were unlocked and ignition keys readily available.

Anyone with information regarding these thefts is asked to call Rock County Communications non-emergency at 608-757-2244, Janesville Area Crime Stoppers at 608-756-3636, or the Beloit Area Crime Stoppers at 608-362-7463.

Bleachers project old news, Pauli says

District Administrator Dr. Dennis Pauli told The Reporter on Tuesday morning, Aug. 13 that Bill Osmulski's concern about the school district spending \$712,000 to repair the football field bleachers is misplaced. Osmulski was the person behind a social media post over the weekend that questioned the bleachers project.

"Wonder where the school district got \$712,000 to build new bleachers when it wasn't mentioned in the referendum questions or any of the voter information packets?" Osmulski wrote in the post on Next Door. Next Door is a social media app designed to allow neighborhood residents to stay informed.

Osmulski spoke about the bleachers project during the public comment section of the regular board of education meeting that preceded the annual meeting on Monday night, Aug. 12.

Pauli said Tuesday that board members and administrators have been discussing repairing the bleachers for the last three years, after a maintenance study identified the bleachers as needing repair. And he said the district was clear in its communications before voters adopted a \$1.25 million operational referendum last November that the money would go in part to pay for major repairs.

"We were clear the money was going to be used to address some of the more significant maintenance work we have."

According to Pauli, the bleachers "were a lawsuit waiting to happen."

"This summer Craig Lodahl, the then-athletic director, was walking down the steps and one of the boards literally broke in half when he stepped on it."

Pauli told The Reporter he has offered to sit down with Osmulski to discuss the matter and show him printed referendum materials to back up his point.

What about cost overrun?

In other business, Pauli and board members heard a presentation from representatives of construction company J.P. Cullen explain the fact, disclosed at the July 22 board meeting, that newly-projected costs for construction projects at Community Elementary School are \$296,000 higher than the original projection.

According to Pauli, cost overruns are natural on construction projects because the initial projections are just that—projections.

"You go from a yellow box on a drawing, and then you actually have floor plans and then you move to 3D renderings and they can get their pricing much more accurate. Prices are going to fluctuate simply because the scope of the project is going to be more refined."

The Cullen representatives told board members that the project's budget includes a five percent contingency fund that will cover some of the overrun.

Other business

The board also approved the following resignations and hires during its regular board meeting Monday night:

Resignations

- Tammy McGuire (middle school, effective July 24, 2019)
- Adela Diaz (Community Elementary School, effective June 7, 2019)
- Sean Anderson (middle school, effective Aug 12, 2019)
- Emily Marron (middle school, effective July 31, 2019)
- Beth Erb (high school, effective Aug. 2, 2019)
- Jennifer Sumwalt (education advisor, effective July 30, 2019 but pending approval of position at Community Elementary School).

Hires

- Tonya DeRemer (Community Elementary School, effective Aug. 6, 2019)
- Jessica Johnson-DeGroot (middle school, effective Aug. 20, 2019)
- Beth Swain (middle school, effective Aug. 6, 2019)
- Delaney Meyer (middle school, effective Aug. 6, 2019)
- Jennifer Sumwalt (Community Elementary School, effective Aug. 6, 2019)
- Jennifer Collins (middle school, effective Aug. 6, 2019)
- Kelly Aleson (middle school, effective Aug. 16, 2019)
- Lukas Anderson (high school, effective Aug. 20, 2019).

LAKE DISTRICT

Continued from page 1

that the RKLD "refuses to complete an audit of all financial transactions . . . the RKLD board authorizes the very basic audit practice that is required by state statute which is no more than reconciliation of checking account(s)."

For the last six years the town chairmen, concerned in part about \$900,000 the RKLD has spent on a ten-year legal fight with the Department of Natural Resources, have been trying to pry open the RKLD financial records, with little success. In March of this year Sweeney, who was appointed by Rock County Board of Supervisors Chairman Russ Podzilni in 2017, filed a public records request for legal, lobbying and engineering invoices since 2003. The RKLD's lawyers narrowly interpreted Sweeney's request and replied by sending him a only a batch of invoices that showed the RKLD had spent \$87,500 on a Madison lobbying firm between March of 2014 and October of 2018.

Agenda amended

The vote that sent Jelinek and Meyer onto the board came earlier in the meeting than called for on the agenda.

Shortly after Proud called the meeting to order, Koshkonong Town Chairman Bill Burlingame, a stubborn and vociferous critic of the board of commissioners, rose and made a motion to move the approval of the 2019-2020 budget and the election of members from the second-to-last and last items on the agenda, respectively, to the third and fourth items on the agenda.

Burlingame said he was worried electors would drift away as the meeting wore on instead of sticking around through presentations by engineer Rob Montgomery and Bill O'Connor, the RKLD's lawyer. That's what happened last year, Burlingame said, and it meant fewer electors participated in the election of commissioners.

Proud and several electors spoke against the motion. Shouldn't people hear Montgomery discuss plans for an expensive new boat landing and possible dam modifications before they voted on the recommended budget? But Burlingame's motion passed on a show of hands (each clutch-



Volunteers Debbie Hart (left) and Jennifer Merritt (right) count ballots during the annual meeting of Rock-Koshkonong Lake District on Saturday, Aug. 10 at Fort Atkinson High School. Electors voted in two new commissioners--Jim Jelinek and Mark Meyer.

Photo by Jeff Brown

ing a blue paper ballot) by a significant margin.

Budget wrangling

Lunder went over the board's recommended 2019-2020 budget, which would have boosted the per-parcel charge each elector pays from \$40 to \$75. The extra \$100,000 generated by per-parcel fee boost would have gone toward building a new boat landing at the end of Bingham Road in the Town of Albion.

But Meyer rose and made a motion to adopt an alternate budget he had prepared. Meyer's budget kept the per-parcel fee at \$40 by cutting the following amounts (among others) from the recommended budget:

- \$11,000 less for general legal fees (to zero)
 - \$3,200 less for general accounting fees
 - \$6,000 less for engineering fees related to the RKLD's ongoing efforts to gain 2.4 more inches for the lake in the summer months
 - \$20,000 less in legal fees (to zero) related to the effort to gain 2.4 more inches
 - \$75,000 less for the Bingham Road boat landing
 - \$15,000 less in engineering fees (to zero) for the Bingham Road boat landing
 - \$3,000 less in lawyer fees (to zero) for the Bingham Road boat landing
- Meyer's budget added \$7,000 to the recommended budget for cleaning the Indianford dam.

Zero for legal?

Rick Richardson, owner of i-90 Enterprises, spoke against Meyer's budget. It would be

foolish to allocate no money at all for general legal expenses, said Richardson.

"Unless I'm missing it, that puts us in a pretty dangerous spot. If we can't afford legal we're going to have to pull that from somewhere else . . . and without any representation, I don't know how we can operate as a board and a lake district. Who can we ask questions when we get questions? How can we find out the information when it becomes a legal expense?"

Meyer replied that he zeroed out the general legal fees line item in his budget to demonstrate how much the RKLD has spent on legal fees over the years. He said the board could pull money from other categories to cover legal fees as needed throughout the year. Better to rely on that tactic than lock in legal expenses and drive up the per-parcel fee, Meyer said.

"This budget can be revised but your tax bill cannot."

O'Connor told electors that with no allocation for general legal expenses in the budget it would take a special meeting of the electors to appropriate money to pay general legal expenses from another budget category.

Richardson made a motion to add back the \$11,000 in general legal fees and \$6,000 in general engineering fees. The motion passed, bumping the proposed per-parcel charge to \$45. A motion to add back the \$26,000 of additional legal and engineering fees related to the water level fight, which would have raised the per-parcel charge to \$52, failed.



As traffic barreled along STH 73 going south at the bend before STH 106, a lone crop duster plied their trade in fretful skies above.

Photo by Tristan McGough