

EDGERTON REPORTER

Vol. 154, No. 24 Edgerton, Wisconsin Proudly Serving the Community Since 1874 \$1.50 January 13, 2021

Edgerton School District

Pauli pulls back plan to reopen facilities

By Jeff Brown
Special to The Reporter

A plan proposed by Edgerton School District administrators to open the district's facilities for athletics and other extracurricular activities drew hard questions from school board members during the board's meeting on Monday night, Jan. 11.

In introducing the plan, District Administrator Dennis Pauli said opening the facilities would allow more students to participate in extracurricular activities. He also said that under the plan, no competitions would take place, and students groups from outside Edgerton would not be allowed to use the facilities.

Pauli acknowledged that opening the facilities would run contrary to the philosophy behind the decision to separate elementary school and middle school students into cohorts to combat the spread of the coronavirus.

"During the day, we're trying to keep kids apart . . . I understand how this feels like it really conflicts with that, and I can't argue that it doesn't," Pauli said.

Athletics over academics?

Board member Kelly Kwiatkowski pointed out that the ban on competitions and outside teams wouldn't necessarily limit exposure to students who'd been exposed to the

virus, given that district officials were powerless to prohibit Edgerton students from participating on traveling teams.

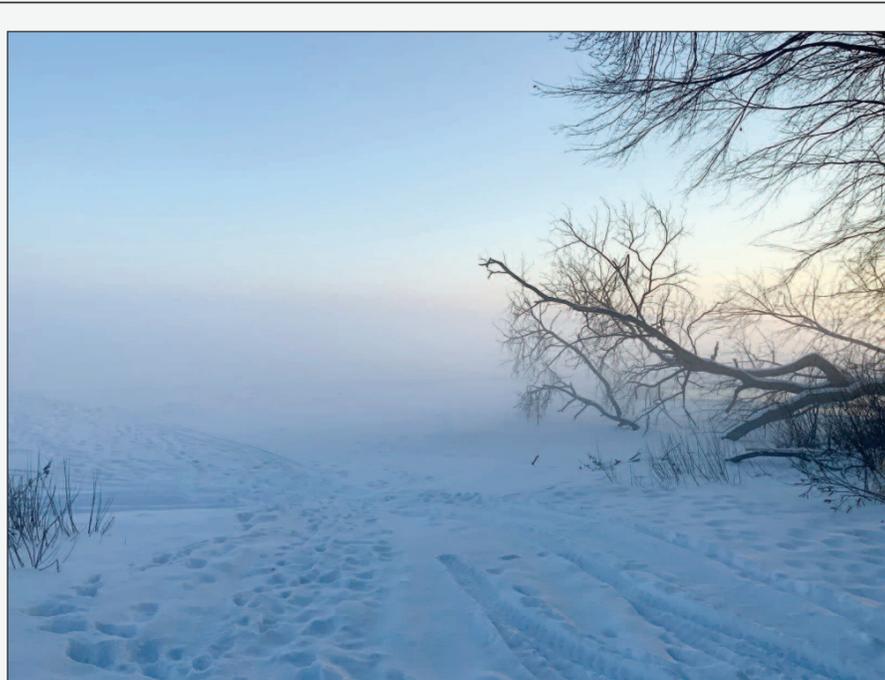
Pauli conceded Kwiatkowski's point, then volleyed the mention of traveling teams—participation in which usually involves membership fees and traveling costs—back at her. Opening the facilities would allow all Edgerton students—not just those whose parents can afford to allow them to join traveling teams—the opportunity to engage in athletics and other extracurricular activities, he said.

"We have lots of kids who don't have access to play on travel teams . . . That feels inequitable."

Inequitable or not, board member Kathy Klein said that opening the facilities at night while maintaining the cohort model and enforcing social distancing rules during the day created an indefensible double standard. Teachers at the district's two elementary schools spend an almost uninterrupted eight hours a day with their students, in one classroom, eating breakfast and lunch with them, said Klein, whose daughter is a teacher at Community Elementary School.

Teachers are even "marking off places in the snow so that our cohorts don't mix," Klein said. "I'm upset. I think that's

See **FACILITIES PLAN**, 6



Lake in the clouds

A view of Lake Koshkonong from Bingham Road in Albion Township on Jan. 5 shows fog rolling off the lake.

Photo by Katie Whitten

Police investigate stolen car crash injuring mother, child from Illinois

By Sam Martino
Special to The Reporter

Law enforcement officials continue to investigate why a young Illinois woman allegedly stole a car in Fort Atkinson and collided with another vehicle in downtown Edgerton on Jan. 6, injuring the woman and her 14-month-old child.

The accident occurred

around 9 p.m. at East Fulton and Catlin streets, when the woman from Riverdale, Ill., collided with another vehicle.

Edgerton Police Chief Robert Kowalski said he didn't know why or how Sarah Bolden, 21, and her young child ended up in Edgerton.

Riverdale is a southern most suburb of Chicago about 130 miles from Edgerton. Kowalski said he did not know

why Bolden was in the area or how she got to Fort Atkinson, where she reportedly stole a 2012 black four-door Mazda3 and then became involved in a two car collision in Edgerton.

Both Bolden and the child were taken to hospitals, Bolden to Mercy Hospital in Janesville and the child to a Madison hospital. The extent

See **CAR CRASH**, 2

Firefighters battle blaze at business early Saturday

Submitted by Edgerton Fire Protection District
Edited by Reporter staff

The Edgerton Fire Protection District was dispatched early Saturday morning, Jan. 9, to what was originally reported as a vehicle fire but turned out to be a structure fire at Four Seasons Comfort Systems, 9955 N Newville Rd., in the Town of Fulton. Two firefighters received minor injuries at the scene.

A truck driver passing by on Interstate 39/90 called 9-1-1 at 4:55 a.m., reporting he thought he saw a vehicle on fire east of the interstate near mile marker 166, which is south of the Rock River bridge. This was the only call received by 9-1-1, but there was a Wisconsin State Patrol squad in the area that found the location of the fire on Newville Road and relayed that it was, in fact, a commercial structure, not a vehicle, as originally reported.

Edgerton Fire units were already responding. Deputy Chief Jason Russ was the first unit on the scene, and based on the size of the building and the amount of smoke issuing from it, immediately upgraded the incident, which brought additional firefighting crews and water tenders through the MABAS (Mutual Aid Box Alarm System). In all, a total of seven firefighting crews from Edgerton, Evansville, Janesville, Stoughton, Deerfield and Brooklyn were able to bring the fire under control by about 6:30 a.m.

The building, one of three on the grounds, contained the offices and two shop areas for



As the sun came up Saturday morning, fire crews and Four Seasons Comfort Systems' owner John Rucker got a better view of the fire damage to the north half of the shop and office area of the business, located at 9955 N. Newville Rd. Heat damage to the siding can be seen towards the front of the side wall in the area where the fire is believed to have started from a piece of shop equipment that appears to have malfunctioned. While suffering smoke damage, fire crews were successful in stopping the fire from spreading into the south shop area.

Photo submitted by Edgerton Fire Protection District

the business. Deputy Chief Russ stated his goal was to keep the fire contained to the north half of the building and stop it from consuming a second larger shop area on the south half of the building. Battling the freezing temperatures, the firefighting crews did exactly that. They were able to keep the flames from extending into the south half of the building, which suffered smoke and some water damage.

It appears the fire started in the north shop area and burned for a while before it was seen by the passing truck driver. The fire extended quickly into the office area before crews arrived, and a portion of the roof over the north shop area collapsed as a result of the fire damage.

The fire remains under investigation but appears to have started when a piece of shop

equipment malfunctioned.

The owner of Four Seasons Comfort Systems, John Rucker, told investigators he had been in the building after returning from the Milwaukee area around 10:30 p.m., and there was no indication of anything wrong at that time. The building did not have a fire alarm system and was not equipped with automatic fire sprinklers, so the fire was able to burn unchecked in the north part of the building until flames broke through a wall and became visible.

Two firefighters received minor injuries during the fire. One was transported to Edgerton Hospital for evaluation and was released to return to the fire scene. The other was checked on the scene and remained on duty fighting the fire.

See **BUSINESS FIRE**, 2

Note to readers on violence in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 6

Dear Readers

This is important material received from the FBI regarding the violence that occurred in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6:

The FBI is seeking information that will assist in identifying individuals who are actively instigating violence in Washington, D.C. The FBI is accepting tips and digital media depicting rioting and violence in the U.S. Capitol building and surrounding area in Washington, D.C., on January 6, 2021.

We have deployed our full investigative resources and are working closely with our federal, state, and local partners to aggressively pursue those involved in criminal activity during the events of January 6.

If you have witnessed unlawful violent actions, or have any information about the cases below, we urge you to submit any information, photos, or videos that could be relevant at [fbi.gov/USCapitol](https://www.fbi.gov/USCapitol).

You may also call 1-800-CALL-FBI (1-800-225-5324) to verbally report tips and/or information related to this investigation.

See **NOTE TO READERS**, 4

Edgerton Fire District Expanded ambulance transfers boost revenue

By Sam Martino
Special to The Reporter

In a 2020 year-end report to the Edgerton Common Council recently, Fire Chief Randy Pickering reported on the two year-old interfacility ambulance transfer program to hospitals raising more than \$140,000 in new revenue for the fire district.

Pickering hailed the upgrade in service for ambulance transfers and emergency medical technicians and paramedics trained to operate under a new 24 hour staffing schedule.

"We are proud of the fact that we are providing that level of service. We could do a lot more if we had staff," Pickering said.

Transporting patients to hospitals outside of Edgerton gave a major boost in revenue to the Edgerton Fire Protection District. The results of the upgrade led to \$142,517 in new revenue in 2020.

Last year there were 270 transfers to hospitals made by Edgerton emergency personnel for a variety of reasons from specialized care for dialysis treatment or a need for a higher care that sending hospitals can't provide. In 2019 the number of calls was 100.

The Edgerton Fire Protection District has a 100 square mile service area covering a population of 15,000 people, including the City of Edgerton and the townships of Albion, Fulton, Sumner and Porter.

With new revenue from ambulance transfer fees, the new service translated into a tax savings of \$4 per \$100,000 of a home's valuation over the past few years, Pickering said.

While not a huge savings, Pickering said the new revenue generated by the department allowed the district to hire new personnel and upgrade ambulance service.

See **FIRE DISTRICT**, 2

Gas Watch

Nat. Average.....	\$2.318
WI Average.....	\$2.160
WI lowest - Milwaukee area.....	\$1.890
Janesville.....	\$2.070
Milton.....	\$2.090
Newville.....	\$2.090
Edgerton.....	\$2.140
Evansville.....	\$2.140
Fort Atkinson.....	\$2.150
Stoughton.....	\$2.150
Cambridge.....	\$2.140
Madison.....	\$1.990
Milwaukee.....	\$1.890

Latest prices reported for one gallon of unleaded gasoline according to local observations and GasBuddy.com as of 5:00 p.m., Monday, January 11, 2021. Prices listed are the lowest in each city, which may be one or more stations.

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Cowley's Piggly Wiggly



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