



Colton Roach (1st grade) reads while “Chapel Buddy” Amara Daub holds the microphone.

Submitted photos



Students at Christian Education Leadership Academy took part in a “See You at the Pole” prayer service Wednesday morning.

Students share prayers at Christian Education Leadership Academy

CITY OF PEWAUKEE — Students at the Christian Education Leadership Academy took part in a “See You at the Pole” prayer service Wednesday morning. Students from grades K4-8 shared prayers that they wrote themselves, as well as selected bible verses. CELA students, parents, and staff all gathered around the flag poles in prayer.



CELA's Chapel Choir, from left: Clarice Hohensee, Addy Meissner, Avery Fischer, Maya Lauterbach, Annalise Treffert, Jolie Tomasini and Maddie Mazur.

Lac La Belle police chief retiring

Village owes him \$30,000 or more in benefits

By Kelly Smith
Special to Conley Media



Kelly Smith/Special to Conley Media
Lac La Belle Police Chief Paul Beal at the Lac La Belle Village Board meeting Tuesday. Beal plans to retire in January.

LAC LA BELLE – The village apparently owes \$30,000 to \$35,000 to the Wisconsin Retirement System for unpaid pension benefits to retiring part-time Police Chief Paul Beal.

The trustees unanimously adopted a motion amending the village budget “in anticipation of making possible payments of \$30,000 to \$35,000 to the Wisconsin Retirement System” following a one-hour closed session during Tuesday night’s Village Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned immediately after the action and trustees offered no explanation of the proposed payments. Village Attorney Hector de la Mora refused to answer a Conley Media reporter’s questions regarding the payments.

However, Beal told Conley Media that he believes the village miscalculated his retirement benefits after a new state law changing the eligibility for benefits was adopted in 2011.

The new law increased from 600 to 1,200 the number of hours part-time public employees had to work in order to be eligible for pension benefits, according to Beal.

However, Beal said, the stiffer work requirements did not apply to part-timers employed prior to then-Gov. Scott Walker signing Act 10 into law.

Beal was serving as part-time police chief and snow plow operator prior to the change in the law and he believes the village was calculating his benefits based on 1,200 hours worked, not 600 hours.

Beal said he learned of the miscalculation when he sought information from state’s public employee retirement system regarding benefits he would receive when he retires in January 2020.

Beal said retirement system officials contacted the village regarding the miscalculation.

Beal said he will have to also have to make additional contributions to the retirement system as a result of the miscalculation but does not yet know how much more he will have to pay.

In addition to working part time as village police chief, Beal works full time as a lieutenant in the Waukesha County Sheriff’s Department.

Beal, 53, is eligible to retire from the sheriff’s department in January but in order to receive his retirement benefits he must give up his part time position with the village, according to state law.

Beal said the village pays him a base salary of about \$15,000.

However, he receives

additional compensation when working on La Belle Lake patrols and directing village snow plow operations.

The village has six to eight part-time police officers who also patrol the lake in the summer and plow snow in the winter in addition to routine patrol duties in the village.

The police department and lake patrol budgets, combined, are about \$80,000, according to Village President Tim Clark.

Clark, in an interview Tuesday morning prior to the village board meeting, told Conley Media village trustees would meet in a closed session that night to explore options regarding the police chief.

Clark said that according to state law, the village has the option of rehiring Beal anytime after a 75-day period following the date of his retirement.

State law does not permit the village to discuss with Beal the possibility of rehiring him during that 75-day period.

Beal is planning to retire on Jan. 17.

Clark said the village may place another part-time police officer in charge of police and snow plowing operations or might consider contracting with a neighboring community for police and snow plowing services.

During the morning interview, Clark made no mention of the village making a payment to the Wisconsin Retirement System.

Waukesha water utility receives awards from water works association

By Brandon Anderegg
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WAUKESHA — The Waukesha Water Utility received the Gimmicks and Gadgets Award while a water utility staff member received the George Warren Fuller Award from the Wisconsin section of the American Water Works Association.

The water utility was the recipient of the Gimmicks and Gadgets Award for engineering a “pipe loop apparatus,” which allowed staff to test how the chemistry of

water would impact Waukesha Water Utility infrastructure.

Water Utility General Manager Dan Duchniak said the apparatus was instrumental in testing how Lake Michigan water would impact Waukesha’s water distribution systems as Waukesha transitions to a new source for water. Duchniak added that engineers developed the apparatus in-house, which led to substantial savings for water ratepayers, he said.

“The really cool part about this is that our guys took it upon themselves to

build that apparatus,” Duchniak said. “Not only saving ratepayers money but taking ownership of that apparatus to make it a safe transition for our customers.”

Water Utility Operations Manager Kelly Zylstra received the George Warren Fuller Award for “her distinguished service to the water supply field in commemoration of the sound engineering skills, the brilliant diplomatic talent and the constructive leadership which characterized the life of George Warren Fuller,” according to the American

Water Works Association’s website.

Duchniak said the Fuller Award is the highest level of recognition that can be achieved at the state level through the American Water Works Association, adding that Waukesha Water Utility is fortunate to have Zylstra as manager of operations.

“It’s an honor and privilege to be working with someone of that caliber here and we are thrilled that she is receiving the award and really proud of her accomplishment,” Duchniak said.

Wanaki

From Page 1A

Department of Parks and Land Use, unveiled their plans for Wanaki in August.

Since then, Wanaki supporters headed by Joe Vachuska have scrambled to derail Farrow’s initiative and keep their beloved public course open.

The well-attended public hearing at the Waukesha County Expo Center was the best venue supporters had to endear the Waukesha County Board of Supervisors into keeping the course open. Supervisors must decide by Nov. 5 on the final draft of the budget.

Vachuska opened the public comment period. He was followed by dozens of others. “It’s good to know we have fiscally conservative leaders in the county, but we feel that an easily reversible mistake was made here,” Vachuska said. “Supervisors, tonight you will hear from a lot of very passionate supporters of Wanaki Golf Course.”

“League members and recreational golfers will tell personal stories and how

Wanaki adds to the quality of life that makes Waukesha County the best county in the state, if not the nation.

“You will find out about the lifelong friendships and life skills that the game brings to golfers of all ages, and Wanaki is securely at the center of it.”

Vachuska said new revenue was available through rate adjustments and better marketing. Private donations, such as the one supporting new mountain bike amenities at Minooka Park, could be found for Wanaki, he said.

Other money-making options include renting the clubhouse during the off season, installing golf simulators and running outdoor activities such as cross country skiing and snow shoeing, he said.

Mike Buettner, accompanied by his brother Rob, told supervisors that their family has had a Friday morning tee time at Wanaki for 20 years.

Mike Buettner, who said he is legally blind, added he golfs on the course because it’s welcoming, walkable and open to golfers of all levels and socioeconomic backgrounds.

“So, we’re asking you not to keep this course open for the Buettner family, but for the thousands of stories like ours that have come out of Wanaki, and there’s thousands more to come,” he said.

“Mr. Shaver talks about this being a business, and I appreciate that. I’m a businessman myself,” he said. “But part of this is not just looking at spreadsheets but getting out on the streets and talking with customers to learn what’s going on out there.”

Farrow’s proposal is con-

tained in the nearly \$319 million budget for 2020 operations that he presented to the County Board this week. Shaver introduced the initiative, and Farrow accepted it into the proposed county budget for next year.

Shaver explains decision to close

Prior to the public hearing, Shaver spoke to the crowd about reaching the decision to close Wanaki.

Initial figures showed the 18-hole course lost \$120,000 to \$140,000 annually over the past several years, making it a liability to the financial stability of the county’s public golf program, Shaver said.

Shaver told the crowd that the course over the past five years has averaged an annual loss of \$143,000.

The financial losses are due to, Shaver said, a decline in the number of rounds played brought on by more 9-hole than 18-hole rounds being played. He placed the decrease in play on the county’s “highly competitive market.” There are 29 golf courses in the county, he said.

The county’s other courses, Naga-Waukee in Delafield and Moor Downs in Waukesha, are fiscally productive enough to support public golf through the use of an enterprise fund, he said.

No tax money supports golf operations. Instead, public golf is financed with revenue from the courses such as green fees, clubhouse sales and carts rentals.

Shaver said Wanaki’s deficits are draining the enterprise fund, which threatens the well-being of Moor Downs and Naga-Waukee, he said.

Farrow on Tuesday said he

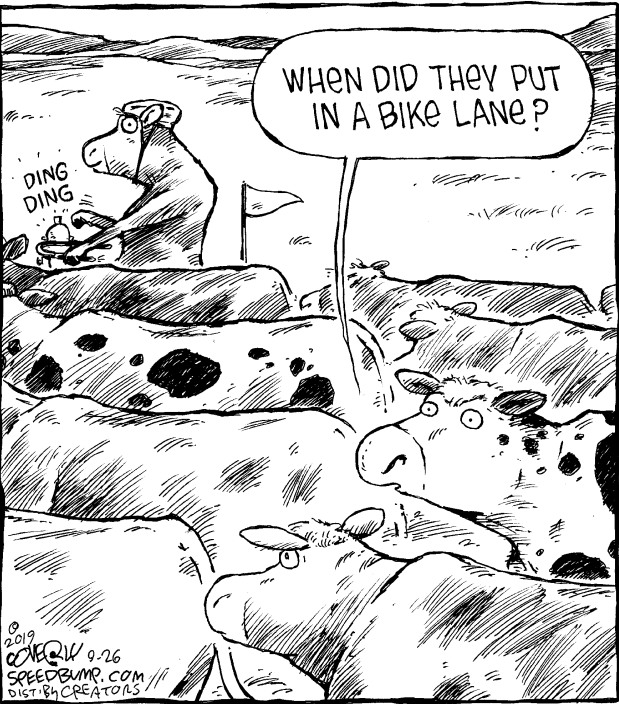
would not entertain Wanaki supporters’ request to continue operations through 2020. Farrow said he does not want his proposed budget changed.

If supervisors approve keeping the course open, they must locate about \$200,000 from somewhere in the budget and shift it into an account to support Wanaki, Farrow said. The figure is the anticipated deficit of Wanaki operations in 2020.

To support spending, the budget contains a property tax levy of \$106.2 million, an increase of \$1.8 million or about 1.7 percent over the previous budget.

If approved as presented, the budget will have a tax rate of \$1.82 per \$1,000 of home value, the lowest since 2009, Farrow said.

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