

ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

Medal of Honor recipient rescued Wis. soldier / A4



THE SCOREBOARD					
Camb.-Fries. 16	J. Creek 28	Portage 6	Reedsburg 36		
Dodgeand 0	M/P/GL 45	Poynette 17	Marshall 3		
Lodi NA	Bell.-Alb. NA	Rich. Center 7	Westfield 27		
P'ville 31	Deerfield 6	Rio 44	Fall River 20		

COMPLETE COVERAGE IN SPORTS / A9-A10

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County faces 6-figure shortfall

Dropping property values behind expected loss; too early to tell exact damage to 2011 budget

By Lyn Jerde
Daily Register

Columbia County could face a six-figure loss in property tax revenue next year as the result of a drop of nearly 4 percent in the equalized assessed valuation of the county's property. County Comptroller Lois

Schepp said it's too early to know for sure how much revenue the county will lose, because many factors — such as state laws, state administrative rules, and exceptions to limits on tax revenue and tax rates — go into computing the valuation drop's effect on how much property tax revenue the county can collect.

But a tentative estimate, which Schepp gave the County Board's finance committee Thursday, is that the county could collect about \$187,000 less in property taxes for 2011 than it collected for 2010.

In 2010, property taxes accounted for more than \$23.5 million, or 40 percent, of the

county's revenue.

The finance committee — which Thursday, officially adopted the Wisconsin Department of Revenue's figures showing a 3.84 percent drop in the county's valuation — is gearing up to start hearing 2011 budget requests from the county's various departments, starting Sept. 22.

All departments have been asked to submit "zero growth" budget requests, as they have for several years.

But Debra Wopat, immedi-

See table of area property valuations on page A11.

ate past chairwoman of the County Board and a member of the finance committee, said the likely decrease in revenue will almost certainly hurt.

"If the numbers are what we expect," she said, "we're looking at staffing decisions.

"If there is a reduction," Wopat added, "I don't think

Please see BUDGET, page A11

A call for religious toleration



ALEX EBERT / DAILY REGISTER PHOTOS

Above, Father Jim Murphy of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Portage reads from "Approaching the Quran" by Michael Sells, a book calling for understanding and religious toleration of Islam. Murphy told the 21 in attendance Friday in the church gym of similarities between Islam and Christianity in an event he organized in reaction to threats that a fundamentalist Florida church would burn copies of the Quran today, the ninth anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Left, John Kamps thumbs through the holy book of Islam as he listens to Quran readings. On Friday night, the Florida pastor took a plane to New York. He landed and declined to talk to reporters on his way to a cab. He has said he planned to meet with the imam overseeing a proposed mosque and Islamic center to be built near ground zero. Earlier Friday, the pastor's son said the burning won't take place today but couldn't say whether there would be a future event.

Daily Register reporter Lyn Jerde shares the column she wrote the afternoon of Sept. 11, 2001. See page A3.



Inmate aid leaders to ask for more money

By Lyn Jerde
Daily Register

Facilitators of a program designed to help former Columbia County jail inmates succeed "on the outside" will ask Columbia County for more money, the County Board's judiciary committee learned Wednesday.

When the County Board's finance committee begins hearing departmental budget requests later this month, among those requests will be an additional \$9,179 for Circles of Support, a program of the Columbia Community Corrections Council, in which trained volunteers provide support for newly released inmates.

John Kinsler of the Community Corrections Council said the additional money, coupled with more than \$11,000 that Circles of Support expects to carry over from this year, would be used partly to help expedite screening of inmates who apply for Circles of Support through the Pauquette Center for Psychological Services.

Please see CIRCLES, page A12

Some students may see Obama speech live

By Jen McCoy
Daily Register

President Barack Obama's second back to school speech will be broadcast live Tuesday, and some local school administrators are leaning toward following their handling of it last year.

"It's basically a no-win situation. You've got anti-Obama folks and pro-Obama folks, and it doesn't matter which way you'll go (because) you'll upset someone," said Jeff Holmes, administrator for the Montello District.

Obama is scheduled to give his speech on education at noon, Central Standard Time. It will be given at Julia R Masterman Middle-High School in Philadelphia. It also will be online at www.whitehouse.gov/live.

Last year, the president encouraged students to study hard, stay in school and take responsibility for their education.

Please see SPEECH, page A11

Downtown littering rises after smoking ban

By Craig Sauer
Special to the Daily Register

The recently implemented statewide smoking ban has caused some cleanliness issues in the downtown, according to members of the Business Improvement District board.

Patrons of downtown taverns are leaving their cigarette butts outside of those establishments and littering the ground, gutter and street, board members said.

"It is thousands of butts, thousands," BID contractor Gil Meisgeier said Wednesday.

Many taverns, including several downtown, are moving to create smok-

ing areas behind their establishments, but others do not have the space.

The statewide smoking ban was implemented in July. In other business:

- Board members expressed more concern Wednesday about skateboarders in the downtown area.

Their presence in the downtown alleys not only cause a nuisance to business owners but also creates a safety issue for the skateboarders, board member Shane Schmidt said.

The police department has issued tickets to skateboarders, but the problem has migrated to areas where there is less enforcement, they said.

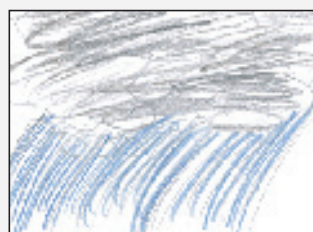
- The BID board discussed the idea of converting the triangle associated with

the Old Hill Ford property into a park to beautify the downtown area.

- The BID received a \$100 donation to pursue the installation of restrooms in the Market Square parking lot. A formal fundraising effort has not started, but board members have continued to suggest that one may be worth attempting.

- BID Treasurer Doug Williams said he is working with the Portage Police Department to continue the board's desire of installing security cameras in the downtown. Williams said it may be possible to lease a system from a company at a cheaper upfront cost than the \$100,000 estimated price tag of purchasing them.

WEATHER



India Niehoff, fourth grade, Pardeeville

Mostly cloudy with shower

High 73 Low 48

See page A12

OBITUARIES

• Theresa "Terry" Gray

85, Wisconsin Dells

See page A11

Rio student now real poster teen for Aeropostale

By Jen McCoy
Daily Register

If there's a life-sized cutout of Calvin Canales at the Aeropostale clothing store, he'd like a couple for his room at Luther College.

"That would be amazing. I'd totally keep one, several actually," Canales said.

The 18-year-old Rio native will appear on back-to-school posters and advertising for Aeropostale Real Teens 2010. It will be unveiled at the store at East Towne Mall today.

"I've always thought he was a pretty boy, you're supposed to say handsome, but I say pretty," said Cathy, mother of Canales.

Out of 5,700 online applications for the Real Teens campaign, Canales was voted into the top 87 by more than 210,000 online votes. Nineteen eighty-seven is the year the company was founded.

A panel of judges chose the top eight to be in the ad campaign, which includes Canales. The contest began on March 12 open to teenagers from 13 to 19 years old. Submissions were accepted

through April 11.

"They sent me an e-mail on April 29 and said I won — pretty bizarre," Canales said. He's a freshman at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, with a major in communications.

"About 10 o'clock at night I'm laying in bed, and Calvin said, 'Mom, look,' and he won. It's awesome," Cathy said.

When Canales shopped at Aeropostale almost a year ago, he signed up for e-mail incentives. Meanwhile, Cathy wanted her



Canales

Please see TEEN, page A11

BUDGET

Continued from Page A1

There is a department in the county that would not be impacted."

County Board Chairman Robert Westby said layoffs and furloughs are possible for 2011, though neither measure has been discussed in any County Board committees.

County Board Vice Chairman Andy Ross said that the county's budget already is lean and that making it leaner will affect the services that the county provides to its residents.

"We have people who need the services that the county provides," he said, "and we're limited on what we can tax. It's a rock and a hard place."

By state law, counties operate under either a levy limit (a limit in the amount of property tax the county can collect) or a mill rate limit (a limit on how much tax, per \$1,000 valuation, the county can charge to its property owners) — whichever limit is stricter. Schepp said that to her knowledge, Columbia County might be the first Wisconsin county in recent years for whom the drop in valuation results in a mill rate limit.

If that happens, Columbia County wouldn't just have a limit on how much its property tax askings can grow; the amount of taxes it collects would likely decrease.

Stephanie Marquis, a spokeswoman for the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, said many Wisconsin counties, and the municipalities within them, sustained valuation

losses this year — a trend that she attributes to the sluggish real estate market.

"As you know, the housing market has been challenging," she said. "As homes sell for less, that data will affect a community's equalized assessed valuation."

Marquis said the Department of Revenue bases its 2011 valuations on the actual values in 2009 for residential and commercial property reported by assessors throughout the state. The state's overall value fell about 3 percent.

But that does not mean that the revenue collected by government bodies — or the amount of tax that an individual property owner would pay — would change in direct proportion to the change in valuation, she said.

Schepp told the finance committee Thursday that homeowners should not assume that their property tax bills will be less just because the county's valuation dropped. What will happen with an individual taxpayer's bill will depend on what's happened to the value of his or her property, and the tax situations



Westby



Wopat



Ross

Area valuations

2010 equalized assessed valuations for Columbia County and its municipalities

COLUMBIA COUNTY

\$5,115,843,700, down 4 percent (\$209,567,300) from 2009.

COLUMBIA COUNTY CITIES: \$1,439,425,500, down 5 percent (\$71,577,500) from 2009.

COLUMBIA COUNTY TOWNS: \$2,977,124,100, down 4 percent (\$116,137,500) from 2009.

COLUMBIA COUNTY VILLAGES: \$699,294,100, down 3 percent (\$21,852,300) from 2009.

INDIVIDUAL CITIES

Columbus: down 2 percent.
Lodi: down 5 percent.
Portage: down 5 percent.
Wisconsin Dells: down 8 percent.

INDIVIDUAL VILLAGES

Arlington: down 2 percent.
Cambria: UP 1 percent.
Doylestown: no change (down \$59,100).
Fall River: UP 4 percent (or \$4,303,100).
Friesland: down 5 percent.
Pardeeville: down 4 percent.
Poynette: down 8 percent.
Randolph: down 1 percent.
Rio: down 6 percent.
Wycocena: down 1 percent.

INDIVIDUAL TOWNS

Arlington: down 6 percent.
Caledonia: down 5 percent.
Columbus: UP 2 percent.
Courtland: down 9 percent.
Dekorra: down 5 percent.
Fort Winnebago: down 3

percent.
Fountain Prairie: down 5 percent.
Hampden: down 3 percent.
Leeds: down 2 percent.
Lewiston: down 7 percent.
Lodi: down 5 percent.
Lowville: down 7 percent.
Marcellon: down 3 percent.
Newport: down 5 percent.
Otsego: down 5 percent.
Pacific: down 2 percent.
Randolph: down 3 percent.
Scott: down 3 percent.
Springvale: UP 9 percent.
West Point: down 1 percent.
Wycocena: down 2 percent.

SURROUNDING COUNTIES

Adams: down 8 percent.
Dane: down 3 percent.
Dodge: down 3 percent.
Green Lake: no change.
Marquette: down 1 percent.
Sauk: down 1 percent.

SOURCE: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Columbia County's recent valuation history (figures are rounded):

2005: \$3.914 billion.
2006: \$4.333 billion.
2007: \$4.676 billion.
2008: \$5.026 billion.
2009: \$5.215 billion.
2010: \$5.247 billion.

The increase of 0.6 percent between 2009 and 2010 was the smallest increase in recent years. For 2011, the valuation went down for the first time in recent years.

SOURCE: Columbia County 2010 budget

(such as school referendums) affecting other taxing bodies.

Ross, who also is a member of the Poynette Village Board, noted that several towns, villages and cities in Columbia County

also experienced valuation drops. In Poynette's case, the drop amounted to about 8 percent.

ljerde@capitalnewspapers.com
745-3587

should be clearly listed in the teacher's lesson plans and must be previewed in their entirety prior to use." It also states that the policy is "To insure that parents have the right to be informed and withdraw their own child from materials they find inappropriate."

Poches prepared a letter for parents and guardians to explain the scenarios. The letter also says that those who do not want their children to participate may opt out by contacting their child's school office on Monday. Replacement activities will be given to those children who can't watch the speech, the letter says.

Last year there was some opposition to Poches not allowing the speech to be shown live. He said he has received no feedback about the speech this year.

jmccoy@capitalnewspapers.com
745-3519

Real Teens 2010

What: Aeropostale Real Teens 2010.

Who: Calvin Canales.

Why: The Rio native won a national ad campaign, and it will be unveiled at this event.

Where: Aeropostale at East Towne Mall in Madison.

When: 4 to 6 p.m. today.

Cost: Free. The public is invited to the event. There will be a disc jockey, prizes and 10 percent off of total purchases that day.

TEEN

Continued from Page A1

son to start applying for college scholarships, and he received an e-mail from the store about a \$5,000 scholarship. The senior at Rio High School wrote a one-page description about why he's a "Real Teen" that included his two years as a student aide for kindergarten, helping coach Rio youth wrestling and being a positive male role model.

Each of the 87 finalists received a \$100 clothing card and a Flip video camera with software to document themselves in their hometown. In his video, Canales points up to the Rio sign that reads population 938, and then he pops up at various places in the village.

"I didn't think I was going to win at all because when I submitted the video I saw that I spelled Aeropostale wrong," Canales said.

Christina Wilson, an integrated publicist at AMP Agency, said the company wanted actual customers to represent their demographic. It's the first time the company has done this contest, Wilson said, and will continue it next year.

"One thing about Calvin, he's passionate about athletics and it kind of streamed over into his volunteer work," she said. "These kids weren't chosen for their looks — it's strictly about their accomplishments."

The other seven finalists were from New York, two from Texas, Florida, Kansas, California and Georgia. All of them met at a New York studio in mid-May to shoot their ad campaigns, which can be seen at www.real-teens2010.com/meet.vtm.

Canales said he took a day to walk around Central Park, eat the food and take in the scenery.

If you hail from a small place doesn't mean you can't think big.

"Maybe just inspire them to try," Canales said.

jmccoy@capitalnewspapers.com
745-3519

Theresa "Terry" Gray

MADISON / WISCONSIN DELLS — Theresa "Terry" Gray, 85, of Wisconsin Dells, passed away peacefully Friday, Sept. 10, 2010, at University Hospital in Madison, with her daughters by her side.

Terry was born May 25, 1925, in Binghamton, N.Y., the daughter of Andrew and Susan Moska Barvinchak. She graduated from Bingham Central High School in 1943, and continued her studies at Palmer Chiropractic College in Davenport, Iowa. She earned a doctorate of chiropractic, where she met and married Merlin O. Gray, another Palmer graduate, Aug. 14, 1946. They began their lives together in Merlin's hometown of Wisconsin Dells and moved to Middleton in 1961. Shortly after Merlin's retirement, they returned to the Dells.

Terry was an active member of the United Presbyterian Church in Wisconsin Dells and at Dale Heights Presbyterian Church in Madison. She also served in various ministries. She was a longstanding member of the American Legion Auxiliary, Dells Senior Club and committee volunteer with the local food pantry. Terry was a loving wife, mother, grandmother and selfless servant to everyone she met. People who knew Terry described her as a thoughtful and caring, a fabulous baker and letter writer extraordinaire. She will be dearly missed by all who knew her.

Terry is survived by her daughters and sons-in-law, Jacki and David Hill of Modesto, Calif., Susan Darling and grandsons, Jared and Nathan of Albuquerque, N.M., and Cindy and Jim Suchomel and grandsons, Mitch and Brock of Deforest; sisters-in-law, Jane Gray of Marshfield, Mudge (Art) Seibel of Fond du Lac and Doris (Willard) Gray of Pueblo, Colo., as well as many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, John; sister, Mary; and her husband and partner of 54 years, Merlin, on Oct. 8, 2000.

A memorial service celebrating her life will begin at 11 a.m. Tuesday at the United Presbyterian Church, 730 Cedar St., Wisconsin Dells, with the Rev. Steven Keller officiating. Visitation will be held at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday at the church. Burial will be at Oxford Village Cemetery.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, memorials be made to the United Presbyterian Church to continue the ministries she so faithfully served.

Picha Funeral Home and Crematory of Wisconsin Dells assisted the family with arrangements.

SPEECH

Continued from Page A1

The speech will be recorded and made accessible to teachers for school-related purposes, Holmes said, as it was last year. There were a couple of complaints last year by people who wanted it shown live, he said.

"I think it would be better done at night with families so they can stress the importance of education. I'll use a Southern phrase: Putting it (the speech) in the school is like preaching to the choir," Holmes said.

He said there has been no feedback so far about this year's speech.

Mark McGuire, administrator for the Rio School District, said he hadn't heard anything about the speech yet but would handle it the same way he did last year.

"If a teacher would like

to show it, they're welcome to show it," he said.

"The bottom line here is that we've gotten nothing from anyone (in the federal government about the speech.) My attitude was if they want to show it, they can show it. It's not mandatory, but I'm not going to make a statement about not watching it, either," said Gus Knitt, administrator for the Pardeeville School District.

Students in the Portage School District might be able to watch the speech live, depending in part on their class schedules and their teachers. Charles Poches, administrator for the district, said he's working with staff to give students who aren't in class — on lunch break, for example — the chance to watch it live. Poches said it will be up to each teacher who has a class at noon to review the content of the speech before it is broadcast and

to determine whether the speech fits into the curriculum. If it does, the teacher may show it, he said. But Poches said that will happen only if the White House releases a copy of the speech in time for review. Last year, the White House informed school administrators about the live speech the Friday before Labor Day weekend, he said, and gave administrators little time to plan.

"I want to make sure that everybody's got the opportunity to read this speech ahead of time. How we're going to treat the speech itself is going to be determined," Poches said. "We're kind of guided by policy, too."

Under the Portage School Board policy 294, "District Guidelines for Video Use," it reads that "any videos having obvious educational value may be shown when appropriate for specific curricular objectives. All videos

PLANNING AN EVENT?

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