

County capsules

STEVENS POINT NAMES NEW FIRE CHIEF: The Stevens Point Police and Fire Commission announced Wednesday, Sept. 17, that Interim Fire Chief Robert Finn has accepted the position of full-time fire chief of Stevens Point. The commission interviewed two finalists for the position and voted unanimously to promote Finn.



Robert Finn

Finn succeeds Tracey Kujawa who left in May to become the Wausau fire chief. Finn has accepted the position and will assume his new duties immediately.

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CWA AND STEVENS POINT AIRPORT PROJECTS APPROVED: Projects at both the Stevens Point Municipal Airport and the Central Wisconsin Airport (CWA) have received state approval.

The Stevens Point project involves finalizing plan and design work for installing a perimeter/security fence as well as runway pavement maintenance. Total cost for the project is \$409,000 and work is to be completed by next summer.

The city and state each will contribute \$14,400, with the federal government paying for the bulk of the project – \$380,000. It will involve crack sealing and laying down a new surface to extend the life of the runway.

At the CWA, funding for another portion of the \$30 million renovation/expansion will help pay for parking lot work.

The \$1.825 million dollar project involves reconstruction of the center-south parking lot and construction of canopies above the parking meter stations. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT), which is passing along \$860,000 in federal funds for the work through the federal Airport Improvement Program, said the project will increase airport revenue and improve parking for users. Portage and Marathon counties will be responsible for the remaining \$965,000 cost.

Construction on the CWA project will begin this fall and wrap up in the spring of 2015.

Work on expanding the baggage claim area is nearing completion and the next part of the project involves renovation of the terminal's center section. The airport will rebid that project after rejecting a previous bid as too expensive.

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CONSTRUCTION WILL CLOSE COUNTY HIGHWAY X: The Portage County Highway Department was scheduled to begin roadwork for County Highway X Monday, Sept. 15. The roadway on County Highway X from North Second Street to the Marathon County line in the town of Dewey will be reconstructed for approximately 1.1 miles.

The work will consist of pulverizing the existing pavement, replacing culvert pipes and endwalls, grading and asphalt paving. Work is anticipated to be complete by early November.

The project will be closed to through-traffic for the duration of construction. Access will be provided for local residents, business (See County, page 20)

Wisconsin teen wins national Heroic Service Activity award

A Stevens Point teen has been named a national winner of the 2014 Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes. Each year, the Barron Prize celebrates 25 inspiring, public-spirited young people from across America who have made a significant, positive difference to people and the planet. The top 15 winners each receive a \$5,000 cash award to support their service work or higher education.



Rachel Ley

Rachel Ley, 17, founded the Literacy for Little Ones program to support families in reading to their children from the time they are born.

She assembles book packages containing a new children's book and information on early literacy, and distributes them to new parents in hospitals.

In the last five years, she and a team of 700 youth have assembled and distributed 8,400 book packages to seven hospitals in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Nicaragua.

Each book package, wrapped in cellophane and tied with a ribbon, includes a personalized letter explaining the benefits of reading to newborns on a daily basis and tips for doing so effectively.

Ley's project was born of her own love of reading for which she credits her mother,

who put her on a "ten-books-a-day diet" from birth until kindergarten.

With an initial grant of \$500, Ley purchased books and supplies, contacted her local hospital, gathered a few friends and distributed 550 book packages that first year. Since then, she has convinced Kohl's, Target and two publishing companies to donate books to her cause.

She has also inspired her peers to fundraise through popcorn and doughnut sales and has received additional grants to buy books and supplies.

On the 11th anniversary of 9/11, Ley contacted teachers, coaches and advisors at several local schools and organized nine groups of students in assembling 1,100 book packages.

She recently expanded her project to include a hospital in Managua, Nicaragua.

She found and ordered Spanish books for babies, translated her materials for parents from English to Spanish, and rallied her peers to assemble over 1,950 book packages for the Nicaraguan hospital in just one month. "I've come to see that volunteerism is really about realizing how fortunate I am," said Ley. "I'm just trying to give back some of what others have given me."

The Barron Prize was founded in 2001 by author T.A. Barron and was named for his mother, Gloria Barron. Each year's 25 Barron Prize honorees are as diverse as their service projects.

For more information on the Barron Prize, visit www.barronprize.org.

Superintendent (Continued from page 1)

like to hear from Greg Nyen, director of student services, on whether he thinks the administration would be able to run the district with an office of superintendent.

Superintendent Attila Wenginger said it was not fair to ask administration to speak publicly on a matter that would affect their employment.

"It's not fair to ambush them like this tonight," Wenginger said. "Had they known they were going to be asked that is one matter, but I don't think it's fair to ask them about this. I am not going to permit my staff to enter into this conversation tonight. They are my staff and it is not fair to them."

Under board policy no single board mem-

ber may direct district staff to do anything, Wenginger said.

Erler said the board should not consider the individuals who fill or would fill the positions for either of the systems in making a choice.

"The decision we make is not dependent on who is currently here and going forward will not be," Erler said. "Ultimately it is the organizational structure that we have to approve, irrespective of the individuals who in the future may fill those positions."

At the end of the discussion, Kochanowski said he did not believe the idea had been given a fair chance.

(See Superintendent, page 7)



Kim Hoppenrath, plant manager, gives Gov. Scott Walker a tour of Steel King Industries Inc. in Stevens Point Wednesday, Sept. 17. Walker took the tour as a part of his "Continuing Wisconsin's Comeback" plan and to visit with the companies and employees that stand as the backbone of the Wisconsin economy. (Portage County Gazette photo)

Last Week's Weather			
Period ending 7:30 a.m.	High	Low	Precip.
Thursday, Sept. 11	67	43	0.12"
Friday, Sept. 12	53	39	0
Saturday, Sept. 13	47	37	0.07"
Sunday, Sept. 14	56	37	0
Monday, Sept. 15	64	45	0.03"
Tuesday, Sept. 16	60	36	0
Wednesday, Sept. 17	63	37	0

THIS WEEK'S OPEN HOUSES

~ Advertised in today's Portage County Gazette ~

TIME	ADDRESS	PRICE	HOST	OFFICE
9:30 - 10:30	2609 Atwell St., Stevens Point	\$144,900	Mary Norrgran	
10:00 - 11:30	4700 Heritage Dr., Stevens Point	\$199,900	Chris Northwood	
12:00 - 1:30	1470 Sunny Crest, Stevens Point	\$389,000	Chris Northwood	

Saturday,
Sept. 20

YOUR GAME-DAY PARTY HEADQUARTERS!

Sept. 27: UW-SP Homecoming

Homemade Soup & Homemade Pizzas

PARTNERS PUB Est. 1977

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