

THE DAILY REPORTER



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QUOTE OF THE DAY: "Rest assured, I will refute all the allegations." - Benjamin Netanyahu

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VILLAGE OK'S \$228M HOSPITAL

Project to break ground this summer in Mount Pleasant

Nate Beck
nbeck@dailyreporter.com

Advocate Aurora Health Care is moving ahead with plans to build a \$228 million hospital in Mount Pleasant after earning village approval this week.

The hospital system is planning a 198,000-square-foot medical center and a 98,000-square-foot medical office building on the north side of Highway 20, at Northeast Frontage Road and Washington Avenue. The Mount Pleasant Village Board approved a rezoning request for the project at its meeting on Monday.

Work on the project is expected to begin this summer. A spokeswoman for Advocate Aurora wouldn't say if the health care group has hired an architect or general contractor for the project.

"This approval is a significant step toward our plan to expand services and access to health care throughout this growing region," said Lisa Just, president of Advocate Aurora Health's Racine Kenosha Lake Patient Service Area.

The medical center will have 60 medical, surgical and intensive care beds, four observation beds, five operating rooms and two procedure rooms. The hospital will offer inpatient care and have an emergency department, among other features. Advocate Aurora's medical office building will have 24 specialty providers, sports medicine, rehabilitation services and a conference room.

"We are pleased that Advocate Aurora is making this significant investment in our growing community," said Mount Pleasant Village President David DeGroot. "We look forward to having expanded access to cost-effective, high-quality care available to our residents."

The hospital is also planning a primary-care and urgent-care center at the southwest corner of Spring Street and Sunnyslope Drive in Mount Pleasant. Ascension Wisconsin plans to build a \$42 million medical complex in nearby Sturtevant.

WHAT A MESS



Winnebago County Sheriff's Office via AP

Emergency responders work on Sunday at the scene of a 131-car pileup on Interstate 41 near Neenah. Wisconsin authorities this week released videos and recordings of 911 calls from the crash, which killed a 30-year-old school teacher and injured 71 people. For video from the pileup, go to www.dailyreporter.com.

BUDGET BONANZA

Evers outlines priorities for two-year spending plan

Scott Bauer and Todd Richmond
Associated Press

MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Although Gov. Tony Evers hadn't released his full two-year budget proposal by print deadline on Thursday, many of the main points were already known. Here are some of them:

ROADS: Evers has signaled he will increase the state's 32.9-cent gas tax to pay for roads in a comprehensive plan for a long-term transportation plan. Republicans have shown openness to toll roads, but some conservative senators stand ready to block any type of tax or fee increase.

MARIJUANA: Evers wants to legalize medical marijuana and decriminalize up to 25 grams of recreational pot. The plan appears to be unacceptable to Republicans.

K-12 SCHOOLS: Evers, a former state schools chief, campaigned on a promise to increase

funding for K-12 schools by 10 percent, which would come to \$1.4 billion. Republicans say they support increasing school funding but not as much as Evers wants.

VOUCHER SCHOOLS: Evers wants to freeze enrollment in voucher schools starting in 2021, a move Republicans oppose. Evers says an enrollment freeze would save money on property taxes, but supporters of the program say it will deny people the chance to escape failing public schools.

HIGHER EDUCATION: Evers plans to continue a tuition freeze at the University of Wisconsin for at least two years, boost funding by \$150 million and allow for immigrants living in the U.S. illegally to pay in-state tuition. Republicans oppose the in-state tuition plan, a version of which they stripped from state law in 2011.

Please see **BUDGET**, page 3



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WADE-ING IN

Former alderman tackles labor shortage at Employ Milwaukee.



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PUNCH IT UP

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ON THE LEVEL | WILLIE WADE

WADE-ING INTO A LABOR SHORTAGE



Photo courtesy of Employ Milwaukee

Former alderman makes his mark at Employ Milwaukee

Dan Shaw
dshaw@dailyreporter.com

As the top official at Employ Milwaukee, Willie Wade has come to see that fighting the Milwaukee area's protracted labor shortage has as much to do with changing employers' attitudes as it does employees'.

Yes, Wade acknowledges, his job is largely one of instilling good work habits in people who may have grown up in families in which holding down a steady job just wasn't a part of daily life. But employers also need to be willing to change.

"It's really about culture," Wade

said. "One of the advantages employers had for years was that they had such a big labor supply, if they didn't like you, they could say, 'Bye.' But now, if they do that, there isn't anybody else who's going to come along and take your place."

The labor shortage is a problem construction officials have long been familiar with. In poll results released by the Associated General Contractors of America in January, 70 percent of the Wisconsin companies surveyed said they expect hiring to be difficult in 2019.

But as chief executive officer of Employ Milwaukee, a group serving all of Milwaukee County, Wade knows the labor shortage goes well beyond the construction industry. His job also has him dealing regularly with employers in the health care, finance, manufacturing, hospitality, transportation and information-technology industries. To one extent or another, all of them are struggling to find qualified workers.

Wade said his job is something he has been preparing for his entire life. Born on a farm in Arkansas, he moved to Milwaukee at a young age when his father took a job at Harley-Davidson.

Wade was enrolled in Milwaukee Public Schools and later discovered to be a good athlete. That led to a chance to play basketball at Armstrong State University in Savannah, Georgia.

Returning to Milwaukee, Wade took a job in the mortgage industry but quickly felt a desire to get involved in sports again, this time by working with youth leagues. That eventually led him to seek employment at Milwaukee Public Schools, getting a job helping special-education students and coaching basketball on the side. Throughout

it all, Wade strove to instill in young people the sorts of qualities that would make them not only good athletes but also good employees: punctuality, diligence and responsibility.

Then came the call of politics. In one of the campaigns Wade worked on, one to prevent the recall of Dr. James White from the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors, he found himself being encouraged by many of the voters he was meeting to run for office himself.

He did so in 2003, when a special election was called to replace an alderwoman found guilty of misappropriating public money. Wade won the seat over 11 rivals.

He stayed on the Milwaukee Common Council until 2016. He now holds the distinction of being the only Milwaukee alderman to have defeated four one-time aldermen in elections.

Even before Wade had joined Employ Milwaukee, his priorities included finding ways to bring more people into the workplace. Sixteen years ago, he said, he was even more dismayed than today at seeing how many employers were willing to simply write off the young in particular as a lost cause.

Some of that has begun to change – a result in no small part of work by groups like Employ Milwaukee. But much still has to be done.

Wade said he has just started to make progress toward his goal of ensuring Employ Milwaukee is the first thing to come to the minds of people in the Milwaukee area when they think about jobs and hiring.

"Anyone who is looking for a job should know to go to Employ Milwaukee and go to the website," Wade said. "The same thing goes for employers who need employees. I want to own that space."

GETTING TO KNOW WADE

The Daily Reporter: What surprises you most about your job?

Wade: The thing that surprises me the most about my job is that we have everything we need in Milwaukee County and the city of Milwaukee to get a lot of work done, but we just don't work together. We need to do a better job of sharing resources and information to make it a lot easier and seamless to work together.

TDR: Which living person do you most admire?

Wade: I admire Congresswoman Gwen Moore. From her humble beginnings to going all the way to Washington, D.C. and serving on the Ways and Means Committee, I have a lot of admiration for how hard she had to work, and how focused she had to stay, to achieve that as a single mother.

TDR: What other job(s) did you

consider trying?

Wade: Working in advertising on Madison Avenue; a financial planner; or college basketball coach.

TDR: What is your greatest fear?

Wade: Failure.

TDR: What is your greatest extravagance?

Wade: Clothes.

TDR: What would you never wear?

Wade: Skinny jeans or spandex

TDR: If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

Wade: I'd like to be taller, at least 6'4"

TDR: What would your colleagues be surprised to find out about you?

Wade: I'm a very good carpenter/handyman and have farming skills.

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