

Home & Money
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Water woes

Take these steps if your house floods

When Should I Call a Professional?

When Should I Call a Professional?

Uncharted waters
If your home floods, start by documenting the damage and then pump out the water and start cleaning.
Home & Money, inside

Spring fling for Elks
Elkhorn found a way, with safety guidelines and protocols in place, to give its spring athletes a chance to compete this summer. **Page 1B**

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Weekend Gazette

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Evers orders statewide mask mandate

By Scott Bauer
Associated Press

MADISON

Gov. Tony Evers on Thursday issued a statewide mask mandate amid a spike in coronavirus cases, setting up a conflict with Republican legislative leaders and some conservatives who oppose such a requirement and successfully sued to end the governor's safer-at-home order earlier this year.

Evers, a Democrat, declared a new public health emergency and ordered the wearing of masks for anyone age 5 and older starting Saturday for all enclosed spaces except a person's home. The new order also applies to outdoor

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Anyone who violates the order would be subject to a \$200 fine. It is scheduled to run until Sept. 28.

"This virus doesn't care about any town, city, or county boundary, and we

need a statewide approach to get Wisconsin back on track," Evers said in a statement, citing the recent rise in cases across the state.

The conservative-controlled Wisconsin Supreme Court in May tossed out an order from Evers' health secretary closing most nonessential businesses in an attempt to slow the spread of the virus.

Republican Assembly Speaker Robin Vos said he opposes a statewide

Turn to **MASK** on Page 7A



Wisconsin Department of Health Services via AP
Gov. Tony Evers declared a new public health emergency Thursday amid a spike in coronavirus cases and issued a statewide mask mandate that starts Saturday and is scheduled to run until Sept. 28.

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• **'Virus doesn't care':** Northern counties see more COVID-19 cases. /2A

GDP suffers record collapse

Challenges ahead for economic recovery, Trump

By Don Lee

Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON

U.S. economic output fell at a stunning 32.9% annual rate in the second quarter—a level not seen since the Great Depression, according to data released Thursday.

The history-making contraction in the nation's gross domestic product, which followed a 5% drop in the first quarter, was widely expected after the coronavirus outbreak shut down large swaths of the economy and led to massive job losses in the spring.

By comparison, during the worst of the Great Recession, GDP—the total of all goods and services produced in the country—shrank at an annualized 8.4% pace in the final quarter of 2008. The single largest annualized quarterly decline since the Commerce Department's records began in 1947 was 10% in early 1958.

The latest steep decline reflects what most economists see as the bottom of the recession. The

Turn to **GDP** on Page 7A



Anthony Wahl/awahl@gazettextra.com

Therese Coogan drove generations of children to school and planned their bus routes for 37 years. As an employee of the Van Galder Bus Company, Coogan knew the city of Janesville so well that her boss called her his version of Janesville MapQuest. Coogan officially retired at the end of the school year, but her boss did not want her longtime service to go unnoticed during the pandemic.

'Perfect job'

Longtime Van Galder bus employee loved children



ANNA MARIE LUX
BETWEEN THE LINES

JANESVILLE

When Therese Coogan began driving students to school for Van Galder Bus Company in late 1986, she didn't plan to stay long.

She had three small children, and her husband, Micky, worked at General Motors.

"It was the perfect job for a mom," Coogan recalled. "I remember doing my first route and thought I didn't like it much."

As the days went on, the children grew on her.

"I liked it more and more," Coogan said. "You got to know the kids. ... And here I am."

After 37 years as a driver and then as assistant school bus dispatcher, she officially retires Friday.

"I'm having a real tough time with this," Coogan said, "but I know it is time for me to be out."

The COVID-19 pandemic ended in-person classes earlier this year, and she stopped coming into the office.

But the 70-year-old leaves behind a notable career that touched many lives while she worked in the background.

In some cases, she has either bused or planned for busing for three generations of students.

"It was fun," Coogan said. "That's what makes it hard now, knowing I won't go back. Work was my home away from home."

Each year, the company bused anywhere from 600 to 700 students who were on rural routes or had special needs.

Coogan organized the routes and figured out which children rode

Turn to **BUS** on Page 6A

Study: Low-income woes remain despite improvements

A third of Rock County residents can't afford essential living expenses

By Frank Schultz

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JANESVILLE

More than 1 of every 3 Rock County households struggle to pay for basic necessities, according to a study released this month by the United Way.

The numbers come from the ALICE Project, which mines federal data to derive a "survival budget" and income levels in an area.

The project recently released its latest report, based on 2018 data.

The coronavirus pandemic has worsened the economic picture for many, and it's likely that today more people endure the stress of not being able to provide for their families,

said Mary Fanning-Penny, CEO of United Way Blackhawk Region.

The 2018 data shows 36% of county residents were poor or earned more than the federal poverty level but still could not afford essential living expenses.

That's an improvement from 2016, when 42% of county residents were found to be unable to pay for necessities.

Fanning-Penny noted

Rock County trends slightly worse than the statewide average, which was 34% of people in poverty or meeting the ALICE threshold.

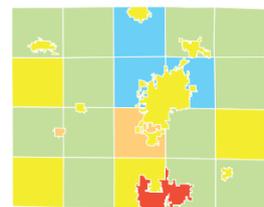
The 36% figure includes the 11% of county residents living below the poverty level and 25% who are considered "ALICE," which means asset limited, income constrained, employed.

This group has been called "working poor," although many poor people also work.

Fanning-Penny said there's no magic solution: "It really takes a collaborative approach. We need policy makers and academics

Turn to **STUDY** on Page 6A

ROCK COUNTY
Households below ALICE or poverty thresholds



Greater than 50%
40% to 49%
30% to 39%
20% to 29%
Less than 20%

SOURCE: United Way Blackhawk Region
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OBITUARIES AND DEATH NOTICES, 6A

- Duane L. Ballmer
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TODAY'S WEATHER

High 80 | Low 58
Pleasant with some sun
More on 7A

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