

A photograph of three children sitting on a muddy bank next to a body of water. They are all covered in mud, including their faces and clothes. They are smiling and looking towards the camera. In the background, a grassy field and a group of people can be seen.

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Mud Run brings community together

Event raises funds for local financial assistance programs

By Bradford Paulson • CORRESPONDENT

The annual Mud Run at Mukwonago High School, held in June, was a huge success. Participants of all ages enjoyed the 2-mile course filled with family-friendly obstacles, inflatables and photo stations.

The sun was shining and it was nice and warm outside, making it the perfect day for a muddy adventure for participants.

But the Mud Run isn't just messy fun – it's also a fundraiser for the community. All proceeds are given back through financial assistance, which helps ensure everyone can have access to YMCA memberships and programs.

The Mud Run is open to participants age 4 and older, making it a family friendly event.

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If you're looking for the quiet county life but want to be within driving distance of the big city, Mukwonago is the place to be.

Nestled off of a major interstate in southwestern Waukesha County, Mukwonago offers visitors and its 20,000 residents a small-town feel with big-city amenities a short drive away.

Large commercial developments such as Metro Market, Home Depot and Walmart anchor the north and south ends of the village, offering easy shopping and multiple employment opportunities as the village and township grows.

Mukwonago is also home to a YMCA, which provides activities for kids, youth and adults all year long.

With the abundance of community festivals and events, there's always something to do.

The Mukwonago Area Chamber of Commerce and local non-profit organizations like the Lions and Rotary clubs and American Legion Post sponsor events throughout the year, including an annual ice-fishing jamboree, Easter egg hunt, Father's Day and Memorial Day parades, Summerfeste, Balloons Over Mukwonago, Fall Fest, Jack-'O-Lantern Jaunt and Haunt, and Midnight Magic – a

winter festival.

Mukwonago is also home to The Elegant Farmer, which has garnered national attention and even prompted world-renowned Chef Bobby Flay to take on its "Brown Bag Apple Pie" in an episode of his television show *Throwdown*. The pie has been named "best pie in America" by the *Wall Street Journal*, *Gourmet* and *Food Network*. Dan Scheel and John Bauer, of *The Elegant Farmer*, won the showdown with Flay.

A bit of history

The Village of Mukwonago was first settled by the Potawatomi Indians in the 1700s. The term "Mukwonago" translates to "Place of the Bear," according to the village's website.

In the spring of 1836, Sewall Andrews and Henry H. Camp built their homes just northwest of the Indian Village and Mukwonago's first plat was made. Soon after, more residents would begin developing homesteads and businesses in the area. The Andrew's house still stands today and is now home to the Mukwonago Red Brick Museum.

Welcome to Mukwonago! It's a great place to call home, run a business, stop by for a visit or attend a special event.

Mukwonago,
Wisconsin 2023-24

OUR TOWN

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above: Participants of all ages made their way through the mud pit at the Mukwonago YMCA Mud Run held in June at Mukwonago High School. The event raises funds for a good cause – to make sure everyone can have access to memberships and programs at the YMCA. **on the cover:** Maggie Devlin (from left), Mariah Stamphel and Margaret Plochky, all from Mukwonago, scramble through the muddy course during the Mukwonago YMCA Mud Run in June at Mukwonago High School.

BRADFORD PAULSON *Our Town*

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VILLAGE OF
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Elegant Farmer under new leadership

Fourth-generation takes over operations

The Elegant Farmer, 1545 Main St., Mukwonago, announced early in 2023 the continuation of its 76-year-old traditions as the fourth generation of ownership took over running the day-to-day operations of the Farm Kitchen Bakery, Deli and Market.

Keith and Tina Schmidt and their daughter, Katie, assumed the helm in January 2023. Former co-partners, Mike and John Bauer, retired as owners leaving their former co-partner and 25-year Elegant Farmer veteran Keith to guide the beloved institution to its next stage.

"It is a pleasure to bring in my family to help me continue the Elegant Farmer's long-standing traditions, family-friendly events and production of our simply the best specialty foods," Keith Schmidt said in a press release.

"Staying as a local, family-owned and operated business for four generations is one of the reasons The Elegant Farmer is so beloved. Tina and I are especially delighted to have our talented daughter bring in the next generation's fresh eyes and



From the left: Tina, Keith and Katie Schmidt celebrate becoming fourth generation of owners of the Elegant Farmer early in 2023, keeping it locally family owned and operated since 1946.

SUBMITTED PHOTO Our Town

forward-thinking approach to help maintain and expand The Elegant Farmer for generations to come," he added.

The Elegant Farmer offers award-winning specialties, including its famed Apple Pie Baked in a Paper Bag and Cider Baked Ham, homemade applesauce, jumbo muffins and cookies, Blue Ribbon cheeses and seasonal fruits and vegetables.

Other offerings include meats

and Wisconsin cheeses in its deli along with barbecue pulled pork, sandwiches and more.

Home of the Smilin' Barn, The Elegant Farmer features several seasonal special events including its Autumn Harvest Festival, Easter Celebration, Blue Ribbon Cheese Fest and more.

The Elegant Farmer is open daily from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information call 262-363-6770 or visit www.elegantfarmer.com.

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Make a Wish Wisconsin celebrated in early February after Mukwonago students and members of the community exceeded their \$150,000 fundraising goal and presented a check for \$175,000. Brandon Sexton, a Mukwonago High School senior at the time, sang the National Anthem to kick-off the basketball game that night. Sexton, who was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins Lymphoma when he was 7 years old, was granted his wish in 2013 of going to Hawaii and riding a dolphin.

LISA SMITH *Our Town*

A slam dunk for Make a wish

Milwaukee Bucks star helps kick off fundraising campaign

By Lisa Smith • CORRESPONDENT

At 6'5" Pat Connaughton has a commanding presence both on and off the court. He is a leader and one to emulate for more than his hard work and dedication to being a better athlete.

The Milwaukee Bucks guard helped Mukwonago tip off its annual Make a Wish fundraiser in January at Mukwonago High School. He spoke to the crowd about the value of sports in teaching life lessons. Connaughton inspires young athletes

to put their dreams into action and to make a difference. The Pat Connaughton Foundation was created for this purpose.

The foundation runs by three core values. The first, "24 hours-unlimited potential," states everyone has 24 hours in a day. How they use that time will dictate the success they can achieve. The second value, "give back," was a linking theme with all the speakers throughout the evening. It is a goal of the foundation to encourage student-athletes to inspire and impact by paying it forward through good

deeds and selfless acts. The third and final value is "work hard, stay humble".

Inspiring the crowd of about 60 gathered at the high school, was not only the NBA champion, but also Mukwonago High School math teacher and head girls basketball coach Rick Witte.

Witte captivated the audience when he spoke of his experience as a Make a Wish dad as his son, Ricky, had been born with severe low muscle tone.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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- 9:45 a.m. -- Children's Education Hour
- 10 a.m. – Worship w/Holy Communion

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444623

Ricky is completely dependent on his family (parents and four siblings). In 2010, he was granted a special Make a Wish trip to Disney World Resort.

“We’re a ‘Wish’ family. What this foundation does is beyond words. It’s outstanding,” Witte said.

Entrepreneur Jerry Jendusa – the driving force behind the fundraiser – spoke at the kickoff about Make a Wish Wisconsin and how the community can help.

“Strength, Hope, Commitment” was the theme of this year’s Mukwonago Community Kids Wish for Kids event. The local program was started in honor of the late Kaden Stark.

Stark lived with a mitochondrial disorder and was a wish recipient in 2011. Stark and his family made magical memories through a life changing adventure at Disney World Resort. Following that experience, the Stark family was inspired to give back and

help make wishes come true for other children and their families.

Stark passed away at the age of 14 when he was a freshman at Mukwonago High School. His family remains active on his behalf and Kaden will continue to be a legacy to the local cause.

Mukwonago athletic groups, clubs and students set a fundraising goal of \$150,000. The fundraiser wrapped up two weeks later during an Indians basketball game – a program that played a key role in the money raised – with the presentation of a check for \$175,000.

Making the evening more special, Brandon Sexton, who was a senior at the time, sang the National Anthem. Sexton was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins Lymphoma when he was 7 years old. His wish was to go to Hawaii so he could see a volcano and ride a dolphin. His wish was granted by the Make a Wish Foundation in 2013.



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444624

A place to learn, relax and connect

New student center offered at Brooklife Church

By Bradford Paulson • CORRESPONDENT

Brooklife Church in Mukwonago expanded its offerings with Brooklife Student Center, in the spring.

The center is a place students can call their own. The student center is part of the church's broader effort to enhance the student experience, promote academic and career success and bringing the students together in the community.

It offers a range of resources and services to help students succeed both inside and outside the classroom. From comfortable study spaces to fun social events, the student center is the perfect place to relax, learn, and connect with fellow students. The center has been designed to provide students with a modern and comfortable space to learn, study, and socialize.

Brooklife Student Center was made possible by the hard work and dedication of volunteers from Brooklife Church and other community volunteers, who spent countless hours over the past few months working to transform the space into a modern and comfortable facility for students.

Many students also volunteered their time and creativity to help it come together. Girls Scout Troop 10422 from Rolling Hills Elementary in Mukwonago is one group that showed up to help get things ready for the big opening.

One student who regularly attends the center has taken initiative to make sure that each time he does, he helps keep everything in place and clean. He said the center "is my place" and has taken so much pride and ownership of the space he enjoys to be at so much.

Volunteers from Brooklife Church played a key role in making the new student center a reality. They spent countless hours painting, cleaning and organizing the space, as well as helping to install new furnishings. Their hard work and dedication helped to transform the space into a welcoming and functional facility for students.

"We are so grateful to the volunteers from Brooklife Church and the community for their incredible work in helping to open the new student center," said Lindsey Kempinski, director of the student center. "Their generosity and commitment to our students is truly inspiring."

The center features a range of amenities, including a cafe, study areas, themed rooms, and a game room. Students will also be able to take advantage of career services, leadership programs, and other resources to help them succeed academically and professionally.

According to school officials, the student



above: Mukwonago High School students Eloise Peot (from left), Zoe Pilant, Faith Kempinski and Cole Peterson get in some study time in one of the Focus rooms at the Brooklife Student Center. **below, left:** A few students are captured playing basketball at the student center in Mukwonago. **below, right:** Gaming is one of the offerings at the center, where students can bring up video games on the big screen and challenge fellow students.

BRADFORD PAULSON PHOTOS *Our Town*



center is a great reflection of the community's commitment to providing students with the resources and support they need to thrive.

"We want these students to know that every student matters to the community and to each other," said Julie Scheibe, executive pastor at Brooklife Church. "Each of these students has the potential to grow into awesome human beings that can change the world."

The center is open to all Park View Middle School and Mukwonago High School students in seventh through 12th grade. It's open to surrounding community middle

school and high school students as well.

Students can access the center during after-school hours. It's open Mondays and Tuesdays from 2:30 to 6 p.m.

Many resources are being vetted into the center and as the program continues to develop, students will be able to sign up for a variety of interest classes, assistance with resumes and job applications, tutoring and life skills training.

The center is looking for professionals from around the community to volunteer their

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

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OUR PARKS

VILLAGE OF MUKWONAGO

The Village of Mukwonago parks and open space system consists of just over 380 total acres of public park land and special use areas under the care of the Department of Public Works.

The system includes a full range of developed facilities including neighborhood parks, community parks and special use areas located throughout the Village of Mukwonago, as well as a wealth of preserved environmental corridor and natural area sites.

Field Park

Field Park is on the southwest corner of the intersection of highways 83 and NN and is the most widely used park in the Village of Mukwonago.

The park has a 3,000-square-foot pavilion, which includes a full kitchen, a baseball diamond and an encompassing walking path surrounded by many large oak trees. It is home to several events including Maxwell Street Days, Mukwonago Summerfeste and Croatian Day Picnic.

An 800-square-foot open pavilion located near the children's play area provides shelter from the sun and rain as well as provides relaxation for those enjoying the park. The pavilion is host to many family, friends and business picnics throughout the summer.

The park and pavilion may be rented out on a first-come-first-serve basis starting Jan. 1 of each year. For the latest rates and application for renting Field Park, visit villageofmukwonago.gov.

Miniwaukan Park

Miniwaukan Park is at the end of McKenzie Road, behind the Mukwonago Industrial Park and Meadow Park Estates Subdivision, is mainly used by youth sports organizations such as Mukwonago Area Soccer Club and Mukwonago Tribe and Bears Baseball organizations.

Miniwaukan Park features one football field, six soccer fields, six baseball fields, a Frisbee-golf course, and a newly launched Born Learning Trail.

The Frisbee-golf course features 40 acres with more than 100 oak trees, 18 holes (two nine-hole loops starting/ending at the parking lot), dual tees and pin placements and signs marking tee pads and baskets.

Minors Park

Minors Park can be found on Highway LO just east of Highway I. Two softball diamonds and a wooded picnic

area with a small open shelter make up Minor Park.

Beautiful oak trees and landscape draw many photographers to the park for wedding and class photos.

Indianhead Park

Indianhead Park is on Main Street (Highway ES), adjacent to Phantom Lake and to the north of the Village Hall.

The park lies along the Mukwonago River, and it features a small, open pavilion, a beach and plenty of open space for frisbee and other sports.

A walking path cuts across the park for easy access to the Village Hall from Front Street. Large oak trees provide shade for those who just want to sit and relax and fish the river.

Phantom Glen Park

Phantom Glen Park sits at the end of Andrews Street, along Phantom Lake.

The small, quaint park consists of a fishing pier, municipal boat launch, and an open shelter with electricity – ideal for a small, intimate gathering of friends and family.

Washington Avenue Park

Washington Avenue Park is in the block bordered by Park Avenue on the north, Washington Avenue on the south, Franklin Street on the west and Division Street on the east – directly next to the Mukwonago Community Library.

The park consists of a children's activity structure, offers a basketball court and a baseball diamond, and has plenty of open space for other recreational activities.

All village parks are rented on a first-come-first-serve basis and can only be rented during the current year.

For availability of a specific park and/or to place a reservation, call the village clerk's office at (262) 363-6420.

For more information, visit villageofmukwonago.gov and under the menu scroll down the page and select "Parks and Recreation."

TOWN OF MUKWONAGO

Town Park

Town Park is at W320 S8357 Beulah Rd.

The park has electricity, picnic tables, soccer and baseball fields, playground, pavilions (one with an indoor kitchenette) and horseshoe pits.

Lauren Park

Lauren Park is at W315 S8555

Highway EE.

The park has electricity, picnic tables, sand volleyball courts, baseball fields, a playground and a pavilion.

Oak Ridge Park

Oak Ridge Park is at W304 S8000 Oakridge Dr.

The park has soccer and baseball fields, picnic tables and a pavilion.

For more information on the township's parks visit www.townofmukwonago.us.

WAUKESHA COUNTY

Mukwonago County Park (and Dog Exercise Area)

Mukwonago Park, S100W31900 County Highway LO, Mukwonago, is part of the Waukesha County Park system.

The 355-acre park site includes a high ridge formed during the last glacial period, which stretches nearly the length of the park. The oak opening ridge is covered with pre-settlement vegetation including burr oak, shagbark hickory, and ground cover of prairie plants.

Mukwonago Park Dog Exercise Area, W325 S9925 Beulah Rd., is open daily. It features 34 acres, dog watering stations and three areas – large breed, small breed and 'Lazy Bones.'

Dog park rules include the following: no more than three dogs per handler in the park; dogs must be leashed (6 ft. maximum length when not in designated off-leash exercise areas); electronic leashes or collars are not considered a leash; handlers shall have control of their dog(s) at all times; dogs are not permitted on groomed cross country ski trails but are permitted on winter hiking and snowshoeing trails.

Park fees apply with annual park stickers available at a cost of \$35 for one vehicle; \$17 for senior or disabled veteran vehicle. Daily parks permits are \$6 per vehicle.

Waukesha County Parks are open sunrise to 10 p.m., daily. During the summer, the beach is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

For more information, call (262) 548-7801 or visit waukeshacounty.gov.





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Fun in the sun!

Clockwise from top: Young football enthusiasts walk with the Mukwonago Braves Youth Football float in the Father's Day parade during Summerfeste in Mukwonago, held in June; car show enthusiasts fill Field Park after the parade; the midway at the Mukwonago Lions Club event attracts hundreds to have fun on Father's Day weekend playing games, listening to music, enjoying food and drinks and going on rides.

BRADFORD PAULSON *Our Town*

BROOKLIFE CHURCH • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

time at the center. Anyone with a talent, job or passion they would like to share with students are encouraged to reach out about becoming a volunteer.

"It's all very new and we want the students to make this facility theirs. So we are waiting to see what they want, so that we can build the opportunities around their needs" Scheibe said.

The BSC staff is working on getting the SAVE Committee (Students Against Violence Everywhere) an organization from the Mukwonago High School to partner up and hold some of their meetings at the student center. The organization would like to come to the center to do some anti-bullying projects

"We are so appreciative of our school district and it looks to be a great outlet for the school district, but more importantly, the students," Kempinski said.

The safety of the students is the upmost highest for making sure that the new facility is perfect for all the students in the community. Each volunteer will go through an interview process after they fill out an online application and go through a background check before being a part of the staff at the BSC.

Students can come by after school to hang out with friends, relax, grab some food (for a nominal charge), and even study in a fun, safe and supervised environment. There are gaming systems, art supplies, sports equipment, games, puzzles and more.

There are a variety of activities offered and occasional outings in the area.

The opening of the new student center has been met with excitement and enthusiasm from students and staff alike.

"I love the new student center," Zoe Pilant, a student at Mukwonago High School, said

shortly after the opening. "It's a great place to hang out with friends and get some work done."

With its many amenities and future look ahead, the BSC is sure to be a popular destination for students for years to come.

"With anxiety levels up in the school's students we are so happy to have a place where they can call their own," Scheibe said. "We want to follow the students lead and see where they take this place into the future."

The goal for BSC is to support itself through grants and donations. Those interested in becoming a regular supporter or offer a one-time donation is asked to visit brooklife.churchcenter.com.

Brooklife Student Center is at 857 S. Rochester St., Mukwonago. For more information, call (262) 378-4470 or send an email to studentcenter@brooklife.org.

Making magic

LISA SMITH PHOTOS *Our Town*



above: Santa and Mrs. Claus bring smiles and excitement to kids of all ages as they waved to the crowd during the Midnight Magic holiday parade last winter. **below:** The Gscheidemeier kids watch in wonder and wave at participants during the parade. **at left:** Zahra Soni, 3, and Elena Corbian, 6, paint holiday suncatchers at Thomas' Greenhouse and Gardens during the Midnight Magic celebration.



SCHOOLS

• CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Dustin Lehman

Coordinator of College and Career Readiness
Ext. 25525

Michelle Ziegler

Coordinator of Elementary Education
Ext. 24405

Student Services

Christine Bowden

Director of Student Services
Ext. 24200

Jaime Dobner

Secondary Program Support Coordinator
Ext. 27404

Jennifer Theisen

Elementary Program Support Coordinator
Ext. 24209

Human Resources & Employee Services

Rachel Hermann

Director of Human Resources
Ext. 24500

Katie Nevoraski

Benefits Coordinator
Ext. 24501

Business Services

Tom Karthausser

Director of Business Services
Ext. 24102

Cori Marszek

Administrative Assistant
Ext. 24103

Lynda Scaffidi

District Accountant
Ext. 24107

Shevin Pawlak

Payroll Clerk
Ext. 24106

Sue Brezovar

Student Information System Supervisor
Ext. 24115

Michelle Ayers

Accounts Payable Clerk
Ext. 24104

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PARK VIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Summer fun



Eva Witt, 7, watches as her younger sister, Fiona, 5, tries to ring a soda bottle at the annual summer festival hosted by St. James in Mukwonago. The event, held in August, features food, music, games, a car show, a lawn tractor pull, raffles, a book booth, fireworks and a cash raffle.

LISA SMITH
Our Town

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Big Bend, WI 53103
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Mukwonago, WI 53149
(262) 363-6286

EAGLEVILLE CHARTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

S101 W34511 Highway LO
Eagle, WI 53119
(262) 363-6258

PRAIRIE VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

W330 S6473 Highway E
North Prairie, WI 53153
(262) 363-6310

ROLLING HILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

W322 S9230 Beulah Rd.
Mukwonago, WI 53149
(262) 363-6318

SECTION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

W318 S8430 Highway EE
Mukwonago, WI 53149
(262) 363-6260

OTHER AREA SCHOOLS

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