

## Youths nurture creativity, connections

Students create sculptures for Eau Claire charity

By Alex Zank

Leader-Telegram staff

Sixteen students from Chippewa Valley elementary schools sat around a table inside a brightly colored room at Banbury Place, ready to talk art.

■ **Art created by 16 Eau Claire-area students ages 9 to 11 being donated to The Community Table will be on display from 3 to 5 p.m. Friday at Banbury Place, Building 13, in Suite 125.**

After discussing their next project — constructing large sculptures of fruits and vegetables — Jo Burke, coordinator of the Eau Claire school district gifted and talented program who is an artist and rents a studio at

Banbury, split the students into small groups.

This particular project, fruits and vegetables made of various materials, was the group's final one and was to be donated to The Community Table of Eau Claire.

"And why talk about fruits and vegetables with The Community Table?" Burke asked the children.

The students were quick to answer that it sends the message to people that eating healthy foods is important to living well.

Connecting with the surrounding community is

one of the objectives of the Banbury Project program Burke oversees. Another is making art.

The program consists of 10 days of classes in which students ages 9 to 11 from the Eau Claire area experience art in depth. Among the program's goals are learning to use art as a

form of expression and teaching students they can positively affect the community where they live.

The class ends Friday. "(The program) combines arts, kids and the community," Burke said.

Around Town

Eau Claire

See ART, Page 2B



Staff photo by Dan Reiland

Kayla Sorensen, 10, of Eau Claire and Sarah Kuenkel, 10, of Altoona paint masks Tuesday representing themselves as part of the Banbury Project art program. Sixteen students from Eau Claire-area schools are participating in the project, which ends Friday.

## Record washed away



Staff photo by Shane Opatz

A motorcyclist made his way through standing water on Galloway Street near the intersection with Moore Street on Wednesday afternoon after a thunderstorm dumped 1.64 inches of rain on Eau Claire in a brief period. Police reported temporary flooding on several roads in Eau Claire County after the late afternoon storm.

By Eric Lindquist

Leader-Telegram staff

The torrential downpour late Wednesday afternoon that caused a mudslide on U.S. 53 at the Eau Claire-Chippewa county line added nearly 2 inches of rain to what is officially the wettest year on record in Eau Claire.

The National Weather Service confirmed that Eau Claire had received 25.65 inches of precipitation this year as of 7 p.m. Wednesday, eclipsing the previous year-to-date record of 22.08 inches in 1973. The agency's records date back to 1950.

After an exceptionally snowy winter, the precipitation has continued this spring and summer, with a string of recent thunderstorms swelling creeks and rivers.

## Snow, spate of T-storms put year in the history books as wettest yet

The 2013 precipitation total is 12.42 inches above normal for this point in the year, said meteorologist Tony Zaleski of the Weather Service office in Chanhassen, Minn. Last year at this time the city had received 15.5 inches of precipitation.

The 1.64 inches of rain recorded Wednesday in Eau Claire caused a mudslide on U.S. 53 between Melby Street and the North Crossing that closed both southbound lanes of the bypass for about 20 minutes, with traffic rerouted to Melby and Business U.S. 53. The passing lane was opened shortly before 6 p.m. after Eau

Claire County crews accessed the area and began removing mud from the right lane with end loaders.

The mudslide, which involved two patches of grassy hillside that gave way and oozed over the shoulder and right lane of the highway, was cleaned up and all lanes were opened at about 9 p.m., said Sgt. Mark Provost of the Eau Claire County sheriff's office. The largest patch of land contributing to the mudslide appeared to be about 40-by-80 feet.

The storms that struck the Chippewa Valley late Wednesday afternoon also

caused temporary flooding but no known accidents or injuries on many streets in Eau Claire, Altoona and rural parts of Eau Claire County, officials reported. Many low-lying areas of Riverview Park were still underwater at 7 p.m., with one park visitor even spotted taking a dip next to a picnic pavilion.

Eau Claire and Altoona police reported a few manhole covers popped off because of the large amount of water flowing through storm water systems.

Officers temporarily closed a few flooded streets — all for less than half an hour — because storm sewers were unable to keep up with the volume of water, said

See RAIN, Page 3B

## Workforce patterns point to growth

By Liam Marlaire

Leader-Telegram staff

The Eau Claire metro workforce grew by 1,800 employees in May compared with the previous month, according to preliminary, seasonally unadjusted data from the state Department of Workforce Development.

Employment in the area, which includes Eau Claire and Chippewa counties, was 300 higher than in May of last year. The jobless rate last month was 5.9 percent, compared with 6.6 percent in April and 5.8 percent in the year-ago period.

"Though the unemployment rate itself was relatively unchanged, the labor force data it's produced from moved in mainly a positive direction," said Scott Hodek, regional DWD economist. "Most of those joining the labor force in May 2013 ended up employed (plus 633), with the number of unemployed only rising by 135."

"Of course it'd be ideal if everyone who wanted a job could find one instantly, (but) the fact that people are re-engaging in the search for jobs probably points to a gain in perceived opportunities, when taken with the other available indicators."

Jobs were up from April in warm weather seasonal industry sectors such as construction, Hodek said, but were also up significantly from May 2012 despite a colder and rainier than average spring. Construction added 900 jobs over the year, and leisure and hospitality added 600.

The city of Eau Claire's jobless rate was flat compared with May 2012 at 6.1 percent. It was 6.3 percent in April.

Other developments highlighted in DWD's jobs release included:

■ Unemployment rates decreased in all 12 metro areas in the state compared with April and either improved

See JOBS, Page 3B

## Employers examine impact of health care reform

Affordable Care Act requires some businesses to provide health coverage

By Liam Marlaire

Leader-Telegram staff

There is no shortage of acronyms involved in the implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act. The IRS (Internal Revenue Service), DOL (Department of Labor), HHS (Department of Health and Human Services) and a host of other agencies are scrambling to issue rules regarding health care reform, according to a presentation Tuesday by Stephen Weld,



Weld

"Whatever your political perspective is," Weld said during the Eau Claire Area Chamber of Commerce program on ACA, "we are in changing times."

Among the act's provisions is a requirement

that employers with 50 or more full-time-equivalent employees provide health coverage beginning next year. Noncompliance penalties vary slightly, but the basic fine is \$2,000 for each full-time worker beyond the first 30 employees. Thus, if a business has 65 employees and does not provide coverage, the penalty would be \$70,000. An employee's premium contribution also cannot exceed 9.5 percent of his or her household income.

There are exceptions for seasonal employees in sectors such as agriculture, retail and tourism, Weld said, but companies trying to keep their staffs below the "50" threshold through independent contractors, subcontracting or staffing agencies may not escape the requirement.

"In my analysis at this point in time, I don't think that is going to work," he said.

Small businesses and individuals will be able

to purchase coverage through an exchange called the Marketplace. The Small Business Health Options Program, or SHOP, will provide employers with resources to contain their costs and simplify the process.

Employers will provide information that includes how much they are willing to pay for coverage, and the Marketplace will determine whether

See ACA, Page 3B



**Death Notices**

**DITTNER**, Grace F., 80, of Eau Claire died Wednesday at home.  
Visitation will be from 4 to 7 p.m. Saturday at Lenmark-Gomsrud-Linn Funeral Home and at 1 p.m. Sunday at Bethesda Lutheran Church, both in Eau Claire.  
Services will be at 2 p.m. Sunday at the church.  
Burial will be at Lutheran Cemetery, Eau Claire.

**GILLESPIE**, Delmar L., 90, of Marshfield died Monday at House of the Dove in Marshfield.  
Arrangements are pending at Cremation Society of Wisconsin, Altoona.

**GULICKSRUD**, Vernie R., 99, of Strum died Tuesday at Crystal Lake Terrace Assisted Living in Strum.  
Visitation will be at 9 a.m. Monday at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Strum.  
Services will be at 10 a.m. Monday at the church.  
Burial will be at West Beef River Lutheran Cemetery, Strum.  
Schiefelbein Funeral Home, Osseo, is handling arrangements.

**LINDBERG**, Linnea M., 54, of Chippewa Falls died Tuesday at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire.  
Visitation will be at 1 p.m. Sunday at Stokes, Prock & Mundt Funeral Chapel, Altoona.  
Services will be at 3 p.m. Sunday at the chapel.  
Stokes, Prock & Mundt Funeral Chapel, Altoona, is handling arrangements.

**PLANTE**, Beverly J., 83, of Eau Claire died Tuesday at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire.  
Arrangements are pending at Cremation Society of Wisconsin, Altoona.

**POESCHEL**, Michael J., 44, died Tuesday in Madison.  
Visitation will be at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at Central Lutheran Church, Mondovi.  
Services will be at 10:30 a.m. Saturday at the church.  
Burial will be at Riverside Lutheran Cemetery, Mondovi.  
Talbot Family Funeral Home, Mondovi, is handling arrangements.

**SONSALLA**, Conrad L., 90, of Arcadia died Tuesday at Gundersen Tri-County Hospital and Clinics in Whitehall.  
Visitation will be at 10 a.m. today at Wozney-Killian Funeral Home, Arcadia.  
Services will be at 11 a.m. today at the funeral home.  
Burial will be at Arcadia Public Cemetery.

**UMBAUGH**, Brock, 65, of Eau Claire died June 18 in Eau Claire.  
No services will be held.  
Chippewa Valley Cremation Services, Altoona, is handling arrangements.

**WALTERS**, Rita A., 73, of Arcadia died Wednesday at Avera Gettysburg Hospital in Gettysburg, S.D.  
Arrangements are pending at Wozney-Killian Funeral Home, Arcadia.

**WELTER**, Lucille L. (Schultz) "Lou," 86, of Eau Claire died Sunday at Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire.  
Visitation will be from 4 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at Lenmark-Gomsrud-Linn Funeral Home, where there will be a 7:30 p.m. prayer vigil, and at 11 a.m. Wednesday at St. James the Greater Catholic Church, both in Eau Claire.  
Services will be at noon Wednesday at the church.  
Burial will be at Forest Hill Cemetery, Eau Claire, at a later date.  
Lenmark-Gomsrud-Linn Funeral Home, Eau Claire, is handling arrangements.

**WOOD**, Kurt A., 48, of Amery died Tuesday at home.  
**YOHNK**, Michael R. "Mike," 63, of Cornell died Wednesday at home.  
Visitation will be at 9 a.m. Saturday at Holy Cross Catholic Church, Cornell.  
Services will be at 11 a.m. Saturday at the church.  
Burial will be at Cornell Cemetery at a later date.  
Borton-Leiser Funeral Home, Cornell, is handling arrangements.

**Jobs/Local employment expands over year**

from Page 1B

or were flat in nine metro areas compared with a year ago.  
■ Municipality rates ranged from 4 percent in Caledonia to 11.7 percent in Beloit. County rates ranged from 4.4 percent in St. Croix to 13.8 percent in Menominee. Eau Claire County's rate for May was 5.7 percent, which tied for the 10th lowest in the state.  
■ Initial unemployment claims are at pre-recession levels.  
■ State revenue collec-

tions are up 4.4 percent through May.

■ New business formations are up 3.6 percent compared with the first five months of last year.

The national unemployment rate moved to 7.3 percent in May compared with 7.1 percent the previous month and 7.9 percent a year ago. Wisconsin's rate was 6.7 percent last month. It was 7.2 percent in April and 6.7 percent in May of last year.

**Seasonally adjusted rates**

In adjusted results, Wisconsin's rate was 7 percent last month, which was equal to the result from a year ago and slightly lower than April's reading of 7.1 percent. The national rate moved to 7.6 percent from 7.5 percent in April and 8.2 percent in May 2012.

The adjusted workforce in the Eau Claire metro area was 700 higher than in April and 500 higher than in the year-ago period.

Marlaire can be reached at 715-833-9215 or liam.marlaire@ecpc.com.

**Western Wisconsin unemployment**

Counties	May '13	Apr. '13	May '12
Eau Claire-Chippewa	5.9%	6.6%	5.8%
Barron	6.9%	8.4%	7.1%
Buffalo	5.8%	6.5%	5.3%
Chippewa	6.4%	7.8%	6.1%
Clark	6.6%	8.0%	6.6%
Dunn	5.9%	6.3%	5.7%
Eau Claire	5.7%	5.9%	5.7%
Jackson	7.0%	8.4%	7.0%
Pepin	5.1%	6.4%	5.0%
Pierce	4.5%	5.1%	4.8%
Rusk	8.6%	9.7%	9.0%
St. Croix	4.4%	5.2%	4.9%
Trempealeau	5.3%	6.1%	5.3%

Source: State Department of Workforce Development

**ACA/ Enrollment to begin**

from Page 1B



individual consumers need to be subsidized. The new law likely will seek more from the uninsured, such as those who are young and are not currently carrying ample insurance.  
Initially the open enrollment program will begin Oct. 1 and end March 31. In future years, it will begin on the same start date and end Dec. 7.

Decisions by Gov. Scott Walker's administration to not have Wisconsin set up the exchanges and to deny increased Medicaid coverage will increase costs in the state, said Mary Ellen Schill, a Ruder Ware attorney who also presented at the program.

"You will have a subset of people who will not be eligible for Medicaid," said Schill, who added that the Marketplace also may not be as robust as in other regions. The state, however, will continue to have a role in setting rates.

Schill acknowledged there remains work to be done, such as formalizing a "navigator" program to help assist consumers, but she appeared cautiously optimistic the minutia of the legislation could be worked out.

"If we get there, I think it will work," Schill said.

**Festival Roundup**

Following is a list of community festivals scheduled within the next week in west-central Wisconsin.

To submit information for the weekly list, write to Festival Roundup, P.O. Box 570, Eau Claire, WI 54702; fax information to 715-858-7308; or e-mail julian.emerson@ecpc.com. Please include a contact phone number.

Today-Sunday

**Cadott:**

**Country Fest**

Highway S at Highway 27, north of Cadott, east of Jim Falls. Ticket, camping information at [countryfest.com](http://countryfest.com); 800-326-3378.

Headliner acts:  
— Brantley Gilbert, 9 p.m. today.  
— Miranda Lambert, 11 p.m. today.

— Hunter Hayes, 9 p.m. Friday.

— Montgomery Gentry, 11 p.m. Friday.

— Little Big Town, 9 p.m. Saturday.

— Toby Keith, 11 p.m. Saturday.

— Jake Owen, 8:30 p.m. Sunday.

— Jason Aldean, 10:30 p.m. Saturday.

Friday-Sunday

**Ellsworth Cheese Curd Festival**

Most events at East End Park, north of East Main Street (U.S. 10/U.S. 63) on east side of village; [ellsworthchamber.com/cheese-curd-festival.html](http://ellsworthchamber.com/cheese-curd-festival.html), 715-273-6442.  
— Live music, 8 p.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday, 4 to 8 p.m. Saturday.

— Chain saw art carvings, Saturday and Sunday.

— Pancake breakfast, 8 to 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.

— Cheese Curd Fun Run, 8:30 a.m. Saturday.

— Kiddie parade, 12:30 p.m. Saturday.

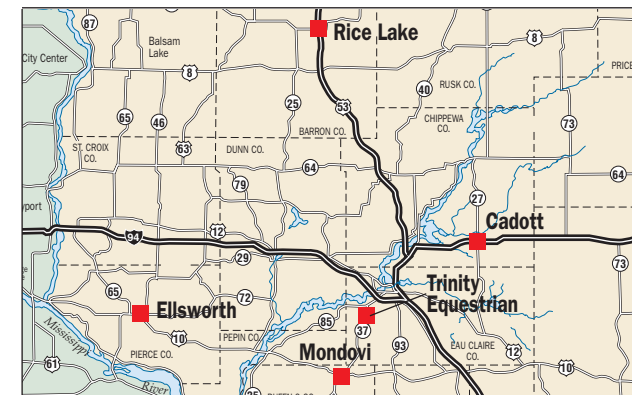
— Pedal tractor pull, 2 p.m. Saturday.

— Bingo, 3 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

— Parade, 1 p.m. Sunday.

— Curd eating contests, 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

— Bean bag tournament, 3 p.m. Sunday.



Staff graphic

Saturday

**Mondovi Friendship Days**

Most events at Buffalo County Fairgrounds, take Harrison Street north off West Main Street (U.S. 10); 705-926-6003.  
— Charcoal chicken, hot dogs and brats, starts at 11 a.m.

— Parade, 1 p.m.

— Kids' games, inflatable indoor shooting range and crafts/vendor fair, after parade.

— Tractor pull, 4 p.m.

Saturday

**Eau Claire: Trinity Equestrian Center's Horsepower for Veterans Motorcycle Run**

All proceeds help fund free equine therapy program for veterans. Motorcycle not needed to participate. Four miles south of Eau Claire on Highway 37, just past intersection with Highway 85; [trinity-ec.com](http://trinity-ec.com), 715-835-4530.  
— Pancake breakfast before ride, 8 to 11:30 a.m. (\$5).  
— Ride registration (\$15) and bike blessing, 8 to 11:30 a.m.

— Ride with military escort to Memorial Park in Arcadia, leaves at 11:30 a.m.

— Barbecue chicken meal at Arcadia park, after ride (\$7).

Saturday-Sunday

**Rice Lake: Hungry Hollow Steam & Gas Engine Club Show**

Hungry Hollow grounds, Highway 25 at 19th Avenue, west of Rice Lake; [hungryhollowclub.com](http://hungryhollowclub.com), 715-234-8423. \$7 donation at gate, children 12 and younger free.  
— John Deere vintage and antique tractors, gas engines and other machinery on display and in action, gates open 7 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.

— Model airplane club demonstration, vintage and antique fire engines, model trains, flea market and arts/crafts fair, Saturday and Sunday.

— Pancake breakfast, 7 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.

— Parade of machinery, noon Saturday and Sunday.

— Tractor pull, 4 p.m. Saturday.

— Garden tractor pull, noon Sunday.

**In Brief**

**Rollover accident victim identified**

ELK MOUND — A 67-year-old Hortonville man is dead after a one-vehicle rollover Wednesday morning in Dunn County.

According to the State Patrol: Troopers responded to the crash at about 6:57 a.m. on Highway 29 at Interstate 94 near Elk Mound.

A vehicle driven by Gary J. Fritz was traveling westbound on Highway 29 and exited onto the interchange that merges to I-94 west. Fritz failed to negotiate a curve and lost control of the vehicle. It rolled across the westbound offramp and came to rest.

Fritz was pronounced dead at the scene. Passenger Donna K. Fritz, 66, of Hortonville was transported to Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire with non-life-threatening injuries.

Poor visibility and driving too fast for conditions may have contributed to the crash.

The crash remains under investigation by the State Patrol.

**Police waiting for child's autopsy**

OSSEO — Police say they're still awaiting an autopsy for Alexis Behlke, a 22-month-old girl who died Saturday.

Osseo police said Wednesday they will release a statement after they receive Behlke's autopsy.

Officers responded at 1:44 a.m. Saturday to 14013 Eighth St. for an emergency medical call of an unresponsive child receiving CPR.

Behlke was transported to Mayo Clinic Health System-Oakridge, Osseo, where she was pronounced dead.

Police detectives, the Trempealeau County sheriff's office and the county coroner are investigating the cause of death.

From staff reports

**Rain/The Fourth looks drier**

from Page 1B

Sgt. Bill Slaggie of the Eau Claire Police Department.

The Weather Service indicated the highest rainfall total reported Wednesday in west-central Wisconsin was in River Falls, which received 3.7 inches.

The good news, for

those hoping to celebrate Fourth of July week without the need for umbrellas, is that the forecast calls for cooler, drier weather for the next week or so, Zaleski said.

Lindquist can be reached at 715-833-9209, 800-236-7077 or [eric.lindquist@ecpc.com](mailto:eric.lindquist@ecpc.com).

**FIREWORKS LIQUIDATORS**  
**LIQUIDATION CENTER**  
**EVERYTHING IS 70% OFF!!!!**

- MANUFACTURER OVERSTOCK
- LAST YEAR'S INVENTORY
- TORN PACKAGING

16947 S. 169th St., Chippewa (on X near Lake Wissota)  
Hwy 53 N to 29 E to X - 1st street on right next to Dollar General

**23rd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

- Receive \$25-\$200 gift certificate with the purchase of a new machine valued at \$200 or more
- Financing available
- Special discounts on selected items throughout the month of June
- Ask about our "Summer Sew" event June 11
- Go to our website often for details on classes, workshops and special events
- Register to win a Brother NS40 Sewing Machine

"Sew Complete has the pattern for quality and service"

**Sew Complete**  
PFAFF BERNINA  
Authorized Pfaff, Brother and Bernina Dealer • "Has the Pattern for Quality & Service"

1408 S. Hastings Way • Eau Claire  
[www.sewcompleteinc.com](http://www.sewcompleteinc.com) 715-832-3343  
1-800-924-4075

**FURNITURE DAMAGE?**  
WE MAKE HOUSE CALLS  
On-Site Repair For Furniture & Kitchen Cabinets  
Finally, an alternative to completely refinishing or replacing damaged furniture... On-Site! Home or Office!  
**FURNITURE MEDIC**  
Call Toll-Free (877) 736-5550  
Serving the Chippewa Valley for over 10 years!

**STARTING AT \$20,998\***

**NEW 2012 PRIUS C II**

53/46 EST. MPG [1]

STOCK# TY2237  
71000 6-13-13

Markquart Toyota reserves the right to correct printing and layout errors.

[www.markquarttoyota.com](http://www.markquarttoyota.com) 715.834.4440

Markquart | Toyota