

Donald Willems

July 20, 1938 — January 20, 2026



Donald J. Willems, 87 years old, lifelong resident of Kenosha, Wis., passed away Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at Brookside Care Center, Kenosha, Wis.

He was born July 20, 1938, in Kenosha, Wis., the son of the late Harold and Stella (Koblenski) Willems. Don proudly served in the U.S. Army; and on July 18, 1966, he married Rae Trecroci in Kenosha, Wis.



Don worked for Wisconsin Bell for 30 years, where he served in multiple capacities. After retirement from Wisconsin Bell, he went on to work in maintenance for Bear Property Management for another 20 years.

Don was a perfectionist and a handyman for the ages. He could fix nearly anything and always made sure it was done right. He loved making Italian sausage with his in-laws, gardening, eating popcorn, and drinking wine. Don was a talented woodworker and enjoyed working on cars. He was an avid Packer and Bucks fan and cherished spending time with his family.

Survivors include his wife of nearly 60 years, Rae; children, Barbara (Matthew) Howell, Lisa (Tony) DeBartolo, David (Michelle) Willems, and Debbie (Timothy) Labbe; grandchildren, David, Joseph, Gino, Tony Jr., Samantha, Tyler, Jacob, Hailey, Dr. Joshua, Jacqueline, and Jennifer; and great-grandchildren, Brody, Madison, Rocco, Isabella, Giovanni, and two on the way.

Don's family would like to give thanks to the staff at Brookside Care Center staff with special thanks and gratitude to Nurse — Rae Lynn, RN and caregivers Adelaida and Burnedette.

Visitation will be held from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., on Monday, January 26, 2026, at St. Mary Catholic Church, 7307 40th Avenue, Kenosha, Wis., with Mass of Christian Burial to commence at 11 a.m. Entombment with military honors will follow in All Saints Mausoleum, Pleasant Prairie, Wis.

Proko Funeral Home & Crematory
5111 60th Street
Kenosha, WI 53144
262-654-3533
www.prokofuneralhome.com



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Shoreland Lutheran High School President Paul Scriver and Kenosha County Executive Samantha Kerkman page through materials from a time capsule that was opened Wednesday at a groundbreaking ceremony for the school's latest expansion. The capsule was enclosed in the building's original cornerstone from 1979.

Shoreland

From A1

advancement, both contributed to the fundraising efforts for the expansion.

"They worked tirelessly around the clock, to provide lists of people, make phone calls and visit people (to fundraise)," Scriver said. "Without their efforts, there's no way that we'd be where we are right now."

The school in total has spent \$12.5 million on improvements, with the school also upgrading its stormwater management facilities.

The indoor renovation to the school will add 15,604 square feet to the school. It includes an additional music room, eight classrooms and a larger main entrance.

The new facilities will also ensure that every Shoreland teacher has their own classroom, and Scriver said they will even have extra classrooms at the school.

In the project's second phase, the school plans to add a new gymnasium and a workout room. The school currently has a weight-lifting room, but the new one would be larger. Those projects have yet to begin, with Scriver anticipating them in the near future.

The school's ongoing renovations were prompted by growing enrollment. The high school currently has 467 enrolled students. Scriver said he thinks the



Shoreland Lutheran High School President Paul Scriver gives remarks Wednesday during a groundbreaking ceremony for the school's latest expansion project.

school's programs have been a draw towards high school students.

Shoreland, in addition to college prep classes also has a trades program where students learn construction skills.

One of the improvements, a welding room planned for completion next year, was prompted by student feedback. Scriver said Shoreland students had expressed interest in learning how to weld.

"With our stem academy, the engineering and computer science programs, biomedical science and our trades program, we really have a lot of people interested in choosing Shoreland as their high school option," Scriver said.

Kenosha streetcar service suspended

KENOSHA NEWS STAFF

KENOSHA — Kenosha's Downtown streetcar service will be suspended on Saturday, Jan. 24, and Sunday, Jan. 25,

due to extreme weather conditions.

No alternate transportation will be provided.

City officials said the service suspension follows

a thorough operational and safety assessment of the weather's impact on the streetcar line.

Officials encouraged riders to plan accordingly.

For updates, visit City of Kenosha Transit online at www.kenosha.org/departments/transit/index.php, or follow the city on social media.



ANGELINA KATSANIS, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Federal agents stand guard Wednesday in Minneapolis.

Minnesota businesses close in protest

GIOVANNA DELL'ORTO

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — A vast network of labor unions, progressive organizations and clergy urged Minnesotans to stay away from work, school and stores Friday to protest against immigration enforcement in the state.

Minneapolis and St. Paul saw daily protests since an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer shot and killed mother of three Renee Good on Jan. 7. Federal law enforcement officers surged in the Twin Cities for weeks and repeatedly squared off with community members and activists who track their movements.

Organizers said Friday morning that more than 700 businesses across the state closed for the day in solidarity with the protest — from a bookstore in tiny Grand Marais near the Canadian border to the landmark Guthrie Theater in downtown Minneapolis.

"We're achieving something historic," said Kate Havelin of Indivisible Twin Cities, one of the more than 100 groups that is mobilizing.

On Thursday, a prominent civil rights attorney and at least two other people were arrested for their involvement in an anti-immigration enforcement protest that disrupted a Sunday service at a church in St. Paul. They remained in federal custody Friday morning.

Meanwhile, Vice President JD Vance visited Minneapolis to meet with ICE officials and address



ADAM GRAY, ASSOCIATED PRESS

An image depicting Renee Good, who was shot and killed by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer Jan. 7, adorns a makeshift memorial for her Jan. 14 in Minneapolis.

reporters. He encouraged protesters to remain peaceful and urged city and state officials to cooperate with federal forces to ease the fraught situation in Minneapolis.

The Republican vice president also blamed "far-left people" and state and local law enforcement officials for the chaos that unfolded during the White House's aggressive deportation campaign. "We're doing everything that we can to lower the temperature," he said, adding that Minnesota leaders should "meet us halfway."

The Justice Department is investigating top Democrats in the state, including Gov. Tim Walz and Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, over whether they obstructed or impeded immigration enforcement through their public criticism of the administration. Walz and Frey described the investigation as an

attempt to bully the political opposition.

Organizers hope Friday's mobilization will be the largest coordinated protest action to date, with a march in downtown Minneapolis planned for Friday afternoon.

The National Weather Service warned of dangerously cold weather, and early Friday, the temperature in Minneapolis was minus 21 with a wind chill of minus 40.

Havelin compared the presence of immigration officers to the winter weather warnings.

"Minnesotans understand that when we're in a snow emergency ... we all have to respond and it makes us do things differently," she said. "And what's happening with ICE in our community, in our state, means that we can't respond as business as usual."

Somali businesses

especially lost sales during the enforcement surge as workers and customers, fearing detention, stay at home.

Many schools also planned to close Friday, but cited different reasons. The University of Minnesota and the St. Paul public school district said there would be no in-person classes because of the extreme cold. Minneapolis Public Schools were scheduled to be closed "for a teacher record keeping day."

Clergy planned to join the march as well as hold prayer services and fasting, according to a delegation of representatives of faith traditions including Buddhist, Jewish, Lutheran and Muslim.

Bishop Dwayne Royster, leader of the progressive organization Faith in Action, arrived in Minnesota on Wednesday from Washington, D.C.

"We want ICE out of Minnesota," he said. "We want them out of all the cities around the country where they're exercising extreme overreach."

Royster said at least 50 of his network's faith-based organizers were joining the protest. About 10 were traveling from Los Angeles while others from the same group planned a solidarity rally in California, said one of the organizers there.

"It was a very harrowing experience," the Rev. Jennifer Gutierrez said of the large immigration enforcement operation in Los Angeles last year. "We believe God is on the side of migrants."

HOF

From A1

Applications are available by contacting the District Office at 262-62-9005 ext. 4, or on the school website www.wilmothhighschool.com under Menu/Community/Hall of Fame. Completed applications

may be submitted online, mailed, or dropped off at the high school office

Applications for both Hall of Fame programs are due by May 1. Inductions are planned for fall 2026.

Inductees for both Hall of Fame programs will be honored during a Friday night home athletic event, followed by a Saturday

evening awards banquet. Honorees will receive a plaque, permanent recognition on the school's Hall of Fame wall, inclusion in its digital Hall of Fame, and feature recognition on the school website and other media platforms.

For questions about the 2026 Alumni Hall of Fame contact Executive

Administrative Assistant Danielle Fiveland-Scott at email fivelandd@wilmoths.k12.wi.us, or by phone at 262-862-9005, ext. 4.

For questions about the 2026 Athletics Hall of Fame contact Community Outreach Coordinator Ryan Gartner at email gartner@wilmoths.k12.wi.us, or phone 262-862-2351, ext. 318.

Firefighters

From A1

Stoner supports the levy being based off development happening within the village. The Somers Fire Department was earlier awarded a federal Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response grant to cover a portion of the costs for hiring and retaining new firefighters.

Stoner said that he wants to assess the situation over a few years because of planned development that will bring additional revenue into the village. Those developments included IEA's new manufacturing facility, a planned truck dealership and several housing developments.

In the first year, the government grant pays 75% of those costs and the village pays the remaining 25%. It

is graduating phased out where, at the end of four years, the village becomes responsible for the full cost of adding the firefighters.

Somers Fire Chief Ben Andersen said the additional firefighters are necessary for the department to maintain their level of service. Over the past seven years, calls to the fire department have increased by 300%.

The volume of calls isn't directly correlated to the

number of residents in Somers, and Andersen explained the department doesn't base the number of firefighters on population.

The Village Board has enlisted a communications firm to raise awareness about what the referendum will mean for citizens. Mueller Communications will provide information, including fliers, and that the village has allotted \$50,000 for the campaign.