



The Phelps Post

A community newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 2

Fall/Winter

Town of Phelps

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A Note from the Town Chair

Welcome to the fall/winter newsletter! A lot has happened in Phelps this year. The old Hospital is down and cleaned up and the site looks nice. The new Town Shop is going up as I write this and it should be finished by February 2026. The new Library/Community Center is well on its way, and we are expecting a finish date of mid July 2026. And Highway 17 is scheduled to be redone from Highway 45 to the Michigan state line in 2026. I'd like to take this opportunity to

thank our Town Clerk, Sheryl Ward, who is resigning at the end of 2025. It has been a pleasure and an honor to have worked with her; may she have a wonderful time moving forward.

*-Steve Doyen
Town Chairman*



Phelps Hospital Redevelopment Update

After years of planning and hard work, the long-awaited demolition of the former Phelps hospital is finally complete, and redevelopment plans are well underway. The THRIVE Rural Wisconsin

Team, in partnership with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and the Vilas County Economic Development Corporation (VCEDC), has engaged Cedar Corporation to help design preliminary site concepts that reflect the community's vision for the future of this property.

This project has been a true community effort, more than two years in the making. In the first phase, we met with residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to understand what Phelps needed and wanted most. The second phase focused on how to make those ideas realistic and financially viable for a de-



veloper. Over the past year, Cedar Corp has been transforming that vision into architectural renderings and conceptual layouts that will soon be shared publicly.

The preliminary plan envisions a vibrant mixed-use development featuring three to four larger retail spaces near Highway 17, potentially including rooftop areas for dining or socializing with scenic views of North Twin Lake. Moving up the hill, a series of "live/work" units would allow owners to operate their businesses at street level while living above. The uppermost portion of the site could feature townhomes or condos, offering spectacular views overlooking the lake.

We are thrilled with the progress made so far. By the time you read this newsletter, the renderings should be available, and we will be actively seeking a development partner to bring this vision to life. We invite everyone to attend the December Town Board meeting, where the plans will be presented for public input.

This redevelopment represents a major step forward for Phelps—creating new opportunities, new energy, and new possibilities for our community's future.



From the Desk of Fire Chief Jeremy Ryan

As we close out the year, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who lives, works, and visits the Phelps area for your continued support of our Fire and EMS Departments. I'm also incredibly grateful for our dedicated members who keep answering the call - and for their families whose support behind the scenes makes it all possible.

This fall, students from Phelps School District visited our station to learn about fire safety, explore our equipment, and see how our tools work. The kids were engaged and eager to learn! Please take a moment to discuss a **family meeting place** in the event of an emergency - this helps us quickly confirm everyone is accounted for.

As winter approaches, please **check your smoke and CO**

detectors, change batteries, and make sure your **driveways are plowed and trimmed back** so our large trucks can safely reach your home if needed.

We continue to make strong progress in training and modernization. We've added two new members, and three more have achieved Advanced EMT certification, enhancing our ability to deliver advanced pre-hospital care.

We're also well underway in replacing our aging Engine 1, which is beyond the NFPA replacement cycle. To save money and improve efficiency, this new apparatus will combine our current Engine and Rescue units—reducing annual capital costs by about \$50,000 while improving on-scene operations and response capabilities.

Additionally, we're working to fund a new command/EMS response vehicle to improve communication, scene coordination, and initial EMS care. **This will truly have a positive impact on patient outcomes**, which is our number one priority.

Thanks to your generous support and our members' fundraising efforts, we're also replacing all outdated turnout gear with PFAS-free gear - **at no cost to taxpayers**. This \$100,000 project will make Phelps one of the few departments in North America fully PFAS-free, greatly reducing our firefighters' cancer risk.

I'm incredibly proud to lead this organization and the dedicated volunteers who serve our community with courage and professionalism. If you'd like to be part of something bigger, we're always looking for new, committed volunteers.

Thank you for your continued trust and support - together we're keeping Phelps safe, strong, and moving forward.

-Jeremy Ryan, Fire Chief

Phelps Volunteer Fire and EMS Department



Phelps Snowmobile Club plans 2nd annual *Phelps Radar Run* for Jan 24!

The Phelps Snowmobile Club is planning its 2nd annual Phelps Radar Run on January 24th from 9am to 4pm on North Twin Lake off the shore of Great Escape Bar. The event committee has been working hard to make it bigger and better than last year's inaugural Radar Run! The main event is the opportunity to race your sled down the 1000-foot groomed snow track on the lake in several race classes. Runs are \$10 each or 3 for \$25. And the last run of the day will be a **COSTUME RUN!** So dig out your hilarious Halloween costumes because best dressed will take home \$300, 2nd best dressed \$200 and 3rd \$100. And the costume run is **FREE** to enter for all!



Phelps Radar Run is a blast for all snowmobile enthusiasts whether you race or not. Come watch the action and enjoy indoor and outdoor bars, food, music, raffles, merch sales, bonfires, and a heated tent. See you there for a great day out on the ice! Visit www.phelpswi.us/phelps-radar-run for more info.

PHELPS
Snowmobile Club

PHELPS
RADAR RUN

JANUARY 24, 2026
ON NORTH TWIN LAKE
1000-foot groomed snow track
off the shore of Great Escape Bar

COME RACE OR WATCH!
FOOD & BAR
RAFFLES
BONFIRES
MUSIC

COSTUME RUN!
AT 3PM
BEST DRESSED WINS \$\$\$!
top prize \$300

THANK YOU SPONSORS!

Phelps Snowmobile Club, Shades Concrete LLC, Mike's Septic Service, KITTOS, Jimmy Spurgeon Firewood, SCHULTZ'S EDGE, HAMILTON CONCRETE PUMP LLC, Bad Ace Tree Service, Asher's Chimney Sweep, KWIK TRIP, TWINLAKES, LAC VIEUX DESERTS, Schindelholz Dental, TRACK & SIDE, STOP'S, ARROWHEAD, GROOMERS, Hamblen Equipment Inc.

Clerk's Corner

Helpful info from Town Hall staff!

For those of you who do not know, I have resigned from my position effective December 31st. I am deeply grateful for the support, help, understanding, and kindness you have all shown me over the past three and a half years. I am thankful for the experience and connections I have made during my service. –*Sheryl Ward, Town Clerk/Treasurer*

Property Tax Bills – Tax bills will be arriving in mailboxes and online, at <https://ascent.vilascountywi.gov/LandRecords/> in mid-December. Bills will be sent out as soon as they are printed. If your mailing address has changed, you can notify the Vilas County Tax Lister at crmccr@vilascountywi.gov or we can provide you with a form for mailing.

2026 Room Tax – 2025 was our first year implementing Room Tax in Phelps and we want to thank all participants with their patience as we were learning along the way. As a reminder, 2026 Room Tax will increase to 4.5% with all new forms that will reflect this change. You can expect those in the mail in early December.

Election Year 2026 – We will have a busy 2026 Election year with a potential of 4 elections. The Spring Primary - February

17, Spring Election - April 7, Partisan Election - August 11, and the General Election - November 3, 2026. www.myvote.wi.gov is a website for all things relating to Wisconsin Elections. You can register to vote, update your name and address, request an absentee ballot, find what's on the ballot, view election results and more.

Poll Workers – Thank you to our poll workers! We are very fortunate to have a dedicated, experienced, informed, and reliable team of Poll Workers. Thanks to this great group of men and women we have every faith the 2026 elections will run smoothly and efficiently.

Town Website – The Town Website www.phelpswi.gov has been updated with a new look and is more user-friendly. You can find forms, view the meetings calendar, review agendas and meeting minutes, news and notices and much more. We encourage you to "Subscribe" to receive agendas, meeting minutes, news and notices, etc. automatically by text message or email.

Your Clerk/Treasurer and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer are here to help with issues, questions, or concerns regarding the Town of Phelps. Thank you.

–*Sheryl Ward, Town Clerk and Kathleen Ray, Deputy Clerk*
715-545-2270

A note from the Phelps Historical Museum

As we bid farewell to another summer, we take a moment to express our gratitude for another successful year. Our museum enjoyed an exceptional season, welcoming visitors from 9 different states. Approximately 550 individuals walked through our doors, experiencing our history and some sharing their personal connections to our town. We also hosted over 70 children on Halloween. Earlier this spring we enjoyed visits from Phelps School helping to further educate our students about our own WWII veterans as well as exploring logging and town history.

Highlighted this year was Big Sand Lake Club's 100th anniversary celebration. We enjoyed sharing its amazing history.

We are always interested in exploring items from Phelps' past. If you possess materials such as artifacts, photographs, or letters that could enrich the museum experience, we invite you to meet with us. Family heirlooms can be gifted or loaned temporarily. Our museum aims to tell the story of not only the town's history but also its people. One of our primary goals is to preserve and share your family's history. Regardless of when or how you became connected to Phelps, your family's history is important to the Phelps Historical Museum!

We are also moving forward with our expansion plans and expect to release additional information in late winter. We appreciate the ongoing support of our members and volunteers and eagerly anticipate sharing our future vision with. The additional opportunities for cultural programs and historical preservation will be a distinctive and invaluable asset to our community. Together with your continued support we look forward to better serving you.

Heading into the holiday season the Phelps Historical Museum

is offering an additional way to demonstrate your support.

This season, as you begin your shopping, please consider purchasing your gift card needs through *ShopRaise.com* and *RaiseRight.com*. These online gift card stores will donate a percentage of every purchase directly to our museum, allocated directly to our museum expansion fund. It is an excellent way to accomplish your holiday shopping while supporting us simultaneously.

Visit our website at www.phelpshistoricalmuseum.org for more information.

Thank you once again for your patronage and have a beautiful winter. –*Your Phelps Historical Museum*



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PHELPS, WI 54554

The new Phelps Community Center is coming summer 2026!

If you've driven past the current Town Hall/Library lately, you've seen the exciting progress on the new Phelps Community Center. Construction is moving along smoothly and remains on schedule, with completion anticipated by July 31.

To support this important project, the Phelps Community Center/Library Fund was established to help cover building and furnishing costs. Contributions have already exceeded \$130,000 and continue to grow. Every donor will be publicly recognized (unless anonymity is requested), and naming rights are available for individuals, families, and organizations wishing to create a lasting legacy within the new facility. Design and creation of donor recognition plaques will begin in early February. Information on how to contribute can be found at www.cfoncw.org/phelps-area-community-foundation as well as www.phelpswi.gov.

Donations are also welcome for the new Public Works Garage. While naming rights have not yet been designated for that facility, suggestions are always appreciated.

This is a wonderful opportunity to invest in the future of our community. Your support truly makes a difference.



**Join us at the Phelps
Christmas Tree Lighting on
Saturday, December 6th**

PHELPS
Christmas
TREE LIGHTING
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6
FESTIVITIES AT 4PM | TREE LIGHTING AT 5PM

Bring your family and join us for a festive evening!

- Activity at the Library at 2pm
- Christmas Caroling
- Hot dogs and hot chocolate
- Bonfire
- Visit from Santa!

PHELPS WOMAN'S CLUB - TOWN OF PHELPS - PHELPS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT - PHELPS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - PHELPS SCHOOL DISTRICT - ELEANOR ELLIS PUBLIC LIBRARY - PHELPS LIONS CLUB - DALE & JAN ENGBERG