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WAUSAU DAILY HERALD

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DIGITAL DISPOSAL

Portage County has seen recycling costs rise. Michelle Goetsch, CEO and founder of the mobile app ERbin, created the tech startup to help people learn how to better recycle in their communities. GETTY IMAGES

Recycling can be confusing; a new app aims to help

Megan Stringer Wausau Daily Herald
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

WAUSAU - Last week, Michelle Goetsch and her team spent time going through Wausau residents' recycling bins. They found cartons of almond milk, broken-down cardboard boxes and even a chainsaw. They also found a plastic toy gun and an old leaf blower mixed in among the cardboard in some bins.



Goetsch

Goetsch does this not because she enjoys sifting through people's trash, but because she wants to learn how people in Wausau recycle. She said that will help inform a new mobile app, ERbin (pronounced urban), to help people determine what they can and can't recycle from their home.

The CEO and founder of the Wausau-area tech startup, Goetsch hopes to launch the app in Wausau in the coming months, following the audit of residents' recycling bins.

The ERbin app beta launched in Weston in March, after Goetsch completed a recycling audit there. She believes about 75 people in Weston have downloaded the app.

See **RECYCLING**, Page 3A



A peek into an anonymous Wausau resident's recycling bin helps Goetsch learn how people recycle. After she completes an audit with the city in October, she hopes to launch her app ERbin for people in Wausau to learn what they can and can't recycle. PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHELLE GOETSCH

"It's not people's fault that it's so hard to recycle. The system is difficult to understand."

Michelle Goetsch
CEO and founder of the Wausau-area tech startup ERbin

Fewer suicides in state in 2018

Rates for men, youths steady at historic highs

Madeline Heim Appleton Post-Crescent
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Editor's note: If you or someone you know is dealing with suicidal thoughts, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255 or text "Hopeline" to the National Crisis Text Line at 741-741.

Fewer Wisconsinites died by suicide in 2018, after a 2017 total that was the highest reported in the state's 30-year online historical record.

New Department of Health Services data obtained by USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin shows 887 Wisconsinites died by suicide in 2018, down from 918 in 2017.

Suicides were particularly down among women, while they increased in rural northern and western Wisconsin. Historically high rates of male and youth suicide remained roughly level.

Though a decrease from one year to the next is a good thing, suicide is such a complex issue it's difficult to determine a cause for what happened in a given year, said Leah Rolando, suicide prevention specialist at Mental Health America of Wisconsin.

Suicide rates have been rising nationwide, and faster in Wisconsin, for a number of years, and DHS data shows that rates increased 40% from 2000 to 2017.

Although the national rate for 2018 has not yet been released from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Wisconsin's rates have been above or equal to the country's average for at least a decade.

Rates fell for women, rose in rural areas

The number of Wisconsin women who died by suicide fell more than 22% from a high of 212 in 2015 to a five-year low of 165 in 2018.

Fewer white Wisconsinites died by suicide in 2018, but numbers for African Americans, American Indians and Asians rose from 2017. Rates for whites and American Indians continue to be the highest of the four groups.

See **SUICIDE**, Page 5A

'We have people from all different walks of life'

Volunteers find camaraderie at Feeding America

Maureen Wallenfang
Appleton Post-Crescent
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

LITTLE CHUTE - Who would have thought that a warehouse full of people wearing hairnets could be a social hot spot?

Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin, the state's largest food bank, depends on

volunteers to help its staff on a regular basis.

And it turns out that some of those volunteers show up every week for more than the satisfaction of helping out.

They're also enjoying the camaraderie. "We have a good time. We make it fun," said the senior statesman of the regular volunteer crew, Joe Talamanco of Appleton. He's a 71-year-old who re-

STOCK THE SHELVES

tired years ago from Akrosil in Menasha and now comes here two morning a week.

"Ninety percent of us who come Tuesday and Thursday mornings are re-

See **SHELVES**, Page 6A

How to donate

You can donate to USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin's Stock the Shelves program by going to feedingamericawi.org. You can also send checks payable to Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin, ATTN: Stock the Shelves, 2911 W. Evergreen Drive, Appleton, WI 54913. Indicate how your name should be listed, if you want to remain anonymous or if you would like it donated in memory of someone.

USA TODAY
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