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# THE POST-CRESCENT

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2025 | POSTCRESCENT.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK



**Dr. Megan Gussick is shown with physician response vehicle Badger 1 outside the emergency department at UW Hospital in Madison on Dec. 8.**  
PHOTOS BY HANNAH SCHROEDER/MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

# Madison community still recovering from shooting

**Dr. Adam Brinkman** seen in a trauma resuscitation bay in the American Family Children's Hospital Pediatric Emergency Department at UW Hospital in Madison, is shown on Dec. 8. Brinkman performed surgery on victims of the Abundant Life Christian School shooting in 2024.

HANNAH SCHROEDER / MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL



**Natalie Eilbert and Nadia Scharf** Milwaukee Journal Sentinel | USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

**D**r. Adam Brinkman heard only the echo of his footsteps as he made his way down the stairs from his clinic to the emergency room on the morning of Dec. 16, 2024. Each step advanced a surge of thoughts that boiled down to one: *What am I going to do when I get there?* ● He knew the broad facts: It was a mass casualty event, a school shooting, 12 critically injured patients – the reported number at the time. ● As Brinkman neared the emergency department floor, a new thought occurred to him that chilled him to his bones: *What am I going to do if these are my kids?*

"I remember thinking, 'Your role is to be a leader here, and people are going to be looking to you to make decisions and fall back on the knowledge and skills you've taught and practiced for,'" said Brinkman, pediatric surgeon at UW Health Kids. "The goal is to take care of these critically ill children who are having the worst day of their lives."

By all accounts, Dec. 16, 2024, was a terrible day for Wisconsin. The Abundant Life Christian School shooting, which left three dead and six injured, was the deadliest school shooting in the state's history. And for two of the most critically wounded children, it marked the first day of months' long recoveries, punctuated by dozens of surgeries and breakthrough moments like standing and walking again for the first time.

Responders are proud of their response, which they say was guided by relationships between branches of emergency services

and community groups. But despite successes, last year's tragedy is, in many ways, still ringing through Madison and the state at large. For gun violence survivors, the anniversary is keen in its ache.

Nessa Bleill, 19, woke to the news of the shooting and felt her stomach drop. Over two years earlier, she and her family had thrown themselves to the ground after shots ripped through a Fourth of July parade in Highland Park, Illinois. She remembered her dog moving by her leg and praying it wouldn't draw too much attention. That shooting left seven dead and 48 injured.

"As a survivor of a mass shooting, every time I see an instance of gun violence, it hits a nerve," said Bleill, now a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. "But seeing it happen in a community that I love and spend so much time in, that strikes another nerve on a deeper level."

# Wisconsin gun safety advocates hit stalemate on gun laws

Natalie Eilbert and Nadia Scharf

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

Since the Abundant Life Christian School shooting a year ago, 850 schools nationwide have experienced gun violence incidents that ultimately left 57 dead. That's more than two school incidents involving a gun a day.

Fourteen of those schools were in Wisconsin, including a deadly shooting in May at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville that killed two.

Immediately after the Dec. 16, 2024, Abundant

**See GUN LAWS, Page 4A**

# Packers-Bears tickets still in stratosphere

## Richard Ryman

Green Bay Press-Gazette

USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

Losing to a hot Denver Broncos team wouldn't have been the worst thing for the Green Bay Packers, but losing several of their best players in the process was.

The Packers took the field Dec. 14 in Denver in first place in the NFC North, holding the second seed in the playoffs and feeling confident after defeating the Chicago Bears the week before. They left Denver after a 34-26 loss, in second place in the NFC North, holding the seventh seed in the playoffs and without a healthy Micah Parsons, Christian Watson, Zach Tom and Evan Williams. It was Denver's 11th consecutive victory.

**See PACKERS, Page 2A**

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Volume 106 | No. 281  
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