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Stevens Point Journal

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026 | STEVENSPONTJOURNAL.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Downtown Main Street is seen on April 25, 2023, in Stevens Point. TORK MASON/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

\$10K grant fund targets downtown growth

Nida Tazeen
Stevens Point Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

The Stevens Point Downtown Business Improvement District will offer a new grant program aimed at helping businesses, property owners and entrepreneurs invest in projects that support economic activity in downtown Stevens Point.

Applications for the 2026 Downtown Vitality Grant will be accepted through Sept. 30, according to a community announcement. The program includes a total funding pool of \$10,000 and was created through the district's Economic Vitality Work Group to encourage private investment in downtown businesses, properties and new ventures.

"Our goal isn't simply to award \$10,000 in grants," said Karen Margelofsky, executive director of the Stevens

Point Downtown Business Improvement District. "We want to use this funding as a catalyst for even greater private investment. Whether someone has been considering a renovation, new equipment, an expansion, a new product or service, or even bringing a new business to Stevens Point Downtown, we want this program to encourage them to take another look at what could be possible."

Applicants can seek funding in multiple categories, though awards are capped at \$5,000 per applicant or property.

Grant supports building upgrades, equipment and marketing

The Downtown Vitality Grant includes three funding categories:

See DOWNTOWN, Page 2A

"We want to use this funding as a catalyst for even greater private investment. Whether someone has been considering a renovation, new equipment, an expansion, a new product or service, or even bringing a new business to Stevens Point Downtown, we want this program to encourage them to take another look at what could be possible."

Karen Margelofsky

Bubbl'r launches its newest flavor

Caitlin Shuda
Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune
USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

BIRON – Bubbl'r spent some time at a cranberry farm just outside of Wisconsin Rapids to promote its newest flavor.

Bubbl'r launched a new limited batch flavor, cranberry lemon lime splash'r, Aug. 31 and posted an ad filmed at Rooted in Red at 1060 Center St. in Biron.

In the ad, two influencers document their hunt for the new Bubbl'r flavor, saying they got a tip that they could find it somewhere in the fields. They search through a wooded area with binoculars, then wade through marshes with a metal detector before finding a can standing among the cranberry vines. They pick up two cans of the new cranberry lemon lime splash'r, try it and call it "perfect."

That's where Jamie Biegel, owner of Rooted in Red, asks if she can help them, adding that cranberry lemon lime splash'r is already out in stores, and the influencers "didn't need to do all this."

See BUBBL'R, Page 2A

Bubbl'r launched its new cranberry lemon lime splash'r on Aug. 3. PROVIDED BY EMMA ROKUS

Stevens Point YMCA to unveil major capital campaign

Nida Tazeen
Stevens Point Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

The Stevens Point Area YMCA will unveil plans for a major capital campaign during a community event from noon to 1 p.m. Sept. 15 at its facility at 1000 Division St.

The campaign was sparked by a legacy gift from longtime YMCA supporter Tim Copps, according to a community announcement. YMCA leaders said the gift created an opportunity to begin planning for the organization's future and broader impact in the community.

Ryan Zietlow, president and CEO of the Stevens Point Area YMCA, said Copps' support reflected a strong belief in the YMCA's mission and the connections it helps create among community members.

"Tim understood that the YMCA is about people," Zietlow said. "He loved

being here, he enjoyed the people around him and he believed in what the Y could mean to this community. His generosity gave us the opportunity to begin thinking differently about the future of this YMCA, and we are honored to build on that legacy."

Organizers said attendees will receive their first look at plans intended to reimagine the YMCA and expand its ability to serve future generations. According to the announcement, the event also will include the public reveal of a major lead gift connected to the campaign.

Campaign tied to Tim Copps legacy

YMCA officials described Copps as a familiar presence at the organization who preferred to support causes quietly rather than seek recognition.

According to the announcement, Copps often spent time at the YMCA

connecting with others and enjoying the sense of community he found there. His estate gift helped launch conversations that ultimately developed into the current campaign effort.

Organizers said the initiative has already attracted support from community members, families, businesses and local leaders who believe in the YMCA's future role in the area.

Community invited to campaign launch

The Sept. 15 gathering is open to supporters, community partners, residents and friends of the organization. YMCA leaders said the event will outline their long-term vision, highlight the campaign's goals and provide information about the next steps in the effort.

This story was produced by reporter Nida Tazeen, NTazeen@usatoday-co.com, with the assistance of Arti-

Stevens Point Journal readers recommended several local businesses like the Stevens Point Area YMCA to find holiday gifts or memberships. CAITLIN SHUDA/ USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

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