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Local News

Errands? Let "The Gofer Guys" do it for you

By Vivian Obarski, *Regional Reporter*

The personal assistant -- while most of us think that's something for only the rich and famous, one man is making this accessible to the everyday person.

Sun Prairie resident Rick Held started The Gofer Guys a few months ago with the goal of giving people something more valuable than money -- spare time.

The Gofer Guys is a professional chores and errand service provider that handles a variety of tasks ranging from purchasing groceries and dropping off items to heavy lifting and moving of furniture.

Held said he got the inspiration from reading an article in a parenting



Sun Prairie resident Rick Held offers his services as a personal assistant through The Gofer Guys. Held bills by the hour or

Held said he wanted to do this properly and, as a result, began researching starting his business, marketing and other things before announcing he was ready to run errands.

"It took a couple of months," he said. "I wanted to make sure everything was correct."

As a result, Gofer Guys is also bonded and insured for clients' peace of mind. While things were a little slow in the beginning, Held said more people are contacting him for a variety of chores, errands and other tasks.

"The hardest thing was getting my name out," he said, adding that becoming a Sun Prairie Chamber member helped his business grow. "More and more people started using me because they hear about me.

"It's been a slow process because I'm kind of by myself."

The tasks Held said he'd do range from cutting back hostas and taking down a 15-foot summer pool to snowplowing the Verizon parking lots in winter.

"I can do almost anything and if I don't have the equipment, I'll buy it," he said.

In addition, Held said he's gone grocery shopping for clients -- just e-mail him a list and the shopping is taken care of.

"I've moved entertainment centers and I had people purchase stuff in Madison, only to have to wait three or four weeks for delivery," he said. "I charge way less than they do."

One client asked Held to move all of the items in her home to a storage space, until her house was ready to be moved into.

Held charges his clientele for each stop he makes. The first and subsequent stops within 10 miles is \$6 per stop, while anything more than 10 miles is \$11 per stop.

However, he will do a quote for any stop over 25 miles from Sun Prairie.

"If I do one stop and bring something to you, that's two stops, so it's \$12," he explained.

In situations where Held makes one stop more than 10 miles away, then a stop within 10 miles of his client and then returns to the client, he won't charge \$11 for the return trip. In other words, the total is \$23, instead of \$33.

But if people have extensive chore lists or the errand list is numerous pages, it may be more advantageous to use an hourly rate, which starts at \$12, Held said.

"If it's hard labor, I'll charge more -- between \$12-20 an hour," he said.

Some of the hourly services Held said he'll do include dog walking, lawn mowing, arranging cable, phone and other services and waiting for those services to arrive.

"I'll tell everybody up front what I'm going to charge," he said.

In addition to the Gofer Guys, there's the Gofer Gals, a cleaning service started by Held's wife. "It's deep cleaning for people who are selling their homes," he said.

As for the future, Held said he hopes to work with area businesses to run errands for them and their employees.

"I can do chores such as taking the car for oil changes," he said. "It'll help them save time and help their employees save time too."

The Gofer Guys

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