

WHEREAS; the legend of the Hodag in American folklore was made popular by Rhinelander timber cruiser and prankster Eugene Shepard in 1893; and

WHEREAS; according to legend, the Hodag had a dragon’s body and a fanged, snarly grin, the strength of an ox, the ferocity of a bear, and the cunning of a fox; and

WHEREAS; the Hodag, which is believed to have roots in Indigenous cultures, is a widely recognized figure not just in Wisconsin but across the United States and around the world, and early reports of the Hodag also indicated that the creature was about seven feet long, 30 inches tall, and weighed about 200 pounds; and

WHEREAS; the city of Rhinelander is regarded as the “Home of the Hodag,” as the Hodag is an intrinsic part of Rhinelander’s culture, identity, and heritage, and the Hodag has been the official mascot of Rhinelander High School since the 1930s, with students and graduates of the School District of Rhinelander referring to themselves affectionately as “Hodags”; and

WHEREAS; statues and artistic depictions of the Hodag can be found throughout the city of Rhinelander, and many local businesses, events, and products bear its name; and

WHEREAS; this year, the Rhinelander Area Chamber of Commerce and its partners have announced the sixth edition of the Hodag Heritage Festival, an annual event dedicated to celebrating the uniqueness of the Hodag and of the Rhinelander community;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Tony Evers, Governor of the State of Wisconsin,
do hereby proclaim May 16 2026 as

HODAG DAY

throughout the State of Wisconsin and I commend this observance
to all our state’s residents.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Wisconsin to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Madison this 8th day of May 2026.

TONY EVERS, Governor

By the Governor:

SARAH GODLEWSKI, Secretary of State