

The Chetek Alert

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Chetek, Wisconsin | One Dollar & Twenty-Five Cents

FIRSTLOOK

CTH A to be closed east of Dallas, starting Sept. 27

CTH A east of Dallas will be closed to through traffic starting Monday, Sept. 27, for road construction, said the Barron County Highway Department.

Road work will include replacement of a bridge, culvert work and regrading of the CTH A and 18th Street intersection. CTH A will be closed to through traffic from the village of Dallas, east to the CTH A and CTH I intersection.

Traffic will be detoured on Hwy. 25, CTH D, 22-3/4 Street and CTH I. The detour route will be marked with signs. The project should be completed in November.

The project is funded through the highway department's annual budget. A road resurfacing project on CTH A will follow in 2022.



CARL COOLEY | CHETEK ALERT

CPD's Lt. Larson honored for 15 years with City of Chetek

Chetek Police Department's Lt. Jessica Larson, center, was honored with an award in recognition of her 15 years of service on in Chetek. The City and Chetek Common Council presented the award on Sept. 14. Pictured above, left to right, are Police Chief Ron Ambrozaitis, Larson and Mayor Jeff Martin. "Being an officer of the law, I'm sure it has its incredible challenges, but I just know enough people—on both sides of the law—that speak highly of you," Martin said. She is a good officer and fair, Martin said, and she cares for local kids. "I am so grateful that you work for us and serve us and the people of this town. Thank you for your 15 years of service," he added. "I love working here, I don't plan on going anywhere else" Larson said.

Most new COVID-19 cases among children

An announcement Monday, Sept. 20, from Pfizer and BioNTech revealed that their lower-dose COVID-19 vaccine was found to be safe and effective in children ages 5 to 11.

The news is welcome to many as infection rates of COVID-19, particularly the Delta variant, have been increasing while a new school year has gotten underway.

According to a weekly report from Barron County Public Health, as of Monday, 273 new infections were reported in the past week, with 199 occurring in unvaccinated persons.

The age group most affected were people age 18 and under, with 77 infections.

"We know that anytime people are together in groups, especially inside, we are going to see more cases. The schools are no different. We also see spread at worksites, weddings, community events and church services," said Barron County public health specialist Sarah Turner.

In the Cameron School District, there have been 37 cases among students

and 20 cases among staff since the start of the school year, said Superintendent Joe Leschisin.

Barron district administrator Diane Tremblay said Tuesday that the district currently had seven students at home who have since gotten a positive COVID-19 test and 34 students in isolation.

In Cameron, the majority of those are happening at the elementary level, with 23 cases among students and 17 among staff.

But infections are not happening in schools as much as they are in households, according to Public Health.

"To date, we have very few of our positive cases that are believed to be transmitted within the school system," said Leschisin. "Additionally, as we saw throughout last school year, we are still seeing very few, if any, of our close contact quarantined students and staff turn positive as a result of the close contact. Unfortunately, we have had to quarantine many through-

out the past year, but our data confirms that a vast majority of these individuals never ended up testing positive for COVID-19 in the following days after their potential exposure."

Many schools in north-west Wisconsin have closed for a day or more due to COVID-19, including schools in the Spooner, Menomonie and Mondovi districts.

Leschisin said Cameron schools have no specific case threshold that would result in closing, but rather that such an option would be a last resort.

"If warranted, we would try to isolate individual classrooms and even grade levels as opposed to an entire building," he said. "Our efforts at this point are to keep our students in school as much as we can. This requires us to look at cases individually and to determine a plan based on individual numbers rather than group numbers."

Masks are optional at local schools, an ever-divisive

SEE COVID-19, PAGE A7

Cameron Main Street Fall Street Sales is this Saturday

Although the succession of Cameron Main Street Fall Street Sales was interrupted by COVID-19 last year, sponsors are referring to the event on Saturday, Sept. 25, as the 42nd annual sale.

"We'll put an asterisk on this one," said Gen Brion on Sept. 8, at the Main Street delicatessen that she owns and operates, along with her husband, Gregg.

At last count, approximately two dozen vendors will line the sidewalks of Main Street Cameron from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 25, not counting the impromptu sales that are likely to take place in people's front yards, up and down the street.

The vendor list is being coordinated by Swan Beach Vendor Events, a marketing business owned by area resident Shelli Swanson.

"We added one more vendor this morning," Swanson said Monday afternoon, Sept. 13.

"That brings us to 20 so far, but we are waiting for confirmation from several others."

Swanson, who will sell boutique clothing at Cameron on Sept. 25, coordinated the Barron Fall Festival vendor sale on Saturday, Sept. 11, and helped arrange for 35 vendors to set up shop on Barron's La Salle Avenue.

"We're still working on food vendors," she added.

Among the food offerings will be items from Brion's Smokehouse Deli, which will also set up service along Main Street.

At least three of the Cameron vendors have been there in past years, according to Swanson.

"One of them makes incredible wooden toys such as airplanes and trucks," she said. "Another will do crafts and face painting for the kids. We will also have quite a few crafters mixed in with the direct sales vendors."

Owner of Erb Bus Service remembered for generosity

Longtime owner of Erb Rural Bus Service, John Erb, of Chetek, passed away on Friday, Sept. 17. His company began providing transportation services to the Chetek School District in 1987, according to the school district. Erb Bus Service continues to provide services to the Chetek-Weyerhaeuser Area School District.

CWASD Superintendent Mark Johnson said Erb was an amazing person that did much for the community.

"While I admired him for

how effectively and efficiently he operated a tremendously complex role, I've always admired him more for who he was as a person," said Johnson. "He was kind, caring and did far more for others than most people know."

Erb donated bus services for the shuttle at Liberty Fest, said Jennifer Blatz, event organizer for the Chetek Area Chamber of Commerce. He also donated bus services

SEE ERB, PAGE A7

Four killed after man 'snapped'

BY RYAN URBAN | BARRON NEWS-SHIELD

A father and son have been arrested and charged in the murders of four people found abandoned in a cornfield near Ridgeland on Sunday, Sept. 12.

Antoine D. Suggs, 38, of Scottsdale, Ariz., is charged in Ramsey County, Minn., Court with four counts of second-degree murder, with intent-not premeditated.

Suggs and his father Darren L. Osborne, 56, of St. Paul, Minn., are charged with four counts of hiding a corpse in Dunn County Circuit Court. They are accused of hiding the bodies of four people in an SUV left in a cornfield southwest of Ridgeland.

Nitasha Flug-Presley, Mat-

thew Pettus, Loyace Foreman III and Jasmine Sturm were found each with at least one gunshot wound to the head. Six spent shell casings were found in the SUV.

According to a criminal complaint filed in Ramsey County, Suggs told his father he "snapped and shot a couple people."

After allegedly shooting the four between 3:30 and 3:48 a.m. on Sept. 12, Suggs stayed with the vehicle and bodies for several hours before abandoning it in the cornfield.

Suggs turned himself into the Gilbert, Ariz., police department on Friday, Sept. 17, according to Dunn County Sheriff Kevin Bygd.

Bygd

SEE FOUR, PAGE A7



Antoine Suggs



100-year-old or older residents to be honored by ADRC

The Barron County Aging and Disability Resource Center is looking for residents who are 100 years or older.

Barron County residents born in 1921 or earlier will be honored by the ADRC through a commemorative video montage. If you are a centenarian or know a friend or family member who is 100 years or older, contact Jennifer at the ADRC at 715-537-6209 or at jennifer.jako@co.barron.wi.us. The deadline is Friday, Oct. 22, to ensure all are included.

The ADRC asks Centenarians to share a photo, a quote or message, some fun history or stories for the video.

DEATHS

John Erb, 66

Geraldine Kohler, 73

Fern Lundholm, 98



Ridgeway remains unpaved; residents ask 'why?'

Just over half a dozen residents came before the Chetek Common Council on Sept. 14 with a petition, asking why Ridgeway Street had not been paved by the city.

During the public comments section of the monthly council meeting, residents Andee Colby and Chris Carlin said that when they bought their newly built homes, they had been told the city

was obligated to pave the road. Paving had been scheduled in 2020 but as of today, it had not been completed. The gravel street was affecting their property values, Colby said. The group of neighbors had signed a petition, asking for a road with a curb, because runoff was eroding and flooding their yards.

Chetek Mayor Jeff Martin apologized for the

delay but noted the city was in the same position as they were. City workers don't do the paving work; the city bids out the service. In this case, it was the county highway department, Martin said. "We're like you, we are waiting for them to come."

Public Works Director Dan Knapp said Highway Commissioner Mark Servi told him

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