

# The Chetek Alert

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Chetek, Wisconsin | One Dollar & Twenty-Five Cents

## FIRSTLOOK

### Alert office closed on Friday, July 2

The Chetek Alert office will be closed on Friday, July 2, in observance of the Independence Day holiday. A dropbox at the Alert's front door can accept articles, ads and payments at anytime. The office will be open on Monday, July 5, at 7:30 a.m.



### Volunteers sought for Liberty Fest

Chetek's Liberty Fest happens because of volunteers and a few are still needed for various events. Volunteers get free entry to the event they work and six complimentary beer tickets.

Go to [www.chetek-libertyfest.org](http://www.chetek-libertyfest.org) and click on the link, "sign up here" to sign up for a volunteer shift. Most shifts run three hours.

### Blood drive held in Rice Lake on July 1

The American Red Cross says there is a severe blood shortage and donors of all blood types, especially type O, are needed.

Schedule an appointment by going to [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org), calling 1-800-red-cross or by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App.

A blood drive will be held at Red Cedar Church, 1701 W. Allen St., Rice Lake, on Thursday, July 1, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## DEATHS

Arvena Borgen, 92

Donna Ebbert, 88

Catrina Fox, 52

Richard Johnson, 74



## Liberty Fest starts July 1

After a year on hold due to the coronavirus pandemic, nearly all of Liberty Fest's annual events have returned.

"We're definitely excited to have a full schedule of events," said Darryl Dahl, president of the Chetek Chamber of Commerce.

So far, around 70 floats had signed up for the parade on Sunday, July 4, at noon. The parade often features more than 100 floats and thousands of people line the parade route, three or more deep, to watch. Secret judges will rate and pick the best chamber member float, best children's float and the funniest float. Brothers Tom and Toby Kutrieb, along with Dahl, will be announcing the parade at Knapp and Second streets, dubbed "Liberty Square."

"Forecast looks to be great," Dahl added.

Chris Kroeze is playing a solo concert at the Beach Party at City Beach, after the parade on July 4. Changes from last year included a new street dance on Friday night, July 2, and the horse pull being hosted at The Funny Farm, on CTH M one mile north of Chetek. There is no Stitching Sisters Quilt Show at The Center this year.

Returning again after last year was a Swan Beach Vendor Craft Fair, featuring local artists, crafts, a food truck and a petting zoo. The event will be held at the American Legion on Saturday and Sunday, **SEE FEST, PAGE A10**

## Sand Creek's new shipshape playground christened



PHOTO COURTESY OF CATHERINE LEFEVRE

A new, volunteer parks committee in Sand Creek raised funds for and organized the construction of a large "pirate ship" playground at Riverside Park and Boat Landing on CTH V in Sand Creek. The structure was built by Bob LeFevre and assembled with the help of many volunteers. Pictured, kids "christen" the ship with water balloons at an open house to dedicate the new playground equipment on Sunday, June 27.

BY CARL COOLEY

One might expect to see peg legs, eye patches and parrots now that a pirate ship has permanently docked at Sand Creek's Riverside Park. But avast, ye matey, no one's going to make you walk the plank here.

Named the "Ark in the Park," this 30-foot long pirate ship playground set

was built over the winter and erected last May by a group of volunteers. An open house was held on Sunday, June 27, to formally "christen" the ship—with water balloons.

Made of wood, the ship is about 24 feet tall at its crow's nest and 12 feet at its widest. There are three plastic slides, a swing set, a fireman's pole, a rope ladder, climbing wall and

more for kids to play on. It is located at the park along the Red Cedar River on CTH V.

"We are pretty thrilled of how it turned out," said Mark Gilberts, who helped organize a new parks committee for the project. "It's really a great addition to town."

Gilberts said the committee formed last September, when a group of

parents and grandparents decided to fix up the town's parks and playgrounds. Bloomer had a ship play set and they wanted something similar for Sand Creek. They got the town's permission to remove the aging play equipment and told the town they would maintain the new equipment.

Gilberts **SEE SHIP, PAGE A9**

## Thompson, Margaritaville at street dance

Break out your dancing shoes for a street dance on Knapp Street, between Second and Third streets, on Friday, July 2.

Local musician Mark Thompson will perform from 5-8 p.m., with Margaritaville playing from 8 p.m. to midnight.

"We're not a rock band, we're not a country band, we're a *rock and roll* band," said Margaritaville's bass player and singer, Tom Hartman, from Chippewa Falls. The band plays Motown, to The Beatles, with everything in between and out, including country and Jimmy Buffett songs, of course. As such, they play lots of tiki bar stages during the summer. All their songs are covers of popular hits.

"Fun, danceable music—that's the look I was going for when I set this band up," Hartman explained. He is joined by Will Chopper, of Eau Claire, on keyboards; Paul Dickenson, of Neillsville, on guitar; and Chris Mahner, of Medford, on drums. Everyone sings,



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Margaritaville plays at Fostbites and Antczak Angus' street dance on Friday, July 2, from 8 p.m. to midnight. The band members are pictured above, left to right, are Chris Mahner, Tom Hartman, Paul Dickenson and Will Chopper. Chetek musician Mark Thompson plays from 5-8 p.m.

which is the key to the band's sound.

Crowd favorites include "Shout," by the Isley Brothers, "Sweet Caroline," by Neil Diamond, "Land of a Thousand Dances," by Wilson Pickett, "Do You Love Me," by The Contours, and "Beer in Mexico," by Kenny Chesney.

"It's really not about the band; it's about music that makes people have fun," Hartman said. "We just have a good time and it rubs off on people. It's feel-good music."

Knapp Street, between Second and Third streets will be closed to traffic for the event. It is sponsored by Fostbites Pub and Antczak Angus.

Jason Fostvedt, owner of Fostbites Pub, said they wanted to have a street dance last year, but did not have enough time to get it organized. Past street dances have been organized by the Chetek Chamber of Commerce, but there have not been a street dance/ **SEE DANCE, PAGE A9**

## Banks honored as Liberty Fest Parade's Grand Marshal

Longtime Chetek resident and former mayor, John Banks, has the distinct honor of being Liberty Fest's grand marshal for two years. Banks was chosen in 2020, but due to the coronavirus pandemic, the parade was not held, but Banks will lead the 2021 parade.

The honor is bestowed on individuals or groups in recognition to their contributions and service to the community. Banks was an educator for 40 years (as a teacher and later as district superintendent) and served as mayor of Chetek. He volunteers with the Chetek Area Museum and has been elected several times to the Barron County Board of Supervisors, on which he currently serves.

"I'm honored by it; very pleased," said Banks. "I think I've done quite well in education, and now pol-

itics, and I feel honored to be recognized for that."

He has recently pushed to see county improvements at the Chetek Dam.

He knows it won't happen overnight, he would like to see the area made more ADA-accessible. Brush and landscaping could be done.

He likes staying involved, he said. "I just enjoy it. It keeps me—hopefully—young and in good spirits. I feel the desire to make things better," Banks said.

Banks is looking forward to Liberty Fest, which has been a high point for his family each year. Family, including his sons, will be visiting. He plans to take out his bright-yellow speedboat on Lake Chetek.

See a complete profile of Banks in the Chetek Alert's Summer Scene, which is free on newsstands.



John Banks

### Friday, July 2nd Street Dance

# FOSTBITES

## Pub

Mark Thompson 5-8 Margaritaville 8-12

Saturday July 3rd- Bakers Dozen 5-9

Sunday July 4th (After the Parade)

New Act! Dwayne Thomas

## Coming Soon!

### The Best Selection of Beer, Wine, and Spirits in the area!

Bring your \$1 Off Coupon from the Parade