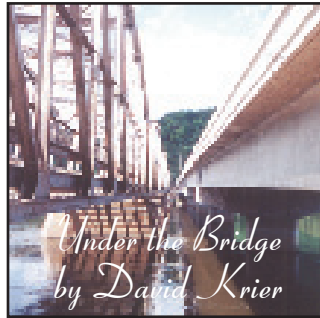


IN YOUR DIAL

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The Boscobel Dial

VOL. 149—NO. 35 BOSCOBEL, WISCONSIN THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2021 \$43 PER YEAR IN WISCONSIN, SINGLE COPY \$1.25



LABOR DAY weekend marks the unofficial end of summer, and here it is already. School started Wednesday across Wisconsin, with nearly all public schools welcoming unmasked children into the classroom. The past two pandemic school starts have been rough ones for teachers now dealing with mask controversies, virtual learning and a myriad of Covid-related challenges. So much for the joys of summer vacation; enjoy these warm summer days while you can. Workers certainly are, taking the summer off while they're able to collect regular weekly unemployment checks plus a weekly federal Covid bonus of \$300. It was \$600 during the initial configuration of the March 2020 CARES Act's federal unemployment aid programs. Many people found \$900 a week in unemployment benefits more enticing than going back to work, and who can blame them?

THOSE DAYS are quickly coming to an end, however, with the weekly unemployment bonus expiring for everyone at the end of the week. More than 11 million people will be affected, with roughly 7.5 million losing benefits entirely after Labor Day weekend. Labor Day might actually mean something this year, with people forced to get out and work with no federal relief in sight. Even though positive cases of COVID-19 are on the rise due to the quickly spreading Delta variant (351 cases in the Boscobel area in the past week), the pressure from employers is driving the elimination of the unemployment bonus checks. Many businesses, especially restaurants and convenience stores, have been forced to close or cut back hours due to the lack of help.

THE PAST YEAR has seen wages nearly double at many area employers, with \$20 an hour not uncommon. The pandemic could be a boon for workers finally getting paid what they're worth. "Essential workers" are another story. We've worked right through the Covid outbreak at the same pre-pandemic wage, while at the same time seeing new hires paid substantially more to keep the doors open. Teachers and health professionals literally take their lives into their hands when they show up to work with unvaccinated patients and students. People who don't believe in masks or vaccines are singing a different tune after spending a few days in the hospital gasping for breath. Do Boscobel parents against Covid vaccines for students know what's in currently mandated vaccines for DTaP/DTP/DT? How about Tdap, MMR or Varicella? Most are required for incoming kindergarteners.



Round Up transports Crawford County Fair visitors. Visitors to last weekend's Crawford County Fair take a spin on Round Up, one of the fair's midway offerings. It was all part of the experience at the family-friendly event at the Fairgrounds in Gays Mills.

—Mark Hackett photo

Highest transmission rate in Grant County

Boscobel School Board establishes protocol as positive COVID-19 cases increase in district

By EMILY SCHENDEL. A mostly masked Boscobel School Board met Monday night to vote on the school's COVID-19 protocol matrix for the new school year.

At their previous monthly meeting the board had voted to make masks optional for the school year. During the special meeting held on Monday, they decided on how it would look for the district when cases do begin arising. The meeting was held in the Bulldog Cafe to accommodate the anticipated large number of participants. Unfortunately those who participated in the Zoom option (which were about 65 individuals) were unable to hear much of the meeting due to poor audio quality. However, families were abot to make their wishes known in-person and via Zoom. One individual held up a sign to her video feed that read "My Child-My Choice Optional Masking" and others changed their Zoom handle to things like "Masks Optional" and "Please Support Optional Masks."

Boscobel School Nurse Susanne Brinkman made a

presentation to those in attendance and the school board explaining the two options that were presented. She shared that under her recommendation and that of public health, Option One would be the best option for the district. This option created the matrix for masking with numbers that were reported as "New Cases per 100,000 persons in the past seven days in the Boscobel Area School District Boundaries as reported by Wisconsin Department of Health Services."

Brinkman gave a firm speech to the board and the crowd gathered at the meeting, laying out her experience as a registered nurse and working with public health and the school district for the past 20 years.

"That is a fact."

"I do want to confirm that I believe in immunity but I believe that masking is what is protecting us from many illnesses. That is a fact," Brinkman said. She went on to share that Boscobel has the highest transmission rate in the county. And quoted a letter from the State Superintendent, urging school districts to consider universal masking as the best option to protect students, staff, and communities. "Whatever happens tonight at the school board I will follow because it is my job, but I am going to make a case for public health. As a registered nurse I stand with the recommendations from reliable public health officials, like Grant County Public Health, the CDC, and DPI. We are trying to make the school year work for everyone but the decision relies on the board."

Brinkman went on to note that in fact children can get COVID-19 and also have serious complications with it, vaccines are proven to be safe and effective and that masks are made from breathable material and that children do not simply breathe in their own

CO2. "I am not making a political decision about this," she noted. "I am standing by science. However I stand by the board's decision, even if it goes against my school of education."

"At this time we are returning to school as masks optional," Shared District Administrator Lisa Wallin-Kapinus on Tuesday morning following the meeting. "At the last meeting the board voted to have the masks optional and we wanted to meet and be presented with options to help us decide what we would do when the numbers of cases began presenting in the schools," she said. "We presented Option One as the option which is recommended by the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and DHS (Department of Health Services) as we felt it was our obligation to present those as they are the recommendations. However, knowing the feelings of the district constituents we also wanted to share option two.

Option two looks at more real numbers in the district and makes the decision based on that."

Option two adopted

Option two, which was adopted by the board, is as follows for New Covid-19 cases in the district over the past seven days (noted as number of cases and percent positive cases):

Low Transmission: 0-4.3 cases or <1 percent of the population (per elementary school or per middle/high school.) This would make face coverings indoors recommended but not required.

Moderate Transmission: 4.4-8.36 Cases or 1.0 -1.9 percent of the population (per elementary school or per middle/high school) This would make face coverings indoors recommended but not required.

Substantial Transmission: 8.8-12.76 cases or 2.0-2.9 percent of the population (per elementary school or per mid-

(See SCHOOLS, Pg. 2, Col. 3)

Cemetery seeks public support following tornado

By DENISE FISHER

Coming home—two words that we take for granted. Coming home to me means rounding the corner and crossing the bridge, stepping back in time, and becoming young again, accepted for who I am. I love that feeling of peace and relaxation that comes over me on the other side of the bridge. There is a sense of pride, of knowing almost everyone I meet, of being greeted with a sense of familiarity. I'm home with my peeps, slowing life down to enjoy the loved ones that surround me.

"Our home" was disrupted big time a couple of weeks ago. Some of the people we love the most were affected, and that sense of community and belonging to our people kicked in. The outpouring of our young and old, that showed up to help our community members get back on their feet is what makes us proud to be from Boscobel and the surrounding area. We're home grown, and we help those that need a hand up.

Our cemetery was hit so very hard. The tough part of this is that if you don't have a loved one there, you might not think about how this changes the looks of the cemetery that we have always went to for solace and reminiscing. It disrupts our comfort to our very soul. Those that now lay to rest in the cemetery are the people that made us the people that we are today. They are the community members that had an impact on our grandparents, aunts, and uncles, who in turn, had a wonderful impact on us.

I was talking to Pam Zimpel, secretary/treasurer of the Boscobel Cemetery Association, one of my favorite humans, about the cemetery damage. The wonderful news is that many came to show respect and love and helped clean up our cemetery, which to me, is one of the most beautiful resting places I have ever seen. It has taken this terrible tornado event to shed a light on the lack of funds needed to fix the cemetery and its need of attention. As a matter of

(See CEMETERY, Pg. 2, Col. 1)

Early Deadline for Labor Day

An earlier deadline is planned for the Sept. 9 issue of the Boscobel Dial due to the Labor Day holiday.

Correspondents are asked to get ad copy to the office by Friday, Sept. 3, 3 p.m.

News copy will be accepted up to 9 a.m. Tuesday but earlier material will be appreciated and also more sure of publication.

The paper will be printed and mailed at the usual time on Wednesday, Sept. 9.

The office will be closed Labor Day.



WORKERS from Krause Monuments' Chippewa Falls office volunteered their time setting and repairing headstones and monuments at the Boscobel Cemetery Thursday and Friday in the wake of the Aug. 7 tornado that damaged three dozen headstones

Advertisement for Crossing Rivers Health Clinic. Meet our expert team in Fennimore. APPOINTMENTS PREFERRED BUT SAME DAY APPOINTMENTS & WALK-INS WELCOME! MONDAY - FRIDAY 7:30 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. COVID-19 VACCINES (FOR AGES 12+) COVID TESTING AVAILABLE. Crossing Rivers Health Clinic. SWTC Campus | Fennimore, WI | crossingrivers.org/clinic