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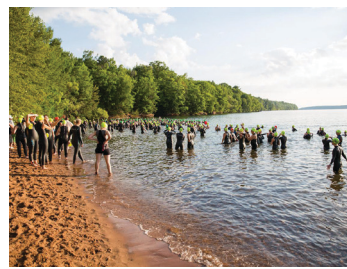


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WHAT'S INSIDE



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Madeline Island's Kelsey Peterson feared her career as a dancer came to an end when she was paralyzed in a swimming accident. But she has rediscovered the joy of dance from her wheelchair and filmed a documentary of her journey. (File photo)

Bayfield homicide trial goes to jury

BY RICK OLIVO
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Editor's note: This story has been edited to correct the name of a company whose CEO testified in the case.

Jurors deliberated until 9:30 p.m. Wednesday and resumed Thursday in the trial of a Bayfield man who killed his neighbor after a long-running dispute between the two.

Their deliberations, which had not concluded as the Daily Press went to press, came after Randy Erickson's attorneys called just two witnesses in his defense Tuesday – one of them Erickson himself. Prosecutors spent more than a week building their case against Erickson, 65, who is accused of shooting to death Michael Kinney, 66, on May 8, 2020 after arming himself with a handgun and going to Kinney's home to confront him. Erickson has claimed self-defense. He told police he and his wife Sue Erickson were at home and she had been drinking that night, and she first went to Kinney's home to confront him over a disagreement earlier in the day. When she returned home, she told her husband that Kinney had knocked her to the ground and kicked her, according to court records.

Randy Erickson, who faces life in prison if convicted on first-degree homicide charges, testified Tuesday about the injuries he and his wife suffered at Kinney's hands before the shooting occurred.

Erickson said he remembered little after he was hit on the head by a shovel wielded by Kinney.

The defense showed renderings of the confrontation scene prepared by James Gripp, CEO of Legal Arts Inc. of Costa Mesa, Cal., a firm that specializes in computer reconstructions used in court cases.

Erickson also spoke about the events that led up to the shooting and said that he remained in pain for days after he was struck on the head by Kinney. Erickson said he did not intend to kill Kinney when he went to his home and that he only wanted to beat him up for assaulting his wife.

But when he arrived, he took a 9mm Ruger pistol from the center console of his truck, placed the holster on the hood of his vehicle and fired a single shot into the air.

Erickson conceded that nothing prevented him from calling the police from his home to report the assault on Sue, or remaining in his vehicle when Kinney approached with a shovel in his hands, or from simply turning his vehicle around and going home.

SEE TRIAL • PAGE A5

Not standing still

Local dancer documents her paralysis, recovery

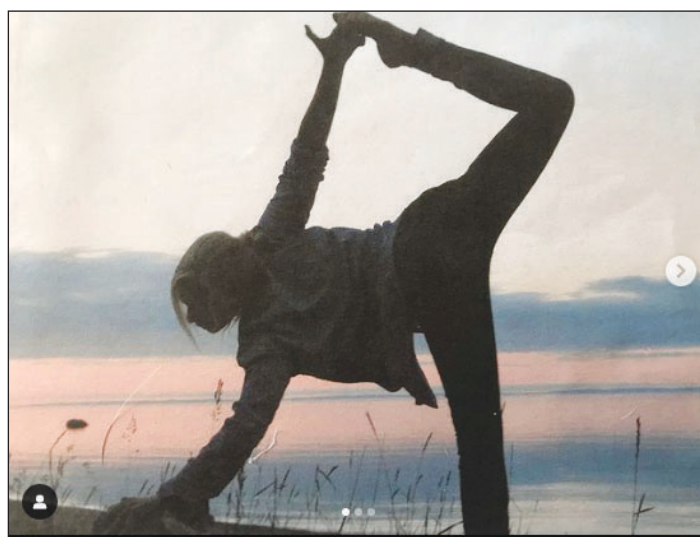
BY TOM STANKARD,
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At age 27, Kelsey Peterson had the rest of her life all figured out.

She first earned a college degree in dance and then set her sights on a career in dancing and yoga. But that all changed one summer night in 2012 on Lake Superior. On the eve of Independence Day, she dove into the lake's refreshing water and smacked headfirst into the bottom of the lake.

She suffered spinal cord injury and emerged paralyzed from the chest down, robbed not only of her ability to move most of her limbs but also of her identity as a dancer.

While grappling with the realities of life as a paraplegic, the Madeline Island resident came to believe that sharing her story would be therapeutic and could offer a lesson to



Before her injury, Peterson was embarking on a career as a professional dancer and yoga instructor. (Contributed photo)

others. She began work on a documentary that gives viewers a glimpse into her life before the accident, how it affected her and how she has come to embrace her new life.

The documentary, which will show locally Aug. 9 and 10, follows Peterson on her path toward acceptance as she finds peers in the spinal cord injury community

across the United States — and rediscovers the joy of dancing from a wheelchair.

From dancer to disabled

Peterson's body has always moved to music, as far back as she can remember. Dance allowed her to express herself as a person and an artist.

SEE DANCER • PAGE A5

OBITUARIES: A7

> **Joyce Gordon-Bratti:** Eau Claire

> **Raymond John Guski:** Hammond

MAILING LABEL ONLY

Aid for animals

CHA challenges kids to sell lemonade for animal shelter

BY TOM STANKARD
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Emery Roush can't abide the idea of animals suffering.

The 12-year-old volunteers at Ashland's Chequamegon Humane Association shelter about once a month and is set to begin training at Helping PAWS Pet Rescue in Washburn so she can help unwanted and sometimes mistreated pets get a new lease on life and find loving homes.

"That's my passion — animals. My dog is my best friend. We got her from CHA at age 2. She sleeps in my bed every night. We're two peas in a pod," she said.

But CHA, which recently set the unenviable mark of housing 100 surrendered or



Emery Roush, left, and her friend Graceyn McMerney have accepted Chequamegon Humane Association's challenge to sell lemonade to raise money for the pet shelter. (Contributed photo)

stray pets for the first time, needs more than just volunteers. It put out a call for local kids to help raise money to pay for food, medical care

and supplies at the shelter, and Emery was one of the first to sign up.

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