

It counts



Ashland Election Specialist Sarah Szymaniak conducted public testing on election equipment earlier this month ahead of the Aug. 9 primary.

All municipalities are required to conduct a public test of voting equipment within 10 days of each election to confirm the accuracy of equipment programming. Szymaniak wants to remind voters not to use the ballot boxes for absentee ballots. Instead, she encourages residents to mail them, drop them off at City Hall or turn them in at the polls on Election Day. (Contributed photo)



Randy Erickson, who is free on bond, is flanked by family members following the end of testimony in his first-degree intentional homicide trial in Bayfield County. (Rick Olivo/Staff photo)

» TRIAL

FROM PAGE A1

“You chose to engage with a man who had beaten up your wife,” Assistant Attorney General Adrienne Blais said. “He beat up my wife. I was not going to let him get away with that,” Erickson said.

Erickson said that Kinney advanced on him when he arrived and was jabbing him with a shovel, trying to back him up.

Blais then read from a transcript of a recording taken by Erickson’s daughter, who accompanied him to Kinney’s home. “You are going to die, you f.....,” Erickson told Kinney in that video. “I’m going to f...ing shoot you.”

Blais also pointed out that Kinney told Erickson 12 times to put the gun down and that at one point, Erickson told Kinney to get down on his hands and knees and ask beg for him to drop his gun.

Erickson said all of the conflict took place in just a few moments and that he believed his life and that of his daughter were in danger when he shot Kinney. Blais said that a total of nine shots had been

fired in the incident. She asked Erickson since he had been a trained firefighter if he had performed CPR on Kinney after firing the fatal shot. He said he had not, and also said he did not check to see if Kinney was alive after the shooting.

The final witness was James Gripp. He said the visuals provided by his firm were prepared using aerial views of the location and laser scan data gathered by police investigators. The visuals included views of what the struggle between Erickson and Kinney looked like, based on the descriptions of Erickson and his daughter.

The prosecution noted that such illustrations were only based on what the Ericksons said happened, which Gripp agreed was the case.

Gripp said that nothing from the evidence produced by investigators contradicted the illustrations he provided in court.

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» DANCER

FROM PAGE A1

“You discover parts of yourself and new ways to move and new ways to move with other bodies and connect with others. No body looks and moves the same,” she said.

That certainly was true after the accident, when her body couldn’t move as it had before. Peterson is paralyzed from the waist down and has only limited control of her upper body.

She could have let her physical condition dictate the rest of her life. But she chose not to.

“We’re always changing. Life is always throwing things at us. We have to evolve because there is no manual,” Peterson said.

One of the biggest lessons Peterson said her injury has taught her is the importance of self-love.

“I’m constantly working on that. That way you’re aware of who you are,” she said.

A new identity

But she hasn’t done it alone.

Her mom, Tori Moore, has been by her side and the close-knit community on Madeline Island has also supported her recovery.

“My mom has been my rock and support system. She would do anything for me. I’ve been able to do a lot because of her,” she said. “Madeline Island has been incredibly supportive. I wouldn’t be where I am without them. I have been really lucky in that way.”

Being forced to move around in a wheelchair has forced her to redefine who she is — no longer an elegant dancer whose legs propel her



Peterson, seen in the wheelchair that she won't allow to define her life, hopes her story helps inspire others and bring about change. (Contributed photo)

If You Go

The Bay Area Film Society will present two screenings of “Move Me,” directed and produced by local filmmaker Kelsey Peterson:

- Tuesday, Aug. 9 at the Bell Street Tavern on Madeline Island. A meet-and-greet starts 7 p.m. followed by the film at 8:30 p.m.
- Wednesday at the Bay Theater in Ashland at 7:30 p.m. with a question-and-answer session afterward.

gracefully as music moves her.

“Having an injury, that changes your physicality. You have to figure out your new version of human. I am a woman with a disability. I have to interact differently. I have to be aware of what feels good to me and how to make life more acceptable and how to ask for that help,” Peterson said.

Finding new footing

Peterson didn’t think she had the courage to

dance again, but her friend Gabriel Rodreick challenged her to try it in a new body that doesn’t move the way her old body did.

“He knew I wanted to dance again and that was daunting. My own doubt was getting the best of me. I couldn’t see how I would be dancer in this body again,” she said.

She tried dancing in the chair, moving her upper body and arms around to the music and across the floor with

help. And though frustrated that she couldn’t move like she used to, she said, “It took me away from my ego and let me be me.”

“It felt like returning home,” she added.

Her new form of getting around also opened her eyes to how life is not made for people in wheelchairs, and she wants to do something about that.

“Accessibility is an afterthought a lot of the time. I want to be voice for change for that because accessibility is love. It says you’re human just like me,” Peterson said. “These are things I wouldn’t have thought about before I was injured.”

Showing the world what her life is like was not easy, but Peterson is delighted by responses to the documentary.

It won the Audience Choice Award for best documentary feature at the Minneapolis St. Paul Film Festival this spring.

Bay Area Film Society member Lisa LeP-lavy loved the film and brought it to the Bay Area.

“This is part of our mission — we want to expose people to different types of films they aren’t normally going to see and support local film makers,” she said. “It will be good for people to know her story.”

At each screening, people will be able to meet her and her questions.

Ashland’s Bay Theater Manager Jon Huybrecht can’t wait.

“I’m excited to see the film and see the audience interact and talk to her. Having her do the question and answer session is a big step up for the theater. I’m excited to meet her,” he said.

» LEMONADE

FROM PAGE A1

CHA Director Kari Olinger asked her and others to compete in what she’s calling her “lemon aid” competition for animals, perfectly timed for the dog days of summer. Kids are encouraged to set up lemonade stands — and adults to patronize them — and then donate the proceeds to CHA for a chance to win prizes.

Emery and her friend Graceyn McNerney set up their stand in downtown Washburn, and business has been brisk.

“I’m happy with the turnout. It’s a lot of fun,” Emery said Monday.

Joining the effort is easy, Olinger said. Just construct a lemonade stand and then notify CHA of the time and place you want to sell. Kids can do it once or every day, and can sell baked goods or crafts to bring in even more donations.

After Aug. 12, CHA

will notify the winner. The group or child that sells the most will earn the lemon “aid” stand Top Dog award. Part of the honor includes winning the grand prize — a basket filled with summer goodies, a personal tour of CHA and a play date with the kittens and puppies at the facility.

Scott Roush said he’s proud that Emery is so committed to something she cares about.

“Especially since it was completely her idea. We didn’t have to urge her or anything. It’s great to see her put forth her own effort,” he said.

Funds Emery and others raise are badly needed because it has been a tough year for CHA, Olinger said.

“With donations low and bills high this year, we need your help,” Olinger said in a flier for the competition.

“We have a dog that has a medical condition we’re trying to solve.



Jayme Morey, left, and Kari Olinger of the Chequamegon Humane Association hold puppies that have been adopted. (Tom Stankard/Staff photo)

Bills are racking up for him,” Olinger said. “We have a dog with a chronic infection in her abdomen we have done tests on. Might need surgery to correct. We don’t have the money to spend on them, but don’t want to give them up. Money raised will help give them the care they need.”

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