

The Chetek Alert

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Chetek, Wisconsin | One Dollar & Twenty-Five Cents

FIRST LOOK

Alert office closed for Christmas, New Year's holidays

The Chetek Alert office will be closed starting Friday, Dec. 23. The office will reopen on Monday, Dec. 26, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Chetek Alert office will also be closed on Friday, Dec. 30.

Regular office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Fridays. Happy holidays from your hometown newspaper!



'Tis the Season special section in this week's edition

The Chetek Alert presents the annual 'Tis the Season special section.

Inside the 36-page holiday special, find feature articles on Christmas traditions, outdoor activities, Chetek Christmas celebrations through the years, a preview of Winter Fest, Christmas pet photos and so much more.

County seeks to fill board seat vacancy

Due to the death of Terry Lee, County Board Supervisor in District 4, there is a vacancy on the Barron County Board of Supervisors.

Anyone who resides in the Township of Prairie Lake and is at least 18 years of age and interested in being appointed to fill the balance of the term that runs until April 2024 should email a letter of interest to Chair Louie Okey at louie.okey@co.barron.wi.us no later than Jan. 6, 2023.

Boundaries for Supervisory District 4 are as follows: the Township of Prairie Lake.



CHETEK ALERT PHOTO

City of Chetek employees have worked around the clock to clean up city streets after the winter storm last week that dumped over one foot of snow on the area from Tuesday, Dec. 13 to Thursday, Dec. 15. Pictured above are two city employees using construction equipment to suck up the snow from Knapp St. and shooting it into a truck that transported the snow to the Chetek Industrial Park.

Snow clean-up underway as new storm blows in

BY KENTON TROUTMAN

Chetek was up to its eyeballs in snow and ice after the winter storm that hit the area on Tuesday, Dec. 13. The storm walloped Wisconsin with ice that coated vehicles and roadways before the rain transitioned to snow. Local snow accumulations measured

well over one foot. Xcel Energy and Barron Electric Cooperative reported power outages throughout the area. "More than 90 workers assisted Barron Electric Cooperative Crews with restoration efforts beginning on the evening of Wednesday, Dec. 14, into Thursday morning and continued through the evening of

Sunday, Dec. 18.

Locals had to snowblow or shovel the dense, heavy blanket of snow from their driveways in order to make their commute to work or the grocery store.

One local demographic that could find a silver lining in last week's storm were the students of the Chetek-

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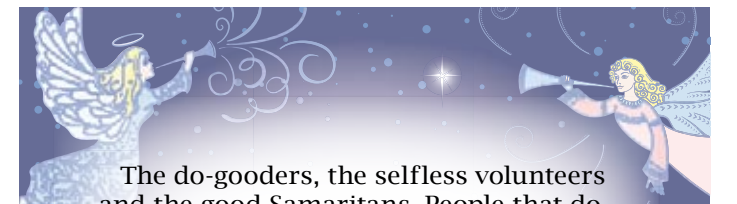
SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Community supports Meadowbrook residents at meat raffle

Phill's Bar and Grill was packed to the brim with area residents for the second annual Great Meat Raffle. The proceeds from the raffle are used to purchase Christmas gifts for Meadowbrook residents. The community purchased paddles at \$75 to enter the raffle. Beth Siems said the event was bigger than last year and had a larger turnout than the 2021 event. The money raised will benefit more than 65 Meadowbrook residents this Christmas. Pictured above from left to right are Darryl Buse, Alex Timm, Bailey Timm, Kelly Timm and Duane Ginder with their raffle winnings.



The Alert's 2022 Angels Among Us nominations



The do-gooders, the selfless volunteers and the good Samaritans. People that do acts of kindness for others without want of recognition or compensation. There are many out there and their work has not gone unnoticed.

The Chetek Alert has asked you, our readers, to tell us who has gone above and beyond with kind, generous or selfless deeds. Here are your nominations, in no particular order.

KEN AND DELORES LAFAIVE

Ken is secretary of the Chetek Lions Club and his wife, Delores, is a past Lions District Governor. Ken's duties have him scheduling meetings, printing agendas, taking notes and minutes. Additionally, Ken also handles correspondence. Above this, he has been the driving force behind purchasing and remodeling the Lions Club food trailer. Ken also helped design and build the life jacket loaner station. More recently, he helped design and build the new pergola at The Center. This past summer, Ken helped paint the interior and exterior of both of the newly remodeled Phillips Park pavilion and the Airport Park pavilion.

Ken and Delores do Meals on Wheels, vision screening for pre-schoolers and grade schoolers at Roselawn Elementary and other local schools. They also headed the pumpkin carving event and helped at the Annual Halloween party for kids.

The Lafaives also gather and recycle plastic bags to be made into benches which are then placed around town and in the parks. Ken also helps with the Deer Hide Program.

Last year the Chetek Lions assumed responsibility for Christmas For Kids, with Delores at the helm. If anyone deserves recognition, it is Ken and Delores Lafaive.

-Anonymous

LORRAINE BIEDRON

Lorraine helps everyone by driving them to appointments, and assisting people with their needs. She loves to bring people food and is a friend to everyone.

-Linda Breed-Starcz

LISA ABBOTT

One can not have enough descriptive words to even give readers a glimpse of the

SEE ANGELS, PAGE A7

Council approves hangar leases, short term rental ordinance

BY KENTON TROUTMAN

The City of Chetek council had its monthly meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 13. Mayor Jeff Martin, council member Thea Hempel, council member Terry Hight, Treasurer and City Clerk Carmen Newman, council member Earl Grover and council member Scott Bachowski were present at the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

During public comment, members of the community

stepped to the podium to voice their concerns and address the council with questions on agenda items. Chuck Harrison a hangar owner at the Chetek Municipal Airport, addressed the council with questions and concerns regarding a letter hangar owners received.

Harrison noted the hangar owners agreed with some of the statements in the letter such as maintaining liability insurance and the city's

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE A7



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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Updated info on Dec. 13 crash that slightly injured two

A firefighter spreads salt in front of this sport utility vehicle that was involved in a two-vehicle crash at 8 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13, at the corner of 25 3/8 Street and County Hwy. D, on the eastern outskirts of Chetek. The Barron County Sheriff's Department reported that the 1996 Chevy Blazer was driven by James W. Watson, 85, of Chetek. The report said Watson was preparing to turn left from eastbound Hwy. D to go north on 25 3/8 Street, but failed to yield the right of way to a 2014 Ford F150 pickup driven by Joshua D. Akins, 38, also of Chetek. The SUV driver admitted he didn't see the approaching pickup as he began the turn. The vehicles collided in the intersection. Both drivers were wearing lap and shoulder belts and sustained suspected minor injuries, but were not transported for treatment, the report said.

COUNCIL: Hangar inspections help council maintain state funding for resurfacing project

FROM PAGE A1

requirement that a hangar owner store an airplane in the hangar. Harrison said there were other statements in the letter that were a cause of concern for he and other hangar owners including the city's inquiry about what was being stored in the hangars, "What we keep in our hangars, which is personal property owned by us, should not be dictated by the city." Harrison concluded if the city were to change the current lease agreement language to no longer require lessees to notify the city of the personal property inside their hangars, it would lessen tensions, "This would not only help us out but it would also help the city out because you would have no issue and we would have no issue."

A previous airport manager at the municipal airport, Harrison asked the council why the city has continued hangar leases. Harrison proposed the city sell the property the hangars are built on and there would no longer be a lease issue. "We would own the property and the hangar, just as a person owns a house and the property it was built on."

Harrison addressed the council at the conclusion of his allotted time, "If the city wants to continue having hangar leases, consideration needs to be taken in how the lease is written and it needs to be rewritten or amended." Hangar owners said they wanted to be included in the amending process of the lease instead of the council making decisions about what the owners may or may not do with their properties.

Mark Lenbom stepped to the podium to address the council about the hangar leases, "Because of my lease, I can't overnight in a camper at my hangar because it's against the lease agreement." Lenbom noted many people camp on the runway at the airport during the Fourth of July holiday and during the boat races in the summer and yet, he is unable to as a hangar owner because of restrictions in the lease agreement.

Kayla Rick addressed the council about ordinance 787A which addresses short term rentals in the City of Chetek. Rick explained to the council that there were sections of the ordinance she had ques-

tions about including the 30 minute radius requirement, which she asked the council to consider amending before voting on it.

Rick noted the current language in the proposed ordinance regarding maximum occupancy, "The language in the proposed ordinance says that maximum occupancy shall not be exceeded at anytime is vague to me." Rick asked the council what that language would mean if her family was having a celebration during the day at the rental or if visitors were sharing a meal with friends that were not overnight guests at the rental. Matthew Rick asked the council if they could define in further detail the verbiage in the proposed ordinance for short term rentals.

Mayor Martin addressed the airport hangar owners and said the council is open to starting an airport commission that would include hangar owners to help bridge the gap, "The airport commission wasn't taken over by the council; no one would show up to the meetings. By default, the council was given responsibility."

Council member Bachowski noted that the lease renewal does not limit things such as snowmobiles, off-road vehicles and recreational vehicles owned by the hangar owner. Bachowski explained to the hangar owners that because the airport is state funded, Public Works Director Dan Knapp has to go to the state to receive funding for the airport resurfacing project. The concern of the council is funding is based on economic impact and usage. The council's reasoning behind conducting hangar inspections is to determine if the hangars are being used for its intended purpose as to not jeopardize the airport's state funding. This answered some of the hangar owners questions about the city's motives behind hangar inspections.

OLD BUSINESS

Hangar lease renewals number 9 and 16 were discussed at the meeting. Council member Hempel asked hangar owners who had concerns about the language in the proposed agreement why they were not at the public hearing at

the November meeting where there could have been a conversation about the agreement before the December meeting when the lease agreement was to be voted on. Some hangar owners said they were unaware of the hearing, but Hempel explained the various avenues the council is required to notify the community of a public hearing.

Council member Bachowski made a motion to approve the new hangar lease renewals, council member Grover seconded. Those in favor of the motion included Bachowski, Grover, and council member Hight and council member Hempel opposed the motion. The motion was carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Bachowski made a motion to table the Articles of Agreement between the City of Chetek and Town of Chetek as joint fire district. Hempel seconded the motion and it was unanimously carried.

Hempel addressed questions asked about the proposed short term rental agreement ordinance during the public comment portion of the meeting. Hempel said the specificity of hosts being within 30 minutes is in case law enforcement needs assistance at a rental. Hempel said this requirement does not mean a person cannot live outside of a 30 minute radius of the rental, but it does mean a second and third party needs to be listed as a contact in case there is an incident.

Council member Hight said the CPD needs some sort of outline to work out of when responding to short term rentals and the council is trying to place basic guidelines to make things easier for the PD.

Hempel told the council she was happy with the proposed ordinance as it was reviewed three times and reviewed by the city's attorney. Hight made a motion to approve ordinance 787A with a \$500 license fee, Grover seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted where Bachowski voted no, Grover yes, Hight voted yes and Hempel voted yes. The motion passed.

SNOW: Stay prepared with adequate supplies

FROM PAGE A1

Weyerhaeuser School District who welcomed the storm and the extra hours of sleep they were given by Father Winter. Schools canceled after school activities on Tuesday, Dec. 13, in preparation of the hazardous road conditions and announced there would be no school Wednesday, Dec. 14, and Thursday, Dec. 15. Students were back in the classroom on Friday, Dec. 16, much to their chagrin.

Some locals were lucky enough to have generators and woodstoves to keep warm and run electricity to their essentials, but others were less fortunate and forced to find hotel rooms or stay with family and friends until the power was restored. Still others needed to hunker down in their homes due to health challenges or animals that could not be transported elsewhere. On Friday, Dec. 16, newly elected 25th Dist. State Sen. Romaine R. Quinn asked Gov. Tony Evers to issue a disaster declaration for his constituents, "I hope the Governor mobilizes the necessary agencies, up to and including the National Guard, to restore critical services to the people of Northern Wisconsin."

As the community braced itself for the continuous snow accumulations, City of Chetek

Public Works Director Dan Knapp said in a Tuesday, Dec. 20, phone call that workers started their workday extra early, "City workers have been working starting at 2 a.m. since last Thursday to keep up with the constant need for snow removal, reports of down powerlines and fallen tree branches." The Public Works Director said that with the incoming storm scheduled to hit the area later today and into Thursday, the community needs to be understanding, "People will need to be patient as we plug away with snow removal to keep roadways clear and safe with the coming storm." The City gathers the snow from the streets and puts it into a dump truck where, emptying it's white cargo on the south side of the Industrial Park located near Whiskey Way bar in Chetek.

According to Barron Electric Cooperative, more than 9,000 of its members were without power for varying degrees of time. The power company noted that the duration of cleanup from last week's storm will be extended due to the number of damaged powerlines and downed tree limbs in the area.

The cooperative did say outages may be anticipated with this week's storm due to the current forecast.

BE PREPARED

The community is encouraged to prepare for a possible power outage this week. Preparations for a power outage include:

- Maintain a 3-5 day drinking water supply. It is encouraged to anticipate each person to a household consuming at least one gallon of water per day.
- Have a manual can opener stored in a handy place with a 3-5 day supply of canned goods and nonperishable foods. These foods include canned meats, soups, and peanut butter.
- Use disposable eating utensils, plates, and bowls to help conserve water in case of a power outage.
- Utilize a grill for outdoor cooking.
- Have a first-aid kit readily available in case of an injury. A first-aid kit should be in both the home and a regularly used vehicle in case of an emergency situation.
- Keep extra cold weather layers, blankets and sleeping bags in an accessible area.
- Fill a bathtub with water for bathroom use before the storm if the residence uses a well.
- Animals are usually forgotten in an emergency. Plan ahead and have water and food set aside in case the power goes out.

ANGELS: They live among us as our neighbors

FROM PAGE A1

the kindness of Lisa Abbott. Lisa is a shining star, a blessing to those that that are in her path. She is authentic, genuine and sincere, to name a few. Lisa, with the support of her husband Greg, has helped so many people in this community that have mentioned they are need of something. It could be anything, a meal, a ride, a flight, a listening ear, a place to park or stay for an undetermined time and on, and on and on. There is not one act of kindness that deserves recognizing over another.

She observes the needs of others daily, and reacts to make that persons day a little bit better. And, she expects nothing in return. I can not thank her enough for the love of her friendship through these past years. Love you Lisa!

-Anonymous

GESA AND TIM TSCHUMPERLIN

Gesa and Tim are Angels Among Us in Chetek. Both Gesa and Tim reached out to help our family during an event that shaped sudden, difficult changes in our family's life. Both Gesa and Tim reached out in many capacities to help find scholastic and social outlets during my son's necessary reprieve from a community he had known his whole life—his school.

The Tschumperlin's attempts to connect us to resources helped us during a confusing and tricky transition period. Not only did they each help us, but I have also observed a number of amazing interactions between Gesa and Tim with their students and the teams they mentor.

Gesa is an excellent teacher and role model. She works tirelessly to provide students alternative and traditional school and life opportunities, even when an outside the box approach is needed. Successful, alternative academic approaches

aren't easy to implement in a public school setting, and Gesa's compassion, problem-solving skills are desperately needed and appreciated in today's school setting by her students.

Tim is an excellent coach and advocate for scholars and athletes of all levels. He is a motivator, teaching kids how to build personal success, using both discipline and a sense of fun and adventure. He helps launch students forward with a foundation of strength, positivity and purpose.

I am so grateful for the Tschumperlin's influence, examples and compassion for the students who are lucky enough to connect with them, and I am thankful for the help they gave us over the last year.

-Chris Dickman-Loew

COMMUNITY OF CHETEK

I just wanted to say thank you to everyone who has helped me during my time of need. After being recently diagnosed with a rare form of breast cancer, I have received so much love and support from the residents of Chetek. So many of you I know from working at the Chetek Cafe and Meat Shop. Since I am unable to work, I don't get to see you as much. Please know I'm thinking of you and I miss you all.

Thank you to everyone who came to my house and cut, split and stacked my firewood for winter. Thank you to my coworkers who picked up the slack for me when I was just too tired to do it.

I also want to thank Al and Miss Kay for taking and picking me up from my chemotherapy appointments every week and to Norbert, Patty, Christine and Dale for just being awesome people who have helped me in more ways than I can list. I am proud to have all of you in my life and cannot thank everyone enough.

-Sherri

CHUCK AMMUNDSON

Since the early 1980s, The Chetek Alert newspa-

per has relied on Chuck to hand deliver the news to about 40 customers. Downtown Chetek residents see Chuck in his green hooded parka, and open boots making his way around town snow, rain or shine to deliver their Wednesday Alert newspaper. It is rare he takes a Wednesday off. When many take a snow day, Chuck is waiting at the newspaper for the sports editor to make his way back from the printery with the newspapers to be dispersed. The ink isn't even dry when Chuck is handed his copies and sets out in sometimes hazardous weather conditions to do his deliveries. Our readers tell us it's the best part of their Wednesday when Chuck arrives with their newspaper and a smile. The staff at Alert appreciate Chuck's friendly greeting and when he tells us a couple of jokes. Chuck also has at least two other part-time jobs downtown doing deliveries or other odd-and-ends jobs around Chetek. He is truly an integral part of living in a small town, and a joy to call him a friend of the community. Thank you Chuck for your service of more than 40 years.

-Staff at the Alert

DAVE LENTZ AND LEE KILLOREN

In the spirit of giving, two individuals come to mind. These individuals have been gracious with sharing their time, talent and patience for the benefit of our local youth. Collectively, Dave Lentz and Lee Killoren have volunteered more than 30 years to coaching, transporting and coordinating tournaments/competitive events. They built a foundation which provides opportunities for kids to try something new, develop a skill or to simply learn and have fun. As their own children are moving on, and the baton is passed to others, we want to thank them and let them know that they are appreciated. Their dedication has truly had a positive impact on the lives of many.

-Jake and Kris Jacobson