



Man who killed officers had a history of bipolar disorder, schizophrenia

## Shooter's mental state increasingly combative

By Ryan Urban

Reports released by state investigators Friday, May 19, cast the man who shot and killed two police officers last month as being severely mentally ill.

A 945-page report issued by the Wisconsin Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation showed that Glenn Perry, 50, of New Auburn, had a history of bipolar disorder and schizophrenia and that family members had been in a process of getting a mental health commitment for him.

At the time of the shooting, Perry was wanted on warrant for failing to appear in Barron County Circuit Court for a divorce case and for failing to pay child support.

The warrant prompted Chetek police officer Emily Breidenbach, assisted by Cameron police officer

Hunter Scheel, to perform a traffic stop on Perry's vehicle on the afternoon of Saturday, April 8. Perry exited his vehicle, armed with an AR-15 semiautomatic rifle, and proceeded to shoot and kill both officers. Both Breidenbach and Scheel returned fire, and a bullet from one of their weapons hit Perry in his right leg. He collapsed at the scene and later died from the wound to his femoral artery.

Just one day prior to the shooting, a family member had informed the Barron County Sheriff's Department of Perry's declining mental state and a threat to the affect of "If anyone comes up with level four protection (possible referring to body armor) and a gun, they might not leave and go home to their family." Several times in recent months, officers had come to Perry's residence in an attempt to serve papers to him in a divorce case.

On April 7 around noon, Deputy Jason Hagen then emailed police countywide in regards to the risks posed by Perry.

The email stated: "[Redacted] said that Glenn is mentally ill and has really been going off the deep end lately, and he is concerned about Glenn's safety and the safety of law enforcement if we should have contact with Glenn. According to [redacted], Glenn always carries a handgun. Glenn has a lot of animosity toward law enforcement and the government. Glenn made statements to the effect that the 'creator' gave him authority to defend himself at all costs. Glenn wants the governor to give him \$27 million to start a business and overturn the judge's ruling on his divorce, among other unreasonable or delusional thoughts."

Hagen's email concluded, "Use extreme caution if you have the occasion to have contact with him. [Redacted] and his family are trying to put together a three-party commitment. If they get it, we will have to put together a tactical plan on how to get him in custody."

Also that same day, Barron County detective Jason Olson met with Perry's parents and asked what the department could do to help.

The report indicated, based on the account of family members, that the detectives had some doubt, based on state statutes, that Perry would qualify for a mental commitment.

### The shooting

Breidenbach, a four-year veteran of the Chetek Police Department, had reportedly seen the email about Perry and observed his silver Chevy Equinox in Chetek on April 8. Breidenbach proceeded to follow the vehicle out of Chetek, northbound on Hwy. SS.

Breidenbach was reportedly in contact with Chetek Police Chief Ron Ambrozaitis, who told Breidenbach not to make a traffic stop without assistance. A dispatcher also relayed information about taking caution around Perry, though Breidenbach did not confirm hearing the dispatcher's transmission.

Scheel responded to Breidenbach's request for assistance.

After coming around the curve on Hwy. SS south of Cameron, Breidenbach activated the lights on her squad car and Perry pulled his vehicle over in front of the McFarland Cascade manufacturing facility. At that time, Scheel arrived at the scene, turning his police vehicle and pulling up behind Breidenbach.

As soon as Scheel arrived, Breidenbach exited her squad. She did not approach Perry's vehicle, but

rather appeared to shout commands.

Less than 30 seconds later, Perry exited his vehicle and immediately began to shoot at the officers.

Breidenbach radioed "he has a gun" and fired her 9mm service

weapon twice before she was struck and killed. The report indicated that one bullet fired by Perry went through the driver's side door window frame of the squad car before striking Breidenbach.

Perry proceeded to charge at Scheel and fire shots. Scheel, initially positioned at the rear of Breidenbach's squad, retreated behind his

(See Shooting Report page 2A)



**Murder weapon**—Pictured is the AR-15 rifle Glenn Perry used to kill two police officers. Glenn Perry reportedly had multiple weapons and hundreds of rounds of ammunition in his vehicle at the time of the traffic stop on Saturday, April 8. Wisconsin DCI Photo



**As seen from above**—This drone photo shows the scene of a traffic stop and fatal shootout on Hwy. SS south of Cameron between police and a New Auburn man, who was wanted on warrant, on April 8. Chetek police officer Emily Breidenbach and Cameron police officer Hunter Scheel were pronounced deceased at the scene. Glenn Perry later died at a hospital as result of a gunshot wound. According to documents released by state officials last week, Perry's mental health had been deteriorating for months before the fateful day. The blanked out areas are where the bodies of the two officers were found (officer Breidenbach alongside her squad car in the middle of the photo, and Officer Scheel alongside his squad car towards the top of the photo) Wisconsin DCI Photo



**Honor flight participants** — Barron resident Edwin Gunderson, left, and rural Cameron resident Dennis Stillwell traveled to Washington, D.C. on May 15-16 as part of a series of "Never Forgotten Honor Flights" that originate from Central Wisconsin Airport, Mosinee. Both are Vietnam veterans. Photo by Bob Zientara

## Memorial Day observances

A time-honored tradition will be renewed Monday, May 29, as dozens of veterans and hundreds of citizens will gather in communities across the News-Shield circulation area to observe Memorial Day.

Community events include:  
• Barron — The day's observances begin at 8:15 a.m. at Monroe Manor, which will also be the starting point of a parade. The parade begins at 8:30 a.m. and will proceed west to 4th Street, then north to La Salle Avenue, then east to the bridge on the Yellow River.

At 9 a.m. there is a wreath drop at Yellow River Bridge on La Salle Avenue and a gathering at Wayside Cemetery.

Patriotic music will be performed, a scouts detail will circle the flagpole and the American Legion, VFW and AMVETS will post colors. A program

will follow, including an invocation by Chaplain Steven Grosskreutz. The featured speaker will be Barron County assistant veterans service

### Senior Awards program Friday

Barron High School's Senior Award Ceremony will be held at 8:30 a.m. Friday, May 26, in the new BHS gymnasium. Commencement ceremonies will be held in the new gym at 6:00 Friday night.

Both ceremonies, held in honor of BHS and ALAW (Advanced Learning Academy of Wisconsin) graduating seniors, are open to the public.

Some information printed with last week's special senior publication was incorrect. The News-Shield regrets the error.

officer Tami Saleska. In case of bad weather, the 9:30 program will move to the high school gym.

The program will conclude around 10:10 a.m. with a photo of all veterans present. The program then proceeds to New Scandinavia Cemetery at 10:45 a.m., Dallas Cemetery at 11:15 a.m., Evergreen Cemetery at noon and Greenwood Cemetery at 12:30 p.m.

• Cameron — American Legion members are meeting at Cameron at 8 a.m. to begin a journey to five cemeteries where veterans are buried, including Pine Grove, Faaberg, Pioneer Rest, Old Sumner and New Sumner. At 11 a.m. there is a Memorial Day service at Sportsman's Park.

• Almena — Veterans and the public will gather at 10:30 a.m. as VFW

(See Memorial Day page 12A)

## Vietnam vets are honored with 'Never Forgotten Honor Flight'

By Bob Zientara

It was the year 2018 when Barron resident (and retired U.S. Air Force Colonel) Edwin Gunderson, and rural Cameron resident (and former U.S. Army infantryman) Dennis Stillwell submitted their names for a

waiting list to take an "Honor Flight" to Washington, D.C.

It took about five years before they made it to the top of the list. On May 15, 2023, they and dozens of other veterans boarded a chartered Sun Country 737/800 at Central Wisconsin Regional Airport, Mosinee,

for a free round-trip flight to Reagan National Airport, just across the Potomac River from the National Mall.

On what might be described as a "whirlwind bus tour," the local vets then spent a lengthy and rewarding

(See Honor Flight page 12A)

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# Perry barely alive when other officers arrived on scene

Continued from page 1

department truck and returned fire, getting off nine shots with his duty issued .40 caliber handgun. As Perry continued toward him, Scheel moved around to the passenger side of his vehicle. Scheel was hit several times and fell to the ground. Perry fired two final shots at close range, killing Scheel. Perry fired at least 10 rounds at the officers. Both Breidenbach and Scheel were pronounced deceased at the scene of gunshot wounds to their heads.

## The threat subsides

During the shootout, Perry sustained a gunshot wound to the femoral artery in his right leg, resulting in heavy bleeding. Bloody footprints

could be seen tracing Perry's steps from where Scheel fell back to Perry's vehicle, which he sat or leaned on before collapsing.

The traffic stop and shootout lasted about 45 seconds. About 45 seconds after the shooting ended, Barron County sheriff's deputy Kari Storberg arrived at the scene.

In responding to provide assistance, Storberg had initially gone north on Hwy. SS from Hwy. 8, assuming the traffic stop would be done in Cameron.

Storberg turned around and went southbound and saw traffic backed up on Hwy. SS. She maneuvered around the stopped traffic and observed Perry against his vehicle. Storberg, seeing Perry's rifle, did

not immediately engage him, but called for backup. Deputy Storberg exited her law enforcement vehicle and began telling passerby people who had stopped to render aid to stay back from the scene because the scene was not yet secured. Deputy Storberg believed Perry was possibly still alive and could possibly shoot either Deputy Storberg or anyone else who was at the scene.

A short time later she observed him lying on the ground.

Next to arrive were deputies Andy Krahenbuhl and Jonathan Fick, both of whom were off-duty, Rusk County Sheriff's Department investigator Riley Kummert—also off-duty, and Ray Parr, of the Barron Police Department. The officers observed Perry wearing a "chest rig" with a weapon holster. One officer noted that he frequently saw Perry wearing this when he had contact with law enforcement officers.

Perry could still be seen moving on the ground, with firearms within reach.

Eventually the officers coordinated and then approached Perry, handcuffed him, and allowed EMS to render aid. The DCI report stated that Perry had a faint pulse at that time. He later died after being airlifted from the scene to Regions Hospital in Minnesota.

More guns were found in Perry's vehicle and hundreds of rounds of ammunition.

In an interview after the incident, Parr said that based on the amount of weaponry and "chest rig," he believed Perry was going somewhere to cause problems and "create more havoc."

## Perry's history

Perry was evaluated and treated for mental health issues in 2010 and 2011 at a mental health care facility in Cumberland, which has since closed. He was diagnosed as bipolar and schizophrenic.

He was charged in two violent domestic abuse incidents in the spring of 2020, shortly before and after his wife filed for divorce. The incidents resulted in misdemeanor convictions.

A friend of Perry's said he didn't mind police, but didn't like being "pushed around" by them. The friend said he had talked about shooting cops if he felt threatened, but didn't talk of having a plan to shoot police or any particular police officer. The friend said he thought of Perry as "more of a talker, not a doer."

By several accounts, the divorce was hard on Perry and his mental

state.

His ex-wife reported that after their separation, he was prescribed some sort of medication. Others who knew Perry said he refused to take medication for his mental health due to the side effects.

One of his four children reported that Perry "talks pretty bad about cops and trains to kill them more or less." They said Perry had a gun range at his house and used it frequently.

Perry's most recent ex-girlfriend reported that they dated for 3 months and that she broke up with him because he wasn't mentally stable. As soon as she saw "red flags" she ended the relationship and blocked his number, she said.

She described Perry's behavior as "slowly started to spiral downhill."

She said Perry was buying guns every week and saying the country was going to war.

Later, he showed up at her house to tell her about hidden messages in his divorce decree.

The ex-girlfriend said she twice reported to law enforcement that Perry was mentally unstable, and she was "very frustrated and angry that no one listened to her the entire time."

Deputy Fick, who previously worked in the Chetek Police Department, said he had seen many sides or personalities of Perry, including, "normal Glenn, when he was drunk, and when he was losing his mind."

Fick said he knew Perry as "someone who would sometimes act crazy and sometimes fight law enforcement, but he never imagined Perry wanting to 'kill one of us.'"

Chetek Police Lieutenant Jessica Larson, who was off-duty and just happened upon the scene, as well as her husband and former police officer, Shawn Larson, also assisted.

Lt. Larson said that Perry made a complaint to the department against Breidenbach after she issued him citations for failing to stop at a stop sign and an auto exhaust violation. She said she had to review the body cam video of the encounter because of Perry's complaint. Larson said she had numerous encounters with Perry, and described him as "over the top" and said he had been known to come to the Chetek Police Department to "scream" at police.

The Larsons picked up the Chetek Police Department therapy K9 Grizz, who had been in Breidenbach's squad at the time of the traffic stop.

Over the years, Perry had occasional encounters with law enforce-

ment. Several times he called to complain about others' traffic violations or his neighbors' corn dryer being too loud.

A family member said that one of the worst aspects of Perry's bipolar disorder was reckless speeding. They said it also prevented him from holding down a job for long, and that Perry didn't manage his money well and was months behind on his mortgage payments.

In August of 2019, he had to be escorted out of the Barron Area Community Center because he refused to leave the hot tub. He had been banned from the facility due to previous incidents involving harassing an employee and making inappropriate comments toward her.

Once he called police after being locked inside the Barron County gun range near Arland after hours when the automatic gate closed.

Some of Perry's encounters with law enforcement were the result of being a victim of criminal activity.

In 2011 his debit card was used fraudulently after Perry forgot it in an ATM in Rice Lake.

In April of 2022, a woman allegedly stole \$13,400 cash and two guns from Perry, a handgun and an AR-15. The woman allegedly confessed to doing so and police found \$9,200 in cash and the guns, which were returned to Perry in May of 2022. The woman was charged in September of last year, and the case remains open.

Perry previously made complaints of theft to law enforcements, but charges did not result. In one case, a law enforcement officer concluded Perry's complaints stemmed from a schizophrenic episode.

In an interview with Perry's parents after the shooting, they stated that they wished social services had been in contact with Perry instead of law enforcement. They said the child support warrant for Perry "was the straw that broke the camel's back."

## District Attorney report

Last week, Barron County District Attorney Brian Wright also released a report on the incident.

Wright stated that Perry purchased the firearm used in the shooting, and many other guns, legally. Perry had no previous gun violations. Wright also stated that officers Breidenbach and Scheel were justified in firing their weapons at Perry.

The following paragraphs are excerpts from Wright's report:

"Much has been said and reported about how brave and courageous Officer Breidenbach and Officer Scheel were when confronted by Perry, who was intent on killing them. I would add that Officer Breidenbach and Officer Scheel are heroes... Their bravery, courage and sacrifice saved countless lives that day, encompassing other responding law enforcement officers, first responders, and the many innocent men, women and children who were in vehicles traveling on Hwy. SS."

"It is near certainty that Perry, had he remained able, would have fired at other responding officers, but also first responders and anyone else who happened to be in a vehicle driving past or near the scene of the shooting, all of whom were at risk of being directly shot by Perry or caught in the crossfire. Worse yet would have been the risk to the public had Perry been able to drive away to a different location."

"His actions were premeditated. They are the epitome of evil. Perry had for years expressed animosity towards law enforcement and the government in general."

"Perry's actions will forever change the way we see our community, but the anger and hatred we, as a community, will surely feel should be concentrated on Perry, and him alone."

"The deaths of Officer Breidenbach and Officer Scheel are a stark reminder of how police officers put their lives on the line each and every day to protect us. The sworn duty of the police officers to serve and protect should be revered whenever we remember the bravery, courage and sacrifice of Officer Breidenbach and Officer Scheel."



**Amy Gagner Award**—Jacob Bever, senior percussionist in the Barron High School Band, is the 2023 recipient of the Amy Gagner award. Amelia Weise (pictured below) is the recipient of the Outstanding Choir Member Award. Both Jacob and Amelia display superior musicianship, leadership, dependability, and outstanding dedication. The awards were presented by BHS Band Director, Haylee Lytle, and Choir Director, John Krull.



**On the way to Ridgeland** -- Prairie Farm resident Ron Wirth will drive this John Deere 4010 model in Sunday's "Dust 'Em Off & Bust 'Em Loose" truck and tractor pull. Murphy, the family dog, consented to pose for the image. Photo by Bob Zientara

## Tractor, truck pull Sunday at Ridgeland

By Bob Zientara

Veteran Prairie Farm tractor puller Ron Wirth said that he was not comfortable being the focus of a story about the Dust 'Em Off & Bust 'Em Loose tractor and truck pull this Sunday, May 28, 2023, at the Ridgeland Fairgrounds.

While agreeing to allow photos of the tractors he plans to enter next Sunday, Wirth would rather focus on the event, itself, and the money it raises for two organizations in the Ridgeland/Prairie Farm area — the Prairie Farm FFA and the Lions Club.

Wirth said he is one of about a dozen members of the Prairie Farm FFA Alumni. The group raises money for scholarships and helps to cover the cost of sending students on study trips like the annual state and national FFA conventions.

FFA students and family members will be staffing the concession stand at Sunday night's event, and Wirth said that the time that the students contribute will help raise additional money for the FFA chapter and its educational activities.

Volunteers — young and old — are an important part of community life in the Ridgeland and Prairie Farm areas, he added. Without the help of people willing to give their time to events like the Dust 'Em Off & Bust 'Em Loose pull, it wouldn't be possible for groups like FFA and the Lions

to succeed, Wirth said.

As Prairie Farm town chair, Wirth said he has allowed heavy equipment to be used at Ridgeland, free of charge, to get the pulling course ready. He said the town of Vance Creek has done the same.

Wirth operates a family dairy farm close to the Barron-Dunn county line, raising red and black Holsteins, and some beef cattle.

He will be 59 this fall. "I have been pulling 44-45 years," Wirth said. "My son, Nathan (age 34), pulls with me sometimes, too. He runs a farm near Rice Lake."

Ron said that after Nathan married, his father-in-law passed away, so he took over that farm.

"I lost my sidekick," he said. Ron Wirth's tractor fleet includes a restored 1955 Allis Chalmers. He also owns a John Deere 4320 and a 4020, which belonged to his late father and was new in 1964.

"Dad passed away 35 years ago, so that tractor has been babied over the years," he said.

Parked outside the garage were two John Deere 4010's (one a gas model, one a diesel), which he plans to take to next Sunday's pull.

"Ridgeland is the first big pull of the season around here," Wirth said. He said he enjoys the competition.

"I met a lot of good people and made new friends," he added.



**Herb Kohl Excellence Scholarship**—Barron High School honors Fran Peterson, the recipient of the Herb Kohl Excellence Scholarship, for her academic excellence and leadership. She is one of the 190 graduating seniors from across Wisconsin that will receive a \$10,000 scholarship from the Herb Kohl Foundation. Fran was chosen because of her academic achievement, citizenship, and leadership through school and community involvement. She has achieved Academic Excellence by earning a 4.0 grade point average while enrolling in the most rigorous high school and college courses offered to BHS students. Throughout her high school career Fran has been a scholar athlete and was involved in multiple extracurricular activities including National Honor Society, Student Senate, Conservation Club and High School Band. Fran is excited to graduate from Barron High School and will attend St. Michael's College in Colchester, Vermont, where she will major in Health and Exercise Science. Fran is the daughter of Bob Peterson and Jewel Market of Barron.

## Reminiscing on the Farm



**Who:** Adults living at home with memory impairment  
**When:**  
• June 1st-June 15th, Thursdays from 1:00pm-3:30pm  
• July 6th-July 20th, Thursdays from 1:00pm-3:30pm  
• August 3rd-August 17th, Thursdays 1:00pm-3:30pm  
**Where:** Nature's Edge Therapy Center  
2523 14 3/4th Ave. Rice Lake, WI 54868  
**Why:** Nature's Edge Therapy Center will provide a free, safe comfortable space in which caregivers and their loved ones will connect, socialize and incorporate therapeutic activities, utilizing horses, horticulture, and farm animals.  
**Contact:** Call 715-651-9665 to reserve your spot!

The Reminiscing on the Farm Program is located on our 65-acre ranch. We incorporate horse interactions, farm animals, and gardening. This is done through mobility and memory enhancement activities. Our farm setting and animals welcome interactions to involve the senses of awakening memories and discussions.



Nature's Edge  
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## Therapeutic Services for Veterans on the Farm



**Who:** Veterans  
**When:**  
• June 29th  
Thursday from 1:00pm-3:30pm  
• July 27th  
Thursday from 1:00pm-3:30pm  
• September 7th, 21st, 28th  
Thursdays from 1:00pm-3:30  
**Where:** Nature's Edge Therapy Center  
2523 14 3/4th Ave. Rice Lake, WI 54868  
**Why:** Nature's Edge Therapy Center will provide a safe, comfortable space in which veterans can connect, engage, and participate in therapeutic activities utilizing horses, horticulture, and farm animals.  
**Contact:** Call 715-651-9665 to reserve your spot!

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The Therapeutic Services on the Farm program is located on our 65-acre ranch. This is done through therapeutic interactions on a nature-based platform incorporating horses and other farm animals. We will teach ground work and horsemanship skills to assist veterans to navigate post-service life. Our farm setting and animals welcome interactions to involve life long connection.

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