

Marathon County Board of Health

Tuesday, August 11, 2020 at 7:45 AM

Meeting Location: 1000 Lake View Drive, Suite 100
Wausau, WI 54403

The meeting site identified above will be open to the public. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health directives, Marathon County encourages Board of Health members and the public to attend this meeting remotely. To this end, instead of attendance in person, Board of Health members and the public may attend this meeting by telephone conference. If Board of Health members or members of the public cannot attend remotely, Marathon County requests that appropriate safety measures, including adequate social distancing, be utilized by all in-person attendees. Persons wishing to attend the meeting by phone may call into the telephone conference beginning five (5) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number. When you enter the telephone conference, put your phone on mute.

Dial +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
Meeting ID: 851 2896 1112
Password: 882227

Committee Members: John Robinson, Chair; Craig McEwen, Vice-Chair; Lori Shepherd, Secretary; Sandi Cihlar; Dean Danner; Kue Her; Tiffany Lee; Corrie Norrbom

Marathon County Mission Statement: Marathon County Government serves people by leading, coordinating, and providing county, regional, and statewide initiatives. It directly or in cooperation with other public and private partners provides services and creates opportunities that make Marathon County and the surrounding area a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business. (Last updated: 12-20-05)

Marathon County Health Department Mission Statement: To advance a healthy Marathon County community by preventing disease, promoting health, and protecting the public from environmental hazards. (Last updated: 5-7-13)

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Public Comment Period**
3. **Approval of the Minutes of the July 14, 2020 Board of Health Meeting**
4. **Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution**
 - A. None
5. **Policy Discussion and Possible Action**
 - A. Revisit membership opportunities to serve on the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards (WALHDAB) and National Association of Boards of Health (NABOH)
 - B. Overview of the 2021 budget parameters for county departments
 - C. Discuss the unmet and emerging public health needs in light of the department's response to COVID-19 pandemic

- D. Report from the Health & Human Services Committee August 5, 2020 meeting on policy issues impacting public health
 - i. Update on State funding to local health department to carry out pandemic related work
 - ii. Provision of masks to guest at county buildings
 - iii. Update on the work of the Wisconsin Counties' Association workgroup on County Communicable Disease Ordinance best practices

6. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

- A. Update on Marathon County's COVID-19 response efforts and focus for the next 30-90 days
 - i. Health Department's role in supporting Wisconsin Emergency Order #1 relating to preventing the spread of COVID-19 by requiring face coverings in certain situations
 - ii. Health Department response priorities in light of recent surge of COVID-19 cases in Marathon County
- B. Staffing Update

7. Announcements

8. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location, Future Agenda Items:

- A. Confirm September 8, 2020 meeting date and determine agenda topics
 - i. Board of Health Self-Assessment Plan of Work

9. Adjourn

FAXED TO: Daily Herald, City Pages,
Marshfield News, Mid-West Radio Group

Signed _____

THIS NOTICE POSTED AT THE COURTHOUSE

Date _____ Time _____

Date _____ Time _____

By _____

Any person planning to attend this meeting who needs some type of special accommodation in order to participate should call the County Clerk's Office at 715-261-1500 or e-mail infomarathon@mail.co.marathon.wi.us one business day before the meeting.

MARATHON COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2020

Present: Via Zoom Web Conference: John Robinson, Corrie Norrbom, Kue Her, Sandi Cihlar, Craig McEwen, Tiffany Rodriguez-Lee, Lori Shepherd

MCHD Staff: Dale Grosskurth, Joan Theurer, Eileen Eckardt, Judy Burrows, Jon Schmunk, Chris Weisgram, Rachel Klemp-North

Others Present:

1. Call to Order

John Robinson Called the meeting to order at 7:47 a.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the June 2, 2020 Board of Health Meeting

Motion to approve minutes of the June 2, 2020 meeting, with correction made by Craig McEwen. Seconded by Lori Shepherd. Motion approved.

3. Operational Functions Required by Statute, Ordinance, or Resolution

A. None

4. Policy Discussion and Possible Action

A. Discuss membership opportunities to serve on the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards (WALHDB) and National Association of Boards of Health (NABOH)

Joan Theurer shared that Board of Health members are provided membership to the associations. Board of Health members are eligible to serve on the state board as well as with the national association. Historically, Marathon County members have not served in leadership roles with the boards.

Sandi Cihlar asked the thoughts of other members, and if they have had the opportunity to review information from either association. Sandi has been in contact with a representative from the national association, and will reach out to provide an update on discussion held by the Board.

Joan will ensure membership lists are up to date with the new Board of Health members during the last year. John Robinson suggested taking some time to review the information on each associations' website. Additional discussion will continue at the next meeting.

B. Update on the Marathon County Community Health Assessment process and Health Officer's decision to delay until 2021

Joan Theurer shared that in early winter the process of identifying community health priorities was started, and provided a brief overview of the timeline typically used by Marathon County. With response to COVID-19 taking priority, the identification of community health priorities was put on hold, and the decision was made to delay the process until 2021. Joan also shared there has been discussion to also delay the next LIFE Report by a year.

Joan Theurer provided an update on the health priorities that are currently in place, and what the focus will be during the next year. Joan reviewed the amount of reduction in time spent on each of the priorities, as well as the shift in work to COVID-19. Work will most likely focus on alcohol & other drug misuse and abuse, behavioral health, adverse childhood experiences, and the overarching goal of socio-economic factors that affect health.

Judy Burrows shared an update on what the School Based Counseling Consortium is doing to plan for the next school year, given factors such as less staff time available, schools possibly continuing with e-learning or mixed schedules, and ongoing pandemic response.

Joan shared challenges to moving forward, including unknowns for 2021. It is not known how long funding will be available for COVID-19 response, or whether or not a vaccine or treatment will be ready in the next year.

Craig McEwen suggested the importance of reviewing the County's strategic plan, as behavioral health and adverse childhood experiences are specific strategies in the plan.

John Robinson indicated discussion will continue at the next meeting, in relation to the County Budget.

C. Update on Start Right Program funding in light of the adoption of the Marathon County 2020 Budget Repair Plan

John Robinson shared an update on the budget repair plan, including what the County Board looked at in relation to COVID-19 response, and associated effects on revenues. Strategies implemented include freezing of hiring for positions where possible, contractual and material savings, etc. Program savings was looked at, including with Start Right, because not all services are currently operating.

Joan Theurer shared that each department was asked to submit an updated budget. The Health Department's goal was to submit something that was revenue neutral. In addition, the Health Department was to reduce Start Right home visiting contract by \$79,000. Joan worked with Children's Service Society of Wisconsin regarding their contract, and two areas were agreed on for reductions; including discontinuing Play and Learns, and home visiting services being reduced by 20 families. Joan will be discussing the plan for 2021 with the County Administrator.

Discussion on the importance of providing services to the County's youngest and most vulnerable, and the risk of bigger issues in the future if services cannot be provided now.

John Robinson asked if outreach could be completed to families who utilize the services, and also share updated information with 211.

D. Report from the Health & Human Services Committee July 1, 2020 meeting on policy issues impacting public health

John Robinson shared that the last Health & Human Services Committee briefly discussed statutory powers and authority as it relates to the COVID-19 response.

Joan Theurer shared the recommendation for a County Ordinance moved forward to the Health & Human Services Committee, and then the Executive Committee. The Ordinance was paused to allow for further review of concerns raised by the business community, and allow a new state-wide work group to work on the issue. Four guideposts agreed upon by the work-group include: 1) Does the effort protect public health? 2) Can it be implemented (is it practical)? 3) Is the ordinance enforceable? and 4) Will the public find it reasonable and largely engage in voluntary compliance?

Joan shared that meetings continue, and will likely result in a “white paper” outlining health officer authority, and what needs to be in place to carry out enforcement. Recommendations will likely come back to the Board for consideration in August. Joan shared the work-group will also be working on putting together information to provide education on health officer authority.

5. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

A. Update on Marathon County’s COVID-19 response efforts and focus for the next 30-90 days

Joan Theurer provided highlights of response efforts, including seeing an increase in positive cases. Recently the increase in cases has been higher in the 20-39 year old range.

Strategies to control spread include harm reduction, through communication with various groups in the community. The Chamber of Commerce is planning to launch a consumer safety pledge initiative for business to participate in, and a masking campaign. Surveillance is another strategy being used to respond to the pandemic, and a dashboard will be ready to roll out at the end of this week. Boxing in the virus through testing, isolation, contact tracing, and quarantine is the third strategy being used to respond to COVID-19.

Joan shared that testing capacity has continued to increase across health care systems, using the National Guard to support community events to underserved populations. Staffing capacity has limited the monitoring of those isolated and quarantined. There are also challenges with limited infrastructure, as the department has outgrown its current space.

Joan asked Board members what they need to be able to carry out their role in being an informed member, and advocate on behalf of the Health Department.

Tiffany Lee asked what the relationship is with school districts and what guidance has been provided to districts. Joan Theurer shared that Amanda Ostrowski, Public Health Educator, has been working with schools. The Department of Public Instruction has also issued guidance for school districts. Recommendations have also been issued from the state association for implementing school sports.

Discussion on what is being asked of schools to reopen while also ensuring safety of students, staff, and the community overall.

Discussion on what is being done with the Chamber's masking campaign, and with health care agencies, and other sectors regarding de-politicizing the issue of wearing masks.

Joan shared background information on the backlog of negative test results being reported. The priority remains on disease investigation and contact tracing.

Discussion on how to ensure minority groups are not singled out in the community as a result of race and ethnicity information in the dashboard coming out later this week.

6. Announcements

None

7. Next Meeting Date & Time, Location, Future Agenda Items:

- A. Confirm August's meeting date and determine agenda topics
 - i. Board of Health Self-Assessment Plan of Work

8. Adjourn

John Robinson adjourned the meeting at 9:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Shepherd, Secretary
Chris Weisgram, Recorder

**Health Officer Notes
August, 2020**

A. Policy Discussion and Possible Action

A. Revisit membership opportunities to serve on the Wisconsin Association of Local Health Departments and Boards (WALHDAB) and National Association of Boards of Health (NABOH) Board members to revisit leadership opportunities through WALHDAB and NABOH. New members to confirm they have received WALHDAB emails in the past week.

B. Overview of the 2021 budget parameters for county departments

Joan Theurer, Health Officer will provide an overview of the parameters provided to county department in developing the 2021 budget. John Robinson, Chair, Finance, Property and Human Resources Committee can share goals and timeline for the budget process.

C. Discuss the unmet and emerging public health needs in light of the department's response to COVID-19 pandemic

Board members will discuss program needs not being met or emerging as a result of the department's response to the pandemic. Enclosed, find Marathon County Health Department Priority Based Budget Program Inventory dated September 2018 for listing of programs.

D. Report from the Health & Human Services Committee August 5, 2020 meeting on policy issues impacting public health

- i. Update on State funding to local health department to carry out pandemic related work
- ii. Provision of masks to guest at county buildings
- iii. Update on the work of the Wisconsin Counties' Association workgroup on County Communicable Disease Ordinance best practices

Joan Theurer, Health Officer and Board of Health members in attendance will share key takeaways from the items discussed in relationship to the county's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Educational Presentations/Outcome Monitoring Reports

- A. Update on Marathon County's COVID-19 response efforts and focus for the next 30-90 days
- i. Health Department's role in supporting Wisconsin Emergency Order #1 relating to preventing the spread of COVID-19 by requiring face coverings in certain situations
 - ii. Health Department response priorities in light of recent surge of COVID-19 cases in Marathon County

Joan Theurer will share the department's role supporting the Wisconsin Emergency Order #1 regarding face coverings. In addition, Joan will provide an overview of current priorities and metrics being used to monitor the impact of COVID-19 in Marathon County.

B. Staffing

Sam Pinzl, Public Health Educator is resigning as of October 30, 2020 after 5 years of service. A request to fill this position is being made.

August 4, 2020

3. **Announcements**

4. **Next Meeting Date & Time, Location, Future Agenda Items:**

- A. Confirm September 8, 2020 meeting date and determine agenda topics
 - i. Board of Health Self-Assessment Plan of Work

Marathon County Priority Based Budget Program Inventory - September 2018

| Prog# | Program | Description |
|--------------|--|--|
| 178 | Alcohol and Other Drugs | Facilitate the work of community partnerships to reduce the impact of alcohol and other drugs by carrying out strategies at a community, systems and policy level in the area of prevention, treatment and enforcement. This program meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 179 | Child Health | Provide health teaching and care coordination for parents of infants and young children for a variety of conditions including failure to thrive, parents with mental health challenges, or are cognitively or physically challenged. This program includes participation in community coalitions, workgroups with other organizations to address health issues impacting children and families such as Early Years Coalition, Child Death Review Team. This program meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 180 | Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention | Provide health teaching, care coordination, environment investigation, and the issuance of lead abatement orders for children identified with elevated blood lead levels. This program is a requirement for local health departments per DHS 140.04. |
| 181 | Children's Hearing and Vision Screening | Screen and refer children in 4K through grades 3 and 5 in 61 of all public and private school districts in Marathon County. |
| 182 | Communicable Disease Surveillance, Investigation and Control | Conduct surveillance, investigate reportable cases and carryout control measures for reportable communicable diseases. This includes HIV Partner services within a three county area (Marathon, Portage and Wood counties) and Perinatal Hepatitis B services. This program is a requirement for local health departments per DHS 140.04. |
| 183 | Community Health Improvement Planning and Implementation (CHIPP) | Conduct a community assessment, identify community health priorities, develop plans, and evaluate the implementation plans.. This is carried out through the LIFE Report and facilitating community partnerships through coalitions such as Healthy Marathon County, Western Marathon County Healthy Communities, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Healthy Aging, Oral Health. The CHIPP portion of this program is a requirement for local health departments per DHS 140.04. The work of the coalitions meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 184 | Department of Natural Resources Transient Non-Community Water System | Inspect and test Transient Non-Community water systems through a contract with the Department of Natural Resources. |
| 186 | Food Systems and Active Communities | Facilitate the work of community partnership to reduce the impact of obesity and chronic disease by carrying out strategies that include the development of local food systems, active communities and the promotion of breastfeeding. This program meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 188 | Human Health Hazards | Provide information, investigate, issue orders as needed to reduce or eliminate a human health hazard. This program includes conducting environmental health screens on behalf of the Marathon County Treasurer on a fee-for-service basis. In addition, this program includes mercury reduction services through a contract with with the City of Wausau and Town of Rib Mountain which includes: outreach services with dental providers; heating, ventilating and air conditioning contractors; auto repairs; etc. This program is a requirement for local health departments per DHS 140.04. |
| 189 | Immunization | Provide vaccines to children and adults eligible for the Wisconsin Immunization Program. Maintain Marathon County's Immunization Reminder and Recall system for children under the age of three. Provide information and education on vaccine preventable diseases. This program is a requirement for local health departments per DHS 140.04. |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 191 | Licensing - Restaurants, Convenient Stores, Lodging, Campgrounds, Recreational Camps, Swimming Pools, Mobile Home Parks and Body Art Establishments | Provide health inspections and licensing for restaurants, grocery and convenient stores, lodging, campgrounds, recreational/education camps, swimming pools through agent contract with the State of WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. In addition, this program provides health inspections and licensing for mobile home parks and body art establishments through a contract with the State of WI Department of Safety and Professional Services. This program meets requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 195 | Northcentral Radon Information Center | Operate a 12-county consortium to work with local health departments to provide radon information and test kits to individuals, private businesses, and government agencies. This program meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 196 | Northern Regional Center for Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs | Provide training, facilitate community meetings and provider connections to increase local communities service capacity to meet children and youth with special health care needs (birth through 21 years of age). In addition, provide information and referral services to parents and providers. The Northern Regional Center serves 15 county area, and is 1 of 5 in the state. |
| 198 | Public Health Preparedness | Facilitate and lead community partnerships to develop and exercise plans to be prepared to respond to a public health threat or event. This program is in support of Marathon County Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8 Public Health and Medical Services. |
| 199 | Rabies Control | Investigate animal bite incidents, issue quarantines, and arrange for testing of animals to prevent persons from contracting rabies. |
| 200 | Sexually Transmitted Diseases Clinic | Provide screening, testing, treatment and risk reduction counseling for persons diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease, including HIV. This program meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 201 | Start Right - Family Resource Center | Provide parenting education classes, information and referral and support for parents in communities across Marathon County. This program meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 202 | Start Right - First Steps | Provide health teaching and care coordination services for pregnant women and their newborns that are at risk for poor birth outcomes and infant mortality. This program meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 203 | Start Right - Step by Step | Provide one-on-one parent education, case management, and support for parents with a newborn to age five who is at risk for child abuse and neglect. This program meets the requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 204 | Tobacco Control and Prevention | Facilitate the work of community partners to implement tobacco prevention and control strategies among youth and adults in Marathon, Portage and Wood counties as directed by the State of Wisconsin Tobacco Control Contract. This program meets requirement for Level 3 designation of Marathon County Health Department per DHS 140.06. |
| 205 | Tuberculosis Case Management and Therapy | Provide case management and directly observed therapy for persons infected or infectious, active M. tuberculosis. This includes assuring isolation measures. In addition this program carries out contact investigation for active M. tuberculosis cases. This program is a requirement for local health departments per DHS 140.04. |
| 206 | Water Testing Laboratory | Provide water testing services for private and public drinking water sources, including swimming pools. |
| 837 | Changemakers for Behavioral Health | Facilitate the Marathon County School-Based Counseling Consortium to reduce youth depression in Marathon County by increasing access and utilization of onsite mental health services at schools, increase awareness of behavioral health issues impacting youth, and align resources to improve behavioral health outcomes. |

The Record-Review

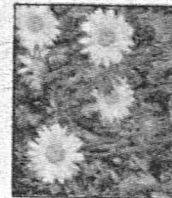
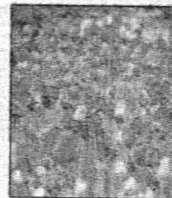
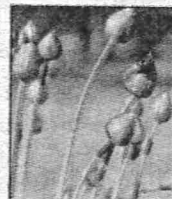
A WISCONSIN HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

ATHENS

EDGAR

MARATHON

STRATFORD



AUG 6 2020

\$1.25

AUGUST 5, 2020
VOLUME 58, NO. 32
SIXTEEN PAGES

County to investigate Trueblood comments

The Marathon County Executive Committee on Monday voted to hire outside counsel to investigate comments county clerk Kim Trueblood made on Facebook.

In the Facebook post, Trueblood, a member of "Parents for Wausau Schools Reopening," told another member of the group that she, as county clerk, had to



State mask mandate

Health department, not police taking mask complaints

By Kevin O'Brien

Public health officials in Marathon County are fielding complaints from the public about people not wearing face coverings, as required by a statewide mandate that took effect last Saturday.

Judy Burrows, public health information officer for the Mar-

athon County Health Departments, said health officials are trying to work with local law enforcement and the district attorney's office to address the mask mandate.

Burrows said their primary goal is to educate the public about the benefits of wearing a mask when it comes to slowing or stopping the spread of a

disease that is spreading rapidly through Marathon County, Wisconsin and the country as a whole.

If people have complaints or questions related to the mask mandate, Burrows said they can call the health department's general office line, 715-261-1900, and whoever answers the phone will be able to ad-



Judy Burrows

See **MASKS/** page 5



A bond Treasurer race set for

Masks

Continued from page 1

dress their concerns.

“As we receive complaints, if we see a need for enforcement, we’ll be working with law enforcement and the DA’s office to see what next steps to take,” she said.

In order for a complaint to be recorded and shared with the district attorney’s office, Burrows said they do need the person filing the complaint to leave their name and contact information.

Burrows noted that there are few exceptions to the mask mandate, including one for those with special medical conditions, so people need to keep that in mind.

“When you see one individual not wearing a mask, don’t assume they’re trying to be non-compliant, because there may be another reason for it,” she said.

Within days after Gov. Tony Evers is-

sued an executive order requiring face coverings in all enclosed spaces to combat the spread of COVID-19, county sheriffs throughout Wisconsin announced they would not be enforcing the emergency order.

In a Facebook post last Friday, Marathon County Sheriff Scott Parks asked residents not to call dispatch to report mask mandate issues, as it would distract from more pressing issues.

“We have limited resources to handle the call volume for our EMS, fire and law enforcement partners,” he wrote.

The sheriff also said local law enforcement agencies have discretion when it comes to the mandate, and can take actions ranging from verbal or written warnings to citations and arrests.

“These discretionary practices are ap-

plied daily in all we do whether normal operations or virus related,” he wrote. “This office will continue to use those discretionary powers in all we do.”

Under the order, which took effect after midnight on Aug. 1, most people age five and older are required to wear a face covering if they are indoors (or in enclosed space). This does not apply to private residences, and is not in effect if the person is alone or with members of their household.

Exceptions are granted for several different situations, such as when people eating or drinking or when wearing a face covering would create a risk for someone doing their job. Exemptions are also allowed for a variety of health issues.

Violation of the order is punishable by

a fine of up to \$200.

The emergency order was issued in conjunction with a new declaration of a statewide public health emergency made by Gov. Evers.

“Wisconsin has experienced a drastic rise in COVID-19 cases throughout the entire state, with 61 of 72 counties (84 percent) representing 96 percent of the state’s population experiencing high COVID-19 activity,” a press release states. “All regions of Wisconsin have high COVID-19 activity levels. This is a dramatic increase from where Wisconsin was in June, when only 19 of 72 counties (26 percent) were experiencing high COVID-19 activity.”

Marathon County has had 589 confirmed cases, 47 hospitalizations and seven deaths.

Trueblood

Continued from page 1

man Kurt Gibbs on Friday to discuss the clerk’s allegedly “offensive comments.”

The administrator said it is a responsibility of the county board to ensure that county employees, including two elected officers, clerk and treasurer, remain true to the county’s code of ethics.

“Marathon County is committed to the highest standards of conduct by and among public officials and employees in

the performance of their public duties,” reads the code of conduct. “Individual and collective adherence to high ethical standards by public officials and employees is central to the creation of and maintenance of public trust and confidence in Marathon County Government.”

State law gives the county board power to remove a county clerk or treasurer. A two thirds vote of the board is required.

Leonhard said it was up to county officials, not himself, to ensure that their county clerk follows the county’s code of ethics, but that following the code means watching what a person says, either verbally or in a written social media post.

“I tell people all of the time that words matter,” he said. “That is extremely true in the most important activities of life and elections are one of those important

things.”

Kim Trueblood did not immediately return a phone call requesting a comment. The Marathon County Executive Committee expects to have results from the outside counsel’s investigation by Monday, Aug. 31.

Happy Sweet 16

92957

From beautiful baby to beautiful lady... it's been a joy watching you grow up.

You're a very precious Grand-daughter, so sweet and charming. You fill our life with cheer, you are our shining star.

Have a fantastic day

Haylee

August 5, 2020

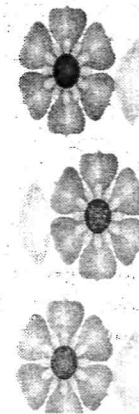


PUBLIC NOTICES

MARATHON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT Notice for Annual Meeting (Section 120.08(1))

Notice is hereby given to qualified electors of the School District of Marathon City that the annual meeting of said district for the transaction of business will be held in the Marathon High School Auditorium, 204 East Street, on Wednesday, the 12th day of August, 2020, at 7 p.m.

Jodi DeBroux, District Clerk
Marathon City School District
Marathon, WI 54449-0000



Tess to receive compensation

The Village of Edgar Board of Trustees met Monday to unanimously vote in favor of compensating village water operator Bill Tess eight hours of work per week for the next three months for telephone consultations; the board will again review its decision in three months.

Village board members reconvened from a closed session meeting, in which

WSH 7-27-2020

brings me great joy. Just to see that one little funny thing brighten their days even for five seconds. It's beautiful."

Kyle Connell

Dinosaur spotted?



to the gym on Monday along County HH in Plover. Connell wears a dinosaur costume head
SA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

Over resident brings smiles wearing T-Rex head while driving on moped

Melissa Siegler Stevens Point Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

ER - A dinosaur was spotted roaming village streets on a bright red moped. While that might sound like the plot of an eccentric children's book, it's all true. Well, kind of. Over resident Kyle Connell, 29, dons a large T-Rex head and drives moped, hoping to elicit smiles and laughs from fellow drivers.

the "Jurassic Park" Connell said he purchased Maskimal from



Wausau public schools to start online as COVID-19 shows no sign of slowing

Alan Hovorka Wausau Daily Herald
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

WAUSAU - Students in the Wausau School District will start the school year online this year as COVID-19 cases continue to surge in Marathon County, the Wausau School Board decided Monday.

The School Board voted 6-3 to not reopen schools this fall for in-person classes and have students begin their 2020-2021 school year online at least for the first quarter of classes. The board will review the decision each month moving forward to decide if the volume of COVID-19 cases, the disease caused by the new coronavirus, allows the district to reopen schools in a mix of online and in-person classes or bring all students back to class.

Wausau Schools Superintendent Keith Hiltz made the recommendation to start online to the full board Monday, prefacing by saying people weren't going to be happy no matter what recommendation the district made and the board approved. He said he asked the community to come together to support one another in making

See MARATHON, Page 6A

Stratford man charged in brothers' fatal stabbing gives up right to hearing

Karen Madden
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

WAUSAU - The homicide case against a Stratford man accused of stabbing two brothers to death in April will continue after he gave up his right to a hearing Tuesday



Police trying to identify body found in river in Wisconsin Rapids

Karen Madden Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

WISCONSIN RAPIDS – Police are trying to determine the identity and cause of death of a man pulled from the Wis-

consin River Monday morning.

The first call of a body near the River-view Expressway bridge came in about 9 a.m. Monday, Wisconsin Rapids Police Chief Erman Blevins said. The man's body was caught in some weeds near a

sandbar, Blevins said.

Personnel from the Wisconsin Rapids Fire Department and Wood County Sheriff's Department helped get the body out of the river, Blevins said. Wood County Coroner Scott Brehm took the body to

Madison for an autopsy, Blevins said.

Blevins said detectives are working on identifying the man. The department does not have a report of a missing man who matches the description, Blevins said.

Dinosaur

Continued from Page 1A

laughing, saying "Look, it's a dinosaur!"

Connell's favorite interaction was with a semitrailer driver who laid on his loud, heavy horn. Connell responded

with his own light, high-pitched horn, making both drivers laugh.

Connell said his moped limits him to driving up to 40 mph, but once he's able to get a new moped, he hopes to drive more places wearing the dinosaur head.

An aspiring actor, Connell recently graduated from John Casablancas Acting and Modeling and has signed with

an agency. He is preparing for an expo in November for actors and models.

Connell said he is inspired by the careers of actors and comedians Jim Carrey and Robin Williams. When he had a bad day growing up, Connell would pop in one of their movies and it would always raise his spirits.

He wants to be someone who can do

that for other people.

"It brings me great joy," Connell said. "Just to see that one little funny thing can brighten their days even for five seconds. It's beautiful."

Contact USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin reporter Melissa Siegler at msiegler@gannett.com. Follow her on Twitter at @Marie2Melissa.

Marathon

Continued from Page 1A

school happen in the fall regardless of the decision.

Hilts said he expects the district to move in and out instructional models for classes, whether in person, a blend of online and in-person or online only for the coming year.

School Board President Tricia Zunker said board members all hoped to reopen for in-person classes in the fall when they approved broad guidelines in June for holding class amid the pandemic. The ongoing surge of COVID-19 cases changed that outlook.

"The data doesn't support that," Zunker said.

She said she wasn't comfortable putting students and teachers at risk of the virus with the ongoing surge of cases and that in-person classes would require the district to make a decision about mandating masks in schools and forcing teachers to act as health care workers.

"If we don't get it right, we could see an explosion of cases here," Zunker said.

The Marathon County Health Department's Amanda Ostrowski said the increasing number of COVID-19 cases could delay the county's response to a positive case inside schools.

"What's important to consider with COVID-19, we as a health department,

we are becoming overwhelmed. We are surging right now," Ostrowski told the School Board before its vote Monday.

As of Monday, 499 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in Marathon County. The county reported also its fourth death on Monday. The county reported almost 60 new cases since last Friday, according to the health department's COVID-19 data dashboard.

School Board member Lance Trollop voted against online-only because the district has yet to present the board with detailed plans on how each of Wausau's three instructional models will work.

Lee Webster, who also voted against an online-only start, said he felt the push for a decision on Monday came from a place of fear.

"I'm very disappointed that we didn't get the full presentation tonight," Webster said.

James Bouché also voted no. Those voting to start the school year online were Zunker, Pat McKee, Ka Lo, Beth Martin, Theresa Miles and Jane Rusch.

Hilts said the district has a working 25-page draft with further details about the three instructional models — in-person, virtual or a mix of both — but won't share until it's complete in order to avoid conflicting information caused by the near-daily developments in the ongoing pandemic.

Contact reporter Alan Hovorka at 715-345-2252 or ahovorka@gannett.com. Follow him on Twitter at @ajhovorka.

Homicide

days before stabbing them.

Noll hid behind a partition the morning of April 7 in the basement of the

and out of the home. Michael Stone tried to use a phone, but Noll took it away from him

er pronounced him dead at the scene.

Noll left the scene and crashed a vehicle about 9:10 a.m. at Wood County A



Bartender Johnny Wilkinson serves customers on July 10 at Matero's Pub and Pizza in Custer. Shortly after reopening, the restaurant closed again because a customer tested positive for COVID-19. PHOTOS BY TORK MASON/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

'We can't close again'

COVID-19 infections cause fallout, adjustments at restaurants

Renee Hickman Wausau Daily Herald
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Just as Chris Daniels of Matero's Pub and Pizza in Custer, a small community northeast of Stevens Point, began to reopen his restaurant's dining room after months of closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he found himself again having to close up shop.

A customer had contracted the illness and Daniels shut down the restaurant as a precaution.

"The health department emailed me," said Daniels, of when he discovered that a customer had been infected with COVID-19. "And then I got a message from the person telling me that he had tested positive and how he felt physically."

Daniels said he found out the customer had the virus on a Monday — when the restaurant was closed. He shut his doors for the rest of the week as employees got themselves tested and the restaurant underwent a deep cleaning and sanitation.

"None of us got sick," Daniels said. "But I just erred on the side of caution."

Daniels is not alone in having to take a step back after opening as the coronavirus continues to present challenges to businesses trying to operate safely across Wisconsin.

When the state Supreme Court overturned an extension of Gov. Tony Evers' safer-at-home order in May, restaurants and other businesses like Daniels' were free to open. But two months after the Supreme Court ruling, there are still no statewide safety requirements for those establishments, even as cases have continued to rise in Wisconsin, hitting nearly 38,000 by Tuesday.

That has resulted in restaurant and bar owners taking a

See RESTAURANTS, Page 5A



At WOW Family Entertainment Center in Wausau, an employee tested positive for the virus a few weeks after the business re-opened, causing owner Evan Greenwood to temporarily close the business for a second time.

"We just want this to get over with as soon as possible. We want to slow the spread. We want to do our part to care about other people."

Evan Greenwood
Owner of WOW Family Entertainment Center in Wausau

Trump reverses on deporting students

Live classes not required for international study

Devi Shastri Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Facing widespread backlash from universities, the Trump administration announced Tuesday it will drop a rule that international students at U.S. universities must take in-person college classes in order to stay in the country.

The decision comes a little more than a week after U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement announced the rule, which reversed previous guidance allowing students on F1 visas to take all their courses online during the coronavirus pandemic.

Eight federal lawsuits have been filed in opposition to the rule, including one multistate suit that Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul signed on to Monday. "This unlawful policy pres-

See STUDENTS, Page 6A

Wisconsinites on disability blocked from pandemic aid for jobless

Oren Oppenheim
Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

A new form of unemployment assistance is being denied to Wisconsinites with disabilities — and Wisconsin is the only state in the nation denying those benefits to its disabled residents during the pandemic.

Because of a law passed by Republican lawmakers in 2013, people who have disabilities and receive payments provided through Social Security Disability Insurance are barred from receiving the new federally funded unemployment benefits for people who have lost work due to the virus outbreak.

The consequences could be severe. For Alan Ferguson, he's at risk of running out of money to pay for medication to keep his suicidal thoughts at bay.

See DISABILITY, Page 7A

WDA 7/16/2020

Restaurants

Continued from Page 1A

wide variety of approaches as they balance health and financial concerns amidst the pandemic.

Many local establishments now require employees to wear surgical or cloth face masks as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, but the CDC says those masks are meant to stop the spread of the virus from the wearer to other people. That means customers are protected from employees, but employees can be left more vulnerable when customers don't themselves wear masks.

At WOW Family Entertainment Center in Wausau, an employee tested positive for the virus a few weeks after the bar, restaurant and arcade re-opened on May 21, causing owner Evan Greenwood to temporarily close the business for a second time.

According to a June 17 press release from the Marathon County Health Department, the business worked with the department to notify employees who had close contact with the infected person and conduct a thorough cleaning.

Greenwood said WOW was not required to close but he thought it was the best decision — despite the financial hit.

"We care about our customers and our employees more than we care about profits," Greenwood said.

On June 30, WOW re-opened, this time with a requirement that customers who are not dining or drinking at the bar wear a mask. Previously, Greenwood said, they had simply advised customers to wear them.

"We just want this to get over with as soon as possible. We want to slow the spread. We want to do our part to care about other people."

With mask-wearing becoming increasingly politicized at the national level, Greenwood said most guests are happy to wear them, but a few react angrily.

"There has been a couple that have been less than friendly," he said. For those customers, Greenwood said, employees tell them "If you don't want to wear a mask, we respect your right as an American, but we're going to politely ask you to leave and hope you come back when you don't have to wear a mask anymore."



Matero's Pub and Pizza is seen on Friday along Highway 66 in Custer.

TORK MASON/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

Shutting down a last resort

Judy Burrows, a public information officer at the Marathon County Health Department, said businesses are notified when an infected person has visited them via local contact tracing programs.

The county Health Department's contact tracers reach out to people who have become infected with COVID-19 to learn where the infected person had been recently, and who they were with, especially taking note of people who have had prolonged contact with the infected person. Burrows said "prolonged contact" is defined as having been within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes of someone who tests positive.

Where necessary, Burrows said, the department will follow up with businesses where the infected person has been as an employee or a customer, and make recommendations depending on the situation.

"We work with the business to find out more about — what is the work environment, what policies does that business have in place," Burrows said.

The Marathon County Health Department encourages businesses to evaluate the number of close contacts it has had to a person with COVID-19, the possibility of further spread, and whether it's possible to take measures like increased social distancing, mask wearing and sanitizing when determining what to do next, she said.

And although many businesses have

chosen to shut down following a COVID-19 case, Burrows said that isn't always necessary. In fact, recommending a shutdown is generally the last resort for the department.

"We would much rather work with them to put good practices in place and help them determine how to make their environment safer," she said.

Point After Pub and Grill in Stevens Point is among the businesses that continued to operate after being notified that a person who had COVID-19 had been on its premises. The restaurant re-opened its dining room on June 3 for the first time after the safer-at-home order but posted on its Facebook page June 10 that a customer who tested positive for the virus had visited the same day it opened.

Another post on its business page explained Point After's decision to stay open as necessary to keep its business afloat.

"I'm sure a ton of people have been exposed and I know the health department is doing what they can to quarantine these individuals," the post read, but, "if I continue to close the doors there will not be a Point After."

"We will continue to sanitize non-stop as we have been every single day and continue keeping tables six feet apart to try and keep everyone safe and healthy as best we can!," the post said.

Point After did not return calls requesting comment.

Burrows said going out to eat inside a

restaurant is risky whether or not there has been a recorded COVID-19 case there. She said she understands that dining out is great experience that people obviously miss, but that there are things about eating in a restaurant that make it an especially risky activity when it comes to COVID-19 transmission — for example, sitting in close proximity to other members of your party and conversing, and not being able to wear a mask while eating or drinking.

"I think anybody that goes into a public retail place or restaurant needs to understand that COVID is present in our community and there is a likelihood that there is someone in that place at the same time they are that has COVID disease," she said.

Some measures businesses are taking, such as extra cleaning of frequently touched surfaces, could make a difference, Burrows said.

That's what Daniels said he did while Matero's was shut down.

When the restaurant re-opened, it focused on curbside pick-up, although the dining room and patio were re-opened as well. Daniels said the dining room now has only four tables, spaced more than 6 feet apart.

He said closing down had a huge impact on his business and his staff, and he won't do it a second time even if another COVID-positive person comes to the restaurant.

"It was a week's worth of business," Daniels said.

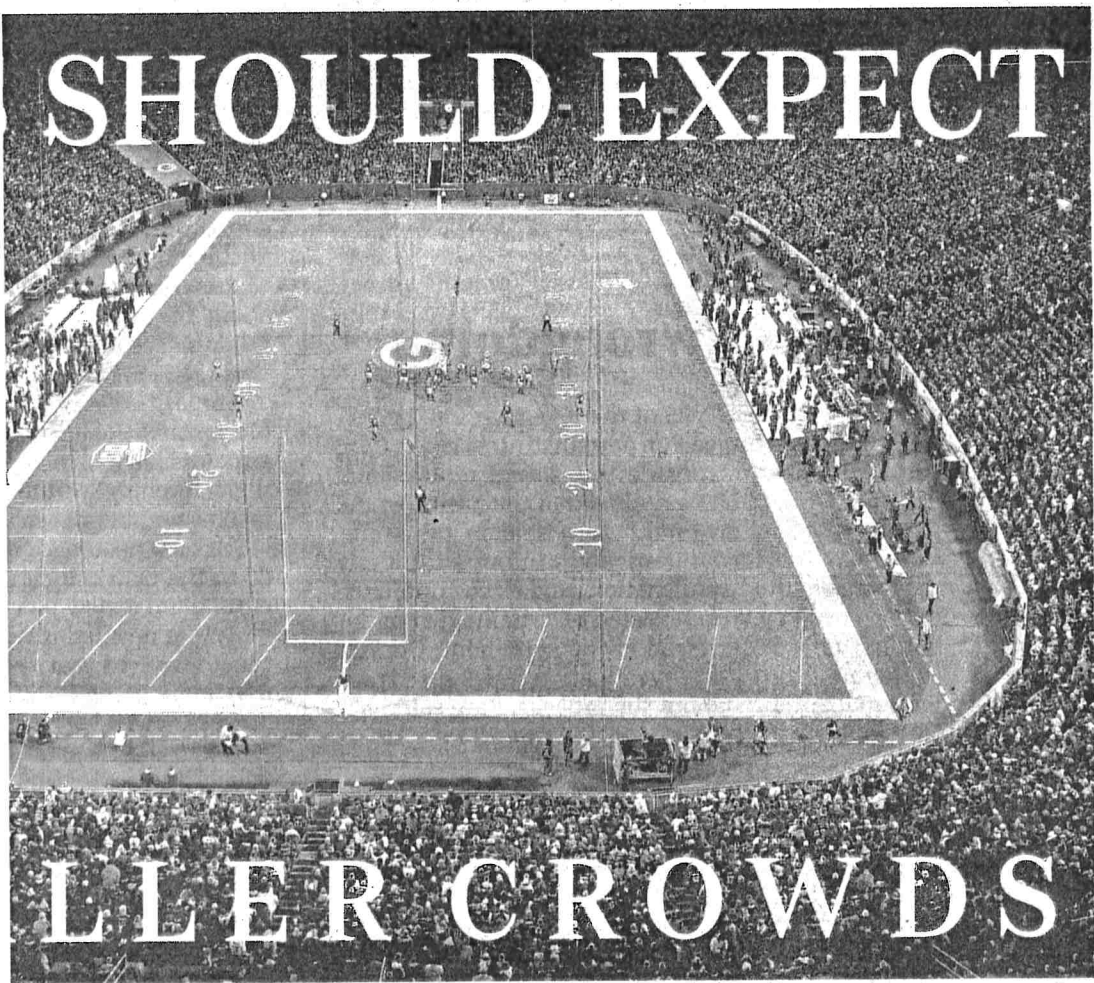
"It was their only job. It was their full-time job," he said of several of his employees. "To just go unannounced without a week's worth of pay is difficult — as it was for me."

"We can't close again," he said.

Burrows encourages customers to continue to patronize local restaurants, but to take advantage of carryout options vs. eating in the businesses' dining rooms.

"Dining out can be modified in a way that makes it safer," Burrows said, "but I don't believe there is any public place right now that is completely safe."

Renee Hickman is a Report For America corps member based at the Wausau Daily Herald covering rural issues in Wisconsin. Contact at rhickman@gannett.com or follow her on Twitter at @ReneeNHickman. Please consider supporting journalism that informs our democracy with a tax-deductible gift to this reporting effort at WausauDailyHerald.com/RFA.



SHOULD EXPECT

LLER CROWDS

estimate a maximum 10,000 to 12,000 fans will be allowed at games this season. JSA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

ate maximum of 12,000 fans at games this season

Press-Gazette WISIN

Green Bay maximum will be al- son. CEO Mark st glimpse king about during the f it's 2019-

e between ng capaci- g a Zoom ay. "It's go- experience

ave fewer on health the time. here could

s would be eau Field's



Mark Murphy, Green Bay Packers president and CEO, talks about how the 2020 season likely will be impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

"It's going to be a very different experience and feel in the stadium."

Mark Murphy, Packers President and CEO

Marathon County COVID-19 cases triple

People in their 20s account for most cases

Melissa Siegler Wausau Daily Herald USA TODAY NETWORK-- WISCONSIN

WAUSAU -- As cases of COVID-19 continue to rise in the state and around the nation, Marathon County has seen its total number of confirmed cases more than triple in the past month.

As of Tuesday afternoon, the number of confirmed cases in the county had reached 388, an increase of 277 cases since June 21. The county has an increase of 45 cases since Friday.

The Marathon County Health Department also confirmed the county's third coronavirus-related death Monday. The death was a man who was over age 65 and had underlying medical conditions, according to the health department.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services has classified Marathon County as having a high COVID-19 activity level.

Since the pandemic began, 30 people in Marathon County have been hospitalized with the virus, an increase of five people since Friday.

As of Monday, the age group with the most cases in the county was people ages 20 through 29. The group accounts for more than 28% of the county's cases. The age group with the second-highest number of cases -- 30- to 39-year-olds -- made up 16%, according to the health department.

Melissa Moore, acting information officer for the health department, said it's hard to know what's driving the county's surge in cases because the virus has become so prevalent.

That's why contact tracing has proven to be so important. There are two main components of determining if someone has been in close contact with a confirmed case and may be at risk: what type of contact and for how long the contact occurred.

Encountering someone who is in-

See VIRUS, Page 6A

Virus

Continued from Page 1A

ected for under a minute won't necessarily put you at a high risk of contracting the virus, Moore said. Attending a gathering where you're hugging or shaking hands with people and spending more than 15 minutes is going to be more dangerous, she said.

"Any time that we go to gatherings of people, our chance of coming in contact greatly increases whenever it is," Moore said.

Moore emphasized that any time people leave their house, there's a chance they will come in contact with the virus. Since most people are contagious before they show symptoms, it's important to be vigilant.

The health department urges residents to take steps to protect themselves, including wearing a mask in public, social distancing and avoiding large gatherings.

The health department works with businesses, schools and other organizations when they've had a confirmed case to conduct contact tracing.

The department said Monday that a customer who had been to M&R Station, 818 S.Third Ave. in Wausau, three nights in one week had tested positive for the virus. The customer was at the bar between 9 p.m. and 1:45 a.m. on July 9, 10 and 12, the health department said.

Officials encourage anyone at the bar during those times to quarantine for 14 days and to monitor for symptoms.

Health officials also recently reported that a person in summer school in the Mosinee School District tested positive for COVID-19. District leaders closed the school Friday to thoroughly clean the building and to conduct contact tracing. The school reopened Monday.

As of Tuesday afternoon, the health department reported 228 people had recovered from COVID-19. There have been at least 9,803 negative test results in the county.

For more information about COVID-19 in Marathon County, visit the county's website.

Contact USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin reporter Melissa Siegler at msiegler@gannett.com. Follow her on Twitter at @Marie2Melissa.

Inmate tests positive for COVID-19; jail in lockdown

Natalie Brophy Wausau Daily Herald
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

WAUSAU - An inmate at the Marathon County Jail has tested positive for COVID-19, according to the Marathon County Sheriff's Office.

The jail, which the Sheriff's Office runs, was notified Tuesday that an inmate tested positive.

According to the Sheriff's Office, the inmate has been incarcerated during the infectious period and is asymptomatic, in isolation and being medically monitored.


The jail will be on lockdown until 8 a.m. Friday while the Sheriff's Office and Marathon County Health Department investigate and follow up with those who may have had contact with the inmate. The Sheriff's Office is not releasing further information at this time.

Contact Natalie Brophy at 715-216-5452 or nbrophy@gannett.com. Follow @brophy_natalie.

FAST AND RELIABLE
**ROOF
INSTALLATION**
AT THE RIGHT COST!

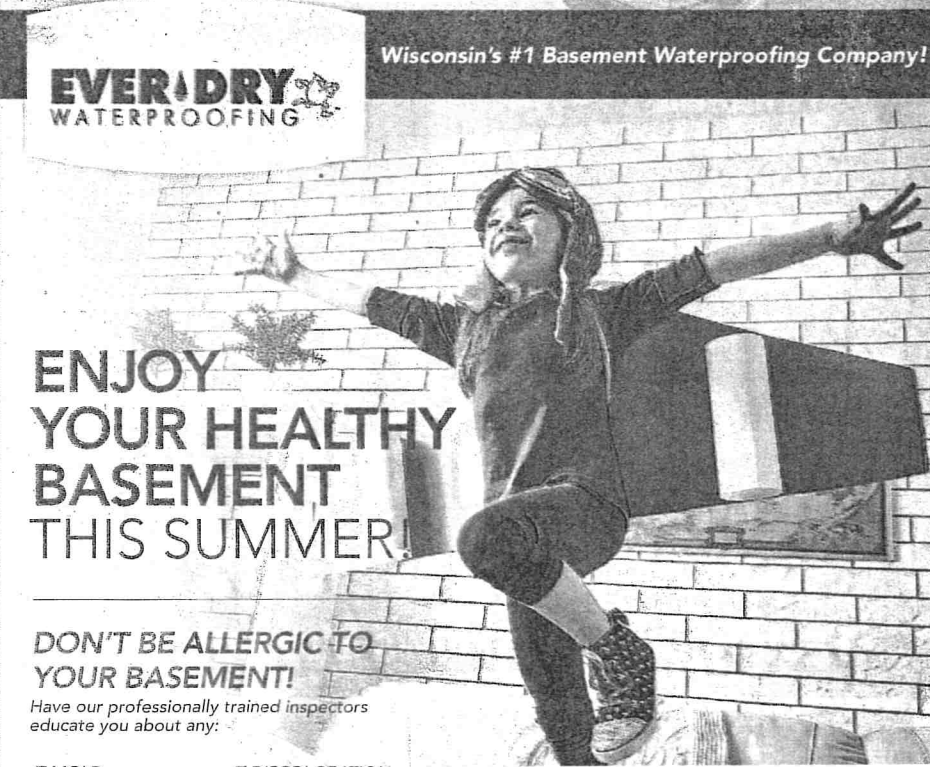
THE MANY SIGNS YOU
MAY NEED A ROOF
REPLACEMENT:

- Your shingles are broken, torn apart, coming off, buckling, cracked, or missing altogether
- Your roof is beginning to leak into your home, creating warped spots in your ceiling
- The shingles/tiles on your roof are discolored, missing, or just look worn down
- The flashing on your roof is damaged
- There are evident signs of wood rot and mold growing, allowing your roof to succumb to deterioration



Wisconsin's #1 Basement Waterproofing Company!

EVER-DRY
WATERPROOFING



**ENJOY
YOUR HEALTHY
BASEMENT
THIS SUMMER!**

**DON'T BE ALLERGIC TO
YOUR BASEMENT!**

Have our professionally trained inspectors educate you about any: