

# Covid Update: Highest New Case Count in Northeast MN Since End of 2020

by Kitty Mayo

## Lake County and Regional Numbers

The ten county region of northeastern Minnesota (considered the Northland) recorded 1,101 cases of COVID-19 for the seven-day period of September 17th-23rd. This is the first time over 1,000 since December 18, 2020 (Source DNT).

New cases in Lake County totaled 23 and St. Louis County totaled 611 during this same time period.

## Vaccination Rates

Lake County's vaccination rate for people 12 years of age and older is currently at 71%. We are number two for "% vaccinated" in the seven county region, with Cook County being number one at 79%.

## Lake Superior School District

Lake View is receiving many questions and comments from parents, employees, community leaders, and the community about LSSD's Safe Return Plan for the school. The plan is on the school's website, and was sent out to parents at the beginning of the school year

Lake County's 14-day case rate on Thursday (9/23) was 45.45 (per 10,000) for the period of September 7<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>. The county's 14-day case rate for September 12<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> was 72.92.

The district's decision to require masking for elementary students and recommended masking for older students stands at the time of publication.

As of September 28<sup>th</sup> Superintendent at LSSD Jay Belcastro stated that with the recent initiation of masking in elementary grades, the district has decided to wait and monitor the situation before making any more decisions about distance learning.

Questions about the school plan should be directed to the superintendent and school board, so as to avoid tying up staff and phones at Lake View.

## Boosters

Per the CDC's authorization and guidance the following are eligible to receive a booster shot now.

Individuals who have already received the 2-dose Pfizer vaccine at least six months ago and are any of the following:

- People over the age of 65
- Residents of long-term care facilities
- People with underlying medical conditions in the age group 50 to 64
- Those with specific medical conditions and based on individual benefits and risks ages 18 to 49
- Individuals with increased risk for exposure and transmission because of their occupation or institutional setting in the 18 to 64 age group

Lake View is offering first, second and booster shots for the Pfizer vaccine for ages 12+. To check your booster eligibility go to: [www.co.lake.mn.us](http://www.co.lake.mn.us). Registration for upcoming clinics is needed. Register online at: [www.co.lake.mn.us](http://www.co.lake.mn.us) or by calling 218-226-4443.

- Wednesday, October 6 from 4:00-5:00 p.m. at Lake View
- Friday, October 8 from 9 a.m.-noon at the Mary MacDonald Building, Silver Bay
- Wednesday, October 13 from 4:00-5:00 p.m. at Lake View
- Wednesday, October 20 from 4:00-5:00 p.m. at Lake View
- Wednesday, October 27 from 2:00-5:00 p.m. at Lake View

Essentia Health in Duluth is ready to administer Covid-19 Pfizer vaccine booster shots for specific populations.

## OBITUARIES

### STEPHEN WILLIAMS



Stephen Williams, a former resident of Grand Marais, passed away peacefully in his home on September 26, 2021, after a courageous battle against pancreatic cancer. Stephen was born July 20, 1948 in Kalamazoo, Michigan to Jack and Mary (Behrens) Williams.

His early years were spent in Racine, Wisconsin. He loved the outdoors and thrived on playing on the banks of Lake Michigan with his brothers and sister. He was active in the Boy Scouts and belonged to the Elks Youth Band in Racine. As a teenager he could often be seen working on old cars in his dad's garage, even before he was old enough to drive.

Stephen attended Horlick High School in Racine. After high school he attended the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point, graduating in 1971, and later earned his teaching certificate from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

He was married to Jean Dusenbery on July 14, 1974 in Grafton, Wisconsin. The couple soon moved to Grand Marais, Minnesota, where they raised their family of three daughters. Steve was always more comfortable working in the woods, than sitting behind a desk. He enjoyed boating, camping, and taking long walks with his family and one or two of the many dogs he shared his life with.

Steve worked for the United States Forest Service in various positions in timber management from 1977- 2009. His legacy includes over 35,000 acres of trees planted in the Superior National Forest under his tour of duty. Steve also participated in wildland fire details throughout the country, specializing in helicopter operations.

He is survived by his wife, Jean, three daughters, Sarah Williams, Erin (Sayer) Larson, and Kimberly (Jack) King, his grandchildren, Sawyer Larson, Emmett Larson, and Koraline King, brothers, John (Susan) Williams, David (Cathi) Williams, sister, Mary Jane (Bill) Huggins, and many nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held on Sunday, October 3, 2021 at 2:30 PM at the United Protestant Church, 17 Horn Boulevard, Silver Bay.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the American Cancer Society.

To share your memories or condolences please visit [www.cavallinfuneralhome.com](http://www.cavallinfuneralhome.com)

Eligible Essentia patients can schedule a vaccine appointment through the MyChart patient portal, by calling (833)494-0836, or visiting an Essentia Health pharmacy.

According to a press release sent out by Essentia last week: "Getting fully vaccinated and following FDA and CDC guidelines for boosters remains the most effective means for preventing hospitalization for COVID-19," said Dr. Peter Henry, chief medical officer at Essentia.

Dr. Henry went on to say; "Most hospitalizations for COVID-19 are in unvaccinated individuals. Reducing COVID hospitalizations improves our ability to have adequate staffing and resources to care for the many other serious illnesses that existed prior to the pandemic, and that have been magnified by patients delaying care for chronic illness during the early stages of the pandemic."

It is likely that people who have received a Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccine will need a booster dose eventually, but that authorization has not yet been determined.

Side effects from a booster shot are possible, and similar to the first two shots. A sore arm,

### DENNIS "KIVA" BLACK

Dennis "Kiva" Black, 58, of Finland, MN passed away on Sunday, September 19, 2021 at St. Luke's Hospital in Duluth.

Dennis was born July 26, 1963, in Chariton, IA, son of Darrell & Carolyn Black. He received his education in Humboldt, IA and graduated from Humboldt High School in 1981. He went to Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, IA his freshman year and then transferred to the University of Northern Iowa where he graduated with highest honors. He loved to read and learn, and he continued his love of learning throughout his life.

Dennis had numerous occupations throughout his life, but one of his favorites was his organic farming and preparing boxes for his customers. He loved living in Finland and the beauty that surrounded him everyday.

Dennis is survived by his mother, Carolyn of Madrid, IA; his sister, Carmen (Terry) of Dallas Center, IA; and numerous friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held October 5, 2021 at the Finland Community Center from 11:00 a.m. til 3:00 p.m.

Memorials may be directed to The Friends of Finland. <https://friendsoffinland.org/donate/>



### DENNIS MICHAEL TOPP

Dennis Michael Topp (Denny Mike), 70, lost his battle with cancer on August 15<sup>th</sup> in Sealy, TX. Dennis was preceded in death by his brother Kristian and sisters Lori Topp and Teri (Brian) Tweed. He is



survived by his wife, Lisa Covey-Topp; children, Kristian, Courtney, Jake and Sydney; grandchildren, Grayson and Olivia; siblings, Leslie Jeanne Pettis (Dale), Thomas (Kim), Joseph (Linda), and Kate Miller (Rene); and numerous nieces and nephews.

Born and raised in Farmington, MN, Dennis graduated from Farmington High School then attended Bemidji State and later Palmer Chiropractic College. Dennis retired from the US Marine Corps Reserves as a Lt Colonel where he flew helicopters.

Dennis married Lisa Schulte (Topp) in 1984 and divorced in 2008. Lisa and Dennis raised four children in Silver Bay, MN. In 2020, Dennis married Lisa Covey and made their home in TX. A service for Dennis was held on Sept 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. in Sealy, TX.

In lieu of flowers, Dennis has asked that a donation be made to the United Ostomy Association of America or to Samaritan's Purse. Cards can be sent to the family at: 428 Lakeview Circle, Sealy, TX 77474.

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redness and swelling, fatigue, headache, muscle pain and fever are all indicators that your immune system is mounting a response to the vaccine.

## Flu Vaccine

Timing is right for people to get their vaccination against the flu virus, with medical experts recommending that those be completed before the end of October. Everyone from age six months up are recommended to get the shot that could prevent serious illness and death, especially in the very young, older, and people with other serious health conditions.

\*It is safe to get both your flu shot and Covid-19 vaccine at the same time.