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WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

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Sports

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Resident objects to highway taxes

By TRISTAN GEHRING
Staff Writer

During the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners on September 5, a public hearing on the matter of amendments to the project list for the Transportation Sales Tax was held. The project list must be updated as work is completed or priorities change, as the tax revenue can only be used for projects listed officially. Laurel Raymond of Blooming Grove Township gave public comment, asking why both the Transportation Sales Tax and Wheelage Tax included with vehicle registration were needed.

Members of the board answered that the Wheelage Tax gives flexibility to funds for maintenance while major construction projects are funded by the sales tax, and that having both funding sources means residents, who use the roads the most, contribute more to their maintenance while everyone using the road to pass through town still contributes through the sales tax. They also asserted that the Transportation Sales Tax reduces the amount of money which must be levied on taxes for road construction projects. The next step for the board is to consider these comments and review their packet on the amendments for future consideration.

Jean Steffens of the license bureau and Shelley Hyatt of the county planning and zoning office approached the board to request approval of a contract with Information Systems Corporation to digitize the county's birth, death and marriage records and the Planning and Zoning Parcel ID records. Because the birth, death and marriage records are considered "vital documents" they must be maintained indefinitely. The physical copies currently in storage are originals in bound books, dating back as far as the 1800s, and are irreplaceable. For the Parcel IDs, there are no statutory requirements to keep originals and the documents can be recreated if necessary, but the process would be arduous in the event of catastrophic losses. The goal of digitizing these records is to create redundancy for vital documents while also streamlining access. There would be a one time cost

County continued on 15

Shredding event September 16

Thrivent Financial is offering a free shredding event on September 16 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Thrivent office located at 201 2nd St. NE, Waseca. Donations benefit Bethlehem Inn, Waseca.

A word from The Word

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way, over the man who carries out evil devices!

Psalm 37:7



Elevator demolished

Crystal Valley structures stood for five decades

Demolition expected to take eight weeks

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

When it was built by Harvest States GTA in 1973, the Crystal Valley feed and grain facility between Janesville and Waseca was state of the art. The grain elevator was about 250 feet tall with concrete 7.5 inches thick. It was poured using slip forms, which meant the work had to continue around the clock.

"About two dozen people have stopped and told us they remember when it was being constructed, or even that they were hired to help with the work," comments Trent Wadd, regional operations manager for Crystal Valley, whose office is located on the same site as the elevator, tucked in a relatively small space between Old and New Highways 14.

Beginning in August, the feed mill, warehouse, and offices, along with the elevator and the two silos located beside it began being demolished using a wide range of large equipment which, large as it is, is dwarfed by the size of the task.

According to Wadd, the concrete demolition will require a total of 8 weeks. He speculates that the process of dropping the structures and then separating out and hauling away the rebar and concrete costs about as much as building them in the first place.

Although he declines to reveal the cost, he observes that some of the bids received for the work were approaching a million dollars.

The contract was granted to Mathiowetz Construction of Sleepy Eye whose general manager for the project is Brad Ommott. Ommott says his company completes roughly 30 demolition projects a year and that, while the Janesville elevator is among the larger ones, it is not the largest.

According to Ommott, a major challenge of the job is separating the immense amount of rebar from the concrete it once supported. Passersby can easily see the piles of materials and the excavation equipment sorting and loading them into side dump trucks.

According to Wadd, the structures have been decommissioned since 2021 for a combination of reasons. For one, the feed mill (at nearly 50 years old) was fast becoming obsolete based on current standards and practices within the feed industry. Besides having limited capacity, it



A 150-foot-tall crane swings a wrecking ball against one of the structures at Crystal Valley Coop between Janesville and Waseca.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

would have taken a considerable investment to bring the facility up to OSHA and FSMA standards for compliance and safety. The two freestanding silos and the six bins within the elevator had a combined total capacity of about 660,000 bushels. A single modern bin owned by Crystal Valley near Hope holds 1.1 million bushels and is structured in a way which allows it to

both receive and release grain without the feed mill to draw corn bushels to the facility. Also, use of the facility decreased because the nearby etha-

nol plant would attract the majority of farmer corn from the area, and the remaining soybean bushel handle is not enough to sustain grain operations economically.

The elevator and silos are being removed now to make room for future dry fertilizer storage and agronomy operations. "We're kind of land-locked here," observes Wadd, sweeping his arm toward the highways to the north and south of

Demolition continued on 4

Waseca Marching Classic Sept. 23

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"We have to be proud," observes Waseca Marching Classic president Edna Burns. "We've got a class act here."

Come Saturday, Sept. 23, the walls of Waseca's buildings will be echoing with music, and the city's streets will be bustling with activity—not only that of its own residents, but because of the hundreds, likely thousands, of visitors in town for the parade at noon and the field show beginning at 5:30 on the high school football field.

The mid-day parade will feature more than 100 units. Leading them will be grand marshals Les and Karen Tlougan, and this year's "Friend of the Classic," Jim Kozan of Waseca Music Company.

Among the many units sponsored by area businesses and organizations will be 10 marching bands; each will perform a parade routine twice; once near the center of downtown and then further north in the vicinity of the Senior Citizens' Center.

"These groups come from schools of all sizes," observes Marching Classic treasurer Mary Williams. "Some will have a few dozen students, some will have well over 100; every one of them puts on a really good performance."

In all, more than 1,200 band students will be in town. The Marching Jays will take part in both the parade and the field show, and will be evaluated and offered feedback by the judges, but will not be under consideration for any awards.

Nine competitors in three classes are in the parade; Twelve bands will compete in the field show.

While there is clearly no cost to view the parade, admission to the field show is \$7 in advance, \$10 the day of. Anyone wishing to purchase the wristbands which show they've paid the admission cost can do so at many area businesses.

The program for the field show will be available digitally using a QR code.

The final element of the Classic is a fireworks display, scheduled for roughly 9 p.m. or

Classic continued on 8

Missionaries tell of flight from Ukraine

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Missionaries Phil and Denise Reed are members of the Waseca Christian Assembly and helped with the church's 20-year celebrations this past weekend.

The two are between assignments just now, having been in Ukraine for 12 years at the time of the Russian attack in February of 2022. They have recently learned their next mission; they will be going to Warsaw, Poland in the near future, where they will be working with Ukrainian refugees.

Among the preparations they are making is an effort to learn at least a smattering of Polish before they go. Phil, who already speaks Russian, notes there are helpful similarities among languages from that region of the world.

They say they are excited to be resuming their work; Phil mentions a digital project he

"I kept wondering. Am I a refugee, or am I only among refugees?"
— Denise Reed

and a group of others have been working on. He refers to it as a "pattern app," and explains that it can be used in any of 15 languages to help lead a small gathering of worshippers through devotions.

"We're really excited about it," says Phil of the app. "It's a way to spread the Word of God even among people who are in transition, or who have to meet in secret."

Phil and Denise are anxious to be back among Ukrainians again, partly because of the abrupt way they had to leave.



LONG LINE - Phil and Denise Reed waited in their car for 60 hours to exit Ukraine. Many people chose to walk instead, getting there much faster.

The two of them were doing their mission work in the vicinity of Krivoy Rog, a Ukrainian city with a population of around 500,000. They explain there had been rumors for weeks that the Russians were planning an invasion. "But I did not speak to a single Ukrainian," recalls Phil, "who believed it would happen."

"The Americans expected it," comments Denise, "but most Ukrainians didn't."

A recommendation had been issued in January by the American Embassy in Kiev that all

Ukraine continued on 2



Missionaries Phil and Denise Reed
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently



Compostings

by Al Batt

Steele County, butter capital of the world

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS’ CLUB MEETING

I’m in a rut. Sometimes I wonder what I’m doing here.

Oh, yeah?
Do you ever wonder that?
Sure, I wonder what you’re doing here, every day.

DRIVING BY BRUCE’S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I’d gotten a buttery spread with a meal. I grew up on a dairy farm. My father wanted real butter with every meal and ours came from the Clarks Grove Creamery. In 1899, Steele County declared itself the butter capital of the world, with 24 creameries at one time. A French chemist created margarine while seeking a prize offered by Emperor Napoleon III. He developed a process that turned beef tallow and milk into a spread tasting like butter; it was called oleomargarine, known as oleo or margarine. American oleo manufacturing began a few years later. In 1885, Minnesota prohibited the production and sale of oleo. Governor Lucius Hubbard announced that sales of “oleomargarine and its kindred abominations” had been halted. A federal law enacted in 1886 recognized margarine as a legal product subject to taxes and regulation. In 1891, Minnesota dairy organizations convinced the legislature to pass a “pink law” allowing oleo to be manufactured and sold in Minnesota, but it had to be colored pink. In 1898, the U.S. Supreme Court declared pink laws unconstitutional. Dairy producers argued that margarine was an unappealing white and its producers shouldn’t be allowed to artificially color their product a butter-like yellow. Dairy producers scored a victory in 1902 when the federal government enacted a law imposing higher taxes on yellow margarine than on white margarine. In 1913, Minnesota’s legislature approved a revision that stated all oleo manufactured and sold in the state had to be 55% white. Oleo producers packaged white margarine with packets of artificial food coloring for consumers to knead in by hand. Oleo mixed with a small percentage of dairy butter—called butterine—became popular. Price worked in margarine’s favor. It’s a misdemeanor to pass off margarine as real butter in Iowa.

He wrote: “I never saw a purple cow; I never hope to see one; But I can tell you, anyhow, I’d rather see than be one.”

Put a weather rock in your yard. It’s a dependable forecaster. If the rock is wet, it’s raining. If the rock is flying, the wind is blowing. If the rock casts a shadow, the sun is shining. If the rock is difficult to see, it’s foggy. If the rock is white, it’s snowing.

ASK AL

“How can I tell if it’s an extended car warranty scam?” If your phone rings, it is.

“Why did castles have a moat around them?” So they wouldn’t have so much lawn to mow.

“Why do some mothers dress baby boys in blue and baby girls in pink?” Because babies can’t dress themselves.

“Why did April 1 become so famous?” It’s the only day between March 31 and April 2.

“When can three elephants stand under one umbrella and not get wet?” When it’s not raining.

NATURE NOTES

I have to look at a chickadee. It’s my favorite bird. If you see a bird, stare at it. It’s an easy way to achieve an enhanced existence. I don’t have a least favorite bird (all of them are lovely), but another that brings me great joy to see or hear is the wood thrush. It flies 200 to 300 miles during a nightly migration, yet it’s referred to as a chunky songbird. Its haunting, flute-like “Frito-Lay” song demands I stop and listen.

The sky was electric. A river of birds stretched across it. A cloud of feathers flew over—a flock of pelicans beautifying the air. It was a glorious sight and an amazing sound. On a windless morning, I could hear the wings of the pelicans. American white pelicans look big enough in the air to have been reported as UFOs. Closer to the ground, I saw messy blue jays in a molt. None of them preferred a chocolate molt. Their heads were featherless, making them the young and the crestless.

In this country, a vulture is sometimes called a buzzard. In much of the rest of the world, a vulture is a vulture and a buzzard is a hawk. The interstate highway system is thought to have increased roadkill, which allowed the turkey vulture to extend its range northward.

MEETING ADJOURNED

“Be kinder to yourself. And then let your kindness flood the world.”—Pema Chodron.

Realizing just how complicated friendships are

I am discovering that I put a lot of emphasis on friendships. I think I’ve always known this, but have recently gone through a friendship breakup that has hit me harder than I expected.

This friend and I have mutual decided to part ways after being best friends for the past two, almost three years. We met freshman year of college and our relationship became super close after that.

But something happened last fall that caused a rift in our relationship. We talked about it afterwards and still decided to stay friends because we were in the same friend group and didn’t want our trouble with each other causing the group to be uncomfortable. But now, a year later, we decided trying to be friends was too much and we needed a break.

This friend breakup is proving to be difficult. I hadn’t realized how many TikToks I send to them every day. How often I text them during the day airing little grievances that don’t matter, but that I know they pretend to care about for my sake. How tempted I was (am) to ask them if they want to run errands with me or get coffee and study.

I have other friends, don’t get me wrong. I love hanging out with my roommates. My best friend and I go on coffee dates when we can, even though we live together. But busy people have



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

busy lives. So I tend to find myself alone in my room at times, trying to convince myself to do homework and be productive even though I’d rather be spending time with people.

And I’m realizing just how complicated friendships are.

My other best friend, who is still in my life (I swear if she isn’t, there’s going to be issues), has made a lot of other friends who are in her major, and they’ve slowly become our friends as well. But she’s the glue who holds the group together. I’m sure every group has the “glue” that at some points is the one holding the group together. They’re great people.

But this event in my life has been a cause for me to look back on other friendships I had. I had good friends throughout middle school and high school, but none compared to how well my college friends and I got along.

I stopped being friends with some-

one in junior high because she and I were so different it was difficult to do anything together. I wanted to go hiking through the woods, but she didn’t like bugs. She wanted to sit and hang out in her room, I wanted to go out and do something. All of my friends I now have, I met on the honors floor in the dorms freshman year. We are all kids who value learning and were involved in a lot of similar activities in high school.

But it’s funny to think how some friendships are built from similarities and some are built from differences. Opposites attract and all that. While some people prefer to have “opposite” friends, I think as a whole we tend to lean more toward those who are more similar. All of my friends I met because they were doing the same thing that I was. Music, classes, work. Maybe for other people it’s church or activities that your kids have in common.

■ Ukraine

from Page 1

Americans leave the country, but the Reeds had chosen to stay.

The “attack” occurred at 4 a.m. on February 24 in many places at once. “There were saboteurs everywhere,” explains Phil.

“They took out power grids and other strategic targets as the troops moved over the border.”

No fighting occurred near their location, however, so the Reeds say they had no idea the war had begun. They were, however, awakened when a regional leader called their phone, but did not stay on the line. “He just wanted to make sure we were awake,” explains Phil. “So we would be aware of what was happening.”

In their email they found a message from that leader: “Given the current situation, do you think it’s time to leave?”

“He told us he wanted us to leave when we could safely do so,” comments Phil.

Serving as a minister to youth in several places in Ukraine, Phil says, “I loved the people I was working with. I didn’t want to leave. But we had to.”

Rather than depart in a state of panic, Phil says he and Denise decided to take a couple days, prepare, and say at least some goodbyes. A certain amount of planning was also necessary: the two had to choose among their belongings, since they could take only what would fit in six suitcases.

“As we made our decisions,” Phil recalls, “a lot of our ‘need to’ items

had to be moved into the ‘want to’ pile.”

Furthermore, fuel was suddenly hard to come by. “Most gas stations would only sell five gallons at a time,” remembers Denise.

Some friends helped them collect two gas cans filled with gas.

“Without those, we wouldn’t have made it,” Phil recalls.

The two climbed into their car and followed the safest route they knew of. Although their ultimate destination was to the south, they traveled to a northward border, away from Russian troops toward the Romanian village of Siret.

“The drive to that border would normally have taken 12 hours,” says Phil. “But it took us 14.”

They stopped only to use the restroom and to refill their gas tank. “We never saw any fighting,” remembers Denise.

Then, as they neared the border, they found themselves in a long line of cars which was barely moving. “We would sit still for a long time. We would turn the car off, because we couldn’t waste the fuel. We never felt like we were in danger. It was really just a very long, very boring and uncomfortable wait.”

Since it was February, they put on additional layers of clothing from their suitcases to stay warm.

Perhaps every 15 minutes to an hour, they would inch forward a few car lengths. It took them nearly three days to work their way to the checkpoint at the border, 60 hours.

“We only left the car to go to the bathroom,” recalls Denise, who mentions the many hundreds of people waiting had little choice but to use nearby trees and bushes—which had very few leaves at that time of year and so did not provide much privacy.

“What should have been a long good-bye had been a short one. And we kept realizing how many losses we had experienced. Someday we hope to go back, but we know it will never be the same.”

— Phil Reed

As the two of them sat in their car, they were passed by many, many people on foot.

“They got to the border long before we did,” notes Phil, commenting on the irony.

Since, with a few legal exceptions, Ukrainian men were not allowed to leave the country, nearly all the people passing them were women and children. Sometimes men would accompany their families as far as the border, then turn around and return past the cars.

The Red Cross and other relief agencies were set up in places along the line and were distributing food and drinks, including hot coffee, to those passing by.

“I kept wondering,” remembers Denise, “am I a refugee, or am I only among refugees?”

When the Reeds did eventually make it to the checkpoint at the border, they noticed that nearly all typical procedures had gone by the wayside. People were being allowed to cross with only a cursory glance at their identification papers. None of the usual questions about Covid were posed. “They just looked at our papers and said ‘You can cross,’” recalls Denise.

Finally, after 82 hours that would normally have been 20, the Reeds arrived at the home of some friends in

Constanta, Romania, who had offered them a place to stay already months before. Phil remembers greeting his friends, socializing for a bit, and then placing a request for a shower.

Although he believed he had done everything to arrange and pay for them in advance, Phil discovered their airline tickets had not been reserved. “It took us two days to get seats on a plane,” he remembers. “But that was actually not so bad, because we could take that time to kind of process everything we had been through.”

“The first month back in the states was really tough,” he says. “What should have been a long good-bye had been a short one. And we kept realizing how many losses we had experienced. Someday we hope to go back, but we know it will never be the same.”

The Reeds have kept in touch with at least some of their acquaintances, communicating mostly over the internet. After nearly two years back in the U.S., they say they are excited about their new assignment in Warsaw.

“It’s time to get back to work,” says Phil. “Faith is growing and Jesus gives us hope. We want to be on our way.”

Like we always were, family

Many thoughts occur to me today as I reflect on the week that was.

Dave Zika has returned from his vacation. He suffered a fall returning from some late night fishing and spent some time recovering. As he says, he’s not as young as he once was. The number of readers who stop in the office, or tell me on the street, how much they love Zika is astounding.

On Saturday I attended my sister Jessica’s baby shower at Club 57. During a casual conversation, my mom turns to my dad and says, “Do you remember Zika?”

I burst out laughing—people who remember him fondly are absolutely everywhere.

By all accounts, my sister’s shower went well. She might be mad at me if I tell the public the name of her future baby, so I won’t share that. What I will say is it’s a girl, and she is due at the end of October.

My sister is a bartender at Barden’s in addition to working for me at the newspapers. She just turned 30 this August.

Growing up the youngest of three in a single parent household was interesting. I tell people I want my future kids to have siblings because I

enjoyed them, despite all their flaws.

Nathan was the oldest and he never went into the newspaper business. He’s more of a free spirit who enjoys riding motorcycles and playing video games.

My sister and I are much more alike. She always got better grades than I did in school and was a much better writer.

I emphasize the importance of siblings during hard times. Yes, the good times are great. Like driving back from a late-night Perkins run, singing Christmas carols together. But the difficult times are what strengthens your relationship. When Dad was having his medical troubles, the only other people who knew what I was going through were Nathan and Jessica.

When we’ve lost loved ones, they know what that feels like. I wouldn’t trade those relationships for the

world.

Being the youngest has its benefits too. Growing up, I would watch Nathan and Jessica do dumb things, make mistakes, and think to myself, “Don’t do that.”

Other times I would tell myself, “I’m definitely trying that!”

At different points, I’ve lived with both my siblings.

Once when I was 18 and mad at my Dad, I stayed with Nathan for a short period. Again, when I turned 20, we shared a place together for a year.

When I went to college, I set up a room at Jessica’s house in Waseca to stay.

And now both of them, well, all of us, are all grown up. Nathan turned 31 this year, and Jessica 30. I turn another year older in November and reflecting on this thought, I realize age doesn’t mean a whole lot other

than there are more problems. At least, people tell me aches and pains accumulate as you get older.

What I’m trying to say is I’m excited to be an uncle, and I’m grateful for the relationship I’ve cultivated with my two great siblings. I hope this doesn’t go to their heads too much.

Also, I should mention we do have an adopted brother Matt, who came into our lives when he was 17-18 and I was 12. Yes, you count too, but I didn’t share a room with you for the first 10 years of my life like Nathan.

P.S. Nathan only tried to kill me with Legos once during my first decade of existence. And Jessica just pushed me into a wall when I was 2 ½ years old and caused me to get 10 stitches in my head.

“Siblings: your only enemy you can’t live without.” – Anonymous

Okay, here’s my actual ending quote: “To the outside world, we all grow old. But not to brothers and sisters. We know each other as we always were, we know each other’s hearts, we share private family jokes. We remember family feuds and secrets, family griefs and joys.” – Clara Ortega



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GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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NEW RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL

Council bans public use of THC

By JESSICA LUTGENS
Staff Writer

The New Richland City Council, in a 3-2 vote, moved to approve an ordinance prohibiting the public consumption of THC during its second meeting of the month on Monday, Aug. 28. Two council members, Jody Wynnemer and Jason Casey, voted against the ordinance. Wynnemer addressed the council regarding his concerns and urged the council to vote against it.

“If I were to smoke a cigarette in the park, or open a beer, both of those are legal; Why can’t I light up a joint?” Wynnemer asked. “Alcohol and tobacco have caused more misery and death in this country than marijuana ever will.”

Wynnemer also expressed dissatisfaction with the \$295 fine for smoking in public, saying it was excessive. “I think a \$25 administrative fee would be much better.”

The 2022 audit of the city’s finances was summarized by Larry Kockelman of Abdo. The audit showed three internal control findings which have been found in previous years and, according to Kockelman, are not uncommon for a city of New Richland’s size. These include limited segregation of duties, preparation of financial statements, and material audit/accounting adjustments. Other internal control findings were due to turnover at a county level.

Recommendations for the city regard internal control documentation and include: develop written policies and procedures, document employee responsibilities, and document processes to improve internal control and help with staff turnover.

Overall, the audit showed the city as being in a relatively good place financially, with cash and investment balances being “pretty steady over the last few years.” The audit report was approved and is posted on the city website.

Bob Johannsen presented the care center report, stating that the average census for July was 36.74. The facility’s audit report showed improving cash flow in the community. Projects in the upcoming months at the center include renovation of the tub room on the 100 hall, ceiling lifts in 12 to 15 rooms to accommodate bariatric residents, and a potential to invest in green energy. As for staffing, the center still has openings for CNAs as well as an RN or LPN. Currently, agency staff are being used to cover shifts. The report was approved.

Shell Johnson presented the PeopleService report. The council approved cleaning and televising of the sanitary sewer system in the southwest part of town at a cost of \$14,827.80.

Eric Hendrickson presented the street/maintenance report, stating that 40 blue cards were issued in July resulting in four shut offs due to lack of payment. It was noted that the new emergency siren was put up on Aug. 12. One purchase request for a new control module for the generator at the water plant at a cost of \$8,697 was approved, to be paid, if possible, with ARPA funds or split between City/Water Enterprise capital funds. The report was approved.

In unfinished business, a contract with Mike Benson for building inspection services effective Jan. 1, 2024 was approved. A bid for the emergency siren totaling \$1,800 from Bader-Bader LLC was also approved.

In new business, a public hearing on the “vacation rentals by owner” ordinance was scheduled for Sept. 11. The council also approved Resolution 23-15 updating the city fee schedule. The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Marching Classic honors Les and Karen Tlougan

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Les and Karen Tlougan are the Grand Marshals for the 2023 Marching Classic Parade. It’s a title they’ve earned, having dedicated many hours to each of the Marching Classic events held over the past three decades.

On Saturday, September 23, they will be seated in a convertible at the front of the procession. Once it’s

completed the route, their car will deliver them back to the viewing stand where, “We’ll get to see the parade!” says Karen, her enthusiasm making it clear that actually sitting still and watching the parade is not how it usually goes.

It was all pretty low-key to start with.

Back between 1985 and 1995, Les and Karen Tlougan had children in the band program, and so it only

seemed right to help out with some of the activities.

“Really, until they’ve worked with it, people have no way of understanding everything that goes into an event like the Classic,” observes Karen. “So we helped.”

“We weren’t directly involved with the very first Classic in 1988,” comments Les, recalling it was prob-

Marshals continued on 4



Grand Marshals for the Waseca Marching Classic, Les and Karen Tlougan. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Friend of the Classic
Owner of Waseca Music lends helping hand

‘Practice, practice, practice,’ says Kozan

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

It’s around 3:30 in the afternoon. School has just let out and customers are coming into Waseca Music in a steady stream. A refurbished clarinet leaves the store with a fifth-grader; a rambunctious sixth-grader takes home a brand new flute. Another beginner needs a lesson book, but already has access to an instrument.

Jim Kozan greets each with a friendly smile, offers advice, and tells the beginning flute player, “You have to practice. I’m 74 years old. I’m in five bands. And that’s what we do: we practice, practice, practice.”

Kozan, now in his eighteenth year of operating the store, remembers that his parents, Ruth and Joe Kozan—who took ownership of the store in 1952—were the grand marshals of the very first Marching Classic parade in 1988. Ruth ran the store and took care of four children during the day. Joe, who also had a job at an area factory, would refurbish and repair instruments in the evening.

As for how he came to be selected as this year’s “friend of the classic” honoree, Kozan is matter-of-fact: “Whatever the music department needs, I take care of them.”

“Whatever they need” has meant a lot of different things over time, Kozan explains.

First and perhaps foremost, his store provides access to instruments. “It’s unusual for a town Waseca’s size to have a music store,” he observes. He says people contact him from a surprisingly wide radius because Waseca Music is one of relatively few stores offering used instruments, which sell, of course, for much lower prices than new ones.

Kozan indicates the spare parts, accessories, lesson books and other items he keeps available. “This is an important resource,” he says.

In addition, “People will never know how much effort it was to sell tickets back before the new performing arts center was built.” Kozan explains that, before the new state-of-the-art venue at the high school was available, there was tremendous competition for “good” seats at school band and choir concerts and plays. Selling the tickets meant recording and making clear which seats were still unsold.

While modern technology makes that task seem easy, Kozan remembers the effort required to take care of it manually, all while treating customers diplomatically.

But mostly, Kozan thinks of the on-the-spot support he has offered during Marching Classic events over the decades, everything from spare parts to spare instruments.



KOZY - Jim Kozan, friend of the Marching Classic, intends to play the accordion during the annual parade Sept. 23. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

He tells of students whose instruments failed to work just prior to parades. One time, a student came to him with a trumpet which could not be repaired in the few minutes available before start time.

“The kid said, ‘I’ll fake it,’” recalls Kozan. “I told him, ‘Don’t do that. You’ll remember it for the rest of your life.’”

Instead, Kozan pressed a replacement trumpet in the student’s hands, telling him to use it.

“Well, of course he didn’t have any money with him,” Kozan states. “I told him, ‘Take it. Don’t hurt it. Bring it back. Everything will be fine.’ And I sent him out.”

Last-minute support prior to the Marching Classic has been such a constant that Kozan jokes he will have to run directly from his store to the convertible he will be riding in during the parade. “Or maybe it can pick me up right out front,” he quips, given that his store is near the start of the parade route.

As for his moments of recognition, Kozan has no intent of doing it the “usual” way, just sitting in the vehicle and waving to the crowd.

“I think I’ll play my accordion,” he comments. “Maybe a few polkas or a waltz.”

“After all, music is what this parade is all about.”

WASECA SCHOOL BOARD

Hudspith introduces school year

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

Superintendent Eric Hudspith began his report at the September 7 Waseca school board workshop discussing how the various buildings and grades began the school year. Grades 7-12 started on Tuesday at the high school; grades K-6 began on Thursday after two days of conferences. Hudspith said he especially enjoyed watching the kindergarten classes as they went through the cafeteria lines for the first time and learned how to enter their lunch numbers. “As a former kindergarten teacher, I never recognized how little they were when they started,” he chuckled. “Because by the end of the year, they’re first graders. But it’s great seeing everyone at all grade levels starting back and getting involved with school and activities again.” Hudspith said enrollment numbers are still fluctuating (as they typically do in August and September) while the district “catches up” with the number of students who have moved in or out of the community, but at the current time the district is down twenty students from last year.

Hudspith highlighted the high number of spectators and the strong effort from the team at the football game against Stewartville the previous week, though the outcome wasn’t the best for the Jays. He was also enthusiastic for the girls’ volleyball game scheduled later that evening. “Of course, they’ll have to ride the bus,” he said almost ruefully. “But they’ve done a lot of work over the last two weeks as a team and with their coaches to feel comfortable as they’re heading down there.” The C squad team would not be playing since a number of team members are “working their way through their injuries and concussion protocols.”

Hudspith shared that the girls were very excited that the bus driver making the trip with them for that evening’s game was Charlie, the driver who was in the accident. “They are excited to see him, to have the chance to make sure he is okay.” Hudspith mentioned that the conference is expanding to include Belle Plaine as the Minnesota River conference will be dissolving after the 2023-24 school year.

Hudspith summarized teacher workshop week next; Literacy training, PLC (Professional Learning Committee) work, and strategic plan work were part of that week. “For the first time in four years, I had a few staff members comment afterwards, ‘I can really see that vision. I can really see where we’re going. That really makes sense to me.’ So that was a good message,” Hudspith told the board, referring to the strategic plan work with the rest of the teachers. Keynote speaker Willow Sweeney also returned to the district for a morning.

In a staffing update, the superintendent shared that they are preparing to interview several

School continued on 8

A judge’s observations

By LANE POWELL
Tri-State Judging Association

For 36 years, the Classic has provided meaningful educational opportunities for students in the performing arts. Its longevity and continued success is due in large part to the organization, dedication, and professionalism of its committee members and sponsors.

TriState Judging Association is

proud to have served the festival for decades, providing constructive feedback to both students and directors.

One of the highlights of the Classic is the educational focus and opportunity for bands to continue to improve through hour-long clinics with judges who have decades of experience in the marching arts. It is also unique in that bands can perform

in the parade venue, field venue, or both, with the chance to earn sweepstakes in each, or in the combined Butch Dufault award, honoring the top band in both. There is also a Herb Streitz award, recognizing the band that exemplifies the best in sportsmanship, performance and character.

Because of all these fine characteristics of the show, the Waseca Classic continues to draw bands of varying

sizes from several states, and with different levels of experience.

What a wonderful way to spend a day, watching kids share their excitement for music and marching in a beautiful community like Waseca.

Lane Powell, Tri-State Judging Association

OBITUARIES

Helen Fowler

HELEN MARIE (GALLAGHER) FOWLER, age 103, of Waseca died Saturday, September 9, 2023, at Lakeshore Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Born August 5, 1920, in St. Mary's Township, a daughter of the late George Walter and Mary Magdalene (Marso) Gallagher. She graduated from Sacred Heart Catholic School, Class of 1937. Following graduation, she attended Mankato Commercial College to earn certifications in Secretarial and Bookkeeping in 1938. Following school, she went on to work for State Farmers Mutual Insurance Company and Jostens prior to her marriage. On October 2, 1948, she married Harry William Fowler Jr., and they owned and operated Fowlers Dairy for the next 24 years. Her most recent occupation would be Bookkeeping and Appliance Sales for Brown Electric Company in Waseca where she worked the last 16 years of her career until her retirement in 1994.

She was a lifetime member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, she was a volunteer for Mayo Clinic Health System, Waseca Senior Center's RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) and was a member of Waseca's Lakeside and Bridge Club. She enjoyed golfing, playing bridge, bowling, bingo, knitting and crocheting. Helen was very socially active and engaged with her community and friends until the day she died.

She is survived by her daughter,



Helen Fowler

Connie Fowler of Warrenton, Virginia; nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her parents and husband; three sons, Mark, Mike, and Brad Fowler; siblings, Marge Baumgartner, Ray and Bob Gallagher, and Irene Nicolin.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 3:00 PM at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca with Father Glenn Frerichs officiating. Visitation will be held for one hour prior to the service at the church.

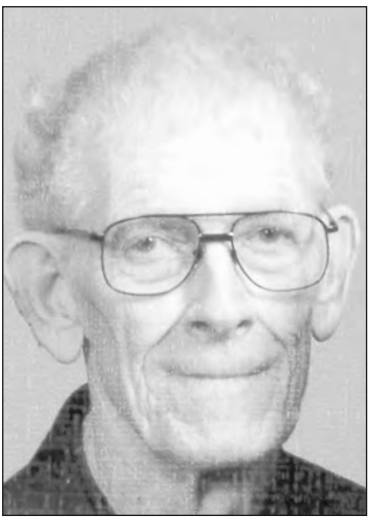
The family has requested no flowers to be sent for the service. In lieu of flowers, please make contributions to Waseca Senior Center or Sacred Heart Catholic Church Building Fund. Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service is handling the arrangements. dsfuneral.com

Richard Schnepf

RICHARD "DICK" PAUL SCHNEPF, age 85, of rural Janesville, died on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at his home with his wife by his side.

Born on May 5, 1938, in Waseca, he was the son of Fred and Adela (Weinkauf) Schnepf. Dick grew up on the family farm in rural Janesville. He attended Trinity Lutheran School thru 8th grade before attending Janesville High School, graduating with the class of 1956. Dick spent a couple of years in Boise, Idaho where he worked as a lineman before moving home and continued his education to become a Master electrician. On June 6, 1959, Dick was united in marriage to Mary Lou Oskey at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Together they made their home on the Schnepf family farm where they raised their five children.

Throughout his life, Dick worked as a lineman, electrician, sold seed for Dahlgren Seeds, and farmed, first alongside his father and later on his own. Dick found a passion for go-kart racing. He was one of the founders and creators of Sprintways International which was built on his land. He thoroughly enjoyed spending time with his grandsons in the garage, working on motors. He loved working on older vehicles, especially anything with a V8 Engine. Dick made every effort to attend any car show within driving distance. Come deer hunting season you could find Dick in his deer stand, spending time with his friends and going for a daily drive with his dog in the Dodge pickup looking for deer. He enjoyed listening to any kind of music whether it was in his garage or vehicle. Dick cherished his grandchildren and always appreciated them stopping by to visit him. He was a member of the Janesville Sportsman's Club, New Ulm Kart Club which later became Sprintways International, and the International Brotherhood of Elec-



Richard Schnepf

trical Workers Local 343 for 65 years. Dick was a lifelong member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville.

Blessed be his memory.

Dick is survived by his wife of 64 years, Mary Lou of rural Janesville; children: Bradley (Kimberly Christenson) Schnepf of Waseca, Dana (Kathleen) Schnepf of North Mankato, Trent Schnepf of Colorado Springs, CO, and Melanie (Lee) Born of Janesville; grandchildren: Ben (Amanda Danberry) Schnepf, Brandon (Chelsea) Schnepf, Jessica (Joshua Browne) Born, Kira (Krystal) Born, Jeremy (Caroline) James, Cody (Brandi) Schnepf, Heather (Brent) Smisek and Rita Osborne; five great grandchildren; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents; son, Corey Schnepf (June 11, 2001); sister, Diana Kennedy (November 29, 2012); and brother-in-law, Edmond Kennedy (July of 2012).

Funeral service were 11:00 AM on Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Interment was in St. John Trinity Lutheran Cemetery in Iosco Township, Waseca County. Visitation was for one hour prior to the service at the church on Tuesday.

Coaching changes through the years



Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika

weight training, AAU, or summer camps and leagues.

In 1972 I came from Luther College to Waseca eager to teach elementary and coach. In 1972 something wonderful happened; Title 1 became law and girls could now participate in school sports. Over a period of time, schools had to offer the same number of sports available to boys during seasons to girls.

In the late 70s into the 80s, there came a movement in the direction of developing boys and girls at younger ages. Parents in Waseca and surrounding schools formed associations with boards and directors. Thus a beginning; the Waseca Basketball Association (WBA). Since parents now had boys and girls playing school basketball, dads and moms with youngsters became involved. Waseca teams would now enter tournaments in other towns on weekends and host a tournament in Waseca. I became involved with my son, Marc, and late daughter, Katie. I believe they started playing in fifth grade: I coached both their teams as part of a group of involved parents. I was blessed because both teams had great talent and I could easily play everyone. When we held tournaments, I officiated other games when we weren't scheduled to play. So many fond memories; trophies and medals, fun and laughter, eating out, shopping in malls between games, and overnight stays in hotels with parents and young boys and girls.

Youth football is now in its eighteenth season in Waseca. Boys begin playing real football in grades 3-6 under the direction of Ed Hoehn, parents, and volunteers. All of the young players are outfitted in the best of hel-

metts and uniforms provided to them through Waseca youth football. A burger fry, breakfast, and football tournament provide money for equipment and keeping the cost down for its young players.

After retiring from coaching varsity football, I coached a fifth-grade team alongside Tim Loonan and Steve Christ. Our sons had all graduated from Waseca and played football. We taught them proper skills to play offense and defense and most of all the proper way to tackle. Ed Hoehn and head varsity coach Brad Wendland laid out fundamentals for coaches to teach. Brad, along with varsity role models, also consistently visited and minged with young future Jays. Playing against other towns like Jordan, Byron, Blooming Prairie, and others was a great growing experience for the young Jays. The youth football program is a class operation; Ed Hoehn still organizes it. There are now four practice fields ready for action with scoreboards and goal posts. Waseca can now host a tournament with 5 games being played at the same time, since it can also use the varsity field.

Being familiar with them, of course I have the most to say about youth basketball and football programs. I would be remiss, though, if I failed to mention other fantastic youth programs in hockey, soccer, tennis, volleyball, softball, baseball, gymnastics, etc. offered in Waseca.

Youth athletic programs can be a great family event. Through them, young participants increase their athletic and social skills; grandparents enjoy going to their games. Varsity coaches inherit boys and girls prepared to play.

I do see some complications that could arise in youth sports and I'll use basketball as an example.

- No church on Sunday; playing in a tournament

- A fifth-grade coach has 20 participants. He or she must put them on an A or B squad, ready to play in an A or B tournament. Lucy makes the A, Shannon is put on B. They are the best of friends. How will parents react? Will they push to put Shannon on A? How about the coach's kid that made the A squad?

- A coach has 15 players and only 12 uniforms. The solution is to cut 3 players for that tournament. How will cut players and parents react? That can be a tough lesson, especially at a fifth-grade level.

- The days of the boy or girl having a growth spurt in eighth or ninth grade and joining the team are over. They are too far behind.

- Parents who have invested years of time, travel, money and training may have a problem if their son or daughter isn't seeing play time at the varsity level.

- The costs for travel, family tickets for a game, playing fees, hotels, and more may place stress on a family's finances.

- After serving as coaches and attending 70 or more games, parents are (or believe themselves to be) experts; They might be harsh or judgemental regarding officials' calls and the head coach's decisions during the game.

- More ninth-, tenth- and even seventh-graders are now starting on varsity basketball teams than ever before. The upperclassmen see the writing on the wall and drop out. The numbers on varsity basketball teams continue to decline.

The days of athletes in high school playing three sports are long gone. Parents, athletes young and old, and coaches will be prepared to handle some unique situations. The kids are back in school, the Friday Night Lights are on, it's time to shout at the top of our lungs – GO JAYS!

Marshals

from Page 3

ably three or four years later that they began helping. For the two of them, remembering the tasks they've performed over the three decades they've volunteered is a review of the ways technology and communication have evolved.

Back when metal "button" pins were the way to show admission had been paid, Karen remembers counting, sorting, and packaging pins so they could be delivered to various businesses. She remembers making ribbon displays with admission buttons pinned on them for sales displays. She says she's grateful that lightweight wristbands are now used, since they're so much easier to work with. Another task was counting programs—hundreds of printed programs. That job, too, no longer exists, since a QR code now allows everyone to access the information digitally.

Modern innovations have not yet wiped the memory, though, of times when Karen and Les would host family gatherings and recruit every-

one there to assist with whatever task was at hand to get ready for the upcoming event.

But even after their daughter Christine graduated in 1989 and their daughter Jessica graduated in 1995, the work continued. Perhaps part of their dedication stemmed from Les' job as the media specialist at the high school, a position he held from 1974 until 2009.

In the end, Karen suggests, it really comes down to making sure a good thing like the Marching Classic thrives and continues.

She has continued to take care of simple but vital tasks while Les has used his skills to continue ensuring the growing and changing media and technology are used to streamline the record-keeping and information sharing with band directors. Judges' comments and feedback, once placed on audio tapes, are now recorded digitally. Videos of each group's performance can be provided to directors online in a timely fashion.

As a member of the Marching Classic leadership team since 2008, there are, at most, two months in the year when Les is not taking care of business for the event. Band directors are contacted already in December or January to "save the date."

Demolition

from Page 1

the site. "We need to make more efficient use of the space we have."

With the elevator and silos removed, Crystal Valley plans to expand the fertilizer storage and delivery facilities. Within a few years, Wadd expects his site to be capable of hauling in and distributing one and a half to two times the amount of fertilizer currently handled.

But for now, all eyes are on the bustle and dust of the demolition project.

"It's somewhat sad to see a landmark go," observes Wadd, who admits he expects to miss it as much as everyone else. He says it is some consolation to know that both the rebar and the concrete are being "recycled": the metal at an area salvage yard and the crushed concrete as fill for various construction projects.

For those who wish to keep an eye on the work as it progresses, the Crystal Valley website (Crystalvalley.coop) shows ongoing images of the demolition process.

On-line registration starts shortly after that. Band registration details, photos, information for the digital program, must all be collected, assembled, proofread, and finally published.

"For the three to four weeks prior to the classic, I often spend two or three hours a day making sure things are ready," says Les.

The day of the parade, he manages band setup, ensuring buses follow a safe entry and exit pattern to the parade start location, making certain every group finds its assigned area, getting bands in the right places to take their turns in the parade.

Which is why it's unusual for the Tlougans that they will actually be sitting still, watching in comfort as each of the bands performs its routine.

Those performances are something they've built an appreciation for thanks to their long association with the Classic.

"You learn what to watch for," says Les. "You get a chance to see the groups develop and mature year after year.

"In some cases, it's fun to watch bands come back each year a bit stronger, until you can see they've built something that's quite remark-

able. It sends a tingle going down your spine when they hit that special note or routine that thrills the crowd."

It is moments like those, along with the camaraderie and tradition, perhaps, which keep the Tlougans coming back.

Those moments also keep the Tlougans hoping more and more newcomers will join the Marching Classic leadership team. "This is something very special for our bands and for our community," comments Karen.

"We need folks to step in and learn the ropes so this amazing event can keep going into the future."

As for the Tlougans, after their moments of glory and comfort, they know exactly what will follow.

"It will be back to work," says Les, who will be setting up the sound system at Trowbridge Park for the parade awards ceremony. "After that, some of the drum majors will probably need rides to get back to their bands, so that is my transport job," says Karen.

"There are many jobs for many people and these just happen to be ours. Business as usual, playing our part in making sure the day goes as smoothly as possible."

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Musical excellence

Kreinbring introduced as new WHS choir director

By AMELIA ROESSLER
Editorial Assistant

Megan Kreinbring is the new Waseca Junior Senior High School choir director and she is excited.

“I decided on Waseca because of the long standing tradition of musical excellence,” Kreinbring explained. “I can’t wait to be a helping hand to continue this tradition but also bring fresh ideas to ensure the longevity of the choral department.”

Growing up in Kenyon, Minnesota, Kreinbring loved going to school at Kenyon-Wanamingo High School, something that encouraged her to become a teacher. After graduating high school, Kreinbring attended Concordia College in Moorhead Minnesota and now she lives in the Mankato area with her husband and two daughters.

Although she is going into her ninth year teaching, Kreinbring said she first started singing in choirs in 5th grade and continued



Megan Kreinbring

to sing into college, where she was a part of the Concordia Choir. Now, she sings in Muscorum, a Mankato based choir.

When asked about her favorite teaching experience, Kreinbring said that her favorite experiences are made in the classroom everyday.

“I love to hear what we sound like on day one and what we sound like on the last day. There is so much growth that happens,” she said.

Kreinbring’s goals for this year include having fun and building a positive rapport in the choir room and music department. She wishes to make connections with students so they feel they have a safe space to come to everyday.

The best piece of advice Kreinbring says she has ever received is to “never stop learning and growing,” something she also advises for her students.

Most of all, Kreinbring says she just can’t wait to be a part of the Bluejay community.

Learning a lot during first year

School board member Alyssa Bowers

By RACHEL LOVERINK
Staff Writer

Alyssa Bowers, a long-time area resident, is embracing the new experience of being a member of the Waseca School Board. She was elected to her position last November and has become more acclimated to the role in the time since, though she said it was challenging at the beginning.

“Starting with the school board was incredibly overwhelming,” Bowers said. “I don’t have an education background, so there is lots to learn.”

When she’s not sitting in on board meetings, she serves as a local Mortgage Loan Officer for Keen Bank. As such, she continues to be knee-deep in paperwork, all while raising three children. A full schedule doesn’t bother her though; actually, she rather enjoys it.

“You make time for the things that matter,” she said. “I’m fortunate that both my employer and my family have been encouraging and supportive of my involvement with the school.”

Prior to this new venture, she thought very highly of the local school district. After all, she chose to enroll all three of her children in Waseca Public Schools.

“Waseca has a great education system and I want to see that continue – not just for my kids, but for everyone,” she said.

“My main priority as part of the school board is to continue to provide quality education to all students in the district. Additionally, I look forward to improving the Hartley facility.”

Her children’s academic environment has always been clear to her, but more light was shed upon her recent attendance of the Minnesota School Board Association conference. At this event, she gleaned a wealth of information and therefore acquired an even better snapshot of the bigger picture.

That’s also when she kicked her wheels into overdrive.

“I’m hopeful that in 10 years, Waseca Public Schools, along with our town, will have grown,” she said. “Within 10 years, and likely less, I envision a new facil-



Alyssa Bowers

ity for Waseca’s youngest students. That being said, we have to make sure that our town’s tax base can support it.”

Bowers believes other, like-minded leaders in key positions so that perhaps these lofty goals can become a reality. She truly counts her lucky stars that the quest for growth and opportunity in this beloved town unites so many.

“Waseca has so much potential, and I’m excited to see what happens over the next couple of years,” she said.

She added, “I’ve lived within a 35-mile radius of Waseca my entire life, living in Waseca for the last 10 years. I like being close to my family and I like to know my neighbors and my community. My husband and I have made some great friends in Waseca over the years.”

Truth be told, the decision to get involved with a local cause really took root with the encouragement of her closest friends. The school board just seemed like the most “relevant” fit and boy is she ever glad that she decided to take the plunge.

“It really is a good board filled with people who care about our community,” she said. “The school board is composed of seven individuals from Waseca. They all offer a unique perspective and background – some are new to the board, and some have many years of experience on the school board.”

Due to the board’s warm welcome, Bowers says she can hardly wait to dig in at every single meeting. She is delighted that the entire board is willing to consider everyone’s thoughts and perspectives so that a solid, comprehensive plan can be formed.

“Even before the election, board members had reached out to ask if I had any questions and to wish me luck,” she said. “They have continued to be available for questions and to clarify things that may be confusing as a new member, and they’ve invited me on site visits to the schools.”

Bowers concluded, “I think being open minded, listening to others, questioning information, and understanding the district needs are crucial.”

‘Better scope of things’

WHS Principal Dr. Jason Miller excited for 4th year

By AMELIA ROESSLER
Editorial Assistant

Dr. Jason Miller is going into his fourth year as principal at the Waseca Junior Senior High School. With these three years as principal under his belt, Miller says he has a “better feel for the scope of things,” although he knows that, since he works in a school, there are always things that will surprise him—an aspect he loves about the job.

One of Miller’s goals for this year is communication. He is focusing on learning to connect with parents, caregivers, and the students.

“Communication is always a goal,” he commented. “We’re never going to get it right, but we try to do as much as we can to get things out there.”

One of the ways Miller plans to reach out to parents and students is through his “Bluejay Blog,” which contains important information about the school, classes, and other happenings. Miller plans to send out regular updates twice a month on the blog, which can be found by going to the Waseca Junior Senior High School website’s homepage.

The website is another way the school is working on improving communication, Miller said. With the help of Julie Anderson, chair of the Waseca School Board, the school’s website has been updated and improved so that it is more accessible and more easily navigated.

Alongside communication, Miller says it is important to build a sense of community. As with the recent loss of incoming seventh-grader Jocelynn Passon, Miller says it’s important to express the shared sense of loss. “We need to honor the life that was part of the community,” he said. Also part of “community” is overcoming the setbacks caused by “distance learning” during the pandemic. Miller says the sense of shared connections was badly affected when the school went into distance learning.

“This is a great community and this is a great school,” Miller said, mentioning the many times he’s heard from people that the district’s students represent the school and community well when they go on field trips or attend “away” activities.

Miller also mentions that an important focus this year will be revisiting the cell phone policy in school. He explained that he’s seeing more and more research concerning how distracting cell phones are for students; Miller believes parents need to be aware of that and support their students in learning to manage their time on electronic devices. But he also said that parents need to learn to manage it themselves.



Jason Miller

With all the challenges of a school year and all the goals he has set, Miller says his main focus is on kindness and respect. “Being kind and respectful to other people who believe something different does not mean you’re agreeing with them or compromising your values,” he said.

Miller also acknowledges it’s important to have fun. “The beauty of the job is meeting people,” he said. “It’s important to laugh and have fun and be goofy.”

Wiste joins TEAM as new kindergarten teacher

By TRISTAN GEHRING
Staff Writer

TEAM Academy has a new Kindergarten teacher for the 2023-24 school year, Carly Wiste. This is Wiste’s first full-time K-12 teaching job; she has been substitute teaching in the Mankato area since her graduation from Winona State University in December 2022 and worked as an Early Childhood teacher for many years. Wiste now has degrees in Elementary and Early Childhood Education and lives in Eagle Lake.

“I have wanted to be a teacher for as long as I can remember,” Wiste explains. “I grew up with a teacher for a mom so I have fond memories of helping out in her classroom with grading or other ‘teacher projects’ she had for me.” Wiste goes on to say she still has a news article from when she was a kindergartener herself in which she says she wants to be a teacher when she grows up. “I love working with kids and find it comes naturally to me. Overall, I can’t picture myself doing anything other than education.” Wiste says it was the small class sizes and sense of community that led her to apply at Waseca’s TEAM Academy. The charter school limits class sizes to twenty-five, with most grades being smaller. Wiste also says, “After doing my research and interviewing with them, I could clearly see the care staff had for the students and their success both inside and outside of school; I knew it was something I wanted to be part of.”

“Kindergarten is such a vital time in a child’s life,” Wiste says about the grade-level where she will begin her post-college career. “I am looking forward to seeing and tracking my students’ growth socially, emotionally, and academically throughout the school year. I know it is going to be so rewarding to witness firsthand.” She also brings a passion for Social-Emotional Learning, or SEL, to the classroom, which includes direct and indirect teaching of conflict resolution, turn-taking, how to be a good friend, and other life skills. “I believe it is something that should be focused on in every classroom. Growing up is really hard and children feel many big emotions throughout their day. It is so important that they are given proper tools to succeed not only in an academic setting but in their everyday lives.” Wiste’s favorite book for children is The Magical Yet by Angela DiTerlizzi, which she enjoys because it teaches children “Growth Mindset” – reminding them that practice and hard work are necessary to become good at something.

Wiste grew up in Mankato, graduating from Mankato West High School in 2018. Her father is Rob Wiste, who works at Corporate Graphics; her mother Sandy teaches second grade. Wiste also has two siblings. Her older brother, Nick, is 31 and lives and works in St. Paul as a chemist; her younger sister, Holly, is 21 and will soon graduate from Eau Claire University with a nursing degree. About her sister, Wiste says “She is my very best friend, as we are less than two years apart, even though we are complete opposites.” By her de-



New TEAM Academy kindergarten teacher Carly Wiste

scription, Wiste’s family is tightly knit, enjoying time together at the cabin, grilling out, and watching sports – particularly football and baseball. Wiste’s personal hobbies are relaxing with a good book, music, and shopping. “When I have a day off, you are likely to find me at TJ Maxx, Hobby Lobby, or Target,” she says. Wiste’s friends and acquaintances can quickly name her favorite musicians, Taylor Swift and Harry Styles – since she spends a lot of time listening to their music and has seen both live in concert more than once. “Music as a whole really keeps me relaxed and grounded when in stressful times,” she says.

Wiste would like to thank TEAM Academy and the greater community for welcoming her here, adding “I am so excited to meet the kiddos at TEAM: I know it is going to be a wonderful year.”

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Elizabeth Kvebak

New role Kvebak to teach elementary art

By JONAH STAFFORD
Staff Writer

After serving the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) district as a substitute teacher last year, Elizabeth Kvebak is gearing up to serve as the district's first-ever elementary art teacher. She is slated to work with preschool through sixth graders in the new role.

Kvebak hails from Detroit Lakes, a city in northern Minnesota. While studying elementary education at Gustavus Adolphus College, she was a long-distance runner on the college track and cross country teams. In addition to teaching, Kvebak has been hired as assistant coach for those same sports under the JWP/Water-ville-Elysian-Morristown collaborative arrangement.

Before teaching at JWP, Kvebak was a fourth-grade teacher in Fairmont. "I liked the district and the town, but it was really far from family and friends," she said of that experience. Kvebak now lives in Mankato with four friends she met at Gustavus. She said she applied for the elementary art position after enjoying her time as a sub and wanting a full-time position at JWP. "I love this school district and I'm excited to stay here," said Kvebak.

She said that her passion for art came from spending time with her grandmother, who "painted intricate designs." When choosing her career path, Kvebak said she was inspired by many members of her family, including her parents, who are also educators.

As a teacher, Kvebak said that she likes to give students "a lot of opportunity for choice so they can be creative." While a sub last year, she remembers seeing that many of her students enjoyed drawing, so she looks forward to giving her future students the chance to express themselves through art in the classroom.

"Getting to teach and see the kids learn and grow is the most rewarding part of the job," said Kvebak. "They really fill your cup and make you smile and laugh."

In her teaching, she said that she likes incorporating students' interests into her lessons. When she was subbing at JWP last year, Kvebak said she would hide the Minnesota Timberwolves logo in her lessons because many of her students were fans of the team. At Fairmont, she designed a math game inspired by the video game Among Us.

As she begins planning lessons, Kvebak said "making sure students have enough time to complete their artwork" could be a challenge, as she'll only have students for 30 minutes at a time. She added that the district provided her with state-approved art curriculum which has been an "amazing resource."

As the beginning of the school year approaches, Kvebak said she hopes her future students "are really excited to be creative and have fun with art class."

Excited for '23-24

JWP Principals talk beginning of new year

By JONAH STAFFORD
Staff Writer

Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) principals Jeff Adams (elementary) and Jake Hager (secondary) are excited for the 2023-'24 school year.

"It went great last year," said Hager, who was new to the district in 2022-2023 "Kids were awesome and parents and teachers were very supportive."

Adams, who is beginning his third year as principal, said a new positive reinforcement system will be implemented at the elementary school this year. "When students do something great, teachers can fill out a slip; then we'll do a positive phone call home and office visit," he explained. Adams will personally hand out a slip to students who are recognized.

He says this program is just one example of JWP's increasing focus on student support and social-emotional learning. One of the new hires for the 2023-2024 school year is a behavior interventionist who will serve all students, K-12. Hager said that the district is implementing reading and math academies, intervention programs, and "power hours" for students who need assistance as they learn.

"We want to be there for the kids and make sure that they have all they need to be successful," said Adams.

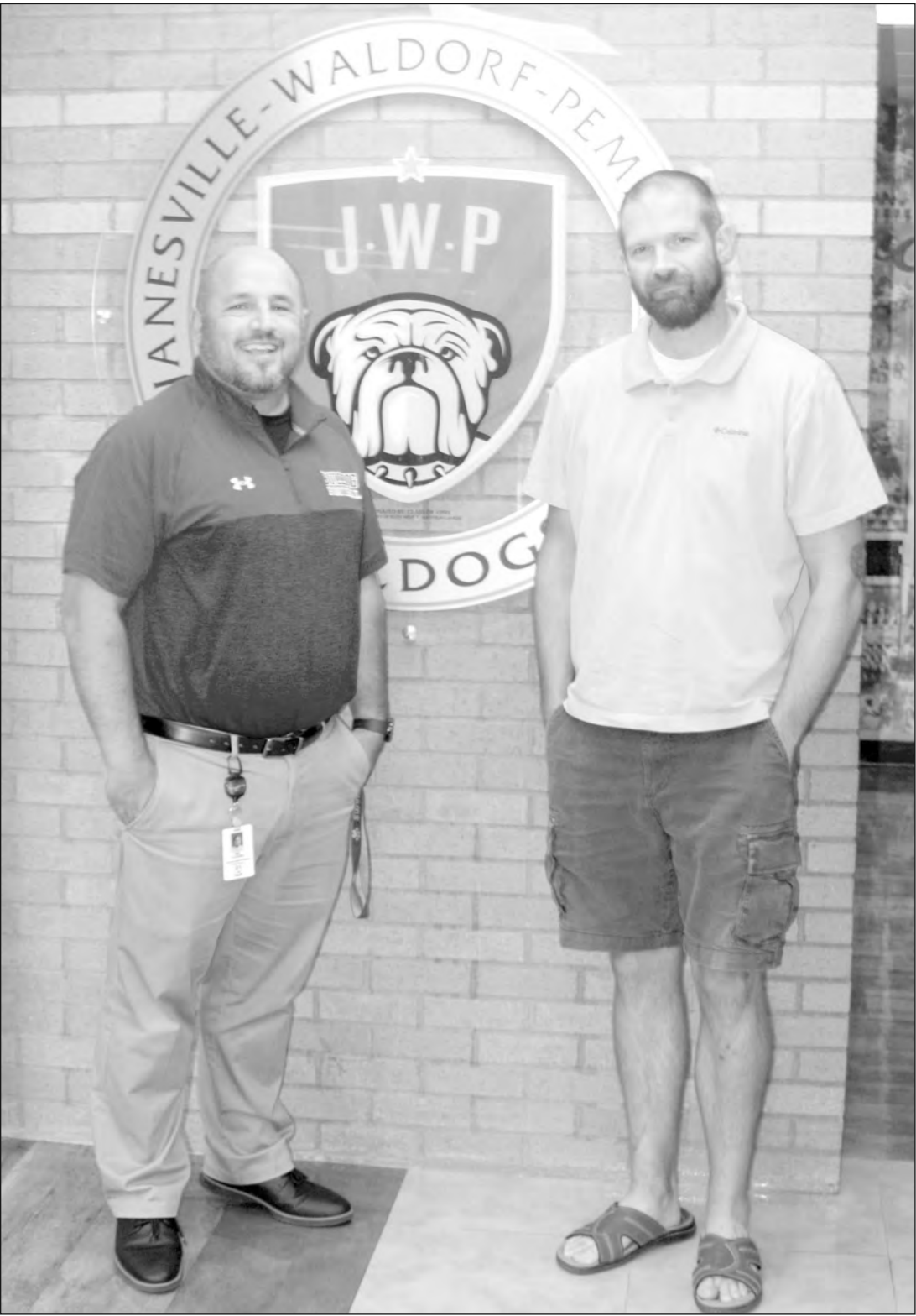
Many new hires have been made for the upcoming year, including for new positions such as the aforementioned behavior interventionist and an elementary art teacher. "It's been a lot more 'adding' than 'replacing,'" said Hager. While most positions have been filled by staff who are training for their new roles, the district is still hiring para-professionals.

Both principals drew attention to the efforts of JWP's custodial team, led by Mike Daschner, in renovating the building and making sure all of the school's spaces are utilized effectively.

They were also in agreement about the main goals of the school. "We're trying to connect everything to the graduate profile," said Hager. "Helping to foster critical thinkers, global citizens, creators, collaborators, and communicators is what we strive for."

Though he was not available for immediate comment, Superintendent Jeremy Erler was described by Hager as being "all about the kids."

"We're in these [administrative] roles because



Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) principals Jeff Adams (elementary) and Jake Hager (secondary).
Pioneer photo by Jonah Stafford

we want what's best for kids and to make a difference for them," he added.

Both principals were in agreement that both schools are ready for the new year. "Students are the ones who energize the whole building," said Adams. "The lights shine brighter when they're here"

The first day of school at JWP for the 2023-2024 school year was September 5. Prior to reopening, open houses and back-to-school conferences were held on August 29 at both buildings. "Any must-know information for parents and students was shared there," said Hager.

Seibert to teach high school art at JWP

By JONAH STAFFORD
Staff Writer

Aylajeon "AJ" Seibert is preparing to work as Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton's new secondary art teacher this school year.

Seibert is from the Brainerd Lakes area and earned her bachelor degree in education at Minnesota State University, Mankato. She holds a K-12 art teaching license and is currently working on a master degree from the Art of Education University, which offers online graduate programs for art educators.

Seibert's previous experience includes serving as the secondary art teacher at Medford High School for one year. She resides in a nearby town with her husband, though she said that she is looking into the possibility of moving to Janesville.

Her decision to become a teacher, she says, is based on her own fantastic experiences as a student. "When I was in high school I had a phenomenal art teacher who I looked up to very much," she explained. Around the time Seibert was in class with that teacher, she was "deciding what to do with her life" and opted to study education over her second pick, psychology.

As a teacher, Seibert hopes to make the same kind of difference in her students' lives. "I want to be more than just a teacher," she said. "I want to be a support system."

Also a positive factor for Seibert is that JWP's philosophy aligns with many of her beliefs and values. "We have a lot of the same passions," she said. "They put student advocacy and wellness at the forefront of education." She added that she is "very excited to be in a school that is a healthy learning environment for students as well as staff."

Seibert describes her relationship with art as a "lifelong passion" and said she does a lot of pottery, ceramics, and painting in her spare time.

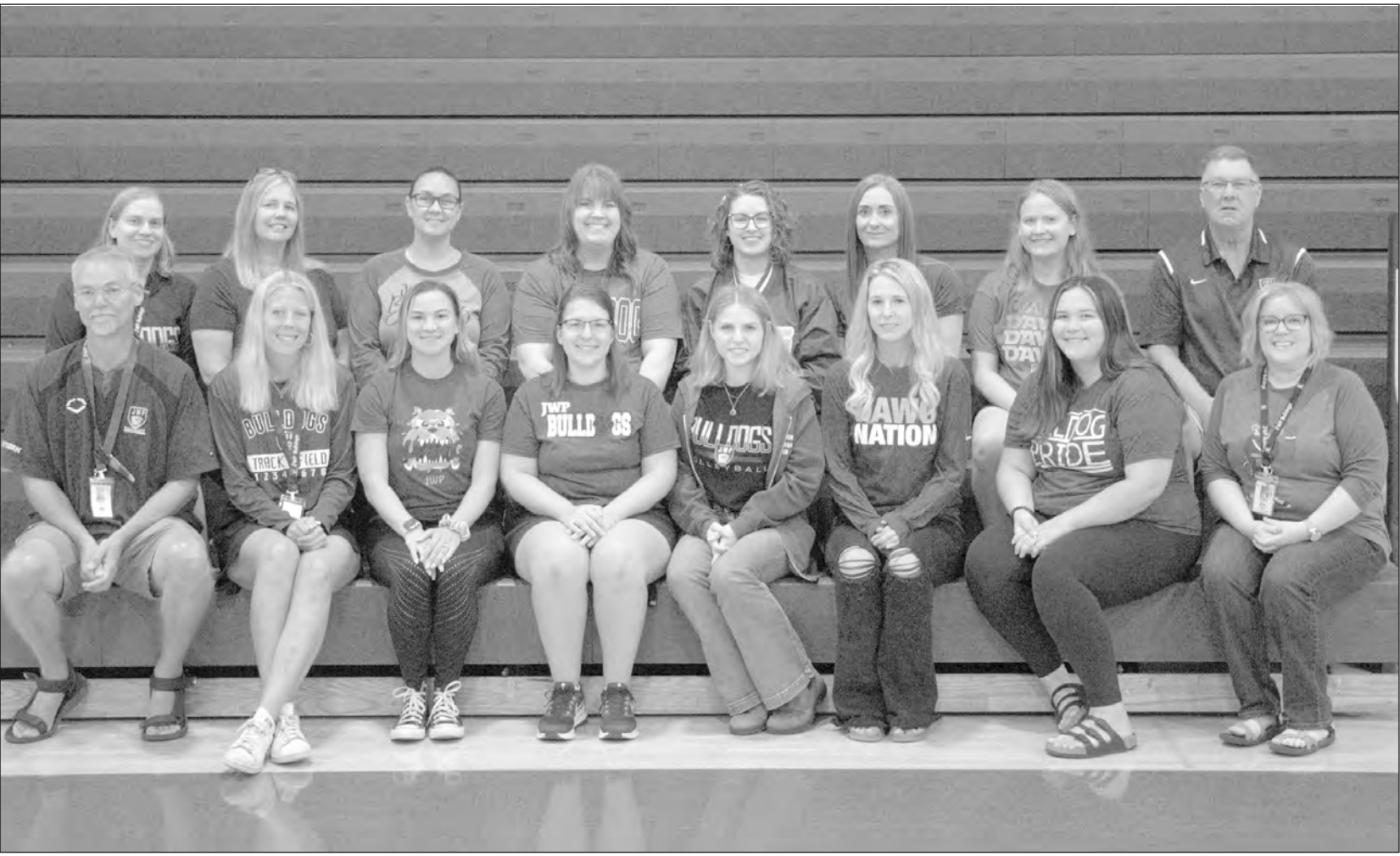
Seibert admits to feeling "a bit nervous" about stepping into the role of secondary art teacher because Tim James, who previously held the position, was there "for a very long time."

"I have really big shoes to fill but I'm ready for the challenge," she added.

Seibert said that the most rewarding part of being a teacher is "a-ha moments," where students finally understand a task or concept. She said that one of her favorite days will be graduation, especially if she remains at the district for several years. "At graduation, students are not the same person that they were when you first met them," Seibert said. "It's great to see them grow."

As Seibert continues organizing her classroom materials and planning lessons, she is looking forward to getting to know JWP's students and community this year.

New to JWP



New staff and teachers at Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton school for the 2023-'24 year.

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Nicole Sebersn

Part of an ever growing world

Seberson, to teach kindergarten

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

New kindergarten teacher Nicole Seberson is a Waseca native who spent her first few years teaching in Wisconsin after graduating from Winona State University in May of 2022 with a major in early childhood and elementary education and a minor in child advocacy studies (CAST).

Seberson says that teaching has not always been her dream. "For a long time I hoped to be a vet or something with nature. However, in high school I got a job at Grace Garden Daycare Center that changed everything. I loved watching how kids explored the world, found everything interesting and had such wild imaginations. I decided then that I wanted to be a teacher. I wanted to help grow that fascination about the world and be a part of that ever-growing imagination."

When asked what was appealing about NRHEG, Seberson replied, "I knew NRHEG was a great school since I used to see their high school band kids at the Waseca Marching Classic; they were always so kind and generous. I had heard from many other current NRHEG employees that it is a GREAT school district that truly cares about its staff and students." Seberson was also looking to get back to the area: "I applied to NRHEG because I was looking for a school closer to my family. Since I went to college in Winona and then taught in Wisconsin, I was missing out on my family that was here in south-central Minnesota."

Outside of school, Seberson enjoys spending time with her family (including her dogs Shadow and Odin) arts and crafts, and being outdoors. She says that she is "SUPER excited to start this year as a Kindergarten teacher! The one thing I hope kids leave my classroom with is a smile. I can still remember my elementary school teachers because of the memorable moments they created such as fun art projects or silly-themed days. I hope they leave my class knowing that I do my very best to help them succeed in anything and everything they do."

Elementary site growing, vibrant

Principal anticipates the arrival more than 30 new students

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

NRHEG Elementary Principal Craig Kopetzki has had enough of summer.

"I want to be greeting students as they arrive. I want to be walking the halls and stepping into classrooms to see the activities there.

"The building has seemed very empty these past few months."

As the school year gets started, the elementary site expects about 390 students, roughly 30 more than last year.

"I just want kids in the building," says Kopetzki. "I look forward to that energy and vibrancy."

Of course, with new staff workshop on August 21 and 22, and with teachers preparing their classrooms, the activity level had been rising gradually, and got off to a good start with teacher in-service activities

prior to Labor Day.

Kopetzki says he particularly anticipated the two days of "Day One" set for September 5 and 6. All families with elementary students were given a 40-minute block of time during which they and their children met their teachers. Parents had opportunities to ensure information and on-line accesses are up to date, peruse Panther-themed clothing offered by Court Sports and make any arrangements for the school snack cart, birthday treats and check on their lunch account balances.

"Yes, lunches are free for all students this year," says Kopetzki, "but seconds are not, so some families will need money in their accounts for that."

While parents were busy with those details, students demonstrated their skills in various subjects for teachers and staff.

"We're checking to see whether students are up to speed, and whether there's been any 'summer slide,'" says Kopetzki. "That way we can find any folks who can benefit from some extra support and get them started as early in the year as possible."

Planning for this extended "Day One" began already last spring; most district families have had their time slot scheduled for months.

"We're really grateful to Mr. Meihak and the school board for supporting this approach," Kopetzki observes. "It's something different, but we believe it can provide some genuine benefits."

Although the district secondary site experienced significant turnover in teaching staff this past summer, the elementary site suffered only one loss, the resignation of preschool teacher Diane Foster. Some in-house



NRHEG Elementary Principal Craig Kopetzki.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

shifts occurred, and the site has now added a new kindergarten teacher.

Kopetzki is glad to have retained so many staff members. "Visitors consistently comment about the dedication and professionalism everyone in our building shows," he says.

A source of optimism for Kopetzki

is the number of students open enrolling in the district. "Maybe the word is out about our gold-standard staff," he speculates. "We seem to be getting calls almost daily from families as far away as Owatonna and Albert Lea that want to enroll their students here."

Secondary site off to fresh start

Cell phone policy under development, new staff in place

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

"This is not a 'me' thing," says NRHEG Secondary Principal Grant Berg. "It's a 'we' thing."

After serving as the secondary principal for a few months last spring following the resignation of David Bunn, Berg spent the summer ensuring the secondary site is operational.

Significant turnover in staff has occurred, with new teachers in the social studies, math, language arts and music departments; ensuring those positions were filled was an ongoing task. New teachers spent two days in orientation on August 21 and 22; all teachers began their 2023-24 school year on August 28.

Students, families and members of the community had the opportunity to meet teachers and tour the school

during an open house on Wednesday evening.

Aside from the number of new teachers in the building, Berg says students are not likely to notice any significant changes. Updated policies regarding when and where students will be permitted to access their phones are under consideration and will be a topic of discussion and planning during this week's staff workshops.

"There's no doubt phones can be an educational tool," Berg says of personal electronic devices. "But they can also be a distraction to learning. It's a matter of looking for a balance that will meet our needs."

Berg speculates that the everyday feel of the school may seem different, since changes in leadership often have that effect. "We want to work



NRHEG High School Pricpal Grant Berg.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

toward a responsive culture with mutual respect as one of its foundations," he says. "It's our duty to educate the students to help prepare them for the future.

"To me that means a range of opportunities in academic, athletic, and fine arts.

"You're not going to find me behind my desk very often; instead I hope to be out there doing what needs to get done to keep things op-

erating smoothly."

He states he is grateful for the support and assistance he has received that he anticipates continuing receiving from the community and staff.

"There will be some snags," he predicts. "But the majority of students and staff know me, and they know I share their pride and sense of belonging for the district. I believe we will be able to work things out."

For now, building-wide, the mood

Schmidt enjoying new role

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

After decades working with local trucking companies, Dan Schmidt has transitioned to "transporting the most precious commodity."

A lifelong resident of the area, son of Schmidt Trucking owners Joe and Gail Schmidt and then owner of C.M.D. Express Trucking beginning in 2017, Schmidt began as the NRHEG district's transportation coordinator early in July.

The position, Schmidt says, was created this year to consolidate various functions related to student transportation which had been divided among at least three different NRHEG staff members.

As things now stand, "I'm the central voice for the transportation side of things," he says.

Perhaps the most obvious element of his job is assuring daily bus routes are operational to carry students to and from school. While that may sound relatively simple, it covers a

wide range of tasks, including knowing what students live where while also making sure properly licensed drivers are in place, as well as that substitute drivers are available in case of illness or absence. It means ensuring that buses are in good operating condition, fuel is readily available—and backup vehicles are in place.

Since Schmidt is also in charge of finding drivers for extracurricular games and events, it also means he must find drivers for the many evening trips involved. As an illustration, he mentions that between August 31 and September 7, there are already seven extracurricular activities needing transportation, one as far away as Randolph.

In addition to his experience in trucking, Schmidt feels that his understanding of what might be needed in his new position was strengthened by having served on the school board beginning in 2017. "I had a chance to learn a few things, on a somewhat

different level, about the transportation needs," he speculates.

In order to accept this new position, Schmidt needed to resign from the school board; his resignation became official with the August meeting. Moving forward, former board member Rich Mueller will again be serving.

"Between my work in the trucking industry and my time on the board, I may have been more aware than many others of the kinds of challenges the position faces," says Schmidt.

Within a short time, Schmidt expects to have completed requirements for the Class B driver license needed by bus drivers. At least for the time being, he expects to be one of the 9 route drivers the district needs.

"The hope is, we'll find another driver and I can keep myself available for emergencies," he explains.

He hopes that his schedule can be more open to carry out the supervi-



Dan Schmidt

sory tasks his position is meant to handle. "I'm here to help see whether there's a better, easier way to do this," he says.

Schmidt wants anyone who's interested to know that becoming a bus driver requires relatively little time. Potential drivers must study materials about bus operation, traffic rules and passenger management, and pass a total of four written exams. With the tests passed, they can begin behind-the-wheel training and practice,

then take the driver test within a relatively short time.

The district covers many of the costs involved and pays wages for various elements of the process.

"When you think about it, being a bus driver is a way to give back," Schmidt observes. "Ours are the first and last faces many students see on a typical school day. We're a source of consistency and reliability."

"Some of our bus drivers may seem to have a pretty tough shell," he says, "but they absolutely love the kids on their buses."

As the new school year begins, Schmidt says he has done everything he can to get all the necessary pieces in place, and believes his department will be off to a smooth start. For any questions or concerns that may arise, he hopes families feel free to contact him directly.

"For anything I might not know," he offers, "I know how to find out." Schmidt's school phone is 507-417-2644. His email is dschmidt@nrhek.k12.mn.us.



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- The median house price increased by 416% between 1980 & 2020.
- 1 in 4 renters spend 50% of their income on housing.
- U.S. home values have increased 7.2% over the past three years.
- A little over one-third of sellers initially try to sell their homes themselves as a "For Sale by Owner" listing. However, only about 10% of sellers actually get their FSBO listing across the finish line; the rest give up and hire a real estate agent.



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DAR celebrates founding of America

WASHINGTON, DC – The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution urges Americans to reflect on the United States Constitution during this month’s annual observance in honor this foundational document of national governance.

The DAR initiated the observance in 1955, when the service organization petitioned the U.S. Congress to dedicate September 17–23 of each year to the commemoration of Constitution Week. Congress adopted the resolution, and on August 2, 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed it into Public Law #915. The celebration’s goals are threefold: to encourage the study of the historical events that led to the framing of the Constitution in September 1787; to remind the public that the Constitution is the basis of America’s great heritage and the foundation for its way of life; and to emphasize U.S. citizens’ responsibility to protect, defend and preserve the U.S. Constitution.

“We are so proud DAR led the way in making Constitution Week an official commemoration and our members enthusiastically promote the celebration annually in communities across the country by erecting community displays, sponsoring municipal proclamations, ringing bells and staging programs to raise awareness of the Constitution’s tenets and importance,” said

DAR President General Pamela Rouse Wright. “We encourage all citizens to join us in celebrating this powerful document that is so important to American history and to reflect on the impact the Constitution has had on the lives of American citizens past and present.”

DAR has been the foremost advocate for the awareness, promotion and celebration of Constitution Week. The annual observance provides innumerable opportunities for educational initiatives and community outreach, two mission areas of crucial importance to the National Society. By fostering knowledge of, and appreciation for, the Constitution and the inalienable rights it affords to all Americans, DAR helps to keep alive the memory of the men and women who secured our nation’s foundational liberties.

One of the largest patriotic women’s organizations in the world, DAR has 190,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters across the country and several foreign countries. DAR members promote historic preservation, education and patriotism via commemorative events, scholarships and educational initiatives, citizenship programs, service to veterans, meaningful community service and more. For additional information about DAR and its relevant mission, visit www.dar.org.

School from Page 3

candidates for the open director of food services position and the open district school nurse position. Hudspeth stated that there is “always consistent turnover” with paras, office staff, and custodial positions, but things are running pretty smoothly at present.

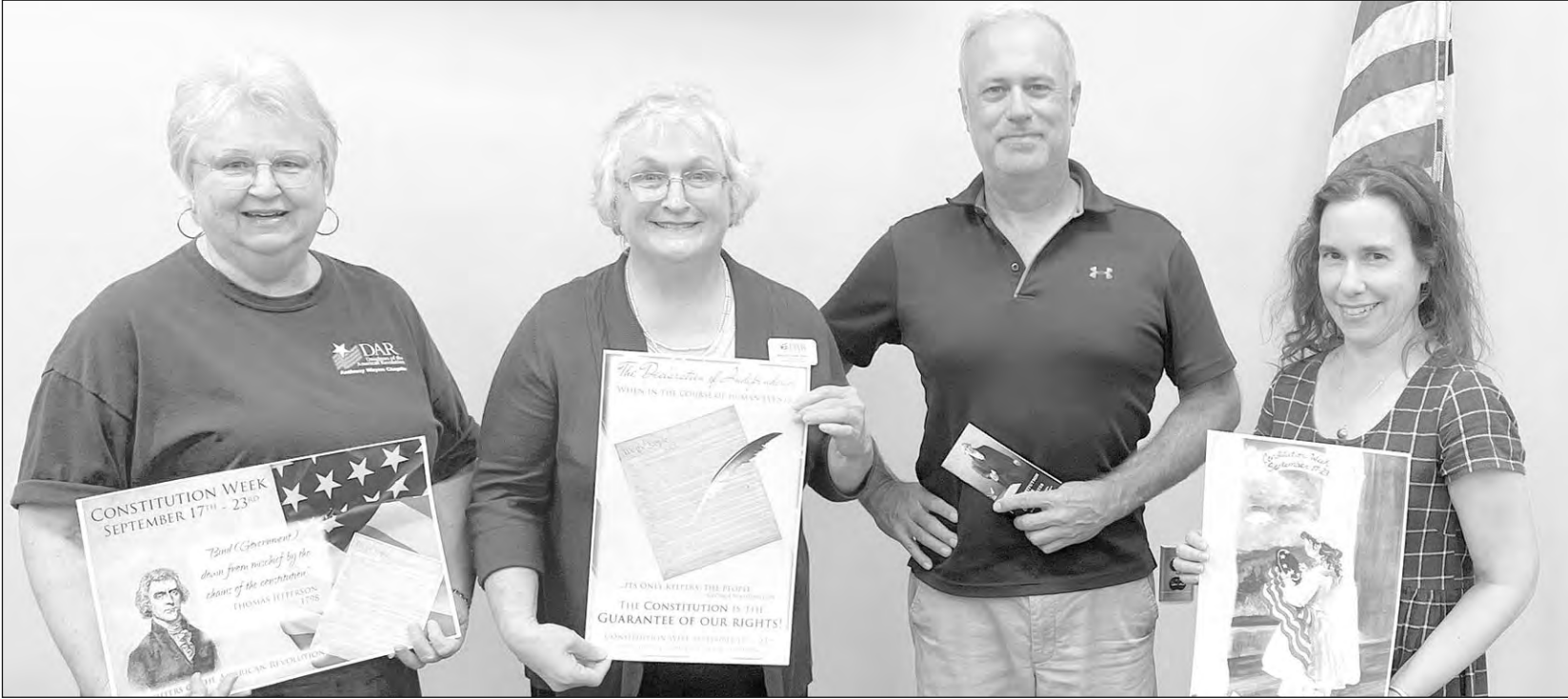
The last item on the agenda was one the superintendent spent the largest portion of the meeting on: results of the most recent district assessments. “I feel good about our instruction. One of the things that just came from the legislation this summer was the Read Act, specifically how to teach reading. Literacy instruction. We’ve been on that now for a few years,” he told the board. “The Amplify curriculum, which supports the strategy of evidence-based reading, was bought a few years back. We have the right stuff.”

Hudspeth used a slide show as he explained the purposes of the four assessments used within Waseca schools: the MCA measures overall proficiency, the FastBridge and the NWEA identify skill gaps and recommend areas of focus for instruction and intervention areas, and classroom assessments measure proficiency toward

standards and learning targets. Hudspeth then shared the spring 2023 results; all grades showed growth in math and most grades showed growth in reading on the NWEA results. There has also been growth in math and reading on the MCA results, though the district is still falling below the state average. Hudspeth said he’s not worried about the actual numbers. “The consequences of these scores are very minimal unless we choose to do nothing about them to help ourselves get better.” He also shared graduation rates and results from surveys given to students one year and five years after graduation, with 84% stating they felt they had a positive learning experience overall.

Board member Theron Kruger asked whether cursive writing instruction is part of the reading curriculum as there is a growing number of young people who are unable to read cursive. The superintendent confirmed that it is taught in the lower grades. “Handwriting is something we have to make sure we don’t lose track of. Amplify does have a pretty high writing focus.” With nothing further on the evening’s agenda, Hudspeth ended by giving kudos to the teachers. “There’s not a system that we’re going to provide that is going to be as good as the talent they have in those classrooms. That’s where the credit really needs to go.”

Constitution week Daughters of American Revolution visit Waseca City Council



Daughters of the American Revolution attended last Monday’s Waseca city council meeting. From left, Linda Born, Marilyn Wilkus, Mayor Randy Zimmerman and Angie Sipe. Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

Waseca issued clean bill of health from auditors

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

At the most recent Waseca City Council meeting, Sept. 17 through 23 was declared Constitution Week in Waseca. Marilyn Wilkus, Angie Sipe and Linda Born from Daughters of the American Revolution gave a short presentation during the regular meeting of the Waseca City Council Tuesday, Sept. 5. This year will mark the 236th anniversary of the framing of the Constitution of the United States. A press release detailing more about the organization and its goals can be found in this week’s edition of the Pioneer.

Aside from Mayor Randy Zimmerman’s proclamation, the evening’s agenda was relatively light. The 2022 audit report from ABDO solutions was presented by manager Abby Schmidt. The city was found to be in very good standing in nearly every category measured and was issued a “clean opinion” for 2022. The city, in cash reserves, has nearly twice the minimum requirement. The only oddity was the tax rate for Waseca was found to be considerably high compared to other cities its size. On a per capita basis, however, the tax rate was lower.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, Gary Dobberstein had some questions regarding the Gaiter Lake development. He believed the area available for development had less acreage than the amount named during a recent, public, informational meeting. His other question regarded who is in charge of development. Two previous contractors had put bids in, and according to Dobberstein, it appeared the contractor with the higher bid was present at the public meeting. Mayor Randy Zimmerman asked whether a contractor had been chosen; it appeared no official selection has yet taken place.

Another public meeting regarding the development is scheduled for 6 p.m. Sept. 14 in the public safety building.

Vanessa Jensen gave a presentation about Junior Achievement and its work in local schools. Jensen said the organization’s goal is to equip students with a life they want, preparing them for a post high school life. This includes exploring opportunities available at college, trade school, or entering the workforce.

“Our focus is on financial lit-

WASECA CITY COUNCIL

eracy and career education,” Jensen said.

More than 5,700 students were served during last school year, with over 176 volunteers from Waseca, Owatonna, NRHEG, Medford, and Blooming Prairie. More than 500 students in Waseca were a part of JA programs during the 2022-23 school year. Local volunteers from the following businesses participated as well: Edward Jones, Suburban Furniture, Pleasant Grove, Pizza Farm, MInnwest Bank, Keen Bank, Midstate Insurance, Federated Insurance, and many parent volunteers.

Jensen shared the story of Emily Knudson of Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm who “believes in JA so much that she asked what she could do.” What she did was teach a pizza class to second-graders and share valuable lessons during the process.

One of JA’s new projects this year is helping local high school graduates create personal budgets. Minnesota schools are mandating a financial literacy course for high

school students; Jensen said JA is hoping to assist local schools however it can.

Following the presentation, the council approved a request for a “renewed gift” of \$2,000.

The consent agenda was approved, which included council minutes from Aug. 15; payroll and expenditures; and a letter of support for a Vista Villa grant application.

Members of the Brakemeier family, which has owned Vista Villa since 2020, is submitting a grant request to the Minnesota Department of Housing and asked to include a letter of support from the city.

Final payments for the parking lot rehabilitation project and 2023 crack seal coat project were approved.

Federal grant authorization for the city’s 4-unit airport hangar project was approved. The hangar project will start in spring of 2024 to repair a dip in the runway.

A premise extension for the Ward House Brewery was approved for its Oktoberfest Celebration Sept. 29 and 30.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Classic from Page 1

immediately following the field show awards ceremony.

“After a hard day of working, the kids really enjoy the entertainment of the fireworks,” comments Williams.

“Some of them say it’s their favorite part.”

Live streaming for both the parade and the field show is available; links can be found on the Marching Classic website (Wasecamarchingclassic.com).

While planning and preparation for the Classic is ongoing and meticulous, there are things that can’t be planned in advance. “We can only hope for good weather,” observes

Tloughan. “But there isn’t a wrinkle, anymore, that we haven’t experienced at least once.” Tloughan recalls a hailstorm which sent audience and performers alike dashing for the school building one year.

But for the most part, emergencies are small scale. “It’s neat to see the camaraderie and the sportsmanship among the bands,” comments Burns. “They cheer each other on and even help each other out if they need to.”

Burns and Williams both recall times when members of one band have helped cope with an “instrument emergency” by loaning a competitor an instrument.

“So you see,” says Williams, “that’s why I always call it ‘family entertainment at its best.’ We have great music, amazing performances, and good sportsmanship all around.”

Back to School Special!

We at the Waseca County Pioneer work hard to bring the latest local news and information to Waseca, Janesville, New Richland, Waldorf, and the many townships in Waseca County. Each week features new and interesting stories about local persons, businesses, and of course, the Waseca School district. Many of our editions include special coverage of important milestones for students, parents, and families, including: Graduation, Homecoming, Prom, and all Waseca Sports, all year long. Don’t miss out! Fill in the coupon and mail it to our office, or call and subscribe now! 507-463-8112

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Robin Dulas and Pastor Jillene Gallatin.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Pastor addresses suicide awareness

Gallatin shares personal experience

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

“This is difficult for me,” said Pastor Jillene Gallatin of Waseca’s Grace Lutheran Church as she began. “This is personal, and it’s so very important.”

Gallatin was the speaker at the Waseca Rotary Club meeting held September 7. A member of the organization, she admitted to being nervous even though she was among friends. Still, she said she was grateful to be delivering her talk at this particular meeting, since September is suicide awareness month.

Her comments then turned to the topic of mental health. Gallatin told of discussions among area community leaders which label current circumstances as being a crisis. According to the national Centers for Disease Control, anxiety and depression are startlingly common: About 1 in 25 U.S. adults live with a serious mental illness. Among youth ages 13 to 18, more than 1 in 5 have had a “seriously debilitating” mental illness.

“Healthy people make a healthy community,” Gallatin stated. She went on to encourage Rotary members to approach the crisis by taking care of themselves and finding ways to manage the stresses and difficulties they face.

“Be sure to keep strong connections with others,” Gallatin recommended, mentioning that she receives vital support and understanding from Grace Lutheran Church administrator Robin Dulas.

Another step Gallatin recommended is to stay informed about mental wellness and provide support for people and organizations that promote it.

Gallatin proceeded to tell why the issue of mental wellness is so deeply personal for her.

She described being a 14-year-old child in March of 1988, already in bed for the night when her mother came to her room and stood silhouetted in the doorway. She remembers being “snarky” as her mother seemed to take a long time to deliver a simple message.

“What I didn’t know,” said Gallatin, “is that those would be the last words I would speak to her.” A few hours later, she died by suicide.

“Death is almost always challenging to cope with,” observed Gallatin. “But people especially don’t know how to respond to suicide. We feel that loss. We feel that disconnect. We’re left with questions we will never know the answer to.”

After her mother’s death, Gallatin moved to her father’s home in Isanti. She was cautioned, “Don’t talk about your mom. It makes

people uncomfortable.”

She told of some community members who would cross the street when they saw her and her family coming. She mentioned asking people to speak with her who simply pretended she hadn’t spoken.

“I felt so much separation, so much isolation. As a 15-year-old, I didn’t know how to cope with that.

“At age 15, I attempted to take my life.”

Gallatin named a friend who had noticed “things were off” during the school day and had asked her about it. The friend telephoned after school; not satisfied with the answers she received, the friend “called an adult. Someone I liked, someone I trusted, a pastor at one of the local churches.”

The adult entered her home just in time: “That pastor’s face was the last thing I saw in my house before I collapsed.

“So you can see,” said Gallatin, “it’s through connection and trying and caring that lives are saved.

“We have to do everything we can to ensure that people don’t feel alone.”

Gallatin went on to say that it’s important to acknowledge the importance of mental health, first by taking care of oneself and being vigilant about finding a support group.

The next step she suggested was “Go with your gut.” If something seems off in interactions with others, she said, take the time to reach out. “Recognize that you have a few minutes to listen,” said Gallatin. “Understand you would rather do that than visit the hospital or a funeral later on.”

For those who “don’t know what to say,” she offered, “We are hardwired to connect with each other. It’s better to say something badly than to say nothing at all.

“People will understand your statements come from a place of caring.”

Gallatin closed on a humorous note, assuring Rotary members that, however uncertain they might be about “going with their guts” and speaking with others, they would never blunder as badly as she had one time when she made an innocent statement to a stranger, a person who happened to be shopping at the same time she was, that was misheard as “I love you.”

“Sometimes my husband wishes I would just not speak out in public,” joked Gallatin. “Know that it’s important to speak out. At least you can be sure you’ll never blunder as badly as I did that day.

“So go with your gut. Reach out. Through connection, we create hope in the world.”

Free flags for veterans

Waseca Exchange Club donates 250 brochures

Non-profit grateful for local support

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Last week the Waseca Exchange club donated 250 brochures to “Free Flags for Vets” a local non-profit group run by Jeremiah Miller. A brochure will now be included with every Flag donated to a Veteran through the Free Flags organization.

Free Flags for Vets was started in 2017 by Miller.

“It was just a dream I had,” Miller said. “Our goal is to be like the Wounded Warrior Project. And now, they’re actually referring people to us.”

Through his organization, Miller has donated more than 1,000 flags. Each donation includes not only a 3’ x 5’ stitched flag, purchased locally through M. Peter’s Enterprises, but also a 20-foot flag pole and LED light. To date, more than 300 flags, poles and lights have been provided to veterans. Now a brochure which explains the history of the American flag and information on how to properly fly flags will be included with future gifts.

Part of the mission of the Exchange Club is Americanism.



From left, Mikhail Rostislavovich, Jaala and Jeremiah Miller, and Caryn Wendt.
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

“We wanted to create a brochure for this, and then Exchange told me they already had one,” Miller explained. “We’re very grateful for the local support.”

For those interested in donating to Miller’s cause, people can do so through mail: Free Flags for Veterans, P.O. Box 555, Waseca, MN, 56093; or online through the organization’s website: <https://freeflagsforvets.org/>

Miller himself currently serves in the U.S. Army National Guard and has completed tours in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait. He joined the service in 1994 and so far has reached the rank of Chief War-

rant Officer Three. He is a life member of the VFW and DAV and a long-time member of the American Legion and the Combat Vets Motorcycle Association.

Miller and his wife Jaala have four children and run Waseca’s Four Seasons.

The cost to make and ship each flag package is about \$300; Free Flags for Veterans currently has more than 200 requests waiting to be filled.

“I feel like we ship out a flag every day,” Miller said. “Our purpose is to make sure every Vet has a flag.”

Graduation with a difference

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

One by one, 18 people took their turn in front of the judge.

There were two options for the “question of the day.” The one most often responded to was, “What advice would you offer to someone new to Drug Court?”

One woman in her 30s repeated a basic tenet of the program: “I love the advice ‘Show up, be honest, and try.’” she commented. “It can be overwhelming to think about everything, but if you stick to that basic idea, you can make it.”

The Steele-Waseca “Drug Court” is a program shared by the criminal justice systems of the two counties. According to Nicole Grams, one of its coordinators, the program has been in operation since 2014 and experienced a significant boost in 2016, increasing the number of people and types of clients it could serve thanks to a grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.

According to numerous sources, programs like Drug Court follow procedures which research has shown to be most effective in working with people who have a substance use disorder that has led them to commit repeated, often escalating, crimes.

Probation officers and other members of the judicial system identify individuals who have chronically broken the law as the result of their disorder and suggest that they apply to take part.

Once accepted into the Drug Court program, individuals enter phase 1, where they are shepherd toward being “safe, sober and healthy.”

Participants must submit to at least

two randomly scheduled drug tests each week. They must follow the steps of a treatment program, and must take part in recovery support meetings, mental health and substance abuse services. As they work their way through the program, they are expected to acquire diplomas or GEDs, earn their driver licenses, find and keep steady employment, and to take care of any fines, fees or support payments that had been missed.

Minimum participation time in the program is 18 months. Careful track is kept of how many days of sobriety and program compliance each person has completed.

At monthly Drug Court sessions, participants go before a judge and are either complimented on their ongoing success or confronted with violations and told what consequences they face.

Among the missteps named at this month’s Drug Court session held in the Steele County courthouse on August 30 were substance use as verified by tests, driving violations and making contact with individuals forbidden under the participant’s guidelines. Violators were warned of consequences ranging from extended participation time in the program to possibly being remanded to the criminal justice system and being sent to jail or prison.

Figures supplied by the program indicate that, since 2014, the Steele-Waseca County Drug Court has served more than 200 participants, and currently has 34.

One of them, James Livingood, 34, was the program’s ninety-fourth graduate. A resident of Steele County, Livingood was graduating after passing a total of 159 sobriety



James Livingood (center) displays his graduation plaque. With him are (from left) Judge Joseph Bueltel, James’ son Huxley, 2, and his parents Kelly (behind) and Jane.

Photo by Deb Bently

tests and remaining sober for 453 days.

Judge Joseph Bueltel shared some observations regarding Livingood’s progress, recalling that he had had something of “a chip on his shoulder” as he began and been a bit “blunt” at times. However, Bueltel said, Livingood had recognized what he needed to do to make changes in his life and had worked on meeting his goals. “You developed your spirituality and made connections with the recovery community,” observed the judge. “We take great pleasure in your accomplishments and the changes you’ve made.” Livingood was presented with a plaque and special coin in recognition of his graduation.

In his turn, Livingood spoke briefly about his circumstances, saying that despite being raised in a stable home, he had joined “the wrong crowd” in his early teens and gone seeking “excitement.” He acquired a substance use disorder which led to criminal activity and encounters with the law. In his statement he admitted to having formerly been “selfish and self-centered, victimizing family and loved ones and other innocent people.”

He remembers feeling as if his

addiction and the bad choices he had made left him with no hope for a successful future.

He thanked Judge Bueltel and judicial system personnel in the room for their interventions on his behalf, particularly expressing gratitude to the parole officer who recommended he join the program: “Like a wild horse, the drug court team roped me in and broke me. Now I follow a routine like a carousel horse on a merry-go-round. My life today is better than I could have ever imagined.”

Drug Court team members expressed their congratulations, noting that during his time in the program James became a very positive influence, giving rides to participants who needed them and even serving as a speaker for community organizations where his story might benefit others at risk of acquiring a substance use disorder.

Livingood’s parents described how proud they were of the changes he had brought about in his life.

Said coordinator Grams: “James’ experience is one of many that shows the value of the Drug Court program. We are proud and grateful for the differences our services have been able to make for our graduates.”

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Waseca Christian Assembly pastor Brad Wickersheim.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently



 The Pastor's Column

Some days are just plain hard

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS
Some days are just plain hard to get through. There was a lot going on yesterday in my life and probably there was a lot going on in yours as well. A lot of things that I prepared for did not go as planned, and other things were a frustrating surprise as well.

I struggle to do things under my own strength, according to my own plans and in my own way. I want control and if I have it, I believe my plans will succeed. And then I remember that old quote by Woody Allen, “If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans.” God has laughed at my plans this week, but He has also done a lot of good in my life as well.

My plans focused on preparing and developing strategies that give the best chance to succeed. These plans have fallen apart, time and time again. Once again an old quote is brought to memory, “No plan survives contact with the enemy.” Once my plans went into action, it turned out the enemy was closer than I thought.

So what do you do when things don’t go as planned? Personally, I think through a lot of things, did I pray and ask for wisdom in plans, did I seek Godly counsel, did I gain support from those around me? Or did I try to force it to happen because I wanted it to happen? I am reminded of how God wants us to rely upon Him in everything. David writes in Psalm 18:31-36

31 For who is God besides the Lord?
And who is the Rock except our God?

32 It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.
33 He makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he enables me to stand on the heights.
34 He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend a bow of bronze.
35 You give me your shield of victory, and your right hand sustains me; you stoop down to make me great.
36 You broaden the path beneath me, so that my ankles do not turn.

God’s plan was that David would be King in place of Saul. Saul was hunting David and was prepared to kill him so he would remain king. David had to trust God’s plan, even though he was anointed king of Israel, Saul sat on the throne. David had to learn that it was in God’s timing that He would be King.

David’s plan relied upon God to move and act, these verses remind us that it is God who prepares us in His timing to accomplish His plans. That takes a lot of faith, David needed to trust God and His preparations for him to king. Even now, God has plans to make us more like Him, to accomplish the plans He has for us. He is the one who gives us strength for the day, trains our bodies for the tasks ahead and then makes the path we will walk upon. Have faith that if He can do all this preparation, then His plans for us will be accomplished.

20th Anniversary

Waseca Christian Assembly approaching 45 years

By **DEB BENTLY**
News Editor

Waseca’s Christian Assembly church is approaching its forty-fifth year, having been in existence since 1979. Over the weekend, it celebrated the twentieth anniversary of its location at 900 Fourteenth Avenue Southeast.

Part of its celebration was to deliver Gatorade and similar beverages to area law enforcement agencies and fire departments.

Another was inviting “Circus Stella” to town; the circus set up its tent on the church property and gave a total of eight shows over the weekend. Church members volunteered to help with various aspects of the operation, including manning the concession stand and assisting with setup and takedown. The church even loaned the circus some of its chairs. In return, the circus is sharing a portion of its income.

“As a church, we made a commitment that this celebration would focus on others, rather than on us,” said church pastor Brad Wickersheim. “We wanted to invite the community in for the fun of the circus.

“Any money that we take in will be passed along to help with the construction of a church in Thailand.”

Other elements of this weekend’s celebration were lawn

games and an outdoor showing of the movie “Jesus Revolution.” Trained dogs from the circus also gave a brief performance during Sunday’s church service.

According to Wickersheim, Christian Assembly once owned the building at 203 Third Avenue Northwest—where the Neighborhood Service Center and area food shelf are now located. The congregation was asked to sell the site and consented to do so, becoming “homeless” in the process. When Wickersheim became the church’s pastor in 2000, the congregation was meeting in the Central School auditorium and renting a few nearby classrooms for its Sunday School. The district consented to allow the arrangement to continue through the end of the school year, but asked that alternate arrangements be found in the near future.

The congregation was able to make temporary use of a then-empty building owned by Grace Lutheran, but all the while was working to raise funds and find a dedicated “home.”

“That time gave us the opportunity to find land and begin construction,” recalls Wickersheim regarding the six-acre plot the church has occupied now for 20 years. He recounts that congregation members helped with many aspects of the construction, including putting up siding, painting, and laying carpet.

“God’s gifts are evident all around We hope that by spreading some joy we can strengthen people’s appreciation for our lord’s generosity.”
— **Pastor Brad Wickersheim**

When the first service was held in the new building, he remembers, only about half the carpeting was in place.

“We’ve been given so much,” Wickersheim observes regarding the church and its progress, “it’s only fitting that we give back.”

Wickersheim says typical Sunday attendance at Christian Assembly is around 70. He mentions that the church is very active in missions. Several members, including Phil and Denise Reed who were stationed in Ukraine from 2010 to 2022, have entered the mission field. Wickersheim himself has volunteered at the federal prison in Waseca for 20 years, and takes frequent overseas trips to help with growing churches. He visited the Reeds in Ukraine almost yearly, and has also been to Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Thailand.

He recalls many incidents throughout his history with the church which have shown God’s will at work—including how he came to be its pastor.

He had been serving as a youth

pastor in Illinois, he recalls, and had recently notified church leadership that he wanted to change roles; he also felt a desire to return to his home state of Minnesota.

It seemed like only hours later he was contacted by Waseca’s “pulpit committee” inviting him for a visit.

He, his wife Gayle, and their then-young children Marissa, Brett and Darek, stayed at the Crossings Motel for nearly a week. “Brett said for a long time afterward that the motel was our first home in Waseca,” jokes Wickersheim.

Brett has become a dentist here in town; Marissa now works in India as a teacher of English at an international school in New Delhi. Darek is in the process of raising funds for a planned mission trip to Japan.

“God’s gifts are evident all around us,” comments Wickersheim. “We hope that by spreading some joy we can strengthen people’s appreciation for our lord’s generosity.”

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CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m. * * *	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m. * * *	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Saturday - 5 p.m. Mass * * *	* * *
4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m. * * *	CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY 900 14th Ave SE, Waseca 507-833-1082 Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m. * * *	FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Rev. Michael Mathews, pastor Sundays: Worship 8 a.m.; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class * * *	JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship * * *
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m. * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship * * *	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship * * *	BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 43089 180th St., Morristown Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Summer worship hours, (10:45 a.m. Worship, winter) * * *
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Worship Sundays 9 a.m., 10:15 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship * * *	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday — 9 a.m. Worship * * *	ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St, Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass * * *
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m. * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting * * *	ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship * * *	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Vacancy Sunday = 1 p.m. Worship * * *
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 314 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-2647 Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m. * * *	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net) Worship Sunday 10 a.m. * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN Wilton Township Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Smiths Mill, Minnesota Vacancy Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship * * *
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m. * * *	SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca 507-835-1222 Worship Saturday 5:15 p.m., Sundays 8:00 and 10:00 a.m., weekdays 8:30 a.m. Tues., Wed. and Fri., 7:00 a.m. Thurs. * * *	THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS Brad Donner, Branch President Waseca, Minnesota www.lds.org Sunday — 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18 * * *	NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 404 30 120th St. Waseca Pastor Sarah Krolak 507-234-6463 Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; Second Sunday “Young at heart” Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation * * *
REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca 507-607-8245 Sundays 9 and 10:30 a.m. * * *	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m. * * *	LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting * * *	NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.
VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * *	VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Brian Schanil Pastor Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School Tuesdays: The Shepherd’s Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH 412 N. Main Street, Janesville Interim Pastor Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:00 a.m. Worship * * *	

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Argus archives

100 Years Ago – The Janesville Argus

-Mr. F. L. Hagerman, who years ago was an operator at the North Western depot in Janesville, is here from Kansas City, Mo. He informs us that he will probably remain for some time.

-A carload of gravel showed up Friday morning and was immediately transferred to Main street under the direction of Emil Dimmel, street commissioner.

-The fishing season is not yet passed and accordingly Julius Koplen, Chas. Gutfleisch, Cris Grams and H. J. Werdin found a delightful day and as delightful an experience when on Friday they went to one of the lakes north of Janesville and spent the day.

-Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Kocourek drove to Wells Sunday morning, where Mrs. Kocourek stopped for the day. Mr. Kocourek continued on to Albert Lea, where he saw a splendid game of ball between that city and Mankato. Others who attended the game from Janesville were Herbert Manthey, P. Cahill and Joe Byron.

-Frank Brown has his crew of road workmen beyond the Roy Keyes place. The work is progressing nicely and in every particular is in a satisfactory condition.

-Martin O'Toole journeyed to St. Paul Sunday and returned Tuesday. While there he took in the Jones-Wells boxing match. Mr. O'Toole states that Jones is in every way superior to Wells. It was an exciting match, however, and well worth a trip to the city to see.

-Miss Edith Klingbeil, who for some time has kept books at the Woodhall garage, has resigned and returned to her home in Mankato.

75 Years Ago – The Janesville Argus

-Mayor Marpe of Waldorf reports that 92 per cent of the business places in Waldorf has displayed their flags during these days of Draft Registration as proclaimed by the Governor of Minnesota and Mayors of the county.

-The return to school of a large number of young people who have been working in local factories and on construction jobs leaves openings for a considerable number of people for a short period, it was announced today by Mr. Benjamin A. Iverson, Mankato manager for the Minnesota State Employment Service.

-Mrs. Chas. Schneider of Green Bay, Wisconsin, Miss Kathryn Jensen, Miss Helen Kiner and Miss Marilyn Nyquist spent last Tuesday afternoon visiting Mrs. Glen Goodrich at Pemberton.

-Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Robran and children were Sunday visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Geo. Robran in Waseca.

-Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Abraham spent from last Wednesday until Friday evening at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Loren Abraham, caring for their grandson, Bruce, while his parents were attending the state fair.

-Mr. and Mrs. Heinz Mittelstaedt and Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Priem spent Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday in St. Paul attending the state fair and visiting the former's brother and wife.

-Raymond Gomsrud returned home Sunday from Willow River after spending the past three months at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Koenig.

50 Years Ago – The Janesville Argus

-Mrs. Pearl Lohman has solved the mystery of why an old gravestone was buried behind the new Heritage House restaurant. Local contractor, Wally Danberry, unearthed the gravestone when he was landscaping at the rear of Heritage House last week. After inspecting the stone, the Argus asked readers for help in identifying David Anthony, the man whose name was inscribed on the marker. Mrs. Lohman called to say that Mr. Anthony was her grandfather. He lived in this area from 1840 to 1894.

-Mrs. Alvina Prail and granddaughters, Renae and Rita Prail, were Friday supper guests of Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Flemming near Waldorf and helped their daughter, Lisa, celebrate her fourth birthday anniversary.

-Mr. and Mrs. Cyril Arnold took their daughter, Barbara, to St. Benedict's College at St. Joseph on Sunday, where she will attend college this year.

-Mr. and Mrs. Art Steinke visited Mrs. Loretta Steinke of rural Waseca last week and took her to the Powell House for the smorgasbord. Mrs. Loretta Steinke had undergone surgery in Methodist hospital just three weeks previously.

-Mrs. David Flitter, Angela and Theresa and Mr. and Mrs. Walter Manke were Sunday guests of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Klan-kowski.

-Mrs. Delma Schueneman, Mrs. Clayton Stangler of Waterville and Mrs. Thomas Mariska of Morristown visited Mrs. William Walz and new baby daughter, Lori Kathryn, at St. Joseph's Hospital in Mankato on Sunday afternoon. Mrs. Schueneman is the baby's great grandmother.

25 Years Ago – The Janesville Argus

-A house fire on Friday, Sept. 11, left the Don and Renee Olson family without a home or possessions. The Janesville Fire Department responded to afire call at the Olson home located on 330th Street in Alton Township. Janesville Fire Chief Bruce Man-the estimated that the house was burning a good half hour before the call came in. Thirteen Janesville firefighters responded to the call and the Waseca Fire Department provided mutual aid with its tanker. The Olsons were safe from harm's way.

-Earlier this summer the Lake Elysian Watershed Association questioned area residents regarding their perceptions and concerns about Lake Elysian. The survey results show a great concern for the lake and its water quality.

-Frontier Communications hosted a picnic in the park on Thursday, Aug. 27, in Memorial Park, Janesville. Winners of Frontier door prizes included: Jerry Esse, Bob Burns, and Duane Jahner, who each won a caller ID phone; Sallie Volkmann, Beverly Gon-solus, Liz Stanke, Alice Schlie, Bob Nelson and Shirley Felske, who each won a caller ID box; and Pat Dumdei, Ron Schuch, and Rich Winter, all winners of a call time card.

-Two Janesville women struck it big at a recent state bowling tournament. Arlene Pooley and Cheryl Schuch came away with record scores having placed second in the single divisions at the 1998 Minnesota Women's Bowling Association tournament.

100 years ago: Matawan bank robbed

100 Years Ago – The Waseca Journal, September 5, 1923

-Sheriff Wadd and Deputy Grant were called to Matawan on Tuesday morning to investigate a bank robbery which took place during the night. The robbers entered the building by breaking the glass in the front door. Using a crow bar they tore the brick out of the side of the vault until they made a hole large enough to admit a man. They got \$127 in cash along with some notes and checks from the proceeds of an auction sale. They broke open five safety deposit boxes and it is said they got \$200 in one of them. They tried to blow open the safe in the vault, but failed.

-Millard Schueller has resigned his position at the E. C. Priebe garage, where he has been employed during the summer months, in order to resume his high school duties.

-Mrs. J. F. Keegan returned to her home at Chatfield Wednesday of last week after spending a few days as a guest at the G. G. Book home in this city.

-Mrs. Clyde Williams went to Owatonna Saturday evening and visited over Sunday as a guest at the home of her mother, Mrs. Kramer, and her sister, Mrs. Edward Lauders, formerly of this city.

-Herter's: Grocery Specials Save You Money--Aloha Flour, 49-lb. bag \$1.65; 100-lb. bag of cane sugar, \$8.85; large can of pink salmon, 13c; 1-lb. package of corn starch, 8c; jar rubbers, per dozen 5c; 1 pound of green tea, 34c.

-Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Staehlin drove to Minneapolis Sunday and spent the day as guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gerhardt Moen.

-Mr. and Mrs. A. Guyer and daughters, Marie and Gertrude, drove to Elysian, Waterville and Morristown Sunday and called on friends.

-Miss Emma Knutson will leave tomorrow for Minneapolis and will attend the university again this year, after spending the summer months at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Knutson in this city.

75 Years Ago – The Waseca Journal, September 8, 1948

-The Water and Light Board members, C. W. Spaulding, E. C. Ward and B. F. Patton, in a prepared statement to members of the city council committee of Herman Woyke, L. L. Loomer and A. A. Draheim, turned "thumbs down" on transferring money from their treasury to the city treasury's earmarked for the installation of lights at the baseball park.

-James Nelson of Ellendale is planning construction of a roller rink in Waseca. The city council granted Nelson permission to go ahead with his plans.

-Four grade school boys ranging in age from 10 to 12 years were apprehended this week for taking \$65 from the Leuthold Clothing Co. cash register in two thefts. They were taken into custody when a fifth youth discovered one of the boys hiding money in the park. He took the money home and hid it. His mother found the currency and made him take it to the local police. Jack Leuthold said that he is not going to prosecute if the money is returned. The parents returned the money and the four boys were released to their custody.

-Tuesday, Sept. 14, 1948 may mark the beginning of a new era in Waseca county agriculture. A small group of farmers and implement men witnessed the introduction of a new type plow which threatens to put the familiar mouldboard machine in the corner for good. The demonstration was sponsored jointly by the Brune Implement Co. of this city and the Massey-Harris Co. on a farm belonging to the Waseca Canning Co. and featured the new Goble offset disc harrow.

-A blaze believed to have started from a short circuit in wiring caused a fire which forced 27 persons to flee a state school cottage at Owatonna early Tuesday morning. This was the second serious fire at the school in a year. On Sept. 11, 1947, a modern cattle barn burned down, causing an estimated \$60,000 damage. Mr. Velve, superintendent of the school, estimated the damage would be between \$50,000 and \$75,000.

-Mrs. Doris Hagg, manager of Doris' Apparel, attended Market Week in Minneapolis the first part of the week.

-Miss Margaret Matson and Miss Kathleen Magner, who teaches in Meriden, spent Saturday in Albert Lea and visited with a teacher friend, who is confined in the hospital.

50 Years Ago – Waseca's Daily Journal, September 4, 1973

-In an accident on Wednesday, a car collided with the side of the engine on a southbound train. The mishap occurred at 8:45 p.m. on 7th Ave. N.W. at the railroad crossing. No injuries were reported.

-Denny O'Rourke brings 11 years of automotive body repair to Waseca when he opens Denny's Auto Body Repair next week. O'Rourke hopes to have the shop ready to open early next week in its location in the former Bob Byron Implement Building at 1010 West Elm Ave.

-Barden's Bar shut-out Johnsons 13-0, Dairy Queen knocked off Harry's Dairy 13-7 and Vista Villa blasted Brown Printing 26-6 in flag football Thursday night. Bill Baumann threw a couple of touchdown passes in Barden's big win. Chuck Schumacher hit cousin Duane Barndt with a 36 yard scoring s trike in the second half to make the final 13-0.

-Waseca police today reported another theft from a parked vehicle. A Hi-tachi AM-FM radio was stolen from a car belonging to Tim Cutting, 700 10th St. N.W. The theft occurred sometime Sunday night at Brown Printing Company. Reported Tuesday was the theft of a stereo tape player from a car along with 32 tapes. Waseca Chief of Police Earl Halleck said the department is investigating the thefts.

-Joining the Waseca Central Middle School staff this year are Mrs. Norma Anderson, Home Economic instructor, and William Dambowy, sixth grade instructor.

-The Bluejay football team traveled with Windom Friday night and came home with a big win as they walloped the Eagles 41-8. Art Hoehn had a big night as he scored four touchdowns and gained 156 yards on 12 carries.

-David and Peter Kunst are about ready to begin the final lap of their walk around the world for the United Nations International Children's Emergency fund. David, whose family lives in Waseca, and Peter, whose home is Santa Ana, Calif., told their mother Monday that they will fly from Calcutta, India to Bangkok, Thailand on Thursday and then on to Singapore before going on to Australia to walk across that continent. After completing the journey across Australia they will fly to California and walk to their home in Waseca, Mrs. Al Kunst said.

25 Years Ago – Waseca County News, September 1, 1998

A potentially explosive device was neutralized by members of the Bloomington Bomb Squad on Monday afternoon outside the Waseca Security Building, after the "bomb" was discovered by a Waseca County Sheriff's deputy at a residence in Waseca, according to Waseca Police Chief Jim Staloch. After officers assessed the potential danger of the device by taking an x-ray, they erected a pressurized water disrupter that was operated from a remote location to neutralize the device. Staloch said after the device was neutralized, it was determined that because of the way it reacted, it had the potential to be harmful.

Three long service runs sparked the Waseca volleyball team to its second victory of the season. The Bluejays swept Albert Lea on the road Thursday, cruising to wins of 15-9, 15-8 and 15-5. Melissa Cummins, who served 19 points, was 22-23 with four aces. Senior captain Molly Arnold was a perfect 13-13 while scoring eight points.

With the "catch and release" regulation in place at Loon Lake, DNR officials have documented a rapid rise in norther n pike and bass populations. They also discovered that the fish are increasing in size.

Bruce and Mary Jane Stauffer of Waseca have been selected at the grand marshals for Saturday's 1998 Waseca Marching Classic.

Fire destroyed the home of Donald Gustaf Guse of Janesville on Friday. Upon the Janesville Fire Department's arrival to the scene, the house was engulfed in flames. No one was home at the time of the fire, and no one was injured in the blaze.

Looking Back (New Richland)

100 Years Back - 1923

-Dr. Brand A. Leopard of Minneapolis has decided to locate here permanently. Dr. Leopard arrived Friday of last week and has since been occupied with arranging his equipment in office rooms in the State Bank building. A waiting room will be used jointly with Dr. A. A. Doyle, who also has offices in the building.

-For Sale--Ford Touring car. Good tires and new radiator. Price \$78.00 if sold at once. Inquire at Randall's Café.

-The New Richland community is soon to stage its second annual "Dairy Days" celebration. The event is unique in that it is a civic affair conducted by farmers and citizens alike, every feature of which, from the parade to the butter exhibit, is designed to show our advancement in and the importance of dairying in the community. If you choose to be our guest Sept. 20 or 21st, you will get something of an educational nature, besides clean wholesome entertainment.

-Newspaper headlines read, "agreement between mine owners and miners brings coal war to an end." They have agreed to keep the price up.

-"Lefty" Woock, who has pitched for New Richland in the Southern Minnesota League during the past month, left Monday for Northfield where he will return to his studies at Carleton College.

-Carl Brecke came down from Minneapolis Tuesday for a visit with relatives. He expects to remain until the middle of next week when he will return to his duties as conductor with the Twin City Lines.

-A.J. Anderson, buttermaker at the Otisco creamery, states that they have spent over \$3,000 in improvements at their plant this year. A new boiler has been installed and a number of other conveniences added.

-E.J. Fogelberg of the local school faculty went to Minneapolis Friday to take his examinations in a medical course he has been taking at the University of Minnesota.

77 Years Back - 1946

-All the year New Richland has been waiting for approval of a project that would give curbs and gutters on several different streets but up to now nothing has been accomplished. Recent announcement of federal projects gives New Richland as a beneficiary to the extent of \$1,700 to complete a survey of the proposed project.

-The League of Women Voters met at the home of Mrs. Reuben Burt-ness Tuesday evening. Election of officers was held and all the old of-ficers were re-elected for the coming year: Mrs. Emory Kisor, president; Mrs. Borghild Breilein, vice-pres.; Mrs. Gay Strenge, treasurer; Mrs. Wm. Sullivan, secretary.

-Monday evening of last week a number gathered at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Evenson in honor of Winston Evenson and LuVerne Sunde, who left Tuesday morning to be in the U. S. Army. Those present were: Mr. and Mrs. Justin Sunde and LuVerne, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Sunde, Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Querna and family, Mr. and Mrs. Chris Hagen and family, Olga Sunde, Mrs. Ole Evenson, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Evenson and family, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Nelson and family of Clarks Grove, Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Johnson, and Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Loken of Albert Lea.

-Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Worke, Emery and Mavis, of Waseca, were dinner guests of Mr. and Mrs. Lester Anderson Sunday.

-Misses Virginia Gallagher and Mareen Barden of Waseca were week end guests of Miss Joan Byrne.

50 Years Back - 1973

-Homecoming queen candidates this year are: Kris Thompson, Mary Root Mary Tollefson, Laurie Roesler and Lynn Budach. They were chosen by the football and cross country teams.

-A week ago Friday evening, visitors at the Luverne Joecks home in honor of Luverne's birthday were Mr. and Mrs. Orville Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Groskreutz and family, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Bruegger, Kevin, Beverly and Merrilee and Mrs. Rod Hedberg, Jeff, Scott and Jamie.

-Lawrence Sorenson and Mrs. Clara Laite of Freeborn spent Friday afternoon with Mrs. H. G. Beneke.

-Tom Madson, son of the Garlyle Madsons, graduated from the Anoka Vocational School on Friday, September 7. He completed a course in auto body repair.

-Sunday visitors and afternoon luncheon guests of Mrs. Martin Bart-ness were: Mr. and Mrs. Howard Sigurdson and Diane of Albert Lea, Mrs. Thomas Baas, Mrs. Eugene Warke and Denise of New Richland, Mrs. Elvern Holland of Ellendale, Mr. and Mrs. Mervin Bartness and Larry Bartness.

-Last Wednesday, Dougal Huntington left for Seward, Alaska. He is traveling up the Alaskan highway and will take up his job as barber when he arrives at Seward. His wife, Kathy, Shane and Heather, are staying at the home of her parents, the Ellsworth Tukuas. Mrs. Huntington will leave soon by plane to join him.

25 Years Back - 1998



-Bringing up the rear of the Kiddie Parade in the First Annual Hartland Festival were the bride and groom, Betsy Donovan and Jake Reed.

-Although the NRHEG High School football squad started slow Friday night, they shut out Maple River 34-0 in their second Gopher Valley Conference game of the season.

-Amy Demmer, a member of the NRHEG FFA Chapter, showed the Grand Champion Dairy animal, which was first in its class at the Minnesota State Fair.



LOP-SIDED WIN — The Waseca High School football team rebounded from a season-opening loss to shut out St. Peter 42-0 on the Saints' field. From left: Tauston Rupe (33) and Carter Ellis (6) celebrate a defensive touchdown; Nate Engel-Mueller (55), Shane Engel-Mueller (75), Noah Thompson (44) and Rupe converge on St. Peter's Nakiye Mercado; Waseca's Kaeden Johnson (1) breaks free for one of his three touchdowns on the night.

Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens

Bluejays bounce back in a big way

Johnson rushes for 180 yards

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

After absorbing a rare setback to a surprisingly strong Stewartville squad in the season opener, the Waseca Bluejays were looking to turn things around in week 2 of the football season.

Mission accomplished.

The Bluejays were dominant on defense and the offense got on track in a 42-0 Big South triumph at St. Peter Friday, Sept. 8.

"It was a great effort by the kids and a win over a solid St Peter team," said Waseca coach Brad Wendland.

It started - and ended - with defense.

The Jays forced at least five three-and-outs and allowed just one first down and 36 yards at halftime, which ended 14-0 Waseca.

The Bluejays broke it open in the second half.

"The defensive coaches put together a great game plan, and the defense had a great game with a number of turnovers, stops and a defensive touchdown," said Wendland. "Offensively, we struggled early with some pre-snap penalties and stalled drives, but then we began to put things together. We wanted to control the line of scrimmage, and we feel like we did that. Special teams provided a turnover as well. It was a great team win."

The Bluejays, plagued early by punting issues, broke open a scoreless game early in the second quarter when Kaeden Johnson scored from 6 yards out, capping a six-play, 52-yard drive, all of it rushing. Zach Hulscher kicked his first of six PATs.

Waseca's other first-half points came when Tauston Rupe stripped a St. Peter ball carrier and took the

fumble recovery 37 yards for a touchdown.

After again stopping St. Peter after three plays to start the second half, the Bluejays needed only one play to light up the scoreboard. This time, Johnson took a handoff and raced 67 yards up the sideline to score.

Brandyn Jascha intercepted a pass which had been tipped by Shane Engel-Mueller.

The Bluejays took it 47 yards in three plays the other way, with sophomore quarterback Jordan Johnston throwing 39 yards to Damarius Russell and, one play later, scoring from 2 yards out. Waseca led 28-0.

The Saints finally crossed the 50-yard line with their next drive, which ended with an incompletion on fourth down.

On the Bluejays' very next play, Johnson took the handoff and raced 76 yards for a touchdown.

Reserves took the field for Waseca in the fourth quarter, which saw senior quarterback Keaton Roeker score on a 2-yard run. The game ended with Roeker taking a knee at the St. Peter 5-yard line.

Waseca totaled 376 yards rushing, with Johnson carrying nine times for 180 yards. Johnston was 7-for-10 passing for 132 yards. Damarius Russell totaled 69 receiving yards, Deron Russell 55.

Defensively, Noah Thompson and Carter Ellis led the Bluejays with 10 tackles apiece. Engel-Mueller finished with eight tackles.

The Bluejays improved their record to 1-1 while the Saints fell to 1-1.

Waseca hosts a perennial powerful Marshall squad Friday, Sept. 15 at 7 p.m.



At left, Shane Engel-Mueller (75) chases St. Peter quarterback Tate Olson. At right, the Bluejays' Jordan Johnston (12) finds room to run during Waseca's 42-0 shutout at St. Peter Friday, Sept. 8.



At left, the Bluejays' Deron Russell (7) breaks into the open field. At right, defenders Noah Thompson (44) and Shane Engel-Mueller (75) apply pressure to Saints quarterback Tate Olson.

WHS girls 4th, boys 15th in huge CC field at TCU

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Waseca High School cross country teams traveled to Montgomery for the Tri-City United Gerry Smith Invitational Thursday, Sept. 14.

The Waseca girls finished fourth out of 24 teams with 174 points. Waconia won with 70, followed by Belle Plaine with 77 and Mound-Westonka 164.

Waseca's top finisher was freshman Stella Omvedt, who ran the 5,000-meter course in 20:24.54 for 15th place. Callie Dufault, a junior, finished 22nd in 20:42.41. Others: Maren Schimming, 44th, 21:17.47; Taylor Markeson, 58th, 21:50.02; Melanie Krueger, 63rd, 21:54.97.

Keira Friedrich, a St. Peter sophomore, finished first among 168 varsity runners in 18:40.53.

The Waseca girls were fifth in the junior varsity race covering 5,000 meters. Berkley Hinna, Violet Rohwer and Kelsey Draeger finished 19th, 20th and 21st, respectively.

Waseca's girls finished sixth out of seven teams in the junior high race, which covered 2,500 meters. Quinn Yoder finished eighth.

The WHS boys finished 15th among 25 teams with



Omvedt



Dufault



Schimming

432 points. Belle Plaine won with 52 and Minnehaha Academy was second at 137.

Isaac Fjeldkamp, a junior, paced the Waseca runners, taking 12th in a time of 16:52.95 on the five-kilometer course. Also placing: Tristan Godwin, 81st, 18:56.38; Tyler Jellum, 104th, 19:32.53; Tanner Hanson, 113th, 19:33.70; Bobby Mortenson, 152nd, 20:33.90; Colton Schroeder, 158th, 20:49.53.

Senior William Lieberman of Mahtomedi finished first among 202 varsity boys in 16:14.81.

The Bluejays return to action Tuesday, Sept. 19 at Albert Lea.

BLUEJAY FOOTBALL

PLAYER of the WEEK

Kaeden Johnson

3 TDs, over 150 yds rushing

1

Bluejay Football Player of the Week Sponsored by:

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BREAK-EVEN WEEK — The Waseca High School girls’ tennis team won two of four matches in the past week, defeating LeSueur-Henderson and Mankato West in a home triangular. Above from left: Sarah Haley, Lizzie Roessler and Addie Pfeiffer. Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens

It’s a break-even week for WHS tennis girls

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Waseca High School girls’ tennis team had mixed results in the past week, sandwiching a victory over LeSueur-Henderson and Mankato West between losses to St. Peter and Fairmont.

The St. Peter Saints defeated the Bluejays 5-2 in Waseca on Thursday, Sept. 7.

Winning for Waseca was No. 4 singles player Addie Pfeiffer, who claimed a 6-3, 6-4 victory, and the No. 2 doubles team of Paige Dufault and Vivian Mader. They ral-

Bluejays sweep home triangular while falling to St. Peter, Fairmont

lied to win 2-6, 6-3, 10-5.

The Bluejays’ Sarah Haley, Takya Schoenrock and Maddy Benson dropped the other singles matches in straight sets, though Benson took hers to a second-set tiebreaker. The Waseca junior varsity lost 7-0.

The Bluejays won twice on Saturday, starting with a 6-1 triumph over LeSueur-Henderson.

Haley, Schoenrock, Benson and Pfeiffer prevailed in straight sets in the singles matches. Doubles wins were at No. 1 with Mia Kanewischer and Elizabeth Roessler, and No. 2 with Dufault and Mader. Pearl Moore and Tailyn Kaput lost in straight sets at No. 3 doubles.

Only six matches were played as rain shortened the match against Mankato West, whom the Bluejays defeated 4-2.

Haley, Schoenrock and Pfeiffer won in

straight sets, while Benson rallied after dropping the first set in singles.

Dufault and Mader were in the second set when the rains came. Kanewischer and Roessler were at No. 1 doubles, while Moore and Esme Pearce played No. 3.

The Fairmont Cardinals defeated the Bluejays 4-3 in Waseca on Tuesday.

Pfeifer was the lone Waseca singles winner with a 6-2, 4-6, 6-2 decision at No. 4.

Kanewischer and Roessler won 7-5, 6-4 at No. 1 doubles, while Dufault and Mader claimed a 7-5, 6-4 win at No. 2.

The Jays’ junior varsity lost 3-0.

The action brought the Bluejays’ record to 5-8 overall and 0-2 in the Big South East. After playing Thursday at Blue Earth Area, they’re at Owatonna Sept. 18, at New Ulm Sept. 19 and at Sleepy Eye Sept. 21.

Action-packed week



The Waseca High School girls’ soccer team has been busy the past week. Clockwise from top left in a win over St. James: Ella Krautkremer (8); Waseca’s Ava Bruhn (9) fires a shot on goal; leading scorer Evelyn Nydegger (3); Ashley Sanchez (15) and Bruhn.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

Sports in brief

Waseca spikers top St. James

The Waseca High School volleyball team swept St. James 3-0 Tuesday, Sept. 12 on the Saints’ court. The Bluejays won 25-18, 28-26 and 25-10.

Aliyah Taylor led Waseca in kills with 10, digs with 14 and service aces with five. Kalea Sartori had four kills. Siri Kuhns handed out 23 set assists.

The Bluejays face St. Peter at home Tuesday, Sept. 19 and host Fairmont Tuesday, Sept. 26.

Soccer girls remain busy

The Waseca High School girls’ soccer team had four recent games, against Fairmont, St. James Area and Marshall.

Against Fairmont, Evelyn Nydegger scored three goals. Gabby Lopez had two goals. Eva Bruhn had one goal. Reese Rodriguez had one goal. Peyton Kalbow had one goal. Goalkeeper Ella Bulfer made 14 saves.

In the St. James game, Lopez scored two goals, Nydegger one. Bulfer had four saves.

Against Marshall Ella Krautkremer had one goal and Nydegger had one goal. Addison Weisler had one goal. Lopez had one goal. Bulfer made 16 saves.

The Bluejays play Tuesday, Sept. 26 at Red Wing. They host Worthington Sept. 28.

Boys’ soccer team falls to Marshall

The Waseca High School boys’ soccer team fell 5-2 to Marshall Saturday, Sept. 9.

Both of Waseca’s goals came in the second half, by Mason Jes and Sunny Mei.

“We dominated about 20 minutes during second half, but the need of having a bench to choose from is important,” said Waseca coach J.D. Delgado.

TheBluejays play at St. Peter Monday, Sept. 18 at 6:45 p.m. The next day, they travel to Worthington with the final game of the season Sept. 21 at Kasson-Mantorville.

We will play againsts Byron tonight. I will send you the stats later tonight.

JWP spikers sweep Nicollet

The JWP High School volleyball team picked up its first win of the season Tuesday, defeating Nicollet 3-0. Game scores were 25-11, 25-20, 25-15.

For the Bulldogs: Brielle Bure 2 aces, 15 digs; Navaeh Weimert 1 ace, 7 assists, 4 digs; Katie Olson 5 kills, 3 digs; Lilly Strauss 2 kills, 3 blocks; Claire Walz 3 kills, 1 block; Aubrey Weedman 2 aces, 3 kills, 2 blocks, 16 assists, 10 digs; Presley James 1 ace, 10 kills, 1 block; Paige Walz 3 kills, 1 block, 3 digs; Lexie Dahlbert 3 aces, 6 digs; Cairlin Kleve 1 kill.

The Bulldogs play Monday, Sept. 18 at St. Clair, Sept. 19 at home against Blooming Prairie and Sept. 21 at Hayfield.

Grizzlies run at Hayfield

The WEM/JWP cross country teams participated in an invitational at Oaks Golf Club near Hayfield Thursday, Sept. 7.

The girls finished seventh with 179 points. Pine Island won with 55.

Grizzlies places and times: McKenzie Westphal, eighth, 20:58.35; Lauren White, 24th, 22:39.49; Kwynn Krause, 27th, 22:57.2; Madeline Hoehn, 58th, 27:03.72; Ellie Schlie, 70th, 29:13.55.

The WEM/JWP boys did not field a full squad.

Placewinners: Gavin Brown, eighth, 18:10.8; Wyatt Jans, 24th, 19:19.82; Alex Kleve, 40th, 20:02.04; Maddox Moreno, 66th, 27:33.15.

The Grizzlies run Tuesday, Sept. 14 at the NRHEG Invitational.



TOUGH NIGHT — The JWP High School football team traveled to Winthrop and took a 40-8 loss to the GFW Thunderbirds. From left: JWP's Dylan McWaters (21) breaks loose; Lucas Morsching (42) stiff-arms a GFW defender; quarterback Daulton Bauer (5) passes to Ty Melchoir (9).
Photos by Leanne Lens

Bulldogs struggle in 40-8 loss at GFW

The JWP High School football team fell to 0-2 on the season with a 40-8 loss to Gibbon-Fairfax-Winthrop at Winthrop Friday, Sept. 8.

The Bulldogs, who trailed 16-0 after one quarter and 24-0 at half-

time, were plagued by five turnovers.

JWP scored in the third quarter on a touchdown pass from Daulton Bauer to Ryan Kronbach. Bauer ran for the conversion.

Bauer finished 10-for-13 passing

for 49 yards, with one interception. Nolan Morsching was the leading rusher with 92 yards on 15 carries. Michael Walker ran for 37 yards. Kronbach caught eight passes for 32 yards.

Ethan Born led the JWP defense

with seven tackles and five assists. Ty Melchoir registered two stops and 12 assists.

The Bulldogs are home Friday, Sept. 15 against Cleveland.

NRHEG spikers win twice

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The first road trip of the season, to Dodge Center, was a long one for the NRHEG High School volleyball team.

It became even longer when the Triton Cobras won two of the first three games, forcing the Panthers to rally to claim a 3-2 victory Thursday, Sept. 7. The final tally in favor of NRHEG was 25-14, 24-26, 16-25, 25-22 and, in the deciding game, 15-10.

"We came out strong in our first game and played well," said Panthers coach Ashley Tolzman. "Our second game is where our passing started to pull behind the 10-foot line and lessened our ability to attack. The third game proved to be a mental game. We really got in our heads. Triton was scrappy and able to pick up everything we were sending over the net."

The final two games were different.

"Our fourth and fifth game we came out fighting again, pushing our passing where it needed to be so we could be on the offense again," said Tolzman.

Individually for the Panthers: Gabby Schlaak 12 kills, 2 blocks, 25 digs; Camryn VanMaldeghem 6 kills, 2 blocks, 3 digs; Izzy Stadheim 1 assist, 4 digs; Elsie Schultz 2 digs; Ary Howe 1 dig; Tayler Schmidt 14 kills, 2 blocks, 18 digs; Hallie Schultz 35 assists, 7 blocks, 25 digs; Keira Lenort 5 kills, 8 blocks, 1 dig; Madi Murray 4 kills, 7 blocks, 1 dig; Faith Nielsen 3 assists, 34 digs.

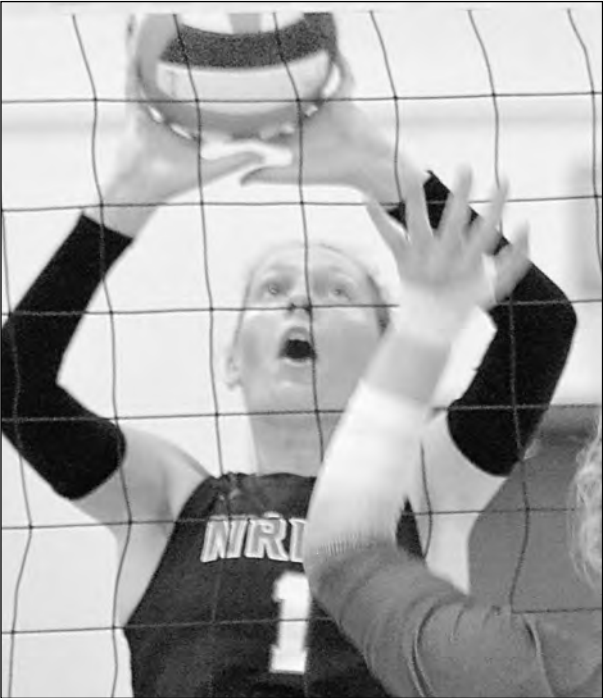
Two nights earlier, the Panthers defeated Martin Luther/Granada-Huntley-East Chain/Truman 3-1 in New Richland. Game scores were 25-21, 25-23, 22-25, 25-22.

"This match was a roller coaster,"



TWO IN A ROW — The NRHEG volleyball team won twice in the past week. Above, the Panthers celebrate a point during their victory over MLGHECT. Below left, Faith Nielsen passes the ball. Below right, Gabrielle Schlaak sets.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens



said Tolzman. "We had some really great plays and saw some really great swings. We also had several mistakes and gave up points. Overall, it was a good competitive match."

Individually: Schlaak 12 kills, 3

blocks, 18 digs; VanMaldeghem 8 kills, 4 blocks, 4 digs; I.Stadheim 1 assist, 1 dig; E.Schultz 1 kill, 6 digs; Schmidt 1 assist, 8 kills, 11 digs; H.Schultz 31 assists, 4 kills, 1 block, 15 digs; Lenort 2 kills, 2 blocks, 1 dig;

Murray 4 kills, 3 blocks, 1 dig; Chloe Stork 1 block, 2 digs; Neilsen 3 assists, 14 digs.

The Panthers, 2-1, play Thursday at WEM and Sept. 19 at home against Medford. They play in the USC Invitational Sept. 23.



I'M OPEN — Quarterback Alden Dobberstein (6) rolls out to pass as Jaylin Raab (5) signals he's open during NRHEG's 2023 home opener.
Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens



EXCUSE PLEASE — The Panthers' George Roesler (85), who had a good game receiving the football, stiff-arms Norwood-Young America's Brayden Daugs (13).



MY BALL — The Panthers' Carter Flatland (41) strips the ball from Norwood-Young America's Hunter Sudheimer during Saturday's game in New Richland.

Football Panthers fall in home opener

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

A lightning delay led to Saturday's NRHEG home football opener to be called early.

It was probably just as well.

The Panthers moved the ball better than last week, but could not find the end zone and couldn't contain Norwood-Young America in a 34-0 setback in New Richland.

"It was a tough loss," said NRHEG coach Marc Kruger.

But the coach did cite some highlights for the Panthers, main-

ly the passing of junior quarter-

back Alden Dobberstein. "The Central Raiders are a very strong team that gave us a lot of trouble," said Kruger. "We had some highlights in the passing game, specifically Alden being able to find tight end George Roesler a few times. Norwood-Young America's front line was very big and played very well."

The Panthers, 0-2, have another Saturday game this week as they host Mayer Lutheran at 7 p.m. Sept. 16 in New Richland.

Nelton, Karl pace Panthers at Hayfield

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The NRHEG High School country teams traveled east last Thursday for the Hayfield Invitational.

"It was wonderful day for running, with much cooler temperatures," said Panthers coach Larry Nydegger.

And the NRHEG runners performed accordingly.

The meet got off to a great start with the combined boys and girls

junior high race going first.

Julieann Wobbrock was the top finisher for the girls, taking first place in the 1.5-mile race with a time of 9:52. Ella Jenö was close behind, taking 11th place, completing the course in a time of 11:13. Owen Flatland finished with a time of 11:10 on the boys' side, good for 37th place.

For the varsity girls, Holly Bartness was NRHEG's top finisher. She completed the 5-kilometer route

with a personal best time of 22:58, which placed her 28th in the field of 77 runners. Madison Corkill and Amelia Duryee finished their first ever varsity races with times of 26:29 and 33:04, respectively.

The varsity boys' race had Devon Nelton and Jacob Karl both finishing in the top 10 with personal best times as well. Devon finished in seventh with a time of 18:08, Jacob in 10th with a time of 18:12. Jackson McGannon shaved nearly

three minutes off his previous best time to take 52nd place with a time of 21:43.

"It was nice to finally be running in cooler temperatures," said coach Nydegger. "And I think that really helped the runners perform at their best today."

After a meet at Blooming Prairie Tuesday, the Panthers are in action Tuesday, Sept. 19 with their home invitational at Riverview Golf Course.

Ninth annual TEAM Walkathon

By **TRISTAN GEHRING**
Staff Writer

On Sept. 8 TEAM Academy held its ninth annual Walkathon to raise money for physical education and recess equipment; the event brought in \$888. Although it was once held in the springtime, it has now become tradition for the Walkathon to take place the first Friday of each school year.

Jalea Priebe, physical education

teacher for TEAM Academy, said she hopes to invest this year's Walkathon money in purchasing heart rate monitors and yoga equipment for her classes as well as more balls and repairs to the "Gaga Pit," the staging area for a popular recess game among elementary students.

The annual Walkathon sees participation from the whole school, with students and teachers alike committed to spending an hour walking



TEAM Academy held its ninth annual Walkathon Sept. 8.
Pioneer photo by Tristan Gehring

together. Students can win prizes during the Walkathon; this year's prize table included backpacks, prize packs from Delta Dental, T-shirts, and small toys. Each year, one lucky student also wins a new bicycle. This year's bike winner was second-

grader Jukai McVey. The bicycle is purchased after the winner is chosen so that it can be the appropriate size and color for the student – McVey would like a blue bike, he told TEAM Academy Director Jill Courtney.

■ County from Page 1

not to exceed \$167,000, for the digitization of all the above records, with an annual recurring cost of about \$2,500 for the maintenance of the files, which is to be paid using a one-time appropriation from the State of Minnesota and interest from investments, and would have no impact on the tax levy. There were concerns among the board about the work being done off-site, requiring transportation of the vital records. The motion to approve the contract passed 3-1, with Commissioner Harguth voting against.

Visitors from District 7 of the Minnesota Department of Transportation presented the District 7 Capital Highway Investment Plan during their September 5 regular meeting. The plan spans the next ten years of road construction on District 7 managed highways in all thirteen District 7 counties. Waseca County is not scheduled to see any construction on district-managed highways until 2028, when the plan indicates Highway 13 beginning north of Waseca and stretching to Waterville will have work done. Highway 13 south of Waseca is listed as a candidate for construction in 2033.

Chris Howard of the land and water resources office received approval from the board for a cover crop project, on the assumption it would be approved by the Soil and Water District at its next meeting. The project covers about 150 acres currently in sweet corn production, owned by Byron Properties of New Richland and located in Section 31 of Wilton Township on Bull Run Creek. Projected costs are about \$40/acre totaling \$5,868.00 to be paid from Riparian Funds with no levy impact.

The board accepted a cash donation in the amount of \$1,050 from the friends and family of Commissioner Blair Nelson to be used for a memorial bench and plaque on the county courthouse property. A location for the bench has not yet been selected.

Denise Wright from the emergency management department presented two items. First, Waseca County was awarded a 2022 emergency management performance grant from the state homeland security and emergency management office. In the amount of \$23,613, the grant requires a 50% local match, and will be used toward emergency management wages in the county. Wright also asked the board to approve and adopt the department's emergency operations plan following its annual review. Both items were approved by the board.

Jon Schiro from Court Services requested the board sign and adopt a resolution to renew the joint powers agreement between the State of Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and Waseca County Court Services, which allows the latter to access tools and resources from the former agency. The cost for this is \$480 each year, which is included in the budget for Court Services. The agreement is in effect for five years.

The board of commissioners also

approved the work done by Scott Construction, Inc. on seal coating approximately 21 miles of roadways in the county, the total cost of which came to 98% of the quoted cost. The board then approved the final payment in the amount of nearly \$92,000.

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SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642
September 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION	NATIONAL SERVICE DOG				1 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	2 V-J DAY
3	4 LABOR DAY	5	6 6pm BAR Bingo	7 7pm BINGO	8 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	9
10 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your Host Relay For Life	11 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting PATRIOT DAY	12	13 6pm BAR Bingo	14 7pm BINGO	15 NATIONAL POW/MILITARY MEAT Raffle 5:30 pm Horse racing 6:30pm	16
17	18 AIR FORCE BIRTHDAY AIR NATIONAL GUARD BIRTHDAY	19 Burger nite 5-7pm	20 6pm BAR Bingo	21 7pm BINGO	22 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	23
24 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your Host Bantam Hockey	25	26 Burger nite 5-7pm	27 6pm BAR Bingo	28 7pm BINGO	29 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm VFW DAY	30

HOURS OF OPERATION
SUN.- MON. CLOSED
TUE.- WED.-3pm to 11pm Tue. Is Lady's nite 2 for one-Men Busch light \$2.50 from 4 to 6pm.
THUR.-1pm to 11pm
FRI.- SAT.-11am to 1 am
POST & AUX MEETING 7pm club open 6pm MEMBERS only. Mn. Gambling license number 00385



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& DESIGN

The Circus was in Town

Circus Stella performs at Waseca Christian Assembly



SPREAD THE JOY - Circus Stella gave eight performances this past weekend. Ringmaster and gymnast Dextre Tripp invited young audience members to take part in some of his stunts: Top right, Emma Brunsen, 8, occupies a chair while Tripp performs a handstand above her. Bottom center, Audrianna Kadrlik balances on Tripp's shoulders as he rides his unicycle. Simon the Clown entertained children with his "rocket balloons," including (bottom left) James Brunson and (bottom right) Lincoln Hermanek and AJ Hinkhouse. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Shows held Sept. 8-10

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"If you can't do this, you should be clapping," says Dextre Tripp as he stands atop a chair balanced on a tightrope.

Tripp is the founder, owner, ringmaster, trainer, juggler, tight rope walker and gymnast who brought "Circus Stella" to Waseca on September 8, 9, and 10. The circus presented eight shows, giving as many as three a day. Its distinctive red and white tent was set up on the property of Waseca Christian Assembly at 900 Fourteenth Avenue Southeast.

The shows lasted about 90 minutes and featured the widely varied talents of Tripp, aerial rope artist Henry Koski, juggler Kayla Malmgren, originally from Eden Prairie, and Simon the Clown, whose real name is Randy Christensen. Each troupe member took turns offering solo performances and also taking part in group acts.

Their talents and accomplishments ranged from laugh-out-loud funny to astoundingly difficult.

"It was scary," admitted 8-year-old Audrianna Kadrlik, who volunteered to sit on Tripp's shoulders as he rode his unicycle during a Friday evening show. Fellow 8-year-old Emma Brunsen sat on a chair balanced on another chair while Tripp performed a handstand above her.

Simon the Clown took the group's picture while encouraging everyone to call out "cheese," then declared his photo of cheese to be a perfect image of the audience.

Tripp, Koski and Malmgren suspended as many as 15 pins in the air, tossing them back and forth while rotating positions. Aerial artist Koski clung to a thick rope with his toes as he worked his way to the top of the tent. In an interview after the show, Koski revealed that he is a student at the New England Center for the Circus Arts, where his major is "Ropes" and he is minoring in "Mime."

As he announced a short intermission, ringmaster Tripp warned the crowd, "But don't leave, because the show isn't over. You know how you can tell? Because you haven't seen the dogs yet!"

The final element of the show were performing dogs Bravo, Timber, Clarice and Adrian. Tripp told the crowd all four were mixed breed dogs

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• Children's Dance: 6 - 8 PM	• Burger Fry: 4:30 - 7 PM	• Pancake Breakfast: 9 AM - 11:30 AM
• Live Auction: 6:30 PM	• Street Dance: 6:30 - 10 PM	

For more details or to purchase tickets, email: PTO@SACREDHEARTSCHOOLWASECA.COM

If you'd like to volunteer or pre-purchase wristbands, please contact the school. Thank you for your support!

EVENT DETAILS

Saturday, Sept 16, 2023	Friday, September 15, 2023
Early Bingo Games: Noon Location: UNDER THE BIG TENT at Sacred Heart Church-Waseca Super Bingo Ticket Prices: \$25.00 (advance sale), \$30.00 (at the door) Note: All advance sale tickets need to be purchased by 5:00 PM on Friday, Sept 15. Tickets available in the Parish Office.	Fish Fry: 5 - 7 PM Live Auction: 6:30 PM Location: Under the Tent at Sacred Heart Church, Waseca Street Dance with Los T! Saturday, 6:30 - 10 PM

Concessions:
Available under the tent all 3 days

Schedules:

Fish Fry: Friday, 5 - 7 PM	Sunday Bingo: Sunday, 11 AM - 1 PM
Burger Fry: Saturday, 4:30 - 7 PM	Raffle Drawing: Sunday, 1 PM
Pancake Breakfast: Sunday, 9 - 11:30 AM	Children's Games & Activities: All weekend
Polka Mass: Saturday, 5:15 PM	Live Auction: Friday, 6:30 PM
Mass: Sunday, 10 AM	Spirit Wall/Cork Pull: Friday, 5 - 8 PM; Saturday, Noon - 7 PM
Early Bird Bingo: Saturday, Noon	Silent Auction, Book Fair, Country Store & White Elephant: Friday, 5 - 8 PM; Saturday, Noon - 7 PM; Sunday, 9 AM - 1 PM
Super Bingo: Saturday, 2 PM	

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