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WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 7 Vol. III \$2

Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca

Friday, February 16, 2024

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Willows is sold

S.A.L. burger and fish fry 5:30 p.m. Feb. 16 at American Legion

Sacred Heart Church in Waseca is hosting a burger and fish fry at 5:30 p.m. at the Waseca American Legion. Cost is \$10. There will be karaoke with Jim Kozan from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. in the Lounge. Meat raffles at 5:30 p.m.

The Catholic Daughters will be selling homemade pies, pop and coffee.

Benefit for Mike Coy, 2 to 6 p.m. Feb. 17

A benefit for Mike Coy, who has been diagnosed with cancer of the liver, will be at the Waseca American Legion hall from 2 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 17. Silent auction, music and entertainment will be featured.

Team Academy “Books and Blankets” 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Feb. 22

Families are invited to read books and make blankets for Waseca’s Bethlehem Inn charity. Families need not have a student at Team Academy. Call the school for more information: (507) 833-8326.

SWCD Tree Order open house 8:30 to 4:30 Feb. 23

An open house will provide the opportunity to learn more about the county Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) “tree order” opportunities. Visitors will be able to acquire information and to place orders for trees to be delivered at a future date. More information is available from the SWCD office at (507) 835-0607.

Blood Drive at Farmamerica 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 1

Visit Farmamerica.org to book an appointment to donate blood during the March 1 donation event at Farmamerica’s main building, 7367 360th Ave, rural Waseca. For more information, contact Farmamerica at (507) 835-2052.

TEAM Academy Open House 5-6 p.m. March 19

Area families interested in learning more about TEAM Academy charter school can visit the facility, meet the teachers, and find out about the school’s methods and philosophy. For further details call the school: (507) 833-8326.

3 on 3 basketball tournament April 6

The inaugural 3 on 3 Blair Nelson memorial basketball tournament will be held April 6, 2024 at Waseca high school. Games begin at 9 a.m. Divisions for grades 4th-8th and a high school division. Max of 6 players per team. Three point and free contests and other fun events will also take place.

Shepherd’s Robe Free store Tuesdays from 1-3 and 5-7 p.m.

The Shepherd’s Robe free store offers clothing, supplies, and much more for free to all interested parties. The store is located at Vista Covenant Church, 14679 275th Avenue, New Richland.

A word from
The Word

Let your steadfast love comfort me according to your promise to your servant.

Psalms 119:76



Milbrath

Milbrath wins election

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Brad Milbrath, 57, will be the newest member of the Waseca County Board of Commissioners. Milbrath defeated fellow candidate Ann Fitch in Tuesday’s special election to fill the seat left unoccupied by the May, 2023, death of longtime commissioner Blair Nelson. Milbrath now represents District 3, covering the majority of the city of

Waseca. He defeated Ann Fitch with 283 votes to 70 with 2 write-ins. He will serve the remaining three years of a four-year term.

“I am humbled and honored to serve as your next District 3 commissioner,” Milbrath said after the results were final. “I am very appreciative of all the support.”

Milbrath said he contacted Fitch Tuesday night to thank her for running a good, clean campaign.

“Congratulations to Commissioner-Elect Milbrath, he will do a fine job representing Waseca County’s 3rd District,” Fitch said in a statement. “While I am disappointed by the outcome of the election, I am far from discouraged. I will continue to serve Waseca in my volunteerism and be involved in

Results continued on 3

A real second chance

Redemption Project aims to find felons gainfull employment

Recidivism rate only 9% for those who utilize program

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

“When we started, we went to various businesses and we asked them, ‘Will you hire some felons?’” says Dwight Tostenson, the chief executive officer and a co-founder of The Redemption Project (TRP), a program which has served inmates from seven prisons located all around Minnesota.

According to a presentation given by Tostenson February 1 during the Waseca Rotary club’s monthly meeting, TRP got its start about six years ago when Tim Owens, a banker and longtime friend of Tostenson, was sent to prison for 14 months. Tostenson said Owens left prison with a new perspective about prison inmates.

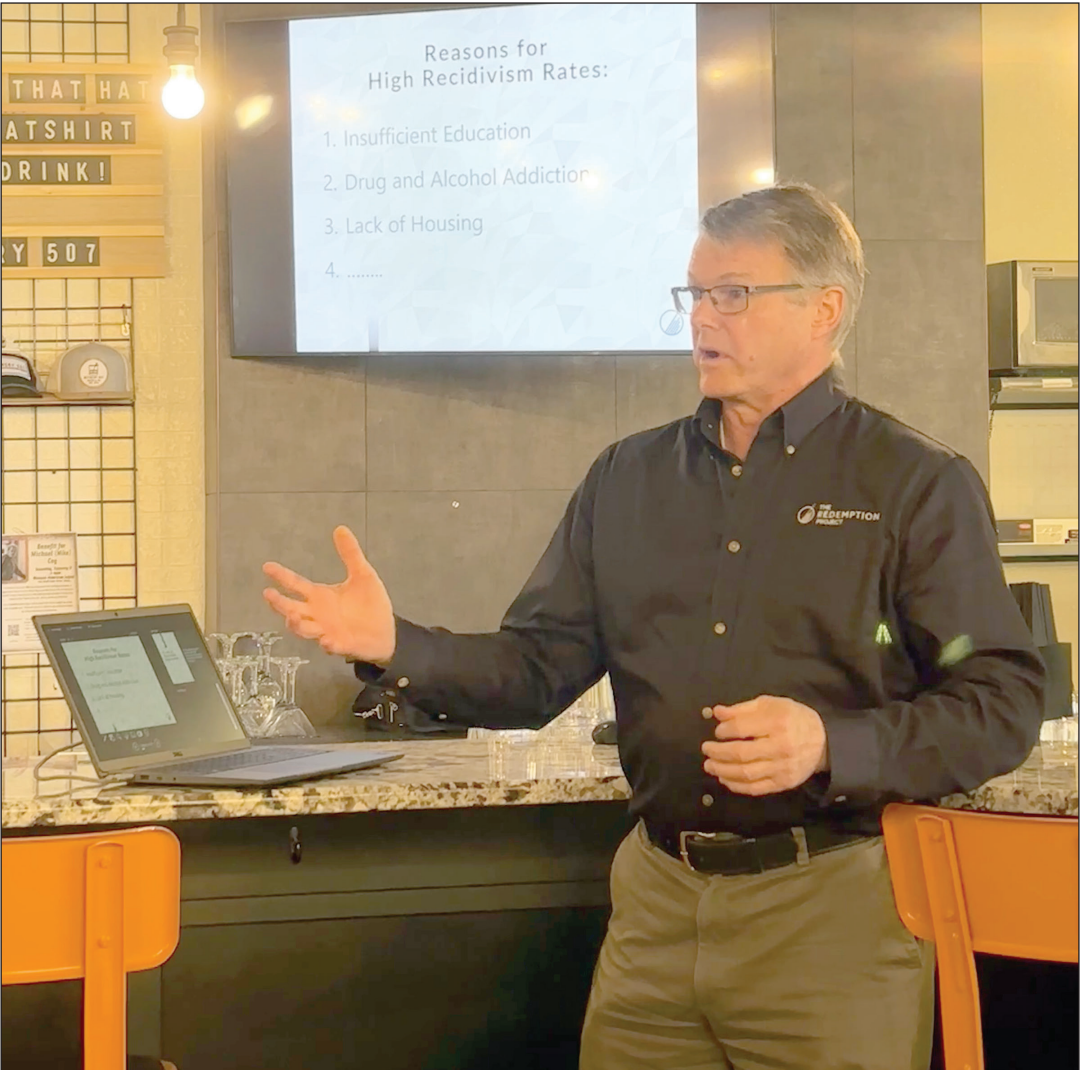
“Seventy to eighty percent of them want to do the right thing,” Tostenson summarized. “They leave prison ready to be good citizens...they get a job and start to earn some honest money. Then the results of their background check come back, and they’re fired.” According to research Tostenson cited, the national “recidivism” rate, that is, the number of inmates who end up returning to prison, is about eighty percent within six years of being released.

“In Minnesota it costs an average of \$55,000 a year to keep an inmate incarcerated,” Tostenson pointed out. “The United States has more people in prison per capita than Russia and China combined.

“The Redemption Project believes that everyone deserves a second chance—that is, a real second chance when they have the resources and support they need to follow through on their intention to be good citizens. Everyone deserves to build the self-respect and stability that come with having a good job.”

Among the 140 inmates who have taken part in the TRP program, Tostenson informed listeners, the recidivism rate is nine percent.

To date, TRP has seven staff members and 40 volunteers. The program has worked with inmates in institutions in Stillwater, Sandstone, Rush City, Lino Lakes, Duluth, Rochester and, as of this



Co-founder of the Redemption project, Dwight Thostenson recently spoke to the Waseca Rotary Club. Below education services director Steven Fitch, Thostenson.

month, the federal women’s prison in Waseca. Tostenson summarized TRP’s program as having three stages.

The first stage is education. A general invitation is issued to all inmates in an institution, offering them a chance to attend a 14-week education course. “We take everybody,” said Tostenson. “Murderers, jaywalkers, whoever signs up.” One of the few requirements is that applicants be anticipating release anywhere between four and 18 months in the future.

Redemption continued on 4



Waseca Snow Week Coronation

Miller, Mumme crowned at WHS

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Snow week royalty gathered in the Waseca High School gymnasium the morning of Thursday, Feb. 8, to find out who among them would be king and queen.

Last year’s Snow Week King, Korbin Schumacher, had the honor of crowning this year’s royal couple, Preston Miller and Ali Mumme. Serving as emcees were Tristin Gross, Josie Madson and Trista Stinehart.

Miller is the son of Jeremiah and Jaala Miller. He takes part in marching band and hockey, and is a member of the Minnesota Honor Society. After high school, he plans to

join the Intelligence branch of the US Marines.

Mumme is the daughter of Matthew and Michele Mumme. She is a member of and secretary to the Minnwest Junior Board of Directors, member of the Minnesota Honor Society, and she works at Grace Garden and Autumn Acres Farm in Janesville. She attends Trinity Lutheran Church in Waterville, where she is a member of the youth group and teaches Sunday School. She plays on the softball team and is a student representative of the Spanish Club.

Prior to the coronation of the King and Queen, several announcements

Royalty continued on 12



King Preston Miller and Queen Ali Mumme.

Photo by Waseca High School Yearbook



Sleigh and cutter parade Saturday

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

For 74 years, the Waseca Sleigh and Cutter parade has been building its reputation for consistency and showmanship—while also proving it’s possible to find fun and variety in the wintertime.

After all, every kid loves a parade and we’re all kids at heart.

Sleigh and Cutter planning committee member Ken Borgmann sees much to be excited about as Saturday’s parade approaches.

Participants from Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa will gather at the county fairgrounds Saturday morning to get their horses and rigs set up and ready for the 12:00 start. Borgmann promises a tremendous variety of units, from rough-ridin’ horseback groups to elegant carriages to the solemn ceremony of the Law Enforcement Memorial Association Caisson drawn on a flatbed trailer.

He anticipates 1,500 people or more will line the parade route: depending on the weather and their own preferences, whole families will park in their cars along Third Street Northeast, or set up chairs along downtown sidewalks, where no parking will be allowed.

He notes that the parade leaves the fairgrounds along Third Street Northeast at noon and returns via Fourth Street Northeast somewhere between 30 minutes and an hour later. Folks wishing to stay in their vehicles should position themselves along those streets. A map of the route will be available on the Waseca City Police Department’s Facebook page at least a day in advance.

As a horseman and member of the Waseca County Sheriff’s posse, Borgmann says he takes the opportunity to ride in the parade whenever he can. “It’s gratifying to see those folks, especially children, with their faces pressed up against their windows to watch all the units pass. They wave and clap as they see everything come by.

“It helps us know we’re doing a good and important thing.”

Borgmann has been on the Sleigh and Cutter planning committee for more than 30 years, and remembers that, over the many decades the parade has been held, participants have had everything from sunny, comfortable rides to icy, bitter ones—and still they continue to come.

“Part of it’s the fellowship,” Borgmann observes. “We love to get together and talk horse.”

As the parade finishes, participants settle their animals and equipment in place and share each others’ company at a meal served by members of the Waseca Area Foundation. There, they either recover from or rejoice regarding the weather on the ride, and continue to socialize. Borgmann says many parade recipients have told the planning committee it’s their best parade experience all year.

“Between the kids watching and the horsemen taking part,” Borgmann comments, “it’s a great experience for everyone.”



Compostings

by Al Batt

Between the Rock and a card place

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I hate Monday. Today is Thursday. It takes me a long time to get over a Monday.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I hate to brag, but I have a lot of pennies. I'm no billionaire, but I've found a penny goes a long way if I never spend it. I was introduced to the world of high finance by a coffee can that became my piggy bank. I grew up with real pigs and a piggy bank that looked nothing like a pig. I spent a few months in a hospital when I was a boy, and family members, friends and neighbors gave my parents silver dollars for me. My parents refused to sell me for my salvage price and put all those silver dollars into a coffee can, which was later stolen from our home. Now I toss coins into a jar. I make it rain! The jar fills and is carted to the local bank, which has a fancy coin-counting machine. Bills promise everything and coins promise little, but I can still make a big decision by flipping a coin.

IT'S A SMALL TOWN IF:

The city limits signs are all on the same pole.

The cafe's special is take it or leave it.

The zoo closed after the chicken died.

The mayor is also the constable, the dogcatcher, the Little League coach and a banker.

The traffic light changes weekly. Someone tells you his other vehicle is a John Deere.

The town shares the one horse with another small city.

You can tell when there is a tornado warning because every resident is outside watching for one.

The first baby of the year was born on August 17.

There are no public restrooms indoors.

A man forgot to turn off his porch light and won the Christmas lights contest.

People plan weddings around spring planting and fall harvest.

Everyone knows what cow pie bingo is.

YOU GREW UP ON A FARM IF:

You used something other than paper as toilet tissue.

You called a farm place by the name of a family who had moved away from there before you were born.

You always knew which direction the wind was blowing.

You told a cousin from the city

that a cow pie is made of beef.

I'VE LEARNED

To expect delays.

That I learned to trust others while on the school's teeter-totter.

The problem with all the presidential candidates is that they want to be the president.

The difference between a garage sale and an estate sale is about 500%.

If you worry too much, you have one more thing to worry about.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

Dwayne Johnson confronted me in front of a Hallmark store. I was between a Rock and a card place.

I bought a small abacus because it's the little things that count.

I met a microbiologist. He was bigger than I expected.

Never say "288." It's too gross.

NATURE NOTES

I've believed all my life that someone introduced European starlings to North America in 1890-1891 by the American Acclimatization Society (dedicated to introducing European flora and fauna to North America), and the driving force behind it was Eugene Scheiffelin, who was obsessed with introducing every bird mentioned by Shakespeare into North America. It's partly true. It likely had nothing to do with Shakespeare. Shakespeare mentioned starlings once in his works, Henry IV, because of their ability to mimic. John Miller and Lauren Fugate of Allegheny College found that starlings were released in the U.S. multiple times in the 1870s and 1880s, and people reported wild flocks during that time. Edwin Way Teale, in his book, "Days Without Time," published in 1948, had popularized the Shakespeare angle. I read Teale and enjoy his writing. He wrote that Scheiffelin had the curious hobby of introducing all the birds mentioned in the works of William Shakespeare. But the American Acclimatization Society releases in 1890 and 1891 weren't their first, having released starlings at least once before in the 1870s. The first assertion of Shakespeare's influence on those releases happened nearly 60 years after the last release. Starling numbers are in decline in North America, with the current population half the size it was 50 years ago. The species is also declining in Europe. Starlings are common and widespread, but according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey, their population has decreased by over 1% per year, a cumulative decline of about 50% between 1966 and 2019.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Don't rob people of their stories. Be kind and listen.

A space outside of time

As I write this, I am on an escape trip to our family cabin in northern Minnesota. There is only a coating of snow on the ground. The temperature is slightly above freezing. There are 13 inches of ice on the lake.

But most importantly, it's a space outside of time.

Perhaps Dave Zika, who has all the answers, can explain why time spent at the lake is different from time spent elsewhere. I'm sure he and I will be able to construct a lengthy conversation on the topic.

But somehow, here, the everyday pressures which push and pull on us, seem muted. Maybe, like sound, they are muffled by the trees.

Somehow, at the cabin, the basic tasks of cooking and (in winter) keeping the fire going are all that's needed. There are no expectations to be met, no challenges to overcome.

Our little cabin is quite remote and unquestionably rustic. It was



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

previously owned by an aunt and uncle who were generous enough to let my family group come for a stay nearly every summer. Over my 55-year history with the location, it has had indoor plumbing less than half that time. Even now, in winter, we have the well inactivated and must make do with limited water use.

While there are definite inconveniences there, I don't mind "making do."

I'm currently working on a story about the Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) service and what it takes to maintain powerlines all across the two-county

service area. Among the information I learned is that, to get electricity to their rural farmsteads, farmers back in the 1930s and '40s were willing to help install the power poles—a very labor intensive task which included digging the necessary post holes by hand.

Dan Meier, operations manager at SWCE, informed me there are still some places where those "user-installed" poles are still holding up electrical conducting line. He says one way to recognize those sections is that the poles are significantly further apart than the way they're positioned by modern crews. The poles also tend to be a

bit shorter than the newer ones.

The reasons why come clear with a little reflection: crews used as few poles as they could get by with because installing each of them was such a labor-intensive task. As for the height, well, compare a piece of 1940s farm equipment to the behemoths you see nowadays.

Those twentieth-century workers would never have been able to conceive an operation of thousands of acres in size that could be operated by one or two people.

Yet they were making the future possible by placing those poles.

There, see, somehow being at the cabin in front of a glass-faced fireplace draws a person into reflection and wandering thoughts.

By the time you read this late Friday I will already be back in Waseca County, rested, refreshed, and ready for the down-home fun of the Sleigh and Cutter parade. See you there!

Amelia's Superbowl halftime performance



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

It's week whatever now in school and I am completely ready for it to be done. I'm exhausted all the time; I'm always writing either for class or work; and I'm always stressed about the future. Lovely times.

I'm probably exaggerating, given that it's late while I am writing this. I was able to attend a University gospel choir practice today, and that was fun. I had interviewed the director earlier in the day for a feature I am writing about him for the Daily. I asked whether I could attend a practice, see what it's like, maybe ask some of the participants about their experiences working with the director.

It was fun, though. I realized I really miss organized singing. I haven't sung as part of a group since high school choir with Mrs. Yess. Singing in choir is truly fun. Since I am an alto, I just love making harmonies and listening to the blend echo through the room. It's just beautiful.

It was really fascinating being able to sit in on the gospel choir. The atmosphere is somehow entirely different from other vocal groups. First,

there was no sheet music. Students learn to sing notes through examples given by the director, then cement their skills through repetition. Lyrics are put on the screen so students can at least see what words they are to be singing. But besides that, it was just incredible that everyone is very passionate in what they are singing about; it led to less of a "teacher-student" environment and more of a shared community where everyone is there to sing good music. I smiled the whole time.

I received an email at 4:30 a.m. today from a gentleman I was scheduled to interview for a story later on. When we met face to face, I told him I had never received an email so early, and it was impressive. He laughed and said it's when he gets

his best writing done, a practice he learned during his PhD studies when he was writing his doctorate during the pandemic. An impressive strategy, but it just makes me wonder how he even gets through his day staying awake. He then asked me whether I am a night owl, to which I responded that if I had to categorize myself, I guess that's where I would probably be placed. But really, that's not how I see myself. While I admit the occasional daytime nap sounds very nice, I would say I am a day person, not morning person, not night owl, but a day person. Oh, but then again I guess being able to bartend proves that wrong.

Well, Valentine's Day has come and gone. The best part of it is when I get lovely little packages from my

grandparents, godparents, and parents. They are all so sweet to think of me on February 14, since someone's son isn't going to be. But that's okay, I don't feel the need to be out and dating right now anyway: It's so much work. Plus, I have all the love I need from my family and friends.

Speaking of friends, my lovely friends forced me to do stand-up comedy on Sunday during the halftime show of the Super Bowl. You see, I lost in my fantasy football league, and the punishment was to do five minutes of stand-up—originally in a comedy club in Minneapolis, but then we weren't able to book a slot. So I was "encouraged" to host a Super Bowl party and then I was to be the halftime show entertainment before Usher. I will say, for the minimal prep I did, I wasn't too bad. There were at least a few chuckles.

My Determination: "But I can be Harry Potter. Or John Conner. Or what's her name, from The Hunger Games. The point is, I can be that person that nobody thinks is awesome, but it turns out, they're kind of awesome." - Hughie Campbell, The Boys

A lot of election talk for February



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

This past week has felt like I've done nothing but talk to candidates running for office.

As I write this, it was most recently the Waseca County Commissioner race for District 3. Last week it was the State House Seat election for 19B to determine who will replace John Petersburg.

All of the conversations were pleasant.

On Thursday, candidate Mick Ditlevson of Owatonna and Pam Seaser, co-chair of the Steele County Republican party, stopped in to visit with me. I have many thoughts following our half-hour meeting.

When I first learned Mick was running, I wondered whether it was a typographical error. I thought his dad Mark was running for office. Mark already serves with the Soil and Water District in Owatonna, is a farmer and an auctioneer. Tracy Holland is a farmer and auctioneer who lives near Ellendale, whom I have done a lot of work for over the years, creating many, many auction posters. He and Mark have run auctions together a time or two.

Once I learned it was not a typo, I learned Mick is 28 years old, a 2014 graduate of Owatonna High School and, after spending some time working in Washington D.C., moved back to town to farm in 2021.

My biggest concerns regarding all the candidates are their ages and experience.

I worry about how they will fight for residents in Waseca, their projects and needs. Younger people do not have the life experience of folks in their 40s, 50s or 60s.

But that doesn't mean young people shouldn't run for office. It just means they should open their ears when those people are speaking.

My impression from Mick is he's willing to do that.

When I shared my concerns and explained our role as a community newspaper he listened and I felt heard. That's all I can really ask for.

No matter who is elected, I will worry about how well they will do serving the needs of Waseca County.

There are two other candidates who have announced their intentions to run for this same seat, Taylor Zinkle and Chris Rausch. I have not spoken to Chris yet and only last week learned of his moving here from St. Paul to run for the open seat.

Taylor Zinkle is another candidate running for office. I attended college in Mankato while he was attending the same school. We bumped into each other a few times. I do not know him particularly well. However, from those interactions I learned he enjoyed talking about all of the Republican folks he knows in Saint Paul. Local Republicans have always advertised with the Star Eagle and now the Pioneer, and so, every election cycle I talk to some or all of the candidates in the area for various levels of office. I always learn a great deal from those conversations.

I have not yet spoken with Taylor outside of gathering a few details to include in the news story about his candidacy a few weeks ago. As of late he's been living in Mankato, and working. Previously, I do know he worked for Congressman Jim Hagedorn. Taylor intends to move into the district to be eligible in the upcoming election. He is a Waseca native.

One more takeaway I would like to share from my talk with Mick and Pam.

Pam asked me if I was just speaking to her and Mick to gather intel for Taylor—in other words, spying on them. I think I actually laughed at the question. I don't know whether I

should have been insulted or not.

Genuinely, I was pleased they felt it was important to come talk to me at all.

When Governor Tim Walz was running for Congress the first time back in 2006, he stopped into the Star Eagle to speak with my father. My dad had just had a stroke that summer and was recovering, but still working. It meant a lot to him that Tim took time to visit not only him, but all of the newspapers in the congressional district.

When Walz was running for Governor in 2018, I had the opportunity to speak to him a couple times. He remembered my dad.

In fact, uncoached, he shared the same story I shared above.

That was impressive.

I've been told a politician's job, outside of the political stuff, is to try and make a connection with each and every person he or she meets. My guess is so those folks are more likely to vote for them. I would say my conversations with Walz met that goal of making a connection. He changed my image of him from a political office to a human. One of my favorite high school teachers, Pat Churchill, was a student teacher in Walz's classroom in Mankato prior to his running for office. He spoke highly of the experience.

I think people get a little too caught up in politics sometimes and they forget that even politicians are people too.

My family has voted on both sides of the aisle. For me, what's most important is supporting the candidates who will do the best to represent me

and the surrounding community. Whoever I believe will succeed at that is who I intend to vote for.

Projects like Tink Larson Community Field or the Waldorf Water Treatment Plant would not have been possible without state assistance. Both of those became reality because area individuals were able to talk to our local representatives, who then believed in their causes enough to fight for them. From what I've learned, it's a demanding task, which is why I think it's important for politicians to have the connections, savvy, and experience to get those things done.

Once again, I wish Blair Nelson were around to tell the story of how the Tink Larson Field funds came down to the wire, a 3 a.m. vote on the State's Appropriations Bill, something only done every two years.

I almost forgot to mention the special election for Blair's empty seat on the county board of commissioners. My talks with the candidates were brief, but good. Congratulations to both on a clean campaign: I felt confident from the beginning that, however the election turned out, the Waseca district will be well served.

One more thing, I also had a meeting with John Knotts, leader of the Waseca County Republicans. I can report, he is also a nice man.

Oh, and Les and Karen Tlougan are very kind, too. I am unsure how involved they are with the Democratic party at this time. I am working on an article to encourage people to attend our local caucuses. On the DFL and Republican sides, caucuses are February 27. Please go take part.

"The journalistic code of ethics governing the broadcasts requires that opposing views be presented, and that journalists' personal opinions or judgments be left out of factual reporting." - Sheri Fink

P.S. I think people should know how a journalist feels about something she or he is reporting about.



SERVING THE WHOLE OF WASECA COUNTY

including the communities of Waseca, Janesville, New Richland, and Waldorf

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Superintendent's Corner

by Eric Hudspith

Preparing students for the future

Waseca Public Schools' mission statement is to empower all learners to thrive in an ever changing world. That is defined most simply by saying that our goal is that students have options when they leave our schools. Whichever one of the three "E" words students advance to after graduation, enrollment, employment, or enlistment, it is important to us that they did so by choice. Each student has individual talent, skills, and interests that are uniquely their own, and our work in school is to assist them in putting these together to create a plan for the next steps.

Counselors, teachers, and administrators do this in a variety of ways. The first step is the creation of a four year plan for graduation. The state of Minnesota has a set of required courses that students must complete to obtain a high school diploma. Our staff works closely with students to ensure that they are able to take all of these classes successfully during their time in high school. Credit recovery programs and additional scheduling adjustments are available to students who need additional support to obtain the necessary course credits to graduate.

In addition to the initial plan for graduation, students in Waseca Public Schools also have the opportunity to create four year plans that allow them to explore their career interests. When students register for classes, multiple career pathways have been identified, with several potential courses listed for each pathway. Students then have the opportunity to take classes that provide exposure and key learning that will support students in this pathway. Students can move freely through pathways as they explore their interests, as these are not intended to create a tracking model, but instead allow students to make decisions about their next steps after graduation with experiences to draw from.

Courses are sorted by career pathways such as: Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; Arts, Communications, and Information Systems; Business, Management, and Administration; Engineering, Manufacturing, and Technology; Human Services and Health Sciences Technology; and a list of global electives that fit all pathways.

Our goal in WPS is to provide students with a strong foundation so that whatever path they choose, they have the skills and knowledge to take that next step. High school students are currently selecting courses for the 2024-25 academic year, and we are excited to see which pathways our students continue to pursue, and hope as well that our local employers are encountering graduates that are prepared and ready to join their teams.

The Willows is sold

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Last week, The Willows restaurant in New Richland was sold to John and Julie Arnold of New Richland. The previous owners, Travis and Heather Blake, shared the news via Facebook.

"Today we close a very big chapter," the Blakes said in the announcement. "This is a bittersweet day as our life has fully revolved around the restaurant for the last 18 years. We can't thank you enough for your continued support over the years. This town, this community, is like no other."

Eighteen years ago the Willows, located at 100 Minnesota Highway 13 in New Richland, came into existence under the Blake family, with Travis and his wife Heather running it together for the past 15 years. The couple officially purchased the business from Travis's dad Jim in 2016.

The Blakes shared emotional memories from their nearly two decades at the restaurant, highlighting their role as "the hub" for after parties during the NRHEG Girls' State Championships runs in 2013 and '14 along with "great Friday nights" and an overall sense of family with the community and their incredible employees.

Travis Blake will continue working at the Willows through March, after which he intends to go full-time with his food truck and catering business, "Blake's BETtor Spread."

"If the year has taught us anything, it's that life is too short, and as the years go on, you can't get moments back, so do what you love to do," their announcement read. "Here's to more time with family, a little less stress, Friday nights, and doing what we love."

The Willow's hours of operation are currently listed as being 11 am to 8 pm on Tuesdays and Sundays; 11 am to 9 pm on Wednesday through Saturday.

More information on the new owners will be published at a future date.

The entire post from the Blake's Facebook page follows:

"Today we close a very BIG chapter.

We have sold the Willows (locally).

This is a bittersweet day as our life has fully revolved around the restaurant for the last 18 years for Trav and 15 for us as a couple.

To our customers: We can't thank you enough for your continued support over the years. This town, this community is like no other. The dedication, the commitment and the ongoing support has always been top notch. This community rallies through the ups and downs, supporting one another for special events, activities, benefits and more. We have had countless class reunions for groups of all ages, birthdays, bridal and baby showers, Christmas parties. We even celebrated an engagement!

Of course, our absolute favorite days were during State Basketball.



The Willows in New Richland was first established in 2006 under the ownership of Jim Blake. Travis and Heather Blake purchased the businesses in 2016. Longtime employee Julie Arnold, alongside her husband John purchased the business last week.

The Willows was the hub for the pasta parties and of course the after parties! Those were the years that our customers turned into family. Those days brought this community close together and we will forever cherish those memories. There was a time where we had more Panther clothing than Bluejay clothing!

To the "Monday Nighters," some are no longer with us, THANK YOU, for the memories. You hosted a baby shower for Tenley, supported us through transitions and remained in contact even after we closed on Mondays. Some of New Richland's greatest people were among this group!

To our employees,

Throughout the years, we have had some of the best employees! We wouldn't be where we are today without you; we can't thank you all enough. Even you who worked many, many years ago!

Finally, we want to thank our friends and family for supporting us. They are usually the ones that we would "put to work" when it was busy, having them do dishes, clean off tables or cook. Thank you for helping with Tenley when we both needed to be at the Willows.

As most of you know, we purchased a food truck a couple of years ago and for you all wondering "What's Trav going to do?" He will continue to work at the Willows until March and then go full-time with the food truck and catering. If the year has taught us anything, it's that life is too short, and as the years go on, you can't get moments back, so do what you love to do and SIMPLIFY. Here's to more time with family, a little less stress, FRIDAY NIGHTS, and doing what we love!"

Sesquicentennial, Century farm apps due March 4

Minnesota Farm Bureau's Sesquicentennial Farm program will honor Minnesota families who have owned their farms for at least 150 years. The Sesquicentennial Recognition Program began in 2008. The program recognizes family farms according to the following qualifications:

- 1) The farm must be at least 150 years old this year (2024) according to the abstract of title, land patent, original deed, county land records, court file in registration proceedings or other authentic land records. Please do not send originals or copies of records.
- 2) Your family must have owned the farm for 150 years or more. "Family" is defined as parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters, first cousins and direct in-laws (father, mother, brother, sister, daughter, son-in-law).
- 3) Continuous residence on farm is not required, but ownership must be continuous.
- 4) The farm should consist of 50 or more acres, and currently be involved in agricultural production.

The Century Farm program recognizes family farms according to the same qualifications as the Sesquicentennial except that the farm must be at least 100 years (2024) old and must have been owned by the family for 100 years.

A commemorative certificate signed by the Governor of Minnesota, the Commissioner of Agriculture of Minnesota and the Minnesota Farm Bureau President will be awarded to qualifying families, along with an outdoor sign signifying Sesquicentennial Farm recognition. The Century Farm families will receive a commemorative certificate that will be signed by the Governor of Minnesota, the President of the board of the

Minnesota State Fair, and the President of Minnesota Farm Bureau, along with an outdoor sign signifying Century Farm recognition.

Applications are available for either the Sesquicentennial or Century Farm recognition by contacting the Regional Farm Bureau Office at: 634 West Bridge Street, Owatonna, 55060, maryjo.schoenfeld@fbmn.org or calling the Regional Farm Bureau office at 507-455-0745. Applications are also available on the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation website, www.fbmn.org and going to "In Action" across the top of the website. Deadline for application is March 4. Previously recognized families should not reapply.

Century Farms are not automatically recognized as Sesquicentennial Farms. Families must apply to receive Sesquicentennial Farm recognition. County Farm Bureaus are encouraged to work with county agriculture societies and county fair boards on local recognition of recipients. Recipients will be announced at the beginning of June.

Minnesota Farm Bureau – Farmers - Families – Food is comprised of 78 local Farm Bureau associations across Minnesota. Members make their views known to political leaders, state government officials, special interest groups and the general public. Programs for young farmers and ranchers develop leadership skills and improve farm management. Promotion and Education Committee members work with programs such as Ag in the Classroom and safety education for children. Join Farm Bureau today and support efforts to serve as an advocate for rural Minnesota. www.fbmn.org

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Annual Waseca SWCD Tree Open House

Friday, February 23, 2024
8:30-4:30
SWCD Office
300 North State Street, Door #4
507-835-0603

Order forms available at the office or on line
at www.wasecaswcd.org/tree-program

Hot Chocolate, Apple Cider and Cookies.
Sign up to win a \$15 Potted Conifer.

Mark or Joe will be available to talk about shelterbelts, windbreaks, tree line restoration.



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Waseca with his significant other, Cindy Lou Johnson.

His decision to run for county commissioner was due mainly to the untimely passing of former commissioner, Blair Nelson.

"Blair and I have always worked well together," Milbrath said. "Part of our discussion was that I wouldn't run against him as long as he was there. He and I had the same philosophies on how things should be done."

His passion for public service,



Fitch

Milbrath added, also contributed to his decision to run.

"I've been helping Waseca County for 24 years, and I believe Waseca can still grow and thrive."

This will be Milbrath's first time holding elected office other than Waseca County Sheriff.

"My history as sheriff has shown

that I take care of Waseca County," Milbrath told the Pioneer in a previous interview. "I think I'm a good leader - I've taken staff and people in general and helped them in any way I can. Part of our philosophy when I was sheriff is that we don't just go to a call, we take those two extra steps, no matter what the cause. If it's a flat tire on the side of the road or a leaky pipe - stop by and help them out. My goal is to help people in any way I possibly can, and make life a little bit easier for everyone."



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OBITUARIES

Christine Schultz

CHRISTINE “CHRIS” ANNA SCHULTZ, age 74, of Waseca peacefully passed away surrounded by family on Thursday, February 8, 2024 in Waseca.

Born on May 4, 1949 in Fari-bault, she was the daughter of Ver-non and Loretta Schwartz. She graduated from Waterville High School with honors in 1967. She was united in marriage to Richard L. Schultz on October 12, 1968 at Holy Trinity Church in Waterville. Together, they welcomed two chil-dren, Ski Ann and Richard C. and later divorced. Chris worked at EF Johnson for over 40 years. While working at EFJ she earned her As-sociates degree from South Central College. She also worked part-time throughout the years at Walters Cookbooks, Wahi’s, McDonalds and Emerson/Cinch.

It was while Chris was working at Wahi’s that she met her love, Kenneth Gottschalk. Together, they enjoyed going to auctions, toy shows, Pioneer Power, Rochester Gold Rush Day, and craft sales. She enjoyed cheering on the Min-nesota Vikings, mowing lawn on her parents farm, gardening, and making her family all types of their favorite jam. Chris would spend time sewing and making beautiful ceramic pieces and other figurines. She was known to collect many chickens and roosters throughout her lifetime. She will be dearly missed.

Chris is survived by; children, Ski Ann (Mark) Christiansen of Waseca, Richard Schultz of Ben-senville, IL; her love of over 32 years, Ken Gottschalk of Waseca;



Christine Schultz

grandchildren, Taylor (Allie) Zin-kle of Waseca, Parker Christiansen of Waseca, Spencer Christiansen of Waseca; Patrick (Indira) Schultz of Bensenville, IL, Charlie (Joe Brabeck) Schultz of Glendale Heights, IL; siblings, Linda (Mar-shall) Nelson of Waseca, Loren “Curly” (Arlene) Schwartz of Ely-sian; and many other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Vernon and Loretta Schwartz; and several aunts and uncles.

Visitation will be held from 4 to 7 PM on Friday, February 16, 2024 at the State Street Chapel of Den-nis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service. Visitation will continue one hour prior to the serv-ice at the church on Saturday.

Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11:00 AM on Saturday, February 17, 2024 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca. Interment will follow at Woodville Cemetery. Dsofuneral.com

Raleigh Schroeder

RALEIGH JOHN SCHROEDER, age 75, of Waseca, died peacefully on Friday, February 9, 2024 at his home.

Born on August 26, 1948, in Waseca, he was the son of Ervin and Florence (Neigebauer) Schroeder. Raleigh graduated from Waseca Cen-tral High School with the class of 1966. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1968 to 1971 where he served on the USS Saratoga. Raleigh was married to Susan Marzinske for 23 years. He worked for Birdseye for 2 years. After his honorable discharge from the Navy, he worked for Stan-dard Oil Co. along side his family. In 1980, Standard Oil Co. became Schroeder Cook Paint. In 2000, Ra-leigh took over the business, chang-ing the name to Schroeder’s Painting.

Some of his hobbies included, puz-zles, fishing and making homemade ice cream. Raleigh was a handy man helping out various customers with mowing their yard and snow remo-val. He enjoyed following profes-sional sports, especially the Minnesota Vikings. Raleigh always looked forward to spending time every summer, for the past 40 years, with his family in Okoboji. He was a faithful member of St. John Evan-gelical Lutheran Church in Alma City.

Raleigh is survived by his daugh-ter, Martha Hennessy and her hus-band, Sean of Pemberton; son, Kevin Schroeder of North Mankato; two granddaughters, Norma and Made-lyn; two grandsons, Collin and Jo-shua; siblings, Craig Schroeder and his wife, Mary of Morristown, De-nise Lilla and her husband, Dan of

Trempealeau, WI, and Steven Schroeder and his wife, Jody of Waseca; many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

He is preceded in death by his par-ents; grandparents: Ernest and Anna (Abbe) Schroeder, and William and Olga (Horsky) Neigebauer; brother, Arleigh Schroeder and his wife Karla; niece, Jessica Schroeder.

Funeral Service will be 11:00 AM on Friday, February 16, 2024 at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Alma City. Interment will follow in Alma City Cemetery. Visitation will begin at 9:00 AM and will continue until the time of the service at the church on Friday.

DSOFuneral.com
Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service
Waseca ~ Janesville ~ Waterville



Raleigh Schroeder

Identify Frosty and win \$1,750

It’s time again for the annual Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Identify Frosty event. This year’s event is the 27th installment of the annual contest.

Who is Frosty?

Identify FROSTY and win some cash! Prize money totaling \$1,750.00 is wait-ing to be won. FROSTY is a Waseca County resident chosen to be an ambas-sador for the Waseca Sleigh & Cutter Festival. Follow the clues and guess FROSTY’S name.

Grand prize is \$350.00. If you are at the official unmasking at 9:00 p.m., on Friday, February 16, 2024, you will win an additional \$50.00. Unmasking is at the VFW Club 113 West Elm Avenue, Waseca, MN. First correct guess from Ja-nesville, New Richland and Waseca win \$150.00; and if you are at the unmasking you will win an additional \$50.00. Only five names will be drawn for \$100 – must be present. Five names win \$50.00 – at-tendance is not necessary.

Frosty: Week 1 Clue

*It’s that time of year again,
As we say hello to 2024,
And enter the 74th Festival ses-sion,
The Frosty contest is one not to ig-nore.
Much like the past 27 years,
And in Sleigh and Cutter tradition,
This year’s Frosty
To the Waseca community, is an addition.
Follow along each week,
As there is money you have a chance to win.
Compile the information and make a guess,
For the contest, today it will begin.
Will you pass Frosty in public.
As you support businesses in town?*

*Likely, that is very possible.
Use the clues to narrow Frosty down.*

Frosty: Week 2 Clue

*Like all that have come before,
This year’s Frosty calls Waseca Home.
All these years, Remaining in the area
Away from Waseca, they did not roam.
To Waseca,
Frosty is tried and true
Graduating as a 2-sport athlete,
A Bluejay Forever - Go. Big. Blue.
But first, Growing up on a farm,
Located on the outskirts of town,
Frosty helped in raising animals and crops.
In the fall, they helped to knock them down.
Moving to town,
Not long after
Frosty continued their hard work
Filling the air with laughter.*

Frosty: Week 3 Clue

*Have the clues given enough?
Who will be the first to guess?
There’s little to go off of,
That I must confess.
To add some more facts
And aid in the identification,
This year’s Frosty
Is a wealth of information.
Supporting the Legion
A member for 50 years plus
The stories in their time,
That would be something to dis-cuss.
50 years a member,
Gives clue to Frosty’s age
Born in the late 40s,
A clue to help you gauge.*

Week 4 - Frosty Clue
*Now Frosty is in Week 4,
His identity is still hidden.
Make multiple guesses if needed,
That is not forbidden.
Let’s bring back some basics,
Frosty, he raised two daughters,
And with 6 grandkids he shared his love of looking over the waters.
Enjoying time hunting and fishing,
Supporting in many ways,
Pheasants Forever and Ducks Un-limited,
Has been Life long, it wasn’t just a phase.
Frosty enjoys his waterfowl,
Collections he has around,
Duck and geese decoys alike
Dozens to be used on the ground.*

Week 5 - Frosty Clue

*Have you made your final guess?
Do you think that you know?
It’s okay if you don’t,
Sometimes that’s how it goes.
The final clue,
To give you the final pieces,
Frosty may have helped,
If you were signing leases
Now a fact, the identity,
This may just give it away
Western shirts, a statement
Frosty wears during the day
On a day, Frosty can be found
At the fairgrounds, doing his thing
Saying his words fast,
Much like the song you can sing*

Contest rules

1. Clues are published by the Waseca County News (wasecacountynews.com and Facebook); NRHEG Star Eagle; Waseca Chamber of Commerce; Waseca County Pioneer and KOWZ/KRUE radio.



2. One guess allowed each week.
3. Each entry must have a name and complete address. Entries without complete information will not be entered.
4. Entrants must live in Waseca County and be over 18 years of age.
5. If there are multiple correct guesses, a drawing will be made to determine the winner.
6. If there are no correct guesses, a drawing will be made from all entries received.
7. Entries must be received before 3:00 p.m. on Friday, February 16th, 2024.
8. Submit entries to:
A. WASECA: Submit entry at Waseca Music; 111 South State, Waseca, MN 56093; or via mail.
B. JANESVILLE: Mail or drop off at Waseca Music; mark your entry as Janes-ville.
C. NEW RICHLAND: Drop off at NRHEG STAR EAGLE NEWS; or mail to Waseca Music - mark your entry as New Richland.
- Frosty sponsors: CULLIGAN, iWEALTH, Brad Connors, DOMINOS, MEDIACOM, ICAN, SUBURBAN FUR-NITURE, and EXCEL ENERGY. Please thank these sponsors for supporting the 27th Annual Frosty Contest!

Lucille Gregor

LUCILLE GREGOR, age 94 of Waseca passed away peacefully on Thursday, February 8, 2024 in Waseca with her family by her side.

Born on September 8, 1929 in rural Waterville, Minnesota, Luc-ille was the daughter of Alfred and Esther (Stoering) Haase. She was baptized, confirmed, and at-tended school at St. Peter’s “Bell” Lutheran Church in rural Water-ville. She graduated from Water-ville High School in 1947. Lucille married Bernard Gregor on Sep-tember 20, 1950. He preceded her in death on November 18, 1972. Together they had two children, Bonnie and Leon.

Lucille was a homemaker and enjoyed gardening, cooking and baking, crocheting, quilting and spending time with family and friends. She was employed at Brown Printing Co. in Waseca for 30 years before retiring in 1994. She was a dedicated employee and worked other jobs before and after her career at Brown Printing. Lu-cille was a faithful member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca for 50 years.

Lucille is loved and remembered by her daughter, Bonnie (Randy) Haley of Rochester; son, Leon (Sheri) Gregor of Morristown; grandchildren, Melissa Haley, Mi-randa (Andy) Hopkins, Mark (Liz) Haley, Derrick (Cheryl) Gregor, Skylar Gregor and Jordan Gregor; great grandchildren, Gage and Remmi Hopkins and Nora and Grant Haley; step great grandchil-



Lucille Gregor

dren, Ava and Reid Hopkins and Savannah and Matthew Lee. She is also survived by her sister, De-lores Jacobsen of Sandvika, Nor-way; brothers-in-law, Clarence Dannhoff of St. James and Arlie (Carol) Gregor of Mapleton, sister-in-law, Joan “Jody” Gregor of Waterville; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Bernard; brother, Roland Haase; and sister, Marlene Dannhoff. She was also preceded in death by brothers and sisters-in-law; two nieces; a nephew; and many friends.

Funeral services were held on Monday, February 12, 2024 at 11:00 AM at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca. Visitation was on Monday from 9:00 AM until the time of services at the church. Bu-rial followed at Calvary Cemetery in Waterville.

■ Redemption from Page 1

Much like any “class,” the course they attend includes a workbook, homework assignments, oral reports, and the like. The subject matter, how-ever, covers four classic “virtues” and how they apply to life: wisdom, courage, self-control, and justice.

“Our participants often say they’ve never thought about these topics before,” said Tostenson. “To them, for example ‘justice’ is about punishment. We ask them to think more deeply about the positive side of what justice means—that is, to “re-ward the good”; to show courage and what it means to “endure for the greater good”; or why it’s important to “seek the truthful” as we strive to live our lives with good character and integrity.”

The objective, he goes on to say, is to change the thinking and thereby the behaviors of the students, which got them into prison in the first place. Without a change in thinking, they will return to prison again, when they face the challenges of reintegrating back into “the world.”

Tostenson said he has found it per-sonally rewarding to be the teacher of these sessions. His own perspec-tives have been broadened and en-riched by the many discussions he has led.

The second stage of TRP’s pro-gram is to advocate for its partici-pants among the public. Tostenson claimed there are four typical hiring models used by employers when in-teracting with released inmates—all are unsuccessful except one.

The first hiring model, he said, is simply not to hire felons.

The second is to treat former in-

mates as “disposable” labor—give them undesirable or difficult jobs and assume they will stay for a relatively short time, thus making room for the next applicant.

The third is “treat them just like anybody else.” However well-inten-tioned the approach might be, Tos-tenson described, it is usually unsuccessful because “released in-mates aren’t like everybody else.” He named obligations for court hear-ings, community service, therapist sessions, drug tests and other re-quirements of their release that, when not supported by the employer, result in the former inmate returning to prison.

The fourth hiring model is where the employer makes minor accom-modations so the former inmate can successfully navigate their short-term challenges. Being flexible and understanding of the former inmates’ challenges results in employees who are loyal, hardworking, and willing to go the extra mile when called upon by their employer out of recognition the employer gave them a chance to prove themselves.

TRP staff, he said, has a program of advocacy under which they ap-proach potential employers, explain participants’ sincere desire to rein-tegrate into society, and work to create circumstances which allow TRP participants to be successful.

“When they have more infor-mation and a better understanding,” Tostenson said, “the employers are often willing to work with us.” Com-panies which have been particularly supportive, he said, include Taylor Corporation, Union Pacific Railroad, the shipping company UPS and dis-tributor US Foods and others.

In addition to the 14-week class, participants in TRP are assigned a mentor and given access to TRP sup-port services personnel. As often as

possible, these folks are former in-mates themselves who truly under-stand the challenges and demands that reentry brings.

“Imagine you had fallen asleep back around 1995,” Tostenson of-fered, “and then you woke up today. How much would the world have changed?”

During his talk, Tostenson shared the story of an inmate who had been incarcerated for 27 years. He had never used the internet, had never seen or used a “smart phone,” had never sent an email. “Now imagine what it was like for this person to apply for a job,” he said.

In addition to helping with job placement, TRP and its mentors pro-vide those who have completed the 14-week education course physical support in the form of cell phones, bus passes, professional clothing, and assistance finding housing. This is due to the fact that most people leaving prison have less than \$200 to use to buy clothing, shoes, jackets, food, and sometimes housing and other necessities. TRP spends about \$700 per participant in support serv-ices to help them get off to a good start.

“Mentors help the participants re-alize they can get through all these challenges,” said Tostenson. He mentioned one individual who had two job interviews scheduled the next day. But “he was completely overwhelmed,” Tostenson described. “He didn’t believe he could do it and that his life was falling apart. Of course he was anxious. Imagine what it’s like to have your first job inter-view at age 42.” TRP’s mentor spoke with the participant, assured him that what he was feeling was to be ex-pected, and “45 minutes later, he was off the ledge,” said Tostenson speak-ing figuratively. The former inmate went to the job interviews and was

offered a job the next day.

Funding for The Redemption Proj-ect comes from a variety of sources, including private individuals and corporations who believe the pro-gram’s three steps program of “edu-cation, mentorship and employment” are a way to help reduce recidivism and strengthen society. TRP recently received a \$2 million, 2-year grant from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). While grateful for what the funding will help the program ac-complish, Tostenson said “We don’t want to be dependent on government funding.”

Tostenson said TRP is determined to “prove out this model” and to help society—and perhaps especially po-tential employers—change their per-spective regarding released inmates. “People have the ability to change,” said Tostenson. “These folks have done what is required of them as far as the justice system is concerned. We can either turn our backs on them or help them rebuild their lives. The choice is ours.”

Tostenson said that, for him, the moment when he was most proud of what TRP is accomplishing was dur-ing a “graduation” ceremony held for a class which had completed the 14 weeks of classroom work. He re-members one of the graduates who was incarcerated for being a drug dealer.

“He said he formerly thought of himself as a good father. His family had a nice home to live in and had all its needs met, thanks to his income from dealing.” Then the inmate ac-knowledged that he was wrong, say-ing “While I was providing for my family, I was destroying other fam-ilies. So, I’m not going be a drug dealer when I’m released.”



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SIGHT TO BEHOLD — A dozen or more large-scale kites, some measuring up to 140 feet long, flew over Clear Lake in Waseca last year as part of the annual Sleigh and Cutter Event.

Kite show, fireworks now Feb. 24

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

The giant kite show originally scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 18, has been rescheduled to begin at noon and go until 5 pm on Saturday, Feb. 24. The fireworks show will take place as scheduled, also on Feb. 24, beginning after it is sufficiently dark, about 7 pm. Both events will take place to the west of the

Waseca Junior/Senior High School, and will be easily viewed from the school's west parking lot. Followers of the Sleigh and Cutter schedule of events are aware that this winter's unusually warm weather has led to rescheduling or canceling a fair number of plans, including numerous snowmobile rides and the Feb. 10 "Charm on the Farm" day.

Soil and Water Conservation District "Tree Day" Feb. 23

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Back in December, every rural Waseca County address received a reminder that summer was on its way.

The county Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) distributed information and an order form for purchasing "bare root" trees. According to Joe Edel, the SWCD technician who coordinates the program, property owners pay much less per tree when they take part in the bulk purchase rather than contacting nurseries themselves.

Apparently many people agree, since the office has already received 85 orders and would not be surprised to see the number doubled by the purchase deadline on Feb. 28. Last year 150 orders were placed; well over 9,000 trees and shrubs were purchased.

The SWCD program warns that, due to that popularity, all interested persons should place their orders as quickly as possible. The department has arranged for contracted numbers of trees from various nurseries; if increased numbers are needed, orders need to be placed as soon as possible.

An excellent opportunity to acquire more information, to consult with Edel regarding the various options, and to learn more about other conservation opportunities will be Friday, Feb. 23 at the "Tree Day" open house at the SWCD's office at 300 North State Street in Waseca, door 4. Information, treats, warm drinks and even a drawing to win a free tree will be available from 8:30 to 4:30 that

day.

According to Edel, nearly everyone purchases the bulk trees with the intent of beginning or maintaining a windbreak. Available plants offer considerable flexibility, with mature heights beginning as low as 5 feet and going as high as 75. Plants are selected with versatility in mind—some are suitable for most conditions, others prefer specifically moist or dry soil. Some flower and produce berries, others are evergreens.

Also offered are some elm and maple trees—the highest-priced plants available through the program, they are priced at \$160 and \$150 for bundles of five—but they are also up to 6 feet tall.

For those not needing trees, an alternative is a mix of native wildflowers. For \$55, property owners can acquire 48 green plants in 12 species.

Orders can be mailed in using the distributed form, placed in person at the SWCD office at 300 North State Street, or registered at the SWCD website online: www.wasecaswcd.org. Payment is expected when the order is placed.

Of the tree acquisition program, which has been operating since at least 2007, Edel says, "Trees play an important role in soil and water conservation. From controlling erosion along stream banks or even catching blowing winter snow, trees are beneficial."

"We want to offer affordable trees to land owners so they can meet their needs on their farmsteads or homes; by doing so, we all benefit because our natural resources are protected."

County addresses need for broadband

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

The Waseca County Board of Commissioners agreed to join the Minnesota Rural Counties (MRC) on Tuesday, February 6. MRC focuses on issues which affect rural communities and their goal is to amplify their collective voices and advocate for solutions to their unique needs.

MRC concentrates its efforts on issues that affect the majority of member rural counties and extends its outreach to potential members. In 2023, they added 20 new counties bringing their membership numbers to 43. Its outreach includes concerns with a possible drainage registry, increasing legislative regulations in agriculture, and making Broadband more available to the community, especially in the areas that are underserved.

During a work session the same day, the commissioners connected on

Zoom with Ann Treacy, a broadband expert for the last thirty years who advocates for voices within the Minnesota counties. The purpose of the call was to acquire additional support from Treacy so she would tell the story of Waseca County in regard to the low-density grant the county applied for.

"It was well-received by the office of Broadband Development," said Commissioner Brad Krause, adding that the commissioners had invested time, thought, and energy into the grant.

He also mentioned that they had received a letter from MN state senator Gene Dornik who offered support, in addition to 25 other letters included in the grant proposal.

The grant the county applied for was for up to six million dollars. If awarded, the grant would benefit all of the following: farmers, local residents and families, school districts,

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

health care institutions.

Each county commissioner spoke about the districts they serve and the effect or lack thereof, of stable internet in the area. Commissioner DeAnne Malterer, from Janesville, and is a retired teacher, shared she had spoken with teachers and administrators during that time when classes went completely virtual during the covid pandemic.

"Waseca was a big zero," Malterer said. "We had so few resources that we could put toward making the connections at a time when we couldn't be connected face to face."

She also mentioned how Julie Tesch, President and CEO of Center for Rural Policy and Development, often has to drive into town to work

due to unstable internet connections. "Most of the service in the rural counties is so poor that nobody knows what good service looks like," Commissioner Malterer added.

"If we get this grant, I'm going to start doing cartwheels," Malterer said.

The county's grant application is one of 69 so far in the state vying for some of \$50 million in grants.

Regarding a bridge replacement approved at last month's meeting, the county approved a grant for the Bull Run Creek bridge. The board approved an amended agreement to increase funds from the Third Judicial District for the Steele-Waseca Drug Court. The county approved an agreement to allow reimbursement for law enforcement's investigation purposes which include equipment, travel, training and overtime.

Council tables ordinance for ATVs and UTVs

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

The Waseca city council tabled a proposed city ordinance to regulate all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and Utility Task Vehicles (UTVs) during its meeting on Feb. 6. While the ordinance currently in place excludes the use of UTVs within city limits, a proposed modification would allow some exceptions.

Councilmember Daren Arndt inquired whether the city ordinance would include four wheelers. Police Captain Kris Markeson responded that because four-wheelers lack safety features, the city ordinance would continue to prohibit them.

Councilmember James Ebertowski asked whether owners could drive ATVs within city limits if they had the required safety features. Markeson responded that no ATVs are allowed under current language, then added that council members could amend the city ordinance to include these ATVs.

"I understand your safety concerns," Ebertowski said. "I guess I've seen plenty of reckless people on ATVs, but I've also seen them on motorcycles." He added that he would rather give residents on ATVs the option of getting those safety features before the city council would pass the new ordinance.

Councilmember Stacey Schroeder pointed out that vehicles with smaller wheelbases are inherently less stable. "Even if you put the safety features on, it's still technically not going to be as safe as a bigger vehicle," she said.

Councilmember Jeremy Conrath said he's fine with moving ahead with the golf cart ordinance, but he expressed multiple concerns about ATV and UTV regulations. For one, questioned whether a non-resident might be led to assume it's all right to ride on streets like Elm Avenue which is no longer considered part of a state highway.

"How do you know if a town has

WASECA CITY COUNCIL

a required permit fee or not?" Conrath added.

Markeson reminded council members that state law provided an impetus for the proposed local change with its specifications regarding what vehicles are legal on state highways. The state has stipulated that ATVs, UTVs, and golf carts are not licensed as motorized vehicles in the State of Minnesota, and so not legal for use on state highways. Markeson pointed out the only "license" such vehicles have is a permit from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) –

for off-road and trail use.

He summarized circumstances imposed by the state law—that if a city wants to allow such vehicles on its streets, it must issue standards which include requiring a vehicle permit.

After further conversation, council members tabled the motion until after their Feb. 20 work session.

In other business, council members responded favorably to Peggy Zinniel's request to block off Second Street NW and use the city-owned lot near By The Way for a June 6 car and bike "roll-in" from 5 to 9 pm. The event will include a food truck, music and vendors. A second event currently being planned for August would be along Second Avenue SW near the Mill.

Zinniel said that her purpose was to bring walk-ins to local businesses and support the community. Mayor Randy Zimmerman said that there is a public hearing coming up on February 20 about updating the policy of food trucks.

During the meeting, council members adopted some individual budgets and approved amending the city's master fee schedule.

WHS Triple 'A' and ExCEL winners

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Four students were recognized during Waseca High School's Snow Week Coronation on February 8. They were ExCEL and Triple 'A' winners: Collin Dettmer and Sophie Chawra (ExCEL) and Andrew Robran and Addison Wieseler (Triple 'A').

The ExCEL Award celebrates excellence in community, education and leadership. It is a unique recognition program designed exclusively for Minnesota high school juniors who are active in school activities, leaders in their schools, and who demonstrate a strong commitment to community service." Each year, Waseca selects two candidates to move forward to the state competition.

The following introductions were read by Activities Director Joe Hedervare:

"Collin is the son of Matt and Abby Dettmer. In her letter of recommendation, Mrs. Lawrence stated that, 'Collin consistently goes above and beyond, embodying the qualities of positivity, responsibility and service that the

ExCEL award seeks to recognize. His tireless efforts to lead by example make him an outstanding candidate for this honor. I have no doubt that Collin's exceptional qualities will continue to positively impact those around him, and I wholeheartedly endorse him for the ExCEL award."

"I am happy to introduce Sophie Chawra, daughter of Rebecca Thompson and Ismail Chawra, as our other ExCEL winner. In her recommendation letter, Mrs. Nelson said, 'Sophie leads by example and is not afraid of hard work. She brings the same work ethic to the field, the classroom and the community. Sophie understands all facets of leadership. She knows how to help and encourage her peers in a positive manner and works tirelessly to encourage and be a role model to younger students.'

"Collin and Sophie are great representatives of our school. Their hard work and dedication to academics, activities, and service is very deserving of this recognition," Hedervare concluded.

The Triple 'A' award

The Academics, Arts, and Athletics Award, commonly known

as the Triple 'A' Award, honors high school seniors throughout the state who have at least 3.0 grade point average and who participate in League-sponsored athletic and fine arts activities.

Hedervare introduced Waseca's two winners:

"Andrew is the son of Todd and Britta Robran. Ms. Conway, in her recommendation letter stated, 'Andrew Robran is a kind, hardworking young man who participates in a variety of MSHSL activities offered here at Waseca. While he is known for being a quiet person, Andrew is a role model and leader at Waseca High School because of who he is and what he chooses to do on a daily basis. He is reliably consistent in his actions and is a dependable

student, athlete, and human being.'

"Addison Wieseler is the daughter of Tania and Patrick Wieseler.

Mrs. Nelson described Addison by stating, 'The Triple 'A' Award is about excellence in all areas. As an educator for over 30 years, I can attest that Addison's commitment to academics, arts, and activities is top-notch. She pursues everything she does with maximum effort and optimism. Her winning attitude and ability to adapt and adjust is impressive. Addison Wieseler is the ideal candidate to represent both Waseca and the state of Minnesota as the Triple 'A' Award winner.'"

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Waseca County employees now CERT certified

Training received in October 2023

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) plays a crucial role in disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. The team members’ ability to bridge the gap between the arrival of first responders and the immediate needs of the community can prevent injuries and save lives.

In 2023, Waseca County employees had the opportunity to receive CERT training under the direction of Emergency Management. This training consisted of four separate classes providing education on basic first aid, search and rescue, fire safety and extinguisher use, lifts/carries and standard preparedness protocol. A final mass-casualty disaster exercise, testing their new skills, was offered at the end of the four-week course. Rasmussen College Nursing School program provided the “victims” for the final exercise with employees triaging the victim’s injuries and moving them to the appropriate treatment area. Each employee received a CERT backpack containing equipment and supplies to assist if their services were needed in an actual event.

Waseca County Emergency

Manager, Denise Wright, stated “We believe Waseca County is the only county in Minnesota that has provided CERT training to its employees. This education provides the employee with skills to use in the workplace, home, or community before, during or after a disaster or emergency.” Michael Johnson, County Administrator stated “The keyword in this program is ‘Community.’ Local governments should be the ambassadors of the community members that they represent. The more prepared our staff are to meet the needs of the community they live in and represent, the more effective governance model we have.”

Waseca County residents had the first opportunity to attend a CERT class in 2015 when it was held in Owatonna. Waseca County Emergency Management began offering the classes in 2016 and continues to do so in the fall of each year. Currently there are approximately 160 CERT trained citizens in Waseca County. If you are interested in learning more about CERT or in attending the next class in the fall of 2024, contact Denise Wright at Emergency Management.



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Pioneer photos by Tristan Gehring





The Pastor’s Column

Here for today, for a time, and then eternity

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

Love and Death. This week we celebrate Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day on the same day. This conjunction of these two days occurs 3 times this century. In 2018 we celebrated the two days together, this year we do the same thing, it will happen one more time in 2029 and then not again until the 22nd Century.

I have thought about the weird juxtaposition of love and death a lot this week as I have prepared to celebrate both the reality of my mortality and the love I have for others. These thoughts have driven me to consider what I can do to demonstrate love to others with the time I have left. Is that not what we have been called to do as followers of Christ? Love our neighbors as ourselves?

Consider Romans 5:8-9

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him!

God’s love has been demonstrated to us, in Christ’s death. His love is demonstrated in His life by teaching us about God and true relationship with Him. His love is

demonstrated in conquering the law of sin and death, by rising from the dead and becoming the Lord of the living and the dead.

On this Valentine’s Day we get to celebrate both the Love of God for mortal man, and the love we have for one another. It is the true demonstration of God’s love for us and our love for Him in recognizing our mortality and need for a Savior. We demonstrate our love for God in heart, soul, mind and strength, as well as our love for our neighbors.

This is the life of mortal man. Here for today, for a time, and then eternity. 1 Peter 1:24-25,

24 For, “All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall,25 but the word of the Lord stands forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you.

Let us celebrate both our mortality this year and the joy of our love. God has given us a glimpse of the beauty of His love here on earth, but we will see it even more clearly upon our death and eternity with Him. So, this Ash Wednesday exercise your ability to love and this Valentine’s remember the temporal nature of your life and relationships.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m. * * * * *	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m. * * * * *	VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * * * *	Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18 * * * * *
4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m. * * * * *	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m. * * * * *	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 Interhim Pastor Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:15 a.m. Worship * * * * *
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 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. * * * * *	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father Glenn Ferichs Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m. * * * * *	JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship * * * * *
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Worship Sundays traditional 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship, 10:45 a.m. contemporary service * * * * *	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 * * * * *	FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Larry Sipe Sundays: Worship 8 a.m.; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class * * * * *	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) * * * * *
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m. * * * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship * * * * *	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship * * * * *	ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St. Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass * * * * *
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 314 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-2647 Worship Sunday 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 * * * * *	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday — 9 a.m. Worship * * * * *	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 Owen St., Janesville Pastor Sarah Krolak * * * * *
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net) Worship Sunday 10 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 * * * * *	ST. JOSEPH’S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship * * * * *	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * * * *
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m. * * * * *	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Pamela Jensen Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN Wilton Township Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor Sunday - 10:45 a.m. Worship * * * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Smiths Mill, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship * * * * *
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca Father Glenn Ferichs 507-835-1222 Worship Sundays 10:00 a.m., Tues. and Wed. at 8:30 a.m. and Thurs. at 7 a.m.; Saturdays at 5:15 p.m. * * * * *	REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca 507-607-8245 * * * * *	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 * * * * *	NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 404 30 120th St. Waseca 507-234-6463 Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; Second Sunday “Young at heart” Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation * * * * *



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Argus Archives



WARM WELCOME BACK — In 1973, Mrs. David Mazza returned to her second-grade class after her and her husband were involved in a car accident that broke her arm. Mrs. Gene Wiebusch and the students surprised her with a sign.

Solving politics, after-school life

Argus Archives - 100 years ago - 1923

-In the fall of 1877 Waseca County witnessed a very spirited political contest. In those good olden days elections came every year and every year the politicians had rich picking. Towards the close of the campaign the editor of the Argus, C. E. Graham, and the editor of the Radical, J. E. Child, became very personal and very bitter. Child supported Warren Smith for treasurer. Mr. Graham opposed him. It will be remembered by those who were on earth at that time in this particular neck of the woods that Mr. Child was an ardent advocate of temperance and had espoused the cause of the prohibition party. Such being the case, his sincerity in supporting Smith was questioned by Graham. Smith himself was a temperance man and a man above reproach. But he had compromised himself not long previously by becoming a surety for a saloon-keeper on a saloonkeeper’s bond. This gave an opening and in the eyes of Mr. Graham was inexcusable from the standpoint of the professions made.

-Through a combination of respective interests, including the village, Alton and Janesville township, the two cemetery boards and the churches, whose contributions cover the cost, the road from Main Street on Finley’s corner to the Catholic cemetery is being graveled. E. T. Dieudonne has the contract and is now working it out with trucks and teams. The gravel is secured at Lake Elysian from Roy Keyes and from the Jewison point.

-Cris Dalton brings in the information that on Tuesday night last a large barn on the farm of Martin Convey was burned to the ground. The origin of the fire is a mystery. It was located in Freedom Township. Thirteen cows were destroyed and eight horses. There was an insurance of three thousand dollars, but the amount does not cover the losses.

-Petitions have been circulated among the citizens of the village asking that leniency or parole be given to a local young man who unfortunately side-stepped the narrow path. Some 250 have signed their names to these lists asking that the law be more lenient with the young man. He has been a fine young fellow, hard working and congenial, and this his first offense could be overlooked when we realize that he would not delve into anything shady in the future.

50 years ago - 1973

-How do you solve the problem of kids going all the way through high school - and sometimes college - without having the slightest idea what kind of work they want to do in life? Nobody has all the answers to this complex question, but five area high schools are trying to fill this vocational gap through the establishment of the Waseca County Vocational Center. Norvin R. Rueckert, director of the proposed center, explained the idea to the Janesville Rotary last Thursday and said the purpose of the center will be to provide programs which the individual school districts have not been able to offer individually. “We hope to come up with a program that will make students aware of the jobs available and the actual demand for workers in each of the occupational areas,” he said.

-Sixth graders of Janesville Public School tried their hand at copy-writing this past week as they turned out the first in a series of student-prepared advertising messages for Janesville State Bank. The completed advertisements will be judged by bank officials this week and the three top advertisements chosen. Prizes of five, three and two dollars will go to three sixth graders placing advertisements in the top three. Other students will receive honorable mentions for their copywriting abilities.

-Births in the Village of Janesville were down by 13 and deaths increased by 13 during 1972 according to statistics released by Lawrence P. Krause, Clerk of District Court. Twenty three children were born to village residents in 1972, compared to 36 in 1971 and 32 in 1970. Deaths, on the other hand, took a dramatic jump from 12 a year in 1971 to 25 during this past year. From 1968 through 1971 an average of 14 people died per year. This almost doubled during 1972.

-“We lost to a good team” were the words coach Mike Niemczyk used to describe Janesville’s 27-15 loss to Waterville. The defeat, for all practical purposes, put the locals out of the running for the Gopher championship; to have a shot at the title, the Bucs would have to lose to Glenville or Blooming Prairie. That is not likely.

25 years ago, 1998

-A 10-point scoring advantage in the second quarter proved to the the difference for the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton girls’ basketball team. The Lady Bulldogs outscored Waterville-Elysian-Morristown 19-9 in the second stanza, leading them to a 66-57 Gopher Conference victory at Waterville. The victory was the third straight for the Bulldogs, and their sixth in the last nine games.

-Trinity Lutheran School, Janesville, recently received \$5,300 from Lutheran Brotherhood through the Member Matching Gift program. The latest payment matches 53 gifts from Lutheran Brotherhood members made during the fourth quarter of 1997. Lutheran Brotherhood’s Primary Partners program matches members’ gifts of \$25 to \$100 per year to Lutheran elementary and preschools nationwide. Since the beginning of the Primary Partners gift program in 1987, \$42,359 has been received by Trinity Lutheran School.

-Mainstream Publications announced on Tuesday, Jan. 13 an agreement to sell its 25 Minnesota and Wisconsin publications include the Janesville Argus to James E. Huckle of Traverse City, Mich. the announcement was made jointly by Robert L. Bradford II, president and principal shareholder of Mainstream Publications and Huckle. A Saturday, Jan. 31 closing date is planned.

-Management firms appear to be a hot topic for the Janesville City Council. Leasing and management options have been opened for discussion concerning the Janesville Nursing Home, and the council is now looking at its Prairie Ridge Golf Course. During its Monday, Jan. 12 meeting the Janesville City Council began discussing the option of bringing a management firm to its Prairie Ridge Golf Course. City administrator Paul Grabitske said the council’s discussions are philosophical, with the council trying to decide what direction it wants the golf course to take.

Waseca Archives

25 Years Ago Today

Highway 14 progress up for discussion
-Waseca area residents concerned about the progress of the Highway 14 by-pass project should mark Feb. 23 on their calendars. A meeting will be held that evening for Waseca City Council and Waseca County Board members to discuss the future of the project.

The public is invited to attend the 6:30 p.m. discussion in the meeting room of the East Annex building across from the Waseca County courthouse.

Ministering to every man’s faith
-“For some people, prison is salvation, said FCI Chaplain Michael Longanecker. He said he has had prisoners admit that if they had “not come to some point of accountability, they would have destroyed themselves.” An enforced opportunity to examine the course of one’s life when it’s apparently going in the wrong direction, is what some individuals need. “A lot of people don’t realize how easy it is to end up in a situation like this,” Longanecker said, “A series of bad choices or one bad choice...”

City passes DM & E Community Plan
-The City of Waseca and the Dakota, Minnesota and Eastern Railroad now officially have a Community Plan and Partnership Agreement, tailored by the railroad for the city of Waseca.

-At the last city council meeting, the vote was 4-0 in favor of the agreement. Absent when the vote was taken were Mayor John Clemons and councilman Chip Decker; councilman Roy Srp, an employee of DM&E, abstained.

Waseca elementary students catch statewide Fitness Fever
-Waseca elementary schools are among 673 schools that are participating in the state’s Fitness Fever program this year.

-The program is sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, and its partners. More than 254,000 students across the state will participate in the month-long program that encourages students to eat healthy and be physically active.

50 Years Ago Today

Debbie Peterson and Dale Paulson exchange vows
-Debbie Peterson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer J. Peterson, Waterville became the bride of Dale R. Paulson, R-4, Waseca, Jan. 5 Rev. Allan Tveite officiated at the double ring ceremony at 4 p.m. at North Waseca Lutheran Church. Bouquets of white mums decorated the altar.

This time it’s murder
-Over bean soup, at the Powell House, with a salesman, on my way to cross country ski, I talked to Tom Kuyper on his lunch break from The Haberdashery. The soup, and yes, folks, even the conversation was good.

Lions events bring in close to \$2,000 for charities
-Nearly \$2,000 was taken in by the Waseca Lions Club in its pancake breakfast and Las Vegas trip fund raising promotions it was reported last night. Money from the ticket sales go to support Boy Scouts, various camps for crippled and retarded children and the eye bank and clinic.

75 Years Ago Today

Two Diesel Freights Hit 6 Miles North of Waseca; Damage Estimate \$70,000

-Failure of a sound bound local Minneapolis and St. Louis freight train to make the Palmer siding caused a head-on crash about six miles north of Waseca Thursday night at 8:40 p.m. One crew man was injured, the two locomotives were derailed, 400 feet of track were torn up and six cars were tossed off the track. Train service of the main artery of the Minneapolis to the Peoria line was tied up for 27 hours until 11:46 p.m. Friday.

County Awaits Col. E. Miller Talk Thursday
-Waseca county is awaiting the public appearance of Col. Ernie Miller, hero of the Bataan death march and former state commander of the American Legion, who will speak at the Central school auditorium Thursday night. Kenny Allen urges everyone in the Waseca area to hear this free speech. It will get underway at 8:30 p.m.

Fire Destroys House on Joe Barden Farm
-Fire that broke out shortly before noon Friday completely destroyed the nine room house on the Joe Barden farm 6 miles southwest of Waseca in St. Mary’s township. The house was occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Bill Scholer. He is employed at the Canning company here and was on the job when the fire broke out. Mrs. Scholer was in Owatonna.

Wasecans Buy Palmquist’s Blacksmith
-Heavily Calloused hands of Axel Palmquist will sharpen their last plow shares March 1, after 45 years of hard labor as Otisco’s blacksmith. Bob Kujath and James Corchran, now with the E.F. Johnson Co., Waseca, have bought the shop and equipment of the wiry, hard working little man of slight build.

Rev. W. Pilgrim Undecided on Stay
-Rev. Walter J. Pilgrim, pastor of St. Johnson’s American Lutheran Church here, has not made up his mind today whether he will accept a call to First Lutheran church at Wells. The call from the Wells church was announced two weeks ago. Sunday a special meeting of the congregation voted to retain Rev. Pilgrim and give him a substantial increase in salary.

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Looking Back (New Richland)

100 Years Back - 1924

• Fire of unknown origin destroyed the Sam Nassif general store at Matawan Monday evening with an estimated loss of \$9,000. The store was one of two general stores in Matawan handling groceries and staple merchandise.

• About 30 friends spent Sunday evening helping entertain Will O’Riley and John Eigenhier at the O’Riley home. The occasion being both their birthdays. Oysters were served. We all hope they will have another birthday very soon.

• Mrs. W.R. Johnston returned Monday noon after spending the week end with her mother, Mrs. R. McDougall, at the Gene Turnacliff home in Wilton.

• Quite a number attended the dancing party given at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jas. Campbell in honor of their daughter, Florence, last Friday evening.

• Messrs Andy and Chris Eustice drove to Mankato Friday. The Misses Agnes Eustice and Marguerite Hawkins returned with them to spend the week end at their respective homes.

• Frank Minges and Ben Bishman, who attended the auto show in Minneapolis last week, returned home Sunday night.

76 Years Back - 1948

• Raul Donoso, the welterweight champ of the Owatonna district and a New Richland boy, has slashed his way into the semi-finals of the Upper Midwest Golden Gloves. Raul has won five Glove bouts this season, four by knockouts and one by a decision.

• New Richland’s treasury has benefitted to the extent of \$1,389.43 from the office of State Auditor Stafford King for its share of the new cigarette and liquor gallonage taxes.

• Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Felber have taken over the Huxford cafe in Waldorf. Their many friends wish them good luck in their new venture.

• Mr. and Mrs. Martin Jacobson of Hartland were Tuesday afternoon visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Peterson, Jane, Robert and Mary. It was Stanley’s birthday.

• Mr. and Mrs. Merle Reese and daughter, Candace, were dinner and supper guests Sunday at the Eldred Wiley home at Sargent.

• Mr. and Mrs. Lorenz Klinger and family were visitors of Mr. and Mrs. Emil Bahr Friday evening.

• Mr. and Mrs. Herman Wenzel and Wayne, Mr. and Mrs. William Robinson and Billy, and Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Wenzel were dinner guests at the Otto Jeddelloh home at Matawan. Francis Wenzel joined them in the afternoon.

• Friday evening Mr. and Mrs. Don Zellweger and Gloria, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Zellweger, and Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Woodhall and daughter of Waseca helped Walter Callahan celebrate his birthday.

• Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Boettger, Mr. and Mrs. John Dusza and Lorraine, Mr. and Mrs. Orvin Hatle and son, and Johnny Boettger were guests at the Will Schue home.

50 Years Back - 1974

Gloria Quintano, New Richland-Hartland AFS student from Nicaragua, Connie Miller and Ray Byron, members of the AFS committee, are pictured as they complete plans for the AFS weekend to be held here.

• New Richland volunteer firemen were called to a fire on New Richland’s main street Saturday. Due to their prompt action, the fire, which was believed to have started by a heating stove in the upstairs apartment of the Hub building, was contained.

• David Deitz, 20, driver of a Hermel Candy and Tobacco delivery truck, from Mapleton was stopped by a masked man in snowmobile suit, ski mask, wielding a shotgun at the Matawan corner about 4 p.m. Thursday afternoon. The masked highwayman jumped into the Hermel truck after ordering the driver out and drove off north, abandoning the truck about two miles from the scene.

• Mrs. Walter Michaelis spent Friday night at the Gilbert Ziegler home in Waseca. Kris, Kordel and Kari Ziegler returned home with Mrs. Michaelis and spent the weekend with their grandparents while their parents were snowmobiling in Wisconsin.

• Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hendrickson, Lisa and Ricky of Rochester were weekend visitors at the Amos Hendrickson home.

• Monday evening, Mrs. Joe Fox, Mrs. Martin Roeker, Mrs. Rolland Berry, and Mrs. Larry Dumdei attended a party at the home of Mrs. Dough Southwick at Medford.

• Thursday afternoon, the birthday club honored Mrs. Sara Winegar and Mrs. Roy Skelton at a belated birthday party at Royal Villa. Guests were Mrs. Ella Ladlie, Mrs. Clara Schue, Mrs. Rose Fischer, Mrs. Rena Beneke and Misses Ruby and Hazel McColley.

25 Years Back - 1999



Valentine’s Day was an extra special day for Jason Robran of Hartland. He was the grand prize winner of \$500 cash at the New Richland Area Sportsmen’s Ice Fishing Contest at St. Olaf Lake. Jason (left) accepted the cash from Sportsmen’s President Leon Schoenrock.

• Lynette Petsinger has been promoted in the U.S. Air Force Reserve to the rank of technical sergeant. Petsinger is the daughter of Isabelle and Gerald Petsinger of rural Ellendale and a 1989 graduate of New Richland-Hartland high school.

• Anne Phillips, daughter of Dale and Valerie Phillips of Hartland, was named First Runner-Up at the 1999 Minnesota Junior Miss Program state finals.

• The local FFA Wildlife Judging Team will enter State Wildlife Judging in St. Paul in April for the 33rd consecutive year after placing first in Region VII competition recently. Members of the winning team are Curt Peterson, who placed second individually; Mike Misgen, who placed fourth individually; Nate Wayne, who placed fifth; and Corey Johnson, who placed seventh.

Compiled by Jessica Lutgens

Russell 'assists' Jays past USC

Junior guard breaks school record

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Junior Damarius Russell has not assumed the lead scoring role for the Waseca High School boys' basketball team since returning from an injury in January.

But he sure helped the Bluejays with his passing Monday night.

Russell dished out a school-record 19 assists as Waseca upended visiting United South Central 74-55. The previous record of 18 against Blue Earth Area in 2019 was set by Malik Willingham, who along with his brother Tyreek are starting at Minnesota State-Mankato.

"We created great offense and shot the ball extremely well," said WHS coach Seth Anderson. "Everyone who was in produced positives for us. It's fun when people are scoring off assists. It means the ball is moving well."

Four Waseca scorers reached double digits, Laird Keeton with 18, Jacob Thompson 15, Zach Hulscher 13 and Deron Russell 12. Damarius Russell finished with two points, one rebound and five assists to go along with his 19 assists.

Also: Ethan Hiller 3P, 2R, 1A; Deron Russell 4R, 5A, 3S; Caden Danner 2P; Carson Ohnstad 7P, 2R, 2S; Hulscher 3R, 1S; Thompson 5R, 1S; Logan Heyer 1R, 1A; Andrew Robran 1P, 8R, 2A.

The Bluejays prevailed 80-61 at St. James last Friday.

"We didn't shoot real well from outside, but we got some turnovers off the press that led to some easy baskets," said Coach Anderson. "I'd like to see us find a way to rebound better!"

The Bluejays, who shot 50 percent to the Saints' 36.2, outscored St. James 24-5 in transition points, 29-2 in points off turnovers and 52-28 on

points in the paint. St. James outrebounded Waseca 40-29. The Jays had just five turnovers.

Individually: Deron Russell 13P, 2R, 2A, 2S; Keeton 18P, 4R, 1A, 1S, 1 blocked shot; Damarius Russell 20P, 4R, 8A, 3S, 3B; Danner 8P, 4R, 2A, 2S; Ohnstad 17P, 1R, 3A, 2S; Thompson 4P, 4R, 1A; Robran 2P, 2R, 1A.

The Bluejays may have had their Feb. 6 game at New Ulm circled on the schedule for weeks. For the Eagles, it may have been even longer.

New Ulm won the rematch of the Big South East Conference powers, sending the Bluejays home with a 100-70 setback.

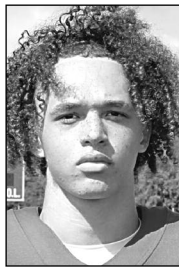
The bottom line for the Bluejays, who trailed 43-34 at halftime, was they could not contain the Eagles' Colton Benson and James Osborne, who scored 32 and 28 points, respectively.

Keeton led Waseca with 15 points. Deron Russell totaled 14, Damarius Russell 13, Hulscher 10, Ohnstad seven, Robran six, Hiller three, Thompson two.

"New Ulm was really good," said Anderson. "They shot the lights out and did whatever they wanted on offense. They are the No. 1 seed in our conference tournament for a reason. We will play them again in the conference crossover semifinal game."

The Bluejays traveled to Blue Earth Area Feb. 2 and, after a slow start, beat the Bucs 76-61. Waseca trailed 35-26 at halftime.

"We played an awful first half



Da. Russell



Above, the Bluejays' Zach Hulscher (14) and Jacob Andrew Robran (40) battle for a rebound during Waseca's 74-55 victory over United South Central Monday night. Below left, Carson Ohnstad (5) makes a pass. Below right, Deron Russell drives to the basket.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens



shooting 2-for-19 from 3," said Anderson. "We played a much stronger second half to get the win."

Waseca scoring leaders: Keeton 20, Hulscher 17, Damarius Russell 16, Ohnstad 11, Deron Russell 7. Robran had nine rebounds,

Hoelscher seven.

Damarius Russell had eight assists. Deron Russell five assists and three steals.

The Bluejays, 14-8 overall and 5-2 in Big South Conference East play, are at Marshall Friday and

Lake Crystal/Wellcome Memorial Monday. Both games are at 7:15. Waseca hosts Blue Earth Area in the final game of the regular season Feb. 22 at 7:30.



Luverne humbles WHS boys

Hockey team falls in OT at New Ulm

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

There's been some speculation this season that maybe the Luverne High School boys' hockey team should deserve consideration among the state's top 10 Class A teams.

The Cardinals looked worthy enough Tuesday night.

Though Waseca managed to keep it close early, Luverne skated to a 6-2 triumph at Waseca Community Arena, improving its record to 22-2 overall and 16-0 in the Big South Conference.

A hard-skating Luverne crew took a 1-0 advantage at the 3:09 mark of the first period.

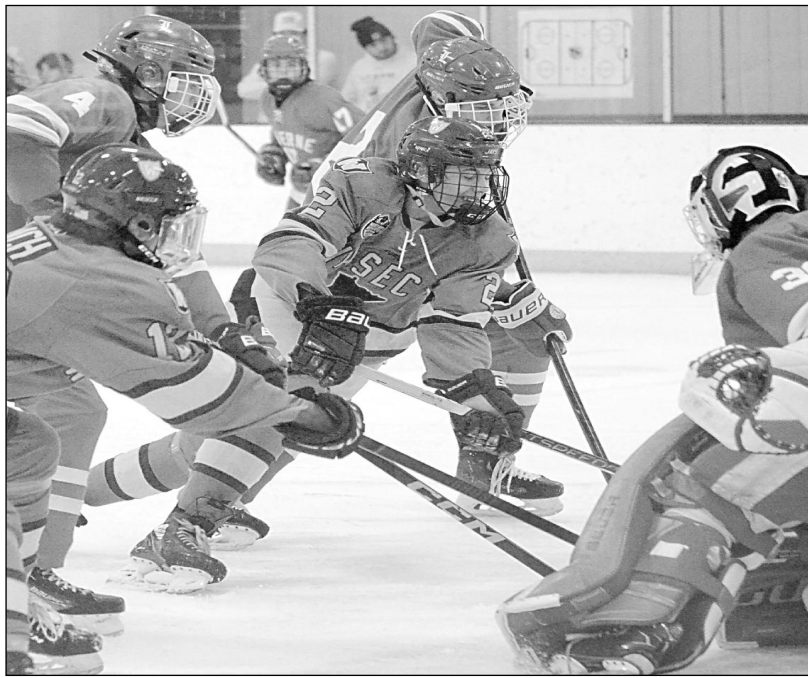
The Bluejays evened it at the 11:50 mark, Cash Lynch scoring on assists from Henry Huttemier and Griffin Storey.

It looked like the teams would take a 1-1 tie into the second period, but Luverne found the net in the final minute.

Hunter Anderson scored on an assist from Jude Gehring in the second stanza, but it was sandwiched by a pair of Luverne goals. The Cardinals scored twice in the third period.

Carter Martens was the goalie for Waseca.

The Bluejays nearly knocked off a strong New Ulm team last



AROUND THE NET — At left, the Bluejays' Cash Lynch (12) and Griffin Storey (22) try to locate the puck as the Luverne goalie makes a save Tuesday night. At right, the Bluejays' Jayden Gehring (13) deflects a shot that sailed high.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens



Thursday but lost 6-5 in overtime at New Ulm Civic Center.

The Bluejays trailed 2-1 after one period, but were tied 4-4 after two and 5-5 at the end of regulation. New Ulm won it at 2:56 into overtime.

New Ulm, which outshot the Jays 40-28, improved to 19-4 overall and 14-2 in the Big South. Waseca was 3-for-6 on power plays, the Eagles 1-for-6.

Lynch, Gehring, Storey, Huttemier and Keato Roeker scored for the Bluejays. Gehring had two assists, Lynch, Anderson and Beckett Sr. one each.

Martens made 34 saves.

Waseca, 13-11 overall and 9-6 in the Big South, finish the regular season Friday at 7 p.m. against Marshall at Red Baron Arena in Marshall.



CLOSE EARLY — At left, the Bluejays celebrate a goal by Cash Lynch that pulled Waseca to a 1-1 first-period tie. At right, Hunter Anderson fires a shot. Luverne pulled away for a 6-2 victory at Waseca Community Arena.



It takes four overtimes, but WHS girls' hockey season ends

The longest-ever Waseca High School hockey game was played last Wednesday by the WHS girls in a Section 1A quarterfinal contest at Winona's Bud King Ice Arena.

Unfortunately for the Bluejays, it was not a celebratory ride home.

The Winhawks, seeded fourth in the single-elimination tournament, outlasted the fifth-seeded Bluejays

in not one, not two, not even three overtimes, but in the fourth extra session. The final was 2-1.

The Bluejays, who were 6-7-1 in the Big South Conference, finished 10-11-3 overall. Winona improved to 11-5.

After a scoreless first period, when Winona outshot the Bluejays 11-5, Waseca got on the scoreboard

Winona wins 2-1 in longest-ever WHS hockey game

at 14:14 of the second period on a goal by Emma Keith. Kaylee Lawson assisted. Waseca put 12 shots on goal in the second stanza, Winona eight.

The Winhawks knotted it 1-1 early in the third period, when both teams fired 12 shots on the net.

Shots in overtime were fairly even. Until the fourth overtime anyway, when Winona outshot Waseca 7-1 and scored the game-winning goal at the 6:30 mark.

Neither team connected on a power play, with Waseca committing two penalties to Winona's six.

Ilamay Draheim was again in goal for the Bluejays.

For the night, Winona outshot Waseca 52-46.

The Bluejays will graduate seniors Keith, Izabela Slechta and Emily Gordon.

3 up, 4 to play

JWP boys inch closer to first title since 2007

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Three games up with four to play.

It sounds like a great scenario for the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton boys' basketball team. But Bulldogs coach Nick James is not expecting a cakewalk.

The JWP boys improved to 7-0 in the Gopher Conference West with an 88-43 triumph over NRHEG at Janesville last Friday, leaving them three games ahead of Maple River, USC and WEM, all 4-3.

"Yes, we are currently three games up with four to play," said Coach James. "If we would happen to win the west side we then would have to play in the conference championship game on Feb. 24 for a chance at the conference title."

The Bulldogs are seeking their first conference crown since the 2006-07 season, when Ted Hammond was their head coach.

"We are just taking it one game at a time right now," said James. "We know some goals we had to start the year, give our selves a chance to compete for a conference title, win a conference title, put ourselves to the top of the section, compete for a sub-section/section title. We know how good we would have to play to reach all of those. This will be very tough to do. There are some really good teams to compete with."

Last Friday's contest was never competitive. The Bulldogs led 52-19 at halftime.

Memphis James, Coach James' son, led the team with 22 points. Daulton Bauer scored 17, Caleb Quast 11, Ethan Born 9, Gavin Bauer 7, Cole Schlueter 6, Austin Carda 4, Ryan Kronbach 4, Steven Dimmel 3, Landon Johnson 2, Austin Quast 2 and Isaiah Berndt 1.

The Bulldogs had a 10-game winning streak snapped with a tough 64-61 nonconference loss at Sibley East Monday, leaving them 17-5 overall.

After a Thursday game at Triton, the Bulldogs are home for their final three regular-season contests, Friday against WEM, Monday against Cleveland and Feb. 23 with USC.

WHS girls get win at St. James

The Waseca High School girls' basketball team picked up a win last Friday, defeating St. James 76-31 on the Saints' court.

As they did a week earlier in a victory over Blue Earth Area, the Bluejays got strong play in the paint with Avery Gaul scoring a game-high 23 points and Grace Guritz adding 12. Point guard Callie Dufault finished with 15 points. Mia Kanewischer added six, Grace Morgan five, Lexi Kanewischer four and Lilly Owens three.

On Tuesday, the Bluejays hosted Big South Conference East leader St. Peter and lost 76-38. The Saints improved to 22-1 overall and 7-0 in conference play.

The Bluejays, 6-18 overall and 3-5 in the Big South East, face Blue Earth Area Saturday at 1 p.m. in the Big South Showcase at Worthington. They play at Maple River Feb. 22 and finish the regular season Feb. 23 at Belle Plaine.



Dufault



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER — JWP sophomore Katie Olson (23) drives to the basket against NRHEG last Friday in Janesville. Olson topped 1,000 career points in a Bulldog victory. Also pictured: JWP's Presley James (10), NRHEG's Faith Nielsen, Kylie Olson (32) and Hallie Schultz (11).
Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

Bulldogs complete sweep of Panthers Olson tops 1,000 career points

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Granted, the 1,000-point milestone in basketball is not as revered as it was a few decades ago.

But it's still a significant milestone that should be celebrated. Especially if you have two more varsity seasons to play.

Friday, Jan. 9 was Katie Olson's night.

The 5-foot-6 guard, who's only a sophomore, topped 1,000 points for her career as the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton girls' basketball team completed a rare season sweep of NRHEG, winning 68-65 at Janesville.

"So happy for Katie and getting her 1,000th point," said JWP coach Brandon Goebel. "She is such a deserving player. She plays extremely hard whether that be in practice or in the game. She is an unbelievable leader for us and I truly believe she is just getting started, and is only going to get better from here."

Olson's historic basket came late in the first half when the teams were engaged in a close battle. While fans displayed signs and anxiously awaited the moment, Olson was content to let others score, and it obviously helped her squad prevail.

Nevaeh Wiemert wound up as the Bulldogs' top scorer with 28 points. Olson had 17, Presley James six, Ali Olson six, Lexie Dahlbert four, Lilly Strauss three, Hope Dimmel two and Kwynn Krause two. James also pulled down 10 rebounds.

"Overall, it was a great game for our girls," said Goebel. "I thought we did a lot of things really well. We went through some stretches on defense where we didn't defend at a high enough level and dug ourselves in some holes at times, but we found a way to get stops and make some shots down the stretch to help get us the win."

It improved the Bulldogs to 18-7 overall and 5-4 in the Gopher Conference East, good for fourth place behind 8-1 Maple River and 6-3 NRHEG and WEM.

The Bulldogs won 63-30 Tuesday at Cleveland.

Individually: K. Olson 9 points, 8 steals; Strauss 9 points; James 9 points, 8 rebounds; Dahlberg 6 points; Krause 6 points; A. Olson 5 points; Mikayla Wheelock 5 points; Weimert 3 points; Dimmel 3 points; Ray Blasing 3 points; Jaidann Mulder 2 points; Ava Appel 2 points; Autumn Thissen 1 point.

The Bulldogs conclude the regular season Friday at WEM.



FAN CLUB — The fans were out in force at Janesville last Friday in anticipation of Katie Olson's 1,000th career point.



BIG NIGHT — JWP's Nevaeh Weimert, above, scored 28 points against NRHEG last Friday.



ANOTHER CHALLENGING WEEK — Preslie Olson goes up for a basket against WEM last week. The Panthers defeated the Bucs 56-51 but lost Friday to JWP 68-65.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

NRHEG girls split in rivalry games

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The NRHEG High School girls' basketball team played a pair of rivalry games late last week.

Both were very close. The results were mixed.

After defeating WEM 56-51 at New Richland Tuesday, the Panthers lost 68-65 in the first game of a boy-girl doubleheader Friday at JWP.

NRHEG ran its record to 17-7 overall and 10-5 in the Gopher Conference.

JWP, which led 31-28 at half-time, completed a season sweep of the Panthers while celebrating Katie Olson's 1,000th career point.

Fouls plagued the Panthers.

"We got up quick in the first couple of minutes of the game and unfortunately got into a little bit of foul trouble," said coach Onika Peterson. "We struggled boxing out and rebounding in the first half and gave them too many chances at second and third-chance shot opportunities. We struggled for a two-minute time span in the first half where they were able to hit some big shots when they needed to and caught up."

It was close in the second half as the Panthers fell behind by seven points but pulled to within one in the final minute.

"We had a chance to pull ahead, but didn't," said Peterson. "It was

a great competitive game of basketball, something you always want to have. Unfortunately, it wasn't our night. Congrats to JWP's Katie Olson on hitting her 1,000 points."

The Panthers' Camryn VanMaldeghe led all scorers with 30 points, adding six rebounds and three steals. Faith Nielsen had 13 points, three rebounds and two steals.

Others: Quinn VanMaldeghe 7P, 2R, 2S; Izley Boerner 2R, 1S; Hallie Schultz 2P, 6R, 2S; Addy Stadheim 4P, 2R; Presley Nielsen 3P, 4R; Kylie Olson 6P, 4R, 1S.

Against WEM, the Panthers rallied from a 26-22 halftime deficit.

"It is always a huge battle between NRHEG and WEM," said Peterson. "It was a fun back and forth game all night. Our kids really stepped up after a couple of rough games the previous week with Triton and USC. I'm very proud of this team and their effort that they put on the floor."

Individually: F. Nielsen 13P, 1R, 2S; Q. VanMaldeghe 12P, 10R, 5A, 3S; Boerner 3R; Schultz 8P, 6R, 2A, 1S; C. VanMaldeghe 18P, 7R, 5A, 5S, 1 blocked shot; P. Nielsen 2R, 1A; Olson 5P, 6R, 2A, 1S, 3B.

The Panthers conclude the regular season Friday, Feb. 16 at 7:15 at home against Maple River.

Section 2AA tournament play starts Feb. 26.

As absences mount, NRHEG boys endure

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Too many turnovers and not enough physicality led to another loss for the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva boys' basketball team Monday night, 77-46 at St. James Area.

The Panthers, 1-7 in the Gopher Conference, dropped to 3-20 overall.

"We still need to work on valuing every possession, and we've slipped of late fighting for rebounds and that position," said NRHEG coach Dan Schmidt. "We were very evenly matched with St James, but it's those little things that continue to put us in big first-half holes."

Will Tuttle led the Panthers in scoring with 13 points and seven rebounds. Jared Lee and Greyson Schaefer kicked in seven points each, Jase Knudson, Jordan Brouwers, and Ricky Zapata four each. Jackson Chrz, Hudson Chrz, and Dom Olson scored two each, and Brendan Schmidt added a free

throw.

"I can't say enough about how hard Will plays game in and game out," said Coach Schmidt. "Even if the numbers aren't there, I know he'll leave it all out on the court. I'm proud of the way that Jared has stepped up in a point guard role after Daxter went down. He's playing out of position, but he's giving it his all, and has done a good job trying to be a leader on this team as a sophomore. That's something this team needs, and he's taken on that role to the best of his ability."

The Panthers ran into a red-hot JWP team last Friday and lost 52-35 in game two of a boy-girl doubleheader in Janesville.

"Unfortunately, turnovers were again a killer for us, as JWP jumped out early and never looked back," said Schmidt. "JWP's defense has been outstanding this season, and between the half-court pressure and their full-court trap, they forced us into 27 turnovers, which led to 31 points. We shot poorly from the

field, especially around the basket. It was just a dominant effort from an extremely good JWP squad."

Tuttle and Greyson Schaefer scored 10 each, Olson six. Brooks Gilliland had five. Jackson Chrz, Levin Kitzer, Lee, Knudson, Jordan Brouwers, and AJ Deen all had two.

The previous Friday, a short-handed Panther crew hosted United South Central and fell short 52-35.

"We ended our week with the beginning of a battle against illness, missing two players to illness, upping our total to four guys out," explained Schmidt. "Out of those four, we're missing the top two scorers, and it shows while we try to find some offensive rhythm without them."

After trailing 28-10 at the half, NRHEG managed to claw back to within 12-13 points in the second half, but just didn't have enough to keep going.

Jackson Chrz led the Panthers in scoring with 10. Lee added nine points and five rebounds. Schaefer

chipped in 5 points, Hudson Chrz four, Levin Kitzer three, and Brooks Gilliland and Zapata two apiece.

The Panthers' infirmity list shifted a little Feb. 6 as they lost 69-51 at WEM.

"We got a couple players back from our JV, but lost another on the varsity," said Schmidt. "That said, the boys really worked hard."

After trailing by 20 early in the first half, NRHEG battled back to close it to a 44-28 deficit going into the break, paced by Jackson Chrz's 12 first-half points. The Panthers continued to battle in the second half and cut the lead to 10 at one point before succumbing.

Jared Lee played a great game 15 points and five rebounds. Jackson Chrz added 12 points and five boards. Knudson turned in another solid game, adding nine points. Schaefer and Deen each had five points, while Deen added nine rebounds. Kitzer added a three-pointer, and Zapata hit a couple free

throws to round out the scoring.

"The last two or three games have given us the opportunity to see what some of the freshmen and sophomores can do," said Schmidt. "Deen has been phenomenal off the bench giving us a rebounding spark."

The banged-up Panthers traveled to Hayfield Feb. 5 and lost 62-31.

"The weekend was not kind to our health, as we were missing 11 players between the C-squad, JV, and varsity, five of which were varsity players," said Schmidt. "We rolled in with seven varsity players, and rounded out the bench with some healthy members of the JV."

Knudson scored 10 points, Zapata six, Jared Lee five. Kitzer and Owen Wayne had three each, Jackson Chrz and Deshawn Jones added two each. Despite not scoring, freshman Deen came off the bench and gathered nine rebounds.

The Panthers conclude the regular season next week, Feb. 20 at St. Clair and Feb. 22 at LeSueur-Henderson.

Grizzlies win 2 of 3 in triangular

The WEM/JWP High School wrestling team won two of three dual meets in a home triangular last Thursday.

The Grizzlies subdued Triton 40-33 behind wins from Parker James, 121 pounds; Carson Petry, 133; Trenton Huger, 145; Gavin Krause, 160; Isaac Quast, 172; Avery Fall, 215; and Keegan Kuball, 285.

Cannon Falls upended the Grizzlies 48-30. Wins were by Parker James, Petry, Lucas Morsching, Krause and Kuball.

The Grizzlies defeated Madelia/Truman 60-12 behind victories by Jonathan Balzotti, James, Petry, Morsching, Patrick Adams, Krause, Quast, Maddox Moreno, Fall and Kuball.

The Grizzlies had two entrants in section individual competition Saturday. Lilly Ewert finished fourth at 136. Kayle Langford did not place.

The Grizzlies hosted a junior varsity tournament Saturday. Placemen: Jacksten Knesch, second; Trey Richards, second; Charles Adams, third; Kaven Sheehy, third; Isaac Miller, fourth; Luke Cahill, fifth; Dakota Blaisdell, sixth; Reed Sammon sixth.

The Grizzlies opened the Section 2A team tournament Thursday. It continues Saturday at LCWM. The section individual tournament is Feb. 24 at 10 a.m. at Blue Earth.

NRHEG wrestling team still looking to field full squad

Coach Shawn Larson has been waiting almost all season for the NRHEG High School wrestling team to have everyone healthy.

He's still waiting.

The Panthers endured a tough night last Thursday at Kenyon, where they lost 61-9 to Kenyon-Wanamingo and 54-6 to Goodhue.

"It was a very tough night," said Larson.

The Panthers picked up two wins

against KW, a 7-2 decision by Deven Parpart at 139 pounds and a first-period fall by George Roesler at 172.

Also wrestling for NRHEG: Charlie Tufte, 107; Dakota Schlaak, 114; Seth Staloch, 127; Parker Bunn, 133; Reese Routh, 145; Harbor Cromwell, 152; Ryan Schlaak, 160; Wyatt Larson, 189; and Cole Hutchens, 285. The Panthers forfeited two matches.

Routh was the lone Panthers victor against Goodhue, scoring a fall in 5:13 at 145. Also wrestling: Tufte, Dakota Schlaak, Bunn, Parpart, Cromwell, Ryan Schlaak, Roesler, Larson and Hutchens.

"This was a very difficult night for us," said Coach Larson. "Honestly, we are going to work on our health for a week. Hopefully, we can get everyone competing next week for the Section 2A team cham-

pionships. If we get everything lined up right, we have a chance to win a dual or two."

NRHEG senior Annabelle Petsinger, meanwhile, finished second in the girls' individual section tournament, again advancing to state. She was a state champion last season.

The Panthers wrestled at Medford Thursday. NRHEG is seeded fifth, Medford fourth. The winner com-

petes in the section semifinals Saturday at 2 p.m. at top-seeded LCWM. The section championship and state tournament berth will be decided at 3:30. Westfield is seeded second, WEM/JWP third.



Petsinger



Couples of all ages enjoyed the Waseca's first ever swing dance session hosted by Farmamerica. Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger



First of, hopefully, many more

Farmamerica hosted swing dance session Saturday

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Farmamerica hosted its first evening of swing dancing the evening of February 10. Many couples and individuals attended the lessons and dancing offered that night. Live music was provided by the high school Jazz Ensemble.

"We're hoping this will be the first of many," said Anne Gerber, who helped facilitate the event and credits high school band director Devon Lawrence with the idea. "He had done something like this at his college (UW Eau Claire)."

Gerber explains that she and four other planners began making arrangements last for the evening already last December. She says they were delighted when Farmamerica consented to the use of its facility, which has an ideal space. Gerber researched what dance instructors she should invite and also realized the event would need funding.

"So I was able to write a grant to the Grace Lutheran Endowment Fund and they approved the grant," Gerber said. "We're very grateful to them for that."

She added that since the jazz band is an existing entity within the high school music program and already practices consistently, the group was ready and available to provide music.

Cindy and Terry Gardner, who host a "Late Night Swing" at the Ukrainian Center in the Twin Cities, consented to travel down and be teachers. Cindy said most participants at the Ukrainian Center, about 75 percent, are recent college graduates or are college students, but the remaining folks represent all age groups. She says she started swing dancing as a hobby many years ago and has been teaching since 1979.

"I figured I would do it for a few years until I got bored," Cindy said, and with a laugh, she added, "I'm not bored yet," mentioning that she was able to quit her "real job" in 1995 and focus solely on being a professional dance instructor.

Meanwhile, Terry has taught alongside Cindy since 1997. Ironically, he met Cindy while on a date with a different woman.

"We've actually, literally brought together between fifty and sixty couples," Terry said. "They've gotten married and have had kids."

Like Cindy, he has a history of traveling around the country to many

dance camps. He has competed in national level Lindy Hop Championship competitions and at the Minnesota State Fair Talent Contest. He and Cindy once won first place in their semi-final at the Minnesota State Fair Talent Contest which allowed them to compete at the Grandstand Show.

The couple keeps pretty busy, with an additional live band dancing every first Saturday of the month. They also offer a family rate of \$40 for couples who can bring as many kids as they have who are under 12 years old.

"We gotta get the next generation hooked," Cindy said, laughing.

Terry describes swing dancing as "Very therapeutic."

"You don't even know you're exercising," Cindy said. "It makes people smile and brings people's spirits up."

Both Terry and Cindy describe swing-dancing as a language communicated by touch and learning to work together.

Noah Gould and Julia Stevens, respectively a junior and sophomore from Minnesota State University, also came down to swing dance at Farmamerica in Waseca. They have a swing dance club at the college whose leaders encouraged the members to attend the event. Although Gould and Stevens have only been going for a few weeks, they have loved learning the different styles within swing dance; "cherry bomb" is their agreed-upon favorite.

"It's a very socializing experience," Stevens added.

Roy and Lisa Kuchenbecker, enthusiasts of swing dance, learned the style from Waseca Community Education about 20 years ago. They became involved in swing dance simply because it intrigued them.

"We're so glad we did it," Lisa said. She and Roy also said how much fun they have whenever they have an opportunity to swing dance. "Usually, it's the music that's always fun to listen to," Roy added.

Their passion has landed them in unexpected but delightful situations. Their favorite band is the Whitesidewalls who are based out of New Richmond, Wisconsin. At one of their concerts, they were having a Valentine's swing dance at the Kato Ballroom in Mankato about 15 years ago.

"We didn't know until we got there that they had a dance competition," Roy said. "We entered and we won! They (The Whitesidewalls) chose the top ten and then the audience voted. And we ended up winning."

The prize ended up being a guitar which all the members from Whitesidewalls signed.

"We like the faster songs where we can really move," Roy added. "We were glad when we found out that they (Farmamerica) was having this because it's hard to find nice venues to go to and dance."

"When we go to the Kato Ballroom, we're usually the youngest ones there," Lisa said. "Last year they didn't even have (something like this)."

"We were happy to see how many kids were there," Roy said, in regard to a conversation about how many children had attended and looked like they were having a good time. "Farmamerica was happy about the turnout, too."

Roy mentioned when he and Lisa left that night and told Gerber, "See you next year," Gerber half-joked, "Next Saturday?"

"We'd go every week if they would have it," Roy said, laughing.



Roy and Lisa Kuchenbecker were the winners of a guitar signed by members of the Whitesidewalls, Wisconsin based band. Below Waseca High School band members dance. Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger



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Additional caucus documents online at: www.wasecarepublicans.com

Janesville High School, 110 East 3rd St., Janesville, MN 56048
Precincts: Alton Township; Elysian City; Janesville City; Janesville Township

New Richland High School, 306 Ash Ave. South, New Richland, MN 56072
Precincts: Byron Township; Otisco Township; New Richland City; New Richland Township; Wilton Township

Waldorf Community Center, 119 S. Main St., Waldorf, MN 56091
Precincts: Freedom Township; Vivian Township; Waldorf City

Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School, 1717 Second St. NW, Waseca, MN 56093
Precincts: all City of Waseca precincts, 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B

Waseca Intermediate School, 400 19th Ave. NW, Waseca, MN 56093
Precincts: Blooming Grove Township; Isoco Township; St Mary Township; Woodville 1 Township, Woodville 2 Township

Precinct	Location
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Blooming Grove Township	Waseca Intermediate School
Byron Township	New Richland High School
Elysian City	Janesville High School
Freedom Township	Waldorf Community Center
Janesville City	Janesville High School
Janesville Township	Janesville High School
Iosco Township	Waseca Intermediate School
New Richland City	New Richland High School
New Richland Township	New Richland High School
Otisco Township	New Richland High School
St. Mary Township	Waseca Intermediate School
Vivian Township	Waldorf Community Center
Waldorf City	Waldorf Community Center
Waseca 1 A	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 1 B	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 2 A	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 2 B	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 3 A	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 3 B	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Wilton Township	New Richland High School
Woodville 1 Township	Waseca Intermediate School
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41 ADP. 24-6
NOTICE OF HEARING
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a hearing on Petition for Adoption of

Child in the above captioned proceeding is scheduled before the Court, the Honorable Judge Jennifer Mammenga, presiding, at the Lincoln County Courthouse, located at 104 N. Main Street, Canton, South Dakota, 57013 for the 19th day of March, 2024, at the hour of 2:30 P.M., for a period of one hour.
DATED this 9th day of February, 2024.

STRANGE, FARRELL, JOHNSON & BREWERS, P.C.

Amber J. Eggert
Attorney for Petitioner
4420 South Technology Drive
Sioux Falls, SD 57106 (605)339-4500 Phone
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Published in the Waseca County Pioneer February 16, 23, and March 1, 8, 2024

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4	5	6 Burger nite 5-7pm	7 6pm BAR Bingo	8 7pm HALL BINGO	9 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	10 Neighborhood Service Center Ham/Turkey dinner 5:30 to 7:
11 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your HOST S.A.-CRED HEART	12 7pm Post & AUX. Meeting	13 Burger nite 5-7pm	14 6pm BAR Bingo	15 7pm HALL BINGO	16 Sleigh and Cutter Festival Dinner/Dance	17
18	19 COAST GUARD RESERVE Birthday	20 Burger nite 5-7pm	21 6pm BAR Bingo	22 7pm HALL BINGO	23 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm Lenten Meal	24
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Queen Ali Mumme celebrates.
Photo by Waseca High School Yearbook



King Preston Miller is crowned.
Photo by Waseca High School Yearbook

■ Royalty
from Page 1

were shared. Sports coaches also spoke. Activities director Joe Hedervare and Principal Miller introduced the ExCEL Award and “Triple A” Winners. Their introductions can be found in this week’s Pioneer.

Emcees Gross, Madson and Stinehart read the following introductions for the remaining 2024 royalty:

“Nate Engel-Mueller is the son of Jesse Mueller and Jessica Engel. Nate is involved in football and baseball, and also enjoys weight lifting. He is a member of Freedom Lutheran Church and works at WalMart.

“Mallory Bruhn is the daughter of Ryan and Stacie Bruhn. Mallory is a soccer captain and a Minnesota Honor Society member. She sings with the select choir and the State Street singers.

“Zac Hulscher is the son of Jay and Stephanie Hulscher. Zac participates in football and basketball; he is employed at Snap Fitness. Zac is a member of Grace Lutheran Church.

“Tricia Cox is the daughter of Eric Cox and Cori Fostviet. Tricia is involved in the marching and symphonic bands; she is a Minnwest Junior Board member, a student council member, Region 3 BPA President, and a member of the Minnesota Honor Society. She is a stage manager for the drama club, works at Pepito’s Pizzeria, has a position as a nanny, and also works at Strawberries and Cream. Tricia attends Grace Lutheran Church and takes part in the youth group.

“Quinn Dahle is the daughter of Tim and Katie Dahle. Quinn is involved in marching band and colorguard, was a fall cheer captain, stage manager for the drama club

and a member of the Minnesota Honor Society. She is also a member at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

“Ethan Stenzel is the son of Jason and Lisa Stenzel. Ethan is a member at Sacred Heart Church; he is involved in football, track and band. Ethan is employed part time at the Southern Research and Outreach Center, he works in the horticulture department.

“Tegan Flatau is the daughter of Brady and Stephanie Flatau. Tegan is involved in football cheerleading, select choir, the State Street Singers, Minnwest Junior Board, Marching Jays, colorguard, drama department and is a member of the Minnesota Honor Society. She attends church at Waterville United Methodist Church. Tegan dances at Unlimited Possibilities dance studio in Owatonna and is employed as a lifeguard and supervisor at Waseca waterpark.

“Jacob Thompson is the son of Isaac and Jodie Thompson. Jacob attends Grace Lutheran Church; he participates in football, basketball, baseball, select choir. He performs with the State Street Singers and as part of its male sextet. Jacob works at Hy-Vee and Greener World Solutions.

“Emma Keith is the daughter of Joe Keith and Muriah Keith. Emma participates in hockey, golf, select choir, State Street, Female sextets, student council, BPA and is a member of the Minnesota Honor Society. She is a member of Sacred Heart Church. Emma works at Zinnias Boutique & Floral shop. She is a lifeguard and swim lesson instructor at Lakeside Golf Club, office administrator at Pantheon Computers, and she also works as a nanny in the summer.

“Noah Thompson is the son of Isaac and Jodie Thompson. Noah is involved in football, basketball, select choir, State Street, male sextets and he works at Faribault Hy-Vee. Noah attends Grace Lutheran Church.”

‘Narrow but deep’

Coy benefit set for Saturday

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

If Mike Coy’s life were a river, he might describe it as “narrow, but deep.” Mike, 71, has lived in Waseca County his entire life and has already arranged to be buried in a county-managed cemetery located on land once owned by his extended family.

A farm and tractor man to the core, he tells of his grandfather having placed him in the driver seat of a bulldozer at the age of 6 to push silage.

“It’s something you’ve got to have an eye for,” says Mike playfully of driving big equipment.

Mike and his wife Cindy have been together since 1983. They raised three children, now adults: Sierra, Clifford and Erin. Of their nine grandchildren, the majority live within a two-hour drive.

The couple’s rural home is two miles west of New Richland along state highway 30. They acquired the homesite, the former Harvey Peterson property, in 1991 and spent years upgrading and improving it while also raising their family.

Last September, Mike and Cindy were informed Mike has an incurable form of liver cancer; doctors predicted that, without treatment, he had less than a year to live. With treatment, the time might be extended, but the final outcome remained inevitable.

The news was particularly surprising because Mike had not felt any pain or discomfort. The cancer was discovered by coincidence when doctors were looking into a different medical issue.

“It was a shock,” he observes. “From that moment, I’ve spent a lot of time just trying to stay on an even keel.” The couple’s finances have been decimated by medical costs coupled with the loss of income from part-time jobs.

Friends and family have been generous, donating to a “Go Fund Me” site and to an account at the State Bank of New Richland. Their children are helping arrange a fundraiser scheduled from 2 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 17, at the Waseca American Legion Hall. The afternoon will feature a silent auction, music, entertainment, and food served for a free-will donation. For Mike, it will be especially poignant to see friends, family and former coworkers, many of whom have contacted him in advance and told him they are coming. He says he currently anticipates being well enough to take part.

As he reflects on where life has taken him, he has to admit it’s not all that far-in terms of distance. A recent trip to the Grand Canyon—a gift from his children—is about the farthest he’s ever been from home.

But he wouldn’t have it any other way. “I feel really connected to this area,” he says.

Born in 1953 to Clifford and Sue Coy, who had a 160-acre farm two miles south and one mile east of Waldorf, Mike was the oldest of six children—three girls and three boys—born within a seven-year timespan. He recalls being put to work on some very demanding tasks, including grinding feed and delivering it to the calves. Perhaps most impressively, at age 7 he was put behind the wheel of a John Deere 730 tractor and sent out to work fields using a three-bottom plow.

Since his father was one of seven children, and since his aunts and uncles all had families with five and six children each, family gatherings were major events. “Grandma Coy had a big old house,” he remembers. “At Christmas, us kids would get our plates and go sit on the stairs or anywhere we could find room.” When the weather allowed, at least some of the 43 cousins would find their way outdoors and “play in the brook, or play in the barn.” He remembers an old trolley mounted in the hay mow which would allow them to swing from one side of the building to the other.



A farm and tractor man to the core rural Waseca County resident Mike Coy.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bentley

After graduating with a class of 50 from Waldorf High School in 1972, he went straight into employment. His aptitude with machines and mechanical repairs served him well as he moved between jobs at various vehicle service stations. Among those employers were Goldstein’s Department Store and Year-Round Cab, both in Mankato.

“I’ve always been good with motors and engines,” he observes. “But it took me years to go get any official training.” He served stints as a Brown Printing pressman, a mechanic and delivery driver for Amoco fertilizer in Otisco, and with Bird’s Eye as a field mechanic before signing up for the diesel mechanic training program at the Albert Lea “Vo-Tech” school.

By the time he got to the classroom, he says, he pretty well knew nearly everything that was being taught. But he came away with a degree that helped him get better jobs.

One of the longest-standing was with the Kenworth dealership in Albert Lea.

Scattered across his career were jobs with Borneke and Loken construction companies. His “eye” for big equipment served him well, since the seats of excavators and bulldozers were among the ones he filled. “They found out I could operate a dozer,” he remembers of one company which hired him as a mechanic, “and there my ass sat.” Among the projects he worked on were Hennepin County highway 2, county road 60 near Worthington, an airplane landing strip near St. Clair and two golf courses. “There was a lot of earth moved there,” he recalls of shaping the sand traps, water hazards and other features of the golf courses.

Looking back on his life’s journey, Mike remembers many of these projects with pleasure.

“Being courteous and doing right by people shows its own rewards. Don’t follow the crowd.”
— Mike Coy

He says the best parts were when he was able to work directly with customers—and so were some of the worst. He also recalls being approached by a much-younger coworker named Jacob at Kenworth. “He told me he was grateful to have known me, and that I had helped him understand things about diesel mechanics that no one else had been able to,” he remembers. “It made me feel like I had been of real help to him, and it filled me with pride.

“I hope most people remember me as a good man who treated people fairly,” Mike speculates.

While he observes that “we start dying on the day we’re born,” he admits there are elements of his life he hates to let go of—especially his relationship with Cindy and their adult children. “Saying good-bye is a really complicated thing,” he comments.

Still, he goes on, “God has a plan. We can trust that it’s good, even if we don’t understand it.

“All we can do is take life one day at a time, do our best, and keep moving forward.”

He offers two pieces of advice: “Being courteous and doing right by people shows its own rewards,” and “Don’t follow the crowd.”

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