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LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY
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State Bound

Fish or Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 p.m. March 22

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Friday until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 pm. Cost is \$15.

Spring Craft Show 10 am to 3 p.m. March 23

Starfire Event Center is sponsoring a spring craft show from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 23. To reserve a vendor table or get more information, email starfireeventcenter@wasecamac.com.

Horse Enthusiasts invited March 24

On March 24 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at 300 N State St, Waseca, will be a presentation by Julie Christie on equine nutrition and rider biomechanics. It is open to all horse enthusiasts. Club membership is not required.

Julie is a certified equine nutrition advisor, has taught equine science for many years at a college level, and has many years experience riding and training. For more information about Julie, visit her website at <https://www.equineetc.net>

Call Bre Campbell for information about the event or Wilton River Riders Saddle Club 507-461-5415.

Breakfast Fundraiser for the Waseca Area Food Shelf at the Waseca VFW Sunday March 24

All you can eat Benefit Breakfast for the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center/Food Shelf at Sweet-Sommers VFW Post 162 (Waseca) on Sunday, March 24th

Serving from 8:00 am - 12 pm. Adults \$12.00, children 6-13: \$7.00, Children 5 and under: Free.

A Food donation area will be set up. All proceeds from this breakfast will be added to the March FoodShare FoodFund Campaign totals! Hope to see you there!

Jason Gray fundraising event March 28 at Fairmont Arts Center at 7 p.m.

The Bravo Zulu House is presenting a Jason Gray Concert to raise funds for the arts center. The show is March 28. Doors open at 6 p.m., show starts at 7 at the Fairmont High School Performing Arts Center at 900 Johnson Street, Fairmont. Advanced tickets are \$20 or \$25 at the door. Tickets can be purchased online at bravozulu-house.org/jasongray

Fish or Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 pm March 29

Briefs continued on 6

*A word from
The Word*

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

James 1:2-4

Luck of the Irish



Irish Royalty Ava Bruhn, Isabella Schultz, Layla Keith, Ava Appel and Erin Gunderson.
Pioneer photo by Rachael Jaeger



56th annual Irish celebration

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

The Irish American Club of Southern Minnesota celebrated its fifty-sixth year on Saturday, March 16. Events started at 10:30 a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church and ended around 8 p.m. when Layla Keith was crowned Miss Irish Rose and Ava Appel received the Miss St. Patrick title.

During the holy mass at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Joseph and Kathleen Groh became Mr. and Mrs. Emerald Isle. Karynn Fett was selected as Grand Marshall. While the congregation received communion, Irish songs were sung, including "Lady of Knock," "Irish Blessing," "Hail," "Glorious St. Patrick," and "Mother Machree."

When the service ended, the Irish families retrieved their flags from their vehicles and marched to The Mill, where Blake's Food Truck served them Mulligan stew, corned

beef and cabbage. As families enjoyed their meal, Anna Burns-Whoooley and Muriah Miller-Keith entertained with Irish songs; John Hoehn, wearing a kilt, also played on the keyboards. At one point, Doug Gerdts and his daughter Bella Kelling-Gerts also joined the fun.

At 2 p.m., there was an auction for various Irish-themed items including a shamrock-themed teapot, a quilt, a trunk of various items. Irish bingo followed at 4 p.m. TJ Anderson was one player who won \$100 in cash and got excited about it. He said he planned to use the money toward a trip to Australia.

Around 4 p.m., Blake's Food Truck offered dinner while the Irish families visited each other over food and drinks.

The celebration began to end around 7 p.m. when the Irish Rose and the Miss St. Patrick contestants

Irish continued on 8



Ava Appel is crowned Miss St. Patrick after Layla Keith. Below: Erin Gunderson, a senior at Waseca High School, called up children of all ages onto the stage and read How to Catch a Leprechaun to them. Throughout the time, she captivated her audience with her lively reading.



Joseph and Kathleen Groh named Mr. and Mrs. Emerald Isle

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Faith Ryan nominated Joseph and Kathleen Groh from Janesville to be the Irish American Clubs "Mr. and Mrs. Emerald Isle" for 2024. The two took on the role during the Irish American Club of Southern Minnesota's 56TH Annual Saint Patrick's Celebration on Saturday, March 16. In addition, if a suitable community occasion arises, the Grohs will be available to attend the event and represent Irish goodwill and cheer.

"She asked if we wouldn't be interested and I said, 'It sounds like a lot of fun.'" Kathleen told The Pioneer during the festivities. "I've observed lots of couples doing it and it's a group, so it's nice that Joseph and I got this opportunity."

Kathleen shared that she is half Irish while Joseph is "three-eighths" Irish; having the heritage is a part of who becomes an Emerald Isle couple, as well as being an older member of the community.

"Joe said if you add up (the percentages), we're 100% Irish," Kathleen half-joked.

"It's not true; it's Irish true," Joseph added.

Joseph's mother was a Jew-ison and his grandmother was a Cahill; that part of his history, he said, was 100 percent. Meanwhile, Kathleen's grandmother

Emerald continued on 8

Section Champions



Rattling off four straight wins through the Class 2AA Section 2 playoff bracket, the Waseca Bluejays earned a trip to the 2024 State Tournament. The Bluejays defeated Blue Earth, Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton, Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial, and Belle Plaine, improving their record to 20-10. On Wednesday the Bluejays play Breck in the State Quarterfinal. This year is Waseca's 12th appearance in the state boys' basketball tournament. They also went in 1918, 1919, 1948, 1974, 1975, 1987, 1988, 2002, 2016, 2019 and 2021. The Bluejays were state champions in 1918 and 2021, finishing second in 2019. They reached the section finals in 2020, when the Covid pandemic prompted cancellation of the state tournament.

This year's roster includes: Ethan Hiller, Deron Russell, Laird Keeton, Damarius Russell, Caden Danner, Carson Ohnstad, Cody Vagts, Noah Thompson, Zach Hulscher, Jacob Thompson, Tauston Rupe, Logan Heyer, Wyatt Hager, Sabastian Teague, Andrew Robran, Rudy Moncada, Geo VanEngelenburg, Max Howard; Managers: Karley Hamilton, Jordan Johnston; Head Coach Seth Anderson; Assistants: Richard Guse, Austin Nagel, Brian Rupe.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

Even better than new?

Windows at local church refurbished

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"They belong in the light," comments Caleb Penic as he and his crew install recently refurbished stained glass windows at North Waseca Lutheran Church.

Penic, lead road foreman for Cathedral Crafts out of Winona, along with crew members Neil Callahan and Hayden Strelow, are in the process of unboxing refurbished stained glass pieces and returning them to their original locations at the rural church located along 120th Street, about five miles north of town.

The same crew removed these windows in January. In place since the 1940s, the windows had been bowed by the pressures of time; among the hundreds of diamond-shaped pieces, a few had cracked, prompting the church to seek out the services of Cathedral Crafts.

Penic explains the windows have experienced the luck of good timing. Although the company has



Cathedral Crafts craftsman Neil Callahan installs a window at North Waseca Lutheran Church.

numerous other refurbishment projects planned, most churches have requested that their windows be left in place until after Easter.

Thus, the North Waseca pieces were one of only two projects in the company's Winona workshop, where the staff of 12 was able to give it only slightly divided attention.

Crew member Strelow does some pre-installation cleaning on one particular window which he will particularly enjoy putting in place. He explains it will be the

Windows continued on 9

Section 2AA Finals • Thursday, March 14, 2024



Pioneer photos by
Eli Lutgens and Jim Lutgens

Congratulations from these area businesses!!



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Compostings

by Al Batt

The purpose of life?

ECHOES FROM THE

LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

Someone called and left a message. I wrote it down.

I can't read a thing you've written.

I couldn't understand a word the caller said.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I saved some daylight, thanks to daylight saving time, and used it to check on the Groundhog Day predictions as of St. Patrick's Day. I remembered the Goodyears, the years we had tire swings. Back when people considered cigarettes to be a vegetable, there weren't many indoor cats or indoor kids. When I was a kid, I wanted to be an entomologist but was told to buzz off because I was too young. My school didn't have a lot of money. It didn't have urinals. It had sponges. The school did have a lovely blackboard. It was remarkable. It was back when you knew what you were going to get from a box of chocolates. The label on the box clearly showed it. We said things like "Can February March? No, but April May" while playing dice games. I was a Yatzee sympathizer. I'd read "War and Peace" in just three weeks when I was in grade school. It was no big deal; it was only three words. There was a day a few years ago when my cousin Shirley had lost her job at the satellite radio company. Her boss said, "Shirley, you can't be Sirius." I was at a library book sale searching for a gift for Shirley. They had some things other than books for sale. One of them was a transistor radio with a 50-cent price tag and the volume stuck on high. I couldn't turn that down. Now, I tip-toe past the pharmacy department so I won't wake the sleeping pills while I unravel my thoughts and try not to invent new ways of being stupid.

I'VE LEARNED

Tall people get rained on before short people.

Trying to carry too much is both lazy and ambitious.

We look old in new photos and we look new in old photos.

Interested people are interesting. To ride or not to ride, that's equestrian.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

What do you call an old snowman? Water.

If the world were flat, cats would have knocked everything off it by now.

I switched all the labels on my wife's spice rack. She hasn't realized it yet, but the thyme is cumin.

Twenty parking spaces may not seem like many, but it's a lot.

How many telemarketers does it take to change a lightbulb? Just one, but he has to do it while you're eating

dinner.

What do you call a relative who sleeps all the time? A napkin.

NATURE NOTES

"How can I tell a male red-tailed hawk from a female?" If you see a hawk laying an egg, that's a female. The plumage color and pattern of this hawk are highly variable, but male and female red-tailed hawks are similar in appearance. As with most birds of prey, the females are larger. It's called reversed sexual dimorphism. There are several theories. The females' larger size protects them from aggressive males. Another hypothesis proposes that the size difference allows the two sexes to hunt different prey and thus reduce competition for food. A third plausible reason is that females need to be larger because they must accumulate reserves to produce eggs. A female usually spends more time incubating eggs and rearing chicks than her partner, and if she's bigger, she might be able to protect her young more effectively. Not all red-tailed hawks have red tails. Adults typically have red feathers on their tails, while juveniles' tails are a darker brown. The younger birds molt into adult plumage (including a red tail) at the beginning of their second year. The red-tailed hawk has a loud, high-pitched, raspy scream often heard in film, TV shows and commercials as the call of eagles and other raptors because it sounds more majestic.

Antlers are a rich source of calcium and other minerals and nutrients, and are recycled to build strong bones and teeth for many mammals. Observers have reported mice, squirrels, voles, raccoons, chipmunks, porcupines, dogs, opossums, foxes, rabbits, coyotes, otters, beavers, groundhogs, bears and wolves gnawing on deer sheds. Some animals might also gnaw on sheds to wear down their continuously growing teeth.

THE BOASTING DEPARTMENT

I'd like you to meet Joey Batt, a basketball player in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC), who is the NSIC Outstanding Senior of the Year Award winner, Myles Brand All-Academic with Distinction Award winner, CSC Academic All-District Team member, All-Conference First Team (four years), NSIC Defensive Player of the Year (three years), NSIC All-Academic Team of Excellence member, NSIC Tournament First Team, D2CCA All-Central Region First Team, and my granddaughter.

MEETING ADJOURNED

"The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well."—Joseph Wood Krutch. Be kind.

Unexpectedly crystallized honey

It might be said I owe the members of NRHEG's culinary competition teams an apology.

I went along last week as 10 "ProStart" students took part in state-level competition. ProStart is a program sponsored by the National Restaurant Association. It creates opportunities for students who enjoy preparing and serving food to see the career possibilities the field offers.

I felt it was something the newspaper should cover—state level competition. I was glad to go. But the day was going to be long, with everyone boarding the bus at 6 a.m. and an anticipated return time about 12 hours later.

I took along a book thinking I would be in need of entertainment.

Boy, was I wrong.

There was plenty of bustle and activity as we arrived and found the locations that would be significant to us, specifically the work spaces allotted to each of the two five-member teams. Time flew, and suddenly it was 9:45, when NRHEG's first team was scheduled to begin preparing its dishes. Each competing group was required to display a menu which included an appetizer, main entree, and dessert.

No cooking could begin until the one-hour timer was started, and all food had to be on the tray, ready for delivery to judges, before the closely-watched second hand reached zero. There were 18 teams at the competition. About



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

every half hour, another two would be given the "go" signal and the furor would begin anew.

It was riveting.

Team members told me they had been practicing and refining their systems for weeks. Everyone had specific jobs to do, and only a relatively tight space to do them in. They not only had to work quickly, but their objective was to present tasty, visually appealing finished products that would catch the attention of the panels of judges. Every cut, every turn of the whisk, was important.

Oh, and they were surrounded by tournament officials watching everything they did. There were separate scores and awards for knife skills, sanitation, teamwork, team spirit, menu design, "essence of taste," creative plating (how the food looks as it is served), management, and, finally the grand award, culinary preparation and a trip to national-level competition. Adults with clipboards were circulating everywhere, referencing the menus, confer-

ring on the sidelines, and occasionally asking questions. "Time remaining" announcements were heard all around the room.

There were even moments of somewhat dark humor—for example when one team had to struggle to get some unexpectedly crystallized honey out of its bottle.

Nearly every team raced through the last few minutes, just managing to put their visually attractive and luscious-smelling dishes onto the tray as the last seconds were counted down. Words are not sufficient to describe, but one NRHEG team served a lemon asparagus salad with shallots, pistachios and a poached egg as an appetizer, honey-glazed salmon with zesty rice as an entree, and a lemon mousse dessert garnished with white chocolate, pistachios and fresh blueberries. The other NRHEG team began with savory French crepes with bacon, tomatoes, baby spinach and cheese as an appetizer, seared tilapia with steamed asparagus and sauteed potatoes as an entree,

and coffee mousse with chocolate shavings and a mint sprig for dessert.

The other 16 teams produced equally sophisticated finished meals.

Perhaps all that will help you picture how dynamic and suspenseful it was to be in that gigantic ballroom at RiverCentre. There was constant activity. The room was filled with luscious smells. The contestants were deeply engaged in each phase of their preparations.

I am not qualified to be a judge, but I almost wished I could be, just for the sake of tasting all those beautiful foods.

NRHEG's only award at the end of the day was to an individual student, Peyton Curtis, for "knife skills." Only four of the 90 students competing were selected for this particular acknowledgment. The prize? A five-piece knife set. With or without a title, though, every competitor that day was a winner as far as I was concerned. They had faced and overcome tremendous challenges.

As I emptied my backpack at home that evening, I came across the book I had taken along. I was almost surprised to find it there, having not thought of it even once during the 14 hours of the trip.

So, NRHEG ProStart, thank you. Your accomplishments were overshadowed only by your effort and determination. Excellent work—and thank you for the entertainment.

Just a bunch of college kids working together

I had a moment today that brought me right back to small town vibes. It was when I was supposed to be studying in the library with one of my co-workers and classmates. We did study for a bit, but then one of us made a random comment and we started talking about a million different things; after that, the studying was over for the day.

She first gossiped about a high school classmate of hers who is getting married, and then talked about her boyfriend, who goes to school in Mankato and is not quite enjoying it. Me being from Waseca, I know a lot of people going to Mankato, so I was able to add some personal input.

Those conversations about her friend's wedding and her boyfriend gradually turned the conversations to the topic of our own possible marriages and whether or not we would take the last name of our husband.

Naturally, I have been under the impression my entire life that I would take the name of my husband. Recently ho-



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

wever, I have thought that I quite enjoy my last name and parting with it might be more difficult than I thought. So I would just tack on his last name to the end of mine, having two last names. Plus, hoping to be a well-known published author/journalist, I don't want to switch up my last name on people and my readers. She, also being a journalist, agreed with me on these viewpoints.

Does anyone remember having crushes in middle or high school and writing your name with the last name of your crush? Well, I am guilty of doing it even now with the guy I have

been talking to and have a crush on. The problem is, he has a hyphenated last name because his parents are divorced. So I can't necessarily have three last names, can I? My study partner and I spent some time discussing it and whether or not it rolled off the tongue. It doesn't, but I guess that's not really a problem for me to worry about, so the conversation ended with me smiling like a high school freshman after experimentally writing my fake married name in a notebook.

We then turned to work drama and gossip and who had dated whom in the

office—turns out my friend knew much more about that than I did, so I came across a few surprises. Then again, it is just a bunch of college kids working together. Our discussion made me curious whether there is a lot of similar work drama in other workplaces or offices. Do people stereotype and place coworkers into categories? Who is the office "skank"? Is there someone who drinks too much? Is one person so focused on work that he or she just never seems to have a personality?

But does it matter? I am not in the position to say, nor to ask. Just some mental stimulation for you all. —

And that is the story and thought processes behind me not getting my work done tonight. Do not fret for me, it was just studying for a midterm that is happening next week, so really, I am just a great student being proactive.

My Determination: "Do you know how hard it is to cook for this family? Not very, but I can't handle much." - Francine, American Dad

Dorky conversations are my favorite

I've been rewatching a series called "The Newsroom." The show focuses on TV journalists, mainly a broadcast journalist and his team based in Atlanta, Georgia.

In the pilot episode, the show begins with main character Will McAvoy giving a response to a question from a lecture hall in college. His response in the show, and frankly in real life, went viral. From there, the show turns to an actual television show, which for a journalist like myself, is quite intriguing.

Through thick and thin, sickness and health, parties and funerals, the news and the show must go on. In every episode, the characters share one abiding trait: Their lives are entirely devoted to "the news." Certainly their personal lives come into play, but it remains evident they have structured their careers around something they feel is meaningful. Their work gives them purpose, and it shows.

I like to say it is rare to find something in life, anything to provide purpose. But really, it just takes people different amounts of time to discover what that is. For many, like myself, friends and family are high on the list.

Some say work, or a profession, is more difficult to find as much purpose in. Again, being in the news myself, I am surrounded by and work with, on a daily basis men and women who have found precisely that. Purpose and meaning in their work. Our staff at the newspaper is incredibly dedicated and caring. And we often write about people who love what they do. New business owners, passionate coaches and players, and enthusiastic churchgoers, to name a few. And those are just people I spoke to this week.

I tell nearly everyone I come into contact with to let me know if there's something they want in the paper. They often do.

My sister called me Monday evening to talk about a city council article



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

she was working on. We talked for more than an hour and a half. She tried to apologize and said she felt "dorky" for bringing up her concerns. I reminded her that this is my life. Those "dorky" conversations, I have each and every day.

In the same light, I mentioned how, outside of Waseca County, I sometimes struggle with conversations. "Struggle" isn't the right word. I just don't have very much to talk about. My life is very centered and I like it that way. I don't get caught up in national news or anything of the sort. For example, when someone walks into the office with a few extra minutes, which happens often, I generally have very good conversations that last anywhere from five minutes to thirty minutes, or hours if the individual happens to be Dave Zika. Some of those folks I've only just met for the first time, but because of our shared interests, here in Waseca County, we can talk and talk and talk.

Those conversations give me great satisfaction, purpose and meaning.

In "The Newsroom" the topics covered are mainly national. The show finds a big topic—often a classic conservative or liberal cause—and localizes it. They present a person or group local to the Atlanta of the show and depict a controversy or difficulty which, outside the world of television, applies to hundreds of thousands or potentially millions of people in similar situations.

In one instance they interview a 95-year-old woman who can't vote because her state passed a voter ID law stating only persons with valid driver licenses can cast ballots.

Being 95, this woman couldn't vote.

In another instance a politician who is interviewed turns out not to understand the term "debt ceiling." He makes a statement during an interview that reveals his ignorance; when the statement sparks a flurry of embarrassing questions, he leaves abruptly.

The debt ceiling, the episode teaches, is simply the amount of money the U.S. can borrow to pay bills. When we as a country need more money, the "debt ceiling" is voted on and raised in order to borrow more money to continue paying debts.

According to information shared during the show, many people confuse the debt ceiling with the national debt, and so believe the persistent controversies about "government shut-downs" are about debt. In reality, a higher debt ceiling just allows the U.S. to pay its bills.

In this case, the "face" the TV show put on the issue was the ignorant politician.

A family friend of someone I know well is going through dementia/alzheimers. Another friend of mine, whom I've known since a very young age, is going through the same.

Often, as I speak with my friend, he has a hard time finishing sentences. He just can't remember words. Twice he's broken down and cried because he just couldn't get the words out. The last few times, I told him he had nothing to be sorry for and however I said it or whatever else I said, must have worked, because I felt like I saw the pain cease for a moment. He continued his

story. I know this friend well enough that oftentimes, when he forgets the words, I know what he intends to say. I try to allow him to finish it himself, hoping that it helps.

I really just work to be patient. I love and care for this friend and I want to cherish the memories I have and get the most out of the interactions we continue to have.

My other friend, whose family member is going through dementia, shares stories with me about their experiences. It's good to have someone to talk to about these things.

People should always be kind.

When a person is mean or expresses anger toward me, I try very hard not to mirror those emotions. I do this for a number of reasons. First, I like to treat people as I would like to be treated. Second, returning anger or malice with equally negative energy is often seen as justification for the original actions.

Put simply, I prefer to spread positive energy.

Speaking of positive energy, I would like to congratulate the Waseca boys' basketball team on an incredible run to the state tournament. Good luck Wednesday night and on.

And speaking of negative energy, I have been battling health difficulties for the majority of the past two weeks. Along with that, a few members of the staff have been out sick. Like a true journalist, I have powered through, just simply from home. I appreciate folks' patience these past two weeks as the office hours have not been consistent.

"Most people spend their life trying not to be the greater fool; we toss him the hot potato, we dive for his seat when the music stops. The greater fool is someone with the perfect blend of self-delusion and ego to think that he can succeed where others have failed. This whole country was made by greater fools."

— Aaron Sorkin, The Newsroom.



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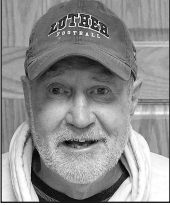
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Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika



Ice fishing adventure brings fatherly wisdom

My only son Marc lives in Mankato; he is a wonderful father. His wife, Shannon, is a wonderful mother. Together they are busy raising four boys between the ages of 10 and 18. Shannon is a real go-getter. She always makes sure things are fair in determining the boys' activities. She is super organized, always sees life as an adventure for everyone, always preaches a "can-do attitude" to all of her family. Shannon is definitely the captain of "Team Zika" as I like to refer to the family. Team Zika doesn't refer to me as Dave, Grandpa, or Grandpa Dave. They call me P.P.D., Papa Dave. I really like it.

Everyone knows that ice fishing in southern Minnesota this winter was a complete bust. I'd gotten my youngest grandson Nathan a Vexilar brand sonar, fish finder, depth finder for Christmas. With basketball most weekends and little ice, he really hadn't gotten a chance to use it to enhance his ice fishing experience. Walleye season here ended in February, but it stays open through April on Lake of the Woods, a giant lake located in Minnesota's "Northwest Angle." A window opened up for me to take Marc and Nathan to the big lake the first week of March. It would be a power trip to Bayview Lodge with two nights lodging and two days fishing in an ice house. What a joy, a fishing trip with my son and young grandson.

Lisa and I raised our family just like Team Zika. Lisa was our family captain and we were always busy seven days a week. Since we are several years retired now, life has really slowed down. I have too much time now to worry about the little things and what tomorrow will bring.

I was over at Mankato West watching grandson Evan play his last B-squad basketball game of the season. We'd be leaving early Saturday morning for Lake of the Woods and Marc checked the weather on his cell phone. The forecast for our destination called for 40-mile-an-hour wind, freezing rain and snow in the afternoon. I commented, "Looks bad, maybe we should cancel." Marc and Shannon both looked at me and Marc said "Don't worry PPD, it'll be okay: We are going fishing." I received a call after supper on Friday evening from Marc, "Dad, would it be okay if Ryan went on the trip with us?" Ryan is my 13-year-old grandson and a great fisherman. "Gee Marc, I don't think we have room for another rider and more equipment in the Ford Edge." Marc replied, "Don't worry PPD it'll be okay." Marc packed the Edge to its fullest on Saturday morning. I was full of joy: Another grandson had been added to the trip.

The seven-hour drive to the resort went smoothly...until we hit the 60-mile stretch from Red Lake to Baudette. The highway was coated with ice and snow: I was driving in a sni in white out. Marc said "Don't worry PPD, just slow down, take your time, it'll be okay." We arrived safely at the resort, checked in, had a great supper, then went to bed early in anticipation of our sunrise exit to the cozy fish house waiting for us on the lake.

We had been informed our fish house was 11 miles out on Lake of the Woods; we had our map in hand. We had purchased four scoops of chub minnows in Baudette. The grannies were awed by the sales lady at the bait store; she was dressed in a halter top and had a real pistol and holster buckled around her waist. We entered Adrian's lake access at 7 a.m. Across Pine Island we went and entered the plowed roadway a couple of miles out onto the big lake. I've fished Lake of the Woods many times, but this time it was different. Most of the resorts had moved their houses closer to shore, but Bayview houses were still 11 miles out. We followed the tiny road straight out with 40-mile-per-hour winds out of the east and blowing snow. I began losing sight of the road, bottoming out in my Ford

Edge; the big lake was becoming a total whiteout at 8 miles from shore. Marc agreed we had to turn around and head back—wherever that was! Marc said to me, "Relax PPD, we'll get back; it'll be okay." I was relieved to see rows of houses through the blowing snow closer to shore.

We came upon the Bayview plow truck heading out to the houses. "Sorry guys, we didn't know it was blowing like this out on the ice. Follow me out, I'll plow you a path right to your house." My grannies said to me, "Follow him out PPD, let's fish; it'll be okay."

Perhaps you're familiar with some of the old adages about weather and fishing, the ones they share on the TV shows. "Don't go fishing when the wind switches direction to the east; fish bite least," or "A drop in temperature and a big change in weather shut down fishing."

Forget all that. Our fishing was fantastic. Ryan caught many nice-sized walleye and sauger as usual. Nathan used his new Vexilar to jig and catch beautiful fish for the bucket, fishing like a veteran. The best bite came from noon to 1 p.m.: Fish aren't supposed to bite then. Marc and PPD watched the boys put ten keeper fish in the bucket as we enjoyed our hoagie sandwich. We had our four-person limit and packed up to head in at 3:30.

Another change in the weather, very windy and rain. Suddenly our snow-bound fish house was sitting in a pool of water. The road going in was a river of water and slush. Going across Pine Island was difficult: we almost got stuck in mud and ruts several times. Marc said, "Don't complain, we won't get stuck or go through the ice. PPD it'll be okay." We got back to our cozy cabin, cleaned some smaller fish for supper, and hung our clothes up to dry. Even Marc said fishing didn't look good for the next day.

After supper there was a knock at the door, it was the Bayview guy who asked, "Are you going fishing tomorrow?" PPD replied, "There was water all over the ice, must be a ton of weight. We had trouble navigating the mud crossing Pine Island. It seemed like we were the only SUV driving on Lake of the Woods. The wind is also changing direction, it's reached 40 mph out of the west.

He checked his cell phone, then contradicted every one of my points: "Rain is ending, down to 15 degrees tonight, it will be easy going across the frozen mud of Pine Island and the lake will be frozen like a brand new highway. There is anywhere from 20 to 26 inches of good ice out there; besides you came a long way to fish with your family." Marc, Nathan and Ryan all said to me "Let's go fishing, don't worry PPD it'll be okay."

Bayview let us keep our belongings in the cabin, we could settle the bill and pack up when we came off the lake from fishing. The ride across Pine Island was easy and there was a runway of clear frozen ice all the way to our fish house. We now had the chance to replace the nine smaller fish we'd eaten for supper with larger ones to take home. The wind was blowing 40 mph and had switched to the west. We had a mix of nine beautiful sauger and walleye by 11 a.m. As we were packing up to leave the ice house, Ryan's bobber went down, the last fish of the trip. Ryan set the hook and had on a big one, a really big one. He played the fish perfectly, it was a huge walleye, and it was a struggle turning the head to get it through the hole. The big fish made a final run and broke the line. Ryand had done everything right, he'd played it perfectly. The young fisherman was crushed and disappointed. There was the sound of silence the first seven miles driving back in. PPD broke the solemn mood: "Ryan, you are a great fisherman; you will have the opportunity to catch many big walleyes; it'll be okay."

Character and form

Lars Samuelsson featured at Waseca Art Center

Display continues through April 19

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

The work of photographer Lars Samuelsson, who grew up in Norway, is on display through the month of March at the Waseca Arts Center. He says that, in his work, he specifically focuses on color and form, saying he finds it fascinating that some rural towns have subdued tones in their signs and buildings while other towns have more colorful ones.

Before Samuelsson takes his road trips, he says he looks at a map and pinpoints where he wants to go. How many photographs he takes, he said, depends on the destination and what he sees that catches his interest.

"I'm not one of those who takes lots of pictures," he admitted. "Usually when I find something, I spend more time than motive."

What Samuelsson means is he likes to enjoy the atmosphere of a town. He'll park his car and explore on foot. That way he can take his time capturing the right mood and tone as he positions himself and his camera.

Samuelsson shared that he was "probably sixteen" when he first picked up a camera. His inspiration was a book of photographs at the local public library in Halden. Landscapes, usually out in the woods, became his initial subject matter.

Halden had only one newspaper; when Samuelsson applied there to be a photographer, he was told the paper had no need for one. Undeterred, Samuelsson took the initiative to learn all about photography on his own. His first camera was a Canon AE-1, a single lens reflex, which he proudly proclaimed he still has.

"It's still solid," Samuelsson said, adding that during the time when he first learned about photography, he often worked with his dad in the dark-room learning how to fine-tune images as they were printed using a projector.

Samuelsson first came to the United States



Artist Lars R. Samuelson tells of his trips to find classic signs in small, rural towns throughout Minnesota. He says he enjoys experimenting with the character, colors and form of the vintage pieces.

Pioneer photo by Rachael Jaeger

while an exchange student at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. It's where he also met his wife Melissa who was the Resident Adviser (RA) in the dorms and now works as a neurologist in St. Paul. Samuelsson mentioned that he found the situation "really funny" since his major was in international studies and political science.

But it was during college when he worked at the campus newspaper, "The Dakota Student," where he said he felt his love for photography ignited. At the same time, he acknowledged it can be challenging to make a living in the field, especially now as he observed that newspapers typically don't have a full-time photographer.

"I figured out that this is really fun stuff," Samuelsson said about his experience at "The Dakota Student."

"And I enjoyed it. To this day, it's the most fun

job I've ever had."

He said he loved roaming around campus, finding subject matter that appealed to him. He also appreciated that "The Dakota Student" took him and others who worked there seriously – he felt that's how he was able to gain even more confidence.

"They pushed me to do the best I could," Samuelsson said. "It was very inspiring."

Currently, when photographs don't occupy his time, Samuelsson freelances as a camera operator for Valley Access TV in Stillwater, Minnesota. Samuelsson also teaches fellow artists how to photograph their work at White Bear Center for the Arts. The Gallery 360 in Minneapolis shows Samuelsson's various artworks.

His collection of photography will run from now until April 19.

MVAC offering paid summer internships

Summer jobs are a learning and earning experience with the MVAC/Waseca County Internship Program.

Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) is accepting internship applications from any students living in Waseca County, ages 18-25, who are enrolled in a community college or a 4-year college and in good academic standing. Income is not an eligibility factor for this internship.

Paid internship goals include developing skills and learning about Waseca County career opportunities.

"We want to draw back students that go to college so that they are able to get jobs in their hometown or home county instead of having them find jobs in the Cities," Stephanie Landsteiner, MVAC Family Resource Specialist in Waseca County says.

Interns will work and learn more about what they're studying – getting a feel for the job they're taking classes in, Landsteiner explains.

The goal is to offer eight MVAC/Waseca County internships this summer.

"Typically, juniors or seniors in college are who we're looking to connect with to help them get experience in their field of study and see what jobs are available to them in the community they grew up in," Sarah McDonald, MVAC Youth and Senior Services Coordinator says.

Interns earn \$15 an hour, work up to 29 hours in a week and the course of the internship is 300 hours total. Students provide their own transportation. Internships usually start the beginning of June and wrap up when students go back to fall classes.

Landsteiner asks students to apply now so she can match their interests with a business or government host.

"I work with the students to best fit their field," she adds. "Whatever they're interested in doing an internship in, we'll explore that with them and reach out to the different businesses."

Some internship hosts, since the program began in 2022, include newspapers, a media and production business, a veterinary clinic, a financial advising firm, and the county sheriff's office.

An intern had an interest in criminal justice such as court administration. She decided to try the sheriff's office internship and saw staff involved in more than making arrests.

"She learned about SWAT (Special Weapons and Tactics) and other different programs that they have," Landsteiner says.

There are benefits to students beyond exploring the career they're taking courses in at school.

"They're also building their resume and deepening their networks," McDonald says. "Those are things that are going to help them get that job and stay on or find something else in their communities."

Applications are available by calling Landsteiner at MVAC's Waseca County office, 507-835-8240, or by email steph@mnvac.org and through MVAC's website <https://www.mnvac.org/programs/employment-training/wacounty-internship>.

MVAC is a Community Action Agency helping those in need secure affordable housing, viable transportation, employment and training for employment, as well as creating educational opportunities for children.

#helpingpeoplechanginglives

Skelton set to serve as mayor until end of term

By JESSICA LUTGENS
Staff Writer

The New Richland City Council voted to appoint Councilperson Loren Skelton to fill the remainder of Mayor Chad Neitzel's term, which expires at the end of this year, in anticipation of his planned departure from the position next month. The council also agreed to accept letters of interest for the soon-to-be open council seat with the intention of reviewing them at the first meeting in April.

One individual was present to address the council regarding a water bill received at a house owned by his father on 1st St. SE. A request for any kind of forgiveness on a roughly \$6,400 bill caused by a ruptured pipe releasing 290,000 gallons of water before the problem was discovered was met with hesitation from some council members.

"We have to treat the water that goes to and leaves the house," said Mayor Neitzel.

Councilperson Janda Ferguson mentioned a similar situation that occurred last year in which the council denied forgiveness of an unusually high water bill.

"We don't really have any guidelines set down that would be fair for all residents in these situations," Ferguson said. "In the future we can look at setting up some kind of procedure, maybe, but we can't just favor each

case - we have to stick to the same thing."

After further discussion, City Administrator Tony Martens agreed to put in a request to shut the water off to the property and place the topic on the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion. No action was taken on the matter.

The ambulance report was presented by Sarah Sundve, stating that the New Richland ambulance has had 16 runs so far this year. Pay rates for ambulance members were discussed along with an ongoing difficulty to recruit members and fill the schedule.

The ambulance report was approved, along with the fire department report, which was submitted in writing.

Chief of Police Tanyce Bruegger presented the police report, which stated that the NRPD responded to 292 calls for service in February. A public hearing regarding body cameras, which the department plans to purchase and utilize in the near future, was scheduled for April 8 at 6:35 p.m.

"With things that have gone on locally, statewide, and nationally with police departments, it's time that this happens within our department,"



Skelton

NEW RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL

Martens said. The police report was approved.

In unfinished business, it was noted that six applications had been received for the assistant city clerk position and results of a survey regarding the possibility of a municipal THC dispensary showed that 99.99% of those who participated were opposed to the idea.

In new business, the council approved a contract with former Assistant City Clerk Sara Jo Vulcan at a rate of \$25/hour up to 20 hours per week for administrative assistance outside of normal business hours while a replacement is found, and to help with training once the position is filled.

Also approved were a purchase request for the reshaping and regrading of swale west of N Elm Ave. and cleaning outlet of retention ponds at a cost of \$670, a contract with Culligan regarding water softeners, pump repair at the wastewater treatment plant at a cost of \$1,814 to be paid with AARP funds, water plant repairs including a flow meter and chemical injection port at a cost of up to \$7,000, and a public hearing to be held March 25 at 6:35 p.m. regarding a franchise agreement extension with Xcel Energy.

In the administrator's report, it was noted that city hall will be closed on

March 29 for generator work to be completed. The report was approved, and the meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.



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OBITUARIES

Clark Koplen

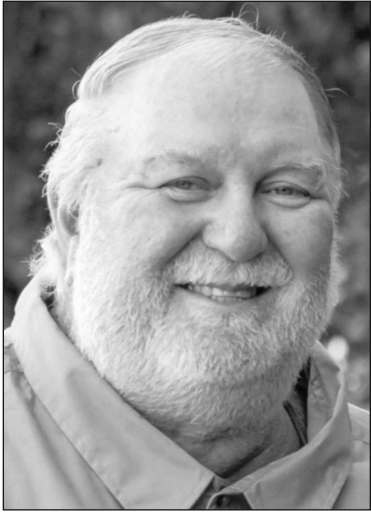
CLARK ALAN KOPLIN, age 66, of rural Pemberton, died on Thursday morning, March 14, 2024, at Mayo Clinic Health System in Mankato.

Clark was born on June 11, 1957, in Mankato, to Glenn and Delsie (Dehn) Koplen. He was baptized as an infant on July 7, 1957, and confirmed in his faith as a youth on May 30, 1971, both at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Alma City.

Clark grew up in Alma City and in the early 1970's his family moved to the Koplen Family Farm in rural Pemberton. Clark attended Waldorf-Pemberton High School where he graduated with the class of 1975. Clark was a lifelong farmer. In addition to farming, Clark worked for various companies which included Brown Printing, Berry Pallets, and Birds Eye.

On June 7, 1997, Clark was united in marriage to Brenda Lau at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Alma City. Together they lived on the family farm and had one daughter, Kelly. Clark enjoyed farming, nature, going to the cabin, reading the plot book, driving around the block and most of all people. He was a lifelong member of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Alma City. He will be dearly missed.

Clark is survived by his wife of 26 years, Brenda; daughter, Kelly Koplen and her significant other, Marco Krienke; brother, Jeff (Sue) of Owatonna, father-in-law and mother-in-law, Dave and Marlene



Clark Koplen

(Goltz) Lau; brother-in-law, David (Katie) Lau; nephews: Curtis Koplen, David Koplen, David Lau, and Wallace Lau; many other family and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents.

Visitation was from 2:00-5:00 PM on Sunday, March 17, 2024, at the Janesville Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service. Visitation continued from 9:00-11:00 AM at the church on Monday.

The funeral service was 11:00 AM on Monday, March 18, 2024, at St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church in Alma City with Pastor Robert Harting, officiating. Interment was at the Alma City Cemetery.

Clark's family would like to extend a special thank you to all of the staff who were involved with his care during his hospital stay. DSOFuneral.com

James Ross

JAMES ORVILLE ROSS, age 80, of Waseca passed away on Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at Minneapolis VA Medical Center.

Born on August 7, 1943 in Waseca, James was the son of Orville and Ruth (Lau) Ross. He attended Waseca Public Schools. In 1967 he was drafted into the United States Army. As part of this service, he fought in the Vietnam War where he was awarded many service medals, two Purple Hearts and was later honorably discharge. He was united in marriage to Sandra Matz on August 24, 1968, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. They later divorced but continued to raise their children together.

James worked for the City of Waseca as a heavy equipment operator until his retirement after 33 years. He was a volunteer firefighter for the Waseca Fire Department for over 22 years. James was an outdoorsman who loved to hunt and fish. He enjoyed playing cards, watching old western movies and the Minnesota Vikings. He also enjoyed spending time with his kids, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. He especially loved watching his grandkids at their sporting events and other activities. He was a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, VFW Post #1642, and American Legion Post #228. He was a loving dad, grandpa, and great grandpa who will be dearly missed.

James is survived by his children, Charlie (Irma) Ross of



James Ross

Waseca, Thomas (Jennifer) Ross of Waseca, Audra (Brandon) Ryan of Waseca; fourteen grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, sister, Diane (Fred) Ventura of Owatonna; and many other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Ruth and Orville Ross; son, Douglas Ross; and brother, Gary Ross.

Visitation was held from 4:00 to 6:00 PM on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation continued one hour prior to the service at the church on Wednesday.

The funeral service was at 11:00 AM on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca with Rev. Michael Grannis officiating. Burial will follow at Woodville Cemetery. Dsofuneral.com

Board approves teaching staff reduction

Meeting room filled to capacity; sixth-grade staff cut may lead to class sizes of 30 students

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

NRHEG School board members voted in reluctant favor of proposals to reduce teaching staff for the 2024-25 school year during their regular meeting the evening of March 18. The Ellendale media center had no open seats as the board voted not to renew the contracts of non-tenured kindergarten teacher Nicole Seber-son and high school math teacher Randy Muske; to reduce the third-grade teaching staff by one individual; and to place only two teachers in charge of next year's sixth-graders, leading to potential class sizes of about 30 students—at least 10 more per classroom than are currently together.

The vote to reduce the sixth-grade staff was especially reluctant, with three of the seven board members responding "nay."

Five individuals' statements were shared during the public comment portion of the evening's meeting. Teacher Mark Domeier urged board members to "walk a mile" in the middle school teachers' "shoes" before finalizing a decision to reduce sixth-grade teaching staff.

Current sixth-grader Emily Delacruz told board members that students her age "get noisy" and "have a hard time sitting still."

She went on to say that, as difficult as it might sometimes be to concentrate this year, she has trouble picturing what it would be like with "another 10 to 14 students in our rooms." She asked, "Why do [next year's sixth-graders] deserve less support than we have gotten?"

Fifth-grade teacher Marcus Fischer could not be present at the meeting, but sent written notes to be shared by fellow elementary instructor Jennie Bunn. He expressed concern about whether, with the big move from the elementary to the secondary building, and with a significant number of students who are not "at grade level" in reading and/or math, "I hope you think of other ways to make reductions that are not directly impacting the success of our students."

Recognizing that the administra-

tion's recommendation to retain two teachers at the sixth-grade level is based on the fact there are currently only 58 students in the group, Fischer's statement concluded, "I see more than a number. I see 58 students who need all of our support to have the best chance to succeed."

Angela Gehrke told board members she was speaking in a two-fold capacity, both as the mother of two boys about to advance into sixth grade, and as a substitute teacher who sometimes supervises sixth-grade classrooms.

She shared that one of her sons has already asked to be home-schooled if he would otherwise be assigned to a class of 29 students. "My 11-year-old recognizes that is too many kids," Gehrke said. "Shouldn't the adults making decisions think about this very seriously?"

Board chair Rick Schultz told everyone in attendance he was thankful for the emails he and other board members had been receiving "for the past 10 days," stating "that's the way this process is supposed to work. I'm glad that we can have these discussions." He also expressed gratitude that most of the communications included acknowledgments that managing the financial affairs of the district is a demanding task.

Schultz then responded to some of the points apparently made in the emails. "We are within our policies" he said of having a class of up to 29 students. While the guideline for class size is 28, the maximum provided for in policy is 32, according to information shared by the district.

He then went on to address questions about four administrative level positions the district has added in the past few years. These are in the areas of buildings and grounds, food service, transportation and "teaching and learning." He stated that adding the positions streamlined the operations of the district and, at least in the case of the food service director, had no impact on the cost of school operations.

Schultz stated that extra money from state and federal sources during the pandemic had allowed the district to be somewhat liberal for the past few years, but, "We've always tried



to be very transparent about this. We've said more than once that the day was coming when things were going to be very tight."

Apparently in response to comments regarding the district's \$3 million "fund balance"—that is, money set aside for contingencies based on a recommendation from the Minnesota State School Board Association—Schultz observed that, if spending were not curbed, "Three to seven years down the road, that fund balance would be depleted down to zero."

School district superintendent Michael Meihak told those in attendance the district's annual budget is "slightly above \$10 million." Most of the district's income is from state allotments which are based on "annual daily membership," the number of students present in school each day. Because, as is the case in most rural districts, the number of enrolled students is dropping gradually, there will be a corresponding decrease in income, even though the state has announced it will be increasing the per-student amount by two percent in 2024-25. Coupled with inflation, administration has estimated these changes will lead to a \$500,000 difference between next year's income and next year's anticipated expenditures.

Even with the staff cuts approved on Monday, Meihak said, he expects to present the board with a 2024-25 budget in June which will include about \$150,000 in "deficit" spending, that is, which cuts into the \$3 million fund balance.

Board chair Schultz said, "If numbers change and we get additional funds, we will adjust.

"In the meantime, I am not willing to kick this down the road for some future board to deal with.

"Yes, these cuts are painful. The better question is, 'Are they do-able?'"

When it came to making a motion

for each of the staff reductions, Schultz himself was the only board member willing to do so in two of the three cases.

In other business, board members voted on a question raised during the February meeting by community education director Macy Whiteside. Whiteside had requested that pre-school teachers Elizabeth and Grace Nelson be granted increases which made their level of pay comparable to other licensed teachers. She had pointed out that, based on averages, the hourly wage the two women have been earning is about \$8.25 less an hour than teachers in K-12 classrooms. She stated a concern the two highly-regarded workers would seek employment elsewhere, given they could easily earn more money at other area districts.

Board members complied with that request, consenting to short-term deficit spending which would bring the two teachers' "wage and benefits package" up to being equal with other staff members working under the teachers' contract.

During his report, elementary principal Craig Kopetzki mentioned that 600 people attended the "Green Eggs and Ham" breakfast served during the district's "Read Across America" observations the first week in March. He also told board members 30 students have elected to sign up for the "invention" and "science" fairs being offered as an optional event for students in fourth and fifth grades.

Secondary principal Grant Berg highlighted recent competitions attended by the high school band, and the DECA and ProStart programs. In response to student interest in the topic, Berg said he has invited all staff and any students who wish to create "brackets" covering basketball's "March Madness." He suggested creating, sharing, and later evaluating the brackets might lead to richer communication among people who don't usually interact.

Teaching and Learning director Jason Touponce reported that Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) testing is underway throughout the district and will continue through May 9.

Waseca DECA



Waseca High School students competed in a Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) competition March 10-12 at the Hyatt Regency Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis. Front, from left Remy Murphy, Brooke Bartelt, Lauren Grant, Alexis Claybaugh. Back: Tanner White, David Hodgkins, Leeland Guggisberg, Kayla Schulz, McKyla Hasselquist, Sophie Chawra, Elizabeth Manthe, Jaya Kunkel. Not pictured: Caden Danner. These thirteen students were among 5,200 who attended the conference from throughout the state.

Sophie Chawra received an award for scoring in the top 15 of her written test. She also received a medal for scoring in the top 12 in her Human Resources Management role play event.

The categories they competed in were: Human Resources Management, Employment Interview, Community Giving Project, Quick Serve Restaurant Management, Automotive Services Marketing, Apparel and Accessories Marketing, Independent Business Plan, Principles of Business Management and Administration, and Restaurant and Food Service Management.

Briefs

from Page 1

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Friday until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 pm. Cost is \$15.

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.

Hiring for the Southern Research Outreach Center

The University of Minnesota is hiring for a Research Plot Technician at the SROC in Waseca. Full-time position with benefits. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent with at least two years of study in horticulture, agronomy, or a

related field and must have or obtain a pesticide applicator license. Full description and application available at www.umn.edu/jobs Job #359540.

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.

Waldorf Veterans Memorial Fund Drive

Donations are requested to support the construction of the Waldorf Veterans Memorial. Checks written to WVMP Fund Drive can be mailed to WVMP Fund Drive; Judy Joecks, treasurer; P.O. Box 55; Waldorf, MN 56091. Questions can be directed to Charlie Barnes at (763) 286-2246.

Waseca County Stagecoach History

Judy Joecks is compiling a history of stagecoach routes in Waseca County. She would appreciate hearing from anyone who has information regarding stagecoach trails or stops. (507) 317-1345.

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Janesville



BEA AT WORK — In 1973, Mrs. Joe Stepan (Bea to Janesville residents) showed Mrs. Bill Sexton a new pair of canvas shoes. Bea helped her husband in his shoe store business for 25 years, and celebrated with an open house.

1923

-If we were to judge of the value of an article on account of its reception by the public and the encomiums bestowed upon the editor for writing it, then the article appearing last week in this series of local historical sketches was the most valuable and the most accurate article every published in Janesville. Following the day of publication, the editor was kept busy answering questions relative to the matter discussed. In no one instance was there criticism.

-After serving several years, Marshal Cris Grams will retire upon the completion of this term of office the first week in April. He has been urged to file again, but he feels that he has given of his time sufficiently to serving the public and accordingly he says no to those who have urged him. It is due to say that Mr. Grams is a very capable and superior official. Universally in town and country the sentiment is repeatedly reflected that he has made one of the best marshals the town ever had an for that matter the state.

-St. Patrick's Day was observed in Janesville on Saturday last in an entertainment of unusual interest and of inestimable value. It centered around the very pleasing and impressive play by home talent at the Town Hall presented both in the afternoon, and evening. It was highly pleasing from the fact that the personnel of the caste rendered their respective roles in a masterly manner, reflecting dramatic ability and a true conception of dramatic interpretation.

1948

-A meeting was held Tuesday evening, March 19, at the Janesville Council Rooms to discuss and find ways and means to secure a public road from Janesville to the Dam at Lake Elysian. Delegations of the following organizations were represented: The Village Council, Public School Board, Fire Department, Sportsmen's Club, American Legion, and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

-Bringing his Mountain lake basketball team into Mankato for the Region two tournament is more or less a trip back home for Coach Paul Munson. Sixteen of his 19 years of coaching have been spent in this section of the state. Following his graduation from St. Olaf in 1927, Munson coached at New Richland. In 1931, he moved to Janesville where he took over coaching all sports at the high school. Munson gained a reputation as a coach during the next 12 years.

-Young men who have reached the age of 18 after January 1, this year, and who wish to join the Navy, must enlist before May 15 or they will be subject to the draft. Ronald K. Seales, Motor Machinist's mate in charge of the Mankato Navy recruiting office, said this morning. Many superintendent in 19 counties covered by the Mankato Service have agreed to issue diplomas of seniors in high school before May 15, if such seniors wish to enlist in the Navy, Seales said.

1973

-Nine Janesville High School students were inducted into the local chapter of the National Honor Society at ceremonies held last night at the high school. They are seniors John Jewison, Ann Wagner and Cindy Miller; Juniors Randy Witt, Vicki Wolff and Carol Bergmann; and sophomores Randy Hoversten, Betty Kopischke and Lori Born. The selection was made by a vote of senior high school teachers from a list of sophomores, juniors and seniors who have attained a "B" average, or above, during their high school studies.

-Janesville's Bombers basketball squad ended its most successful season in eight years with a string of five wins in their last six games. Coach George Tuvey said, "This strong finish is really typical of our entire season. We played well early in the year, fell apart for several games, then came back strong - in one word, we were an 'erratic' team." Throughout the season, the B squad set many records in statistics compiled over the last seven seasons. Against Morristown the Bombers scored 65 points and allowed only 16. Against Glenville, Janesville could only manage 22 points, and against Loyola they allowed 60. The Bombers allowed an average of 36.5 points per game, while scoring 39.7.

-Janesville students, from fourth through twelfth grade demonstrated everything from the effects of temperature on a frog to deficiency of Vitamin E in mice at the annual JHS Science Fair Friday night. Science Fair Director, Dave Ostrem told the Argus that there were over 74 displays set up in the gym for the occasion. Judges gave first, second and third places in grades four, five and six, junior and senior high. Ann Sens won first place in the fourth grade category with her display on cats, Bradley Hays placed second with his Wood Ducks and Bill Bartelt and Teddy Johnson claimed third with their Water Purification project.

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Waseca

25 Years Ago

-The Waseca Community Education Department held a public forum March 16 at the Waseca High School's little theater to release the results of the Minnesota Student Survey completed during the 1997-98 school year by sixth, ninth, and 12TH grade students. Jim Colwell of the Minnesota Department of Children families and Learning presented the survey data and compared Waseca's results to other students throughout the state.

-Jeff Monahan, spread out a series of sizable and stunningly beautiful colored print-out reproductions of the windows of Sacred Heart Church on the desk in his office at his business, Travel Source. Each tall, narrow window features a saint exaggerated in height, draped in a voluminous robe, standing either on a tile floor or on the earth. The saints are framed by marbleized pillars which support a rounded arch embellished with Celtic-like tendrils.

-“She's a troublemaker, an instigator. She's not a good girl,” Heidi Gusts said talking about her character Abigail Williams in this weekend's production of “The Crucible.” Gusts said Abigail accuses everyone of witchcraft while covering her own missteps.

50 Years Ago

-Father Peter Esterka, escapee from Communist Czechoslovakia, and author of the book “Never Say Comrade” will speak Sunday at Sacred Heart Church. Father Esterka is presently a professor of theology at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul.

-Holly Herbig, local actor director, has joined the Guthrie Theatre travelling company presenting a pioneer history of the northwest. This spring and summer the company will offer 60 performances throughout five states with the opening performance March 29. The original travelling company, which had planned to offer “Taruffe,” on tour, was cancelled last fall because of the gasoline shortage. Coincidentally, Holly had played the lead in “Tartuffe” at Alexandria's Theatre Le Homme Dieu last summer.

-“You're unlimited in what you can do as long as there is enthusiasm, spirit, and unity within the organization,” Don Paulson, executive secretary of the Minnesota Pork Producers said Tuesday night. Paulson was the guest speaker at the annual Waseca County Pork Producers Banquet in New Richland. Over 150 members were in attendance at the event which featured speaker, Paulson and entertainment provided by Vigortone Feed Company.

75 Years Ago

-The annual meeting of the Waseca County Anti-Horse Thief Detectives got off to a slow start last Thursday evening because the Central High basketball team was playing Mountain Lake and a majority voted to listen to the game via Bob Mischek's radio. Minutes were read between halves and during time between periods. When the final score was announced, the meeting proceeded.

-The celebrated remains of Master Technical Sergeant Henry Charley Kampen, a World War II decreased member of the United States Marine Corp from Waseca being returned from overseas for final burial, will arrive within the next month accompanied by uniformed United States Marine Corp escort from the Chicago Distribution Center of the American Graves Registration Division

100 Years Ago

-The past week has been a busy one for Judge and juries in district court. Judge Senn was relieved on Tuesday afternoon by Judge Comstock of Mankato who is trying the case of Miss Bridget Magner against W.J. & E. C. Priebe and the Pure Oil Co. This is a suit for damages on account of the building of oil tanks on the M. & St. L. right way near her residence property in the south part of town. The case is being bitterly contested.

-A delegation of thirty Elks appeared before the council in regular session Tuesday evening and asked for financial assistance through their spokesmen, Chase. Spillane, Erick Sjostrand, and Ernest Zimmer. The Elks, who opened their bathing beach last summer to the public, are unable to handle the large number of bathers that will take advantage of the public this year because of inadequate bath-house facilities.

-The settlement of a suit in district court in Waseca last week established a precedent in the matter of liability for the use of glaring automobile headlights. The suit was the aftermath of an automobile accident near Janesville last summer, due to glaring headlights.

125 Years Ago

-India is upholding the rupee at 1s, 4d. when its market value as silver is only 11d. But India is doing this simply by running into debt. Now, common sense tells us this cannot last forever. When the monetary conference at Brussels separated in December, 18992, I wrote at once to the Indian government and suggested the following: “Shut the limits of India to the public and prohibit the import of silver either as coins or as bullion into India by anyone except the Indian government.”

-The gold men have invariably fought undercover. There is not a leading advocate of the gold standard in the United States who dares to publicly give his true reason for demanding that gold should be retained as the sole metallic base of our monetary system. Those who know anything about the subject are fully aware that gold is constantly rising in exchange value.

-No one can give a design of a poultry house that will be acceptable to all for the reason that ideas differ regarding poultry houses. The kind of poultry house to be constructed depends upon the cost – or rather how much one is willing to invest in it. A person can have any luxury preferred if he is willing to pay for it.

New Richland

100 Years Back - 1924

• The Waldorf Consolidated school basketball team showed considerable enterprise by entering the Hamline University tournament, but were eliminated when they were defeated by the Byron, Minn. team 14 to 12. The boys who made the trip with Coach Jelliffe were: Leonard Yarnike, Ciril Hawkins, James Hawkins, Kenneth Courtney, Adrian Burmeister, Leonard McArdle and Wm. Ford.

• March 11 was election day in the local precincts of the county, and New Richland village had 26 citizens out to vote. F.H. Krueger was re-elected Village President for one year; H.E. Johnson was re-elected trustee for three years; H.F. Bestmann, treasurer; A.O. Lea, clerk; J.L. Sullivan, constable for two years; A.A. Sybilrud and O.S. Martinson, Justices of the Peace for two years; Ole Anderson, constable for one year.

• The Ellendale theatre has been re-opened by Ray Nelson of Blooming Prairie.

• Ben Messersmith has opened a shoe store in the building to the west of the Bruzek Hardware store. A stock of Wear-U-Well shoes has been received. In the same building, C.F. Weckwerth will operate a paint shop and will carry a complete stock of wallpaper and paints.

• A number of friends agreeably surprised H.E. Sievert by dropping in on him unexpectedly Sunday evening on the occasion of his birthday.

• Lost—A truck chain on gravel road east of New Richland. A reward of \$1 will be paid if left at this office.

• Gus Hoelz returned to his home Friday afternoon. He has been staying at the home of his son, William, doing the cooking while “Bill's” wife was away.

76 Years Back - 1948

• New Richland township at the Tuesday election chose a new supervisor and a new clerk. Walter Michaelis was chosen as supervisor, and Emil Bolduan, clerk for the past 23 years, decided two years ago he wanted to be free of the job. This year he put his foot down and refused flatly to be clerk any longer. He was succeeded by Martin Neumann who is considered a good choice.

• The third annual Business Men's basketball tournament got through the preliminary games Wednesday. Land O' Lakes topped Minneapolis Knitting Works 24 to 17 to enter Friday's games opposite Borchard's Service, winners over Kreuzer's Men's Store 22 to 18. It was Steihl's Studio, 29 to 14 over O.S. Martinson, that won the right to play Clark's Cafe team, which took an overtime period to knock off the Standard Lumber quint 20 to 16.

• Mrs. Raymond Brandvold was a dinner guest and attended the quilting party at the Palmer Swenson home Tuesday. Lois Brandvold joined her mother after school.

• Mr. and Mrs. John Wipplinger and son, Arthur, and Mr. and Mrs. James Folven and family of Kiester were Sunday afternoon and evening visitors of Mr. and Mrs. G.M. Anderson.

• Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Leader and Mr. and Mrs. Kelly Anhorn of Morristown were Sunday afternoon visitors at the Glen Herbst home. Little Sharon Herbst, who had spent two weeks with her grandparents, returned home.

• A group of relatives gathered at the Arthur Kofstad home on the south county line Friday evening to help Dennis Kofstad and David Demmer celebrate their birthdays.

• The following were entertained at dinner and supper Sunday at the home of Mrs. Ole Finseth and Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Finseth: Mr. and Mrs. Erwin Murl and family of Ellendale, Nels Hatle of Hartland, and Mr. and Mrs. Ed Berg.

50 Years Back - 1974

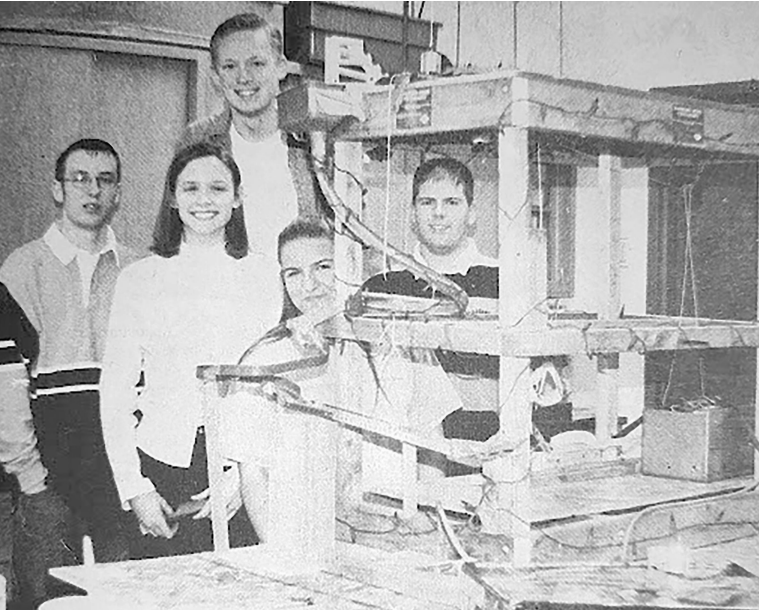
These Waldorf-Pemberton high school students are pictured as they correlated plans for the 'Expo-Education, 1974' to be held at the Waldorf-Pemberton high school. They are, from left: Bill Blashlack, Tim Sonnek, Barb Hawkins, Kathy Kirkpatrick and Bill Marzinske.

• Rebecca Robran, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Robran, Hartland, has been selected as Girls State representative by the American Legion Auxiliary of Lundberg-Lee Post #226, Hartland. Susan Somage, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Somage of Hartland, has been named alternate.

• Mr. and Mrs. Gary Hansen and family were Sunday afternoon and supper guests of Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Hanson of Ellendale.

• Mr. and Mrs. Leon Kozirolek were in Des Moines, Iowa, three days last week. They attended the American Park Congress and National Portkette Convention.

25 Years Back - 1999



This Rube Goldberg contraption built by NRHEG physics students placed fourth in competition at MSU recently. Putting the winning project together were, from left: Evan Berg, Jessica Kubat, Jason Johnson, Jan Vanderploeg and Nate Waldhauser.



The Panther Cheerleading State Competition squad won the championship trophy in the Class A division of the 1999 State Cheer Competition at Concordia College, St. Paul. Pictured are from left, kneeling: Erica Olson, Jenny Werth, Sarah Motl and Cindy Adams; standing: Alison Underland, Lean Schoenrock, Jackie Hullopeter, coach Carol Reese, Kristin Shultz, Amber Simonson and Breanna Schimek.

■ Emerald from Page 1

was Katie Fitzgerald, also 100% Irish, but Kathleen said her mother was English, Dutch, Scottish and a few other nationalities. Since the Grohs knew they were going to become the Emerald Isle couple, they wanted to learn what being an Emerald Isle couple would be about. So, in January, they went on a cruise where they learned to play the Irish spoons from an Irish couple. Kathleen remembers another trip to Ireland, in 2018. Kathleen mentioned how she and Joseph were always impressed with how people would come into the clubs and perform. “Joe and I didn’t consider ourselves musical at all,” she added. This was a time when their local parish priest led a tour in Knock but also visited the Blarney Stone and spent quite a bit of time in Dublin. Kathleen calls one of her and Joseph’s “highlighted trips.” She also said they balanced most of their time between churches and the pubs. When they pulled up to one of the churches over there, they would announce they were going to have mass. “[The natives] would look at us and say there’s no priest available for mass,” Kathleen remembered. “We would say, ‘‘Oh, we brought our own priest.’” Their priest, now deceased, also had 100 percent Irish bloodlines.

Kathleen remembered seeing his last name on some of the public transportation buses and said she and Joe would tease him about owning the whole bus line. Aside from churches and pubs, the Grohs also visited a museum where, Kathleen mentioned, she loved seeing “all the beautiful works of art” there. They also stopped in the library at Trinity College. When they were both eighteen years old, they met while attending college in Winon, although at different institutions. Joseph was at St. Mary’s which still operates and is well-attended and Kathleen at St. Teresa’s which was an all-girl school and closed in 1989. In 1965, St. Mary’s hosted a rock-and-roll mixer dance where the couple first bumped into each other. “It was the first time someone asked me if I minded dancing with him,” Kathleen remembered, and I said, “‘Sure.” Growing reflective at one point in the interview, Kathleen remembered one of the first times she was first involved with an Irish celebration with a good friend of hers. “A long time ago, the former Mrs. Emerald Isle, Jane Mulcahey, and I worked on the Irish dinner together,” Kathleen shared. “She was still young then and so was I – at St. Ann’s in Janesville. I thought today, it was really interesting because we spent all our lives in this area, and we were back together for this celebration.”

■ Irish from Page 1

showcased their talents. Miller-Keith also asked each of them a series of questions from the judges about what their Irish heritage

means to them. After Miller-Keith announced the pageant results, the winners took photos with family members, friends, and other royalty under the wooden arch shaped like a Celtic knot. Jasmine Kotek, Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Queen, also participated in the photo shoot.

The Pastor’s Column

Not everyday can be a mountain top

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS
Nobody wants to go through the valley, but we all want the mountain top experience. I have heard this sentiment from a few people over the past months. On Sunday mornings we have been talking about following Jesus and what that means for us that claim Him as Lord and Savior. There are days where we feel like we are going through the valley and others where we are on the mountain top. Not every day can be a mountain top experience, but on the other hand not every day is the deepest corner of the valley either. Following Jesus in our life can be a journey, mountain tops and valleys can be experienced any given day depending on the circumstance and how we respond. The reminder that we need to have is that God is with us every step of the way on our journey through the mountains and the valleys. I have been thinking about Elijah again and his experiences with mountain tops and valleys in 1 Kings 18-19. Elijah sees God move by accepting His offering in front of the priests of Baal and King Ahab, Elijah prays for rain after a long drought then runs faster than Ahab’s chariot. Surely seeing God move in these miraculous ways is a blessing to Elijah, but shortly after this mountain top experience Ahab kills the prophets of God. Elijah is distraught and finds himself in the desert

wanting to die. God meets him in the valley of the shadow of death. Elijah is comforted by God, given food and drink, allowed to rest, and God speaks to him. God says just the right words to encourage him revealing His plan to redeem Israel through a faithful remnant. On the Mountain tops we see God move, but in the valleys God causes us to grow in faith in Him. Psalm 23 reminds us to trust God in the valleys of life. Verse 4 says:
4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. God has called us to follow Him in all things, if you are in the valley know that He is with you. If you are on the mountain top share it with others by telling the story of how God is moving, write it down so that you can remember God’s faithfulness when you go into the next valley. It is easy to believe God on the mountain tops and those experiences give us strength to face the next valley, where everything is trying to kill us and our faith. Remember that God is with us in the valley and the next mountain top is just up the hill. Trust that He will lead you to the next mountain top and He is with you even in the valley.

Irish mass, parade



The Irish American Club of Southern Minnesota celebrated its fifty-sixth year on Saturday, March 16. Events started at 10:30 a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church and ended in the evening. During the holy mass at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Joseph and Kathleen Groh became Mr. and Mrs. Emerald Isle. Karynn Fett was selected as Grand Marshall. While the congregation received communion, Irish songs were sung, including “Lady of Knock,” “Irish Blessing,” “Hail,” “Glorious St. Patrick,” and “Mother Machree.” A parade followed. Above are photos from the mass, and the parade. Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger

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4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m. * * * * *	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.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 Interim 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. * * * * *	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m. * * * * *	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father 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 * * * * *	CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY 900 14th Ave SE, Waseca 507-833-1082 Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m. * * * * *	FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota 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 New Richland, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship * * * * *	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday – 9:15 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. * * * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship * * * * *	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday — 9 a.m. Worship * * * * *	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. * * * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting * * * * *	ST. JOSEPH’S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship * * * * *	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * * * *
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 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 * * * * *	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 * * * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN Wilton Township Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor Sunday – 10:45 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 p.m. * * * * *	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Pamela Jensen Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * * * *	NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER. * * * * *	
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Caleb Penic of Winona's Cathedral Crafts in front of one of the newly reinstalled windows at North Waseca Lutheran Church.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

■ Windows
from Page 1

first time he will have both refurbished and installed a panel.

Among them, Strelow and Penic list off what has been done with the pieces. Since they have been away, these windows have been completely disassembled, each of their dozens of pieces meticulously labeled, and then reassembled exactly as they were. In the process, broken pieces have been replaced. New “leading,” the double-channeled metal which holds the pieces together, has been used. Finally, subtle but solid metal bars have been incorporated into their structures to prevent the sort of bowing that caused the damage in the first place.

“We want them to hold up at least another hundred years,” comments Penic.

Though he has worked in churches large and small, and handled stained glass projects from simple to complex, Penic reveals he finds his work with each project highly rewarding.

“The artists who put these windows together,” Penic states, “their sincerity and dedication continue to ‘shine through even decades later. The more you learn about what they did and how they did it, the more you appreciate the beauty of stained glass.

“It makes you want to get everything right as you work on these

pieces.”

As he looks at the diamond-shaped pieces in the “American gothic” windows of North Waseca Lutheran, Penic can name the stained glass company’s specification number for each color and pattern. He mentions that, unlike he has ever seen before, the makers of North Waseca’s windows put a serial number on some of the panels.

He smiles broadly as he remembers another unique element of this project. “I came over and I told the folks of the congregation about the work we would be doing,” he explains. “They listened closely and they asked good questions.

“Then, afterward, they invited me to a potluck lunch. It was the first time that ever happened to me.

“And boy, was that food good.”

Penic, Callahan and Strelow planned to have all windows back in place within about three days. The final element of the project is scheduled for the week of March 18 to 22, when the outside woodwork will be examined and, when necessary, refurbished or replaced.

Although window refurbishment might seem like a rare thing to most folks, Penic mentions that he has worked on a wide array of projects within a relatively short distance of Waseca, including New Richland, Mankato, Austin, and Madison Lake. He spends much of the year traveling and working at various sites all around the country and even internationally.

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56th annual



The Irish American Club of Southern Minnesota celebrated its fifty-sixth year on Saturday, March 16. Events started at 10:30 a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church and ended in the evening where royalty were crowned. Above are scenes from the evening portion of events, held at The Mill, in Waseca.

Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger

Busy months ahead at Farmamerica

Volunteers are needed to make new and exciting events and programs possible

(Waseca, Minnesota)- If you follow Farmamerica on social media or keep an eye on community events, you may have noticed that Farmamerica’s calendar is filling up, fast! In April, baby farm animals will begin making their way to the farmyard just in time for a new Barnyard Babies Animal event. The month of May is packed with middle school Ag Career Exploration (ACE) Days, as well as elementary Ag Evolution Field Trips. The summer is filled with a new Kids Club Program, Private Day Camps, Farm to Fork dinners, and other special events.

With these new programs and events, Farmamerica is counting on volunteers now more than ever! “At Farmamerica, despite our modest team size, we offer a wide range on hands-on programs. We rely on our dedicated volunteers to help us bring the story of Minnesota agriculture to life in an engaging way. Their contributions are vital to our mission of connecting people to the evolving story of agriculture,” said Farmamerica’s Executive Director, Jessica Rollins. To round up volunteers, Farmamerica is hosting a complimentary Volunteer Breakfast on April 5th at 9 AM. Whether you have years of experience or are considering volunteering for the first time, this breakfast is for you!

A few of Farmamerica’s volunteer opportunities include:

- Using a script with talking points to help youth learn about historic sites
- Driving an antique tractor pulling a wagon of kids
- Welcoming visitors at the registration desk during special events
- Helping our site manager with landscaping, painting, or animal chores

For planning purposes, RSVP to this event by March 26th at farmamerica.org/events. Know someone who would make a great volunteer? Invite them to join you!

Farmamerica is a non-profit agricultural interpretive center that connects people with the evolving story of agriculture through educational hands-on experiences like historic farm tours, day camps, family-friendly events, partnerships, and community engagement. The 360-acre Farmamerica site is located right off Highway 14 on County Road 2, west of Waseca, MN.

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COUNTY OF LINCOLN

IN CIRCUIT COURT
SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

NOTICE OF HEARING
41 ADP. 24-5

In the Matter of Termination

of Parental Rights Over
AVA C. ANDERSON,
Minor Child.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE
that a hearing on Petition for
Voluntary Termination of Pa-
rental Rights 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 30th day of April,
2024, at the hour of 1:30
P.M., for a period of one hour.
DATED this 20th day of
March, 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
amber@strangelaw.com

Published in the Waseca
County Pioneer on March 22,
March 29, April 5 and April
12, 2024

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STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
COUNTY OF LINCOLN

IN CIRCUIT COURT
SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

NOTICE OF HEARING
41 ADP. 24-6

In the Matter of the Adoption

of
AVA C. ANDERSON,
Minor Child.

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 30th day of April,
2024, at the hour of 1:30
P.M., for a period of one hour.
DATED this 20th day of
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Friday, March 29, 6:30 PM
Good Friday
Sunday, March 31, 8:30 AM
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9:45 AM Easter Egg Hunt
10:45 AM Easter Worship Contemporary

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SUMMARY OF SECTION 6.23 FO FLOODPLAIN OVERLAY DISTRICT STANDARDS AND ASSOCIATED DEFINITIONS IN SECTION 8.03 OF THE WASECA COUNTY UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE (UDC)

Waseca County adopted a newly revised FO Floodplain Overlay District Standards at the March 19, 2024, County Board of Commissioners meeting. The ordinance was based on the existing standards in Section 6.23 of the UDC and the MN DNR model floodplain ordinance. Definitions of important terms in the revised ordinance can be found under Section 8.03 of the UDC. The ordinance amendment was necessitated to satisfy state and federal standards detailed in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103F; Minnesota Rules, parts 6120.5000 – 6120.6200; the rules and regulations of the National Flood Insurance Program in 44 CFR 59 to 78. The ordinance provides the general regulations for development in floodplains, as well as procedures guiding administrative responsibilities.

A copy of the ordinance in its entirety is available for inspection at the Waseca County Planning and Zoning Office, 300 N State St., Waseca during regular business hours 8-4:30, and will be on the county website www.wasecacounty.gov under the Planning & Zoning department's page.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
Waseca County East Annex (Commissioner's Room)
300 N. State Street, Waseca, MN 56093
Thursday, April 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

A. Request for a Variance of 20ft to construct an attached garage 20ft from an existing property line in Section 33 of Alton Township.
Mark A. & Barbara Buker request for a variance to construct an attached garage approximately 20ft from their existing property line. The UDC requires a setback distance of 40ft from property lines. The parcel is located at 8998-330th Ave., Waseca (PID:09.033.1100) and in Section 33 of T107N R.23W. The parcel is in the A-1 Agricultural Protection Zoning District.

B. Request for a variance of 16.5ft to have an existing structure 3.5ft from a proposed property line in Section 22 of Freedom Township.
Hidden Spring Lake Farm LLC requests a variance of 16.5ft from the required 20ft to have an existing structure 3.5ft from a proposed property line. The applicants are requesting the variance prior to splitting their parcel into two. The property is located at 3323-80th Ave., Pemberton (PID 04.022.0700) and in Section 22 of T106N R.24W. The parcel is in the A-1 Agricultural Protection Zoning District.

C. Request for Variances to have existing structures closer to proposed property lines in Section 24 of Freedom Township
Kevin Roeker requests variances to have existing structures closer to property lines than the 20ft setback requirement in the UDC. The applicant is requesting the variance prior to splitting their existing parcels. The parcels are located at 28238-50th St., Janesville (PIDs: 04.024.0510 & 04.024.0500) and in Section 24 T.106N R.24W. Both parcels are in the A-1 Agricultural Protection Zoning District.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

WASECA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Waseca County East Annex (Commissioner's Room)
300 N. State Street, Waseca, MN 56093
Thursday, April 4, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

Request for an Amendment to Section 6.21 of the Unified Development Code.

Waseca County requests for an amendment to Section 6.21 of the UDC to include Landscape Retail Business under the list of conditional uses in the VMX Village Mixed Use District.

Information on this item will be available at the Waseca County Planning and Zoning Office, 300 N State St., Waseca during regular business hours 8-4:30, and will be on the county website www.wasecacounty.gov at the agenda tab. Oral comments will be accepted at the meeting. Upon request, accommodations will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all Waseca County services, programs and activities.

Maame Quarcoo, Sr. Land Use Planner.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer March 22, 2024

Earn it they did

WHS boys improve vastly en route to section championship

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Anyone who believes the 2023-24 season has been a cakewalk for the Waseca High School boys' basketball team should maybe think again.

The Bluejays, according to head coach Seth Anderson, have earned everything they've gotten this season, improving vastly since December and culminating with a 70-66 victory over Belle Plaine at Minnesota State-Mankato last Thursday that gave them the Section 2AA championship and sent them to state.

"I think excitement is the best word heading into the state tournament," said Anderson. "We are very excited to earn that opportunity to play on the biggest stage."

And earn it they did. The Bluejays went back and forth with Belle Plaine all night, trailing 7-4 in the opening minutes. A last-second three-pointer by Carson Ohnstad pulled them within 33-32 at half-time.

The teams continued to trade baskets in the second half until Ohnstad connected on a three to put Waseca up 52-47 with 10:55 remaining, prompting a Belle Plaine time out.

Damarius Russell, who struggled at the free-throw line in the first half, made 10 consecutive free throws in the second half as the Bluejays threatened to pull away, taking a 64-57 lead with 4:48 to play. But Belle Plaine refused to fold, and it was 64-63 when Deron Russell got three points the old-fashioned way, making the field goal and free throw. Both Russell brothers hit free throws in the final minute as the Bluejays finally put it away.

Damarius Russell finished with 22 points, two rebounds, five assists and two steals with just two turnovers. He was 5-for-7 on two-pointers, 3-for-6 on threes. Deron Russell totaled 18 points, three rebounds, three assists, three steals and one turnover, making five of nine field goals.

Ohnstad had nine points on three treys, adding two rebounds, three assists and two steals.

Others: Ethan Hiller 1R; Laird Keeton 9P, 4R, 1A; Zach Hulscher 2P, 2R, 1S; Jacob Thompson 5P, 3R; Andrew Robran 4P, 5R, 2S.

The Bluejays had only seven turnovers.

"To win games, you have to have good players," said Coach Anderson. "We certainly have that in the Russell brothers, among others. Those two have done such a great job attacking the hoop in the playoffs and making the right read to pass to our shooters or score themselves. They have become really good at picking their spots to attack when the defense isn't loaded up to stop them."

Anderson also said going to state never gets old.

"People ask me if I get tired of replying to everyone's text messages, e-mails, tweets, Facebook posts, and I always say no," said Anderson. "This is the best part of

"I'm not surprised. We've worked real hard for it as a team and are ready for the big moment."
— Laird Keeton

the job, thanking people who are acknowledging the effort we have put in. It's such a privilege to represent your community. I've been fortunate to grow up at Maple River and coach at Waseca, where both communities value basketball and take pride in it. I thought we had a great fan base for the section final. It was awesome to be able to accomplish a big goal like this."

His players agreed. "It feels good to get back to the state tournament," said Damarius Russell, who added that he's not very surprised. "Last year, we had a great season and we had a lot of people coming back. We managed to fight through adversity and get to the state tournament. I expect us to go up there and compete."

He praised Anderson and the other Waseca coaches.

"I'd like to thank them for always pushing us in practice, putting us on the right track, giving us confidence," he said. "I'd like to thank God for letting us get to the state tournament."

"I'm not surprised," said Keeton. "We've worked real hard for it as a team, and we are ready for the big moment. I'm expecting us to go out there and give it our all, play our best."

"It's definitely a great accomplishment," said Hulscher. "I think that's what most teams look forward to. I think we've definitely earned it. We had a lot of ups and downs. We're a hard working team for sure."

Hulscher also praised the coaches. "They're great, holding us accountable every day in practice," he said. "We work very hard, and they work very hard. They should get some recognition too. Each coach on our team is an important part of our success."

"Once the regular season ended, I wanted us to go as far as possible," said Thompson. "We went to state for football. Now we get to go for basketball."

Deron Russell said he's not ruling anything out for the state tournament.

"We just need to go out there, prepare the best we can, and shock the state," he said.

The Bluejays, seeded No. 2 on the south side of the section, improved their record to 20-10 while Belle Plaine, No. 1 in the north, finished 21-8.

The Bluejays drew the toughest of all first-round matchups at state, where the top five teams are seeded and the rest are random draw, against 28-1 top seed Breck on



DRIVE TIME — Damarius Russell drives the lane during the Section 2AA championship game against Belle Plaine.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens



THE DIRTY WORK — At left, Andrew Robran goes up for a basket in the section title game. At right, Jacob Thompson grabs a rebound.

Pioneer photos by Eli and Jim Lutgens



Wednesday at Williams Arena in Minneapolis.

The winner of that game plays Friday at 6 p.m. at Williams Arena against fourth-seeded Pequot Lakes or No. 5 Minnehaha Academy. The

championship game is Saturday at 5 p.m. at Williams Arena.

If the Bluejays lose to Breck, they would play Thursday at 6 p.m. at Concordia University in St. Paul. The third-place game is Saturday at

2 p.m. at Concordia. The rest of the Class AA field includes No. 2 Albany, No. 3 Lake City, and unseeded Jackson County Central and Pelican Rapids.



Seth Anderson

Does the suit help?

Apparently, it doesn't hurt

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

During the course of a big game, you'll see a myriad of emotions from Waseca High School boys' basketball coach Seth Anderson.

His attire, however, does not waiver.

Anderson has made it a habit to wear a suit whenever the Bluejays are playing a crucial contest, and he was wearing one last week as his team won the Section 2AA championship and advanced to the state tournament.

"I used to wear the suit to almost every game when I first started coaching, but then as time went on our staff started wearing the same polos or long sleeve dress shirts to games to match," said Anderson. "I always try to get back to wearing it on big home games and playoff games. I do think it still represents that it is an important event and we want to be our best. I have no idea if it makes a difference."

His players say it sends a definite message.

"It tells us that we have to play ever better than we have been," said Damarius Russell. "We know he means business. If he's locked in, it means we have to be locked in."

"It tells me it will be a big game, and we have to play our best," said Deron Russell.

"It shows that we have structure on our team," said Laird Keeton. "It shows that he means business, and it's time for us to take care of business."

"Coach Anderson, he's a very classy guy, and we are very well coached," said Zach Hulscher. "When he brings his suit to the game, we kind of think of it as a business trip. I think it definitely brings class to our team."

Anderson's attire, and his fiery demeanor on the Bluejays' bench, are mindful of former Waseca coach Manny Beckmann, who always wore a suit, rarely lost and was known to get emotional at times.

Anderson has a standard answer for why he wears a suit: "I usually just tell people that, 'Because I'm not very good looking, I have to cover it up with something else.'"

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2024

Another chapter written for WHS boys' basketball

Bluejays claim Section 2AA crown, return to state tournament

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Dating back to the program's first state championship in 1918, the history of the Waseca High School boys' basketball team is long and storied.

Another chapter has been written. The Bluejays, once again cast in the role of underdogs, went toe-to-toe with No. 1 seed Belle Plaine at Minnesota State-Mankato's Bresnan Arena last Thursday, emerging victorious 70-66 for the Section 2AA championship and all-important state tournament berth.

The feeling, according to Bluejays head coach Seth Anderson, is different than 2021, when the Willingham brothers, Malik and Kyreese, were dominant and most people figured Wasca would win.

"You know, it's never easy," said Anderson. "But this is very different than last time. The teams are very different. When we were winning the state championship, everybody expected us to win, and it was almost more of a relief than a joy. This team has been a little bit more of a surprise. If someone had told me at Christmas time that we'd be playing in the state tournament, I don't know that I would have believed them."

For much of the season the Bluejays were without last year's leader, junior guard Damarius Russell, who was recovering from a football injury. And, since he's been full strength, they haven't been the same team.

Russell and his brother, sophomore Deron, are a threat to score any time they touch the ball, either driving, pulling up for a jump shot or backing up for a three-pointer. Damarius had games this season of 17 and 16 assists.

The Russells, with their many God-given talents, are surrounded by a talented and smart group that includes Laird Keeton, Zach Hulscher, Andrew Robran, Jacob Thompson, Carson Ohnstad and Ethan Hiller.

"They all have definite skillsets that compliment each other," said Coach Anderson. "I think the best thing we did, from early in the year to late in the year, is that guys figured out what they were good at and became really good at doing it. That's what you saw (in the subsection championship game), the Russell brothers getting downhill, Carson and Zach hitting shots, Laird and Hiller kind of doing everything, and then Robran and Thompson just being the enforcers inside, winning every tough rebound."

A willingness to sacrifice has, according to Anderson, been a hallmark of the 2023-24 Bluejays.

"We've gotten mentally tougher and physically tougher as the season went on, and we needed to," said Anderson. "We struggled in a lot of areas early in the year. There are a lot of guys on this team who could score 15 to 20 points a game. It all comes down to how much are you willing to sacrifice, and that kind of thing is contagious."



HOW SWEET IT IS — Head coach Seth Anderson raises his fist as his players applaud after the Waseca High School boys' basketball team won the Section 2AA title and garnered a state tournament berth. Players pictured are Geo VanEnglengurg (44), Ethan Hiller (0), Logan Heyer (24), Caden Danner (4) and Laird Keeton (2).
Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens



KEY COMBO — At left, Damarius Russell splits the defense during the Section 2AA championship game against Belle Plaine. At right, Damarius and Deron Russell cut down the net.
Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens

Anderson said there is something special about coaching brothers.

"Siblings can say things to each other that coaches and teammates can't say to each other," said Anderson. "That was true with the Willingham boys and it's true with the Russell boys. It's so special when you can do it with a family member. I know how much the Willinghams appreciated it. The

Russells, they're in their prime right now, and they're still young. They're really going to appreciate this as the years go on."

The Bluejays received a tough first-round draw at state against No. 1 seed Breck, but that doesn't faze Anderson or his players.

"We've competed real well with some really top-notch teams," said Anderson. "Our offense has been

pretty good lately. I'd like to see us really put a good performance together and get something done up there."

"We'll have to be locked this week for practice," said Deron Russell. "We need to just go out there, prepare the best we can, and shock the state."

This will be Waseca's 12th appearance in the state boys' bas-

ketball tournament. They also went in 1918, 1919, 1948, 1974, 1975, 1987, 1988, 2002, 2016, 2019 and 2021. The Bluejays were state champions in 1918 and 2021, finishing second in 1919. They reached the section finals in 2020, when the Covid fiasco prompted cancellation of the state tournament.

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