



Compostings

by Al Batt

Grandpa Al crows loudly for Joey Batt

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING
Do you always stir coffee with your right hand?

Yes, I'm right-handed.
Try using a spoon next time.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Deep thoughts occur as I drive past his drive. When the sun rises and sets, it makes my day. Bright sunlight makes me sneeze three times. I have photic sneeze reflex. It's pepper on the sun. Achoo represents the sound of a sneeze and is an acronym for Autosomal Dominant Compelling Helioophthalmic Outburst (ACHOO) Syndrome, characterized by uncontrollable sneezing in response to sudden exposure to bright light, typically intense sunlight.

I exchanged pleasantries with a fellow traveler in Bethany, Missouri. She was from Goshen, Indiana. She asked where I was from. I told her. She said the winter weather here might be too much for her. I told her our weather wasn't as bad as she'd heard, and it was worse than she'd heard. She mulled that over for a minute and left. She was a hurrying Hoosier.

When I was in school, I formed the Al Club. I was in it because I started it. Others shared the lovely name: Routh, Waldhauser, Morstad, Loe, Tappe, Hanson and Berkvam, to name a few. Al Berkvam was a teacher and a coach. I told him he was a member. I was afraid he'd get all weepy on me, but he didn't. Those who had Allen, Allan, Alan or Allyn as middle names were awarded trial memberships. El Kabong was an honorary member. In the "Quick Draw McGraw Show," Quick Draw spent cartoon time as his alter ego, the masked El Kabong, who used a guitar (a Kabonger) to bash bad guys into submission. In the Al Club, there were no dues, no secret handshakes, no mission statement and no meetings. The first rule of Al Club was: there are no rules.

I was in a large store in Missouri because it was handy to buy some drinking water to put in the cooler in my car. I stumbled around a bit before locating my prey. As I grabbed a 12-pack of water, a man thanked me. I replied, "You're welcome," out of habit. His young son told me I was a hero and then they left. I was confused. When I got to my car, I grabbed my hat from my head. It said "Kiester Fire Department" on it. The city was named for state senator and judge Jacob Kiester. The Kiester Fire Department, which is made of heroes, had given me the hat. If I could have found that man and his son, I'd have told them so.

I'VE LEARNED
I use a level only in the evening.

The lady who lived next door to me in the Twin Cities was 80% Irish. Her name was Iris.

Most conspiracy theories are my-thunderstandings.

I like a banana that's a little green and firm. "No brown bananas" could be my shopping motto, although banana bread is great. Why are most banana-flavored things yellow? We don't eat the yellow part.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

What is yellow, delicious and dangerous? Shark-infested lemon meringue pie.

If you've never tried blindfolded archery, you don't know what you're missing.

If he left a voicemail, would you call Johann Sebastian Bach?

I got a job at the chess factory. I work knights.

Welcome to IKEA. Come in and make yourself a seat.

I cut a log in half with my vision. I saw it with my own eyes.

A GRANDPA CROWS

Joey Batt, daughter of Brian and Laura Batt of New Ulm, and a first team All American, was named to the all-tournament team after her Minnesota State Mavericks Women's Basketball Team won the 2024 NCAA DII National Championship with an 89-73 win over Texas Woman's University.

NATURE NOTES
Terri Guillemets wrote, "My favorite weather is bird chirping weather."

Anonymous wrote, "Spring has sprung. The grass is riz; I wonder where the birdies is." The birdies are here or on the way. I believe in the miracle of birds each time one swings into my field of view. If I'm fortunate, I might get to enjoy the terpsichorean talents of sandhill cranes. Reason number 397 why I like birds: just because.

House finches are permanent residents of Minnesota, but some undergo a short-distance migration south. It might be to avoid paying taxes.

If the inside of a house window hosts flies that resemble house flies, they are cluster flies. They don't harm people or property and don't reproduce indoors. They are parasites of earthworms.

Birds need to transfer and preserve heat to eggs and nestlings via brood patches, bare areas of skin on the belly that lose their feathers toward the end of the egg-laying period. Most birds shed automatically, but some pluck their brood patch and use the plucked feathers to make an insulating lining for their nests.

MEETING ADJOURNED
"Kindness is always fashionable, and always welcome."—Amelia Barr.

The anatomical position of their feet...

I am pleased to report I saw a Loon on Waseca's Loon Lake this past week. I know this happens only in spring and fall, during migration, so I was happy to be in the right place at the right time.

I went online to see how far our state bird travels and came across a whole bunch of "I had no idea..." information I now feel compelled to share.

According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website, loons are physically heavier than other birds their size because they have solid bones—unlike most flighted birds, whose bones are hollow. This extra weight is a benefit in a number of ways. For one thing, it causes the loon to sit lower in the water than other birds. This probably helps facilitate that famous element of their life cycle—having their chicks climb on their backs. It also streamlines their dives, allowing them to slip underwater without a splash. One website also mentions it allows them to dive as deeply as 250 feet (another site claims 320 feet) and stay underwater for as long as 20 minutes.

That weight is a disadvantage, though, when it comes to flight: Given the ratio between their body weight and their wing size, they need a "runway" at least 100 feet long,



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

and up to 600 feet, to take off. Because of this, any loon found on land more than a few feet away from water is likely in distress. It sometimes happens that loons in flight will see the reflective surface of a road or parking lot, mistake it for a lake, and come to a landing. Once this has happened, they will not be able to take off. An organization calling itself the "Loon Preservation Committee" out of New Hampshire urges people who come across one or more stranded loons to contact a qualified rescue person or organization.

The anatomical position of their feet is the same type of double-edged sword: Loons are very awkward on land, but impressively efficient and versatile swimmers.

Thanks to their "torpedo-shaped" bodies, Once in the air, they can fly as fast as 75 miles per hour.

Scientists believe loons can live to be up to 30 years old.

Something to brag about: the DNR claims Minnesota has roughly 12,000 loons—more than any other state besides Alaska. There are five types of loons—all of which an Alaska DNR website describes—we Minnesotans see only the "common" breed, which has a black bill.

Speaking of seeing—scientists believe the red eye color is related to giving the loon improved eyesight while underwater. Only mature birds have red eyes, so it may also be useful as the birds select their mates.

On to another iconic topic: vocalizations.

Various sites mention that loon calls fall into four different categories, named "wails," "yodels," "tremolos" and a "hoot." The one most people think of first is the "wail." Ornithologists say that one is simply one loon "looking for" another—"I'm here, where are you?"

"Yodels" are made only by males and are defensive warnings, meant to

drive away an intruder. They are also sometimes simply a message: "This is me. You are in my space. Go elsewhere."

The "tremolo," which some people say sounds like a laugh, is a more energetic defensive call. Websites list a variety of uses, but people I know who are "crazy about loons" tell me it is used in recognition of threats such as an approaching boat or a circling eagle. The "hoot," websites say, is a soft, more intimate sound used to communicate with hatchlings.

Loon vocalizations are a particularly deep "rabbit hole," so if you want to know more, feel free to spend some time on the web.

Websites suggest the main reasons young chicks ride on a parent's back is to help regulate their body temperature, and to protect them from predators, including turtles and large fish, which might come up from underneath. The more recently they have hatched, apparently, the more time they are likely to spend riding. One parent serves as a floating island while the other dives to find food and feed the young.

I hope, like me, you were fascinated by some of this information. I have always been fascinated by loons. Now I have come to appreciate them even more.

I didn't get *the* job, but I did get a job

What's up gang? It has been quite a time in Amelia's life - ooh, it's a doozy. Keep reading for all the juicy gossip and details of how things go for a 20-year-old college student.

Well, first off, I applied for a promotion at work (the college newspaper, the Minnesota Daily) and through a two-month-long process, I learned a lot about the workings of the Daily. But all that came to a crashing halt last Thursday.

As usual, I am exaggerating, but the core fact is undeniable: I was turned down for the job I wanted. I've come to realize that's okay, though, because I got a job I believe will actually be better. Instead of being editor-in-chief, the leader and big decision maker of the Daily, I will be the second-in-command, the managing editor. I just found out today and I don't think I'm supposed to spread the word, so shhhhh.

Anyway, three other editor-in-chief candidates and I turned in our 20-page applications, then met weekly for two months with the manager of the Daily to discuss how the Daily runs and what exactly the position requires. At the end of those two months, we presented our strate-



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

gic plans and ideas to the entire MNDaily staff; the staff responded to a survey evaluating how well we each did, and those results were sent to the Minnesota Daily board.

Two weeks later, the other candidates and I spent six hours in the office, taking our turns giving presentations and being interviewed by the MNDaily Board. Definitely not nerve-wracking at all. The worst part was, we had to wait in the office for over an hour before we were brought down to hear the final decision at 11:30 p.m.

While I did not get "the" position, I am actually really excited with this new position. I get the leadership aspects I was hoping for without all the pressure of making the final decisions. I sat down with the new edi-

tor-in-chief today; immediately after he offered me the position and I accepted, he went on to say, "Great, now here's the list of things we already have to do." So I whipped out my notebook and got to note taking.

I would like to pause and say thank you to everyone who supported me through this. My parents, family, friends, and most of all, Eli, who gave me a wonderful letter of recommendation and ended up talking on the phone with my professor for 45 minutes (which is a crazy thought to me: my two worlds collided).

So I got that going for me. In other news - remember that guy I told you guys I had a crush on? Well, we are officially dating now. Also, I don't know if it is appropriate for me to be

telling the entirety of Waseca County my dating life, but it's news in my life, so you're reading about it. I mean, if you made it this far in my column you obviously don't hate hearing about my life and can handle the randomness of my column writing, so kudos to you. I won't tell you his name or anything like that, but he is super sweet and lets me pick on him, so it's a good time (sorry Grandma, he's not a cowboy like we talked about).

Other gossip includes my roommate/best friend has been having a stressful time in her life which has included demanding classes, fake friends, and stupid men, so I've been trying to help her out.

And not to mention all of my classes are starting to assign final projects now, too, so that's great.

Well folks, that's it. Thank you for reading this week's episode of random thoughts that were in Amelia's head and somehow made it into the newspaper.

My Determination: "Don't be a strong woman. Strong women weather storms. You want to be the storm." - Svetlana, Shameless

What do you ask a congressman?

I had the opportunity to attend a recent fundraiser in Waseca for Congressman Brad Finstad, our local representative in the United State House of Representatives.

The most surprising part, for me, were the people I spoke with while in attendance. One attendee, a Pioneer reader, gave me a hug and started crying. She said some kind words about my work with my two newspapers.

The moment was deeply moving for me.

Numerous other people shared kind words. I never tire of hearing compliments about the newspaper. They reinforce the value of my hard work and dedication.

I love what I do. It's important and gives my life meaning.

Politics, outside of local elections, are something my dad always cautioned the newspaper to stay away from. I generally follow his advice.

This week was a slight exception. I do feel our congressman and senator visiting Waseca are important news stories. These types of visits don't happen every day.

I'm at a point in my life where, politically speaking, I am unsure where I stand. On the one hand, there are elements of both parties' platforms I can agree with. On the other, both have taken some positions I cannot support.

I'm brought back to the history book I read in college. It claimed anyone who uses terms like "left" and "right" does not understand



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

people. I'm grateful to be my own person, not obligated to agree or disagree with a certain set of people simply because I'm "on that team."

During the fundraising event last week, I had the pleasure to talk with a great number of folks prior to the congressman's speech and my time speaking personally with him.

I spoke with two of the four candidates running for the republican nomination to replace soon-to-be retired John Petersburg.

I also spoke with John, who invited me for a tour of the Capitol. I appreciate everything John does for Waseca and told him as much.

What little I've learned about politics so far is that I don't much enjoy candidates belittling their opponents. Naturally people will disagree, but complaining and name calling, in my opinion, reflect badly on the person throwing the mud.

There were many, many other people at this fundraiser, too numerous to mention.

A few conversations, however, stand out to me.

Waseca County commissioner

Doug Christopherson was there; I asked him about the congressman's speech. His response was likely based on his experiences as an elected official. "It's difficult to approach all of these issues and ever expect one person to change them when they require much more."

One of my favorite sayings proclaims "A problem well stated is the first action required for solving it."

The congressman's speech was good. After listening to him, I can easily understand why he is our representative. He has strong values and convictions, is a farmer, and has strong faith in God. Numerous statements he made about how "politicians in Washington need to be adults" resonated. He talked about the "instant gratification" people have access to today. And much, much more.

Regarding my opportunity to speak with him personally, I wish we would have had longer together.

Prior to our interview, I had sent out a request to about 150 different local leaders and businesses requesting their sugges-

tions regarding questions for the congressman. I felt compelled, after reading through nearly 100 replies, to simply ask about the most-suggested topics: farming, health care, immigration, emergency services and taxes.

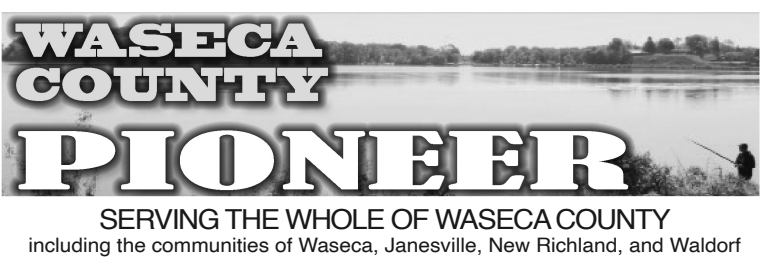
I had been sent some very specific suggestions about an amazingly wide array of issues. Some addressed internet access, home schooling regulations, and very specific elements of health care including the worker shortage and the ability of Medicare to cover certain hearing aid brands. The list goes on and on.

Whenever I speak to local representatives—and I've spoken with most of our local state senators and house members—I tell them my biggest concern is caring for our aging population. The shortage of healthcare workers will only be exacerbated in the coming years as demand grows.

The congressman agreed this is a problem, although neither he, nor really any federal bill I am aware of, offer any solutions.

Representative Peggy Bennett had a good response when I asked her about it last summer. I'm hopefully optimistic and I do believe Minnesota will fare better than other states as the need continues to grow.

"If all printers were determined not to print anything till they were sure it would offend nobody, there would be very little printed." Benjamin Franklin



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GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$59 Per Year, Waseca County Residents
\$69 State of Minnesota • \$79 Outside Minnesota

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Kiss the pig



Waseca Intermediate School participated in food awareness month in March. Their goal was to raise awareness for hunger through a “kiss the pig event.” The students “voted” for staff members by contributing money; “winners” were introduced to a young pig. Student contributions came to a total of \$975.37, all of which was donated to the Waseca Area Food Shelf.

A different kind of graduation

Perkins, Nusbaum complete drug court program

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

“It was forced,” said Steele Waseca Drug Court graduate Eric Perkins. “But thank God it was.” On March 29, Waseca area residents Perkins and Dan Nusbaum met the requirements to complete the drug court regimen and move forward without the frequent meetings and expectations the program imposes.

Their graduation took place at the end of a regularly scheduled weekly court session in the Waseca County courthouse. District Court Judge Carol Hanks presided over the meeting, holding conversations with each of the 12 or so participants in attendance. Also present were representatives of the county probation, court services, and law enforcement staff.

Early in the session, Waseca County Attorney Rachel Cornelius gave a brief explanation of the program, stating “Drug Court is not a free ride.” Her summary explained eligible “repeat offenders” who have “been in and out of the justice system” because of addiction to drugs, alcohol, or both, are offered a reduction in their sentences as long as they agree to meet program requirements. Among those are treatment for their addictions; payment of court fees and fines along with any missed child support payments or other financial obligations; attending group support sessions similar to Alcoholics Anonymous; getting and keeping a job; earning a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED); acquiring a driver license; and complying with a schedule of random testing to detect use of drugs or alcohol.

Information available online about the program states the minimum time length for completion of the five-phase program is 18 months.

Cornelius’ statement also announced that Nusbaum and Perkins are graduates number 103 and 104 from the local program, which has been in place since 2014.

As part of the ceremony, both graduates presented a letter to Judge Hanks. Each thanked the court and law enforcement representatives who oversaw their participation in



Area residents Dan Nusbaum (left) and Eric Perkins, receive congratulations from Waseca County District Court Judge Carol Hanks as they graduate from the Waseca County “Drug Court” program.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

the drug court program.

Nusbaum said that, prior to his entry in the program, “I fell completely apart.” His advice was that anyone in a similar position should, “Join! Get in drug court, and listen.”

Perkins stated his choice for “drinking too much and driving under the influence” is what put him into the desperate condition which led to his participation in the program. “I hated the beginning part,” he admitted regarding the structure and many expectations drug court imposes. “It was hard, but it gave me the tools I needed to succeed.”

“It took 18 months of drug court to fix me,” said Nusbaum. “I’m going to stay working, stay active in Alcoholics Anonymous, and be a good grandfather to my grandchildren.”

Graduates received a certificate, a commemorative drug court coin which says “Where treatment and justice meet” on one

“It took 18 months of drug court to fix me. I’m going to stay working, stay active in Alcoholics Anonymous, and be a good grandfather to my grandchildren.”

— Dan Nusbaum

side and “Change your thinking, change your life” on the other. They were also presented with a letter of congratulations from United States Senator Amy Klobuchar.

Hippity Hoppity



Miss Janesville and her attendants “hopped to it” at Trinity Lutheran School and Janesville-Wal-dorf-Pemberton schools’ Easter egg hunts last month.



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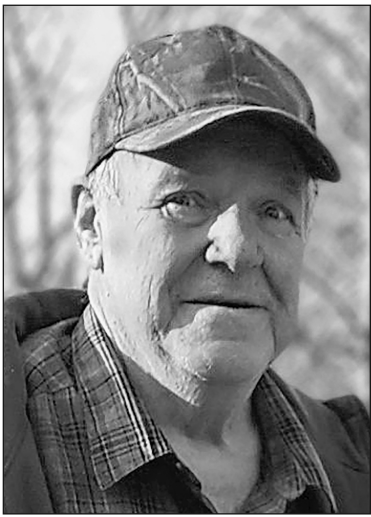
OBITUARIES

Dale Norbert Feser

DALE NORBERT FESER, 68 of Waseca, passed away on Monday, March 25, 2024, at his home.

Born on January 30, 1956, in Denison, Iowa, he was the son of John and Elizabeth "Betty" (Schneider) Feser. He attended Harlan High School in Iowa, graduating in 1974. Dale worked for General Electric in Carroll, Iowa, for 10 years before moving to Waseca where he was employed with Cinch, formerly the E.F. Johnson Co., for 36 years. Dale was united in marriage to Lanae Kletscher on August 25, 2001, in the backyard of their Waseca home. Together they went on many fishing adventures, morel hunts, ice cream dates, drives around the countryside and up North. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends around the bonfire, doing projects around the house, turkey hunting, whittling diamond willow, and grilling and smoking meats. He especially enjoyed time with his grandson. He was a quiet man who will be greatly missed.

He is survived by his wife, Lanae of Waseca; daughter, Tara (Andrew) Jones of Elko New Market; and grandson, Bode Jones. He is also survived by siblings, Mary Ann Anastasi of Defiance, IA, Gary (Becky) Feser of Irwin, IA, and Tom Feser of Dennison, IA;



Dale Feser

brothers and sisters-in-law, Doug (Twilia) Kletscher of Westbrook, Audrey (Randy) Helbling of Faribault, Brian (Vicki) Kletscher of Lamberton, Monica (Tom) Davison of Waseca, and Brad (Joanne) Kletscher of Woodbury; many nieces and nephews; stepfamily from Lakeland, FL; and many loving family and friends. He was preceded in death by his mother and stepfather, Ray Henkelman; father, brother-in-law, Denny Anastasi; and father-in-law and mother-in-law, Elvern and Arlene Kletscher.

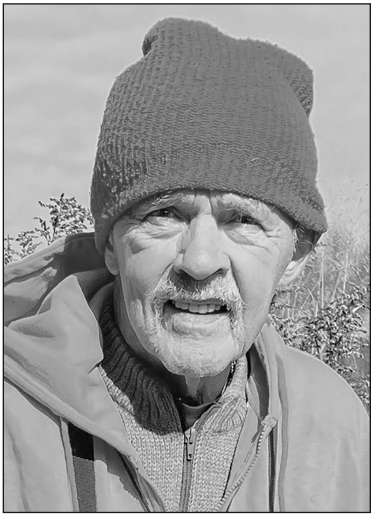
A visitation celebrating Dale's life will be held on Saturday, April 6, 2024, from 1-4 PM at the State Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca.

Bruce Allen Wilker

BRUCE ALLEN WILKER, age 77, of New Richland, died on Sunday, March 31, 2024, at the Benedictine Living Community in Owatonna.

Born on January 5, 1947, in Waseca, he was the son of Harvey and Charlene (Pachl) Wilker. Bruce attended Waseca Public Schools, graduating with the class of 1965. Following his education, he enlisted in the United States Navy, honorably serving his country from 1966 - 1969. Bruce was united in marriage to Virginia Fell in 1966, and later divorced. Throughout his life, Bruce worked at Brown Printing for many years before running a pallet business. He loved cars, racing, and there was nothing he couldn't build or devise. Bruce was an avid outdoorsman, hunter, and fisherman. He was a member of the American Legion Post 228, Dark House Association and Ducks Unlimited.

Bruce is survived by his children: Jeremy Wilker of Golden Valley and his children: Beatrix and Ari Wilker; Jenny (Tiffany Thompson) Evans of San Diego, CA and her daughter, Isabella Evans; and Chase Wilker of Waseca and his children: Wyatt Devans, Madison and Harper Wilker and Adlee Ziemke; siblings: Jim (Sharon) Wilker of New Richland, Sue (Paul Zim-



Bruce Wilker

prich) Wilker of Elysian, Sherry (Frank) Haney of Kabetogama, Cindy (Kevin) Dickie of Waseca, and Shelly (Bruce) Miller of Waseca; many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friend.

He is preceded in death by his parents; and son, Christopher Wilker.

A Gathering of Family and Friends will be from 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM on Saturday, April 13, 2024, concluding with a prayer service and military honors all at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. A Celebration of Life hosted by Bruce's family will follow at the Waseca American Legion Post 228.

DSOFuneral.com



More than 135 third-graders from Hartley Elementary, TEAM Academy and Sacred Heart Elementary were in attendance for "Ag in the Classroom" last Wednesday. Pictured are some of the participants. Pioneer photos by Tristan Gehring

Ag in the third grade classroom

By TRISTAN GEHRING
Staff Writer

Waseca's third-graders from Hartley Elementary, TEAM Academy, and Sacred Heart School gathered at Hartley Elementary on March 27 for "Ag in the Classroom," an event coordinated by local farmer Vicky Singledstad to teach children about Waseca's agriculture businesses. Around 135 third-graders attended, as well as representatives from Farm Bureau and visitors. Four farmers came to share information about their work: groups of third-graders rotated among their stations spending 25-30 minutes with each farmer. Each gave the students a hands-on experience, as well as answering their questions following the presentation.

Megan (Eldeen) Steffl, was accompanied by Waseca County Dairy Princesses McKenna Eichhorn and Katy Eldeen for her presentation. Steffl is a former resident of Waseca, and now runs a dairy operation in Brown County. Students watched a video showing a child their age explaining some things about dairy farming; the video was followed by a verbal "quiz." Students also got a close look at examples of feed given to cattle at various ages. Following the presentation, the third-graders got the chance to pet Lucy, a 10-day-old calf Steffl had brought.

Sharing information about pork farming was Todd Selvik, of Waseca

County's Selvik Farms. Selvik explained the growth of pigs, which typically weigh 3 pounds or less at birth. Selvik said he buys his pigs when they weigh 12 to 15 pounds; two to three weeks later, they will have doubled in size. They are sent to market weighing 280-300 pounds. Selvik farms, like most pork operations, repeats this cycle twice yearly. This year, he told the third-graders, he's seen about 1,200 pigs. He also told the classes some "fun facts" about pig farming in the state of Minnesota - specifically, Minnesota is the second-highest producer of pork products in the United States, and every pig farm in Minnesota is family-owned. Selvik's presentation featured a table full of non-food products made from pork - items such as dynamite, chalk, and rubber gloves. Though, to the students' apparent disappointment, there was no dynamite.

Teaching students about sheep farming were Gary and Tina Schoenfeld, with their daughters Kaitlyn, Natalie, and Isabel, who live south of Waseca. They currently have 65 ewes and 66 lambs with 23 ewes yet to lamb. They explained they first started raising sheep in 2015 so that their daughters could show them at fairs. Each sheep produces 8-10 pounds of wool yearly. The Schoenfelds also shared some examples of products made from sheep - includ-



ing baseballs and tennis balls, art brushes, cosmetics, and more. They allowed students to see examples of the feed they give to their sheep, and students once again got to see the animals face-to-face as the Schoenfelds allowed them to spend time with two of their bottle-fed lambs.

The fourth station at Hartley Elementary was staffed by Leon Schoenrock of New Richland, who raises corn and soybeans. He taught the children about the differences between the sweet corn we eat and "dent corn," which he said is what

most of the corn grown in this area is, explaining it is used primarily for animal feed and corn flour. He explained the life cycle of the corn plants, relating it to significant times in the students' year. He said he'd be planting soon, and by the time the students were out of school the corn would still be less than a foot tall; yet, by fair time in Waseca, the corn would be several feet tall. Harvest time, he explained, would be between back-to-school and Halloween's trick-or-treating.



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Karryn Fette is crowned Grand Marshal of the Irish American Club celebration held in Waseca on March 16. Pioneer photo by Rachael Jaeger

Fette is honored to be grand marshal

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Janesville area resident Karryn Fette, 53, says she will remember March 16, 2024 as one of the two best days of her life. She was delighted to learn during this year's Irish American Club celebrations that she had been named Grand Marshal for the yearly St. Patrick's day observance. The other "best day" was in March of 1987, when she was chosen to be Miss Irish Rose for the year.

"When Faith Ryan called me about being the Grand Marshal, I was excited," Fette said, the joy evident in her voice. "It warmed my heart. I was grateful for the good wishes and support of all the people who were there."

Ryan was head of the Irish Club of Southern Minnesota for many years.

"I know she has her talents in other areas," Fette said of Ryan. "I believe that girl can do all."

The title brings special meaning for her, Fette said, because recent health difficulties with heart failure and Parkinson's disease have been limiting her opportunities to get out and be among people. "When someone says they wish they were Irish, [I tell them] they already are because of association," Fette stated. "Nobody would tell you that you're not a part of this. You're still part of the community."

Fette's story mirrors many of the circumstances traditionally associated with the Irish. For one, she mentions how people of Irish heritage acknowledge the hardships their people and country of origin have experienced. Right along with that, though, she points out she appreciates how the Irish know how to have fun when they come together.

As for her, Fette says the difficulties she has faced over time have helped her become compassionate and open. She offers the example of having asthma from a young age, back in a time when society was more rigid. She remembers being expected to complete all the same activities and physical challenges as her classmates—including a yearly 600-yard dash. "Every year I pushed myself to do that," Fette remembered. "And every year my parents would have to come in and take me to the emergency room." She also shared she tried out for cheerleading but her coach told her that was "for the misfits."

Perhaps because of her difficulties, Fette recalled, "The other kids didn't like me, and my parents told me I was paranoid." She clarified, though, that she never told them what was going on, so they had no information to form a more sound understanding. Fette revealed she never said anything because she feared the bullying would grow worse if the perpetrators were punished.

Of feeling like an "outsider" all through her childhood, Fette observed, "I do feel like that shaped me as an adult."

Her first marriage was to a man she described as "extremely abusive."

"[It was] because he liked me," Fette said. "He was the first person who ever liked me in high school. He had some pretty scary attributes, but I thought, being the compassionate person I am, I could change him."

By the fourth year of their marriage, however, she no longer saw that as a possibility.

Fette expressed she feels very happy to have found Jason, her husband who has loved and cared for her in many ways. For example, as her health troubles have caused her to spend more and more time at

"I got to go on a parade, learned the Queen's ways, and got as sunburned as all can be."

— Karryn Fette

home, Jason has encouraged her to get out, even if it's only for a car ride.

"He's my rock," Fette said.

Of the compassion she has acquired, Fette said it was bolstered by her career as a peer support specialist from July 2016 to September 2022. In her first position, she worked in downtown Minneapolis with People, Inc., for about a year until she transferred to Olmsted County as a peer support specialist on the Active Community Treatment (ACT) team. She returned to Mankato and worked for Human Services, Inc. (HSI) as a program supervisor for in-home clients for 2.5 years until she was diagnosed with Stage Three heart failure.

Her job was to work with people overcoming mental health challenges as they reintegrated back into society. She helped them create and follow personal budgets while also increasing their organizational skills. While because of her health, she has been unable to continue her career, several clients keep in touch with her. One of her clients was a sixteen-year-old girl who had cerebral palsy. Her parents told Fette that when she came home, there wasn't a day when she wasn't smiling.

"There is not one day that goes by that I want to do something," Fette said. "I miss working with people. I felt a lot of pride in what I did."

Fette expressed how much she has missed being part of a community; she said being selected as Grand Marshal has helped her feel like she is included again.

Being selected as Miss Irish Rose in the 1980s was also a powerfully positive experience.

"It was the greatest summer of my life!" Fette recalled enthusiastically. "I got to go on a parade, learned the Queen's ways, and got as sunburned as all can be. I matched my red dress by the time the parade was over—I remember being very thirsty!"

When Fette received the Grand Marshal title in March, lifelong friend Carol Jewison told her she had a lot of confidence to do what she did. Since it was also Jewison who told her about the Irish Rose pageant back in the 80s, Fette expressed how much gratitude she felt she owed Jewison: "She will always be a special lady to me," Fette said.

What she appreciates most about the Irish Club and the heritage that goes along with it is that everyone is included. She offers the example of her father, Paul Kubista, of fully Bohemian heritage, who married her mother, Mary, who is Irish. Even though that was "unheard of" at the time, the Irish still accepted her dad into their clan.

On top of it, her parents, Paul and Mary Kubista, were an Emerald Isle couple in 2019.

Of being grand marshal in 2024, Fette said, "It was a huge honor and I'll never forget it."

"Yes, we've had hard things happen in our lives, but we can take one day and celebrate who we are."

One of few farmers in congress

MN's 1st congressional district representative in the United States House

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Congressman Brad Finstad, 47, his wife, Jackie, and their seven children operate a family-owned, fourth-generation farm about 15 minutes outside New Ulm. Like most farms in southern Minnesota, the operation grows corn and soybeans. The family also owns a soil laboratory which employs about 50 people.

"I like to joke that I was involved in precision ag before it was sexy and cool," Finstad said during a fundraising event held in Waseca last week. "I have bruises and calluses to prove it."

Finstad graduated from high school in New Ulm, then went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural education from the University of Minnesota.

"Nothing I experienced growing up pushed me away from farming," Finstad said. "Everything pulled me in. It is a connection to the land knowing I was working on the same ground my grandparents had farmed."

Finstad said he learned from his parents' work ethic, common sense, problem solving, value of faith, and value of family.

"As a farmer, you can be a welder, a chief financial officer, a chief executive officer, a janitor and a veterinarian all by lunchtime," Finstad joked. "That drew me in."

In addition to his continued association with the family farm, Finstad worked for the Minnesota Farm Bureau association, working his way to becoming an area director for the organization. He served on Governor Tim Pawlenty's Rural Health Advisory Committee; Pawlenty was in office from 2003 to 2011. Finstad also became an agricultural policy advisor to U.S. Representative Mark Kennedy, who held office from 2005 to 2007.

"When I was in the statehouse, I did a lot of work around agriculture and small business," Finstad said. "I would say one of the bigger pieces of legislation I worked on in my state

service was the Positive Alternatives Act. It really gave an opportunity, a life-affirming opportunity for families in need, in crisis."

The Positive Alternatives Act (2005) created a grant program within the Minnesota Department of Health for life-affirming organizations offering support to pregnant women. Under its terms, \$3.357 million is now available annually through a competitive grant application process.

From 2008 to 2017, Finstad was chief operating officer for the Center for Rural Policy and Development, a nonprofit policy research organization based in St. Peter. In 2017 President Donald Trump appointed Finstad as the USDA Rural Development director for Minnesota where he served until shortly after Trump left office in 2021.

Finstad next took a short-term position as interim executive director for the Minnesota Turkey Growers Association, helping run the organization until a long-term director was found in 2022.

When Jim Hagedorn, who had been Minnesota's first congressional district representative since 2019, died of cancer in 2022 while in office, a special election chose Finstad to complete his term. Finstad was reelected a few months later, and is currently serving the remainder of that term.

Minnesota's First Congressional district

"We have 21 counties from Wisconsin to South Dakota," Finstad said. "And we have some counties that have more pigs than people."

Along with that, "We have Olmsted County, which is one of the most highly educated counties in the country," Finstad continued. "And so we have some unique issue sets. We have a strong agra base stronghold in this district."



Finstad

"I like to joke that I was involved in precision ag before it was sexy and cool."

—Congressman Brad Finstad

Finstad said his seat in Congress doesn't belong to a politician or party, but to the people of southern Minnesota.

"It belongs to each and every one of you. And so for that, I need to make sure I'm just working hard every day, to listen and to hear what's on your mind, to know what the needs are of your community and the Southern Minnesota community as a whole."

Today

Finstad currently serves on Congress's Agriculture and Armed Services committees.

Finstad is one of, what he claims, are five real farmers in Congress.

"And I make sure I play that card every day that I can," he said. "When I hear policymakers and politicians and activists try to tell us how we should farm, I like to educate them on how we actually do farm, the reality versus the perception."

When it comes to our nation's defense, Finstad describes himself as a "Reagan republican."

"I think that we have peace in our world through our strength; God willing we never have to use that strength," Finstad continued. "I feel like, as a country and from a national defense standpoint, we have weakened in the last 25 years."

"We are starting to see that play out on the global stage," he said. "Russia doesn't invade Ukraine... Hamas does not try to annihilate the Jewish population of Israel if they fear the strength of the United States. It has made us vulnerable."

Finstad said he continues to worry about the United States's place in the world. He referenced an "aggressive China right now looking at Taiwan... How do we help our allies?"

"Serving on the Armed Services Committee I think about the military, and I think about some of the wars or

■ Finstad

from Page 1

cated about 15 minutes from New Ulm where he, his wife Jackie, and their seven children farm corn and soybeans. He and his family also own a soil laboratory which employs about 50 people.

Finstad currently serves on two congressional committees, Agriculture and Armed Services. He also chairs an agriculture sub-committee dealing with foreign trade, horticulture, foreign agriculture, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as "food stamps").

Agriculture/2024 Farm Bill

"As a farmer—I'm one of five real farmers who serve in Congress—I make sure I play that card every day I can," Finstad said. "When I hear policymakers, politicians and activists try to tell us how we should farm, I like to educate them on how we actually do farm, the reality versus the perception."

With the current farm bill set to expire in September, Finstad said a topic weighing on farmers' minds right now is a potential new five year program, a \$1.6 trillion farm bill, of which \$1.2 trillion is nutrition.

Finstad observed that more than 82% of the farm bill comes through his sub-committee.

"My philosophy has been pretty simple, and I hope it's the Southern Minnesota philosophy that you all ascribe to," Finstad explained. "Our program should be all about giving people a hand up, not just a handout."

"Each and every one of you would give the shirt off your back to help your neighbor in need," Finstad told those in the room. "And our programs should reflect that. But they should be focused on that neighbor in need, not the neighbor in want, not the neighbor who maybe just doesn't want to work. It should be the neighbor in need. And that's what this program should be targeted to."

Finstad said he predicts the bill will make it through the House Agriculture committee in four to five weeks.

"We live in a very uncertain time in regards to the input side of things," Finstad said. "In farming we've seen two years of decrease of farm income, and that's not sustainable. We need to do whatever we can to pro-



Congressman Brad Finstad, right, listens as attendees share their thoughts and concerns.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

vide security and risk management tools. The farm bill offers that."

Finstad told those present he will do everything he can to make sure the bill gets passed.

Divisiveness, Immigration, Spending, House Speaker Mike Johnson

Finstad was asked how he plans to deal with the divisiveness in Washington, D.C.

"I think it's all of us," Finstad answered. "Congress is a reflection of who we are as a country right now. We are an emotional, high-strung country. We just need more adults in the room who are willing to make decisions that really have an impact on the next generation, rather than what gets us through the next election."

"I think more people in this country need to realize we should wear the sweatshirts that have 'USA,' not an R or not a D on them," Finstad continued. "That doesn't mean you give up on your principles. That doesn't mean you can't be conservative and common sense minded. It just means you've got to put our country first. We need more of it."

Finstad highlighted having worked on numerous bills with democrats, including state congresswoman Angie Craig.

Other questions Finstad fielded included the shortage of healthcare workers in nursing homes, the Republican Speaker of the House's leadership, and the controversial immigration bill which failed to pass the senate earlier this year.

Regarding the immigration bill, Finstad said its proposals didn't really fix the problem. He stated it still allowed nearly 5,000 illegal en-

trances into the country each day.

"Let's be crystal clear, we passed an immigration bill in the House ten months ago, so I never had a chance to vote on [the senate version of the bill]," Finstad explained. "What we did in the House is, we were pretty clear we wanted a common sense solution.... Build a wall or have a secure border. You have a border with a wall and a door, that door gets open. That's immigration. Immigration is something you and I should be able to explain to our kids in five minutes."

The congressman was asked whether he's optimistic about the speaker of the house, Mike Johnson's leadership.

"I will tell you that we appear to be functionally dysfunctional—that appearance is probably reality," Finstad answered. "We are in a very tight majority in the United States House, and we have to acknowledge the fact that we are one half of one third of government right now. The democrats have control of the senate, they have control of the presidency. We need more adults in the room, not less. Speaker Mike Johnson is an adult."

Finstad said Johnson is a good man, and even if he doesn't agree with the speaker all the time, that's okay.

"We have segments within our parties that want to throw snowballs at each other," Finstad said. "That gets in the way of actually looking outward, because you're so busy looking inward, and we're dealing with that right now in the Republican Party."

Finstad also addressed the \$1.2

conflicts that we've been involved in, for right or for wrong, for the last 30 years," he continued. "We've been involved in a fight in the Middle East against an opponent that had J-B Weld and duct tape keeping their military together and you look at our potential adversaries in the future. For the next 30 years, it's going to be very high tech."

Finstad explained why this matters for southern Minnesota. A company in Winona, which he recently toured, produces \$10 million a year in carbon fiber products used to line exhaust systems for rockets and rocket ships. In Mankato, diesel generator manufacturers are making products that go on United States aircraft carriers.

"And the list goes on and on," Finstad said. "We have a lot of job providers and job opportunities in southern Minnesota that really can help on the innovation front with our defense."

In congress, Finstad argues the Prove it Act is a meaningful piece of legislation currently getting traction. "[The bill] is centered around trying to make sure the executive branch, all three branches of government, are working in a co-equal way. The Prove It Act is really saying, 'All right, when you write those rules and regulations, if there is a financial implication outside of what was intended by Congress, you need to come back to Congress and show us and, and make sure that we have the opportunity then to fine tune it.'

"And that's really some of the basic things that you see trickle in and out of our government, our policy, and our politics right now," Finstad concluded. "We have to push each other to dig in and become more intellectually deep on the issues that matter."

In conclusion

"I would just close with this," Finstad said. "Not to oversimplify the challenges of our time, but I tell you this. My biggest fear right now in our country is that we have shattered the moral compass that has guided us, and we no longer believe God is the author of The One Truth. If we don't believe that, then we all ascribe to our own truths. Then who wins in a political environment? Is it your truth versus my truth? You win because you holler louder, you raise more money and beat me in an election? It's unsustainable. And so we have to get back to the idea that there is right and wrong in this country, and that we do have a country based on laws and law and order."

"It's an honor of a lifetime to sit in your seat in Congress and represent you," Finstad concluded. "I will work until the day is done to make sure I do that with honor and in the most noble way I can."

Easter Vigils



During Easter Vigils held the evening of Saturday, March 30, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville and Sacred Heart Church in Waseca, ceremonies reminded those in attendance of God's miraculous powers and asked them to renew the vows made at their baptisms. Pioneer photos by Deb Bently



The Pastor's Column
Sometimes we get in our own way

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

Sometimes everything goes wrong at the same time. I am not complaining, I am just surprised by it. I shouldn't be surprised, but I always am. Life is hard, the things we go through are stressful, and we struggle to trust God's plan.

My hard weeks are sometimes similar to other people's and very different at the same time. We have spent the last 6 weeks walking our way through Lent, Holy Week, and Resurrection Sunday. As a pastor in our community, it is my desire to make this season meaningful, purposeful, and relatable to many people. We plan and prepare sermons and worship experiences that allow people to re-engage in community while calling all of us to a deeper relationship with God.

It is a tough balancing act of planning, prayer, outreach, and love for our community. Then in the midst of planning, life happens. You know what I mean, a car breaks down, it snows keeping family away, someone starts or continues a family fight, or it just doesn't meet expectations. Our best intentions are to worship God through the difficult times, but the distractions of life can hinder us and become a barrier to worship, growth, and faith.

Hebrews 12:1-3 calls us to focus on God and His work of the cross.

1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 Let us fix

our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Sometimes it is our own choices that hinder us from a deeper relationship with God, this "sin that so easily entangles" needs to be confessed and turned over to God. Other times we carry the burdens of worry, developing a faith in God's plan will bring us closer to Him and help us to "throw off everything that hinders." Still there are times when we work really hard at getting it just right, and we realize we aren't running "the race marked out for us."

We have been called to fix our eyes upon Jesus, fully and completely. He took joy in His work of salvation, how are we to respond every day? He endured the cross, He accepted the shame of it, and He overcame it for His glory and our good. His call to us is to do the hard work of a deeper relationship with Him.

The problems of this world are myriad and I wish we would never have to go through them. If you are in the midst of a stressful life situation, reach out for prayer and support. If you are questioning God and His plans ask Him to reveal Himself to you in ways that you would understand. In all things though, don't focus in on the problem, turn your eyes to Jesus, don't grow weary or lose heart, ask God to strengthen you.

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CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m. * * *	Sunday worship 10 a.m. * * *	New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * *	* * *
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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 * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Smiths Mill, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship * * *
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m. * * *	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Pamela Jensen Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN Wilton Township Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor Sunday - 10:45 a.m. Worship * * *	NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 404 30 120th St. Waseca Pastor Sarah Krolak 507-234-6463 Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; Second Sunday "Young at heart" Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation * * *
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. * * *	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 Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18 * * *	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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Waseca County History Center

Where'd It Go?

Janesville Argus, March 2, 1961
Former Robert Wiste residence moved to current location, County Rd. 3, Janesville MN.



JANESVILLE'S LITERALLY ON THE MOVE, and for proof we snapped this picture Tuesday of the former Robert Wiste residence being moved down highway No. 14 towards its new home on the Joe Jewison farm 4 miles north of Janesville. Spencer House Movers of Wells were contractors of the job.



Janesville's Literally on the move, and for proof we snapped this picture Tuesday of the former Robert Wiste residence being moved down highway No. 14 towards its new home on the Joe Jewison farm 4 miles north of Janesville. Spencer House Movers of Wells were contractors of the job.

Briefs

Dr. Charles Karuku at Nation's Glory Barn 6 p.m. April 19

Charles Karuku is the Founder and President of International Outreach Church, a growing diverse multi-racial congregation in the Twin Cities. He will be speaking at Nation's Glory Barn at 6 p.m. on Friday, April 19. More information is available by email at thenationsglorybarn@gmail.com.

"How-To Festival" 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, April 27, at Waseca Library

Courses covering 16 "How to" topics will be offered free of charge at the Waseca Library on Saturday, April 27. Each hour, four new topics will be addressed, ranging from first aid to raising chickens. Various courses are intended for participants of various ages, ranging from 6 to adult.

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.

Waseca

25 Years Ago

-Dale M. Schlicht, 54, a Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern (DM&E) railroad employee, died April 2 as a result of an accident in the Waseca switchyard. According to Roy, DM&E Manager of Operations in the Waseca office, Schlicht was working in the railroad switchyard at the time of the accident. Srp said Schlicht "was doing what he always does."

-On March 2, Joyce Wobbrock, a fiscal officer in Waseca County Human Services since April 1997, was notified that she was placed on administrative leave due to questions of employee misconduct and inadequate job performance.

-January 1, 2000, which has turned into Y2K in our collective vernacular, is the date most of us think of when considering the wide range of computer glitches which could occur to disrupt our lives. There are, in fact, 13 Y2K critical dates which are being tested at local banks for Year 2000 compatibility.

50 Years Ago

-Fifteen-year-old Mary Whitaker of Waseca was struck and killed by a northbound train shortly before midnight Saturday night in Otisco. Miss Whitaker and her three companions were on their way back to their car west of the railroad tracks in Otisco when the incident occurred. The youth were apparently running across the tracks in front of the train when Miss Whitaker was struck.

-Timothy Gerald Cutting, 700 10TH St. N.W., Waseca, pleaded guilty to the charge of furnishing liquor to minors in district court Monday afternoon. Cutting appeared before the honorable Judge Urban J. Steimann at a special session of County Court and was fined \$200. Cutting was picked up March 30 in the City of Waseca by Officer Steve Prescher.

-Jerald Gordon Turner of 437 Owns, Mankato, was booked into the Waseca County Jail Monday night for the possession of a large quantity of marijuana. He is scheduled to be arraigned today before Judge John McLoone. The sheriff's office was aided by the Waseca Police Department in the arrest.

75 Years Ago

-A log cabin was a luxury for Louis L. Fretham, now 82, who was born in a cavelike dugout in Isosco township. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Erich Fretham, came to America from Norway in 1862. A thoughtful brother of Erich had a home waiting for them. It was a dugout carved out of a hill side.

-Mrs. Marshall Gove, English war bride, will be back home soon. She will leave here May 1 for Frankfurt, Germany to join her husband who is a Staff Sergeant in an AACS squadron there. Mrs. Gove expects her American citizenship papers in the mail any day.

-Charles H. Suttleif, 43, dropped dead in the yard of his Wilton township farm following a heart attack Wednesday, April 6 at 11 a.m. He had just entered the yard of the farm he owns and rents to Tom McCarthy, 3 miles southeast of Otisco when he suffered the attack.

100 Years Ago

-While bulletins and pamphlets on better farming by the score have been written on the opportunities and benefits of alfalfa, until quite recently little has been known of the uses of sweet clover which heretofore has grown wild and feared and thought for many years as one of our worst weed pests and is rapidly coming to its own as the wonder plant of the present time.

-Gust Glaser of Rost township, marketed 19 head of hogs last Friday the combined weight of which was 5,760 pounds, or an average of a trifle over 303 pounds each, says the Lakefield Standard. These hogs were farrowed in September and October. Mr. Glaser does not have an up-to-date hod house but has used an old building with dirt floor and had to "chink" up the cracks to keep out the draft.

-Minnesota farmers are offering an average of \$38.93 for farm hands working on a monthly basis, according to J.S. Jones, secretary of the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation, who has just completed a state-wide survey. His data shows a general trend toward slightly higher wages in all departments of farm activities.

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New Richland

100 Years Back - 1924

- The Odd Fellows hall was rented last Tuesday evening to Mr. Atalla Abraham of Alden, Minn., who will open a general store in the building some time after the first of April.
- Gardner and J.E. Murtaugh of Albert Lea were here Tuesday and negotiated an arrangement with J.H. Burnes at Beaver Lake which will result in the establishment of a boat livery there this spring.--Ellendale Eagle
- A deal was closed Friday of last week between W.J. Romig, landlord at the Hotel New Richland, and Adam Endres of Kilkenny, whereby the latter will take over the management of the hotel on April 1.
- Misses Edith Bjorklund, Myrtle Johnson, Lilley Rotegard, Margaret McNerny and Julia Keeley, all of the school faculty, spent the week end in the Twin Cities.
- Arthur and Edward Lechner, John Schultz, Eldor Klinger, Jennie and Valin Larson, Herbert Marvey and Florence Bartz were visitors at the Herman Klinger home Saturday evening.
- The Misses Bernice and Della Dinneen, who are nurses at St. Mary's hospital and the Mayo Clinic of Rochester, spent the week end at the home of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Dinneen.
- The Study Club entertained at a five o'clock luncheon Saturday afternoon at the home of Mrs. H.E. Sievert in honor of Mrs. F.D. Brandenburg. Mrs. Brandenburg, who has been president of the Club, left the following day for her new home at Crystal Bay, Lake Minnetonka.

76 Years Back - 1948

- The Arthur Evensons married in the neighborhood of twenty-five years and who moved recently to the T.J. Thompson farm southwest of New Richland are without telephone service for the first time. While they have a promise of a phone soon, they are finding the situation most inconvenient.
- Shirley Kelling, Waseca, an eighth grade student of Sister Malcom at the Sacred Heart parochial school, won first place in the Waseca county spelling contest. She had a score of 106 words right out of 120. Shirley will take part in the Minneapolis Tribune bee April 17.
- Mr. and Mrs. Durwood Fitch, Lylah and Jackie of Ellendale were dinner and supper guests of Mr. and Mrs. Ole Hanson Sunday. In the afternoon they attended the musical concert at the Vista church. Lylah Fitch took part in the program, playing the violin.
- Mr. and Mrs. George Lewer and children of Waseca were Sunday supper guests of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Jacobson. Ruth Ann Lewer remained for a longer visit.
- A group of neighbors and friends gathered at the Myron Miller home Friday evening to help Mrs. Miller celebrate her birthday. Guests present were: Mr. and Mrs. Howard Nelson, Mr. and Mrs. George Huxford, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Huxford and Jerry, Mr. and Mrs. Myron Seward and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Elvon Kamrath and daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. Herman Neitzel.
- George Johnson, who for the last year or more has been employed in the shop of the P&S Electric Service, is opening a shop of his own at his home town of Hartland.

50 Years Back - 1974



New Richland village's new police car is pictured here as Police Officer Leo Nissen backs it out of the garage at the village hall. Decals were put on the doors, rather than painting them as has been done in the past.

- Marti Moen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Cleon Moen of New Richland, has been selected as New Richland's representative for Girls State. Sandy Nelson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bert Nelson of rural New Richland, is her alternate.
- Saturday evening visitors at the Martin Roeker home were Mr. and Mrs. Art Erdman and Marty and Mrs. Alvina Prail of Janesville and Mr. and Mrs. Carl Tesch of New Richland.
- Mrs. Russell Swenson and Mrs. Hannah Espee were last Tuesday afternoon guests at the Wendell Armstrong home in honor of Richard's birthday.
- Earning trophies for the top bridge scores at the American Legion auxiliary luncheon card party were Mrs. Harry Lillesve and Mrs. Cornelius Gulbrandson. Mrs. Clarence Korman and Mrs. Carrell Raymo took home trophies for top score in the pfeffer tournament.
- Over the weekend Steve Weydert, Jim and Randy Knudson attended a Winter Camp in Wisconsin. It was sponsored by the 4-H club.
- Sunday dinner guests at the Harvey Bell home were Mr. and Mrs. Roger Kezzeks and Brian of Minneapolis, Mrs. Esther Overhalt and Helmer Hendrickson of Albert Lea.

25 Years Back - 1999

- A document dating back to March 1, 1862 was found in legal documents belonging to Rudolph Piltingsrud following his death last year by his son, Dale. It was filed in the City of Washington and signed by President Abraham Lincoln.



The Panther girls' basketball team just finished the best season in the history of the sport at NRHEG High School. Members honored at the Winter Athletic Banquet are, front from left: Annie Blumenthal, Amy Kubista, Missy Lonning, Amanda Moxon, Holly Waldhauser, Missy Wayne; back: Kelly Pectorious, Faith VanBockern, Jessica Kubat, Katie Recknor, and Heather Wayne.

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Tough act to follow for boys' track

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The 2024 Waseca High School boys' track and field team has a tough act to follow: its own.

After finishing second in the Big South Conference meet and fourth in Section 1AA last spring, the Bluejays surprised most everyone by bringing home a state championship in June.

The goals, according to eight-year head coach David Abel, are the same as always.

"Our season goals are pretty consistent year in and year out," said Abel. "We expect to compete for the conference championship, qualify for True Team state and move as many athletes on to state as we can."

The Bluejays graduated eight athletes off last year's squad, including some exceptional talent. Kyle Ahlschlager finished eighth at state in the long jump, Eddie Herman eighth in discus. Ahlschlager and Christian Rodriguez were a part of the Bluejays' state champion 4x100 and 4x200 relay teams. Addison Sampson is the school record in the pole vault. Joe Feldkamp was a captain.

The Bluejays return several gifted athletes, including the school's 100-meter record holder Kaeden Johnson, who will play football for the Minnesota Gophers this fall. He was a member of the Bluejays' state championship relays, as was junior Damarius Russell, a three-sport standout.

Also returning for the varsity are seniors Isaac Feldkamp, Andrew Robran, Javonn Rodney, Colton Schroeder and Ethan Stenzel, juniors Micah Allen-Haas, Tristan Godwin and Carson Ohnstad, and sophomores Brady Tlougan, Deron Russell, Will Mansfield, Wyatt Hager and Jett Rohl.

"We have strong senior and junior classes," said Abel. "We have good numbers in our sophomores and freshmen and some 'new-to-track' athletes that we will need to step up and fill some roles for us."

Other varsity hopefuls include senior Gaige Johnson, juniors Pablo Alvarez-Reyes, Nathaniel Andrs, Michaiah Grannis, Brandyn Nascha, Bennett Ludwig, Joe Mixteco, Koltyn Quillen, Miguel Rocha and Cody Weber, sophomores Liam Biddle, Nathan Kaiser, Daniel Sipe, Zane Staloch and Juan Victorino, and freshmen Tovin Grannis, Cash Lynch,

Brady McKenna, James Quade, Owen Rupe, Johah Worke and Sean Noble. The managers are Jordan Johnston, Paige Dufault and Katie Olson.

Abel said the Big South favorites are the usual ones, Fairmont and Marshall, with St. Peter also expected to field a strong squad.

The top teams in Section 1AA include Plainview-Elgin-Miller and Faribault, with Winona, Austin, Red Wing, Stewartville and Kasson-Mantorville also expected to contend.

The Bluejays' strength lies with their 15 returning lettermen, a strong group of sprinters, and discus throwers.

"We have 38 guys out for track, which is a great number," said Abel. "We should be able to find some gems in the group to fill out the needed areas on the team. We need to find some depth in the mid-distance areas, improve in the triple jump, shot put and high jump."

Abel's coaching staff includes WHS



Abel



READY TO COMPETE — Among the returning lettermen for the Waseca boys' track and field team are, front from left: Micah Allen-Hobbs, Wyatt Hager, Jordan Johnston, Tristan Godwin, Bennett Ludwig and Isaac Feldkamp. Back: Ethan Ethan Stenzel, Andrew Robran, William Mansfield, Javonn Rodney, Damarius Russell, Kaeden Johnson and Carson Ohnstad.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

head football coach Brad Wendland, who enters his 18th season working with the throwers, Grant Popp, Saiveon Williamson and Robb Winterfeld.

Waseca High School 2024 Track and Field

March 21 Indoors at MSU-Mankato
March 26 Indoors at MSU-Mankato
April 2 Indoors at MSU-Mankato
April 11 at Mankato West, 4:45

April 18 Waseca Invitational, 4:30
April 26 at Plainview-EM Inv., 4:30
April 30 at St. Charles Inv., 4:30
May 2 at Mankato East Inv., 4 p.m.
May 7 True Team Section at Jordan
May 16 Waseca Invitational, 4:30
May 18 True Team State at Stillwater
May 21 Big South at Fairmont, 4 p.m.
May 30 Section at Faribault
June 1 Section finals at Faribault



UPPER CLASSMEN— Juniors and seniors on the 2024 Waseca High School baseball team include, front from left: Shane Engel-Mueller, Nate Engel-Mueller, Keato Roeker and Max Wirtz. Back: Logan Heyer, Sebastian Teague, Armando Balderas and Colten Ruedy.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Every pitch matters for baseball Bluejays

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Every game is always important in the shortest of all seasons, spring sports.

It's especially true for the 2024 Waseca High School baseball squad.

The Bluejays, according to fourth-year head coach Taylor Phelps, need to capitalize on all their opportunities as they return only two starters.

"We will have to prove ourselves," said Phelps. "Every game is an opportunity and every game matters!"

Last year's Bluejays finished 12-11 overall, 3-10 in the Big South Conference, with their season ending in the section semifinals.

This year's crew is led by a strong senior class that includes

Armando Balderas, Carter Ellis, Shane Engel-Mueller, Nate Engel-Mueller, Logan Heyer, Titus Mokoff, Keaton Roeker, Joshua Teachout, Sebastian Teague and Jacob Thompson.

"These seniors have either put in the time through the program or are athletes from winter and fall sports who are eager to have fun and see success this spring," said Phelps.

Ellis is new to the team and could be a big factor, according to Phelps, who's also expecting key contributions from Balderas, the Engel-Mueller brothers, Roeker and Teague, along with juniors



Phelps

Colten Ruedy and Maxwell Wirtz.

"These seven individuals had significant moments of play last year, and I expect leadership and success from these seven in particular," said Phelps.

The other juniors are David Hodgkins and Aiden Shoemaker. Phelps said Thompson, Mokoff and Teachout could have an impact.

Exactly who plays where is to be decided.

"With many spots left open from last year, players will need to be flexible on positions and my lineup/roster will be fluid for a good portion of the year," explained Phelps. "It may change quite quickly."

Phelps and assistant coaches Bob Lucken and Austin Nagel are hoping the Bluejays can build off the

success in recent years.

"The team is looking to continue the recent success we have seen," said Phelps.

2024 Waseca High School Baseball

April 8 vs. LCWM, 5 p.m.
April 9 at Tri-City United, 5 p.m.
April 12 at Sibley East, 5:30
April 16 vs. New Ulm, 5:30
April 18 vs. NRHEG, 5 p.m.
April 23 at St. Peter, 5:30
April 26 at Fairmont, 4 p.m.
April 30 at New Ulm, 5:30
May 2 vs. WEM, 5:30
May 4 at DH Worthington, 11 a.m.
May 7 vs. St. Peter, 4 p.m.
May 9 at Blooming Prairie, 4:30
May 11 DH vs. Marshall, 11 a.m.
May 13 at LeSueur-Henderson, 5 p.m.
May 14 vs. Maple River, 5:30
May 16 at Belle Plaine, 5 p.m.
May 21 vs. Triton, 5 p.m.
May 23 Section at high seed, 5 p.m.
May 28 Section at high seed, 5 p.m.
May 30 Section, TBD
June 1,4,6 Section at LS-H, TBD

New coach takes over for WHS softball

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The 2024 season is a good news, bad news situation for the Waseca High School softball team.

First, the bad. The Bluejays graduated five starters, three of which were named all-conference or honorable mention all-conference.

The good news? First-year head coach Amanda Sommers has plenty of players from which to complete her lineup.

The Bluejays, 7-8 overall and 2-8 in the Big South Conference Big Division, will certainly miss graduated seniors Haylee Sommers, Riley Ruedy and Hannah Thursdale.

Returning varsity athletes include seniors Cameron Stagman (3B/C), McKyla Hasselquist

(P/CF) and Ali Mumme (CF/1B), junior Siri Kuhns (1B/2B) and sophomore Lauren Grant (C/OF/2B).

Incoming athletes include juniors Lily Owens, Ellie Hoehn and Kenzie Sanborg, and sophomores Chloe Roemhildt, Ellery Waldron, Brooke Bartelt, Hannah Teague and Madison Roessler.

"We are a young team this year," said Coach Sommers. "We are rebuilding this year and look forward to our underclassmen gaining a wealth of experience and building the culture of our program. We're expecting many juniors and sophomores to step into key roles on the team this year, and provide leadership to our underclassmen."

As far as team strengths, Sommers said, "The first few weeks of practice have shown we

have a lot of hard working players who are putting in their time and want to improve and be their best."

The coaches biggest concern is lack of varsity experience.

"We need more time on the field," she said.

The Bluejays' key to success?

"Underclassmen stepping into important leadership roles on the team, and building a positive culture in our program," said Sommers, who's assisted by Abbe Hoehn and Molly Schmidt.

Sommers said New Ulm and St. Peter are the preseason favorites to win the Big South, while the top



Sommers

teams in Section 2AA figure to be Belle Plaine and LeSueur-Henderson.

2024 Waseca High School Softball

April 4 vs. Blue Earth Area, 5:30
April 9 at Medford, 5:30
April 11 at St. Peter, 5:30
April 12 at St. Clair, 4:30
April 16 vs. New Ulm, 5:30
April 19 at NRHEG, 4:30
April 20 DH vs. Worthington, 11 a.m.
April 23 vs. St. Peter, 5:30
April 25 at Fairmont, 4:30
May 2 at New Ulm, 5:30
May 4 DH vs. Marshall, 11 a.m.
May 6 at Jordan, 4:30
May 7 vs. WEM, 5:30
May 9 vs. Sibley East, 4:30
May 14 at Maple River, 4:30
May 16 vs. Tri-City United, 5:30
May 17 vs. Rochester Lourdes, 4:30
May 21 Section, TBD, 5 p.m.
May 23 Section, TBD, 5 p.m.
May 25,28,30 Section at Mankato



SOFTBALL LEADERS — Among the juniors and seniors on the 2024 Waseca High School softball team include, front from left: Kenzie Sanborg, Lily Owens and Siri Kuhns. Back: McKyla Hasselquist and Alison Mumme.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

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Juniors pace WHS track girls

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

There aren't many seniors, and the overall numbers are down, but Waseca High School girls' track and field coach David Abel still expects an exciting spring from the Bluejays.

"We have a very strong and deep junior class," said Abel, whose 2023 squad graduated six seniors while finishing second in the Big South Conference and fourth in Section 1AA.

Returning varsity athletes are seniors Sarah Haley and Evelyn O'Brien, juniors Callie Dufault, Brooklyn Flatau, Sierra Krause, Gaby Lopez, Cami Marquez, Neveah Sampson and Kalea Sartori, sophomore Vivian Mader, freshman Stella Omvedt, and eighth-graders Maren Schimming and Reese Rodriguez.

The rest of the roster includes juniors Bella Wikan and Niya Williams, sophomores Kelsey Draeger and Jenna Hudak, ninth-graders Reese Ludwig, Noelle Drake, Lauren Holmseth, Angelica Lopez, Violet Rohwer, Savannah Vagts and Katelyn Weber, and eighth-grader Reese Rodriguez.

The Bluejays graduated seniors Sam Azure, Ella

Dufault, Thyme Lang, Camille Ring and Kya Hoof. Dufault and Ring were state entrants.

While Abel expects a strong performance by the junior class, he's hoping some of the younger kids emerge as leaders.

"We have good numbers in our junior and freshman groups," he said. "We will see what they can do."

As for goals, Abel said the Bluejays always look for consistency.

Fairmont, Marshall and Belle Plaine figure to be the teams to beat in the Big South, while Winona Red Wing, Kasson-Mantorville, Byron, Faribault and Northfield look to be the class of Section 1AA.

"Our 11 returning letterwinners should anchor this group," said Abel. "We have 24 girls out for track, which is a low number for us. It will be tough, but we hope to be able to find some gems in the group to fill the needed areas on the team. We need to find some depth in the mid-distance areas, improve in the triple jump and high jump, find some sprint depth, and find some vaulters. We will need some girls to step and create the depth we will need to really score well as a team."



TRACK GIRLS — Among returning letterwinners for the Waseca girls' track and field team are, front from left: Vivian Mader, Gabby Lopez, Callie Dufault, Stella Omvedt and Maren Schimming. Back: Brooklyn Flatau, Sierra Krause, Kalea Sartori, Evelyn O'Brien and Sarah Haley.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens



TENNIS BOYS — Members of the 2024 Waseca High School boys' golf team include, front from left: Otto Schoenrock, Oliver Rohwer and Amaan Bahtti. Back: Henry Huttemeier, Dominic Grunzke, Tyler Jellum and Ahmed Farooq.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Collins returns as WHS boys' tennis coach

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

When it comes to high school head coaches, Kyle Collins is an exception. He has stuck with it through thick and thin.

Granted, it's been more thin than thick in recent years, but section championships and state tournament entries are not totally foreign to Collins-coached teams. It's just that it's been a while.

"It would be nice," said Collins. "To return to the section finals one day!"

Regardless, Collins returns for his 22nd season as head coach of the Waseca High School boys' tennis team, which he's guided to a record of 189-141 in that tenure.

The Bluejays aer coming off a season which they finished 7-8, including 1-2 in Big South Conference East matches. Their best finish in recent years was 9-7 in 2019.

Returning players from last year are seniors Oliver Rohwer and

Dominic Grunzke, junior Tyler Jellum, freshmen Henry Huttemieir and Otto Schoenrock, and eighth-grader Armaan Bhatti.

Huttemieir had a record of 9-8 at No. 2 and 3 singles, Schoenrock was 9-7 at No. 4 singles and Rohwer 8-8 at No. 1 doubles last spring. Bhatti was 7-8 at No. 3 doubles and Jellum was 3-13 at No. 1 singles.

The rest of the roster includes seniors Ahmed Farooq and Eddy Gallegos, juniors Aiden Groskreutz, Liam Hagre, Lucas McQuery, Brayden Hoof and Tyler Hanson, sophomores Allan Kopetzki and Bryghton Rugger, freshman Dawson Goodlander, eighth-graders Kyler Carlson and Joe Calhoun, and seventh-graders Keenan Collins, Carson True, Nicholas Nelson and Oliver Rugroden.

Key graduates from last year's squad were Jacari Jellum, J.D. Delgado, Jan Schoen and Corbin Connors. Delgado was 10-4 at No.

2 doubles, Jellum 8-8 at No. 1 doubles, Schoen 9-4 at No. 2 doubles, Connors 7-8 at No. 3 doubles.

If things go as hoped and planned, Collins feels the Bluejays can contend in the Big South East. Section 1A, according to Collins, is always tough.

"We hope our strength is in the singles lineup, as we graduated four out of our six doubles players from last season," said Collins. "We have a few spots to firm up on doubles and hopefully strengthen our singles."

The key to success for the Bluejays is, according to Collins, battling under all conditions.

"The guys are going to have to battle each and every match," said the coach. The Bluejays started the season on a positive note, winning the St. Peter Doubles Tournament with a 4-1 victory over St. Peter and a 3-2 win over St. James.

Jellum and Huttemieir were at No. 1 doubles. Also teaming were Grunzke and Rohwer, Schoenrock



Collins

and Hanson, Farooq and Allen Kopetzki, and Bhatti and Keenan Collins.

The Bluejays' home opener against Faribault was postponed by weather.

Collins is assisted by Trish Mercier.

Waseca High School 2024 Boys' Tennis
March 30 at Gustavus-Adolphus
April 2 vs. Faribault, 4:30
April 11 at St. James, 4:30
April 12 vs. Blue Earth Area, 4:30
April 16 at Redwood Valley, 4:30
April 18 at Fairmont, 4:30
April 22 vs. New Prague, 4:30
April 23 at Rochester Lourdes, 4:30
April 25 vs. Schaeffer Academy, 4:30
April 30 at New Ulm, 4:30
May 2 vs. Worthington, 4:30
May 4 at Stewartville, 9 a.m.
May 7 vs. St. Peter, 4:30
May 9 at Lake City, 4:30
May 16 Section at high seed
May 21 Section at Rochester, 8 a.m.
May 23 Section at Rochester, 8 a.m.
May 28 Section at Rochester, 8 a.m.

Hammond steps in for golfers

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

According to Ted Hammond, there's a very good reason he's the new head golf coach at Waseca High School.

"I took the head job because they couldn't find one," said Hammond, who's had a long and distinguished career coaching Waseca and JWP sports.

In all, Hammond has been a head coach for 13 seasons.

His overall record?

"Not important," said Hammond.

More importantly, he's coached 10 golfers who have reached the state tournament.

Hammond takes over a WHS boys' squad with several returnees, including seniors Charlie Cariveau, Preston Miller and Cody Vagts, and juniors Hunter Anderson and Reed Anderson.

The captains are Vagts, Miller and Cariveau.

Also vying for varsity positions are freshmen Gavin Anderson, Alex Breck, Lucas Danner, Brody Dufault, Gavin Hinton, Braiden Nlson, Isaac Pfeiffer, Karter Selvik, Owen Weiseler, Izaac Kehkler and Owen Wilder.

"Cody Vagts and Hunter Anderson will be counted on for low scoring," said Hammond. "Our key to success would be 'pack scoring,' which means we have to score in the mid 40s. We would like to finish in the top half of the conference and get two individuals to state."

The WHS girls' team is not as established but still has high hopes.

"We only have nine out and are real young," said Hammond.

The lone senior is captain Emma Keith, who last year missed

advancing to the second round of section by one stroke.

"We are hoping to go to state this year," said Hammond.

Also returning are juniors Lexi Kanewischer and her cousin Mia Kanewischer, sophomore Madison Rasche and ninth-graders Alli Hoban, Abigail Lapidis, McKenna Mortenson, Josie Ross and Amilyha Lynch.

"We are quite young and look to improve as the season progresses," said Hammond. "We would like to finish in the middle of the conference and have each girl break 50 during the season. The key to success will be the improvement of the younger girls."

Hammond is assisted by second-year coach Maren Peterson.

Waseca High School 2024 Boys' Golf
April 9 vs. NRHEG, 4 p.m.
April 12 vs. Faribault, 4 p.m.



GOLF GIRLS — Members of the 2024 Waseca High School girls' golf team include, front from left: McKenna Mortensen, Elli Hoban and Josie Ross. Back: Amilya Lynch, Madison Rasche and Abby Lapidis.

April 15 vs. Owatonna, 4:30
April 22 at Minnlowa Golf Course, 4 p.m.
April 23 vs. United South Central, 4:30
April 29 Waseca Invitational, 4 p.m.
April 30 at Shoreland CC, 2 p.m.
May 6 at Jackson CC, 2 p.m.
May 13 Big So. at Dakotah R.e GC, 9 a.m.
May 14 at Tri-City United Inv., 2 p.m.
May 16 at NRHEG, 4:30
May 21 at LeSueur-Henderson, 1 p.m.
May 28 Section at New Prague, 9 a.m.



GOLF BOYS — Members of the 2024 Waseca High School boys' golf team include, from left: Izaac Kehler, Preston Miller and Reed Anderson.

June 4 Section finals at New Prague, 9 a.m.

Waseca High School 2024 Girls' Golf
April 9 vs. NRHEG, 4 p.m.
April 11 vs. Faribault, 4 p.m.
April 16 Inv. at Shoreland, CC, 2 p.m.
April 18 at Mankato East, 4 p.m.
April 19 at Mankato North Links, 2:30
April 22 at Shoreland CC, 4 p.m.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

April 23 vs. United South Central, 4:30
April 29 at Fairmont, 4 p.m.
May 6 at New Ulm CC, 2 p.m.
May 13 Big So. at Dacotah Ridge, 1:30
May 14 at Tri-City United Inv., 2 p.m.
May 16 at NRHEG, 4:30
May 21 at LeSueur-Henderson, 4 p.m.
May 29 Section at New Prague, 1 p.m.
June 4 Section finals at New Prague, 1 p.m.



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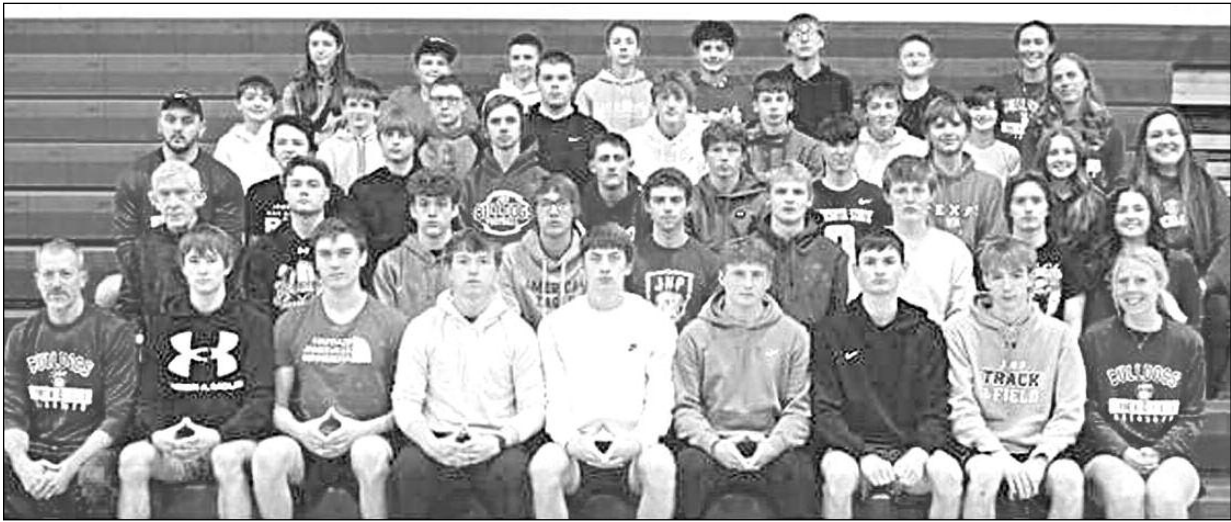
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TRACK BOYS — The 2024 JWP High School boys' track and field team. Front from left: coach Tim Johnson, Isaac Gahlon, Luke Cahill, Alex James, Ryan Krobach, Dylan McWaters, Memphis James, Kaden Baker and coach Liz Kvebak. Row two: coach John Kaplan, Ethan Born, Dylan Gustafson, Carter Hoehn, Gavin Marinenko, Isaiah Berndt, Eric Daschner, Shane Witts and coach Emily Olson. Row three: coach Sam Schruin, Charles Adams, Carson Schultz, Tyler Johnson, Noah Brock-Oxner, Daulton Bauer, Elo Flo Sola, Alexander Kleve, coach Alison Olson and coach Kenzie Miller. Row four: Evan Mulcahey, Karson Middlestaedt, Jacoby Harris, Jason Wheelock, Gavin Bauer, Tyson Krohbach, Samuel Hoehn, Brennan Welvaert and coach Andrea Kronbach. Back: coach Ashlynn Wendt, Syler Kelley, Gavinn Kaiser, Preston Johnson, Christian Reyes, Leighlan Harris, Jacob Passow and coach Katie Cahill.

Photos courtesy of Janesville Journal



TRACK GIRLS — The 2024 JWP High School girls' track and field team. Front from left: coach Sam Schruin, Brielle Bure, Onikia Herme, Kwynn Krause, Aubrey Adams, Sarah Bulman, Lauren White, Caitlin Kleve and coach Liz Kvebak. Row two: coach John Kaplan, Paige Walz, Katie Olson, Neveah Weimert, Autumn Thissen, Camilia Mantorsi, Ariana Aguilar and coach Emily Olson. Row three: coach Tim Johnson, Madeline Hoehn, Claire Walz, Lilly Strauss, Madyn Holland, Presley James, Ava Appel, Alison Olson and Kenzie Miller. Row four: Ashlynn Wendt, Makaela Westphal, Clare Groh, Kayleigh Donner, Anne Adams, Ava Krause, MaKenzie Westphal, coach Andrea Kronbach and coach Katie Cahill. Back: Ashlyn Wolff, Madilyn Gustafson and Kiaya Hoehn.

Highly anticipated season arrives for JWP track and field

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Head coach Sam Schruin and his Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton track and field athletes have looked forward to this season for, oh, almost a year or so.

The Bulldogs had a breakthrough season in Schruin's first year as head coach, with the girls winning the conference and sub-section meets and the boys also claiming the sub-section crown.

Girls returning from last season are MaKenzie Westphal, Kwynn Krause, Katelyn Olson, Neveah Weimert, Ariana Aguilar, Ava Appel, Brielle Bure, Onikia Herme, Madline Hoehn, Madyn

Holland, Presley James, Lilly Strauss, Claire Walz, Paige Walz, Aubrey Weedman, Caitlin Kleve and Lauren White.

Back for the boys are Tyson Johnson, Gavin Weedman, Chuck Adams, Daulton Bauer, Noah Brock-Oxner, Isaiah Berndt, Luke Cahill, Eric Daschner, Isaac Gahlon, Derek Gustafson, Alexander Kleve, Shane Witts, Kaden Baker, Alex James, Ryan Kronbach, Dylan Mcwaters, Preston Johnson, Syler Kelley, Karson Mittelstaedt, Teagan Mulder, Jacob Passow, Christian Reyes, Leighlan Harris and Jacoby Harris.

State entrants last year included

Kronbach, Strauss, Katelyn Olson and Weimert.

Several athletes were named all-conference or honorable mention and many individuals received academic all-conference honors.

The biggest losses among last year's seniors, according to Schruin, are state entrants Ashlin Keyes and Raquel Fischer, Madison Kunst, and Michael Ravenhorst, Zach Groll, Jack Cahill and Nick Johnson.

Schruin said he hopes to develop champions and graduate leaders.

"A strength for our team is our culture, as cliché as it may sound," said Schruin. "It's more like a family where everyone feels welcome

and is pushed to become their best self. Another strength would be strong leadership from our upper class. They do a great job of teaching and mentoring our younger athletes and make the program very inclusive. Everyone is very driven and has a strong work ethic, willing to be coached and bring a positive attitude every day. I would say a team strength would be the coaching staff as well. We have a very knowledgeable group of individuals who are committed to the social, emotional, and physical growth of the athletes."

Schruin has a large coaching staff that includes assistants John Kaplan, Liz Gerry Kvebak, Scott

Thompson, Andrea Kronbach and Emily Olsen. Volunteer assists are Tim Johnson, Mike Cahill, Katie Cahill and Kenzie Miller. Ella Stenger, Ashlynn Wendt and Ali Olson are the managers.

The key to success?

"Get better every day," said Schruin.

The coach shared a couple quotes that are said almost every day in practice and have become the team's mottos: "It's a beautiful day to be a track athlete," and "Whether you think you can, or can't, you're right," attributed to Henry Ford.

"I'm really proud of everyone and all the hard work they put in,"

said Schruin. "I'm really thankful for the support from the community, administration, school staff, coaches, etc! Everyone is a part of this program and is a part of the success of the team."

2024 JWP Track and Field
April 4 Indoors at Minn.-Mankato, 5:30
April 9 at Kenyon-Wanamingo, 4:30
April 11 at Tri-City United, 4:15
April 16 at Maple River, 4:30
April 22 at Blooming Prairie, 4:30
April 27 at Lakeville North, 9 a.m.
April 30 JWP Invitational, 4:30
May 2 at Medford, 4:30
May 7 True Team at USC, 2 p.m.
May 11 Conference at Maple River, 10 a.m.
May 14 Jr. High Conf. at JWP, 4:30
May 16 at Waseca, 4:30
May 23 Sub-section at Norwood-YA, TBD
June 1 Section at Mankato West, TBD

Burke takes over as coach of successful JWP golf program

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

There's a new head coach in place, but the expectations remain the same for the Jansville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School golf teams.

Again, the Bulldogs are looking forward to this season.

Head coach Tim Burke takes over a boys' team that won conference and section titles last spring. The girls' team last won a section crown in 2021.

The boys will be led by Logan Thell, who finished among the top 20 in the state tournament the last two years. He's joined by returnees Steven Dimmel, Ryan Kronbach, Carter Miller, Jeffrey Simonson and Alex James.

Leading the girls' squad will be

"The goal is to improve on last year's success."
— Coach Tim Burke

Hope Dimmel, a state tournament participant last year and a member of the Bulldogs' last section championship team.

"The goal is to improve on last year's success, both from an individual and team standpoint," said Burke. "Not that I've had much time when them at this point, but you can feel they have some unfinished business."

Burke said camaraderie and experience are among the strengths for both the boys and girls.

"The majority of the group has been together for a while now and has a lot of the same goals," said

Burke.

The Bulldogs' key to success, according to Burke, is to play their game and not letting the outside noise bother them.

And Burke looks for improvement despite the fact the Bulldogs start the season as the boys' favorites in the Gopher Conference. He does hope to improve overall numbers in the program.

"We are always looking to improve our team numbers," said Burke. "Five of the boys are seniors, and we only have two girls out this year, so it will be critical to



GOLFERS — The 2024 JWP High School golf teams include, front from left: Abby Balzotti, Steven Dimmel, Dylan Hood, John Bublitz and Evan Mulcahey. Back: Hope Dimmel, Logan Thell, Carter Miller, Ryan Krobach, Jeffrey Simonson, Alex James and coach Tim Burke.

Photo courtesy of Janesville Journal

get new recruits in here to have a solid program."

Burke's assistant coach is Mike Gardner.

2024 JWP Golf
April 13 at Oaks Golf Club, 9 a.m.
April 16 at Kenyon CC, 4:30
April 20 at Blooming Prairie, 10 a.m.
April 25 at Riverside GC, 4:30
April 26 JWP Triangular, 1:30

May 2 at Triton, 4:30
May 9 at Mankato No. Links, 10 a.m.
May 13 at Austin CC, 10 a.m.
May 20 at Waseca, 12 noon
May 23 at Waseca, 10 a.m.

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Baseball Bulldogs return lots of lettermen

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Fifth-year Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton baseball coach Cory Jewison should have no problem filling out the lineup card this spring.

The Bulldogs are loaded with ballplayers, with no less than 12 returning lettermen.

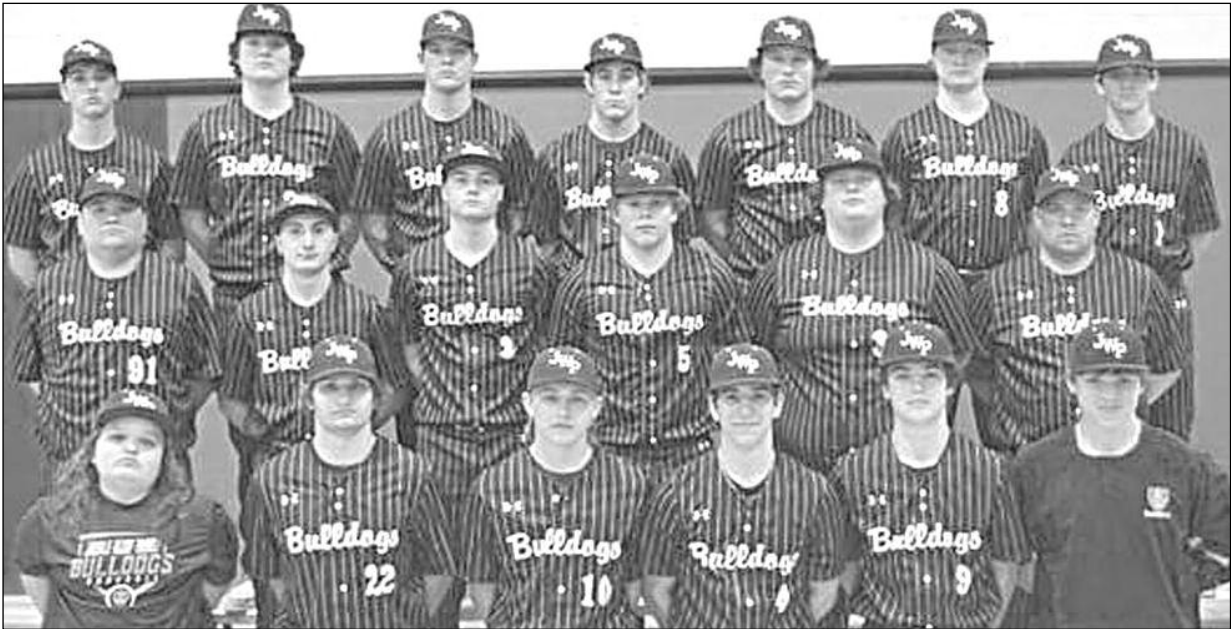
"This group has lots of leadership and starters returning," said Jewison. "Five of the players will have a minimum of two or more years with varsity experience. I think this will give us a great opportunity to have a successful season."

The returnees include seniors Gavin Krause, Nolan Morsching, Ty Melchior, Josh Bengtson, Cole Blomstrom, Cole Gartner, Austin Carda, Austin Quast and Drake Hershberger, juniors Ethan Born and Lucas Morsching, and sophomore Chase Gerdts.

Melchior and Krause are three-year letterwinners. Morshing, Bengston and Blomstrom have earned two varsity letters. Melchior was namd third team all-conference and Gerdts received honorable mention.

The most important players to replace from last season, according to Jewison, are Ian Barnes, Kelton Erler and Ryan Hanson.

"Ian was one of our starting pitchers and our second basemen," said Jewison. "He gave us great leadership and was a solid contact hitter. Kelton will be a very big loss. He was our starting catcher for three years. We will miss his leadership on the field with defense and his offense. He was a huge contributor and he led our team in



BASEBALL — The 2024 JWP High School baseball team. Front from left: manager Adarius Radunz, Jaxon Miller, Chase Gerdts, Lucas Morsching, Carter Quast and manager Avery Fall. Row two: coach Cory Jewison, Cole Blomstrom, Ethan Born, Peyton O'Brien, Max Davis and assistant coach Tyler Fellows. Back: Austin Carda, Austin Quast, Cole Gartner, Gavin Krause, Tyl Melchoir, Josh Benston and Nolan Morsching. Not pictured: Drake Hershberger.

Photo courtesy of Janesville Journal

batting average, hits, walks, and stolen bases. He was also great behind the plate on blocking and calling the game. Ryan was our closer and played the corners of the field. Ryan was one of our power hitters and led our team in slugging percentage, doubles, and triples. He was also second in RBIs."

What does Jewison expect from the 2024 Bulldogs?

"Our seniors lead by example, and hopefully they continue being great role models for the underclassmen," said the coach. "We have a core group of returning starters in many positions, strong leadership by our senior class, and our offense should be pretty good. Having 12 home games should help as well."

The key to success?

"One very important key to our success is how well the boys overcome adversity," said Jewison. "That has always been this particular group's downfall. However, I feel like they are going to over-

come that because of their leadership and development. We need to take one game at a time and worry about every last pitch until the last out of the game. Each pitch will be very important."

Jewison sees the Gopher Conference as tough but very winnable.

"It's always so unpredictable," he said. "I think all the teams have a strong chance of competing for the conference title."

Defending champion Lyle/Austin Pacelli is the clear favorite in Section 1A.

Included on the schedule are a pair of Northern Minnesota teams, International Falls and Cromwell-Wright.

"I am very excited to play Cromwell-Wright and International Falls," said Jewison. "I think it is fun for the northern teams to come down here and play to get more experience for themselves. I know both Cromwell-Wright and ourselves enjoyed playing against each other."

Jewison, who has a four-year record of 22-31 at JWP, is assisted by Tyler Fellows.

In summary, Jewison said, "I am very excited about this season. This group has been an integral part of our baseball program since I started coaching at JWP. This is a special group and they deserve so much success and need to be rewarded with their hard work the past four years."

2024 JWP Baseball	
April 1 at Mankato Loyola,	5:30
April 2 vs. St. Clair,	4:30
April 4 vs. Blooming Prairie,	4:30
April 5 at Madelia,	4:30
April 8 at Hayfield,	4:30
April 11 vs. WEM,	4:30
April 16 at Maple River,	4:30
April 18 vs. Kenyon-wanamingo,	4:30
April 19 vs. International Falls,	4:30
April 20 vs. Cromwell-Wright,	1:30
April 25 vs. Medford,	4:30
April 26 vs. Martin Luther,	4:30
April 27 at Heritage Christian,	11 a.m.
April 29 at NRHEG,	4:30
May 2 vs. Randolph,	4:30
May 3 vs. Alden-Conger/GE,	4:30
May 9 at Triton,	4:30
May 10 at Goodhue,	4 p.m.
May 13 vs. United South Central,	4:30
May 17 vs. New Ulm Cathedral,	5 p.m.

New coach leads softball Panthers

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

A new head coach takes over for the NRHEG softball team this spring and, like her Panther counterpart in baseball, she's no stranger to the system.

NRHEG graduate Kayley Camerer, who not long ago was hitting home runs for the Panthers, is now in charge of the program, assisted by 18th-year coach Nole Jensen and third-year coach Cloie Arndt, another former Panther.

Last year's squad, the final season for longtime NRHEG coach Wendy Schultz, finished 9-8 overall and 6-6 for fifth in the Gopher Conference. They lost their sub-section opener.

The Panthers graduated three players off that squad in Sydney Schultz, Bree Ihrke and Trinity Smith-Vulcan.

Schultz, daughter of Wendy Schultz, was all-conference, all-section and honorable mention all-

state. She and Ihrke were the captains.

Plenty of players return including seniors Payton Bunn (OF), Faith Nielsen (P/IF), Preslie Nielsen (IF), Erin Peterson (utility), Tayler Schmidt (IF) and Isabel Stadheim (OF), juniors Aryana Howe (U) and Aspyr Stenzel (IF), sophomores Kyera Eustice (OF), Adalyn Stadheim (C/IF), Chloe Stork (U), Tatum Thibodeau (U), Sam Possin (U) and Claire Robran (OF), and freshmen infielders Olivia Berg, Izley Boerner and Faith Phillips.

Coach Camerer expects a big season from the Panthers' sister tandems, Faith and Preslie Nielsen and Izzy and Addy Stadheim. Peterson or Berg could also have a breakthrough season.

"We hope to keep improving and getting better throughout the entire season, and be playing our best softball around playoff time," said Camerer. "Our team strengths



RETURNEES — Returning letterwinners for the NRHEG High School softball team are, from left, Aryanna Howe, Faith Nielsen, Isabel Stadheim, Adalyn Stadheim and Preslie Nielsen.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

include being hard workers with a great team chemistry, great attitudes, and our speed. One thing we need to work on is getting experience and growing confidence levels for players who are stepping into starting varsity spots."

Returning state entrants Randolph and Bethlehem Academy are the preseason favorites in the Gopher Conference.

The top teams in Section 2A, according to Camerer, are New Ulm, Belle Plaine and returning state entrant LeSueur-Henderson.

NRHEG 2024 Softball Schedule	
April 2 at Blue Earth Area,	5 p.m.
April 4 at Randolph,	4:30
April 5 at Austin Packer Dome,	7 p.m.
April 8 vs. Southland,	4:30
April 11 at United South Central,	4:30
April 12 vs. Blooming Prairie,	4:30
April 15 at Granada-H-EC/ML,	4:30
April 18 vs. Bethlehem Academy,	4:30
April 19 vs. Waseca,	4:30
April 22 at Blooming Prairie,	4:30
April 25 vs. Hayfield,	4:30
April 26 at Caswell Park,	TBD
April 27 at Caswell Park,	TBD
April 29 at JWP,	4:30
May 2 vs. Kenyon-Wanamingo,	4:30
May 7 vs. United South Central,	4:30
May 9 at Maple River,	4:30
May 10 vs. Tri-City United,	4:30
May 13 vs. Medford,	4:30
May 16 vs. WEM,	4:30



SOFTBALL — The 2024 JWP High School softball team. Front from left: Hudson Miller, Raylin Blasing, Victoria Blomstrom, Ellah Oliver, Lily Quast and manager Lydia Sack. Row two: coach Nicci Malecha, Rykleigh Donner, Lilly Ewert, Kayle Langford, assistant coach Jace Emory and assistant coach Addison Miller.

Photo courtesy of Janesville Journal

New JWP softball coach seeks success

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

JWP High School girls' sports teams have made some great progress in recent years. Nikki Malecha hopes to do it with the softball team.

Malecha is in her first year at JWP and first season as head coach of the softball team, which finished 7-10 overall and 3-8 in the conference last spring.

"I have high expectations that the girls are going to hold themselves to high standards and compete within the conference and the section," said Malecha. "We have a lot of great talent on this team and as long as we connect both offensively and defensively we will be able to compete against any team."

Returning varsity players include senior Lexie Dahlberg, juniors Brielle Dessner, Ellah Oliver, Autumn Thissen and Addison Miller, and sophomores Lily Quast, Brielle James, Victoria Blomstrom, Lilly Ewert and Kayle Langford. Dessner was named to the all-conference team last year while Dahlberg earned honorable mention.

The Bulldogs are looking to replace graduates Isabelle Rider, Vanessa Terbeest and Jessa Westphal. Rider was the starting catcher the last two seasons and Terbest was the starting pitcher last spring, winning the Gopher Conference Sportsmanship Award.

New to the team this year are freshmen Hudson Miller and Raylen Blasing, eighth-grader Ryleigh Donner and junior Sophia Coulsey.

Among the Bulldogs' strengths, according to Malecha, is the fact

many players are back and have prepared during the offseason.

"We are returning many players that have put in the time during the offseason to work on their mechanics," said Malecha. "Defensively, we will be strong. The players have a great bond with each other and I look forward to seeing their skills come out during the game."

The coach's biggest concern is pitching and figuring out who will start at catcher and second base.

"We have a young pitching crew," said Malecha. "However, they have worked hard during the offseason and over the last couple weeks to be ready to go."

The key to success?

"To have fun and compete," said Malecha. "We can't dwell on the little things as I want the girls to focus on one pitch, one out and one inning at a time. This is a group of girls that want consistently and be able to advance their mechanics."

Malecha is assisted by Jeff Simonson on junior varsity and Jace Emory with the junior high.

2024 JWP Softball	
April 2 at St. Clair,	4:30
April 4 at Blooming Prairie,	4:30
April 6 JWP Triangular, noon/4 p.m.	
April 8 vs. Hayfield,	4:30
April 11 at WEM,	4:30
April 16 vs. Maple River,	4:30
April 18 at Kenyon-wanamingo,	4:30
April 19 vs. Cleveland,	4:30
April 23 vs. Blue Earth Area,	4:30
April 25 at Medford,	4:30
April 26 at Nicollet,	4:30
April 29 vs. NRHEG,	4:30
April 30 vs. Granada-Huntley-EC,	4:30
May 2 at Randolph,	4:30
May 9 vs. Triton,	4:30
May 10 at New Ulm Cathedral,	5 p.m.
May 13 at United South Central,	4:30
May 16 vs. Bethlehem Academy,	4:30
May 17 at Glenville-Emmons,	4:30

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Ferber back for 34th year as head coach

By JIM LUTGENS Sports Editor

During the last three-plus decades, a lot of coaches have come and gone for New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva athletic teams. Except for one sport: track and field.

Duey Ferber enters his 34th season at the helm of the program. He remains as optimistic as ever, and he has some good reasons for that optimism with state entrants returning for both the boys and girls.

The boys' team will be led by Will Tuttle, who reached state in the 110-meter high hurdles and 300 intermediate hurdles, placing seventh in the highs. The Panthers' Most Valuable award winner for track and field last spring, Tuttle is one of three captains.

The other captains are Levin Kitzer, voted Most Valuable in track events last year, and Parker Bunn.

Also returning for the boys are Harbor Cromwell, Charlie Fuller, Devon Nelson, Wyatt Tuttle and Brendan Schmidt.

Key athletes graduating off last year's squad include Aidan Deyle, Lucas Hanna, Makota Misgen, Conner Nelson and Sawyer Prigge. Hanna finished seventh in discus at the state meet. Deyle was fourth in the 110 high hurdles at section.

According to Coach Ferber, the Panthers should have solid performers in most every event.

"We have some good athletes in most areas," said Ferber. "We should be strong in our hurdle events and sprint relays. Our long distance has some good younger athletes as well as some upper-classmen. Our jumps have some new athletes to hopefully score some points. We have most of our bases covered."

On the other side of the coin, Ferber said, "We need more events where we can score multiple people."

Avoiding injury is crucial for the Panthers.

"We need to keep everyone healthy and able to compete in all the meets," said Ferber. "We need to work hard and get some of our new members some experience in their events."

Ferber, who guided the Panthers to Gopher Conference championships in 2018 and 2019, said Maple River returns some very good athletes and are the preseason conference favorites. He expects Belle Plaine and Jordan to have solid squads in Section 2A.

"We have a lot of good hard

working kids that love to be out there competing and trying to get better," summarized Ferber. "Our upper-classmen do a good job of showing the younger athletes how to work hard to succeed."

Expected to lead the NRHEG girls is another hurdler, Evelyn Nydegger, who finishd 13th at state in both the 100 highs and 300 intermediates. Her teammates voted her Most Valuable last spring. She's a captain this year.

Another returning state performer is Quinn VanMaldeghe, who had the 15th-best 800 time in the state meet. She was NRHEG's Most Valuable in track events.

The Panthers also return Gabby Schlaak, Anika Ladlie, Chloe Riewer, Malonna Wilson, Paige Johnson, Keira Lenort, Sierra Misgen, Clara Buendorf and Holly Bartness. Schlaak was the squad's Most Improved athlete last year.

Key graduates last year were hurdler Olivia Kofstad and all-around performer Josie Strom.

The Panthers have finished second in the Gopher Conference meet the past two seasons, edged by two points last year. Ferber isn't ruling out a championship season for the NRHEG girls.

"I think the Gopher Conference is wide open this year," said Ferber, who expects JWP and Maple River to field solid squads.

Ferber figures the Panthers will be strong in the hurdles, jumps and middle distance events.

His biggest concern is numbers.

"We need to have more than one person score in each event," he said.

The key to success?

"Hard work and grit," said Ferber, who likes what he's seen from the Panthers' newcomers.

"We have some new athletes that are looking good on our team," he said. "This group of seventh-graders is going to be good for years to come."

Ferber is assisted by Larry Nydegger, Bailie Thom, Kim Johnson and Brian Belcourt.



Ferber

Familiar face leads baseball Panthers

By JIM LUTGENS Sports Editor

A new head coach is in place for the NRHEG High School baseball team in 2024, but he's no stranger to the Panthers.

Shawn Larson, longtime assistant baseball coach and the varsity wrestling coach, will lead NRHEG on the diamond last spring.

While the Panthers have no seniors on their roster, a number of key players are back from last spring's team that finished 10-2 for second in the Gopher Conference and 11-5 overall.

Larson looks for good things from juniors Alden Dobberstein (P/SS/2B), Carter Martens (P/3B) and Jace Ihrke (P/C), and sophomore Jared Lee (P/1B/OF).

The other juniors are Aaden Hanna (P/OF), Mayson Patten (3B), Aidan Schlaak (P/IF), Seth Staloch (SS/2B) and Brock Ziemke (1B).

Varsity sophomores includ Isaac Bauleke (OF), Jordan Brouwers (OF/3B), Wyatt Larson (P/C/3B), Deven Parpart (P/IF/OF) and Owen Wayne (P/2B/SS).

"It is unknown at this time if we will be using any freshmen," said Coach Larson. "Alden Dobberstein, Carter Martens, Jace Ihrke and Jared Lee are all varsity returning players

who we expect to stand out on our team this season."

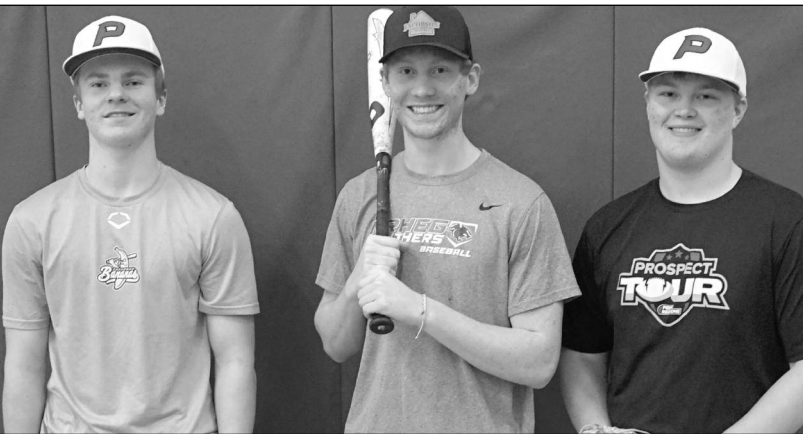
As for new player impact, Larson looks forward to contributions from everyone.

"We have a cast of players that are capable of good things," said Larson. "Look for players like Aidan Schlaak, Wyatt Larson, Owen Wayne, Jordan Brouwers, and Deven Parpart to have good seasons and really help out the Panthers in the 2024 season."

Larson looks for wide-open races for both the Gopher Conference and section championships, and he believes the Panthers can contend.

"We have potential to be competing for both the section and conference title," said Larson. "Our section has several teams that will be contenders for the title. If I had to pick a favorite, I would have to pick Belle Plaine to be the top contender for the section. Our conference is extremely talented this season. United South Central, Maple River, Hayfield, Randolph, and Kenyon-Wanamingo are all teams that can win. Based of of last season, I would say that USC is probably the preseason favorite."

Larson, who replaces Mark Lee as head coach, will be assisted by first-year coach Marcus Fischer and for-



LEADERS — Captains for the 2024 NRHEG High School baseball team are, from left, Jared Lee, Alden Dobberstein and Jace Ihrke. Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

mer NRHEG head coach Jeff Reese.

So who's going to pitch for the 2024 Panthers?

"Jared and Alden will probably be our ringers," said Coach Larson. "Right now I'm looking to not have an ace, but have a crew of people who can pitch. We don't have a lot of arms, but we have arms."

Larson, who recently completed his 20th year with the wrestling team, has been with the baseball program since 2007.

Larson is excited to take over as head baseball coach.

"I'm happy to be in this position," he said. "I think what steered me in this direction is that my son was still playing and there were enough kids on the team that I had coached before that I didn't want to let down. I wanted to have my name in the ring."

NRHEG 2024 Baseball Schedule

April 4 vs. Randolph, 4:30
April 8 at Triton, 4:30
April 9 at Blue Earth Area, 5 p.m.
April 11 vs. United South Central, 4:30
April 12 at Granada-Huntley-EC/ML, 5 p.m.
April 18 at Waseca, 5 p.m.
April 22 vs. Blooming Prairie, 4:30
April 25 at Hayfield, 4:30
April 26 vs. Pine Island, 7 p.m.
April 29 vs. JWP, 4:30
May 2 at Kenyon-Wanamingo, 4:30
May 6 vs. Madelia-Truman, 4:30
May 7 vs. Tri-City United, 5 p.m.
May 9 vs. Maple River, 4:30
May 10 at LCWM, 5 p.m.
May 13 at Medford, 4:30
May 16 at WEM, 4:30

NRHEG golf squads ready to tee it up

By JIM LUTGENS Sports Editor

Not only is everybody back for the NRHEG High School boys' golf team, the Panthers have picked up a player.

Senior Daxter Lee, who's played baseball in the past but can't this spring because of an injury, is out for golf. His impact is yet to be seen, but his presence gives the Panthers one more varsity hopeful.

Carter Schlaak, Shane Hansen and Tyler Kress lettered last year.

The rest of the roster includes Jackson Chrz, Jaylin Raab and Hudson Chrz.

The NRHEG boys finished 5-13 last season, taking sixth in the Gopher Conference and 12th in the sub-section tournament under coach Brad Root, who's in his 35th year at New Richland and 14th season as head golf coach.

"We had a good season last year and the boys got some good experience, so we are pretty well set on five varsity spots," said Root. "We will again have small numbers on the boys side, so someone may emerge as a surprise to help us. We did not have many JV meets last year, so the non-varsity players didn't get much meet experience last year. The varsity boys have pretty good golf skills, but need to work on the mental side of the game, consistency, and course mangement."

The Gopher Conference favorite, according to Root, is Hayfield. He expects Waseca to lead the sub-section.

Meela Budach is the lone returnee for the NRHEG girls, who had a fine season last year while finishing second in the conference and fifth at sub-section. The Panthers were 20-2 for the season, pushing Root's career

mark to 141-50 through 13 seasons.

Root is assisted for both boys and girls by Kara Wilkenson, Kim Olson and Jordan Kindred.

"Course mangement is a huge part of the game as well as becoming strong mentally," said Root. "We need to move from being practice players to tournament players, making sure they are prepared for whatever weather conditions exist, as well as dealing with situations on the course will be a priority. We would like to advance our team to section and get an all-conference selection or two. We have small numbers. All will play varsity. We want them to learn



Root

the game so they can enjoy it throughout their life. As always, we want our student-athletes to enjoy the sport and have fun while at the same time representing our school well."

Root said the NRHEG girls need to be mentally tough and focused.

"We are counting on continued improvement in all our girls," said Root.

NRHEG 2024 Golf Schedule

April 4 at Riverview Golf Course, 4:30
April 9 at Waseca, 4 p.m.
April 18 at Riverview GC, 4:30
April 25 at Dodge Country Club, 4:30
April 26 at JWP Prairie Ridge GC, 1:30
May 2 at USC Oak View GC, 4:30
May 9 Mankato North Links, 10 a.m.
May 13 at Austin CC, 10 a.m.
May 16 vs. Waseca at Riverview, 4:30
May 20 at Waseca, 12 noon
May 23 Conf. at Waseca, 10 a.m.



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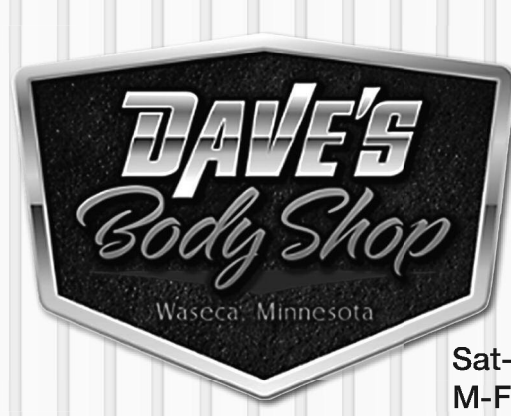
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Ooodles of Noodles



"Ooodles Of Noodles" was the theme at Hartley Elementary for their March Food Drive to support the Waseca Food Shelf. Last week 750 boxes of noodles which weighed in at 639 pounds were delivered to the Waseca Food Shelf to stock the shelves.



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‘It’s hard to see pain on the inside’

Jermiah Miller leads Waseca’s ‘Ruck of Hope’

Annual walk held
on March 30

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

According to a report released by the United State Department of Veterans Affairs in November of 2022, an average of 121 veterans per day committed suicide in 2020. The number is 30 more a day than in 2001, but about 7 fewer than in 2018. This frightening circumstance is hardly talked about in politics or anywhere else outside of a few veterans’ circles. It is taking many lives, especially among veterans aged 18-34. In response, Veteran Jeremiah Miller, 46, who has served military tours in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait, and who is now an owner of Waseca’s 4-Season Apparel and More, helped start “Ruck of Hope,” an event that brings attention to the issue of veteran suicide to Waseca. A “ruck” is a walk or march taken while carrying a weight, often a rucksack to represent the emotional weight of veterans who contemplate suicide. Usually, Miller shared, veterans carry 48 pounds when it comes to their actual ruck march while on tours or missions, but he chooses not to be a stickler since he wants everyone who wants to, to participate. “We wanted to spread awareness about people who served their country and later took their lives because they thought they were alone,” Miller explained. “It is for the families left behind to let them know we care and are here for them with love and support.” Miller said he makes a point of using the word-ing “died by suicide” or “suicided” rather than “committed suicide” because of the stigma attached to it. Some people, for instance, might view suicide as a cowardly act. Maurela, 25, Miller’s daughter, also understands a different perspective because of all the different people she’s talked to over the years. She explained the term “committed suicide” bears some of the same negativity as “committed a crime.” Maurela went on to say that suicide isn’t a crime someone commits since they ended their life on their own terms, which is why, she added, it’s important how someone processes their understanding of suicide. “I think it’s because people can’t see it,” Jaala, 41, Miller’s wife, observed. “But it doesn’t mean it isn’t there.” “Like you can see someone going through cancer because they’re missing their hair,” Maurela agreed, “but it’s hard to see the pain that’s going on inside.” Miller believes that the most important factor in suicide is education and by that, he means “It’s like with anything that is going on in society today, especially with the world, the way it is – we want to educate people and make them understand,” Miller said. “Over time, we’ve gotten more data and we understand more things and so if someone tells me [suicide] is cowardly, I would ask them why – you have to respect their opinion – I don’t want to attack that person but I want to understand why they think how they do.” After listening, Miller added, he has discovered the person he has been having the discussion with often begins to think more deeply about alternate perspectives. “The term can be skewed,” Miller said, “so that’s why we’ve taken it out of our speak.” He noted that the views of various religions often affect people’s thinking. “What I would tell people is that I was raised to believe God is the final judge. When I’m at the Pearly Gates someday, I will answer to him,” Miller said. “It’s not my job to judge.”

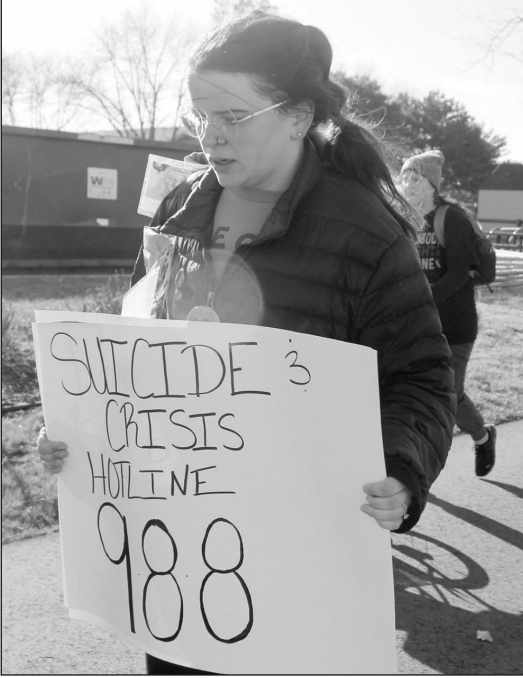


Jeremiah Miller leads the Ruck of Hope group of 25 with his golden poodle, Hope. Below, community members show their support for veterans who have died by suicide. Bottom right Maurela Miller holds a poster for the Suicide and Crisis hotline 988 during the Ruck of Hope march on March 30.

Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger



There have also been other misunderstandings associated with Ruck of Hope. In the past, Waseca residents have mistaken the march as a protest, especially in 2016 when Donald Trump was selected as the Republican candidate for president. Residents saw the marchers and misunderstood their motive. But Miller made it clear that’s not what he was protesting and also clarified that Ruck of Hope is not affiliated with any political group; it’s solely for veterans. “We’re not protesting Trump – we’re protesting suicide!” Miller remembered saying. Even on March 30, certain Waseca residents didn’t understand what Ruck of Hope was all about. Jaala observed Waseca residents waving at them and sometimes stopping them to ask what they were doing. “We’ve had people come up to us and say we haven’t been able to speak about this,” Miller said, commenting that it amazes him how many family members of veterans have opened up to him and his family. Those family members have traveled from as far away as Anoka and Medford to participate in the Ruck of Hope march, but the Miller family also participates in rucks in the metro area that they know about. Others outside of Waseca who participate in the Ruck of Hope march, know about it because of the network the Miller family built in their local community and wider range of veteran communities which include the Mankato, Rochester, and metro areas. “When you start talking to more vets and hanging around the veteran community, you start understanding that this is a big deal,” Miller said. Miller has gotten many of his ideas for Ruck of Hope from the organization “Operation: 23 to 0” and collaborates with them for the event. The Minnesota branch of the organization is based out of Stillwater; its mission is to curb the rates of military suicide and provide resources and networks of support. Along with bearing a US flag and flags of their



various organizations, members of the ruck are encouraged to wear a chain of pictures with them on the journey. The photos are of the local veterans and military members who have died by suicide during the past few years. In the last few years, Miller mentioned that others have donated money. “What we do with that is we have a nonprofit called Free Flags for Vets and that nonprofit has three pillars,” he said, explaining the first “pillar” is to give American flags to current and prior military service members; the second is to promote suicide awareness for military service members. The third pillar is to recognize high school seniors who have joined the military or graduating children of military members by providing them with special cords signifying the appropriate military branch to be worn during the graduation ceremony. Throughout the walk, the service members and their families shared stories and exchanged contact information to potentially organize more events and create networks of resources for their fellow veterans. Either way, the message will live on. As the ruck of 25 marched through Waseca, their signs still showed their message to struggling veterans: “The world is a better place with you in it.” “It is for those who have attempted or thought of suicide,” Miller said. “We want them to know there is hope out there and that we will help them through difficult times.”

Ensuring MN veterans can get the care they’ve earned

By Senator Amy Klobuchar
Opinion

Whether they served in the jungles of Vietnam, the mountains of Afghanistan, or the sands of Iraq, when our veterans signed up to serve our country, there wasn’t a waiting line. When they return home from duty and need a job, education, housing, or health care, there should never be a waiting line in the United States of America. That’s why for years I worked alongside Minnesota veterans and families to ensure that veterans exposed to toxic substances, including burn pits in the Middle East and Agent Orange in Vietnam, could get the high-quality, affordable health care they need through the Department of Veterans Affairs. For too long, our vets had to jump through bureaucratic hoops to prove the obvious — that their conditions, be they high blood pressure from Agent Orange or cancer from exposure to burn pits, were related to their service — and in some cases, they still found they weren’t eligible to receive care through the VA. That changed when Congress came together to pass the PACT Act. In March, the VA announced that it is now able to provide health care for all vets who were exposed to toxins or served in the Vietnam War or any combat zone after 9/11. That means millions of vets can apply for VA health care up to eight years earlier than expected. This is a game-changer for the 118,000 Minnesota vets who the VA estimates benefit from the PACT Act. In our state alone, more than 8,000 vets have already applied for care. I think of the Starks family, who I had the privilege of meeting in March. Jerald Starks served our country in the Army for 16 years, and his dedication to service didn’t end when he got home — he went on to work in law enforcement and for the Postal Service. He tragically passed away from leukemia related to burn pit exposure, but during his cancer battle, the PACT Act ensured he and his family could afford care. In the wake of the VA’s announcement, I am focused on ensuring all Minnesota veterans can get the health care they need. If you or a loved one served and may have been exposed to burn pits or toxins of any kind, I encourage you to enroll in health care through the PACT Act. You no longer have to file a disability claim to receive this care — if you were exposed to toxins or served in the Vietnam War or any combat zone after 9/11, you are eligible to enroll in VA health care today and will have access for life. Visit VA.gov/PACT or call 1-800-MYVA411 to learn more. For assistance, you can also call my office at 612-727-5220. Just as our veterans made a promise to defend our nation, we make a promise to be there for them when they come home. By expanding access to health care, we are letting our veterans and service members know that when the United States of America makes a promise, we keep it.

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CITY OF WASECA PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the City of Waseca City Council will consider Ordinance No. 1115 at their meeting to be held at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 16, 2024, in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL, located at 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN.

In order to comply with State and Federal requirements, Ordinance No. 1115 is a corrective ordinance requesting the addition of statutory authorization language to Section § 154.034 of Chapter 154 of the City of Waseca Zoning Code regarding floodplain management.

A complete copy of Ordinance No. 1115 is available in the office of the City Clerk, Waseca City Hall, 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on Friday, April 5, 2024.

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Pearl Jamison passed into the arms of her Lord and Savior on Nov 27, 2023. A Celebration of Life for Pearl Jamison, Mother of Carlene (Larry) Kuglin, Ross (Yin Mai) Jamison and Doug Jamison will be held on Thursday April 11th at Vibrant Life Assembly of God, 702 3rd St S, Ellendale, MN 56026. Visitation will be at 10:00am and service starts at 11:00am. Lunch to follow.

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General Notice to Control or Eradicate Noxious Weeds

Notice is hereby given this 2nd day of April, 2024, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 18.75-18.91, that all persons in Waseca County, Minnesota, shall control or eradicate all noxious weeds on land they own, occupy, or are required to maintain. Control or eradication may be accomplished by any lawful method but the methods may need to be repeated in order to prevent the spread of viable noxious weed seeds and other propagating parts to other lands. Failure to comply with the general notice may mean that an individual notice will be issued. An individual notice may be appealed within two working days of receipt to the appeal committee in the county where the land is located. Failure to comply with an individual notice will mean that the inspector (local or county) having jurisdiction may either hire the work done or seek a misdemeanor charge against the person(s) who failed to comply. If the work is contracted for hire by the inspector, the cost can be placed as a tax upon the land and collected as other real estate taxes are collected. By state law the local weed inspectors are designated as township supervisors, city mayors or their appointed assistants. The appeal committee shall consist of a county commissioner and a township official or, if in a city, municipal official of the corresponding district/township/city. The committee shall meet at 10:00 am on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of each month, as needed, at the Waseca County Land and Water Resources Office.

Statewide Noxious Weeds

Prohibited Noxious Weeds: Attempts must be made by all landowners to control or eradicate species on these lists. These species cannot be transported without a permit. There are two categories, eradicate and control:

Eradicate List: must be eradicated by killing the above and below ground parts of the plant:

Yellow Starthistle
Common Teasel
Black Swallow-wort
Pale Swallow-wort

Dalmatian Toadflax
Johnsongrass
Japanese Hops
Diffuse Knapweed

Brown Knapweed
Red Hailstone
Giant Hogweed
Japanese Honeysuckle

Grecian Foxglove
Cutleaf Teasel
Palmer Amaranth
Tree of Heaven

Control List: Must be controlled by preventing the maturation and spread of propagating parts:

Leafy Spurge
Wild Parsnip
Common Barberry
Non-native Phragmites

Purple Loosestrife
Narrowleaf Bittercress
Bohemian Knotweed
Meadow Knapweed

Spotted Knapweed
Plumeless Thistle
Giant Knotweed
Poison Hemlock

Canada Thistle
Common Tansy
Japanese Knotweed
Round Leaf Bittersweet

Restricted Noxious Weeds: May not be sold, transported without a permit, or intentionally planted in Minnesota:

Common/European Buckthorn
Japanese Barberry Cultivars
Wild Carrot/Queen Anne's Lace
Morrow's Honeysuckle
Winged Burning Bush

Multiflora Rose
Porcelain Berry
Bell's Honeysuckle
Siberian Peashrub
Lesser Celandine

Garlic Mustard
Crown Vetch
Black Locust
Amur Honeysuckle
Saltcedar

Glossy Buckthorn
Tatarian Honeysuckle
European Alder
Amur Silvergrass

Specially Regulated Plants: These plants have been determined to pose ecological, economical, or human or animal health concerns. Measures must be taken to minimize the potential for harm caused by these plants:

Poison Ivy
Callery Pear

Norway Maple
Tatarian Maple

Amur Maple
Amur Corktree

These listings are subject to change. For a current listing of the Minnesota Noxious Weeds go to:
<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants-insects/minnesota-noxious-weed-list>

Waseca County Noxious Weeds

Additionally, Waseca County has added the following weeds to the control list:

Non-licensed Hemp
Wild Cucumber*
Wild Mustard

Field Bindweed
Common Cocklebur*
Perennial Sowthistle

Velvetleaf
Common Waterhemp*

Bull Thistle
Black Nightshade*

Wild Proso Millet
Giant Ragweed*

*These are native plants and have enforcement restrictions placed on them by the MDA

The Board of County Commissioners asks for your cooperation in weed control:
Doug Christopherson, Brian Harguth, DeAnne Malterer, Brad Krause & Brad Milbrath
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April 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Burger nite 5-7pm	3 6pm BAR Bingo	4 7pm HALL BINGO	5 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	6
7	8 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	9 Burger nite 5-7pm	10 6pm BAR Bingo	11 7pm HALL BINGO	12 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm GARY-S MASH-BURGERS serving at 5:30	13
14 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your HOST WASECA SHERIFF POSSE	15	16 Burger nite 5-7pm	17 6pm BAR Bingo	18 7pm HALL BINGO	19 WALLEYE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm	20
21	22	23 Burger nite 5-7pm	24 6pm BAR Bingo	25 7pm HALL BINGO	26 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	27
28 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your HOST Waseca High School FOOTBALL	29	30 Burger nite 5-7pm				

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

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
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 Parental 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

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 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

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State Certificate of Assumed Name Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333

The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.

ASSUMED NAME:
Lone Pine Printing
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS:
310 5TH ST NE WASECA MN 56093 USA

APPLICANT(S):
Name: Danielle Ray Hasselquist
Address: 310 5TH ST NE WASECA MN 56093 USA

If you submit an attachment, it will be incorporated into this document. If the attachment conflicts with the information specifically set forth in this document, this document supersedes the data referenced in the attachment.

By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY: Danielle Hasselquist

MAILING ADDRESS: None Provided

EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL NOTICES:
lonepineprinting@gmail.com

Work Item 1465269200023
Original File Number 1465269200023

STATE OF MINNESOTA OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FILED
03/22/2024 11:59 PM
Steve Simon Secretary of State
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on March 29 and April 5, 2024

City of Waseca
Board/Commission Vacancies

Openings exist on the following City Advisory Boards

Economic Development Authority
Planning Commission

Applications are accepted until April 30th, 2024.

Most groups meet on a monthly basis.
Anyone interested in serving on one of the board may submit an application to City Hall, 508 South State Street.
Applications can be obtained at City Hall or online from the City's website ci.waseca.mn.us or call 835-9700

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

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Scenes from Minnesota State Mankato's national championship celebration.

Photos from MSU Athletics

■ Titles

from Page 1

a lot of fun. I'm proud of our women, proud of our men, and we're going to enjoy this one."

"I don't even know what to say right now," Kyreese Willingham said. "It's just an unbelievable feeling. All the credit to Malik for finding me."

Malik Willingham was named Elite Eight Most Outstanding Player. Kyreese also qualified for the all-tournament team.

The team finished the season with a record of 35-2. NSU finished 32-3.

The men's title game was a sharp contrast to the women's championship, which the Mavericks led from

start to finish.

Batt, a senior from New Ulm who was named to the all-tournament team, finished with 10 points, six assists and five steals.

"This was so amazing," said Batt. "It was one of the best experiences, but I don't think it's hit me yet and it might not hit me for a few days. The growth that this team showed this season is insane. These guys are like my second family, and I'll always be a Maverick."

"This has just been incredible," said coach Emilee Thiesse. "When you go back to Joey's freshman year, and to watch this program grow with Joey at the helm has been amazing. It's not just this team; it's a lot of other teams that have helped us build this culture. But this team is extra special."

The Mavericks, who started the

"It's just an unbelievable feeling. All the credit to Malik for finding me."

— Kyreese Willingham

season 2-4 while Batt was sidelined with an injury, finished 32-5, finishing with an 11-game winning streak.

Winona State is on the only other men's team from Minnesota to reach the Division II national title game. Winona State reached the national championship three consecutive seasons – 2006, 2007 and 2008 – and won the title in '06 and '08.

The last school to win the Division II title in men's and women's basketball in the same season was Central Missouri State in 1984.

Both the men's and women's games included the Minnesota State

band, of which NRHEG graduate Anton Domeier is a member.

The Willingham brothers are not the only former Bluejays to continue their basketball career past high school.

Andrew Morgan, North Dakota State, was second team all-conference in the Summit League. He's currently in the transfer portal and is reportedly being sought by the University of Minnesota.

Ryan Dufault is also playing at a Division I basketball school, St. Thomas, and has seen consistent action.

Hippity hoppity



Southern Minnesota Pageants sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt at Clear Lake Park last weekend. More than 10,000 eggs were hidden and prizes were distributed. Above, local royalty pose with the Easter Bunny. From left: Aadhavi Natarajan, Amaya Raths, Jasmin Kotek, Morgan Mohler, and Anna Brennan. At left: Mia Wanbach, 5, gives the Easter Bunny a heartfelt hug. At right: Milo Baumann, 2, scrambles after eggs while his dad holds the bag for his prizes.

Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger



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