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Local Troops



Staff members from numerous agencies support the Drug Court program. Acknowledged during a July 16 celebration of the program’s tenth anniversary were (Front, from left) Kaiya Martin, Kate Hendrickson, Rachel Cornelius, Scott Wolfe; (Back, from left) Mary Ulrich, MacKenzie Weis, Daniel Frenk, Scott Hanson, Scott Cody, Robert Jarret, Nicole Grams, Rusty Hardeman, Perry Berg, Judge Carol Hanks, Judge Joseph Buettel. Team members not pictured include David Wright, Kris Markesen, Joshua Sorensen, and Laura Cain.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Area ‘Drug Court’ marks ten years of bringing change

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

“I sure didn’t expect I would ever be advocating for the Drug Court program,” stated area graduate Ken Holmseth. He remembers “I was convinced the justice system was out to get me.”

Holmseth was one of three Waseca graduates who spoke Tuesday, July 16, during a celebration ceremony marking the tenth anniversary of the Steele/Waseca County Drug Court.

As has been explained in past Waseca County Pioneer articles, Drug Court is a locally operated program which offers an alternative to eligible individuals convicted of

a crime related to chemical abuse. Those selected are typically offenders who have previously served sentences for at least one chemical-related crime. Drug Court staff members approach them with a choice: either serve the sentence behind bars or consent to take part in a closely supervised program meant to help them begin the process of recovery while also reconnecting with their community—including family, neighbors, and employers.

Drug Court graduates have repeatedly told the Pioneer that following the Drug Court regimen is difficult and demanding: though they do avoid time behind bars, they are required to meet all financial obligations, including paying fines, restitution to victims, and—when applicable—

child support. They are also expected to catch up on major life achievements their addiction may have kept them from completing, for example earning a GED or acquiring a driver license. They must also attend counseling, get and keep a job, and consent to random testing to confirm they are not using chemicals.

The Waseca site’s first graduate, Ashly Sylvester, spoke at last week’s event. Sylvester expressed gratitude for the “entirely changed” life course she has been able to follow since her 2016 graduation.

Anyone who “drops out” of Drug Court must serve the incarceration time they were sentenced to; it typically takes about two years to meet all the requirements of the

program.

Waseca County Attorney Rachel Cornelius points out it costs about \$76,000 a year to incarcerate an individual in the state of Minnesota. Supervising someone in drug court is about \$4,800 a year. But most significantly, comments Cornelius, “Drug Court rebuilds people’s lives and their connections to the people they have often alienated. It gives them a path out of the cycle of addiction and incarceration.”

Cornelius praises Drug Court coordinator Nicole

Court continued on 8

Stillwater Southern Gospel at Waseca’s Christ Community Church Friday, July 26

Stillwater Southern Gospel will be performing at Christ Community Church on July 26 at 6:30pm. The address is 2200 Fourth Street Northeast.

Faith Lutheran Church will have their Vacation Bible School Sunday, July 28

Faith Lutheran Church will be having their Vacation Bible School on Sunday July 28 between 3-7pm. They are located at 300 Owen Street in Janesville. You have to register first; supper will be included. This is a free event.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes Junior Sports Camp July 30 - August 1

Young athletes in grades 3 to 8 can take part in a Christian-centered camp which has them concentrate on one sport each of the three days of the camp, Tuesday through Thursday, July 30 to August 1. Registration is \$60 per camper, with scholarships and generous family discounts available. More information and registration are at minnesotafca.org/waseca-jsc.

Susan Rucker book signing 6 p.m. Monday, August 5

Nationally known consultant and motivational speaker Susan Rucker, who grew up in Waseca, will be telling about and signing copies of the book “Rise Up” at the Waseca Library beginning at 6 p.m. the evening of Monday, August 5.

Briefs continued on 3

A word from
The Word



Love your enemies,
do good to those
who hate you.
Luke 6:27

‘She gives her talent as a gift’ Harguth Gallery honors local artist for decades-long contributions

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Locally famous artist Char Harguth, 88, was honored during a gathering on Friday, July 19, at the Waseca Art Center along North State Street. More than 80 people attended the invitation-only event.

The Center has named a gallery in her honor; the ceremony was a ribbon cutting as it was opened under its new name. Harguth is a lifelong member of the Waseca community, and has been an enthusiastic participant in Art Center events since 1976. Mikhail Rostislavovich, the Art Center’s president elect, said the honor was because of Harguth’s “years and years and years and years of service and involvement with the Center.” He called her a major donor, and cited her willingness to teach across generations.

Her attendance at the on-going Wednesday morning “art appreciation” sessions has been constant; the weekly get-together invites artists to gather, network, try various techniques and learn from each other. Harguth has taken part in the sessions since the inception of the Art Center, and can remember back to when Pat Beckman first opened the facility in a location across the street.

With a long list of media, Harguth’s artwork includes drawings, paintings, collages, and even bronze sculptures. She creates it on a variety of sometimes surprising surfaces including glass, two-man saws and ostrich eggs. Her work tends to feature rural scenes. She also dabbles in music and creative writing; she has not only been recognized for her writing, but for her service to the community.

Harguth, who lost her husband Joe in 2006, was surrounded by family members young and old as she took to the podium to say a few words. An elegant black drape was drawn away, and the foot-tall letters of “Harguth Gallery,” were revealed above her. Ever humble, she promised to keep her statement short so guests could enjoy the snacks and treats. She said, “I couldn’t be more honored,” then mused, “When I started in 1976, I never



More than 80 people attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Waseca Art’s Center newly named Harguth Gallery.

“Years and years and years and years of service and involvement with the center.”
— Mikhail Rostislavovich

would have thought my name would end up there like that.”

Though Harguth failed to boast about her work, the evening’s program claimed, “her many creative gifts and graceful service have touched the Waseca community, her family and friends. She strives and encourages growth in herself and others which will undoubtedly live on in everyone who has and will cross her path.”

After her comments, a red ribbon was stretched across in front of her, held at each end by one of her great-grandchildren; she, Rostislavovich, and her daughter Liz, shared an oversized scissors to cut the ribbon.

According to long-time Art Center leader Pat Beckman, three people have had a portion of the Art Center named for them. Beckmann has a gallery in her name in honor of her years of service as executive director; Kent Schultz’s name is on the second-floor auditorium in recognition of his assistance in restoring the present building; and now Char Harguth has been honored for her



From left Mikhail Rostislavovich, Char Harguth, Liz Harguth.

lengthy, continuous patronage.

Numerous family members said the invitations they received to the event had a short note on them in Harguth’s handwriting saying, “It won’t take long.”

After she took a seat, a small mountain of snacks and drinks formed in Harguth’s hands and on her lap as her smiling great-grandchildren eagerly brought their great-grandmother gifts to eat and drink.

Her daughter-in-law, Sue Harguth, who’s been

Harguth continued on 4

WASECA CITY COUNCIL City hires Stantec for Gaiter Lake design

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Preceding the regular Waseca city council meeting and the approval of \$322,000 for the project, last Tuesday evening July 16, 2024, was an hour-long financing discussion regarding the Gaiter Lake land development project.

Doug Green of Baker Tilly listed costs, estimates and expected revenues, which he called, “educated guesses” regarding how circumstances might develop during the three-phase plan.

Green explained his expertise is in the area of finances, not housing or real estate. He told council members to regard the numbers he provided as “conservative estimates.”

Phase one of the potential Gaiter Lake Development plan would require an estimated \$2.4 million in financing. The amount does not include every cost, but was what Green based his calculations on as he determined the amount of money necessary for financing purposes. Phases two and three, would each require an additional \$1.1 million. The lots sold in phases two and three would be priced lower than those in the first phase.

The “most desirable” lots on the city-owned property are scheduled to be sold during the first phase: approximately 25-30 lots will be available at about \$70,000 each. According to Green, in order for the city to avoid losing money on the project, an average of at least three lots will need to be sold each year. City Manager Carl Sonnenberg explained later the in-

Council continued on 5



Compostings

by Al Batt

Deer kill more people than sharks

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING
I don't like my Tesla.
What's wrong with it?
I get 0 miles to the gallon.
DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Deep thoughts occur as I drive past his drive. I walked as my socks edged lower on the New York Sock Exchange and on my ankles. I heard voices in my shed. No, not voices in my head. We all hear those. I walked toward the building. I wasn't afraid. In my boyhood, I'd held a flashlight for my father while he attempted to fix something on a dark night. No voices from a shed could be that frightening. The voices turned out to be two screech owls discussing whatever owls discuss.

A SAMPLE EXAMPLE
I woke up. I didn't know I'd been sleeping until I woke up. I headed off to do things that needed doing. I pulled into a convenience store after a two-hour class. A sample lady was doing her job. I love sample ladies. I don't think I've ever encountered a sample gentleman, but I'm sure there are some. The offering was a lemonade/mango/passionfruit drink. She asked me if I'd like some. I did. I'd been lacking passionfruit in my life. I drove home hydrated, with my speed hovering around the speed limit. Several vehicles went by me as if I were backing up on the two-lane road. Most drivers don't care to see a cop on the road unless that police officer is pulling over the nut who just passed us. Little did those speeders know that because the world is round (a bumpy spheroid or an ellipsoid), those who are ahead of me are behind me.

HE AIN'T GOT NO BOOK LEARNING
I volunteered at a Friends of the Library book sale. It's enjoyable visiting with folks about books. I recall watching some ancient black-and-white movie or TV western where one galoot insulted another by saying, "He ain't got no book learning."

I grew up hearing about Abe Lincoln reading by candlelight or by the light of the fireplace. When a nasty ice storm hit and snapped off power poles as if they were toothpicks, it cut off our electricity and left us without power. I tried reading books by candlelight and kerosene lamp. It was hard on the eyes. It was like reading by a lava lamp.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT
The doctor diagnosed me as

color blind. That news came out of the purple.

What's red and bad for your teeth? A brick.

What did Tennessee? The same thing Arkansas.

I never get tired of hearing jokes about insomnia.

Deer kill more people than sharks. It's hard for deer to kill a shark.

I have an earworm that wanders around in my head. It's "What's New Pussycat?" and it's called the Tom Jones syndrome. It's not unusual.

I'VE LEARNED
Sweet corn! Say no more.
Lutefisk is an excuse to drink butter.
I long for boring news.
The sun is a space heater.
Listen to the one who thinks the deepest, not the one who shouts the loudest.
Cigarettes are veggie wraps.
The word "Ohio" looks like a tractor.

You're more likely to be called "Einstein" if you do something stupid than if you do something smart.

NATURE NOTES
I walked after dark. I walked after light, too. The yard bombilates day and night—the insects make a humming or buzzing noise. Not everything comes to those who wait, but mosquitoes do. I enjoy the finer things in life—fireflies, shining stars come to Earth to keep us company.

Earlier, a sliver of blue as intense as a summer sky zoomed by—a blue jay off on its daily errands. It made me feel like a star witness. I employ a lot of bird feeders because they're chirper by the dozen.

House wrens sang a hymn to a summer day. Their songs came from everywhere and from nowhere. Other voices joined—robin, common yellowthroat, American redstart, red-eyed vireo, indigo bunting and goldfinch. A catbird practiced his repertoire. Fledged orioles and their tuckered parents are a treat to watch and listen to.

Japanese beetles are beautiful botherations that feed on over 300 plant species. I've read that starlings are prime predators of adult beetles. Garter snakes and grackles were others mentioned. Japanese beetle white grubs feed on the roots of lawn grasses from June through the fall and skunks and raccoons tear up a lawn in pursuit of the grubs (crows eat grubs they find in those excavations) and chickens devour a few adults.

MEETING ADJOURNED
If you can't find a kind person, be one.

Just me, the hammock and the sky

On a whim last spring, I purchased a square hammock which is 10 feet on a side. It's meant to be suspended from four points, the obvious choice, of course, is four trees.

The phrase "live and learn" comes to mind. After all, trees are easy to come by, but four trees located within reach of straps in each of four directions from a central point are a bit more of a challenge.

My family has put the hammock up a few times. It's impressive to look at. This past weekend, we hung it so that it was just above ground level on one side, but it reached out over a hill and was about 10 feet above a downward slope on the far side.

In the quiet of the afternoon, two kayakers came by on the lake. I could hear them talking between themselves about how the appearance of my family's cabin has been changing since we took ownership. Most noticeable to these two was the more open view of our building site—we trimmed back quite a few dead branches so we would have a better view of the lake—turns out, a "view" goes in more than one direction.

I was flattered they noticed the improvements and intrigued by how well their voices were carrying.

As they floated on past, they saw the hammock. Quite understandably, though, they did not know what it was. "Is that some kind of roof?" one of them asked. "Why is it hanging



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

there?" That was yet another understandable question. The natural ground cover below the hammock clearly did not require a "roof."

"It's some kind of tarp," speculated the other kayaker.

Both ideas seemed fairly feasible since, when no one is on it, the hammock hangs very level, well, at least flat.

At that point, though, I could stay quiet no longer. I stepped out where they could see me and called out, "It's a hammock."

In response to their confused "A hammock?" I replied, "Yes, it's for laying on. It's made to hold four or more people."

Their uncertainty dealt with, one of them called back, "Well, it looks like fun! Enjoy it!"

Deciding I should do just that, I approached the nearest edge. The published capacity of the hammock is more than 600 pounds, so I had the academic understanding that it would be perfectly safe for me to climb aboard.

But it was out over that hill. Anyone who went through it, or fell off the edge, would probably roll 20 or 30 feet across brambles and scrub trees only to land on the rocks at the shallow edge of the water. Not a pleasant possibility.

Still, I had received clear instructions to "enjoy" the hammock. I gradually convinced myself to crawl on at the ground level side. And of course, being a hammock, it curved downward under my weight. There near the "top" I was actually still touching the ground. Noting I was still unharmed, I rolled gingerly outward until I was fully suspended.

Above me, a circle of trees extended skyward. Since they were a combination of deciduous and evergreens, they provided a richly varied frame around a small patch of sky.

I took a deep breath, looked upward, and took a moment to appreciate I was not rolling rapidly toward the lake. Then it sank in I was beautifully comfortable. The temperature was just right. Something was keep-

ing the mosquitoes away. It was quiet and, although there are always tasks to be performed, none of them were an emergency.

I continued to lie there and appreciate the sky and its framework of trees. Various sounds filtered my way, but all of them from a distance—and none of them of any concern to me.

So there we were, just me and the sky. It had been a long time since I had had the time and the mindset to appreciate being in the moment.

I can't tell you how long I stayed there. It might have been five minutes, it might have been most of an hour; time seemed irrelevant.

Eventually I took on the challenge of getting back off the hammock. Because the surface area I was on had sagged under weight, it was now an uphill climb back to "ground level." I have to speculate that, if the kayakers had come by as I planted my hands and knees and rocked sideways, they would have really wondered what was going on. Let's just say I'm glad there was no one there watching to see how oafishly clumsy I must have looked. Those feelings mustn't have mattered much, though, because two hours later I invited someone from a neighboring cabin to come share time on the hammock with me.

The text read, "If you come over, I will show you something completely new."

Memorable weekend, food combinations

Summer is really summering, isn't it. This past weekend I did the classic American summer weekend and spent it at a cabin on a lake with my friends. The cabin was in northern Wisconsin somewhere in between Spooner and Hayward (I think, I am not really sure. I was just along for the ride). But it was a great weekend.

I see why people itch to get away for the weekend to their cabins and enjoy the time on the lake, in the boat, soaking in the sun, or listening to the loon call at dusk. It was eleven of us packed into a small, one-room cabin with a loft. Girls were in the loft and the guys had to find themselves spots on the one mattress or the couches. Despite cramped quarters, it was almost the picture perfect weekend. Grilling, swimming, roasting s'mores, doing a puzzle, sightseeing. All the pieces of a relaxing weekend gathered together to create a collage of memory that will probably never leave me.

While you all probably have experienced weekends exactly like or very similar to the one I have described, there were still intriguing aspects that made me feel my



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

getaway was different from the cliché weekend at the lake. For one, the friends that I went with weren't originally "mine," they were my boyfriend's. Thanks to spending time with him and his crew, I have come to regard them as belonging to me as well. The thing that intrigues me most is that they are all graduated and have adult jobs whereas I still have one year of school left. While I know we are only a year or two apart, and it feels like they are still young and students, it's interesting to hear them talk about their jobs as human resource workers, finance employees, or bank tellers (can you tell they all went to the U's business school?). But meanwhile, I go to class.

It is interesting to speculate that,

in a year, I will be just like them. Still young and vivacious, only hopefully with a full time job doing who knows what who knows where.

But all those questions are for future me, not for weekend-at-the-lake me. Not that it stresses me out (yet), it is just something I think about as someone whose life seems to be on the verge of a major change, but not changed yet. We will see, though. I wouldn't mind some fairytale-esque adventure to sweep me away from the commonalities for a bit.

Maybe that's why I make weird food combinations, to add a little bit of spice. I was talking with my friends about the weird food combos I sometimes put together, and while they were open to some of

them, one of the girls responded to another with, "I think I just lost respect for you." Maybe you readers will think differently, or maybe you will share her feelings regarding my occasional food choices.

Here's one of them: peanut butter, jelly, ham and cheese sandwich (yes, all four together in one sandwich. If I have potato chips, even better); honey and ketchup on my breakfast egg burritos instead of salsa; instead of bread-crumbs for chicken parmesan, I use crushed-up animal crackers to add a hint of sweet flavor; I also put cottage cheese in my scrambled eggs, but I don't think that one is as weird.

That's all that I can think of for now, but I'm sure there are other weird food combos that I eat without being aware how strange other people might find them. I will let each of you decide for yourselves where between "I just lost respect for you" and "Wow, that's a really cool and unique combination!" you rank my food choices.

My Determination: "The future came and went in the mildly discouraging way that futures do." - Neil Gaiman, Good Omens

Late night conversations with Tink

Lately, Tink Larson and I have been exchanging emails between 1 and 2 a.m.

He sends in results from Braves baseball around then, which is when I am often just finishing my work. That makes it easy for me to send a spontaneous reply.

That I am receiving sports results came about because my dad has a hard time with technology and so, sometimes, he can't find the emails from Tink. So Tink asked me if I could respond to his emails; that way he has confirmation of which emails he's sent or maybe an indication he may have forgotten about one.

I'm very grateful Tink stays on top of these things. Some folks in the younger generations (and older) don't understand how important it is to take care of the extra little things. In this case, for sports.

Publicity helps promote the program, which in turn, hopefully helps it grow. Doing team gatherings, practicing together—all of it builds camaraderie for a team. I cannot stress enough that going the extra mile with extra tasks is what keeps local sports groups, programs and small communities as a whole not only surviving, but thriving. When folks start letting things like that slip away, they stop happening; after that, the



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

program, or worst case, the community, dies a little.

For example, NRHEG baseball saw a slip when Jeff Reese retired. The program is still recovering today. Now, former students he once coached are heavily involved in the program and he himself has returned. NRHEG hasn't had a Legion program for a number of years; now it's finally looking like the upcoming groups will bring it back in the coming season.

I think of the Carlie Wagner years of basketball. Carlie inspired powerful excitement in the youth program which she continues to give back to. That enthusiasm strengthened the basketball program for years to come. Benefits are still felt today.

Anyway, back to Tink. It appears we are both night owls; the conversations we have are quite nice. I was not able to attend Braves games this year due to other obligations, an unfortunate circumstance I warned Tink about before the season. I'm grateful for

these back and forth communications and again glad he puts in the effort to communicate. I really enjoy speaking with him.

This week we talked about the latest game with Waterville, which ended with the Waterville coach making a second trip to the mound. It seems the Waterville team was unaware of the rule in baseball which states that, if a coach makes a second trip to the mound to speak to a pitcher, the team must make a pitching change.

The other team wanted the Braves to let it slide, but that's not how rules work. Tink presented the point that, if the Braves had sent up an illegal batter, he would have been called out.

I've known the rule about two trips to the mound since I was 12 years old. Tink and I both agreed, kids today don't watch baseball. It seems as if, in general, people watch less baseball today. To try and adapt, major league baseball has implemented new rules, including a pitch clock, to speed up

games. It really has helped speed up the pace. I, for one, enjoy high school and college sports more than professionals. The amateurs seem more genuine, less calculating. To quote my favorite move, it's, "for the love of the game," not a job.

Tink and I were having another email exchange the other night. Though I had planned to, I was unable to attend Wednesday's home playoff game because of the funeral of my Grandpa Ray Rosacker.

During that exchange, I mentioned to Tink that it truly is a small world, since Uriah Possin, a fellow player, also served as a pallbearer at the funeral. I had run into Uriah the week prior when I stopped to visit Grandpa on a Saturday.

Here is the response I got from Tink: "It's a small world many times. That's why I say to never cheat on your spouse unless you are willing to be caught and willing to suffer the consequences. If you do, at some point you will run into someone you wish you wouldn't have seen at that time and you will have a hard time convincing them that the lady you are with is a long lost cousin."

Thank you, Tink, for the life lessons.



SERVING THE WHOLE OF WASECA COUNTY
including the communities of Waseca, Janesville, New Richland, and Waldorf

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GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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Sacred Heart pillow cleaning Aug. 3 from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Catholic Daughters of the America's Court Sacred Heart #1424 invites everyone to Carlson's Pillow Cleaning Service on Saturday, August 3rd from 8:00am to 1:00pm.

This will be held at the Parish Center of Sacred Heart Church. Use the east entrance door. Feather pillows are cleaned, deodorized, sanitized and fluffed, then covered with new fabric (ticking). Microfiber pillows can also be cleaned. This is done in a mobile unit, same day service, while you wait. Custom made new pillows are also for sale. Proceeds from this event cover many of our projects including support of Bethlehem Inn, Pregnancy Options Clinic in Faribault, Sacred Heart School, Habitat for Humanity and many others. For questions contact Pat at 507-461-5095.

Farmamerica "Food to Fork" 6 p.m. Aug. 8

Farmamerica is offering a 6 p.m. "Food to Fork" dinner the evening of Thursday, August 8. For more information or to acquire tickets, visit the organization's website or telephone the office at 507-835-2052.

Annual Waseca Band Garage Sale at County Fairgrounds 4-H building Aug. 8, 9, 10

The Waseca Band Boosters organization will be holding its annual garage sale fundraiser across three days at the 4-H building located on the Waseca County fairgrounds. Donations can be delivered August 5, 6 and 7 during the afternoon and the morning of August 8. The sale begins at 4 p.m. August 8 and continues on Friday, August 9, and Saturday, August 10. Details regarding times are available in an advertisement available in this paper.

Soapbox race Saturday, August 10 from noon - 3 p.m.

The Waseca Freemason's are sponsoring a soapbox race on Saturday, August 10 from 12-3 p.m. It will be held on the west side of Tink Larson Field, 4th Street NE.

The funds raised will go toward Fire Suppression Kits.

We are looking for kids 6 years and older to participate in the race. Contact Kevin Clemons at 507-461-2388 to sign up for the race. Everyone is welcome to watch.

Community Salad Luncheon 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, August 9 at Waseca's St. Paul Lutheran Church

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Waseca is offering a salad luncheon open to the public from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at its community hall at 314 Fourth Ave Northeast on Friday, August 9. The meal is \$8 per person.

Happy Days in Waseca August 10

Happy Days in Waseca, an event aiming to bring more community to Waseca is taking place August 10 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

There will be a car roll-in, live music, vendors, and food trucks. The event will take place in the lot downtown behind Refinery 507.

"A Hard Day's Night" free band performance 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 13, at Waseca's Trowbridge Park

The Beatles cover band "A Hard Day's Night" will be giving a free performance open to the public at Waseca's Trowbridge Park pavilion at 7 p.m. the evening of Tuesday, August 13. The band bills itself as having an "authentic Beatles sound."

World Honeybee Day at Hofmann Apiary 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. August 17

The Waseca County History Center is sponsoring an observance of World Honeybee Day from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, August 17, at the Hofmann Apiary, 4661 420th Avenue, Janesville.

Waseca Garden Club holds 34th annual summer tour

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Waseca Garden Club's Summer Garden Tour was the afternoon of Saturday, July 20, 2024. This was a free event and open to the public, juice and cookies were served. Five gardens were featured this year, in the past there have been four and six, it varies. The club has sponsored the walk since 1990.

The Bailey-Lewer House, currently owned by the Waseca County Historical Society, and located along northeast Second Avenue was first on the tour. The house was built in 1868 and has vintage landscape plant varieties; its gardens are kept by volunteers. Garden Club members Jolene Gundermann and Kathy Oftedahl were there with greetings, cookies and beverages. They also provided maps to the four remaining locations.

Planted in memory of Millie Os-lund, Nick Poehler and Max Lande, the expansive garden at the Bailey-Lewer house has 53 plant varieties on display. An especially interesting feature is a line of tombstones leaning against the back side of the

house. Oftedahl explained "They were samples for the stonecutter who was living here. If someone had to pick out a tombstone, how else would they do it?"

The rural garden of Cindy and Roy Miller was the second stop on the tour. Cindy credits her love of flowers to her mother, Norma Cook, whose work was also on the garden tour years ago. The Millers have a 35-year-old rock garden surrounding an artificial pond. In among the rocks were numerous hosta, coral bells, jack-in-the-pulpit, solomon's seal, bee balm, lilies and sedum plants. Cindy told visitors she works to keep her flowers butterfly friendly. An especially appealing aspect of the space was a sense of peace inspired by the undisturbed, quiet setting. In the middle of it all was a chair Miller's father made by welding an antique tractor seat to a wheel well. It was comfy.

The garden of Linda and Chuck Cone, along northeast Tenth Avenue, provides a great view of Loon Lake. With an extensive and elaborate drainage system, Chuck only had trouble with one Maple tree this year getting



The Waseca Garden Club's Summer Garden Tour was the afternoon of Saturday, July 20, 2024.

too much water. The ground was much dryer by the day of the walk; there was no danger visitors would get mud on their shoes. The Cone's garden featured vegetables in addition to flowers and decorative plants. A vibrant asparagus plot which could paint anyone who sees it green with envy will not be harvested from for the rest of the summer so it can rebuild its re-



Tour continued on 5

Area Special Olympics athletes cite benefits of participation

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Cindy Ruedy has been a volunteer special olympics coach for 15 years.

A Waseca resident, Ruedy works part-time at ICan, located in downtown Waseca. The organization describes itself online as providing services and support for intellectually handicapped children and adults. Ruedy said her work there showed her the value and importance of Special Olympics, leading her to become the area coordinator for its programs.

Ruedy spoke at a recent meeting of the Waseca Exchange Club where one Special Olympics participant, Jake Lieser, 27, is a member. Also present that day was Joe Zappa, 32. Though both are neurodiverse, Lieser has a full-time job at Waseca's Kwik Trip South and Zappa works at the skilled nursing facility in Janesville.

Ruedy told Exchange members she is willing to donate her time to the program because of the many positive results it fosters. "It's a place where everybody has 'ability,'" she said.

"It's not only about the national level competition," she assured. "Really, it's not about competition at all, but the opportunities to be part of a community, for the participants to challenge themselves, and for the sense of achievement it brings."

She mentioned Special Olympics activities and programs not only create many opportunities for the participants to build relationships among their peers, but also to create connections with the com-



From left, Joe Zappa, Mikhail Rostislavovich, Cindy Ruedy, Jake Lieser, Perry Berg.

munity as a whole.

Zappa described having been a Special Olympics participant for about 15 years, including while he was still attending public schools. Among the sports he has taken part in are softball, flag football, basketball and floor hockey. He enthusiastically described games and competitions at which everyone in the audience, of every ability level, was on their feet cheering and encouraging the athletes.

"Even though we were developmentally disabled, we were appreciated."

He also mentioned having been part of a "unified" team, a Special Olympics category which combines both intellectually handicapped and unhandicapped athletes on a team.

Ruedy continued on 7



Mikhail Rostislavovich and Jake Lieser.

Early phases of internet installation underway in southwest part of county

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

The process of installing about 200 miles of fiber internet cable has begun in the southwest portion of the county. Under the terms of a \$4,385,000 grant from the Minnesota Office of Broadband Development, fiber internet cable is due to be installed in Vivian, Byron, Freedom and Wilton townships; installation will continue next year, with internet service in those townships probably being fully connected and operational late next summer.

The grant was applied for by Waseca County in partnership with Blue Earth based television, phone, and internet provider, Bevcomm. Under the terms of the grant, all residences within the designated areas are eligible to be connected to the system at no cost to themselves, provided they request that connection during the installation process. New

connections will be possible after the system is in place, but at a significant fee. Those who wish to use the fiber network to acquire services will have to contract for them through Bevcomm.

Anyone with questions about arranging connections for homes or businesses within the designated area can contact the Bevcomm office, located at 123 W. Seventh Street in Blue Earth. The phone number there is (507) 526-2822.

Those moving through the four townships at this time will see small white and orange flags, and if their timing is right, a crew of three or four workers with about the same number of vehicles working along roadsides. The crew and vehicles are owned by Midwest Utility Services, a Mankato company engaged by Bevcomm to bury the needed casings and cables.

According to Midwest team super-

visor Cody Elias, the white flags indicate the path the buried cable should follow. Orange flags indicate locations where the team should be cautious of underground lines.

Elias explains there are about five steps to getting the internet cable distributed throughout the planned network. The first, determining the route, was done by engineers at Bevcomm; their objective was to devise a network which could meet system demands while making efficient use of resources. Bevcomm staff placed the flags and advised Midwest of the route.

The second step is now in progress. A crew of three has been working about a month so far using a specialized piece of big equipment known as a "directional bore." Mounted on tracks and at least 15 feet long, the bore drives a shaft un-

Internet continued on 8

JANESVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Janesville plans work session for budget

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

During their July 8 meeting, members of the Janesville City Council agreed to meet the evening of July 22 for a work session to review and discuss the city's 2025 budget. City Administrator Clinton Rogers drew council members' attention to the city's insurance costs since they were still to be determined. Also still unknown, he noted, were a few other line items.

"I would feel more comfortable at our future meetings with some of these numbers," Rogers added.

He also asked for council members' opinion about granting city employees an across-the-board three percent cost of living wage adjustment over this year's wages. Employees had also received a three-percent raise for 2024, partly because the police department contracts had included that amount. Council members expressed no apparent concern about that number.

In other business, the city council tabled a request originally placed by Jacob Witt at the June 5 Economic Development Administration (EDA) meeting. Witt had requested \$45,000 for exterior improvements to the south wall of his building at 109 North Main Street. Previously, Rogers mentioned he had asked Witt to supply a copy of the contractor's estimate prior to the July 8 meeting, but Rogers had not received it.

Mayor Andy Arnoldt asked whether Witt had acquired two bids; Witt responded he had only one. Rogers also asked Witt for confirmation whether his request pertained to a wall along 109 North Main Street; Witt answered that it involved two walls that stood alongside each other.

"Maybe we need to look at getting the rest of our wall down," Arnoldt suggested.

Referring to a detailed handout in the council packet, Councilmember Jim Mulcahey voiced reasons for his reservations – that the project seemed quite extensive and it falls outside the city's responsibilities. "I'm not willing or able to pass this [resolution] without our wall being removed first and then determining what we need to stabilize the wall that's there," Mulcahey stated.

"There is an issue with removing our wall and that is an electrical service hanging on part of it," Councilmember Ivan Maas said. "I don't see that being a

Janesville continued on 5

OBITUARIES

Laura Truebenbach

LAURA TRUEBENBACH, age 96, died on Friday, July 19, 2024 at Bethesda Grand in Willmar.

Laura Rosa Esther Krenke was born on March 1, 1928 in Lemond Township, Steele County, Minnesota. She was the daughter of William and Wanda (Willert) Krenke. Laura was baptized as an infant on April 1, 1928 and later confirmed in her faith in her youth on May 24, 1942, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church of rural Meriden.

She attended elementary school at District 54 in Steele County. Laura went on to graduate from Owatonna High School in 1946. While in high school, Laura began working at Selmer and Vida Langlie's home while Selmer was in the service and MIA at the time. She also worked at the St. Olaf Lake store, and the roller rink. Following her graduation, she was employed as a nanny and housekeeper for Dr. Oeljen in Waseca.

On October 19, 1947, Laura was united in marriage to Hilbert Truebenbach at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Meriden. They began their married life living on a farm in Le Sueur County and later moved to another farm in Waseca County in 1952. In 1956, they quit farming and Hilbert began working for Birds Eye while Laura started working for Brown Printing Co. in 1960 and continued until her retirement in 1989. They moved to the John Sutter farm in Blooming Grove Township where they lived for 17 years. In 1973, they purchased a home near New Richland. When they needed assistance with their daily care, Laura and Hilbert moved to town in New Richland and most recently Laura resided in Willmar to be closer to family.

Laura is survived by her children, Beverly (Bruce) Barrett of Litchfield, Darlene (Ralph) Davis of Fountain, CO, Nancy Brekke of



Laura Truebenbach

Ellendale, Karen (Jeff) Koehler of Belgrade, Mary Rahman of Forest Lake, and Donna (Steve) Bondeli of Thorpe, WI; daughters-in-law, Bonnie Truebenbach of Waseca and Julie Truebenbach of Shakopee; 17 grandchildren; and 13 great grandchildren; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Hilbert in 2008; two sons, Paul in 1990 and James in 1993; sons-in-law, Sam Brekke in 2012 and Steve Rahman in 2016; three sisters, Loretta Abbe, Luella Fischer, and Lenore Bratsch; brother, Roland Krenke; several sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law.

Visitation was from 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM on Thursday, July 25, 2024, at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation continued for one hour prior to the service at the church on Friday.

Funeral Service was 11:00 AM on Friday, July 26, 2024, at Trinity Lutheran Church in New Richland with Pastor Mary Iverson officiating. Interment was at Decoria Cemetery in Blue Earth County. DSOFuneral.com

Eugene Hart

EUGENE HART, age 88, of Waseca died on Thursday, July 18, 2024, at his home in Waseca.

Born on June 27, 1936, in Mountain Lake, he was the son of William and Carol (Sneer) Hart. On September 2, 1955, Eugene was united in marriage to Gloria Deuth at Evangelical Lutheran Church in Heron Lake, Minnesota.

Eugene worked at Toro Co. in Windom for several years before moving to Beaverton, Oregon in 1961, where he worked in the quality control department for Precision Casts Parts. In 1968, he purchased the GasLite Motel in Waseca. In 1971, Eugene purchased the Maplewood Inn Restaurant next door to the GasLite Motel. In 1973, he opened the new Waseca Cinema Theater which he owned and operated until 1985. Eugene went into real estate in 1983 and became a partner in Century 21 First Choice as a broker real estate agent and owner. During his time in real estate, he was a partner in the development of Waseca housing with Prestige Development Corp., Parkridge Twins Inc., and Waseca Property Management. Eugene retired in 2001. While in business, Eugene believed in giving back to his community where he spent countless hours fundraising for the addition to the Waseca Hospital. He was a member of the Waseca Chamber of Commerce where he served as president, he was also a member of the Waseca Lions Club and St. John Lutheran Church in Waseca.

In Eugene's later years, he and his wife spent time visiting their children and wintering in Florida. He enjoyed traveling, camping, reading, biking, fishing, golfing, and hunting. Eugene's greatest



Eugene Hart

pride was being a devoted husband and father. He found great happiness in his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Eugene is survived by his loving wife of 68 years, Gloria of Waseca; children: Debra Fowler of Dawsonville, GA, Kim (Al) Calcagno of Portland, OR, Karie (Todd) Conway of Waseca; seven grandchildren: Shane Hart, Katie (Anthony) Powell, Jonathan (Katie) Fowler, Thomas (Emily) Fowler, Matthew Fowler, and Reid Conway, Cole Conway; four great grandchildren: Lylah Hart, Charlotte, and Hannah Powell, and Michael Fowler; other relatives and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents; stepfather, William Marion Harding; half-brother, William Michael Harding; son-in-law, Michael Fowler.

Funeral Services are pending and will be announced on a later date.

In lieu of flowers memorials are preferred to the Cancer Research Institute. DSOFuneral.com

Palmer bus recruiting
Test drives give feel for real thing

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Three giant yellow school buses pulled up inside the Waseca County Fairgrounds Saturday, July 20, for the Palmer Bus Services' third annual bus driver recruitment day. It was sunny but not yet hot, given it was only 10 a.m.

Kathy Anderson, southern regional recruiter for Palmer Bus Service was there setting up a table and tents along with Tim Engels, site manager for Janesville, Barry Olson, a driver for Janesville, Matt Gallagher, a site manager for St. Clair, and Audra Veroeven, site manager for Waseca.

They all explain driving their course is only a "test" in the reverse sense—an opportunity for prospective drivers to test their comfort level behind the wheel of such a large, unjointed vehicle. The point of today's experience is to assure people considering the job they would be capable of becoming school bus drivers. Anderson reported later that about 10 prospective drivers took part during the four-hour event.

Anderson said, "We have a thousand units with Palmers in 28 school districts. We work closely with other bus companies like Lenz Bus Service out of Waseca. All three Palmer Bus sites have a perfect Department of Transportation inspection record of 100 percent," elaborating that, "They

check everything. Nuts and bolts, emergency exits, tires and brakes, transmission, just everything from top to bottom.

"Our mission is to safely transport students to and from school and we're doing it."

Palmers is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year, having been founded in St. Clair in 1974. The company began covering Janesville in 1978 and Waseca in 2016. Before that, Waseca students were transported by Clemons Bus Service.

Drivers testing their comfort level are put behind the wheel. There to help out and accompany eager new drivers, Olson jumps in and instructs how to start the bus. "You have to turn the key and wait for a moment before it starts, it's not like a car." Releasing the brakes requires not only releasing the foot pedal, but also clicking some switches. The final step before rolling out is pulling the handle to close the door.

Once the trial drive begins, the driver is instructed to guide the 8-foot-wide, 35-foot-long vehicle between the buildings along the somewhat winding drives of the fairgrounds. Olson explains navigating this narrow space is part of the experience. In the area where the fair food wagons sat during the fair are cones set up to imitate a parallel parking spot.

The next maneuver is a wide turn leading in the direction of the grandstands. Along that path is an



EVERYDAY NOBILITY - Bus drivers (from top) Tomas Howe and Nicole and Barry Olson were among those helping recruit new drivers during last year's "Test drive a bus" event.

Pioneer archive photo by Deb Bently

orange cone representing a student waiting at a stop. There are switches the driver has to click to get the "Stop" sign on the side of the bus to pop out, which it does when the school bus doors are opened to allow the "student" to enter.

Olson points out that, when the doors are opened and the stop sign is extended, it becomes illegal for any other vehicles to pass the bus. Said Olson, "There can be fines of up to \$600 and an appearance before a judge. No one

wants to deal with that. If we [bus drivers] get the license plate, we always turn it in, but we never really hear back about what happens." On rural roads, drivers are expected to activate the red, flashing lights at least 300 feet before coming to a stop. In town, the distance is 150 feet.

There is a straight-away before the bus is returned to its original location. As the bus comes to its parking spot, the ignition must not be turned off until after the parking brake has been set.

■ Harguth

from Page 1

married to Harguth's son Greg for 41 years, sat down for a break and said, "She gives her talent as a gift. We have a whole wall at my house that's her pictures. When Char's grandkids show up, there are tons of things for the kids to do. Painting projects,

chalk drawing, anything to do with art. Char goes out of her way to visit you or insists you come visit her at least once a week, every week. She never misses church."

Thinking for a moment she added, "Even at her age, she'll bike to the Farmers Market every Saturday."

Harguth's granddaughter Jennifer commented Harguth "needed to go to the Farmers Market to get her sweet rolls every Saturday. And chocolate, she has to have chocolate." When asked what kind of

chocolate Harguth likes the most, Jennifer replied, "Any." Adam, another grandchild of Harguth said, "We were sledding and grandma was there, it was her toboggan and we crashed it and broke the wood on the bottom. She didn't get mad, just ran up asking, 'Are you okay?' over and over." He thought for a moment and said, "She made me learn how to play with Lincoln Logs, I remember those."

Joe and Char Harguth raised five children in the Waseca community.

Her family has blossomed to include eight grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren. Harguth claims her art isn't a big deal; when asked about becoming famous or selling her pictures, she replied, "I've given away almost all of it. My family doesn't even want it anymore." She certainly loves her Wednesday art class; she wanted it mentioned she never missed a class, but after a second's thought she chirped up and said, "Wait, I did miss a few because of Covid, but that was it."

■ Tour

from Page 3

sources and be ready for next spring. Chuck had grass shavings expertly sprinkled throughout his gardens to keep in moisture and protect the soil. The Cone garden features a wide variety of plants including green peppers, tomatoes, zucchini, cucumbers, dahlias, begonias, and much more. Chuck said it takes an hour and a half each day to water his gardens when the weather is dry.

John and Pam Fossum invited vis-

itors to their garden along northwest Seventh Avenue. Dahlias have been their favorite flowers since 1985. Red dahlia tubers originally provided by John's dad have been in circulation for more than four decades, and have been joined by more dahlias year by year. A decorative feature in their garden was the use of unusual items as flowerpots, including a child's toy barn and repurposed propane tanks. Their inviting, open garden area seemed to change depending on the direction visitors looked. On display were snap peas, green beans, butterhead lettuce, cantaloupe, okra, broccoli, strawberries, raspberries, kohlrabi, eggplants,

sweet banana peppers, tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, poblano peppers, zucchini, red pumpkin and Swiss chard.

The garden of Bill and Geraldine Kuschel along southeast Fifth Avenue has two water fountains with a wonderfully shaded, evergreen backdrop. The house is a 1953 Light Yellow Cape Cod. The garden includes many individualized features. Bill and Geraldine designed their own fire pit. A well-worn and decorated wooden fence lines the back of the yard near the pine trees. There are Honey Gold and Harrison apple trees and a hog house ventilation cupola that still sports its original paint. Bill

remarked about the cupola, "Can you imagine people used to get on top of those tall barns with a paintbrush and paint these things?" The garden also features both light and dark lilac bushes and a flourishing pussy willow tree.

The Waseca Garden Club wants everyone to know membership is open to anyone interested in joining; the group meets at 6:30 p.m. each fourth Monday of the month at the Southern Research and Outreach Center. They also have a booth at the Waseca County Fair. The cost to join is \$5 per year. More information is available from Jolene Gundermann at Jgunderm2@gmail.com.

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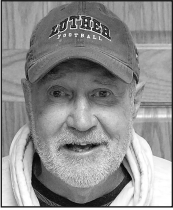
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Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika



Kugie vs. Zika: Comparing stresses

The 2024 Waseca County Fair has come and gone. Fifty percent of all parents have already completed their school supply shopping for fall; major stores offer great prices and discounts during July. The Vikings have opened training camp and athletes are getting in shape for the preseason. It won't be long before Don White and Dale Kugath will be calling the play-by-play for Bluejay football on KOWO under the Friday night lights.

Don White is the voice of the Bluejays and works with his sidekick "Kugie," they've been together for 15 years. I really enjoy listening to them and can live every play and moment in the game as they call it.

Don refers to Kugie often during each contest; he provides stats and play-by-play analysis. Someone counted those references once during the first half of a Bluejay game: The count was a whopping 65. I remember the duo calling the Waseca/Marshall championship basketball game. Dufault made a three-quarter-court shot in the final second to tie the game. Don was so excited he fell off his chair. Streich made a shot in the last second of overtime to win the game; the Bluejays were off to state.

Kugie was a three-sport athlete at Waseca in his younger years, playing football, basketball and serving as captain of the baseball team. After graduating from college, he taught in Waseca and in Briston, S.D. Kugie has had numerous experiences coaching high school sports. He's been a head coach and assistant in several sports throughout his career. Kugie has a wealth of knowledge when it comes to sports. After his teaching experiences, Kugie sold real estate with his father in Waseca and also worked construction with the Peterson Boje crew.

Kugie later became sports editor of the Waseca newspaper. For 15 years, he covered Waseca, NRHEG and JWP sports. He started out every column with a reference to his wife Jennifer, whom he called "the captain." The captain proof-read all of Kugie's writing, making him a writing expert. Kugie's goal in writing about all sporting events was: "For people who weren't at the game, I wanted them to read the article and feel as if they had been there." Kugie was also known as the "swami," he made game predictions in his column.

I had a conversation with Kugie about which member of a professional team is under the most pressure, and who is the most valuable part of the team. We are all humans and feel pressure to perform well in whatever we choose to do. A surgeon, anesthesiologist and nurse all feel tremendous pressure, but they don't have to perform their jobs in front of thousands of rabid, screaming fans.

In professional football, I choose the kicker. After a close game, the kicker enters the action with two seconds left for a 55-yard field goal. His team either wins or loses based on his performance in that moment. I recall Gary Anderson, kicker for the Vikings, hadn't missed a field goal all season, but then he missed a chip shot at the end of a playoff game, costing the Vikings a trip to the Super Bowl.

Kugie chose the quarterback. In the final minute of a close game, the QB is called upon to put his team in a position to win, throw on every down, and engineer a victory-scoring drive. The great Tom Brady was on the winning team for seven Super Bowls and was named M.V.P. in five.

When it comes to hockey, Kugie and I both chose the goalie. The person between the pipes faces pucks flying at 100 mph and is called upon to make the save. Think of the pressure during overtime or a shutout, when it's game over if a puck gets into the goal.

In baseball, my choice is the pitcher—the closer. In the last inning, the closer comes in to shut the door and send down the best hitters to preserve a victory. Mariano Rivera, a Yankee closer, retired with 652 saves: That's a bundle of Yankee victories.

Kugie—a truly team-minded individual—picked the team member who comes to the plate with two outs, team down by one, runners on second and third with two strikes in the bottom of the ninth. That special player has to deliver a hit.

In basketball, I again picked the closer. Every team needs a player to perform in the clutch and make a basket in the closing seconds of a close game. The T-wolves didn't have one and lost to Dallas in the NBA conference finals. Dallas had two outstanding closers.

Kugie, the team guy, picked the player at the free throw line with one second left on the clock and the team behind by one or two. The pressure is even worse when the team is also on the road and opposing fans behind the basket are screaming and waving things.

The swami left our conversation with two coming predictions. First, the Twins will be in the baseball playoffs. Second, J.J. McCarthy, the Vikings' young, first-round draft pick for QB, will see playing time in the second half of the season.

Move over Don White; my number of references to Kugie is beginning to rival yours.

Filing dates open July 30 - Aug. 13

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

At its regular business meeting July 18, the Waseca school board moved quickly through organizational items, payment of claims, and approval of employment and contract agendas.

Superintendent Eric Hudspeth shared his proposed goals for the 2024-25 school year, including showing evidence of performance, communication with the school board concerning literacy results, and supporting building administration in implementing the district's strategic plan. He said he will present the finalized plan to the board for approval in August.

Business Manager Matthew Moline's financial report provided updates regarding expenditures and revenues including new band uniforms/disbursement of old uniforms and transportation, and presenting the Long Term Facilities Maintenance (LTFM) expenditure and revenue plans discussed at the previous school board workshop for approval.

Included in the evening's action items were continuing memberships in the Minnesota State High School League and the Minnesota State School Board Association, and approval of the resolution to establish dates for filing affidavits of candidacy, since three school board positions will be up for election this fall. The dates for filing are July 30 to Aug 13, 2024 in the office of the superintendent for a \$2 fee.

WASECA SCHOOL BOARD

forms/disbursement of old uniforms and transportation, and presenting the Long Term Facilities Maintenance (LTFM) expenditure and revenue plans discussed at the previous school board workshop for approval.

Included in the evening's action

Summer projects well underway

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

NRHEG School board members were informed during their July 15 meeting that the replacement of wooden doors with metal ones to meet safety standards, parking lot enlargements and resurfacing, and updates to the heating, cooling, fire detection and fire suppression systems are on track for completion prior to the beginning of the school year. Dozens of workers from numerous companies are on site daily at both schools performing tasks throughout the buildings. Work is being overseen by the consulting company SiteLogIQ, with ongoing reports to the administration.

Along with the construction, district superintendent Michael Meihak informed the board that the building and grounds committee recommends the removal of four relatively large trees at the New Richland site, one of which is failing due to Dutch Elm disease. The others, he reported, have become so large they are rubbing against the building and overhanging the roof. Board members expressed approval of the removals. "Recent storms have certainly taught us the value of being cautious," observed board chair Rick Schultz.

School board members heard from district transportation director Dan Schmidt, who mentioned some repairs needed at the two bus garages. In Ellendale, an overhead door opener must be replaced. In New Richland, some mold has been noted among the rafters; district finance director Karla Christopherson responded to board member questions telling them money for the project would come from the "long term facilities maintenance" fund. The state provides a certain amount of funding to districts for ongoing maintenance and also expects reports regarding how the money is used.

Schmidt also conversed with board members regarding his preparations to ensure district transportation needs will be met as school begins. He reported he is performing a fair number of vehicle repairs himself, and is also contracting for body work to be done on two buses. Plans to acquire a new bus were addressed: Schmidt said he will be meeting with sales staff in the near future.

Once a commitment is made to acquire a new bus, there is a 14-month

School Board NRHEG

waiting period for delivery, so Schmidt reported he expects to see the new vehicle in place for the start of the 2025 school year. The district will be leasing it for a number of years, then purchasing it.

Geoffrey Wagner, NRHEG's Director of Special Education, also spoke with board members the evening of July 15. Wagner serves both Waseca and NRHEG school districts, and was newly hired this past January. He reported he "hit the ground running," given that he was picking up duties in numerous buildings in the middle of the school year.

Many ongoing tasks of overseeing special education procedures at NRHEG are performed by special ed coordinator Lara Chicos. Wagner praised the quality of her work, saying she is an asset to the district. He also complimented special education staff members for their dedication and for the quality programs they have implemented.

District teaching and learning coordinator Jason Toupence summarized the district's state-required "literacy plan" for the 2024-25 school year. The state department of education requires all districts to have a system in place to ensure all elementary students will be "reading at or above grade level" by the time they complete third grade. He said the six-page plan has been available on the district website since June. Its major elements are that staff members will undergo professional development to help them meet the expectations of the READ Act, that students will be assessed to see whether they are reading at grade level, and that any students who are not will receive additional support.

Superintendent Meihak made mention the NRHEG district had "shown a presence" at the Waseca County Fair. He named staff members and board members who had helped man the district's booth, and thanked school board member Amy Ihrke for the slide show she had created. Meihak said the district has also arranged to have a booth at the upcoming Steele County Fair.

■ Janesville from Page 3

huge obstacle, but it has to be done. It has to be moved."

Rogers promised Witt he would stay in touch as the council consults with city attorney Jason Moran. During the meeting, the city council also

approved a slightly revised contract agreement regarding the school resource officer; revisions were called for because there has been a slight change in state laws since the original contract was written, and because a new three-year agreement has been put together by officer Sheila Jewison.

"It's mostly the same except for a few phrases," Rogers assured, adding that he met with Principal Jeremy

Erler who went over the document word by word. Rogers also reported the JWP school board had recently voted to accept the agreement.

In other matters of interest, the city council approved the release of an easement on Pearson Acres Number 2. When Pearson Acres was platted in 2022, Pearson dedicated some land as an outlet for storm water management, but the area was

never used for that purpose and since a newer plat was approved last year, Rogers deemed the designation unnecessary. By vacating this easement, the land will go for the purpose developer Sam Borneke has in mind.

Council members officially accepted a donation of \$338 from Simply Saved Thrift Store to put toward purchasing some needed equipment for the city police department.

■ Council from Page 1

come from those sales would constitute the "break even" line necessary to service the debt without additional taxes.

Green's model did not include the tax abatement program which was talked about by council members. Councilman Jeremy Conrath stated he believes the tax abatement program will be necessary to promote the sale of potential lots at Gaiter

Lake. Other council members agreed.

Debate over the likelihood of success, the amount of lots sold in recent history, different financing options and much more took place during the hour and a half presentation.

Ultimately, council members approved the proposal from Stantec Consulting Services on a 4 to 3 vote.

This means \$252,800 was approved for Stantec's Estimated Project total; \$7,500 for small utility coordination (to assist city staff); \$25,000 for a potentially required archaeological survey; and \$37,000

for contingency costs (potentially more expenses).

City Manager Sonnenberg explained this project is set up in a way that requires a vote by the council at each major section of the project, allowing the city as much flexibility as possible in case it decides to stop progressing with the plan. The next major vote on this subject will come in the spring of 2025 when the council will determine whether the city should move forward with the plan Stantec creates.

Numerous members of the public have appeared at prior council meetings arguing the cost of the project is very high and there is no guarantee buyers can be found to recoup expenses. They have also raised concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed development and the possibility of flooding in low-lying sections.

Regarding the environmental concerns, the city is working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, whose authorization is required as the project moves forward. City Engineer Nate Wiley said

after the meeting that the city is working closely with the DNR and that the project will not be harmful to the area ecosystem.

Regarding the cost, the council members in favor of this project believe it will move Waseca forward. Over the past 50 years, the city's population has stayed roughly the same while business in town continues to go elsewhere.

Those opposed to the plan argue the lots will not sell and that the financial burden of the project will be detrimental to the city's future.

Nearly every vote on the subject of the Gaiter Lake Development has been 4-3. Mayor Randy Zimmerman and council members Stacey Schroeder, Daren Arndt and Mark Christiansen have voted in favor.

Council members John Mansfield, James Ebertowski and Jeremy Conrath have cast their ballots against the project.

Interested individuals can watch a videotape of the entire meeting online; access is available through the city's website.



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Braves come from behind to keep season alive

Waseca tops North Mankato, 14-12

The Waseca Braves remained alive in the 13-60 League playoffs with an exciting come-from-behind 14-12 marathon victory at North Mankato Sunday, July 21.

The Braves, who soundly defeated visiting Lake Crystal last Wednesday in a single-elimination play-in game, faced a must-win situation at North Mankato after falling to Waterville on Saturday. The game was delayed for an hour and a half by rain and ended after three and a half hours.

Next up for the Braves is a 2 p.m. game at Eagle Lake Saturday, July 28.

There was plenty of offense at North Mankato as both teams totaled 16 hits. Waseca stranded 10 baserunners, the Gators 11.

Jimmy Loonan led the Braves with three hits and three runs scored. Tyson Reger, Kelvin Nelson, Payton Garza and Ryan Hanson had two hits each. The other Waseca hits went to Griffin Krautkremer, Sebastian Teague, Kyle Waugh, Seth Anderson and Alex Feeney.

Waugh had a big two-out, two-run double in the eighth inning to give the Braves a short-lived lead. Ten Waseca players had at least one hit.

The biggest hit of the game came in the top of the ninth, a two-run single by Nelson to give Waseca the lead for good.

"Our last three innings were very productive, with nine runs on 10 hits," said Braves coach Tink Larson. "The bottom three hitters in the North Mankato lineup hurt us as they went 9-12 with five RBIs. You usually don't see that kind of production from the bottom of a lineup. Their number nine hitter had four hits and they

had two guys with three hits and two guys with two hits. We are very happy to advance and get a chance to play again this coming weekend."

The Braves used four pitchers, with Nelson getting the win while throwing the final two innings. He struck out two and walked two.

Last Wednesday, at Tink Larson Field in Waseca, the Braves played solid baseball while winning 8-2. They stranded 10 baserunners.

Waseca hits went to Reger, Krautkremer, Nelson, Loonan, Garza and Hanson, with Krautkremer delivering a two-run home run. Garza walked three times.

Nelson started on the mound and went eight innings for the win, allowing five hits while fanning eight and walking two. Reger pitched the final inning, striking out the side.

"It was nice to get a win in a single-elimination game and advance to the double-elimination portion of the tournament," said Larson. "It was a closer game than the final score. In the seventh inning, with the score 4-2, Lake Crystal had runners and second and third base, but Kelvin got a fly ball for the third out."

The Braves caught a break in the eighth, scoring three unearned runs with two outs after a Lake Crystal error.

"Lake Crystal collected four of their five hits in that seventh inning as Kelvin Nelson was pretty sharp other than for that one inning," said Larson.

The Braves struck out 11 times but received 10 walks. Loonan was twice hit by a pitch.

Champions



The Waseca U16 boys' soccer team took first place at the North United tournament in Coon Rapids on Sunday, June 23. The team finished 4-4-2 (4 wins, 4 losses, 2 draws) in league play. The squad placed first in the North United Summer Invitational tournament in Coon Rapids in June. The team also advanced to the MYSA state tournament, finishing third in a tough group. Front from left: Amin Sharif, Matthew Nelson, Nolan McQuery, Jacob Harguth, Shylo Driessen, Sawyer Mairs, Landon Rutt and Christian Rodriguez. Top: coach Mike McQuery, Brady Tlougan, Jose Viera, Carlo Driessen, Carson Harter, Owen Rupe, Tovinn Grannis and coach Eli Nelson. Not pictured is Dawson Goodlander.

Submitted photo

Stellar season

Waseca's 11U boys' soccer team finished its season in the MYSA state tournament: Front from left: Lucas Negrete, Easton Schlueter, Gavin Loeffler, Brock Groh and Jameson Corchran. Back: Mathias Arkadie, Jose Gaona, Joe Harguth, Wyatt Greenfield, Jaxen Jutzi, Micah Aboki and Noah Harguth. Not pictured: Beckett Foels and Jordin Bohlmann-Little. The team was coached by Dan Groh and Mike Corchran.

The 11U boys went undefeated, 10-0-0, in league matches. The team played in a higher division at state, gaining valuable experience against some very strong opponents.



The Pastor's Column

We're running out of summer

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

More than once this week someone has commented, "We are running out of Summer." I was incredulous when they said that, mainly because it seems like I haven't gotten to do the things I wanted to do. Like most summers, I want to go swimming, camping, relax around a campfire, take a nap in a hammock and more. This summer though, I have been fixing cars, mowing the lawn, helping my family, dodging raindrops and trying to help those recovering from flooding.

There has been a lot of good that I have been able to do this summer, but at the same time, I want to be a little selfish. I want to enjoy the things I have planned, but it seems my plans have been changed by others. How do you balance the needs of life with the rest and joy you want to experience? Many times, people will comment that they just aren't happy at a given moment, or their plans were ruined. How do you set your own expectations so that you can enjoy the changes to plans, or interruptions, that God has for you?

When I think about rest and life, the needs of others and my own needs, I look to the disciples in the Gospel of Mark. The Disciples had been commissioned by Jesus in Mark 6 to go from village to village and preach repentance, baptize people, and heal those suffering from illness or spiritual attacks. They had been given a task to do in the limelight of ministry, as they returned to Jesus. He drew them away to rest with Him and pray, but that plan was interrupted.

They did their job in the villages well, and the crowds followed them to find Jesus. Soon 5,000 men, not including women and

children, had gathered, when all the disciples wanted to do was to go up on the mountainside to pray with Jesus. Instead, Jesus taught those 5,000 plus people for the day. Jesus' plan to have the disciples pray with Him was interrupted by the needs of the people. The disciples were tasked with feeding the 5,000 plus people.

I wonder what the disciples felt, when they went from the preacher to the table water. Exhausted from preaching and healing in the villages, the disciples were ready to rest, but hungry people needed to eat. Their plans to rest were changed to meet the needs of others. Jesus knew what the disciples needed to remain humble, and reliant upon Him. He showed them that they were serving the needs of people to help all become better followers.

Take time to read the whole true story recorded in Mark 6, what stands out to you? Which character do you identify with the most in that chapter? The townsfolk of Nazareth, The Disciples, John the Baptist, John's Disciples, and the crowd were all at different phases in their lives and faith. Some had no faith in Jesus, others were questioning their faith, still others were growing in their faith, and some were just starting to recognize the need to follow Jesus.

Each person had their plans interrupted by Jesus, and they were better for it. Treat your interruptions this summer with faith, God may be trying to use those interruptions to teach you something about Him or He may be using you to build faith in others. Don't become frustrated at the change in your plans, but trust that God's plan is greater than your own. Be ready to serve, whether it is up front or waiting tables because it might be both at the same time.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

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

25 Years Ago



- Paul Porter, a crop and organic systems researcher with the University of Minnesota at Lamberton, discuss organic production with farmers at Tuesday's field day at the Southern Research and Outreach Center in Waseca.



-Tim Jertson has been hired to head the Waseca Arts Council which oversees the Art Center and the ArtSpace. Steve DeLaitsch resigned June 15, and Jertson moved in immediately to fill the void and direct ongoing programs.

Janesville

100 Years Back

Sad accident causes death - A deplorable accident occurred shortly after five o'clock Friday afternoon, when Mrs. August Tetzloff was hit by the engine of the east bound train a mile west of town and instantly killed.

Tourists stop occasionally in town for one thing and another and from them is gleaned the fact that is told in song and story everywhere that Minnesota is the finest state in the Union in productive power and capacity, and that the graveled road from Janesville to Waseca is the finest stretch of road on the Black and Yellow trail.

Continuing his early memoirs - G.W. Allyn tells about the erection of a log school house and its first teacher.

D.D. Carpenter had an opportunity to ride over to St. Clair Thursday morning, but on account of pressing duties he turned it down, much against his will. He stated in the presence of the writer that he has been a resident of Janesville for lo these many years, fifty or more, and that during all that long half century it has never come his way to go to that town, and he has never seen it.

NOTICE - It would be well for chicken owners to remember that the law restraining chickens applies to young chickens as well as others. In some cases these are allowed to roam about at their own sweet will, doing much damage. Owners of such should take this as a warning.

77 Years Back

Dr. Dean S. Fleming, State Health Department PReventable Disease Chief, has reported that Minnesota's 1948 polio cases total 29, as of July 15. On July 21, there were 74 patients receiving care at the Minneapolis Kenny Institute.

Janesville held a track meet in trouncing Lake Crystal here Sunday in a lop-sided game by a score of 16-7. The visitors played poor baseball, falling apart, and never having a chance with the home gang.

Program for wheat crop given - Under government loans, or purchase agreements, farmers in the county are assured of a top price of \$2.10 a bushel.

The Waseca County Fair Board held a meeting Wednesday evening and selected Louis H. Pagel of Janesville, County Commissioner for the 4th Waseca County District, to fill the vacancy on the County Fair Board caused by the death of A. F. Sponberg of New Richland, who had been a member of the fair board for several years.

50 Years Back

The Minnesota Department of Health announced today that children entering school for the first time must have received immunizations for both measles and rubella.

"Tell the News. Share the Love" will be the theme of Trinity Lutheran's two-week Vacation Bible School opening here Monday, July 30. All area children are invited and welcome to attend.

The Misses Ruth and Rachel Wagner, Marilyn Manthey and Connie Blasing of Janesville, attended the Future Homemakers of America Camp from July 15 to 20.

The Janesville American Legion dropped a 6-1 game to New Richland at Albert Lea last week and was eliminated from the Legion tourney. They had earned their way to the quarterfinals by defeating Alden.

On Wednesday afternoon, the Cele-Brate-A-Bit Birthday Club met at the home of Mrs. Bernard Lynch. Sr. The birthday of Mrs. Ema Wingen was celebrated.

25 Years Back

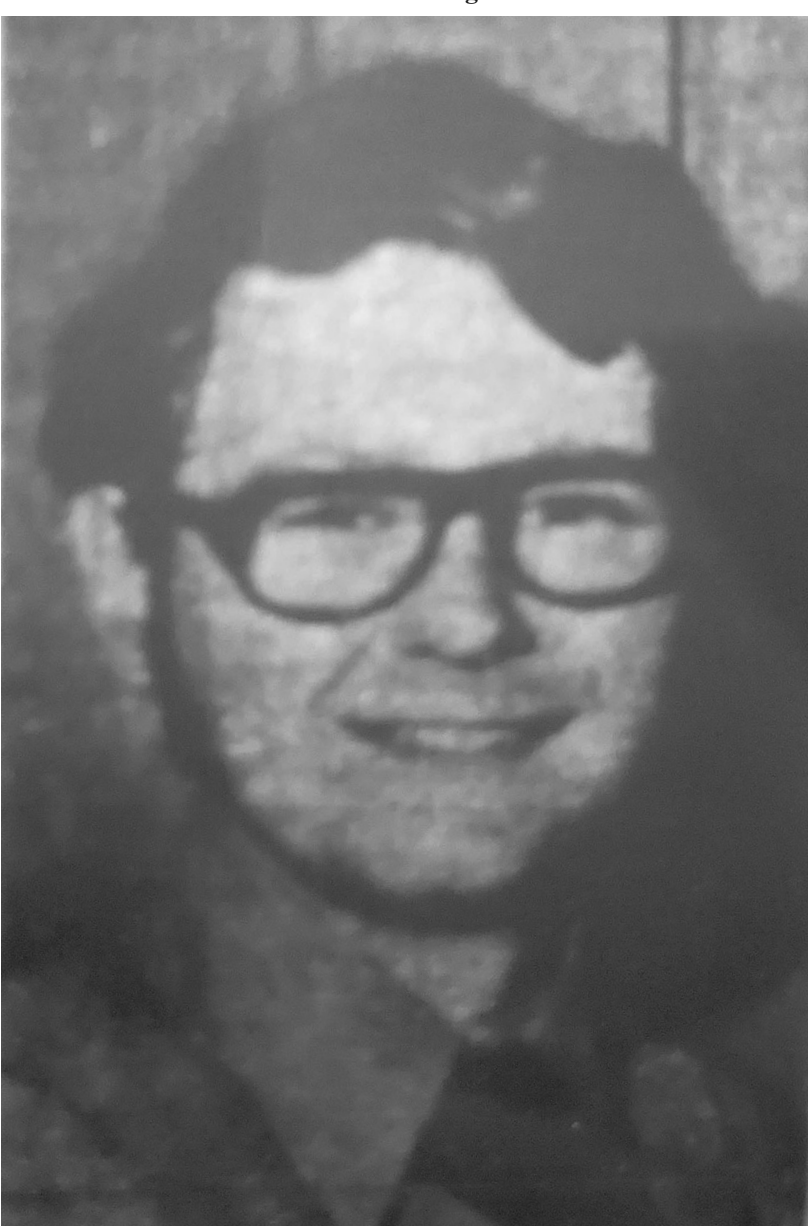
Looking down the road to future construction projects, West Second Street came up for city council discussion. The Janesville City Council granted Bolton and Menk its approval to conduct a feasibility study on West Second Street, with costs not to exceed \$3,000.

Summer travels took a St. Clair teacher halfway around the world. Judy Bach, elementary special education teacher, was one of 200 American educators to visit Japan.

Pat Smith of Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School was one of 38 area high school instructors that have been chosen to participate in Summer High School Experience programs provided through a special partnership of business and education leaders in the Mankato area.

The University of Minnesota Extension Service is sponsoring "Operation Hat Check" as a skin cancer prevention educational effort at this year's Farm Fest, Tuesday, Aug. 4- Thursday, Aug. 6, near Redwood Falls. Farmers attending Farm Fest can trade in their old baseball-style caps for a free hat that provides better protection from the sun.

50 Years Ago



-Kent Olmanson, a former radio sales representative and announcer from Chippewa Falls, Wisc., has joined the advertising staff at Waseca's Daily Journal. Olmanson, 21, a native of the St. Peter area, worked for WCFW radio for the last year, following a radio and television course at Brown Institute in Minneapolis.



- Mountains here we come! - AT SIX A.M. TODAY, a group of high school youth left St. John Lutheran Church for the Big Horn Mountains in Wyoming. Tonight they will be camping in the Badlands of South Dakota. Of the nine days in the trip, five will be spent backpacking through the mountains. The hiking leaders are Terry Gilbertson, Carolyn Gilbertson, and Pastor Merlin Bartlet.

75 Years Ago

-Albert Nelson is a one man who personally conducts a thirty-two piece band with never a thought or worry as to musician trouble, for Mr. Nelson not only leads his large orchestra, but he also plays with every one of the thirty-two instruments himself simultaneously if the need be.

-Jay Gould's 26TH Annual Million Dollar Circus offers what is unquestionably the mightiest, most sensational, most entrancing and entertaining circus and performance ever presented to the American public. In this age of super-sensations, nothing is too difficult or too dangerous to attempt, and their program is replete with some of the most unique, startling, new and stupendous features ever before presented.

100 Years Ago

-Anthony, Kan. - Harold Forest Hayter, aged fifteen, adopted son of Mr. and Mrs. L.Y. Hayter, had the unusual experience of being reunited to a sister whom he did not know he had. The sister, now Mrs. Pearl Irene Wilson, wife of the deputy treasurer of Wilson county at Fredonia, did not know either that she had a brother and neither knew who they really were, other than they had been adopted as babies.

-Corn-and-cob meal has proved better and more economical than shelled corn and whole oats in feeding baby beeves at University Farm, according to a statement made on Cattle Feeders' Day recently. Corn-and-cob meal, fed with linseed meal, corn silage and alfalfa hay gave a large, average daily gain at a smaller cost per pound of gain than shelled corn and whole oats, with the rest of the ration the same.

-The second half of the Southern Minnesota League finds three new opponents picked for the Waseca team to meet. St. James and Mankato will be met twice, Blooming Prairie three times and New Richland once, according to the schedule published last week. Inasmuch as none of these teams finished in first place, or were tied for first, there is reason to believe that Waseca will have less difficulty in annexing a few games at the least.

Ruedy from Page 3

Lieser, who has also participated since he was in school, shared similar memories. "I've made a lot of new friends along the way," he stated. "I love [being in Special Olympics], seeing the people I've gotten to know, and testing my limits."

Ruedy told Exchange members all local Special Olympics workers are volunteers. "It's deeply meaningful," she stated, "to see how our participants have grown...how our activities have helped them be more mature, more socially connected. We get to see them train, compete, and improve."

She mentioned programs exist for

very young participants ages 2 to 7 years, and continue through adulthood.

It is especially fulfilling, she added, when those who have benefited from the program at younger ages are then able to take on leadership roles, as both Lieser and Zappa have done.

According to the Special Olympics Minnesota website, there are 16 competition categories; among them are poly hockey, basketball, flag football, alpine skiing, bocce ball, bowling, golf, gymnastics, power lifting, softball, swimming, track and field, and tennis.

Ruedy told Exchange members that all money acquired through fundraising for Special Olympics is used to support local participants. Money raised is used to arrange for transportation, acquire uniforms, and for general expenses.

New Richland

100 Years Back

-A contribution of \$32 was taken up in Ellendale last week for the erection of a diving board at Beaver Lake.

-Found-An automobile side curtain has been left at the Star office for the owner; also a license tag.

-On July Fourth the New Richland and Austin teams played three innings of a scheduled game at the celebration at Wells. When this game was called by rain in the third inning New Richland had a 6 to 0 lead over Austin. Last Thursday the game was played off at wells for a \$400 purse. New Richland won the game 6 to 5 when Tyrholm poled out a three bagger with Nock, Dielke and Gomsrud on bases.

-Two Ellendale residents were arrested in Albert Lea Thursday night by the local police department when liquor was found in their automobile.

-Cash Specials-Salmon, 1 lb. cans, 29c; beans, per can 11c; syrup, 5 lb. pails, 23c; toilet paper, per roll 6c; red cherries, per can 33c; Golden Bantam corn, per can 19c; Chocolate, pure baking chocolate, per cake 19c; tooth picks, 3c; salt, per bag 7c; pineapple, per can 29c; fig cookies, per lb. 17c; olive skin soap, per bar 8c; Tanglefoot, to get rid of flies, 3 double sheets 5c; picnic plates, 12 in. package, 8c; wash rags, each 4c-Sunde-Romine Co., phone 35, New Richland.

-Waseca is fast becoming a city. The first evidence is the fact that three divorce actions were started in one week.

77 Years Back

-Fire did a lot of damage Monday night at the Faust Theatre. The evening show was well under way when at 8:40 a defective wiring in the rewind table threw a spark which ignited the film. This touched off other films and soon the interior of the fire-proof booth was enveloped in flames. About 20,000 feet of film was destroyed, and both projectors which cost about \$2,000 each probably were ruined.

-Sharrell Albright was hostess at a party for 13 of her friends last Friday evening at her home. It was her 12th birthday.

-William Sullivan was the successful bidder for the residential estate of Miss Agnes Sunde and will do some remodeling before occupying the home. The purchase price was around \$3,800.

-Every once in a while someone reminds me of news I've missed. The latest to kid me about it is Attalla Abraham who gleefully remarked that he was gone from the store a whole week and it failed to "make" The Star. That was back in June when he was called down into Oklahoma by the death of a cousin. Some time we're going to make trouble for those Abraham clerks who hold up news from us.--C. W. Brown

-Elmer Lee accompanied Reuben Johnson of Clarks Grove, Oscar Hendrickson of New Richland and D. P. Moon of Norwalk, Calif., to the northern part of the state at Lake Winnibigoshish Wednesday morning where they enjoyed fishing, returning home Sunday.

-Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Storlie of Waseca and Mr. and Mrs. Orville Johnston of Albert Lea were Saturday evening guests of Mr. and Mrs. Dan Kaufman.



50 Years Back

-Pee-Wee tractor pull will be held at the annual Farm-City Day in New Richland this year. Pictured are Gary Hagen and Brad Nelson holding the prize trophies, and Orlene Moden on the Pee-Wee tractor.

-Mr. and Mrs. John G. Johnson of Albert Lea, Mrs. Palma Hanson and Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Knutson were Sunday evening visitors at the Selmer Gulbrandson home.

-Mr. and Mrs. E. M. Reistad attended a birthday party Sunday at the Earl Thompson home in honor of his mother, Mrs. Gladys Thompson's birthday.

-Unofficial UFO Landing?--Delano Bartness, a farmer near Hartland, was spraying his cornfield when he discovered a most peculiar disturbance in the midst of the rows. It was in the shape of a circle and estimated to be about 12 to 15 feet across. In the circle there were vice holes in the ground, all about a foot and a half deep. Other smaller but deeper holes also appeared in the circle. The dirt near the holes had what appeared to be white ashes on it. The corn leaves on the outside of the circle were silted, but still green, as though they had been exposed to extreme heat. It's been nearly two weeks since the incident was noticed and most everything in the area is back to normal.

25 Years Back

-The congregation of Vista Lutheran Church, rural New Richland, will celebrate the 140th anniversary of the organization of the church, Sunday morning, Aug. 9 at 10 a.m. worship service.

-New Richland-Hartland Elementary School in New Richland welcomes Paul Sparby to the position of the principal. Paul accepted the position this spring, following the resignation of Ken Meyers. Ken had served in that capacity for 19 years.

-Minnesota Lake's Festag royalty was crowned following the parade Wednesday, July 15. They are from left: Miss Congeniality Melissa Bruegger, First Runner-Up April Becker, Miss Festag 1998 Katie Maras, and Second Runner-Up Taryn Treanor. Parents of the girls are Richard and Cindy Bruegger, Richard and Anne Becker, Denise and Brian Esser and Arlyn and Sandy Treanor. Katie is the granddaughter of Dennis and Barb Byrne of New Richland.

Compiled by Jessica Lutgens

Waseca schools students named to the B honor roll		
Last	First	Gr
DeRaad	Miya	10
Draeger	Kelsey	10
Frye	Lily	10
Gehring	Jude	10
Gustafson	Destiney	10
Hansen	Dylan	10
Hiller	Meraina	10
Hiniker	Wesley	10
Johnston	Jordan	10
Kaiser	Nathan	10
Kilmer	Alyssa	10
Godwin	Tristan	11
Groll	Lucas	11
Groskreutz	Aiden	11
Gustafson	Keaton	11
Hodgkins	David	11
Hoehn	Ellie	11
Johnson	Chloe	11
Kalbow	Peyton	11
Kelm	Addison	11
Lopez	Gabriela	11
Ludwig	Bennett	11
Marquez	Camila	11
Matz	Mason	11
McQuery	Lucas	11
Mlenek	Jacob	11
Ohnstad	Carson	11
Patel	Aayu	11
Patel	Arpee	11
Paulson	Jameson	11
Peterson	Keegan	11
Pickett	Cejay	11
Radke	Erik	11
Russell	Damarius	11
Sanchez Pliego	Ashley	11
Schulz	John	11
Sell	Jordan	11
Shoemaker	Aiden	11
Volovsek	Molly	11
Wadd	Mason	11
Wikan	Isabella	11
Below	Grace	12
Cacchione	Aurora	12
Cariveau	Charles	12
Eldeen	Allie	12
Engel-Mueller	Nathaniel	12
Eustice	Alexandria	12
Ferch	Makenzi	12
Hagen	Ellen	12
Haley	Sarah	12
Hasselquist	McKyla	12
Heyer	Logan	12
Hyland	Samuel	12
Johnson	Gaige	12
Pilaczynski	Cheyenne	12
Reyna	Stacy	12
Ritchie-Brady	Patrick	12
Robran	Andrew	12
Schroeder	Colton	12
Schulz	Kayla	12
Sieberg	Cody	12
Skinner	Kaleigh	12
Slattery	Caitlin	12
Swenson	Paige	12
Teague	Sabastian	12
Theobald	Zachary	12
Thompson	Jacob	12
Vagts	Cody	12
VanEngelenburg	Gulyan	12

Writer with local roots signing books August 5

By DEB BENTLY
News editor

Although author Susan Rucker now lives elsewhere, there are a number of ways she will always be a Bluejay. “I grew up here,” she states. “My parents live here. This community gave me the foundations I’ve been building on ever since.”

Rucker, the 1988 valedictorian at Waseca High School, is now an author of her second book, and will be signing copies at the Waseca Library from about 6 to 7 p.m. the evening of Monday, August 5. One of 30 contributors to the just-released compilation from Successful Books press, Rucker credits her national reputation as a motivational speaker and “people whisperer” as the basis for having been invited to collaborate on the book.

“I’ll be speaking for about 15 minutes at the start,” Rucker explains regarding August 5. “Then I’ll sign any copies people have, whether they bring them along or buy one from me there.”

Rucker’s contribution to the hard-cover book titled “Rise Up” is a chapter on what she calls “overcoming overwhelm.”

“There are times when all of us want to give up,” she explains. “We’re overwhelmed by the difficulty of accomplishing our goal, or we’ve decided there are too many obstacles.”

“What I hope people will take away from not only my writing but the whole book is that they should keep going. I want to help them find the strength to stay in a difficult situation not only ‘even though’ it’s hard, but maybe ‘because’ it’s hard.

“When we face our fears, when we keep moving forward even though we’re tempted to quit, that’s when we grow, when we learn. That’s when we feel a real sense of accomplishment when we come out the other side.”

For Rucker, writing her portion of the book was a challenge of that nature.

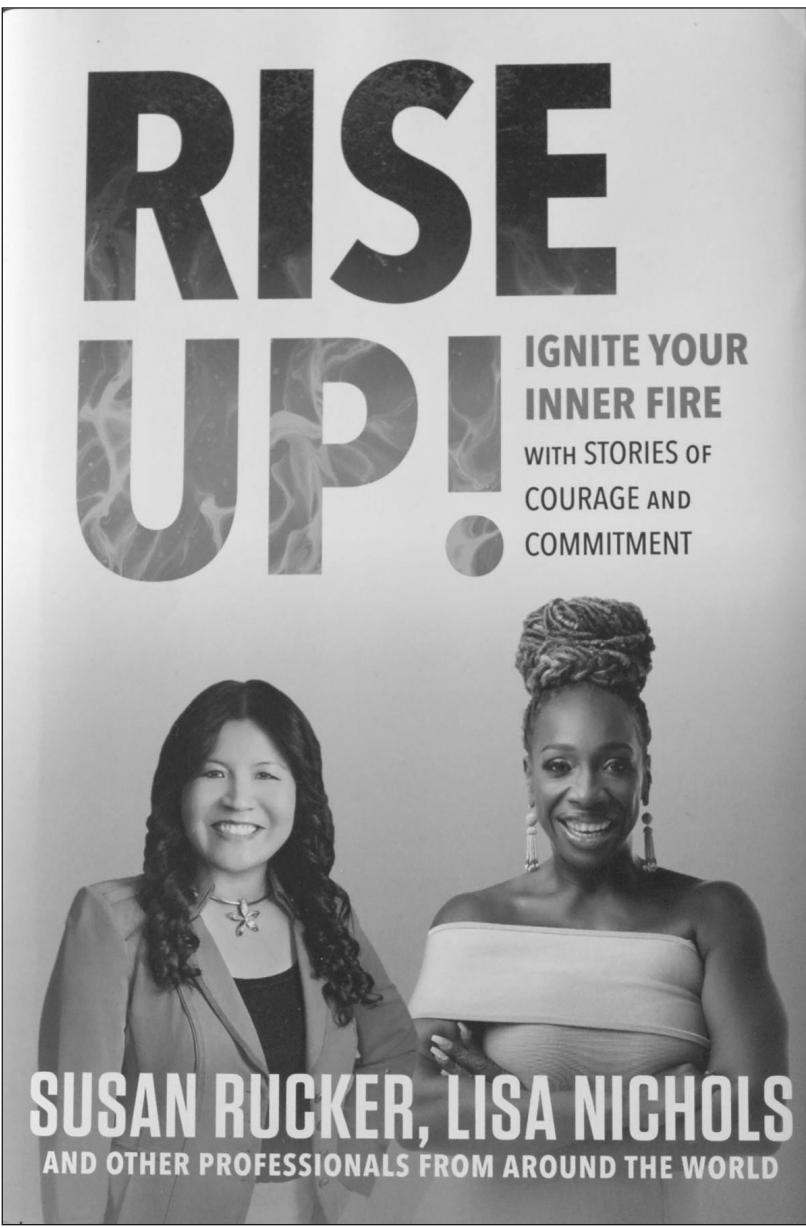
“It is not my goal to become an author,” she comments. “It’s hard work. It asks you to dig deep and find the words to express complicated ideas. I did it for this book, though, because I liked its purpose and I like [co-author] Lisa Nichols.”

Rucker explains the book is the brainchild of internationally known television show host Lisa Nichols, Rucker learned “Rise Up” was being organized and compiled thanks to having interacted with Nichols numerous times, including having been a guest on her show.

The soul searching, writing and re-writing are all worth it now that the published version is something she can share. Rucker observes. “For me, it’s not about selling books. It’s about helping people find their way through difficult situations. It’s about helping them be the best possible version of themselves.”

The theme seems like a consistent one for Rucker, who makes public appearances as a speaker and consultant. She describes the central focus of her role as helping people and teams recognize the impact of their work and, when needed, improve it.

“I believe when people aren’t



Nationally known consultant and success coach Susan Rucker is an author of recently released “Rise Up!” Rucker grew up in Waseca, graduating from Waseca High School in 1988.

■ Court

from Page 1

Grams: “Without her, our program would not have gotten started 10 years ago. She has worked hard to keep our drug court thriving.”

Grams, in turn, says that although she has been in the field of probation for 24 years, the most recent 10 working with Drug Court have brought her the strongest sense of accomplishment and personal satisfaction. “We get to make a difference by helping our drug court participants restore their lives.” Also rewarding, she says, is “the ripple effect it has

on their families, employers, and community. Court has also forged stronger working relationships among the criminal justice professionals in our community.”

In its ten years of existence, the Steele/Waseca Drug Court program has “graduated” more than 100 area individuals. Three of those graduates, including Holmseth, spoke during last week’s ceremony.

“Nobody thought I was going to make it,” he stated during his talk. “I had an attitude about the justice system and everybody in it.”

Holmseth said his cynicism continued until one day he saw tears in Cornelius’s eyes during a graduation ceremony for another participant.

“That compassion showed me a side of the justice system I was never

willing to consider existed,” he stated. “That’s when I had to realize the system is maybe not out to get me, and maybe that chip on my shoulder needed to be broken.”

Also a speaker during the celebration was graduate Emily Nelson. Nelson told of having been raised by substance-addicted parents. “From the beginning,” she observed, “my entire life was centered around addiction.” After being introduced to methamphetamine at 19, she said she entered a “very long, vicious cycle of abuse, crime, and incarceration.

“It was rare when I wasn’t on a local jail roster,” she mentioned, saying she saw no future for herself except to “die with a needle in my arm.”

Faced with the choice whether to

enter Drug Court or serve yet another sentence and “miss another two years of my son’s life,” Nelson took part in the program beginning in 2017.

She told everyone gathered at the session she is now working toward the goal of becoming a professionally licensed counselor.

As the celebration closed, plaques were presented to members of the law enforcement and justice systems who regularly contribute to the Drug Court’s on-going programs. Honorees included Steele and Waseca County district court judges, members of the county attorney office, Drug Court coordinator Nicole Grams, probation supervisors, law enforcement officers, and more.

■ Internet

from Page 1

derground and creates a channel about 5 inches in diameter.

Operators say the machine is capable of digging hundreds of feet down and of creating a continuous opening about a mile in length. When necessary, it can drill through solid rock, but those extremes are not called for on this project.

Elias says the pipe being placed to serve as a casing for the fiber is between 3 and 3.5 feet below the ground in ditches, at least 5 feet beneath roadways, 10 feet below culverts and a minimum of 15 feet below water channels. He says the path of the channel and the mechanics used to create it follow rules set by a number of state agencies, in-

cluding the Department of Natural Resources.

Once the directional bore has created the needed underground opening, the machine pulls an orange pipe about 1.25 inches in diameter through to line the channel. For those who come across the crew and their vehicles, the giant reel of what looks like oversized orange hose is the “pipe” in question.

Depending on the number of specialized digs—waterways, culverts, and passages under roads—Elias says the vertical borer team completes about two miles of underground channel a day. He also clarifies that the equipment will no longer be able to operate once the ground freezes, and so the work will need to be continued next summer. The laying of the orange pipe is the second of five phases Elias named.

Elias invites farmers to contact Midwest with information about any underground tiles which extend into

ditches The company’s number is (952) 884-3661.

The next step will be to actually insert the cable into the pipe and set what Elias called “pedestals” at each location where a connection is arranged for. Crews from Midwest will also be doing the work for that phase, and are likely to begin later this summer.

The cable’s diameter is about the same as a dime or a nickel, Elias says, but it encloses 100 glass fibers. Each connection on the network—home or business—will have its service delivered by one of those fibers, which are capable of sending or delivering a gigabyte’s worth of information in a second.

The fourth installation phase, also scheduled to be performed by Midwest crews, is to run the needed connecting cable from the “pedestal” to the outside of the customers’ home or office.

A fifth crew will install the service

inside the structures.

The current timeline has the system up and running sometime near the end of summer 2025.

A couple of elements are still in the “to be determined” phase.

For one, Waseca County and Bevcmm applied for an additional grant which would add St. Mary’s township to the planned network. The list of successful applications has not yet been released by the Office of Broad-band development, but if the grant is received, some elements of the plan may be expanded.

One other detail, according to Elias, is that there must be a small building located somewhere fairly central within the system. The building will act as a hub for the wiring and connections, allowing the services customers request to be delivered. The location for that structure is still being finalized.

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Notice to Voters

August 13, 2024

Statewide Primary Election



Review the information below to learn about upcoming elections.

Access Your Sample Ballot	Find Your Polling Place	Additional Election Information
- Your official ballot will have the names of all candidates for your precinct. - To see a list of the names of candidates and questions that will be on the ballot for your precinct visit: mnvotes.gov/myballot - You may also be able to view your sample ballot online by scanning:  - You may request to have a free copy of your sample ballot mailed to you.	- Election Day is Tuesday, August 13. - You can find your Election Day Polling Place by visiting: mnvotes.gov/pollfinder Voting Before Election Day - You can vote early with an absentee ballot starting Friday, June 28. - You can vote early by mail, in person, or from the military or abroad. - Learn more by scanning: 	- Election Day Polling Places are open 7am to 8pm. - You may live in a precinct where a ballot is mailed to you as a mail ballot voter. - If voting by mail, return your ballot no later than 8pm on Election Day. - Election results will be available starting after 8pm on Election Day at: electionresults.sos.state.mn.us - Check to see if you are pre-registered to vote by scanning: 

Contact Your Local Election Official	Important Information Regarding Your Ballot
Your county election official: - Can mail you a sample ballot - Keeps your voter registration record - Handles other parts of the voting process Election official: Tammy Spooner General phone: 507-835-0610 Website: wasecacounty.gov 307 State St N Waseca, MN 56093	A primary election determines which candidates will be on the ballot in the November general election. There may be two kinds of offices on your primary ballot: partisan offices and nonpartisan offices. Partisan candidates will be listed in multiple columns on the primary ballot. Each column will list the candidates for one major party. You can only vote for candidates from one political party. If you vote for candidates from more than one political party, your votes will not count. You decide when you vote which one of the parties you will vote for—Minnesota does not have political party registration. Nonpartisan offices will be listed on the back side of the primary ballot. You can vote for any candidate. The candidates who get the most votes will be on the November general election ballot.



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STATE OF MINNESOTA
Before the
Waseca County Board of Commissioners
SITTING AS THE DRAINAGE AUTHORITY FOR
Waseca County Ditch 35

In the Matter of:

JOHN E KRAUSE TRUSTEE
DORIS K KRAUSE TRUSTEE
10769 300TH AVE
WASECA, MN 56093

Petition for Authority to Use Waseca
County Ditch 35 as an Outlet

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, the Waseca Board of Commissioners of the Waseca County Drainage Authority, sitting as the drainage authority for Waseca County Ditch 35, pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 103E.401, shall hold a public hearing on the petition of John and Doris Krause to use Waseca County Ditch 35 as an outlet for drainage. The petition requests authority to use Waseca County Ditch 35 as an outlet for drainage from the following property:

14 acres in the NE ¼ of the NW ¼, section 14 of Wilton Township with PID # 11.014.0120

The hearing shall be held at 9:30AM on August 6th, 2024, at the Waseca County Board of Commissioners Room, located in the Waseca County East Annex at 300 N. State St. Waseca, MN 56093. All interested parties may appear and be heard.

Brian Harguth
Board Chair

Dated: 7-02-2024

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 12, 19, 26 and August 2, 2024

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**NOTICE OF FILING DATES
FOR 2024 CITY ELECTION**

NOTICE is hereby given by the City of Waseca, Minnesota that the first day of filing of candidates for the November 5, 2024 City General Election is **Tuesday, July 30, 2024**, and the last day for filing is **Tuesday, August 13, 2024**.

The offices to be filled at said election are as follows:

Mayor – two year term
Council member Ward 1 – four year term
Council member Ward 2 – four year term
Council member Ward 3 – four year term

Candidates may file in the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 508 South State Street, Waseca, Minnesota, during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., from July 30, 2024, to August 13, 2024. The City Clerk's office will be open until 5:00 p.m. on August 13th. Candidates must be over 21 years of age and have maintained residence in the Ward from which the candidate seeks election for 30 days before the election. Filing fee is \$2.00.

Julia Hall
City Clerk

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 5, 12, 19, 26, and August 2 and 9, 2024.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF WASECA**

Notice is hereby given that the City of Waseca will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, August 7th, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at the City Hall Council Chambers located at 508 S State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comment on the progress and performance of the grant that the City of Waseca received from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Small Cities Development Program for funds to rehabilitate low to moderate income, owner-occupied, single-family households. The public hearing is intended to provide citizens with an update about the program. All persons who may have an interest in the program are encouraged to attend the public hearing.

Julia Hall
City Clerk
City of Waseca
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 19, 26, 2024

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642
August 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7pm HALL BINGO	2 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	3
4	5	6	7 6pm BAR Bingo	8 7pm HALL BINGO	9 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	10
11	12 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	13	14 6pm BAR Bingo	15 7pm HALL BINGO	16 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	17
18	19	20	21 6pm BAR Bingo	22 7pm HALL BINGO	23 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	24
25	26	27	28 6pm BAR Bingo	29 7pm HALL BINGO	30 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	31

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NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the Waseca City Council will hold a public hearing on **WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Council Chambers, 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093, to consider the following Ordinance:

ORDINANCE NO. 1116 – AMENDING CHAPTER 154 OF THE WASECA ZONING ORDINANCE IN REGARD TO INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

A complete copy of Ordinance No. 1116 is available for public inspection in the office of the City Clerk, 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

Published in the *Waseca County Pioneer*, Friday, July 26th, 2024, and Friday, August 2nd, 2024.

Julia Hall
City Clerk

Attention Woodville Township Residents:
The following offices will be up for election to be filled at the November general election.
Treasurer, 4-year term
Supervisor, 6-year term
Filings are open Tuesday, July 30, 2024 at 8 a.m., and close Tuesday, August 13, 2024 at 5 p.m.
Interested parties should email the township clerk at woodvilletownshipclerk@outlook.com or by phone at 507-461-0193.
Andrew Miller, Woodville Township Clerk
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 19, 2024

NOTICE OF PUBLIC ACCURACY TEST

Waseca County Property & Election Services Office will test the electronic voting machines to be used for vote tabulation in the Primary Election of August 13th, 2024.

Testing will be held on Wednesday, August 7th & Thursday, August 8th, from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. in the Election Room on the main floor of the Waseca County Courthouse, 307 North State Street, Waseca, MN.

The Public is invited to attend.

Tamara J. Spooner, Director of Property & Election Services

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 26, 2024

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING DATES FOR FILING AFFIDAVITS OF CANDIDACY

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Independent School District No. 829, State of Minnesota, as follows:

1. The period for filing affidavits of candidacy for the office of school board member of Independent School District No. 829 shall begin on July 30, 2024 and shall close on August 13, 2024. An affidavit of candidacy must be filed in the office of the school district clerk and the \$2 filing fee paid prior to 5:00 o'clock p.m. on August 13, 2024.
2. The clerk is hereby authorized and directed to cause notice of said filing dates to be published in the official newspaper of the district at least two (2) weeks prior to the first day to file affidavits of candidacy.
3. The clerk is hereby authorized and directed to cause notice of said filing dates to be posted at the administrative offices of the school district at least ten (10) days prior to the first day to file affidavits of candidacy.
4. The notice of said filing dates shall be in substantially the following form:

NOTICE OF FILING DATES FOR ELECTION TO THE SCHOOL BOARD
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 829
WASECA
STATE OF MINNESOTA

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the period for filing affidavits of candidacy for the office of school board member of Independent School District No. 829 shall begin on Tuesday, July 30, 2024, and shall close at 5:00 o'clock p.m. on Tuesday, August 13, 2024.
The general election shall be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024. At that election, three members will be elected to the School Board for a term of 4 years. Affidavits of Candidacy are available from Julie Anderson, School District Clerk, or the Superintendent's Office, 501 East Elm Avenue, Waseca. The filing fee for this office is \$2. A candidate for this office must be an eligible voter, must be 21 years of age or more on assuming office, must have been a resident of the school district from which the candidate seeks election for thirty (30) days before the general election, and must have no other affidavit on file at the same primary or next ensuing general election. The affidavits of candidacy must be filed in the office of the superintendent and the filing fee paid prior to 5:00 o'clock p.m. on Tuesday, August 13, 2024.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 19 and 26, 2024

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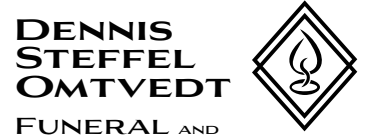
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Local Scouts



Waseca troops 85 and 1085 held their court of awards the evening of Sunday, July 21. Jack Anderson of Waseca and Sam Ryan of Janesville earned Eagle Scout honors. Troop 85 is led by Shawn Pomeroy. Troop 1085 is led by Nicole Busse.



SMIF seeking applications for Small Town Grants Applications due August 26

OWATONNA, Minn., July 15, 2024 – Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) is currently accepting applications for its Small Town Grant program. Towns, or Native nations, with populations of 10,000 or less in SMIF’s 20-county region are eligible. Nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, public institutions and units or agencies of local, state, federal and tribal government are encouraged to apply. Requests of up to \$10,000 for eligible projects will be considered.

The Small Town Grant program seeks to invest in collaborative initiatives which improve the way a community works together, solves challenges, creates a welcoming community and sense of belonging for all. SMIF seeks proposals which focus on collaboration throughout the project and will impact the culture, education, economy and/or social aspects of the community. Proposals to launch new projects or expand existing initiatives will be considered.

Since 2017, SMIF has awarded 114 Small Town Grants, impacting more than 150,000 residents in the smallest communities of southern Minnesota. Examples of past grant projects include: the establishment of a new organization to unite various cultures in

town, a new event to draw tourism and create a welcoming atmosphere, strategic planning for city growth, marketing videos to retain and attract residents, community-wide branding initiatives, a welcome basket program for new residents, translation services for non-English speaking residents and more.

The Small Town Grant program is supported, in part, by a generous donation in memory of Paul O. Johnson who wanted southern Minnesota’s smallest communities to thrive. Paul’s legacy is being continued by his family, Amy De Jong, Paula Rehder and Scott Johnson.

“These funds have been an incredible way to jumpstart collaborative projects that help create welcoming communities,” said Tim Penny, president and CEO of SMIF. “Once again, we are grateful to Paul Johnson’s family for their generous support.”

Applications are due to SMIF by August 26, 2024. Awardees will be notified by October 15, 2024. For the application and guidelines, visit www.smifoundation.org/smalltowngrant. For questions, contact Sarah Scheffert, community vitality specialist, at 507-214-7015 or sarahs@smifoundation.org.

Waseca Exchange club earns national awards at convention

During the Exchange Clubs National Convention, in San Antonio Texas, this past week our local Exchange Club was conferred with multiple National Awards. The highest number they have ever received since their founding in 1982. Club president Mikhail Rostislavovich was given the “Distinguished Club Presidents Award” for his commitment to the community of Waseca and his strong belief in the principles of the National Exchange Club.” Said Tracy Edwards, Chief Executive Officer during the ceremony.

Over the course of the week the Waseca Club was bestowed with a variety of National Awards one of the awards was National Exchange “Big E” given to the Waseca Club for reaching Exchange’s Highest Standards of Excellence in the areas of extension and expansion, efficiency, and education. “The Waseca Club under the direction of Mikhail grew by 150 percent., he and the club worked with many of the organizations and community members in Waseca. Under his leadership the Book of Golden Deeds was given out, The Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award, and the establishment of a new Freedom Shrine at the Waseca County Court House to name a few.”

Said Katie Smith Director of the Lakes and Prairies Region which covers part of Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska.

The club was also honored with the National C.A.R.E. Award. Out of the 700 participating clubs in the country 3 were chosen for their outstanding projects in the area of Child Abuse Prevention Waseca was one of them both National President Michale Reichek and Lakes and Praies District President Sharon Klien and Regional Vice President Annette Duncan congratulated Rostislavovich and his club for their outstanding work on behalf of abused children in our nation.

At the culmination of the awards ceremonies, Rostislavovich was honored with 3 and 10 national membership award pins for growing his club with some of the largest numbers this year in Exchange. National President Reichek joked “Mikhail you have been on my stage way too many times this week.” But it wouldn’t be the last time Reichek would see Rostislavovich on the stage. During the closing ceremony, Mikhail was honored as one of the National Exchanges Exchangites of the Year.

Ann Fitch the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Executive Director was at the Na-



The Waseca Exchange club was celebrated during the national convention in San Antonio Texas. Pictured are National President Michale Reichek; Lakes and Praies District President Sharon Klien; Regional Vice President Annette Duncan; and local leaders Dwight Tostenson and Mikhail Rostislavovich.



Mikhail Rostislavovich. Exchange Club grow and reestablish its strong ties in the community.

Rostislavovich said he was both humbled and honored to have his club and its members recognized after a year of hard change and growth. Our club is an exemplary example of what the Exchange motto is, “Unity For Service.” Our community and all of its service organizations Rotary, Lions, and Masons is what help make Waseca a strong resilient place to live.

Dwight Tostenson who also attended the convention said he was excited to see the Waseca

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