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Catfish fry and shrimp dinners at VFW 5:30 p.m. Nov 17

A Cajun catfish fry and shrimp dinner fundraiser from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Waseca VFW will benefit the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center.

Bluejay Blast Nov. 18

The twelfth annual Bluejay Blast will be Saturday, November 18. The event is sponsored by the Waseca Schools PTO to raise money for classroom use.

Drive-thru Lefse Pickup 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. November 18

North Waseca Lutheran Church, 40430 120th St. Waseca, is holding its fourth yearly “Lefse Pickup” on Saturday, Nov. 18 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. A package of 15 Lefse “quarters” sells for \$10. Pre-orders are preferred: To place your order call or text Greg Thomson at 612-619-3868 or Roy Srp at 507-521-1185.

Books and Brews Nov. 18 at Waseca Library

Waseca Public Library has found the perfect combo for a book club: bookworm babble and beer. Stop by the library to pick up this month’s book discussion selection, Our Missing Hearts by Celeste Ng. Book club begins at 4 pm on Saturday, November 18th at Half Pint Brewing Company. Drinks and food not provided but can be purchased.

Teen Journals Workshop 1 p.m. December 1

A Waseca Library workshop will focus on helping teens create interactive journals. This 1 p.m. December 1 event is free and open to all interested teens. More information is available from library staff, 507-835-2910.

Lego Story Time at Waseca Library 10 a.m. Dec 2

Children ages 4-6 are invited to bring an adult to a monthly event which asks them to create a Lego scene meant to illustrate a story. Get more information by visiting the library or calling 835-2910.

Holiday Cookie Dazzle 9 a.m. until noon Dec. 2

Achieving Dreams for Disabilities will host a “holiday cookie dazzle” at the Waseca Senior Citizen Center on Saturday, December 2 from 9 a.m. to noon. Plates of 12 cookies will be available for \$7 with breads and other treats priced individually. To donate baked goods, contact Kari Haslip in advance at 835-2058. All proceeds go towards programs for those with disabilities.

Briefs continued on 7

A word from The Word

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses.

2 Corinthians 12:9



Author Patty Wetterling signs a copy of the book she authored, “Dear Jacob” at the Waseca Public Library. With her is book co-author Joy Baker.

Photo by Deb Bently

Talk by “Dear Jacob” author Patty Wetterling draws more than 200

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

From 1989 to 2016, it was probably Minnesota’s most famous “unsolved mystery”: Where was Jacob Wetterling? Kidnapped from an otherwise quiet neighborhood in St. Joseph on October 22, 1989, the 11-year-old’s fate was unknown until the research and writing of Minnesota blogger Joy Baker reopened the case and led to the uncovering of new evidence.

Baker’s work was energized when she came to know Jared Schierl, now in his 30s, who had been abducted and sexually abused in January of 1989 in a community not far from St. Joseph, and who was anxious to find closure to the incident which had profoundly affected his youth and coming of age. Schierl, and soon Baker, were convinced the same attacker was involved in both inci-

Author continued on 9



Sft. Cade Wolfe

Five U.S. soldiers killed in crash

A 24-year-old Mankato native with ties to Waseca County was among the five U.S. soldiers who died in a helicopter crash during a training exercise in the Mediterranean Sea on Friday, November 10.

Sgt. Cade Wolfe, son of Waseca County Sheriff’s Deputy Scott Wolfe, was a 2018 Mankato East High School graduate who was killed in a refueling accident during training that caused the aircraft carrying them to crash into the Mediterranean Sea, the American defense department said in a statement on Sunday.

“This is devastating news that reverberates across the entire special operations community.” Lt. Gen. Jonathan Braga, commander of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, said in a statement.

“We mourn the loss of these five incredible soldiers, each of them a national treasure. They hail from rare patriotic families with deep military service ties that span multiple generations and formations,” he said.

Friends and family mourned Wolfe on social media over the weekend, remembering a fitness fanatic who was passionate about serving in the military. They say Wolfe was caring, and brought energy and joy to others around him.

In an interview with the Star Tribune, Chad Ziemke, general manager of the Fitness for 10 gym in Mankato, said, “Cade just wanted to make people laugh and wanted to laugh himself.”

Wolfe was a member of Fitness for 10 since it opened in 2013 and liked to work out with his dad and brother when they were all back in town. Ziemke said Wolfe was “kind of a knucklehead” when he first joined as a teen but grew into a

Wolfe continued on 4

WHS Honors Veterans

Jeremiah Miller serves as guest speaker

Service, dedication, brotherhood

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Waseca Junior and Senior High School hosted guest speaker Jeremiah Miller as it honored individuals from all branches of the military during its annual Veterans Day program in the high school gymnasium Friday morning, Nov. 10, 2023.

“Do not take their bravery for granted,” Waseca principal Jason Miller said as he welcomed students, staff, and local veterans. “Bravery is not the absence of fear. Bravery is feeling the fear, the doubt, the insecurity and deciding that something else is more important. We are the home of the free because of the brave—thanks to the men and women of our armed forces.”

Senior student council members Hannah La-Croix and Tricia Cox led the pledge of allegiance, then introduced the band before the American Legion demonstrated the flag folding ceremony.

“The Star Spangled Banner” and “I Hear America Singing” were performed by the WHS marching band and select choir.

Miller was then introduced as the Veteran speaker for the day.

Miller was born and raised in Waseca. He enlisted in the United States Army Reserves in 1994, attending basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina in 1995 prior to graduating from Waseca High School in 1996.

Miller spent a few years in the Inactive ready reserves before he joined the Minnesota Army National Guard in 2002. In 2005-07, he completed a 22-month deployment: Some 16 of those months were spent in Iraq. In 2009-10 he completed a 13-month deployment, all of it in Afghanistan. In 2018 he completed a 9-month tour in Kuwait. In



Local Waseca Veterans present the flag following a demonstration of the traditional flag folding ceremony. Below, Jeremiah Miller.

Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens

2010 Jeremiah completed the Warrant Officer Basic Course. He is currently a Chief Warrant Officer 3 and is a Training, Advising, and Counseling Officer for the Minnesota Warrant Officer Program.

Currently, Miller works full time for Andersen Windows as a recruiter; he and his wife have owned 4 Seasons Apparel and More in Waseca for 10 years. In attendance were his wife Jaala, his four children and his grandson.

Miller started his speech by recognizing the Marine Corps, followed by all those who served. He said he felt the loss of many close friends, veterans who took their own lives. “Thank a Veteran, give

Program continued on 8



WAF awards ceremony

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

The Waseca Area Foundation/EF Johnson Foundation (WAF) held its annual fall grant awards program at the Central Building in Waseca on Wednesday afternoon, Nov. 8.

What started as a “\$6,000 pipe dream” in the 80s with a first grant of \$600 has now allowed the organization to distribute well over \$12.5 million—more than \$350,000 of that in 2022 alone.

“As you drive around town, you



Recipients of grants awarded during the Waseca Area Foundation’s annual awards program Nov. 8 at Waseca’s Central Building.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

see things that make a difference in the community for people of all ages,” WAF board member David Oraskavitch said as the program began. “We make a difference in Waseca, New Richland, Janesville, and all of Waseca County. People continue to support us year after

year; we wouldn’t be able to do this without them. Thank you to everyone here and for the continued generosity of those who live in this community, who continue to support these programs.”

An impressive number of grant awards were announced. A total of

\$4,000 was awarded to NRHEG Schools.

Recipients were asked to provide general information about their organization, then to describe the project the grant will support.

Waseca Public Library: \$9,500 for Summer concert series, monthly teen

events, “get-lit” subscription boxes; the Waseca Water Carnival at Trowbridge Park.

Waseca County Sheriff’s Posse: \$1,500 for uniforms, belts, saddle

Awards continued on 8



Compostings

by Al Batt

A lengthy, one-sided conversation

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

Could I get a cheeseburger without the cheese?

Why don't you just order a hamburger?

I don't like hamburgers.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I started the day by having breakfast. Great idea. I couldn't believe I'd thought of it. I walked around an airport terminal. Another step on the journey. People played bumper cars with their wheeled suitcases while their eyes were riveted to device screens. It's astonishing what those small things can do. I grew up thinking it would be incredible to own a device like a Swiss Army knife.

I couldn't help but rate the foodstuffs being devoured by fellow travelers. I'm not proud of that, but I didn't judge the person, just the victuals. There was a lot of "What is that?" I need to keep moving in an airport, otherwise, I feel as if I'm taking up space at the front of a line.

I was headed home from telling stories at a festival in Illinois. At a stop for fuel, I became involved in a lengthy one-sided conversation with a gas pump. It peppered me with questions. "Are you a rewards member? What is your zip code? Would you like a car wash?"

I was in Dixon, which is Ronald Reagan's hometown and the site of the Petunia Festival and is the Catfish Capital of Illinois. I heard a lot about Rita Crundwell, the town's former comptroller and owner of 400 show horses. She was trusted, which made the magnitude of her betrayal inconceivable. She misappropriated \$54 million from the coffers of a town of 15,380, the largest municipal fraud in US history. In five months, she stole \$3.2 million, which was more than the city's \$2.9 million budget for that period. She was released from prison after serving less than 8 1/2 years of a 19-year, 7-month sentence. Why did she do it? It wasn't because she hadn't acquired a taste for Marmite or Vegemite. Marmite is a salty and yeasty brown spread that finds its place on toast in the UK. Its advertising campaign acknowledged people either love it or hate it. Vegemite is as Australian as kangaroos. It's another yeast extract spread, dark reddish-brown and salty. The two taste similar,

but Vegemite is saltier and more bitter with a thicker consistency. I'll stick to peanut butter.

I'VE LEARNED

I saw a deer in a field as I drove down the highway. Fortunately, I'd just seen a lighted sign saying, "Don't swerve for deer." I didn't swerve for that one.

I met an engineer from Texas in Alaska. He wanted to see a big state. He was a tall guy who bumped his head due to his altitude. He explained that the collision happened because he was bald and hair acts as an antenna signaling warnings of oncoming impacts.

A man needed to move a fox, a chicken and a sack of corn across a river. He had a rowboat, which could only carry him and one other thing. If the fox and the chicken were left together, the fox would eat the chicken. If the chicken and the corn were left together, the chicken would eat the corn. How did the man do it? The man and the chicken crossed the river (the fox and corn are safe together) and he left the chicken on the other side and went back across. The man then took the fox across the river, and since he couldn't leave the fox and chicken together, he brought the chicken back. Since the chicken and corn couldn't be left together, he left the chicken and took the corn across and left it with the fox. He returned to pick up the chicken and rowed across the river one last time.

NATURE NOTES

I eliminated some common burdock plants. I've encountered a kinglet, goldfinch and hummingbird killed after becoming entangled in a burdock. The birds had become caught by the hooked bracts surrounding the flower heads and seed heads. The more a bird struggled, the more ensnared it became. Other small birds reported to have suffered the same fate after seeking insects or seeds include gnatcatchers, nuthatches, chickadees, warblers and siskins.

Trees that provide nuts and berries for food, and feed caterpillars are great for birds. Doug Tallamy, a professor at the University of Delaware, discovered that oaks support 557 caterpillar species, black cherry supports 456 species, and maples support up to 297 species. Tallamy said, "No insects, no baby birds."

MEETING ADJOURNED

It's not them or us. It's them and us. Be kind.

Where would we be without trees?

Trees are magnificent and wonderful, the longest-living organisms on earth: Where would the rest of us be without them?

Some trees live to be fewer than 100 years old, some live into the thousands of years. One particular great basin bristlecone pine, a breed located in the mountainous regions of California, Nevada and Colorado, is nearly 5,000 years old. Park rangers have named it Methuselah, and keep its specific location secret. A giant sequoia in California is 275 feet tall; the world's largest tree by volume, it's been named General Sherman.

There are 60,065 different species of trees in the world. Deciduous trees have leaves that change color and fall off at the end of the summer. Evergreens - the pines and spruces - have needles. All trees survive through the process of photosynthesis; leaves and needles look green because chlorophyll absorbs blue and red light energy from the sun, then uses that energy to create a sugar which fuels the tree. The roots draw water and nutrients from the soil to nourish and grow the tree.

Oaks are America's national tree; they were chosen because they embody strength and sturdiness.

Trees of all kinds and sizes give us



Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika



many wonderful things. Trees breathe in carbon dioxide and send out oxygen in its place: they give us air quality.

Compost piles on forest floors are continually creating new soil; the roots of the trees prevent it from eroding away.

Our rains appear to be coming in much greater volumes—maybe five or seven inches at a time; trees protect against floods and water pollution. Trees provide homes for many birds, mammals and insects, and support wildlife in many different ways. Canopies cool our city streets and sidewalks while providing shade for our homes on the hot 90-degree summer days.

Trees provide the materials for framing out new houses, our beautifully stained and varnished cupboards, and the trim around our doors and windows. Wood provides fuel for fireplaces, and for those who

still heat their homes with wood-burning furnaces. And, oh yes, trees produce the pulp for the mills that produce the many paper products used in our everyday lives, even for the edition of the Pioneer you're reading at this moment.

People, animals, insects and birds all rely on the wonderful food trees provide, for example, maybe some yummy leaves for a caterpillar to grow into adulthood through metamorphosis. Squirrels and other critters of the woods enjoy acorns and walnuts. We all make our grocery lists and head to the store for honey crisp apples, oranges, pears, bananas and other nourishing fruits.

Christmas would be gloomy if not for the beautiful, decorated, lit-up Christmas trees in everyone's living rooms. Many times when you knock on the door to celebrate Christmas with family, there's a decorative wreath or pot out front festooned

with greens of every size and beautiful bells and ribbons.

Trees can sometimes be not-so-wonderful, though. I've heard several people say they had to replace sewer pipes running from their houses to the city system under the street because a tree's roots have grown into the pipes and caused leaks. Sewer pipes are an expensive repair; so is replacing and revitalizing the lawn after the digging is all done.

Nasty weather, wind, ice storms and tornadoes can raise havoc on many levels. One of them is the mess left behind when trees break.

At the cabin in Waterville, I've had many experiences with trees, even a tornado. Big tree limbs have come down on my cabin roof and dock; half a tree came down just missing my neighbor's roof. Here's something I bet you didn't know: If a tree on your property comes down in the wind and is left on your neighbor's property, the tree becomes theirs. The neighbor's insurance becomes responsible for any damage and for cleaning up all the wood on their property. I have a friend who has a cabin up north. After an ice storm,

Zika continued on 8

Was the cardinal just coincidence?

The word "coincidence" is made up of two parts. "Co-" is a prefix that means "together," as in "cooperate" (work together) or "coordinate" (plan together). Joined with "incidence" it means "happen together." So when we say something is "coincidence" we're saying they simply chance to have happened at the same time.

But isn't it amazing how often things coincide?

This past week, a cardinal flew into my window, injuring itself. Since it couldn't fly after the collision, it would have been easy pickings for predators if left on its own. But once it was caught, what could be done for it?

I was fortunate to find out Waseca has Chasity Marquette, who knows more about helping birds and wildlife than most of us could ever guess. Chasity explains she is a certified



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

animal rehabilitator as acknowledged on both the state and federal levels. She also says it's no simple matter to meet all the criteria for those certifications.

As a news writer, of course, having learned about Chasity and all she can do, I had to interview her. Watch for the story next week—it will warm your heart and probably also amaze you.

But about those coincidences... Awhile back I had registered for a

retired teacher get-together taking place up in the Cities this week. Of course important things were being said and done, but I was there because of the day's "keynote" event: the University of Minnesota Raptor Center was scheduled to give a demonstration, and I wanted to be there.

The knowledgeable speaker showed us four raptors: a red-tailed hawk, a kestrel, a great horned owl and a bald eagle. Along with the beauty and majesty of the birds

themselves, the information shared was utterly fascinating. For example, it is well known that owls have large eyes to give them excellent eyesight. The presenter informed us that, if human eyeballs were proportional to owl eyeballs, ours would be roughly the size of softballs.

But when it gets too dark to see, owls hunt using sound. They have extraordinarily large ears, and—never would have guessed this—they are at different heights on the two sides of their heads, giving them powers of echolocation which are just as impressive as their eyesight. This amazing sense of hearing allows them to pinpoint and capture small animals moving around under a bed of snow.

The bald eagle which was part of the demonstration had been taken in

Opinion continued on 2

A return to family connections



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

watch my sister observe a college campus and know she is about to go to one in less than a year.

After that, I took them to my favorite Chinese restaurant on campus, Legendary Spice, and watched them struggle to learn how to use chopsticks before giving up and asking

for forks. It was quite the sight, but I'm grateful they gave it a chance and tried their best, laughing along the way. They're so cute.

I also took them to get boba, which is a Taiwanese drink made of milk tea and tapioca pearls. You can customize it and get different flavors, so

I got salted caramel; my sister got some flavor she did not like. None of them had tried boba before, so it was hilarious watching all their faces as they took a sip and experienced the extraordinary texture of a tapioca pearl for the first time. It definitely is something to get used to, but I encourage anyone to try it. Once you get past the odd texture, it tastes good.

Then we got back to the hotel, spent time together and tried to plan what we were going to do on Saturday. Of course they asked for my recommendation, but sadly I came

Determined continued on 6

I was certain Thanksgiving was yesterday

As I look back on this past week, I can't help expressing my appreciation.

First, I appreciate the people of our Waseca County community. If good, hard-working, positive-minded people are "gems," I spend my time surrounded by diamonds. Examples from this week are the two activity directors I encounter most—Dan Stork from NRHEG and Joe Hedevarre from Waseca. They both work very hard and are determined to keep students' experiences as positive as can be. I also think of warm, friendly conversations with Darrin Stadheim, Representative John Petersburg, Jon Butler, Kristie Biehne and others held at various events.

When it comes to nearly every conversation, I wish it (the conversation) could be the type folks have over a beer or during a long car ride. A conversation with no end in sight, no feeling or need to be or do something else. Those conversations are what I live for. Especially on occasions when I have to rush from place



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

to place, I feel a certain level of regret. I'd much rather just sit down, talk, and listen to what these people whom I care about have to say.

In addition to the people I encounter, I appreciate the nature of what I do to make a living. Boredom and routine are never a problem. I get to go many, many places. I meet many, many people. I attend events that range from poignant to jolly. And I have excuses to exhibit unusual behavior, including setting up my own photography station for the sake of ensuring I get good pictures.

Even with the many tasks I have to manage and the demands it makes on my time, there can't be any better job than running a newspaper.

Few days go by without a reader thanking me and the newspaper for doing what we do. Yes, plenty of readers express criticism and some are quicker than others to point out our mistakes. Messages of gratitude and appreciation, though, are more frequent and persistent. I appreciate that the newspaper is accomplishing the purpose I have for it: inform people about what's going on in their communities while also sharing the stories of our surprising, heartwarming, industrious, resilient people and businesses.

During interviews, I work to focus my whole attention on the story I will be telling. I think only about the person, their story, their

life, and what questions I should ask. That's vital, since each person's story is special and unique: I want to write a piece that represents them to the level they deserve.

Over and over again, my work has shown me people value and appreciate it when others take the time to recognize who they are and what they've accomplished. The beauty of my job is I get to go looking for those moments and experiences which will draw readers in and help them see their poignancy. I've yet to meet a person who doesn't have a life, a story not worth sharing. I can't write everyone's story, but I certainly never get tired of hearing someone tell me theirs.

Speaking of interesting stories, one of my destinations this week was the Waldorf city council meeting. Big news, and something of a turnaround from past discussions: the council voted to allow residents to keep chickens in town. I have to

Stargazing continued on 7



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

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One of the speakers at JWP's high school Veterans Day program Nov. 10, 2023

JWP observes Veterans Day

JANESVILLE JOURNAL

Every year, during Veterans Day, we honor those who served our country in the military by thanking them for their service and showing them our gratitude.

Although Veterans Day fell on a Saturday this year, Janesville-Walldorf-Pemberton High School still took the time to provide a breakfast and a school-wide program on Friday, Nov. 10.

In years past, it was the JWP Student Council who took charge of serving the breakfast and scheduling the program. This year, however, it was the Minnesota Honor Society (MHS) members who were in charge of it all, led by junior Claire Walz.

The breakfast was prepared courtesy of the school's lunch staff with the MHS students and a few JWP staff members serving the meals. After everyone got their plate and a cup of coffee, the MHS members sat down to visit with the veterans and their wives, making sure to begin the conversation by asking about their time in the service.

As the school day began at 8:30, high school students made their way to the high school gym for the program. The high school band performed the Star Spangled Banner, "America, the Beautiful," and a medley of traditional patriotic pieces. The boys' and girls'

choirs each performed a song: The girls sang "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy" by the Andrew Sisters while the boys performed John Owen Jones's "Tell My Father."

After the band and choir performances, each of the 10 veterans in attendance took a moment to introduce himself. Those attending were Bob Carda, Gary Mittelsteadt, Robert Hermer, Harold Kruse, Dave Barbknecht, Matt Richardson, Harlan Erdman, Gerry Schendel, Bob Westphal, and Russ Wiebold. Nearly all of them served during the Korean or Vietnam conflicts.

After Eric Daschner performed "Taps," the program concluded with Emcee Walz giving thanks to the veterans for attending and to the school lunch staff for helping put together the breakfast. When the program finished, everyone had a chance to talk to the veterans and thank them for their service.

Veterans Day is a reminder of how many in our community have served our country with pride, even at times when their sacrifice did not receive the gratitude it deserved. If you haven't already, thank a veteran for their service. It's not only the values of the United States they exemplified during their time in the military but the values of Janesville and surrounding communities.



Scenes from the NRHEG Veterans Day program. Below veterans open cards hand prepared by elementary students at NRHEG. Photos by Deb Bently

Honored, celebrated NRHEG Veterans Day program

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

NRHEG students in grades 3 through 12 attended a program honoring veterans in the secondary school gym on Friday, Nov. 10. Twenty or more members of area veterans' organizations attended as a group; prior to the start of the program, they were presented with thank you cards handmade by elementary students. Other community veterans attended and sat among the audience.

The New Richland American Legion Color Guard posted the national and state flags, after which the crowd recited the "Pledge of Allegiance." All were then invited to join the full, grade 7 to 12 choir and band to sing the national anthem.

The program was planned cooperatively by the High School Ambassadors organization, led by teacher Holly Pederson, and the secondary music department, led by choir director Krista Reeder and band director Seth Schaefer.

The purpose of the program, according to the planners, was to recognize and thank area veterans for their service while helping heighten student awareness of the concept that "freedom isn't free."

Ambassadors Evelyn Nydegger, Payton Bunn, Chloe Riewer, Madeline Schlaak, Izley Boerner, Kylie Olson, Clara Buendorf, Tayler Schmidt, and Kayden Warke, Chloe Stork and Sierra Fish took various roles in the program, including acting as emcee, providing patriotic readings, and demonstrating the traditional triangular military folding of the flag.

Among the numbers performed



during the program was a "United States Armed Forces Salute," which included easily recognized excerpts of the official song from each of the branches of the American military. As each was played, veterans in the crowd who served in that branch were invited to stand and be recognized.



RAPTOR A staff member from the University of Minnesota Raptor center describes the habits and behavior of bald eagles. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

■ Opinion from Page 2

by the Raptor Center because it was too accustomed to human presence. In fact, this giant bird had located himself on a golf course and had taken to landing on people's golf carts hoping to be fed.

Can you imagine what a fright that would be?

So it's been a very bird-related week for me, and I'm deeply

grateful. The speaker from the Raptor Center informed us that, by contacting their facility at the University of Minnesota, folks can arrange a visit and tour. If you want to speak with Waseca's own rehabilitator, you will have many opportunities next spring and summer when Chasity's domestic animal rescue facility, Aspy Acres, will again be open for events.

In the meantime, I'm fascinated with all I've learned in the last few days—and with the coincidence that caused me to have these inter-related experiences so close together.

'It's a great time' Santa Anonymous Auction Nov. 25

Annual event typically raises around \$35,000

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

There will be very few white beards visible on the Saturday after Thanksgiving at the Boxcar Bar in Waseca beginning at 5:00 p.m. Santa, however, will be everywhere.

"It's a great time," declares organizer Todd Schmidt. "People tell me they wait for it all year."

Items and services donated by Waseca County businesses will go up for auction; bidders will cheerfully pay much more than their usual selling price. "I tell people," says Schmidt, "if you're looking for a bargain you're in the wrong place. People are here to give, and give generously."

The auction has been an annual event for 28 years now, and typically raises between \$30,000 and \$35,000. Schmidt bears the costs of advertising and managing the event, donating every dollar raised directly to the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center (NSC), which uses the money to acquire toys, games and presents to be given to area families who might, otherwise, have to make do without holiday gifts for their children.

Purchases at the auction are tax deductible because they are donations to the NSC.

Clearly, it is a cause Waseca area residents are glad to support, since Schmidt tells of pizzas which sold for \$75 and a novelty lamp which brought in about \$1,200.

The event lasts roughly five hours. Schmidt says the banter, camaraderie and good-spirited competition are as entertaining as any performance or show might be. He attributes the mood to the fact that everyone knows the money spent is "for the kids." He knows for a fact that some of the people buying items at the auction were once benefactors of the Santa Anonymous program.

"We do this all year," says Schmidt of himself and his significant other Tae Born. Schmidt has



Todd Schmidt is the owner of Waseca's Boxcar Bar, which will host the annual Santa Anonymous Auction Nov. 25. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

been the chief fundraiser for the area Santa Anonymous program for the past 25 years and has the process down to a system. Early in November, he sends postcards to dozens of area businesses: He and other volunteers follow up shortly thereafter to collect the many donations, sometimes making repeat trips.

Items may be as compact as gift certificates or as bulky as furniture. All are placed in the Boxcar Bar's storage room to wait for the big day.

The day of the auction, everything is set out for arriving buyers to consider and examine.

"The whole event is open to the public," Schmidt declares. "We can always fit a few more people in; we'd sure love to see some new faces this year."

The fun begins around 5. Long-time auctioneer Bill Harguth will be sharing the stage with Landen Flemming, who began helping with the sale last year and will continue doing so this November.

Schmidt and his volunteers keep everything flowing smoothly, including being sure money is collected and items are delivered to the buyers. Within a few days, proceeds from the event are delivered to the NSC.

Area families interested in benefiting from the

"It feels mighty good on Christmas morning knowing that, all around the county, kids are waking up to presents they might not otherwise have gotten." — Todd Schmidt

Santa Anonymous program can contact the NSC to find out more about eligibility and procedures.

As for Schmidt, he agrees that being an anonymous "Santa" places demands on his personal energy, time and resources. Not only doesn't he mind, however, he's glad—even honored—to have helped the program.

"It feels mighty good on Christmas morning knowing that, all around the county, kids are waking up to presents they might not otherwise have gotten," says Schmidt. "It makes my Christmas feel even more like Christmas."

OBITUARIES

Robert Pearce

ROBERT “Bob” EDWARD PEARCE died on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at his home in Waseca, surrounded by his family. TERI JEAN PEARCE died on November 9, 2023 at St. Mary’s Campus of Mayo Clinic in Rochester surrounded by her family.

Bob was born in Santa Monica, California on May 12, 1944, to Gene Edward and Jeanne Ellen (Halsey) Pearce. Teri was born in Owatonna, Minnesota on September 3, 1944, to Toivo Emil and Martha Eileen (Lageson) Harinen.

Bob and Teri graduated from John H. Frances Polytechnic High School in Sun Valley, California, where they were high school sweethearts. Following high school, Bob attended Stanford University. He left Stanford early to enlist in the Coast Guard and later finished undergraduate and graduate studies. Teri graduated from California Lutheran College.

On March 9, 1967, Bob and Teri were united in marriage in San Francisco, California. They began their married life together in Hawaii where Bob was first stationed. They moved to different locations around the country as part of his Coast Guard service before making Minnesota their home in 1996.

On May 23, 1966, Bob enlisted in the United States Coast Guard and was quickly promoted to rank of Chief Electronics Technician. During his twenty-one years of military service, he was awarded the Coast Guard Medal for Heroism before being honorably discharged as a Commander in 1987.

In Bob’s civilian life he taught seventh grade math at Parks Junior High, taught engineering at California State Polytechnic University Pomona, and worked as a Technician at Onan and a Test Engineer for Itron. After retiring Bob enjoyed volunteering for Waseca Public Schools, was a talented Skywarn storm spotter for over fifteen years, and also volunteered for the Red Cross travelling around the world to help provide relief.

Teri was an elementary school teacher in various schools around the country. She was Teacher of the Year in 1995 at Laguna Road School in Fullerton, California. Her last teaching position was at North Intermediate School in St. Peter, Minnesota. Teri enjoyed sewing and reading. She also di-



Robert Pearce

rected the Bell Choir at Christ Community Church.

Bob and Teri were both devoted followers of Jesus Christ. They were long-time active members of Christ Community Church in Waseca where they enjoyed involvement with Bible study and volunteering in the sound booth.

Bob and Teri are survived by their three sons: Gregory (Smruti) Pearce of Los Angeles, CA, Jonathan (Jodi) Pearce of Waseca, and Mark (Jennifer) Pearce of Waseca; four granddaughters, Mikayla (Casey) Cayer, Eleanor Pearce, Esme Pearce, and Cordelia Pearce; two grandsons: Raahi Pearce and August Pearce; Teri’s two siblings: Andrea Juhl of Pittsburgh, PA, and Mark (Judy) Harinen of Waseca; and seven nephews.

They are preceded in death by both of their parents and Bob’s younger brother, James Pearce.

Visitation will be held from 4-7 p.m. on Friday, November 17, 2023, at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca and will continue for one hour before the service at the church on Saturday.

Funeral Services for Bob and Teri will be 10:30 AM on Saturday, November 18, 2023, at Christ Community Church in Waseca with Pastor Rick Wulf officiating. Luncheon to follow service. A private family graveside service will take place at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Bob and Teri’s memory may be directed to the Red Cross, US Coast Guard Foundation, and American Cancer Society.

Darlene Tesch

Darlene Tesch, age 92 of rural Waldorf, MN was called to her heavenly home on November 15, 2023.

Darlene Dorothy, the first-born child of Leonard and Tillie (Gilster) Proehl entered this world on October 16, 1931, on their farm north of Waldorf in Freedom Township, Waseca County. She was baptized on November 29, 1931, and later confirmed in her Lutheran faith on June 18, 1944, at First Lutheran Church, Waldorf. Darlene’s mother wrote in her confirmation bible, “there is a great day to come when you will be able to join parents, sister, and friends and all who are so dear, in one beautiful land with our Dear Savior Jesus, never to part again”.

Darlene lived within two miles of Waldorf her entire life. As a young child, her family moved to a farm south of Waldorf. While growing up, she enjoyed helping her father in the fields and could drive their team of horses with ease. Darlene was valedictorian of the Waldorf High School graduating class of 1949.

Upon her marriage to Armin Tesch on September 29, 1950, she moved to their farm east of Waldorf, where she spent the rest of her life. Darlene and Armin worked side-by-side on their crop and dairy farm, where they raised five children. They were

blessed with 69 years together.

Darlene lived a life of service to others. She taught Sunday School and Vacation Bible School; and was a member of First Lutheran Ladies Aid and Women in Mission, holding various offices at the local and circuit levels. She was also active in the Republican Party and Farm Bureau. After Armin and Darlene retired from the farm operation, they dedicated more time to community service and became involved with the Janesville Trinity Lutheran Mission Society. Their retirement travel was usually based on volunteering, which included Alaska, mission trips to Mexico, and various locations in the southern United States to help with hurricane clean-up and rebuilding.

Darlene was raised in the years of the Great Depression and war rationing when resources were often scarce. She learned at a young age to save, conserve, re-use, and re-purpose as much as possible, a habit which continued throughout her life. She was a prolific seamstress. Her many boxes of fabric included scraps of material saved from the clothes she had sewn for her children and grandchildren. Later, when she sewed quilts for missions, her family would search the quilt tops for pieces of fabric from their childhood clothing.

Grandma Tesch stitched hours of love into the special quilts she made

for each of her grandchildren: Julie Tesch, Todd Pierce, Tony Pierce, Amanda Tesch, Erin Koshiol, Derick Sommers, Adam Przybilla, Danyelle Caliguire, and Kyle Sommers.

Visits and hugs from her great-grandchildren: McKayla Pierce, Arlen Pierce, Lexi Kanewischer, Matthew Koshiol, Hannah Sommers, Brooke Koshiol, Abby Sommers, Stella Caliguire, and Ana Przybilla, brought Darlene great joy.

She enjoyed music. When family and friends visited Darlene in her later years, she was usually found enjoying songs from her collection of music CD’s.

Darlene is survived by her children: Marilyn (Dean) Pierce of Woodbury, Kathy Tesch of Cold Spring, Marty (Jan) Tesch of Waldorf, and Bunny (Rick) Sommers of Owatonna; her grandchildren and great-grandchildren; sisters Bernita Kohnert and Beverly (LeRoy) Janike; brother Eldean Proehl; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

She is preceded in death by her parents; her husband; 22-month-old sister Genelle Proehl; son Arlen Tesch in 1981; great-granddaughter Addison Sommers; and brothers- and sisters-in-laws.

Visitation will be from 4-7 PM on Sunday, November 19, 2023 at the State Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation will



Darlene Tesch

continue for one hour prior to the service at the church on Monday.

Funeral service will be at 11:00 AM on Monday, November 20, 2023 at First Lutheran Church in Waldorf with Rev. Michael Matthews officiating. Interment will be in the church cemetery. Memorials are preferred to First Lutheran Church or donor’s choice.

Darlene’s family thanks all who supported her with personal care, visits, cards, and kindness during her days at the Lakeshore care facility in Waseca. Thank you also to Brighton Hospice.

Imposter police officer suspected in Waseca

During the last weekend of October, a Waseca resident reported encountering an individual who sent the impression of being a member of the Waseca Police Department, but whose apparent attempts at impersonating an officer did not hold up under scrutiny.

Captain Kris Markeson summarized that the suspected impersonator was tall, slender, caucasian, and appeared to be in his 40s. The person was driving a black SUV vehicle topped with a light bar and marked “Waseca Police.” The vehicle had a searchlight mounted on the side and

displayed a four-digit unit identification number on the back window.

Markeson said the local resident “was approached by a person he first believed was a police officer, but after a few minutes of talking to him, realized this may not be a police officer.”

The resident told police the suspected impersonator claimed to be in the neighborhood due to a noise complaint. He spoke with the man briefly and then the man left the neighborhood without any problems.

“It’s very concerning to hear something like this,” Captain Marke-

son said. “As of this point, the person has not been located but we continue to investigate.”

Police say impersonation cases like this are rare, but they do happen: The Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension said over the last three years, Minnesota law enforcement agencies have reported 194 impersonation cases, including 68 so far in 2023.

Jeff Potts with the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association has encountered a handful of cases during his career, and he offers this advice:

“If you ever find yourself in a situation that doesn’t quite feel right,

you can ask the person who says they’re a police officer to see their identification and a badge. Police officers should be able to produce that,” Potts explained.

Potts also encourages anyone in doubt to call dispatch and check whether any officers are patrolling locally. He says dispatchers should be able to verify whether an individual is actually out on police business.

“We tell the public if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, you can always call 911 and the dispatcher can help you out,” Potts said.

Esther Dietrich

ESTHER MILLICENT (SWENSON) DIETRICH, age 94, of Waseca passed away on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at Mayo Clinic Health Systems in Mankato.

Born on August 31, 1929 in Waseca, Esther was the daughter of Carl Oscar and Hilda (Larson) Swenson. She grew up on a farm southeast of Otisco. Following her mother’s passing at a young age, she was raised by her father, brothers, and sister. While growing up Esther attended the Vista Covenant Church in rural New Richland. She graduated from New Richland High School in 1947. Esther spent the majority of her career working for Birdseye. She retired after 22 years. She was united in marriage to George Dietrich on August 7, 1949 at Vista Covenant Church in rural New Richland. Following her marriage, she became a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca.

Esther enjoyed traveling. Most of her summers would be spent gardening and going on bus tours with her friend Donna. She loved bowling and playing cards. She would enjoy playing bridge, and especially loved playing Pfeffer with her children and grandchildren. She spent most of her mornings enjoying breakfast at Jonnie Beans with her friends. She was a dedicated member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, where she was a member of the Cotta Guild.

Esther is survived by her children, Steven (Marcia) Dietrich of Sioux Falls, SD, Lee Ann (Vincent) Byron of Cave Creek, AZ; seven grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren; brother, Rolland (Carol) Swenson of Waseca; sister-in-law, Winnifred Swenson of



Esther Dietrich

Waseca; special cousins, Marjorie Gore, Virginia Swenson; many close friends; several nieces and nephews; and many other relatives.

She was preceded in death by her husband, George Dietrich; parents, Carl Oscar and Hilda Swenson; siblings, Mildred, Arthur, Evelyn, Raymond, Russell, Kenneth, Frances, Emmeth, Marvin and Marilyn.

Visitation for Esther will be held from 4:00 to 7:00 PM on Thursday, November 16, 2023 at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation will continue one hour prior to the service at the church on Friday.

Funeral service for Esther will be at 11:00 AM on Friday, November 17, 2023 at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca with Rev. Michael Grannis officiating. Interment will be at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca.

Esther’s family would like to offer a special thank you to the Mankato Mayo Clinic Health Center nurses and staff for their compassion and care.

Wolfe

from Page 1

respectable man who had checked into the gym more than 800 times before enlisting in the Army.

“He was the hardest worker in the room,” Ziemke said. “Cade loved his country and I’d say that’s what he would want everyone else to do.”

Wolfe was the third member of his family to join the military, following his father, Scott, and brother, Cooper. He did so in 2018.

Scott Wolfe is a Waseca County Sheriff’s deputy who served in the Army’s 82nd Airborne Division. He survived the infamous Green Ramp disaster in March 1994 when two military planes collided over Pope Air Force Base in North Carolina. One of the planes crashed into the ground, killing 24 soldiers.

Cade Wolfe enlisted as a Blackhawk helicopter repairer and was assigned to the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade at Wheeler Army Airfield in Hawaii. He was later assigned to the First Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, which provides helicopter support for special operations forces. The 160th is headquartered at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

He served as a helicopter crew chief, and earned several awards and decorations, including two commendation medals.

Wolfe’s parents said Monday they are traveling to Tennessee to be with Cade’s brother and family. No funeral arrangements have been made at this time.

The Department of Defense identified the other soldiers killed in the crash as Chief Warrant Officer Stephen Dwyer, 38, of Clarksville, Tenn.; Chief Warrant Officer Shane Barnes, 34, of Sacramento, Calif., Staff Sgt. Tanner Grone, 26, of Gorham, N.H., and Sgt. Andrew Southard, 27, of Apache Junction, Ariz.

President Joe Biden mourned Wolfe and the other soldiers in a statement Sunday, calling for prayers for the soldiers’ families.

“Our service members put their lives on the line for our country every day,” Biden said. “They willingly take risks to keep the American people safe and secure. Their daily bravery and selflessness is an enduring testament to what is best in our nation.”

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Hospice services not the same as in the past

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

November is National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. Tarin Nelson, Manager of Clinical Services for the Mankato branch of St. Croix Hospice providers says praise is unnecessary. People who are, like her, trained in providing hospice care, are fine continuing their duties and tasks without exterior acknowledgment: They already feel as if they have some of the most rewarding jobs imaginable.

“Some people may not realize what hospice care is like nowadays,” says Nelson. “We see it as our job to make the end of our patients’ lives as important as the beginning.”

Nelson explains that hospice services like St. Croix Hospice will ideally be brought in to serve dying patients as soon as they are eligible. When a patient has been diagnosed with a terminal illness resulting in a life expectancy of six months or less, and curative treatments are no longer the best option, it may be time for hospice. Patients are often referred by their doctors, but can contact a hospice provider directly if they want more information.

At St. Croix Hospice, two types of hospice care workers—home care aides and nurses—will visit patients wherever they call home. The hospice care company provides all needed equipment and, if the patients and their families wish, will make needed arrangements to have pharmacies deliver medications when possible. Staff will monitor patient discomfort and pain levels, working to ensure patients are able to interact with their caregivers and family members. Home care providers are also trained in working with memory care individuals.

Misconceptions around hospice care often delay people from accessing the benefit. According to the most recent NHPCO Facts and Figures Report, the median length of stay for a hospice patient in the United States is about 18 days, and trends in recent years have shown that only about 50% of Medicare beneficiaries utilize the hospice benefit when they are eligible. Interestingly, Nelson says that research shows hospice patients live an average of 29 days longer than terminally ill patients without hospice care. “When you think about it, it makes sense,” she observes. “Their symptoms are being managed. They’re in less pain, they’re not nauseous, they get endorphins from their interactions with family.”

In addition to medical and personal hygiene care provided by the nurses and aides, Nelson goes on, St. Croix Hospice and similar services adopt a “holistic” approach that meets the emotional, spiritual and social needs of patients.

“We serve the family members, too,” she says.

St. Croix Hospice has social workers who typically visit patient homes as well. These specialists help with paperwork, communicating with various agencies, and answer questions about related topics. St. Croix Hospice can help with last wills and testaments, funeral arrangements, and official forms. “They can be a very important resource,” says Nelson. “They’re trained in working with these kinds

of things, and of course, most regular folks are not.”

Also visiting patient homes, says Nelson, are agency “chaplains” who serve patients of all faiths and backgrounds. Nelson explains, “If people are looking for religious guidance, they can provide it. If they prefer to seek spiritual advice, that’s available.”

“Just like we come to patients’ homes to treat them, we meet them where they are at spiritually.”

Also part of the St. Croix Hospice team—although Nelson speaks of it more as a “family” setting—are doctors, nurse practitioners, and volunteers.

Nurses and aides, she says, tend to build deeply personal relationships with the patients and caregivers they work with. Staff members adjust the lengths of their visits based on circumstances but are usually with patients for about an hour at a time.

In keeping with the idea of meeting patients’ needs, she says, “Whatever people once did for themselves, we don’t want them to lose that.” This means aides or nurses might do anything from shaving patients to curling their hair to folding their laundry. On days when it’s what’s needed, they may simply sit and listen, or work together on a jigsaw puzzle.

One comment Nelson says she and her fellow staff members hear frequently is, “I wish we had learned about you sooner.”

Hospice care is covered by Medicare, Medicaid, VA benefits and most private insurances, making it available to people at little to no cost. Most patients are referred to hospice by a doctor, but “anyone can reach out to us,” she says.

Nelson consents that for many people, the idea of hospice can be scary. “But the concept many people have and the reality of what it’s like are very different.

“We come to care deeply about our patients. We use our experience and our training to give them what will help them in this difficult time. We provide extra services to keep them at home, if that’s where they want to be.”

As the patient’s end nears, family members frequently want to know “how long is left.” Nelson points out it is a very practical question, since loved ones may be traveling from out of state to visit. While their experience may give hospice nurses a certain level of intuition on the question, there is also a surprisingly scientific way to get an estimate. She explains that St. Croix Hospice uses an innovative technology called “MUSE” that helps predict the final days of life for a patient. Once a patient begins showing signs and symptoms that they have reached the very end of their hospice journey, the hospice team initiates the Voyage Vigil Program, increasing caregiver presence at a time when it’s needed the most.

Even after patients have “earned their wings,” as Nelson phrases it, St. Croix Hospice remains in contact with bereaved family members, providing support and resources 13 months after a loved one’s passing.

“It’s all part of that holistic approach,” says Nelson. “Losing a family member is a deeply personal experience, so we want to provide personalized attention.”

‘No stranger to grief’

Patty Smith has spent a decade as a hospice nurse in Waseca

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

A Waseca resident and a mother of three, Patty Smith, 41, laughs when she describes herself as “a special kind of weirdo.”

Smith has been a hospice nurse for 10 years, visiting individuals with terminal conditions across an area which spans from Northfield to Waseca. She currently visits each of about 20 patients about twice a week.

Each of those visits, along with associated phone calls and followup exchanges, provides her with challenges and privileges.

“There is a lot of critical thinking and problem solving,” she observes. “I like that part. I can use my knowledge, my experience, and my creativity to help make a troubling situation better.”

“That’s very rewarding.”

Also rewarding, she says, is being welcomed by patients and their families at “a very vulnerable time.”

She says it “is an honor to be included” as people reach out to one another under a changed set of dynamics.

“People who know me know that my family is no stranger to grief,” she says, mentioning having lost one brother when he was 18 and another at the age of 20. “I want to do everything in my power to decrease the pain people feel as they lose their loved ones.”

Along with the poignant moments are light-hearted ones.

She remembers persistently assuring one patient that, “Yes, I will get you to bingo on time.”

“My job keeps me humble,” she observes. “I know what I would want if I were dying: I would hope for peace and comfort and the chance to say good-bye to my family.”

“So I do whatever I can to provide that for others.”

In keeping with the practice of going to patients wherever they are, Smith says physical location—a home or a care facility—is only the beginning. Each family has its own culture, she says, its own way of doing things.

Among her many jobs is accommodating to that culture, becoming familiar enough with it to genuinely serve both the patient and the family.

“My job is difficult,” she says. “It includes a lot of sadness.

“But the rewards outweigh that.”

Smith talks of the time just before patients “earn their wings” when they may become responsive. “That’s a time when I’m glad I’ve



Hospice nurse Patty Smith (right) with her children (from left) Avery, 10; Ashley, 13; and Lucas, 16.

gotten to know them,” she says. “I’ve had a chance to learn what they like, what they don’t like, what they’re worried about.

“Even when they can’t respond, I believe they can still hear me. So I will talk with them in the way they have always liked. I’ll bring up topics I believe they’re thinking about.

“Yes, it’s a sad time. But I’m still glad I can be there.”

Another aspect of her job as a hospice nurse, says Smith, is that her faith is strengthened “on the regular.”

She tells of conversations she has been privy to as her patients speak with loved ones who have died.

“I am absolutely certain there are better things to come after this life,” she says. “People see those loved ones so often, it’s like there’s a welcoming committee forming on the other side.”

One big challenge, Smith observes, is unpredictability.

“I may think I know what my day is going to be like,” she says lightheartedly. “But one phone call can change everything. I’m used to that; I expect it. I’ve learned to adapt and keep moving forward.”

What helps her adapt, she says, is the sense of personal involvement she acquires: “We genuinely grow to love our patients. We love their families.

“I know what I would want if I were dying: I would hope for peace and comfort and the chance to say good-bye to my family.”

— Hospice Nurse Patty Smith

“We want to be there for them.”

As described in the accompanying article, Smith and other hospice workers support and advise their patients in many different ways. “I’m glad I have the skills I need to help, and I’m glad St. Croix offers so many services.

“I don’t ever want to see these people feeling as if they have nowhere to turn.” She speaks of family members and what their status will be after their loved ones have “earned their wings.”

“We have a really good team, and I know we are going to come together collectively to provide what’s needed,” says Smith.

“I let myself cry. I let myself grieve. And I do what I can to make sure the families are served as their journey continues.”

Rich sounds ringing Waseca Chorale to host annual concert

Program set for 4 p.m., Nov. 26 at Sacred Heart

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Back in September, the rich sounds of Christmas began ringing from Grace Lutheran Church.

“It’s something not everybody does,” laughs Chorale president Al Judd. “So, yes, it was kind of odd to have Christmas songs in the back of our minds then. But it was a fun opportunity. I liked it.”

The Waseca Chorale’s annual holiday concert will be 4 p.m. Sunday, November 26 at Sacred Heart Church in Waseca. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$7 for children 12 and under.

Codirectors John Hoehn and Deb Yess say the selections included in the performance reflect a variety of moods, settings and time periods, with ranges of secular and sacred, timeless and modern pieces included.

The level of the music, says Hoehn, is “challenging enough to push our skills, but not impossible to learn.” In preparation for November 26, the Chorale’s 48 singers have been learning the equivalent of a song a week, practicing each Tuesday at Grace Lutheran for about 2 hours. Of the 11 numbers to be performed, each singer has made connections with personal favorites.

Judd, for example, says he particularly enjoys the version of “Silent Night” the group is preparing. He describes it as “the song everyone knows—but different,” with unexpected variations and “a truly beautiful solo.”



The Waseca Chorale
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Director Hoehn comments that “familiar but different” is something of a common theme in the numbers being performed.

Chorale member Rita Miller is excited about the new energy and enthusiasm brought to the group by performers who have recently joined. She credits some of this refreshed interest to the directorship of Deb Yess, long-time vocal music teacher at Waseca High School. “It’s so uplifting to hear a beautiful, new voice singing next to you,” observes Miller.

Group member Deb Vetter says she knows a song is making a connection with the audience when she can see people’s lips moving. It’s that sense of shared beauty, she says, that makes performing as part of the Chorale profound. “Every once in a while I find myself thinking, ‘Dad would love that!’ about a particular set of words, or a part

of a song. I like that connection, too.”

Toni Bauleke says she enjoys the rich harmonies in the version of “The First Noel” that will be performed. Like other songs on the docket, she says, it is “familiar but different.”

Vetter says she hopes many, many people will come and enjoy the concert on November 26. She observes that the shared experience of the holiday music, the beautiful setting and the rich acoustics at Sacred Heart Church will be a good foundation for the holiday season which follows.

Chorale member Andy Miller believes the group’s version of “God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen” will especially contribute to that. “It’s a powerful arrangement,” he says, which emphasizes elements of the lyrics people often overlook. He looks forward to performing it, he continues, because “It reflects great, great joy.”

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George Klug deploying a WQ3D water testing device in Fergus Falls' Lake Alice.

Lake revitalization project getting state-wide attention

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

“It’s important to make funding available for something this exciting,” says District 19 Senator John Jasinski regarding the lake revitalization system which has transformed Waseca’s Loon Lake for the past two summers. “WQ3D has been phenomenal,” he comments regarding the company which provides and maintains the system, represented locally by area resident George Klug. Jasinske and others were given tours and shown statistics regarding the WQ3D’s system; the senator went on to help shepherd a pilot program which provided funding to place treatment units during June in 20-acre Lake Alice, located within the city limits of Fergus Falls in Otter Tail County. An October 17 article in the Fergus Falls Daily Journal quotes Otter Tail area senator Jordan Rasmussen as saying, “I was really excited to find a program to potentially help improve the water quality for this key asset; if the results continue to show promise it’s something other communities both in Otter Tail County and across the state can be

interested in utilizing.” The article also states that E. Coli bacteria levels have dropped from being double the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s maximum acceptable level at about 270 colony forming units per milliliter (CFUs) to being 18. According to Klug, who has been to Fergus Falls to maintain the WQ3D units every two weeks since they were installed in June, “Each lake has its own ecological situation,” and so Lake Alice has not shown as thorough a turnaround as Loon Lake did from June to September of its first year. However, along with the impressive reduction in E. Coli bacteria, there has been a significant decrease in the amount of algae and the lake is no longer a source of offensive odors, even though it had been for decades. Lake Alice had no significant problem with weeds, Klug observes, because the water was so murky plants could not grow. According to Jasinski, more than \$225,000 in funding has been allocated to two communities using the WQ3D system for a “pilot program” meant to evaluate the effectiveness

of the WQ3D system. Treatments in Lake Alice will continue next year under that funding. French Lake in Rice County will be outfitted with the system beginning next year. At more than 840 acres, it is the largest the company will have worked with so far, and will require up to eight mechanical units, according to Klug. Like Lake Alice, French Lake will be in the pilot program for at least two years. Klug expresses guarded optimism that the pilot program might open the way for broader use of the WQ3D system. Among Senator Jasinski’s observations is the fact that WQ3D’s system is versatile, does not use chemicals, and causes no disruption for property owners who live near the lake. “I know many of our lakes seem to be getting worse,” he states. “This type of improvement is good for fishing, good for water sports, good for tourism.” He also states that a great deal of state money is allocated toward improving water quality: “It’s important to be responsible with how we manage that money,” he says.



Loon Lake as seen from Lisa Mackey's back yard.

Loon Lake improving as next door neighbor

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Waseca resident Lisa Mackey, 44, has had even more than a life-long association with Loon Lake. She says she has been grateful over the past two summers that the lake has been clear of weeds and the water has been clearer. As an offspring of the Fell family, she is aware a large piece of property along the lake was undeveloped field in the late 1800s. Her ancestor George Fell owned it and sold it to the city. All her life, generations of her family have occupied a row of houses located directly on the lake-shore. Across that time, the lake has been a somewhat changeable neighbor. “There were times when you would look out and think, ‘What a peaceful view.’” Mackey says she enjoys watching the many birds which come and go across the seasons, up to and including eagles, pelicans, loons and swans, with geese, ducks, coots, and seagulls as near constants. “The lake can be a really good place to have a house,” she observes. She remembers times in the

‘80s and ‘90s when family members would catch enough fish for a “fish fry” get-together in the backyards. And then there have been other times. “The summer would start, the lake would be blue,” she remembers, “and then...seaweed.” For much of her life, boating would be impossible as the summer advanced because of the heavy growth that floated on a majority of the lake’s surface. And then the smell would come. As the excess plants would die, they would begin to rot and then to stink. Mackey also remembers a time in her childhood when a cousin decided to slide into the water to cool off, and came back out coated in small, black leeches which had been clinging to shoreline rocks. “I never went into the water again after that,” Mackey recalls. City council member Stacy Schroeder lives within easy walking distance of Loon Lake and also has lifelong memories associated with it—including family picnics in the park pavilion. A distinct recollection from her childhood is col-

lecting snail shells along the shore and sometimes catching live snails “and watching them climb up a glass.” In more recent times, she tells of having often altered the routes of her daily walks because of the smell coming from the water; what she describes as “an ugly, frothy foam” would also be unappealing. With the water in the lake staying clear and open as it has for the past two summers, Schroeder says she is persistently noticing and appreciating new elements. “I was on one of my walks and I suddenly thought to myself, ‘Hey, it doesn’t smell bad.’” Fairly recently she noticed snails in the water near the shore. “I think everyone appreciates that the lake is becoming an asset again,” says Schroeder. “And that it can be done in such a low-profile way, after all the things that have been tried over time, that’s also a benefit. “I hope the equipment that’s helping our lake can do the same good for many, many more communities.”

The Pastor's Column

With the Lord is unfailing love

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

Have you ever been so tired that you wanted to sleep, but couldn’t get to sleep or stay asleep? And then other times when you know you need to stay awake, you fall asleep quickly? It is a frustrating experience, but a reality we have faced. The balance of rest and activity is complex and frustrating at times. There are times when life gets overwhelming and it seems like there is nothing you can do except wait for God to move. It is in this waiting that we struggle to rest in God’s sovereignty. We want to take things in our control and make something happen, when waiting on God is the correct decision. Then there are times when we see God at work, but struggle to know how best to join in. People growing in faith, and we don’t want to hinder them, but guide them into maturity in Christ. We question our role in God’s actions and wonder why or how he would use us and then struggle to even join in. In Psalm 130 we see that the author is using the similar words that Jonah using while in the belly of the whale as he cries out to God. In the same way as Jonah the author and the people who sing this psalm are looking for God to move in a situation that they could not overcome themselves. They cried for God to move, and now we see the attitude they take in waiting. 5 I wait for the Lord , my whole

being waits, and in his word I put my hope. 6 I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning. They are not passively waiting for God to move rather they are actively waiting and watching for Him. I used to work on third shift as a security guard. I watched for the sunrise every work night; it was a promise that I anticipated. The end of work and the beginning of a new day. We know that God will work, but in His timing, we are to anticipate and search for His movement. He is the God of redemption and rescue, His promises are sure, and His love is deep. Verses 7-8 remind us of how we can hope in God’s sure work: 7 Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. 8 He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins. God’s unfailing love is a promise for our work and rest, a promise that allows us to join in when we see Him work and when we must wait for Him. Take hope, our God does not sleep or ignore our cries, but is waiting for His perfect timing to move and act.

■ Determined from Page 2

up blank. I couldn’t believe it - I live in Minneapolis and I couldn’t even think of anything for us to do. To be honest, there really isn’t anything I do on the weekends or when I have free time because I’m usually tired or don’t have an entire day to go explore or do things. So we went to bed without a plan. The only “required” task on Saturday

was to pick up the birthday cheesecake we had ordered for my grandma’s birthday. So that’s what we did. We drove down to St. Louis Park to Muddy Paws Cheesecake and picked up the delicious box of sugar. Thankfully, the lady there had flyers to an art show that day, so we piled back into the car and went! The mall we went to was a cute outdoor outlet mall decorated in garland and ready for Christmas. We ended up buying only one type of thing: plants. I was glad of that; I am becoming a plant person and it’s exciting. Why are succulents so cute,

though? Then Saturday night came, bringing with it the whole reason this weekend happened - the indoor! Every year the University marching band puts on an indoor show (nothing as cool as Waseca though) and this was my third time going. I’ve loved it every time and I’m glad I was able to share the experience with my family. My godmother said she and my grandma even stayed up until one a.m. because they were so hyped from the concert. Adorable. Sunday was spent studying and catching up on homework, but over-

all a great weekend. More and more, I appreciate the time spent with my family. When I moved to college freshman year, I was so ready to be on my own, be independent without needing my family. I went months without seeing them, but to me, I was just being college-normal independent. But now, it’s not that I am not independent, I just learn to appreciate the connections and conversations I have with my family. My Determination: “Together, we can do anything - face any foe, and overcome any obstacle.” - Lois Grif-fin, Family Guy

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m.	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m.	VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship	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
4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m.	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m.	VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Brian Schanil Pastor Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School Tuesdays: The Shepherd’s Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark	JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m.	CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY 900 14th Ave SE, Waseca 507-833-1082 Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m.	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Saturday - 5 p.m. Mass	BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 43089 1800th St., Morristown Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Summer worship hours, (10:45 a.m. Worship, winter)
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Worship Sundays traditional 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship; 10:45 a.m. contemporary service	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship	FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Rev. Michael Mathews, pastor Sundays: Worship 8 a.m.; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class	ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St. Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m.	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 Owen St., Janesville Pastor Sarah Krolak
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 314 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-2647 Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m.	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwasceca@hickory-tech.net) Worship Sunday 10 a.m.	LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting	ST. JOSEPH’S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Smiths Hill, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m.	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Pamela Jensen Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship	TRINITY LUTHERAN Wilton Township Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship	NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH 404 30 120th St. Waseca Pastor Sarah Krolak 507-234-6463 Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; Second Sunday “Young at heart” Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca 507-835-1222 Worship Saturday 5:15 p.m., Sundays 8:00 and 10:00 a.m., weekdays 8:30 a.m. Tues., Wed. and Fri., 7:00 a.m. Thurs.	REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca 507-607-8245 Sunday worship 10 a.m.	THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS Brad Donner, Branch President Waseca, Minnesota www.lds.org Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18	NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.



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Argus Archives

75 Years Ago

- A series of outstanding concert and lecture events by nationally established artists and speakers is being planned for residents of Waseca County by the County Library and the Department of Concerts and Lectures at the University of Minnesota for the coming winter months. Everyone in Waseca County will be urged next week to enroll in the Waseca County Concert and Lecture Association and thus be able to attend the numbers which are scheduled for presentation at the Waseca High School Auditorium.

- Another farm accident was reported by Vera Prechel of the Woodville Hustlers 4-H club last week. George Klampe, 16 years old and son of Roy Klampe, Woodville township, had his arm broken while cranking a car. This accident will keep George from performing his regular duties for several weeks.

- Tuesday, November 11, was a big day for the American Legion of Janesville. A short Armistice Day program was presented at the school auditorium in the morning. Our Post Commander, Erven Kopischke, gave a short talk. Harvey Kuhn and John Fury were the color bearers and Vernon Walther and Mike Raveling were the color guards. At six o'clock the Legion Auxiliary gave a Pot-Luck supper at the I.O.O.F. Hall. All the Legionnaires were invited and this really was a swell feed.

50 Years Ago

- Bradley Schnepf, a 12-year-old seventh grader at Trinity Lutheran school, is the top point man for the season in the four-cycle go-cart racing at the New Ulm Cart Club. Bradley accomplished the feat in his first year of competitive racing. One of four sons of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Schnepf, rural Janesville, Bradley also won a host of first place trophies. The go-carts raced every other Sunday on a dirt track.

- Randy Hoehn, Janesville's 171-pound junior back, was named to WCCO Radio's All-State Football Team of the Week for October 19. He was one of 27 players from all parts of the state named to the honorary squad on "Prep Parade", a 30-minute program devoted to high school sports and band activity throughout the state. Hoehn's recognition came after the Golden Bears bombed Glenville 41-0.

- John Mulvaney, Jr. pled guilty in Waseca County Court Tuesday morning to firing a high-powered rifle within the Janesville city limits Saturday night, November 4. One of the bullets penetrated a building on the Alvin Rosenau place and wounded one of Rosenau's horses. Deputy Mert Schwartz was called out to investigate an alleged shooting in town Saturday night. The wounded horse was discovered by Rosenau at 12:05 p.m. Sunday afternoon. It has been treated by Dr. Roy Hendricks for a head wound. In court Tuesday morning, Judge McLoone ordered a 30-day continuation of the case to check the condition of the animal. Mulvaney has agreed to pay restitution on the incident.

25 Years Ago

- It was a joyous occasion for the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton School Board when the results of this Tuesday, Nov. 4, special election were tabulated. The JWP School District will see both construction and remodeling in its future thanks to the passing of an \$11 million referendum. The referendum passed with 1,011 yes votes to 782 no votes. "I'm just so excited beyond words," said Roxann Zimprich, board member, after hearing the results. "I'm excited for the kids."

- The state 4-H Dog Show was held on Saturday, Oct. 18, in Hutchinson. There were 220 4-H members from across the state participating in the show including Stacy Bethke and Liz Sonnenberg from Waseca County. Three types of events were held: obedience, showmanship and agility. To qualify to compete at the state dog show, the 4-H member and his/her dog must first earn a blue ribbon at their county fair. This qualifies them to participate in the regional dog show which was held in September. At the regional show, if the 4-H member places at the top of their class, they qualify for the state show. Both Stacy Bethke and Liz Sonnenberg received blue ribbons in the competition. Bethke received her blue in senior novice obedience, placing third overall. Sonnenberg received her blue in senior novice showmanship.

- Mankato, a local phone call away. This was the topic of discussion during the Janesville City Council's Monday, Nov. 10 regular city council meeting. Bob Alton, president of Hickory Tech Corporation, and Asim Saber, president of Mankato Citizens Telephone Company, presented a plan to bring telecommunications to Janesville. Currently the city is under the Frontier Telephone system. The proposed plan is to overbuild Frontier's system with a municipal telephone system leased from MCTC. Along with caller ID, long distance and internet services, Hickory Tech's subsidiary company CRYSTAL is proposing a local link to Mankato. Currently, if a person wishes to call someone in Mankato it is a long distance charge.

■ Stargazing from Page 2

to keep chickens in town. I have to say, Waldorf is my favorite town to cover. Waseca is a close second. But in Waldorf, every time I see someone from the town, they bring story ideas for me to write about. They care about each other; I love that.

I thought Thanksgiving was Thursday until my dad told me it was next week. So, I made no plans for Thursday.

On Friday I turn 26-years young. My plan for the day includes a conversation about advertising design with Jon Butler at FM Bank, perhaps followed by an interview with John Mansfield regarding the anniversary of the Ward House. I want to leave some room for flexibility: It is my birthday after all. Oh, and I'll try to have lunch with my mom and

dinner with my dad. That's generally my birthday plan.

Saturday is the Bluejay Bash. Matt Petsinger invited me to join him at his table again this year and I accepted, again. (Last year was a lot of fun.)

P.S. When I started covering NRHEG's athletic banquets, I would stop all of the teams after the awards to take pictures. After a year of this, Dan made it part of the program. This year, the school purchased a canvas backdrop for use during this new portion of the program. Dan is incredibly helpful anytime I need anything related to NRHEG athletics and I am very appreciative.

P.P.S. I asked Waseca AD Joe Hedevare, the other day, how he works the entire day, then attends sporting events every single night. He told me he wonders sometimes too. I don't know if all athletic directors are as good as what we have at NRHEG and Waseca, but I consider myself, and these two communities, fortunate.

Back in the day (Waseca)

100 Years Back - 1923

"Every one of the 88 rural schools of Waseca County is now open and conditions were never better every way," was the statement made yesterday morning by H.C. Van Loh, county superintendent. In point of attendance, Mr. Van Loh says that the average is closer to 100 per cent this year than at any time since he began his work as county superintendent.

An article appeared in yesterday's edition of The Waseca Journal, whose publisher is postmaster of Waseca, which reflects on the veracity, honesty and integrity of the publisher of The Herald, and also on the honesty of an employee who is conducting a subscription campaign for the Herald. Notice is hereby given that a demand will be made for a retraction of this article and if retraction is not promptly made, suit for libel will be instituted against the publisher of The Waseca Journal and the man he employs as assistant.

Mrs. B.R. Laux has rented the building next to Mrs. Lindell's Variety store and has opened a lunch room there. Mrs. Laux plans on serving lunches, short orders and meals and will sell home made pies.

Christ Sanders has sold the Cozy Lunch Room to Mrs. Emma Walters formerly of Waseca and Olga Wang of Faribault.

Peter Wasbotten drove to Minneapolis Saturday morning and spent the day. He also visited at Northfield and witnessed the football game there in the afternoon.

H.M. Buck returned last week from his visit with relatives in New York state. The apple crop there is a very light one this year, he says. He was asked \$9.00 for a barrel of apples.

R.G. Farabaugh, who has been employed at the Journal office for the last three weeks, left Mon. afternoon for Minneapolis where he will visit with his brother and possibly remain for the winter.

75 Years - 1948

Break-ins continue in Waseca with between \$60 and \$70 in change stolen from the Ward and Beaumont fruit stand Sunday night. Ray Ward, proprietor of the South State street store, discovered the theft Monday morning.

Elaine Worke, who had been employed for 18 months at Rindelaub's bakery, resigned her position there and is now working as a dental assistant for Dr. G. Ellis Fastle.

Mr. and Mrs. C.B. Arvesen, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Lee and Laurence Lee and Miss Myra O'Hara, from Waseca, attended the chicken supper at the North Waseca Lutheran church Wednesday evening.

Misses Olina and Stena Haugen of Blooming Prairie, and Mrs. George Hackett were guests at the Ralph Palmer residence last Friday.

Mrs. Arnold Keller, Mrs. Frank Kiesler, Mrs. Emma White, Mrs. Ben Rieke, Mrs. Andy Phelps, Mrs. Ed. Stevens, Mrs. L.E. Reineke, Mrs. Herman Esker, Mrs. Ruth Pulver, Mrs. John Tabbert and Mathilda Zimmerman visited with Mrs. Lulu Goodspeed and Mrs. R.G. Faes at the Masonic home at Savage on Monday.

At the meeting for the purpose of voting on the consolidation of rural school districts in this area at the local school Friday night, the vote was 189 in favor and 133 against.

Cpl. Andrew Kajewski and Mr. and Mrs. Joe Kajeweski, Mary and Steve, attended an oyster supper at the Bennie Fogal home at Mankato Friday evening.

50 Years - 1973

The Waseca Cinema is set to open Thursday, Nov. 15 and will feature "Paper Moon" for the first showing. Camera equipment and theater seats, which are still in shipment, have to be installed before the theater opens.

Alvin Maurer, Sr., Mankato, assumed ownership of Depot Liquor Nov. 1. He purchased the business from Ron Spies, who has been managing the business since may of 1972.



Grand Opening Week is on the agenda this week at the Territori House in Otisco. The new supper club five miles south of Waseca Will be featuring Miss Minnesota Joleen Marie Benoit as part of the festivities in their dining room.

Fifth grade students at Waseca Middle School conducted a pumpkin contest last week. Each student was given a pumpkin to decorate with yarn, felt, and other materials. The pumpkins were then judged and the following winners chosen: Angela Miller, first place; Keith Johnson, second place; Keith Malterer, third place. Also pictured is Merritt Fuller, who furnished the pumpkins for the contest.

25 Years - 1998

After a long campaign which received a great deal of local attention, the bid for Waseca County Sheriff came to an end with a Tim Dann victory Tuesday night, winning with 3989 votes.

The Spanish Department of Waseca High School has chosen Lori DeLong as Student of the Week for the week of Nov. 2. She is the daughter of Kent and Bonnie DeLong of Waseca.

Governor-elect Jesse Ventura had kept everyone guessing, but Monday morning at a state capitol press conference, the announcement was made that his transition team chief of staff is former Wasecan, Steve Bosacker.

After a month long renovation, Mark and Bev Siemers reopened Waseca's laundromat facility, now known as the Maytag Laundry and Ultimate Tan.

Compiled by Jessica Lutgens

■ Briefs from Page 1

St. Paul Lutheran Christmas Bazaar 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 2

St. Paul Lutheran will be offering Christmas items for sale and also serving meals during its bazaar from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2. On the menu are sloppy Joes, hot beef sandwiches, and homemade pie.

History Center Bootlegger's Ball 5:30 p.m. Dec. 2

The Waseca County History Center is sponsoring a "Bootlegger's Ball" at its Second Street NE address. Live jazz music, 1920s dances and a costume contest will be among

the highlights. Tickets are \$20; admission is free to members. RSVP required.

Grief Group from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Thursdays through December 7

Real Life Church, 620 Elm Ave W, will be the site of a weekly grief support group, Grief Share, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Tuesdays through December 7. Contact Janeice Bull at bull.jm@gmail.com or 507-384-2181 for additional information, and register at griefshare.org/findagroup.

All You Can Eat Breakfast 8 a.m. to noon, Dec. 10

All you can eat breakfast to benefit Waseca Boy Scouts Troop 85 at the Waseca V.F.W. Cost is \$12 for adults, \$7 for youth, preschool free. Menu includes pancakes, French toast, biscuits and gravy, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, beverages.

Looking Back (New Richland)

100 Years Back - 1923

The dedication services of the new Trinity church of New Richland will be held Sunday, November 25. Dedication will take place in the afternoon and will be conducted in the English language.

Having missed chickens from time to time a lady living in the west part of town discovered a party entering her chicken coop at 9 o'clock Wednesday evening. She was able to get a good description of the thieves. An examination of the foot prints in the garden showed that the owner of the shoe that made these tracks is no juvenile.

Mr. and Mrs. George Hadden and children motored to Minneapolis Saturday and visited with relatives until Monday. On their return they were accompanied by Mrs. John Hadden, who will remain with her son and family for several days.

Herman Breise and Leonard Lewer have been making use of some of their knowledge they gained at the demonstration tour blasting out trees and rocks. "Herm" says it beats the grub hoe all to pieces.

The Beck garage installed a new filling station at their garage last Thursday. The Beck garage is nearing completion and will make a nice improvement to Matawan.

The misses Adeline and Elizabeth Plck spent several days last week at the home of their sister, Mrs. Wm. Possin at Waldorf. They assisted the Possin family move to their new home at Minnesota Lake.

Mr. and Mrs. Bob Porter of Freeborn visited Sunday afternoon at the Jake Echernach home and in the evening at Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Korman and family.

77 Years Back - 1946

B.V. Eckels, whom The Star mentioned last week as successor to Dr. R.K. Hawley, dentist, acceded to the desires of classmate Dr. Albert G. Flor of New Ulm and the latter is preparing to come here. He already has part of his equipment here and is having the office and living quarters redecorated, preparatory to moving in.

Herb Schwenke is to quit farming and will henceforth follow the job of mechanic. Nov. 15 he will begin work for the new Byron Implement Co., taking the place of Frank Svoboda.

When Virgil Wenzel drove into Hector he wondered why so many people stared so interestedly at his auto. Two chickens had cozily roosted on the rear bumper for the nine-mile ride. Ted Westerhaug completed a carpenting job on the Odin Leabo farm and drove home to Fergus Falls. Next day he drove down to have the car oil checked. Roosting under the hood was one of Mr. Leabo's chickens, and in the oil pan was an egg.

The following were entertained at the Irving Lee home Friday in honor of Robert Lee's fourth birthday: Mrs. Ed Bruzek and Barbarar, Mrs. Arvil Olson and Marilyn, Mrs. Donald Hoeg, Charles, Kenneth, and Nancy, Wayne Wenzel, Mrs. Albert Ganiere, Donna and David, Mrs. L. A. Bruzek and Mrs. Ed Silvers.

C.I. Virnig Hardware Co. has rented the John Deere implement building owned by Ed Nash Priebe of Waseca and will use it for storage and assembling of farm implements and may establish a repair shop there also.

Mr. and Mrs. Lorenz Miller and family, Mr. and Mrs. Eldor Klinger and Mr. and Mrs. Melvin O'Riley and son, Darwin, were Sunday afternoon visitors at the F.F. Krueger home.

50 Years Back - 1973



Farmers and their wives gathered at the Raymond Wood farm Friday and Saturday to harvest and crib 65 acres of ear corn for Mr. Wood who underwent back surgery recently. Pictured at coffee break are ARthur Krueger, Gay Proehl, Lester Schlaak, John Wood, Jacob Hoelz and Milton Nelson.

25 Years Back - 1998



Breanna Johannsen blows on the windmill built in a science class at NRHEG High School to test its power as partner Kelli Schlaak enjoys the process.



Jaydyn Gaul and Julie Nelson

Jaydn Gaul recognized as ‘Outstanding New Marcher’

Jaydyn Gaul daughter of Steve Gaul and Julie Nelson of Waseca rec'd the recognition of "Outstanding New Marcher" with the U od W1 Euclair Blue /Gold Marching Band.

She was selected out of the group of 162 NEW Marching band members on Nov 2nd by the fellow marching band students .

Jaydyn is an Alumni Member of our own Waseca Marching Jays, having graduated in 2023. Jaydyn played both Clarinet AND trumpet for Waseca Band.

She is currently playing Clarinet with The UW Euclair Blue Golds.

This award speaks highly of the Waseca Band educational Program as well Ms. Gaul's efforts juggling college course work, practises and performances.

To be elected by her peers is an extreme honor.

The modern BMB was born in

fall 2000 with a modest, 60-member ensemble. It has since morphed into a vibrant, 475-member collegiate marching band that tours extensively and performs on the world stage.

2021 marked another restart for the Blugold Marching Band. After the enormous challenges presented by COVID-19 in 2020, BMB regrouped and took the field in 2021 with 400+ members.

The Blue Golds completed a full 2023 performance schedule that included Home Football Games, exhibitions at Chippewa Falls, Youth in Music (Minneapolis) and Bands of America and St. Louis MO.

As the nation continues to emerge BMB is excited at the prospects of an even bigger and better 2024! Every two years the Band Travels Internationally 2024 marks that upcoming trip. Jaydyn is excited to travel with the band.

■ Zika from Page 2

trees and limbs littered the half-mile driveway to the cabin. The weight of the ice took many, many branches and whole trees to the ground. He couldn't get to his cabin until he had worked days to clean up the mess.

High winds bring down limbs into power lines and block traffic on streets, creating dangerous situations. Many people have gone without electricity for extended periods of time.

There are also times I've gotten back into my car after leaving it parked along a tree-lined street and noticed a sticky sap on my windshield. Some trees give off an invisible sap I wasn't aware of. According to the internet, Minnesota's biggest culprits are the sugar maple, the Chinese elm, and the birch tree. Speaking of sap, it takes 40 gallons of sugar maple sap to make one gallon of that famous natural syrup.

Fall brings shorter days, less daylight, and an end to photosynthesis. The leaves die, change color, and drift to the ground, gradually leaving the branches naked. Raking leaves can become a frustrating, difficult task. Trees don't let loose of all the leaves at the same time. The 20-mile-per-hour winds seem to change direction every other day.

One day, leaves are blowing into my yard from the park to the west;

the next day leaves are coming from my neighbor's to the south. I'm no saint, either, of course. Leaves from my yard are also constantly relocating to nearby properties. It's common practice to have to rake the yard several times.

This year, leaf pickup for my neighborhood was approaching rapidly; the city was scheduled to pick up all the leaves on my curb on November 7. The leaves from my maple tree were down. I raked and used my blower to create huge piles of leaves. I filled garbage cans full, carried them to the curb, and dumped them. I was hurting—my back and legs needed rest. As I took a stretch, I looked out the window at what seemed like mountains of leaves still needing to be dealt with.

Sammy barked. I looked out the window again and there was Giles filling garbage cans and carrying them to the curb.

"I thought you could use some help," he said as he greeted me. A short time later, here came neighbor Twila with a rake, ready to take on a role in the Zika leaf project. Thanks to Giles, Twila, and their kind hearts, the leaves were piled at the curb and the yard was once again leaf free.

I'd like to close with a few "dad jokes" for grandchildren, kids and simple-minded adults.

What is a tree's favorite shape? A tree-angle.

What's a tree's least favorite month? Sep-timber.

What stumped the tree? It couldn't find the root of the problem. (Get it? Find the root...)

Council talks upcoming road construction

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Two different road projects on 11th Avenue NW and Fourteenth Street dominated the conversation during the November 8 regular meeting of the Waseca City Council.

Ultimately a feasibility study for a mill and overlay of 11th Ave. NW was approved. Current expectation is that work on the road would be completed in 2024, and that as much as three-quarters of the funding for the project would come from the

state.

A local joint road improvement project with Woodville Township was eventually approved for the city to apply for a Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) grant for 11th Ave. NW. Most of the discussion actually came over preferences of pavement options on 8th St. NE which also needs work. The city will delay any applications for grants on 8th St. NE for a year, because the LRIP grant dollars, if approved, would reimburse nearly 100% of the cost for 11th Ave NW. It is also believed

WASECA CITY COUNCIL

that there will be another round of LRIP funding available next year, which can be applied for, for 8th St. NE.

The council agreed to some changes in the Waseca Airport's already-approved 4-unit Hangar Project because bids on the plan came in about \$46,000 more than expected due to material cost increases.

In the city manager's report, Carl Sonnenberg said he is talk-

ing with a regional developer regarding Gaiter Lake; he told council members he hopes to bring together information for a city council work session in early 2024.

Council member Jimmy Ebertowski was congratulated on becoming a father. "Last Wednesday at 8:01 a.m. Waseca's population grew by one," Ebertowski shared. "My heart has never been so full. I've never felt so blessed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

■ Program from Page 1

them a hug," Miller said. "Tell them what they mean to you."

Miller still serves on the Minnesota National Guard, and is approaching his thirtieth year. Miller told the audience that October 20 of this year was one of the most meaningful days of his life. His son Preston enlisted in the Marine Corps and Miller was asked to give the oath.

"Giving Preston the oath will be one of the greatest times of my life," Miller said. "Thank you Preston for giving me that."

Miller spoke about his decision to enlist in 1994. His friend William said he was joining and Miller followed suit.

"People don't always give so much thought to joining the military because of our democracy here," Miller explained. "When freedom is destroyed in one country, it is threatened throughout the whole world."

Miller closed with a quote from one of his favorite speakers, John F.

Kennedy.

"Ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man. Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you."

At the conclusion of the speech, Barb Klampe announced the winners of the "Voice of Democracy" and "Patriots' Pen" youth scholarships.

In order to be eligible for the award, students needed to prepare a three- to five-minute "audio essay." Only five points separated first and

second places.

Ashton Jenzen took first, garnering three perfect scores from evaluators. "I would not be surprised if this is a winner at the state level," Klampe said.

In second place was Lucas Vasquez.

At the middle school, sixth- grader Lucy Deml was the "Patriots' Pen" essay winner.

At the conclusion of the program, all active duty service members and local Veterans were all honored and asked to stand as their names were read aloud.

New program offered by WAF

Waseca Area Foundation is thrilled to introduce a groundbreaking opportunity where "EVERYBODY WINS!" With its innovative Advisor Managed Program (AMP), Waseca Area Foundation (WAF) is delighted to provide a tailored approach to charitable giving.

This program empowers donors to recommend a preferred investment advisor to manage their charitable funds. Such an approach enables donors and their investment advisors to maintain their professional relationships while advancing philanthropic objectives.

Never before have our local advisors had the opportunity to maintain their client relationships when their

clients establish a fund within Waseca Area Foundation.

Why now? Waseca Area Foundation has obtained its own 501c3 status, allowing the introduction of this new opportunity.

How does Everybody Win?

- Clients can personalize their giving by recommending grants for causes they care about, with the guidance of a local foundation that understands the community's needs. Additionally, clients may benefit from a tax deduction and potentially avoid capital gains tax on appreciated assets.
- Advisors retain management of the assets while receiving compensation, making it possible for

clients to contribute those assets to a charitable fund locally at WAF. Moreover, WAF provides comprehensive back-office support for granting and financial reporting, simplifying the process for both clients and advisors.

- Waseca Area Foundation increases its fund balance, thereby amplifying its impact and the amount of giving to local organizations. Additionally, a small administrative fee associated with newly established funds supports the mission and ongoing work of Waseca Area Foundation.
- Community & Beyond: More grant dollars are directed to local programs and projects!

We are delighted to announce the activation of our first AMP Donor Advised Fund – the iWealth Foundation Fund. Brad Connors, a WAF Board member and CEO of iWealth investment firm, has played a pivotal role in making the AMP program accessible to everyone.

Utilizing the new AMP Program to establish a charitable fund through Waseca Area Foundation is now more convenient than ever. "Everybody Wins!" To learn more, please contact the Waseca Area Foundation office at 507-835-5990 or email Amy Potter, Executive Director, at pota@waseca.k12.mn.us.

■ Awards from Page 1

bags and uniform accessories.

Big Brothers, Big Sisters: \$7,000 for mentoring support.

Life Work Planning Center: \$2,500 for workshops and training for women in transition services, gas cards, and/or Walmart cards, utilities, phone bill payments.

Lutheran Social Services (LSS): \$3,000 for foster family programming. LSS provides four activities each year for all foster families in the area.

Beds for kids: \$1,000 for purchasing beds and bedding.

Feeding our Communities partners: \$3,000 for hunger relief. The JWP Backpack Program was new this year and helps send food home with JWP students who experience food insecurity. Currently 74 students are receiving assistance.

Neighborhood Service Center: \$5,472 for Waseca High School Backpack Program helping students whose homes experience food insecurity.

Waseca Food Shelf: \$7,000, which is expected to meet about one month's worth of need. Food shelf representatives described encountering an 80% increase in requests in 2023 as compared to 2022.

Waseca Arts Council: ; \$4,000 for a new "Art on the Ave." event scheduled to take place next year in front of Katie O'Learys. This event will include music, food stands and family and kid activities

Waseca Historical Society: \$1,000 for updating information on the online historical document server.

Waseca Chorale: \$2,500 for two concerts performed each year.

Waseca County Sheriff's Office: \$1,000 for drug and drug safety education materials

Farmamerica: \$4,400 to provide student opportunities to explore careers in agriculture. The organization will also be building raised garden beds.

Junior Achievement: \$3,200 for programming to be offered in Waseca Schools. According to information the organization shared, Junior Achievement impacts hundreds of students at nearly every school in Waseca County. This grant was requested to support bringing speakers and presenters into the schools, and to fund the "Titan" program. "Titan" is aimed at helping students understand what it is like to run a real business.

JWP Schools: \$1,000 for Raptor software support. This software will help the district assess threats and student risk.

NRHEG Schools: \$1,000 to acquire "high-interest" reading materials for students at the junior and senior high levels.

Waseca Community Education: \$13,000 for a summer youth theater program and for youth development grant scholarships.

According to information shared by Oraskovich, it was the intent of the EF Johnson family to provide scholarships for local schools, with the majority going to Waseca. This past year, a total of \$20,000 was awarded to Waseca High School seniors; \$3,000 to JWP seniors, \$3,000 to NRHEG seniors; and \$10,000 for "non-traditional scholarships" awarded to students attending Riverland (Austin), and South Central Colleges (Mankato and Faribault).

Oraskavitch concluded the program saying: "When you leave here today I hope someone says to you, 'Who are our Big Brothers and Big Sisters? What is Farmamerica doing?'" Tell people what

you remember about these different groups, organizations, and people. Please continue to apply for our grants. When you hear someone say 'I wish I could only...' tell them about the Waseca Area Foundation. People don't know what they don't know. A lot of people didn't know their dreams could come through by applying for a grant."

More than two dozen non profit organizations benefited from this week's awards banquet, with more than \$100,000 given to benefit Waseca area citizens. Monday evening the Janesville Area Foundation presented its awards banquet. New Richland's grant awards will be made at the city's next council meeting.

"Keep doing what you're doing," WAF member Amy Potter added.

Looking forward, the spring grant application deadline for New Richland and Waseca will be March 31, 2024.

The Waseca Chorale

under the direction of
Deb Wantoch-Yess and John Hoehn

presents

Fantasy of Christmas Carols

Sunday, November 26, 2023 at 4:00 pm

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

111 4th Street NW, Waseca

Tickets available at the door

Adults \$10

Youth ages 12 and under \$7

This performance of the Waseca Chorale is made possible in part by a grant from the E.F. Johnson Foundation

■ Author

from Page 1

dents, as well as several more which Baker found in newspaper archives.

In 2016, Daniel Heinrich, who had been investigated in the case in the early 1990s, confessed to kidnapping and killing Jacob, then revealed the location of his body. Heinrich, it turns out, had approached numerous boys across the nearby region in the late 1980s, leading to the unsettling legend of “Chester the Molester” in the Stearns County town of Paynesville.

In September of 2016, 27 years after his abduction, the family of Jacob Wetterling held a funeral for him.

This October, a book co-written by Jacob’s mother, Patty Wetterling and blogger Joy Baker was released. Titled “Dear Jacob: A Mother’s Journey of Hope,” the book is available in hardcover.

Authors Wetterling and Baker came to the Waseca library the evening of November 6 to share their insights and experiences from preparing the book. Attendance at the talk was unexpectedly high: Ultimately more than 80 seats were filled; about another 120 people chose to stand.

Wetterling described having lived more than 20 years in “high gear” after Jacob’s abduction. There were campaigns and appeals to the public for Jacob’s return, all of which metamorphosed into a national leadership role in protecting missing and exploited children. An important accomplishment in that role, Wetterling said, was helping establish the national registry for predatory offenders and the “amber alert” system used when children are missing.

After decades of hoping and working, Wetterling said, the two-month time frame in which Heinrich was reinvestigated, confronted and then confessed was “all so abrupt.” She had established an identity and a place in society which suddenly changed.

“Now who was I?” she said. “Everything I was trying to do hadn’t happened.”

Jacob was the oldest of four children; his siblings are now adults and even parents. Wetterling said she had often been asked to write a book, and believed she should for the sake of finding closure, but was uncertain where to begin.

In the meantime, she and Baker had become close friends. Wetterling asked her whether she would be willing to go through some “stuff”—a pickup load of papers and memorabilia—to help get her organized.

The idea that she would trust

Baker so completely, Wetterling made clear, was a complete turnaround from where their relationship once stood. The two read an email exchange from the time prior to Heinrich’s arrest, when new evidence was being uncovered, making Baker and Schierl enthusiastic about further progress.

In her email, Wetterling had told Baker she was showing the behavior of a “stalker” by talking with so many people from Wetterling’s life.

Baker’s somewhat embarrassed response expressed regret that Wetterling felt that way and confusion about how to move forward.

Fortunately the two learned to trust one another, the investigation continued, and Heinrich was brought to some level of justice.

Wetterling shared that, throughout the time Jacob was missing, she persistently thought about what she could do to “catch him up” on what had been happening while he was away. This led to writing a series of letters, especially during holidays and celebrations. The “Dear Jacob” title of the book came about because those letters were the foundation for Wetterling’s memoir.

“Patty was kind of broken,” Baker said of the time after Jacob’s funeral.

“It’s like scrambled eggs,” Wetterling said of herself. “Everything mixes together and nothing makes sense.”

Thus, the two worked closely together, Wetterling expressing her thoughts, feelings and impressions and Baker helping structure and organize the writing.

Even in the overly full library, Baker and Wetterling were able to keep the tone of their talk personal and friendly.

Wetterling said that, even with the dark ending reached in Jacob’s case, she can still find hope. She tells of a time in southeastern Minnesota when her vehicle had broken down and needed repairs and she found herself in emotional turmoil with no apparent path for withdrawal. She described being invited home by a woman who lived on a pig farm—a setting completely foreign to a “city girl,”—given a bed to sleep in, a hearty breakfast, and then a pair of boots to wear while helping “slop the hogs.”

“I found such strength in that,” Wetterling remembers. “That someone was willing to take me in and help nurture me past the rawness.”

“We live in a world where stuff happens and we have no choice but to pick ourselves up. But we can’t stop. Jacob’s world is still worth fighting for; let’s continue working toward the world as we believe it should be.

“I have grandchildren now, so I have even more reasons to keep trying.”

Trot photo opportunity.

Farmamerica encourages all interested runners to experience this fit-on-the-farm event and to start their holiday season with old and new friends. Early registration is only \$10 per participant; registration at the door will be \$15. Children 4 and under are free. Visit farmamerica.org to see full event details and to register.

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

‘A pretty hopping place’

Friends of Waseca Public Library

Program nearly two decades old

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

“I like to see a library be filled with vitality,” says Gwen Oraskovich, one of nine members of the “Friends of the Library” board of directors. Toward that end, she and the other board members work to advance their organization’s chosen purpose, namely to support the Waseca library, focus public attention on its many programs and offerings, and encourage gifts and endowments to continue that work.

Donations to Friends of the Library have been tax deductible since 2004. “Five dollars or five thousand,” quips board member Linda Grant, “we’re grateful for every donation.”

Grant says it adds special meaning for her that the financial underpinning of the Friends organization is a \$10,000 grant made by her dear friend Irene Jeddelloh nearly 20 years ago. As an “endowment,” the original \$10,000 is still there, and has even been increased by more than \$6,000. While the money remains on deposit, any interest or investment income earned by the endowment is available for advancing the library’s cause.

Individuals who donate to the Friends of the Library have the opportunity to specify whether their gift should become part of the endowment or go directly toward some current project.

Board members acknowledge that donors have many options as they decide what organizations to support. “But think about it,” says board member Jeanne Swanson indicating the people coming and going at the Waseca Library.

“This isn’t only a place to come and borrow books. People mingle here, they try new things. They can use the computers to browse the internet.” Swanson also mentions Lego Storytime and numerous “how-to” events, saying people of all ages take part. Behind her, as if on cue, a boy calls out to a friend, “We can charge our phone here!”

“It’s a pretty hopping little place,” observes Grant.

Board members recognize that very few people are likely to access all the programs and opportunities the library offers, but that there is definitely



Representatives of the “Friends of the Library” board during a recent author event held at Waseca’s Masonic Lodge.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

something on the list for everyone. From “Battle of the Books” for tweens and teens—a trivia contest based on four selected books—to “Cook the Book,” which asks adults to choose and prepare a recipe from a specific cookbook, options are far-ranging and original. The library’s summer reading program helps children maintain their skills during non-school months; author events bring in writers to share background information about their work. The November 6 talk by “Dear Jacob” author Patty Wetterling and her co-writer Joy Baker drew more than 200 people.

As to how board members distribute money across the various events, they say they mostly listen to staff requests and support whatever activities they can—sometimes by allocating funds, sometimes by volunteering to serve snacks or provide beverages.

Friends of the Library board members encourage area residents to remember the many services and opportunities provided by the library and its resources as they make major financial decisions. They hope folks will include donating to the endowment as an option as they make long-term arrangements with financial planners or attorneys.

“Yes, there are a lot of ways to make a difference,” says Swanson. “But think about it, where else can you go anymore where you can receive important services, interact with many different groups of people, make use of the resources and just plain have fun without anyone expecting that you’ll pay out money for what you’re getting?”

Friends of the Library board members include Penny Anderson, Jeanne Comstock, Sue Erdmann, Linda Grant, Joanne Jackson, Rick Morris, Gwen Oraskovich, Mary Schultz and Jeanne Swanson.

Rush over to

Farmamerica

for inaugural

turkey trot

Farmamerica encourages local runners to skip the lines and crowds Black Friday and “enjoy the fresh country air while burning off some extra calories” at the organization’s inaugural Turkey Trot on Friday, Nov. 24.

The run is open to all ages. Check-in will begin at 8:30 a.m. For those with a competitive spirit, the day includes a timed 5k race beginning at 9:00 a.m. A more relaxed fun run/walk begins at 9:15 a.m.

Racers will enjoy running or walking past Farmamerica’s historic sites on a paved path while taking in the beauty of the countryside. Those who register by November 15 will receive a Turkey Trot race medal and t-shirt. After the race, enjoy bananas provided by Kwik Trip and a Turkey



Alex Merritt and family

Benefit

for Alex

Merritt

Saturday

A cancer benefit for 2015 NRHEG graduate Alex Merritt will be Saturday, Nov. 18, in Mapleton at the home of Karson and Amber Duncanson located at 11965 571st Ave Mapleton.

A free will donation will begin at 5 p.m. The day will include a silent auction with bids due by 7 p.m. There will be a 50/50 raffle with tickets available the day of the benefit or in advance.

Those interested in donating items or purchasing tickets can do so by contacting any of the following individuals: Marijo Beckstrand, 507-381-3520; Jamie Beckstrand, 507-381-9000; Alicia Root, 507-995-8547; Steph Root, 507-461-3796; Luann Card, 507-676-4423.

Alex was first diagnosed in August of 2020 with a neuroendocrine tumor affecting some lymph nodes and his pancreas. He handled 2 cycles of chemotherapy and had a major Whipple procedure to remove a tumor, which was a success. In February of 2023, Alex was showing a recurrence affecting some lymph nodes and his liver. He handled six cycles of chemotherapy this time and had surgery to remove another tumor. He then developed a bacterial infection requiring many additional hospital stays. All money raised will help Alex and his family. Alex has a long road to full recovery and any bit of support will be much appreciated.



Bill Kuschel accepts his teacher of the year title during the annual Waseca High School Veterans’ program last Friday.
Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens



WHS teacher of the year

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

In a surprise recognition during the Veterans Day program November 10, it was revealed that WHS teacher of 12 years Bill Kuschel has been selected as Waseca’s Teacher of the

Year. Fellow teachers Marc Engesether and Jake Janike introduced Kuschel. “He’s here because of his dedication and work ethic,” Engesether said.

Walking in to surprise Kuschel were friends and family holding

flowers.

After hugs and tears, Kuschel came to the stage and addressed the more than 1,000 people in attendance.

“I’m surprised. Humbled. Wow!” Kuschel said. “Thank you for the opportunity to be your teacher.”

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Jays' season ends in state quarterfinals

Unbeaten, top-ranked Stewartville subdues WHS football team, 22-0

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The only difference this time was the uniforms.

The outcome was never really in doubt.

Stewartville, the No. 1 ranked Class AAA football team in the state, stayed unbeaten with a 22-0 victory over Waseca in a state quarterfinal game Saturday, Nov. 11 at Hastings. The 12-0 Tigers, who defeated the Bluejays 27-13 in the season opener at Waseca, continued their march to what will, in all likelihood, be a state championship.

The Bluejays, who dealt with adversity most of the year - including a season-ending injury to their leading rusher and scorer, Kaeden Johnson - finished with a record of 9-3.

"I thought we had a great year," said Bluejays head coach Brad Wendland. "Stewartville is as good of a AAA team that I've ever seen."

The state tournament appearance was the fifth for Waseca under Wendland, who also guided the Bluejays to state in 2009, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

While Wendland had praise for his entire squad, he pointed at the seniors for paving the way.

"I'm unbelievably proud of the seniors, who have provided not only leadership for us but success this season," said Wendland. "I think the seniors really showed the way with their work ethic and leadership in practice."

Last Saturday, Stewartville took the opening kickoff and methodically marched 71 yards in 10 plays for a touchdown, the final 13 yards on a pass from Ayden Helder to Carter Miller. Parker Wangen kicked the PAT, and it was 7-0 midway through the opening period.

The Bluejays, taking over on their own 20-yard line, answered, but mistakes - penalties, missed passes and a low snap in punt formation - gave Stewartville the ball back on the Bluejay 45.

The Waseca defense held, however, pressuring Helder on a fourth-down pass, and the Jays took over on their own 25 early in the second period. They punted after three plays.

Mixing the run and pass effectively, Stewartville then drove 64 yards in 10 plays, with Helder throwing a 13-yard touchdown pass to Caleb Bancroft. Wangen ran for a two-point conversion.

The Bluejays again punted and, on the next series, Tauston Rupe picked off Helder for only his second interception of the season.

The Jays, after taking a 15-yard penalty, threw an interception, and Stewartville settled for a 15-0 half-time lead.

The Bluejays got the spark they were looking for when Damarius Russell returned the opening second-half kickoff 42 yards to the Stewartville 49, but their drive eventually stalled deep in the red zone as the Tigers again picked off a pass and took over at their own 1-yard line.

One first down later, Noah Thompson recovered a fumble to give the Bluejays a golden opportunity on the Stewartville 13. A holding penalty was followed by a fumble, which Stewartville recovered.

The Bluejays quickly forced a punt, which covered only 14 yards, and Waseca had another opportunity at the Stewartville 30. Again they couldn't cash in, fumbling on the second play as the third quarter came to a close.

The Tigers proceeded to drive 75 yards in 11 plays, with Helder throwing a 5-yard touchdown pass to Henry Tschetter. Wangen kicked the PAT.

Waseca had one final shot, starting at its own 22 after a personal foul penalty, but a third-and-16 pass fell incomplete and the Bluejays again punted.

Stewartville ran out the clock, advancing to the state semifinals Saturday, Nov. 18 against Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.



Johnson



Ellis



N.Engel-Mueller



S.Engel-Mueller



N.Thompson



Stenzel



Wendland

For the game, the Tigers held the Bluejays to 97 total yards while gaining 305.

"The kids played with great passion throughout the season," said Wendland. "This team is very connected, and I give the seniors a lot of credit for that."

The Bluejays will graduate seniors Johnson, Laird Keaton, Carter Ellis, Keaton Rucker, Rudy Moncala, Jose Mixteco, Zach Hulscher, Noah Thompson, Jacob Thompson, Nate Engel-Mueller, Andrew Robran, Josh Norman, Ethan Stenzel, Iven Rodriguez, Shane Engel-Mueller, Joe Mixteco-Perez, and Javon Rodney.

After the game, the seniors lined up on the goal line and were congratulated one by one by the Waseca underclassmen and coaches.

"It's their last game, unfortunately, and we shake their hands as sort of a way to say so long to them," said Wendland. "Those seniors really battled when they were younger to make themselves into a great grade. They were outstanding leaders for us."

Returnees for next include their quarterback, sophomore Jordan Johnston, who had never played the position before this season, and several others who possess excellent football skills.

Stewartville 22, Waseca 0	
WAS	0 0 0 0—0
STEW	7 8 0 7—22

First Quarter
STEW - Miller 13 pass from Helder (Wangen kick)

Second Quarter
STEW - Bancroft 14 pass from Helder (Wangen run)

Third Quarter
No scoring

Fourth Quarter
STEW - Tschetter 5 pass from Helder (Wangen kick)

	STEW	WAS
First downs:	16	5
Rushing:	42-120	24-69
Passing:	16-21, 172	4-11, 35
Total Yds.	292	94
Penalties:	6-55	7-60

INDIVIDUAL STATS
Passing - WAS: Johnston 4-11, 35; STEW: Helder 15-20, 167; Miller 1-1, 5
Rushing - WAS: Johnston 12-42; Mixteco 11-28; Hulscher 1-11; STEW: Miller 24-59; Helder 12-27; Wangen 1-21; Scanlan 3-8; Tschetter 1-4; Schneider 1-1
Receiving - WAS: Da.Russell 2-21; Ohnstad 2-14; STEW: Miller 5-63; Tschetter 6-56; Wangen 3-21; Turner 1-18; Bancroft 1-14
Waseca Defense: Bennett 4 tackles; Da.Russell 4 tackles, 1 assist; Keaton 1 assist; Ellis 6 tackles, 6 assists; De.Russell 3 tackles; Moncada 2 assists; Rupe 1 tackle, 1 interception; Glynn 1 tackle; N.Thompson 2 tackles, 3 assists, 1 fumble recovery; Hagen 3 assists; N.Engel-Mueller 3 tackles, 4 assists; Garza 1 tackle, 1 assist; Robran 3 tackles; Stenzel 8 tackles, 3 assists; S.Engel-Mueller 6 tackles, 3 assists; Rodney 1 tackle



THAT KIND OF NIGHT — At left, Tauston Rupe (33) walks off the field after the Bluejays' state quarterfinal loss to Stewartville Saturday, Nov. 11. At right, Waseca quarterback Jordan Johnston glances up at the scoreboard. Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens



JUST OUT OF REACH — At left, the Bluejays' Carson Ohnstad (18) just misses a pass from quarterback Jordan Johnston. At right, Damarius Russell (3) breaks loose for a 42-yard kickoff return to start the second half.



BROKEN UP — A Bluejay defender breaks up a pass.



TOUGH LOSS — At left, the Bluejays' Bennett Ludwig (24) can only chase as a Stewartville receiver crosses the goal line. At right, Noah Thompson (44) and Benjamin Hagen (50) wrap up a ball carrier.



TOUGH YARDS — Jordan Johnston, right, was held to 42 yards rushing and 35 passing by Stewartville.

BLUEJAY FOOTBALL

PLAYER of the WEEK

Tauston Rupe

Rupe, RB, MLB had an interception during the Bluejays final game against Stewartville. Congratulations on an amazing season, Bluejays!

Bluejay Football Player of the Week Sponsored by:

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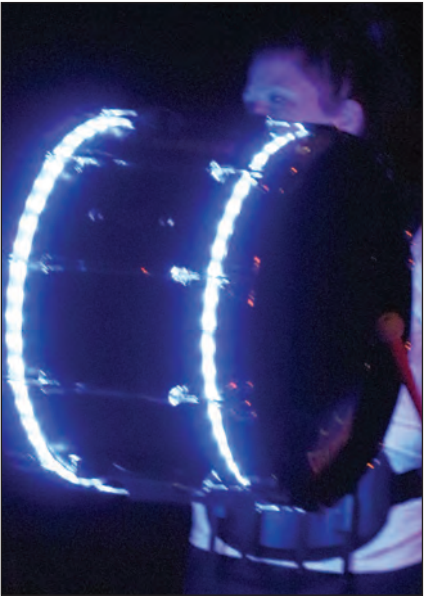
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Pioneer photos by Deb Bently and Waseca Public Schools

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