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LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY
No. 45 Vol. III \$2 Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca Thursday, November 7, 2024

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Sports



Afton Finly (foreground), librarian with the LeSueur-Waseca Library in Waseca, said one of her biggest goals when talking with students during the career fair was to build their awareness regarding the versatility and flexibility of libraries. "We're more than books," she said.

Career fair expands future possibilities

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

About 350 students from the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) and Waseca high schools, the Alternative Learning Center, and the Southwest Metro Partnership "Transitions" program attended a career fair at The Mill in Waseca co-sponsored by the Waseca counseling department and the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce (WACC) on Monday, Oct. 28.

According to Ann Fitch, WACC

executive director, students came in distinct groups, each of which circulated among the dozens of vendors for 90 minutes or more; the fair was open from about 10:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. "We worked to represent a wide swath of opportunities," described Fitch. "We have businesses who might hire students going directly into the workforce, we have two- and four-year post-secondary edu-



Jennifer Burt, office manager with Patton, Hoversten and Berg law office in Waseca, wanted students to know they don't have to be lawyers to do important work in the field of law.

Pioneer photos by Deb Bently

Fair continued on 4

Santa Anonymous Program receiving applications

The Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center (WANSC) is now taking applications for the Santa Anonymous Program. This annual event provides gifts, toys or clothes to Waseca families in need. Parents of newborn children through grade 12 who are income eligible, and who are residents of Waseca County may apply.

Additional details can be found on Facebook, or by stopping at the WANSC building at 203 Third Avenue Northwest in Waseca to make an appointment or inquire about eligibility requirements. Applications can also be picked up at the County Health building, 1000 West Elm, or at the Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) office, 108 Tenth Avenue Southeast, in Waseca. Further information is also available by calling Cindy Kolander, WANSC Executive Director at 507-833-4119.

Waseca-Le Sueur library's will host live author Thurs., Nov. 7

The Waseca-Le Sueur Library system will host author Navajo Ranger, Stanley Milford, Jr. at 6 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 7. This will be an online event and will be recorded. To attend or to watch the recording go to wasecale-sueurlibraries.com/getregistered. Milford has investigated the paranormal, ufos and hauntings.

Indian Island Winery will host the band High Strung Nov. 8

The Indian Island Winery will host the band High Strung from 6-8:30 p.m. on Friday, November 8. They are described online as an acoustic trio performing classic pop.

Starfire Event Center will host Pub & Grub Comedy Sat., Nov. 9

The Starfire Event Center will host a Pub & Grub Comedy Special at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9.

Waseca Floral open house Saturday, Nov. 9

Waseca Floral, at 810 North State Street will have an open house, Saturday, Nov. 9. There will be porch pots, wreaths, arrangements, roping, hot cider and treats.

A word from The Word

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.
Revelation 3:20



From left: Rick and Sheila Morris of Waseca Floral; Diane Beckmann of Thrivent Financial; Larry Johnson of MinnWest Bank; Abbe Hoehn of The Mill; and Dr. Jay Bulfer with his wife Lyndsea of Growing Roots Chiropractic were acknowledged during the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Business & Industry Celebration, at The Mill the evening of Oct. 29, 2024.

Business of the year goes to...

Growing Roots, Larry Johnson, Thrivent, Waseca Floral, and the Mill honored

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Mill Event Center was abuzz with activity the evening of Tuesday, Oct. 29 for the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce 2024 Business & Industry Celebration. Organization executive director Ann Fitch acted as emcee for this event which celebrates the accomplishments and dedication of Waseca Chamber Members who contribute to making Waseca great.

Selected for the Young Entrepreneur Award was Dr. Jay Bulfer of Growing Roots Chiropractic located at 1800 North State Street. His somewhat emotional acceptance speech drew attention to the shared leadership of his wife, Lyndsea Bulfer. "Thank you to the chamber, thank you to Waseca. This has been an incredible year, we're excited to be here and I can't go further—" there was a slight pause here—"without recognizing my wife." His words were met with applause.

Next up was the Social Media Rising Star Award, which went to Larry Johnson, the "Minnesota Mortgage Man," at Minnwest Bank located at 200 Second Street NE. His acceptance speech took a humble approach, "This is really undeserved when I see what everyone else is doing. We wanted people to get excited about banking and finance, so one day my daughter suggested TikTok. We started making videos and it blew up from there."

The Chamber's "Impact Award" goes to an organization or business that consistently gives back to the community through service or donations. This year's winner is Diane Beckmann of Thrivent Financial located at 201



Larry Johnson, the Minnesota Mortgage Man with MinnWest Bank, snaps a selfie after accepting the Social Media Rising Star Award during the Chamber of Commerce's annual business industry celebration, October 29, 2024. Selfie by Larry Johnson

Second Street NE. "We have friendly competition when we all play well. We give back to the less fortunate because you've been blessed, I've been blessed. Thank you," said Beckmann.

The Legacy Award is reserved for a business that has been ongoing for 50 years or more. This was awarded to Rick and Sheila Morris of Waseca Floral located at 810 North State Street. Said Rick, "You just go to work every day, and you wake up and all these years have gone by. I want to thank my wife and all of you. Please, when you're out and about and you get the urge, stop in and say hi once in a while."

Said Fitch, "The People's Choice Award is the only award that we have the public vote on. This allows the community to tell us which chamber member they feel is important to them. This chamber member continually shows up for their community. Our winner joined the grind of being a family business in 2016. They have seen thousands of delighted customers pass through their doors every year as core memories are created each weekend. People come to them to celebrate their nup-

tials, to gather after laying a loved one to rest, or just catch up with friends over a bean bag tournament. Leaning on the broad shoulders of their family and the deep core of their faith to carry them through when times were uncertain, they have persevered when too many of their industry colleagues shuttered their doors in 2020 and 2021. Their giving nature has made them a favorite of their community. They have a very difficult time saying 'no' when asked to donate; in fact they are making a donation right now. They donated the space we are sitting in tonight. Our People's Choice Award Winner is The Mill. Please come forward Hoehn Family." Abbe Hoehn, manager and daughter to owners Joe and Deb Hoehn, accepted the award on behalf of The Mill, "Thank you, guys, I have no words, this is all a huge team effort. From me, my staff and family, thanks."

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Business & Industry Celebration 2024 was catered by The Boathouse and included appetizers such as: steak crostini, shrimp cocktail dip, margarita flatbread pizza and antipasto skewers. There was also a cash bar provided by The Mill.

Programs honor veterans

There are numerous Veterans Day programs happening throughout Waseca County on Monday, Nov. 11, 2024. The Waseca VFW, American Legion, color guard, and other area veteran groups will be visiting various locations. Among the scheduled events:

7:30 a.m. Veterans Day breakfast at the Janesville High School

8:40 a.m. Veterans Day program at Janesville High School; high school choir and band will perform. Bob Carda will be the guest speaker.

9:15-10 a.m. Hartley Elementary in Waseca will have a Veterans Day Program

9:30-10:00 a.m. Waseca Junior Senior High School Veterans Day Program

10:00-10:30 a.m. Team Academy Veterans Day Program

11:00 a.m. Waseca American Legion veterans' dinner

1:30 p.m. Colony Court Veterans Day Program

1:30-2:20 p.m. Veterans Day program NRHEG High School, New Richland

4:30-7:00 p.m. Sweet Sommers VFW will serve burgers. The club will be open from noon till 8 p.m.

* * *

Veterans' Day dinner free to veterans 11 a.m. Nov. 11 at Waseca American Legion

Area veterans are invited to a free Veterans' Day dinner beginning at 11 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 11, at the Waseca American Legion, 700 South State Street.

Waseca State of the City address 7 p.m. Nov. 12

The Waseca "State of the City" address will be 7 p.m. on Nov. 12 at the high school performing arts center. Those present will hear from Mayor Randy Zimmerman and city manager Carl Sonneberg.

Learn Colorful Abstract Painting at the Waseca Public Library Tues., Nov. 12

Create an abstract painting at the Waseca Public Library at 12 or 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 12. Learn to create and evaluate and build your art till it's ready. This is geared for adults.

Briefs continued on 3



Compostings

by Al Batt

I met a pumpkin named Gourdon

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I got a postcard from my doctor. What did it say?

He said he'd be right with me.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. Everything was nearly copacetic. I'd asked my wife, my SEO (search engine optimization), for the shopping list I'd misplaced after writing a phone message on the back. She found it, and I found the store all by myself. A store clerk asked me if I'd found everything OK. I asked her to define OK. I'd found things I needed more than I wanted.

As I had driven to town, I remembered riding along in a car and playing games to pass the miles. We'd put "butt" at the end of the names of businesses. We'd say, "I spy with my little eye—corn." We drove around Iowa a lot. We played the game where my mother said things like, "Whatshisname? You know, that guy from that movie about the detective with a poor attitude that I think looks like your Uncle Vern." We looked for out-of-state plates and improvised reasons for their appearance in the Gopher State. An Ohio plate meant the giant ice cream store in Cleveland had lost its power. It flooded the state with ice cream. Ohioans were fleeing, searching for a dry and unsticky land to begin new lives. Fun memories that digital devices and social media wouldn't have made.

FROM THOSE THRILLING DAYS OF YESTERYEAR

Bobbing for apples was a thing when I was a boy. I'd stick my face into a tub of water and try to catch apples floating in the water with my teeth. The apples were bigger than my big mouth. My nose filled with the water other noses and mouths had been in. Life gets small when you're bobbing for apples, but not small enough. We should have been bobbing for crabapples.

I ate pillowy Wonder Bread. It helped build strong bodies 12 ways. According to the Wonder Bread Cookbook, the 12 ways were muscles, bones and teeth, body cells, blood, appetite, growth, brain, energy, red cells, vitamin B12, protein digestion and tissue respiration. I don't eat Wonder Bread today. I sometimes rode in a Pontiac while eating Wonder Bread. They no longer make Pontiacs. Thank goodness I still have lefse. Lefse is a meal in itself. I put butter on it and it's bread. I put

brown sugar and butter on it and it becomes dessert. And, of course, it can be used as a napkin. I've even put peanut butter and/or honey on it. My grandchildren dislike lefse so much they won't even try it. They have no reason other than they know they wouldn't like it.

HALLOWEEN EXPERIENCES

Halloween offered some scary things. A phone call from an unknown number. A home with all its lights on (I've become my father). The 2.4 inches of snow that fell at my secret location in Minnesota. I met a pumpkin named Gourdon.

I'VE LEARNED

The roof of my mouth is actually my mouth's ceiling.

Jim Simser, hall-of-fame football coach and good man, died recently. As I shook the hands of his sons and gave his sister Carolyn a hug filled with years and tears, I realized once again that I know the best people on earth.

I threw a boomerang once that never came back. I live in constant fear.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

Want to make a quick buck? Raise deer for racing.

Who said, "Coming are British the. Coming are British the"? Paul Reverse.

The world would be a butter place without margarine.

Why did the pirate walk the plank? Because he didn't have a dog.

Why is dark spelled with a "k"? Because you can't "c" in the dark.

NATURE NOTES

There are about 225 owl species and about 50 possess feathered ear tufts (plumicorns). They aren't used for hearing. The exact function is uncertain, but there are theories galore. They may be for camouflage, helping a roosting owl blend into a tree by breaking up the owl's shape. They might make the owl look like a broken branch. The tufts could be used for communication with others of its species—courtship, recognition, display aggression or territorial behavior. Perhaps the presence of ear tufts gives an owl the look of a mammal and appear more menacing to mammalian predators. If the last were true, why wouldn't all owls have plumicorns? It continues to amaze me that great horned owls begin nesting in January or February.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Be kind and acknowledge another's existence by asking, "How are you?"

VFW Breakfast to benefit WANSC 8 a.m. to noon Nov. 17

An all-you-care-to-eat breakfast from 8 a.m. to noon at the Waseca VFW Post, 113 W. Elm Ave., will benefit the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center. Cost is \$12 for adults, \$7 for ages 6 to 13, and free for ages 5 and under. Food or cash donations for the Waseca Area Food Shelf will be appreciated.

North Waseca Lutheran Scandinavian Dinner Sunday, Nov. 17

North Waseca Lutheran Church, located at 40430 120th Street in Waseca, is having its 36th annual Scandinavian Dinner the evening of Sunday, Nov. 17. Adults are \$20; children 10 and under \$10. Carryout is available or eat by reservation. To make a reservation call Roy Srp 507-521-1185 or Greg Thomson 612-619-3868. The menu will include Swedish meatballs with mashed potatoes, coleslaw, jellied cranberries or Lutefisk w/white sauce and lefse.

State of Waseca County address 7 p.m. Nov. 19

The Waseca "State of the County" address will begin at 7 p.m. on Nov. 19 in the high school performing arts center. Speakers will be county board

of commissioners chair Brian Har- guth and county administrator Mi- chael Johnson.

Farmamerica Presidential Turkey Trot Friday, Nov. 29 at 10 a.m. till noon

Run off those Thanksgiving calories with the pardoned presidential turkeys 5k. Join Farmamerica for a Turkey Trot around our historic grounds starting at 10 AM and meet the newest members of our farm family straight off the truck from Washington D.C. Cost is \$20 per walker or runner, under 4 is free. A t-shirt.

Boxcar Bar Santa Anonymous Auction Saturday, Nov. 30

The Boxcar Bar in Waseca will host a Santa Anonymous Auction at 5 p.m. on Saturday, November 30. Proceeds go to families in Waseca County. Anyone with questions is invited to call 507-835-5136 and speak to Todd Schmidt or Tae Born. Donations to be auctioned off can be dropped off at the Boxcar Bar.

Waseca Public Library Thursday game sessions Oct. 31- Nov. 21

The Waseca Public Library will

Briefs

host a Lego, puzzle, mental chal- lenges and snack session at 3:30 p.m. every Thursday from Oct. 31- Nov. 21. This after school club will be de- vising plans, detecting problems, im- proving alternate routes and building models. Recommended ages 7-12.

Melissa Schultz at New Richland Liquor Friday, Nov. 22

Musician Melissa Schultz will be performing from 6 to 9 p.m. at the New Richland Liquor Company Fri- day, Nov. 22. Melissa Schulz is a local Waseca musician. She plays keyboard with drum tracks and per- forms pop, rock, and country covers from the 50s to today's hits.

St. Olaf Lake Christmas Festival Craft Show Saturday, Nov. 23

The St. Olaf Lake Christmas Festi- val will be from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in a heated area on Saturday, Nov. 23 at 9633 SW 128 Street, New Rich- land. Four vendors will be selling crafts, cookies and other goodies, hot chocolate, cider and coffee.

The Jazz at Indian Island Winery Saturday, Nov. 23

The Indian Island Winery near Ja- nesville will host The Jazz 10 at

5:30-8:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 23. The group plays classic and modern jazz for dancing.

Melissa Schultz at Papa Olie's in Waldorf Sunday, Nov. 24

Local musician Melissa Schultz will perform from 7 to 10 p.m. at Papa Olie's in Waldorf Sunday, Nov. 24. She plays keyboard with drum tracks and performs pop, rock, and country covers from the 50s to today's hits.

The Mill Event Center will have IV Play Wednesday, Nov. 27

The Mill Event Center in Waseca will host the band IV Play from 9:15 to 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 27. IV Play is a popular cover band playing all kinds of hits, both new and old.

Waseca Public Library November Boundary Waters exhibit

The Waseca Public Library will host a Boundary Waters exhibit for the entire month of November. Learn about the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and its wildlife. This feature will have book recommendations, a wood engraved map and more. This is geared for all ages.

A gathering of college journalist nerds

I survived Bourbon Street, New Orleans on Halloween and I lived to tell about it. I joke, it was actually really fun.

As I mentioned last week, eight of my coworkers (friends) and I embarked on a trip to New Orleans, Louisiana for a work conference held by the Associated Collegiate Press. Basically, a bunch of college journal- ist nerds getting together to learn how to report on things on campus. I'll be honest, I expected to learn more than I did. Most of the sessions I attended talked about things I al- ready knew, which made it frustrat- ing because the place was freezing cold: a lot of the time I felt like I was sitting in a walk-in cooler. Shivering and not learning anything was a bit frustrating at times, but overall it was fun.

One disappointment was we did not have time to venture around New Orleans—apart from finding food and the Halloween night celebrtions. Ho- wever, I still got to experience some



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

new things. For example, I tried my first po-boy and grits (on separate oc- casions). The po-boy was really good, but extremely large for my stomach. I chose one with shrimp; the shrimp was basically pouring out. I needed both hands and most of my plate to catch what fell out. Still really good, though. The grits, on the other hand, was a different experi- ence. I'm not saying I didn't like them, but they weren't what I was expecting. It was like eating unfla- vored/seasoned soggy oats. But per- haps I'm being unfair; they came as a side order to my omelet and I did

nothing to flavor them. Maybe next time I get them they have to be with something and not just a side. Next time.

Also next time, I will be getting one of the baked pastries called a beignet. That is the one thing I wanted to say I tried, but then didn't end up trying because I was never hungry and always full when an op- portunity presented itself. Oh well, my visions of being Princess Tiana with my delicious beignets will wait for another time, another trip.

But yes, I walked down the famed Bourbon Street on Halloween night,

surrounded by crowds and throngs of people dressed to the nines (or dressed minimally (if at all) if you catch my drift) in their Halloween costumes. It was fun until it started raining...then it was really fun. I danced in the rain in the streets of New Orleans and had a great time.

As it has a way of doing, reality came crashing down in a matter of days as I had to fly home to the cold, wet, dreary weather of Minnesota. The worst part is all the homework that needed to be made up. Oh well, just one more semester of suffering and I'm free. I only say this because while I do graduate in the spring, I don't think I'm going to be taking enough classes to even be a full-time student, so we'll see where that takes me, I guess. But first, surviving this week. Wish me luck and I hope you all voted, I know I did.

My Determination: " I just don't have the words for it. Schmoobly- dong. Is that a word?" - Roger the Alien, American Dad

An in-depth look at newspaper construction

The last few newspaper editions have been what I describe as 70- email and 100-missed-phone-call days.

Every day I wake up to anywhere from at least 50 and up to 70 or more emails. Of those, only a dozen or two usually require responses. I have a system. I drag emails to various boxes for their intended purposes. I have an inbox for the Star Eagle, the Pioneer and the Golden Link and under those inboxes I create sub- boxes where I can drag emails based on my designation. I need boxes for advertisements—one with approvals, another with questions still needing input. I get many questions about pricing, subscriptions and invoices. I have a box for that.

As I put all the pieces in place to create the week's edition, I refer back to those boxes. If everything were not categorized for quick recall and reference, I would spend hours just looking for information and input.

Many people may not be aware that the amount of paid advertising dictates how many pages will be cost effective for the week's edition. Be- cause of this, advertisements go onto the pages first. When it comes to legal advertisements, I create the ad and place it on the appropriate page, then send a "proof" (a copy of the ad), along with the cost to the adver- tiser. Every advertisement you see in the paper, I have communicated with that advertiser at some point regard- ing its content. All of the articles for that matter, I've discussed with our writers.

It's a lot of information.

With this being an election year, last week I woke up to 60 emails on Monday and another 70 on Tuesday. Today, a week later, I again woke up to numerous emails and missed calls.

I miss many calls on Mondays and Tuesdays: I generally answer only if I see the number and feel confident a conversation with the caller will ad-



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

vance the work at hand.

There's just so much to go through.

Recently, I started working on Sat- urdays in addition to Sundays. It has made my weeks, my life, infinitely easier. I put together the Star Eagle (as much as I can, that is) on Sat- urday. On Sunday I do the same for the Pioneer. (I also put together the Golden Link Shopper on Saturday.)

With the general framework in place, I can use Monday and Tuesday to tackle the stack of emails, missed calls, text messages and in-person messages needed to refine the de- tails.

Once I finish going through the pile of messages, I prioritize them, then tackle each one in turn. After I'm done, usually hours later, I finish putting the new bits of information, ads, and more in the paper. Late Monday evening, I send the assem- bled pages in electronic format to my respective editors for review.

I do not read every article in the paper. (For context, this week's Star Eagle had more than 10,000 words. The Pioneer 20,000. A novel is usually at least 40,000 words.) By the time Monday is done, I've put in a full workday on Saturday, any- where from 8 to 14 hours on Sunday and another 8 to 16 hours on Mon- day.

Tuesday is spent making correc- tions—those from my editors regard- ing the news items and headlines, and those from any advertising proofs sent out Sunday and Monday. There are also inevitably last-minute

changes and additions.

There's no way to prepare in ad- vance for what can't be predicted, so I have to be ready for anything from restructuring pages because of a news story or ad, or even adding pages.

In one recent case, I received a request for a full-page advertisement (delight!) after the submission dead- line (disservice!). But because of the way papers are printed, I can't add only one page, I have to add two.

So in addition to the requested full-page ad, I also had to assemble an unanticipated page of news copy and photos.

Thankfully, because of my hard- working writers, we were not lacking in available content. A good average time for physically constructing a newspaper page is an hour, so, along with the extra challenges, I now had to devote an extra two hours to as- sembling a paper which otherwise would have been essentially com- plete.

All right, so by Tuesday morning (barring surprises) I have organized and reviewed nearly a novel's worth of information, and have placed it all out neatly on model pages—still all in electronic format—in preparation for printing. I have sent the completed pages for my editors to review, and am now receiving their observations, suggestions, and occasional ribs. It's now time to begin making correc- tions to both the Star Eagle and Pioneer. The corrections can be a bit of an Easter egg hunt: they may be in the text of stories, in the information

printed under the pictures, in the headlines or in other text in various nooks and crannies. Sometimes they regard photographs themselves—maybe the wrong one was used by mistake, or maybe there is some aes- thetic element that needs attention.

After all of these corrections have been incorporated, I review the ap- pearance of each page to make sure the spacing is correct, that the refer- ences to "jumped" article continu- ations are consistent, and just generally that I am satisfied with the nearly-finished version of the week's edition.

With all that done, I do some of my own proofreading. I read stories I feel must be read (if I hadn't al- ready).

I generally read my own articles two or three more times to make sure I said what I intended.

I check the headlines, double check names and other details in the obituaries, confirm all of the adver- tisements are accounted for and triple check that I have read all of my emails.

It's usually at this point a last-mi- nute obituary is submitted and I must take a piece of content out of the paper to make room for it.

Once I'm finally done proofing and correcting, I send the final elec- tronic version of the paper to the printer; because of time schedules for the presses, this must be no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday. (If I am late, the paper is late, which sometimes happens.)

Wednesdays are the closest thing to a day off I get.

I wake up and immediately go to the post office, after I prepare some paperwork, to deliver our forms to allow the paper to be mailed.

I then relax—at least as compared to the days before—and start tackling some of that "to-do" list from my email box. In three days, the cycle starts over.



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

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GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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New Richland Library adult bingo Wednesday, Nov. 13

The New Richland Public Library will sponsor a Friends of the Library FOL adult bingo event at 10:15 a.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 13. Winners will be allowed to select one book from the FOL book shelf. Blackout winner gets \$15 NR Bucks. To anyone interested please bring at least one food item for the NR Food Shelf day of event.

Cook the Book recipe sampler at Waseca Public Library, Thursday, Nov. 14

Visit the Waseca Public Library to choose a recipe from the selected cookbook. Bring the finished dish to the library at 12 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 14 to sample others and share yours. Share cooking tips, and try delicious food. Open to all.

Waseca-Le Sueur Library system will host author Javier Zamora Thursday, November 14

The Waseca-Le Sueur Library system will host author Javier Zamora online at 3 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 14. Zamora will also host a Spanish event at 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 9.

Mondrian-Inspired Mason Jars at New Richland Public Library Thurs., November. 14

Create Mondrian-Inspired Mason Jars at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 14. Teens will embrace their inner artist and create a mason jar inspired by Piet Mondrian, a twentieth century abstract artist. For ages 13-18.

Harvest Mission Brunch, Bake Sale at Grace Lutheran 10 a.m. November 15

Grace Lutheran Church at 300 E. Elm Avenue in Waseca is having a brunch and bake sale to benefit its mission projects on Friday, Nov. 15 beginning about 10 a.m. The \$9 brunch will be served from 10 a.m. until about noon.

Legion Burger and Fish Fry to benefit WANSC 5:30 p.m. Nov. 15

A burger and fish fry meal at Waseca American Legion, 700 S. State Street, beginning at 5:30 Nov. 15 will benefit the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center (WANSC). Tickets are \$10, available in advance at WANSC, or at the door.

Mary Guentzel Quintet at Indian Island Winery Friday, Nov. 15

The Indian Island Winery near Janesville will host the Mary Guentzel Quintet from 6 to 8:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 15. The group plays Irish music and some all-time favorites.

Books and Brews at the Waseca Public Library Sat., Nov. 16

Babble and Beer at the Waseca Public Library 4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 16. Stop by the library to pick up this month's book discussion selection, The House of Eve by Sadequa Johnson. Drinks and food can be purchased.



Oriana Jewison of Waseca with her family and the donors who provided the heifer she was awarded through the Minnesota Youth Beef Experience Program. Linde's Livestock Photography

Daughter of holocaust Survivors tells of trauma

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"During my childhood, I was angry with God," remembers Iris Tzafrir.

Tzafrir's parents, both Holocaust survivors, married in Israel in 1949 and went on to raise two daughters and two sons. Tzafrir's childhood anger stemmed from what seemed like odd behavior on her parents' part.

"Why did I have to eat every scrap of food on my plate?"

"Why were my parents terrified of dogs?"

But more than that, she said, her household was filled with a sense of "sadness, aloneness, and loss."

Tzafrir spoke the afternoon of Sunday, Oct. 27 in Waseca's Grace Lutheran Church as part of the congregation's outreach program; an audience of at least 50 attended. Born and raised in Israel, Tzafrir moved to Minnesota more than 30 years ago, is married, and has an adult son. According to committee member Carlene Rosenthal, Tzafrir had also previously spoken in Waseca about seven years ago.

Mingled among Tzafrir's descriptions of her own experiences was a warning:

"The distance between hate speech and murder is very short."

Tzafrir cautioned that those who use hate speech are good at "blaming and making up lies" as part of the process of "categorizing people as 'us' and 'them.'"

"History has taught us that, if you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will believe it," she said.

Tzafrir cited the example of 1930s German "minister of propaganda" Paul Goebbels, who said the influence of radio—the only mass media available at the time—was comparable to that of the world's largest governments, calling it the globe's "eighth great power."

Using lies, and by blaming jews, gypsies and members of the LGBTQ community for the country's economic collapse, Tzafrir summarized, the Nazi regime was able to create the atmosphere of "us" against "them" that paved the way for the imprisonment, enslavement and cruel murder of millions who had once been neighbors and productive members of society.

"A world without genocide starts with each of us," she suggested.

The first steps she offered included "participate in government. Exercise the privilege of voting.

Minnesota Beef Expo Awards

St. Paul, Minn. — The Minnesota Beef Expo awarded 11 heifers to deserving youth through the Minnesota Youth Beef Experience Program (MYBEP) on Saturday, Oct. 19. From a pool of 77 applications, each recipient was selected based on their passion for agriculture, commitment to raising a heifer, financial need and willingness to learn. Recipients are responsible for raising, breeding and maintaining records on the care of the animal, while providing progress reports to their mentor, breed representative and Minnesota Beef Expo

staff. Donors of the heifers will serve as mentors to MYBEP recipients. Since the start of the program 20 years ago, MYBEP has awarded a total of 180 heifers. The 2024 MYBEP heifer recipients are:

- Troy Clemenson of Zumbrota, Minn. received an Angus heifer donated by Stehr Farm, Derek Stehr of Zumbrota, Minn., on behalf of the Minnesota Angus Association.
- Oriana Jewison of Waseca, Minn. received a Charolais heifer

Beef continued on 4



Iris Tzafrir (center) with Grace Lutheran Church outreach committee members (back, from left) Mary Jenatscheck, Jonna Moen, Pastor Jillene Gallatin, (front, flanking Tzafrir) Carlene Rosenthal and Chuck Brenner. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

"Don't take your freedoms for granted."

She observed, "Neutrality helps the oppressor," and suggested that anyone who hears hate speech about any group should "see their humanity.

"Choose and put into practice the eleventh commandment: Do not be a bystander.

"Go out and learn."

Tzafrir is the author of "Touching the Trembling Places," a reference to feelings and memories which are frightening to recall.

In it, and during her talk on Oct. 27, are details of her parents' lives, although mostly only her father's, since her mother would not speak about the time of the Holocaust.

Her father Yehoshua, 17 at the time, had been part of the infamous death march from Nazi forced labor and extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau, in modern-day Poland, to Buchenwald, about 425 miles westward in Germany. Most of the 10,000 prisoners who were forced to run out of Auschwitz in January of 1945 perished: Only 3,000 arrived. The event is described in the iconic Holocaust era novella "Night" by Elie Wiesel.

He was also held for a time at Plaszow camp near Krakow, Poland. Plaszow was the location of the events which led to "Schindler's List," the historic description by writer Thomas Keneally which contrasts the extraordinarily cruel behavior of camp commander Amon Goeth with that of industrialist Oskar Schindler. A movie version of the book was released in 1994.

During her presentation, Tzafrir played a video of her father during a visit to Plaszow in 2010, a trip he took in the company of all four of his adult children. He described a memory of being on the

field as a slave laborer and seeing Goeth shoot a man selling cookies though there was no apparent motive to do so.

After World War II, Yehoshua emigrated to Israel and spent the rest of his life there; he was a newspaper writer who also published books of poetry in the Hebrew language. He died in 2015.

During the 2010 visit to Europe, Tzafrir said she and her siblings decided to look for a way to make a connection with the many people their father had lost—his parents and all his siblings. They went to an official agency and—with considerable difficulty—were able to acquire his birth certificate and those of his brothers and sisters, as well as his parents' marriage certificate. When Tzafrir continued her research, she made the surprising discovery that her father's sister, her aunt, had survived the war and also moved to Israel prior to 1950. She had married and raised children, surviving until 1974. Impressively, she had even read her brother's poetry, but had not known it was his because the Israeli government had encouraged Holocaust survivors to adopt Hebrew names, rather than those their families had used in Europe. Born Yehoshua Lieblich, he had converted his last name to the word meaning "a morning breeze," and continued his life under that name. In the same way he had assumed she was dead, she had assumed the same of him, and had no way of knowing about the name change.

"For the first time in our lives," remembers Tzafrir, "we were no longer alone. We had cousins."

Yehoshua was able to meet his nieces and nephews. "It was a moment of tremendous joy," remembered Tzafrir.

Waseca missing chickens at a standstill

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

When she returned to her small farmplace about three miles southeast of Waseca the afternoon of Oct. 14, Janice Foss Crosby quickly realized something was missing: about 25 chickens. Along with other poultry and some small livestock, Crosby has had chickens on her property for nearly 30 years and has lived at her current residence since 1997: this is the first time she has been the victim of apparent theft.

The chickens were something of a mix, but all were specialty breeds, including white chanterrel, rose comb Rhode Island reds and, in Crosby's words, "Various mixes who popped up along the way." They were kept in a small enclosure not easily visible from the road.

She goes on to say she is mystified why anyone would take them, since they were older birds—not desirable as meat—and were in the midst of molting, so they did not look their best.

The sheriff's office responded when she reported the theft, but let her know that, without security cameras or any eyewitnesses, little can be done. In the three weeks since Oct. 14, no significant progress has occurred toward identifying the thieves or recovering the chickens.

Crosby says she kept the chickens mostly for personal pleasure. She used their eggs herself, or, when there were more than she needed, gave them away. She recalls times when neighborhood children would come to her house for the fun of feeding the birds. "Those kids are in college now, but it was a nice thing for them."

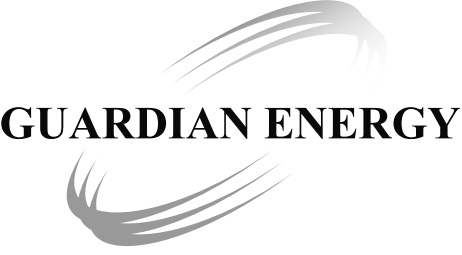
After posting news of the theft on Facebook, Crosby was contacted regarding the sighting of two rose comb Rhode Island red chickens in the vicinity of Waseca's western Kwik Trip store; she was able to capture one of them, but knew it wasn't one of hers. Coincidentally, she knows who the chicken belongs to and plans to return it.

What Crosby does know is that her birds weren't slaughtered by a weasel, a fox or the raccoon she sometimes sees near her farm. "There wasn't any carnage or bodies," she observes, pointing out the chickens would have panicked if there had been a predator and would have made a mess of the pen. Instead, the feed dishes were in place with food still in them. The chickens were in a fenced-in area covered over with chicken wire and a tarp meant to protect them from owls, hawks, eagles, and the weather. The enclosure gate was closed and latched, she mentions, but even if it had been standing open, she believes they would not have wandered away, since they have never had any other "home."

When Crosby searched her property "just in case," no sign of the chickens was evident. Two "free range" chickens were still on the property.

The loss of the chickens is difficult for Crosby for a number of reasons. For one, the birds were

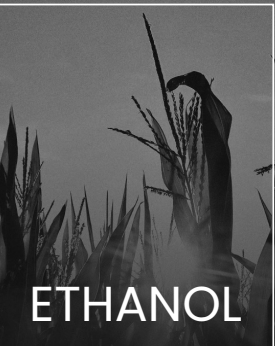
Chickens continued on 5



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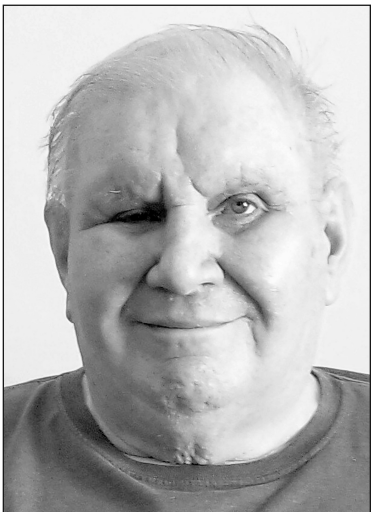
OBITUARIES

Clifford Tesch

CLIFFORD WARREN TESCH, age 75, of New Richland, died on Saturday, November 2, 2024, at the New Richland Care Center.

Clifford was born on March 1, 1949, in Mankato to Harold and Marie (Brown) Tesch. He was baptized as an infant and confirmed in his faith in his youth, at First Lutheran Church in Waldorf. Cliff grew up on a dairy farm in rural Waldorf and received his education at Waldorf-Pemberton Public Schools. In his youth he was active with the Waldorf Peppy Peppers. Throughout his life he worked various jobs which included Fritz Young Tiling, Polar which later became Cenex, Brown Printing, B & S Grain in Waldorf, Crystal Valley, and Canterbury Downs. He also owned and operated his own gas station which was called "Cliff's Deep Rock". Cliff was a member of the Waldorf Fire Department and enjoyed volunteering during Waldorf Days for many years. He was also a member of First Lutheran Church in Waldorf. He enjoyed toy collecting, especially replica NASCAR cars, spending time with friends and family and watching NASCAR racing and All Star Wrestling. Cliff had a beautiful sense of humor and loved children. He had a fun-loving spirit no matter what he was doing. He cherished his nieces and nephews, and they would fondly refer to him as "Uncle Cliffy".

Cliff is survived by his siblings: Audrey Bruender of Waseca, Cur-



Clifford Tesch

tis Tesch (Sara Roemhildt) of Waseca, and Diane (William) Radil of Montgomery; nieces: Angie Swanson, Lori Bruender, Allison Tesch, and Amanda Schuldt; nephews: Jim Bruender, Dan Bruender, Jacob Bruender, Drew Tesch, Jeremy Lindeman, and Matt Lindeman; other relatives and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents and brother-in-law, Doug Bruender.

Funeral Service will be 11:00 AM on Saturday, November 9, 2024, at the Waldorf Community Center in Waldorf. Interment will be at First Lutheran Cemetery in Waldorf. Visitation will be for one hour prior to the service at the community center on Saturday.

Memorials are preferred and can be directed to St. Croix Hospice or the Waldorf Fire Department.

Gerald McClune

Gerald Martin McClune 84, of Waseca, MN was surrounded by family at his home when he went "down the road" to meet his Heavenly Father on November 2nd, 2024. Jerry, or Mac as he was known, was a kind and loving husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather.

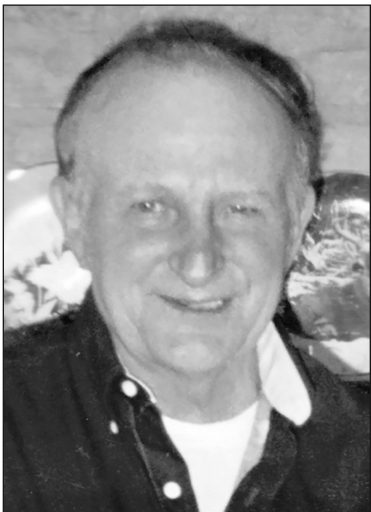
Born on September 20th, 1940 in rural Kilkenny, LeSueur County, Minnesota, he was the son of John and Esther (Spitzack) McClune. Gerald grew up on the family farm outside Kilkenny and then moved to Waseca in the early 1960's. He had a passion for life and enlivened all those who met him. He often exclaimed that life is beautiful.

He married Joan Wobschall and had 3 children. They later divorced. He then married Connie (Schade) Larrabee on March 11th, 1995 at their home in Waseca.

Nothing could slow him down. Not even a corn picker that took most of his hand in 1967 or cardiac arrest in 2016. He worked at Brown Printing Co. for 40 years, started McClune's Tree Service with his sons Wayne and Terry in 1976 with a rope, saw and ladder. He worked those 2 jobs until he retired in 2001 and then continued to tend to his farm chores up until 2 weeks before his passing.

Jerry loved working outdoors on God's little acres. He was most happy after a long fulfilling day of doing farm chores, checking on his little animals, working in the hay field, splitting wood for his wood-burning stoves, plowing snow or socializing with family and friends in the shop. He loved playing Euchre, shaking dice, auction sales and watching cowboys.

He is survived by his loving wife, Connie of 28 years, sons Wayne (Jeanette) and Terry (Bobbie) McClune; stepchildren Trevor, Neil, Dana (Jamie) and Jennifer (Gary) Larrabee; grandchildren Catherine Williams, Heather (Pat-



Gerald McClune

rick) Hagge, Christina McClune, Ryan, Camie and Madysyn McClune, Michael Rezac, Tommy Jr. (Hayley) and Tabitha Bennett, Gerald and Maxwell Keyes, Amber Wusterbarth, Jocelyn (Colin) Lamoreau, Kaelyn and Madilyn Larrabee and Cody Johnson; great grandchildren Alexis Allen, Donna Trom, Wayne Jr. and Clarice McClune, Lux and Charlee Rezac, Brantley and Kaleb Bennett, Brycen, Brooklynn and Bayleigh Foechlich and Evelyn Lamoreau. He is also survived by his son-in-law, Tommy Bennett Sr. and many nieces and nephews who called him Uncle Jerry.

If you were lucky enough to know him, you have a great gift and are blessed.

He was preceded in death by his parents; daughter, Annette Bennett; brother and best friend who lived with him, Harry as well as brothers, Thomas, Donald and Patrick McClune.

A celebration of life will be held in the McClune's shop on the farm located at 416 11th Ave NE, Waseca, MN on Saturday, November 23, 2024 from 3-6 p.m. All are welcome.

Put those work gloves down and put the tractor in the shed, dad. We'll close the gate behind you.

Boldtfuneralhome.com for information and guest book.

Fair

from Page 1

cators, we have government agencies, military branches, and non-profit organizations."

Students, all within one or two years of finishing their schooling, circulated among the tables, stopping to ask questions whenever they came across something that aligned with their interests. To encourage interaction, many vendors offered treats or small gifts.

Students were also encouraged to complete a "Bingo" card. Vendors stamped the cards as participants completed tasks which ranged from "find a career that requires a uniform" to "get a sticker." Students who managed a bingo and turned in their cards were eligible for prize drawings.

A long table manned by Mayo Clinic Health System employees invited students to try cleaning and

bandaging simulated wounds or checking blood pressure.

"We're planting seeds," said one representative from Viracon. "We want these kids to find careers that are satisfying to them; we also want them to be aware they can build their futures without leaving their roots behind."

Jordan Schoener of Cinch informed students they could become machinists by entering a paid apprenticeship at the company facility, then work their way up. "Businesses and communities support each other," Schoener said. "Neither of us can prosper and continue growing without the other."

Jennifer Burt, office manager with Waseca law firm Patton, Hoversten and Berg, had a table full of cards labeled with a variety of types of work. "I'm letting everyone know about the jobs available in a lawyer's office," said Burt. "There are a lot of very important jobs that need to be done, so it's not only lawyers." Burt commented she had been getting many questions from participants and that

the career fair seemed like a great opportunity for all involved.

Edel Fernandez, candidate for Minnesota House 19B and admissions manager for South Central Community College, which has campuses in both Faribault and Mankato, said he was pleased with the amount of interest students had been showing. "It's been great. I've answered lots of questions about our two- and four-year programs," said Fernandez. "So many have been coming, I'm starting to run out of materials."

Librarian Afton Finly with the LeSueur-Waseca Library located in Waseca, said she was helping spread the word that "libraries are more than just books." She pointed out book specialists can work in a variety of settings, including law libraries and research facilities. In addition to being a possible career choice, Finly went on, she was working to remind learners that libraries are one of few remaining places where patrons can go inside, access the resources, feel completely safe, and never spend a dime.

Joe Isder of Elegant Creations in Waseca commented he too was there to let students know "they have options." For those not interested in post-secondary schooling, he pointed out, his business and many others offer the chance to build a solid, fulfilling career.

Craig Ryan of Waseca's Winegar, Inc., stood behind a table filled with complex metal pieces all manufactured by local company staff. "We value those students who like working with their hands," he observed. "We want them to know they're just the kind of people we're looking for."

Commented one student, "I had no idea how many options there are. I'm getting a lot of good ideas."

Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce leader Fitch commented, "This is a great complement to the Chamber's immersive career education day, which we hold in spring. There, we take groups of students to tour area businesses.

"Here, we're bringing the businesses to them."

Beef

from Page 3

donated by Polzin Cattle, Chris, Leslie, Brooke, Desirae and Colton Polzin of Darwin, Minn., on behalf of the MN/WI Charolais Association.

Avery Stark of Cannon Falls, Minn. received a Hereford heifer donated by Pressnall Family Farms of Randolph, Minn., on behalf of the Minnesota Hereford Breeders.

Samantha Bender of Howard Lake, Minn. received a Maine Anjou

heifer donated by D-K Hawkins Cattle, Dan, Kimberly, Connor, Emma, Andrew and Caleb Hawkins of Garfield, Minn.

Alivia Uhlenkamp of Green Isle, Minn. received a Red Angus heifer donated by Compeer Financial. She will be mentored by Steve Pomerkenke.

Trevin Dicke of Goodhue, Minn. received a Shorthorn heifer donated by Mulberry Lane Shorthorns, Cathy & Dennis Hoffbeck of Morgan, Minn., on behalf of the Minnesota Shorthorn Association.

Tatym Travis of Greenwood, Wis. received a Simmental heifer do-

nated by Oak Meadow Farms, Dr. Lynn, Barb, Matt, Jessica, Hunter and Garrett Aggen of Harmony, Minn., on behalf of the Minnesota Simmental Association.

Riley Rickford of Barnesville, Minn. received a Simmental heifer donated by St. Germain Simmentals, Adam and Theresa St. Germain of Winnebago, Minn., on behalf of the Minnesota Simmental Association.

Madison Holtz of Little Falls, Minn. received a South Devon heifer donated by K&M Cattle, Matt & Kindra Wayrynen of McGregor, Minn., on behalf of the Northern States South Devon Association.

Olivia Matchey of Independence, Wis. received a Speckle Park heifer donated by Hay Creek Speckle Park, Brad & Lacey Sonnentag and family of Boyd, Wis., on behalf of the American Speckle Park Association.

Audrey Hendrickson of Truman, Minn. received a heifer awarded during the MYBEP Ideas & Insights Symposium donated by the Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association. She will be mentored by Mark Pesek.

The recipients will compete for the MYBEP Achievement Award at the 2025 Minnesota State Fair.



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Cornhole for a Cause



Top, players give their all in the Cornhole tournament; part of the entry fee went toward supporting the Waseca Area Food Shelf. Above, Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center Director Cindy Kolander and cornhole tournament organizer Michael Priebe. Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

Confirmed



Alexis Olson of New Richland was confirmed on Sunday, October 27 at Christ the King Lutheran Church of Waseca. Pictured is Alexis Olson with Pastor Eric Ishamaru

Chickens from Page 3

like pets. She had raised them and enjoyed having them around. For another, she had planned on breeding the chickens this year to add some younger blood to the flock. She sometimes sold the gathered eggs but mostly just gave them away to family.

"I never imagined anyone would

trespass on my property and steal my old chickens," Crosby posted on Facebook. "I hope whoever did this will understand the full extent of what they have done [by taking] my pets. I would like to think they will return them."

Crosby has admitted to herself she most likely won't get her chickens back. Anyone who has information about these chickens or their whereabouts is encouraged to call the Waseca County Sheriff's Office at the non-emergency number 507-835-0537.

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Waseca Art Center

SHERRI KRUGER- KUKOWSKI

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RECEPTION: NOVEMBER 14TH 5 - 7 PM

In the past 30 years, Sherri has taught herself to do mosaic using stained glass and other found objects, or "treasures" as she refers to her substrate hunts. With a grant from the Northwestern Arts Council, Sherri traveled to Philadelphia and studied under Mosaic artist Bonnie Fitzgerald. While out East, Bonnie taught the fundamentals of Public Art, and the materials necessary to create a public piece of art that would stand the test of time as well as be pleasing to those viewing the public art. Working alongside community members, she taught the skills of Mosaic art work. Recently, she completed the installation of a 24 x 11 foot mosaic mural for the community of Badger, Minnesota, that is on display in Badger Heritage Park. The public art created for the community as well as for the people of the community to work with Sherri depicts the past and present community as well as it's rich history and heritage. Sherri is working on a 10-12 foot Minnesota art piece titled "Got Coffee...You Betcha," using mugs from all over the state that have been donated.

Sherri has participated in several art shows, winning awards, peoples choice, and recently Art Advocate of the Year Award. The theme, available materials, and numerous treasure hunts allow her work to change. Many of her pieces depict nature and use the treasures of the great outdoors such as driftwood, pebbles, moose and deer antlers, but her pieces always include her primary medium - glass. She uses glass in some form, incorporating her "treasures" to tell or create a story. Presently Sherri is a High School Math Teacher, Studio Owner, and Artist in Badger, Minnesota. She and her husband have 4 children, 7 grandchildren, 16 mo. old black Lab, Lucy and her crazy cat brother Oreo.



VIRGINIA LAFRANCE



Virginia La France from Saint Peter is a printmaker who will be exhibiting some of her works in the last exhibit of 2024, November 6 through December 21. She is a retired school librarian with an art major from Minnesota State University who fed her art interests with summer classes at MSU. Upon retirement, she joined the St. Peter Art Center and the Carnegie Art Center in Mankato. She took Monotype printmaking classes from art educator Joel Moline in St. Peter and became interested enough to apply for a Prairie Lakes grant to purchase a printing press. You will find some of her work exhibited at both the St. Peter and Carnegie Art Centers' member shows and consistently at regional juried art exhibitions.

Monotype art is created on a plexiglass plate with printing inks and then printed on paper when it is run through a printing press. Virginia claims that she is not an expert and is still learning, exploring and having fun.

"Newsies" at JWP November 7, 8 and 9

By RACHAEL JAEGER Staff Writer

Under the direction of English teacher Teagan Knoblich, the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) theater department is putting on "Newsies," a musical show about children known as "Newsies" who sold newspapers on the streets. "Newsies" is also based on the historical event of the Newsboys' Strike of 1899 in New York during which newsboys fought Joseph Pulitzer, publisher of "The World" and William Randolph Hearst, publisher of "The Journal" for fair wages.

"Newsies" will run at 7 p.m. on Nov. 7, 8, 9; there is also a matinee showing at 2 p.m. on Nov. 9. That day, the doors will open at 1 p.m. for family activities, including coloring pages and a discussion about the time in history the play takes place.

Knoblich says she appreciates fellow adult leaders helping with the show, including Becky Borneke, the music director in charge of the singing, music, and audio; Brook Ling, dance director and choreographer; and Melanie Morrow, tech director who organizes set and stage design and oversees the tech students.

When working with the students who were assisting her with the set design, Knoblich said they had questions about technology and what was appropriate for the era.

What impresses Knoblich about her students is how passionate they are and how comfortable they are with proposing creative ideas or solutions.

"They have been an asset on the stage because they help build the scene, the character, and the story," she added. "They have great ideas."

The down side of that energy and creativity, she reveals, comes when many different students get excited and speak all at once.

"It can be tough to keep my head in those situations," she admitted. When she does respond badly, she said she apologizes to her students and explains she has a lot on her plate. "They're all really receptive and they get that," she added.

"Working with Knoblich is extremely nice because she's very organized and very determined to make sure everything has a place and time and everyone knows what they're doing," said Isaiah Berndt, a senior who plays Davey Jacobs, the co-leader of the newsboys' strike.

"To add onto that, we've had a rolling director situation and I think it's nice we've secured one and that it was her," added Eric Daschner, also a senior, who plays the lead role of Jack Kelly, whose charisma spurs on the other Newsies. "She knows her stuff with her creative writing background."

When asked about their characters in Newsies, Berndt said he can relate to Davey in a way because he also has a younger brother, which allows him to "channel" Davey in how he handles his brother. Sometimes Berndt will give his fictional character's brother nudges to cue him with a hypothetical question of, "What's going on?" during moments in the play.

"It's a fun relationship dynamic," Berndt said.

After Berndt listed singing and music in general as his passions, he mentioned something he loves about his role is witnessing the evo-



The JWP theater department is putting on "Newsies," a musical show this weekend. Pioneer photo by Rachael Jaeger

lution of his character Davey as he unfolds from a nervous, cautious individual into a character full of confidence.

Daschner stated he enjoys all aspects of theater, from the process and practices to the day shows. But he said if he were to pick, he likes to play a character completely different from himself. For example, in contrast to Jack who is direct and goes for what he wants, Daschner feels he's more methodical.

Since Berndt and Daschner are both seniors, Newsies will be their last performances at JWP, so they said they're taking every moment they can.

"Newsies has always been a musical that I've loved," Berndt said.

"No one can change my mind that Newsies is the best musical out there," Daschner added.

Ariana Aguilar, who also has the title of Miss Janesville, performs the character of Katherine Plumber, a reporter who covers the strike. To get into her character, Aguilar says she will go backstage and recite her lines.

What inspires Aguilar about Katherine is how independent she is.



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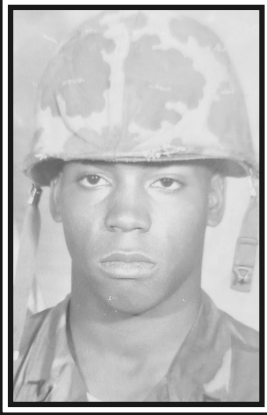
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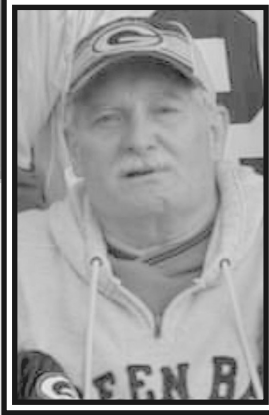
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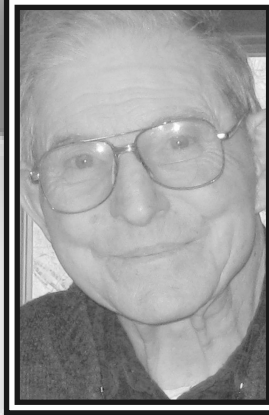
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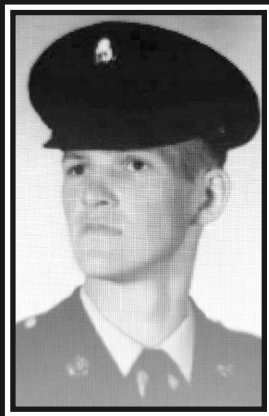
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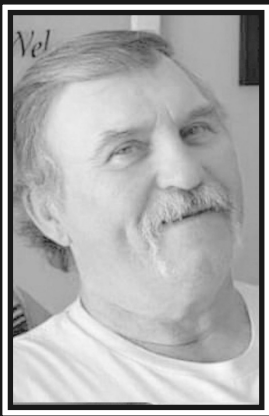
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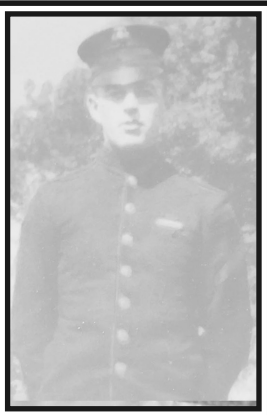
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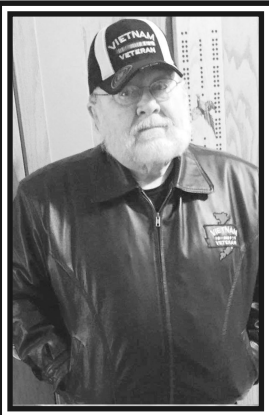
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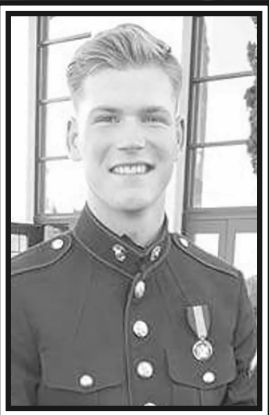
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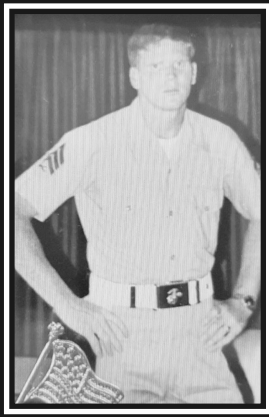
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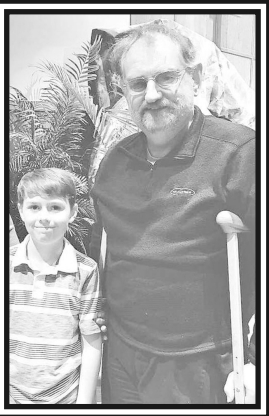
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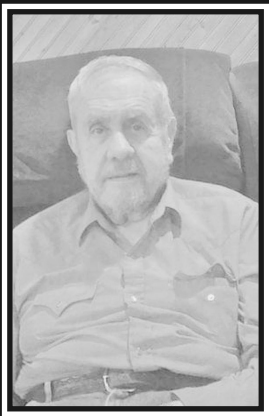
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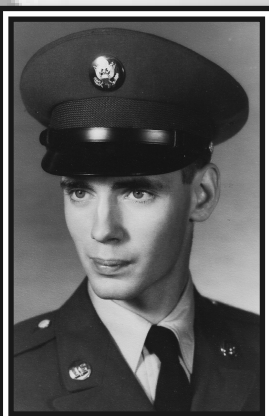
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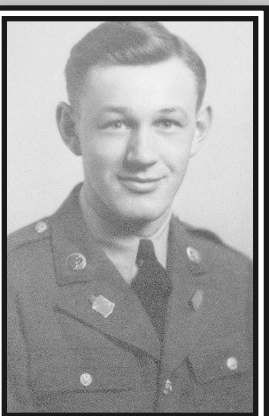
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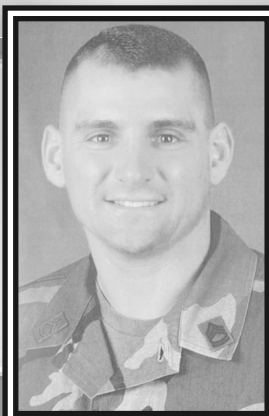
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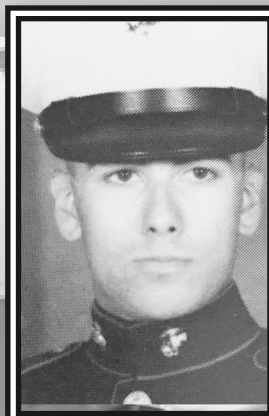
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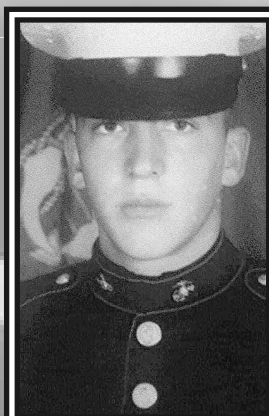
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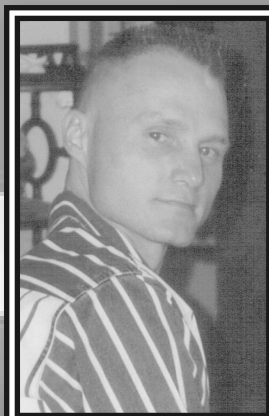
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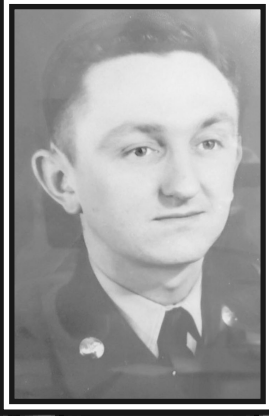
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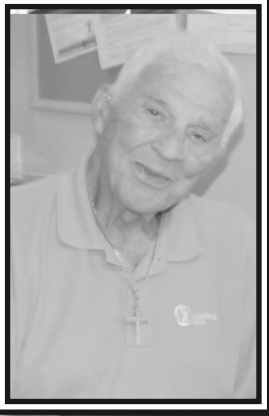
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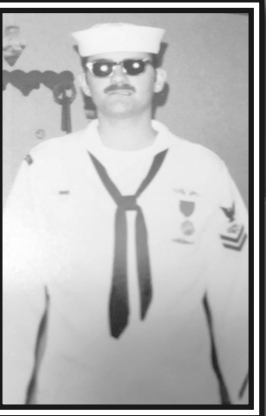
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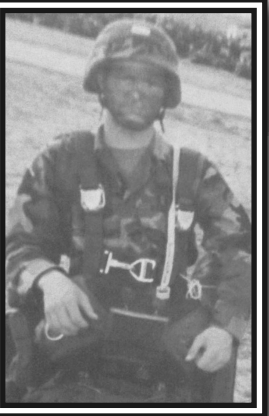
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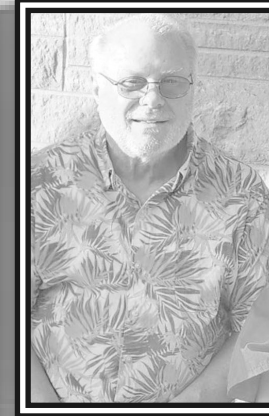
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VETERANS DAY 2024

Marriage, military, and Turkey

Local veteran talks time as cryptographer

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

From Minnesota to Georgia, Colorado, and even Turkey until his eventual return, Norman Eckart served our country as a cryptographer for the United States military.

Eckart, 80, was drafted into the service in 1965 during the heart of the Vietnam War.

“Uncle Sam interrupted our wedding,” Sharon Eckart, Norman’s wife, remembered.

The loving couple, high school sweethearts, wanted to get married before Norman’s military career began. Next year on August 21 of 2025, the couple will be celebrating their sixtieth wedding anniversary.

“Norman was the first guy I ever dated—when I was 15,” Sharon said.

“After you eat lobster, who the heck wants to eat hamburger?” Norman asked pointedly. “She couldn’t date until she was 16, but her dad let her date me.”

“Then we just dated forever,” Sharon added.

Getting married, however, meant Norman didn’t begin service until March 1966. At the time, newlyweds were given a six-month deferment.

After a physical, Norman left for basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. A six-week crash course taught Norman discipline, respect, how to shoot, who and who not to salute, and much, much more.

“And a lot of PT [physical training],” Norman added.

After a couple months leave, Norman went to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for officer candidate training. He signed up for communications.

“I wanted to go to crypto school,” Norman explained. “Coding and decoding. I take everything communicated and put all of that into codes, so we can read and send messages.”

With the use of special machines, Norman says an entire message can be typed in and later decoded without enemy combatants knowing what is said.

“Cryptography is all memory work,” Norman explained. “All

“On duty it was yes sir no sir. Off duty it was Bob and Norm.” — **Norman Eckart**

of it must be committed to memory or you won’t make it.”

Once Norman completed advanced training at Fort Sill, he moved onto signal school at Fort Gordon, Georgia.

With his training finished, “they asked me where I wanted to go,” Norman continued. “I put in for Fort Carson, Colorado.”

In the heart of Colorado Springs, Norman was stationed at Army defense headquarters at Ent Air Force Base.

Upon arrival Norman was joined by Sharon; the two lived in a basement apartment of “The nicest man, Mr. Biele.”

Sharon got a job in the surgery department at a nearby hospital; their total monthly income was \$129.

“We ate a lot of fish, mac and cheese, and venison,” Norman said.

“Steak once a month, a quart of Coors beer and a bottle of olives,” Norman said was their once-per-month payday treat.

Norman shared a story of a sergeant offering him \$10 to take his shift. “I worked a 20 hour shift that day,” Norman said. “That was a lot of money in those days.”

While in Colorado, Norman worked in a heavily guarded communication center. “Guards at the steps, every entrance,” Norman explained. “My area was behind a two-foot-thick steel door. There were only two of us at a time doing all of the coding.”

Norman said he worked with a CW4 chief warrant officer and three-star general Robert Hackett.

“So you know who did all the work?” Norman asked, then answered. “Me.”

“On duty it was ‘yes sir,’ ‘no sir,’” he continued. “Off duty it was Bob and Norm. We got along very well.”

Norman shared the story of one Colonel Gnomes who didn’t respond quickly enough to a “flash message” that came through Norman’s communication center. A flash message is urgent and top

secret. This particular one needed a response in three minutes.

“He tried to say he was busy,” Norman recalled. “He liked to read the paper.”

It was Norman’s job to take the messages, then, after reading and decoding them, determine whether they needed to go to the warrant officer or even the general at the top of Cheyenne Mountain.

At another time, the same colonel came storming to Norman’s communications center and demanded Norman open the door. Gnomes did not have clearance to enter the room.

Norman said he grabbed his gun, cocked it, pointed it at the colonel and reminded him he didn’t have clearance and therefore wasn’t allowed inside.

“He’ll never forget me,” Norman said.

Gnomes could be seen “standing at attention” in salute for hours and hours later that day as punishment.

In January of 1968, Sharon gave birth, in a military hospital, to the couple’s first of two children, Michael. Five years later the couple had Michelle.

Following Michael’s birth, Norman was soon to be stationed elsewhere, but insisted he was going to drive his wife and one-month-old baby back home to Minnesota first.

“Specialist Eckart, he’ll show up sometime in March,” Norman said his commanding officer put in the report.

During this time Norman saw many of his friends drafted and sent to Vietnam. He really wanted to go there, but kept having to wait for his deployment. He was told he was being shipped “somewhere more important.”

It turned out to be Izmir, Turkey, a communication center, 18 miles out into the mountains, a mile underneath the ground.

“It was huge,” Norman remembered. “When you have a power failure a mile underground, you



Local veteran Norman Eckart and his wife Sharon will celebrate 60 years of marriage next year on Aug. 21, 2025.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

learn what dark really is.”

Norman worked with the Turks, Greeks, Australians, British and “a couple Italians.”

During this time, since Norman’s work was classified, Sharon really didn’t know what her husband was doing. Even if it weren’t “need to know,” the cost of a phone call to Turkey was \$67.

To get around this, Norman had friends from communications across the country connect calls from the Eckart home in New Richland, to New York, California, London and finally Izmer, Turkey. As he describes it, one party called from one phone line to the next as the call was transferred.

“Uncle Sam footed the bill,” Norman said. “It pays to have friends.”

Norman has many memories from his time in Izmer.

While there he learned of a Turkish foreign exchange student destined for the New Richland-Hartland School District, Mahmu Pilar. Norman spoke passable Turkish and tracked him down.

“That was the first time I had turkish coffee,” Norman stated. “You could stick the spoon in it and it just stuck in. It was that thick.”

Norman recalled how friendly the village people were to him, despite warnings from his superiors to stay away.

“They couldn’t understand tips,” Norman recalled. “I’d hand them a dollar and they’d run around trying to find me the spare coins to make up the difference.”

““No, it’s fine!” I told them,” Norman pleaded. “They had no concept of ‘keep the change.’ They were that honest.”

At Sharon’s insistence, Norman also shared a story of the “circumcision party.”

A young man was turning 12 years old, becoming a man. “I bought the dad a magnum of champagne, a carton of cigarettes, fake Chanel number 5 perfume for his wife and for the young man, a bottle of Aqua Velva after-shave.

“They treated me like I was the king of Russia,” Norman remembered. “I was a good American. I could go anywhere... They treated me fantastic.”

“I treated those people right and they treated me right,” Norman continued. “I was probably the only American who went down to the village encampment and came back alive!”

With a young boy at home, Norman chose to retire from the service in 1969. His final title and rank, Sergeant E-5, his job, cryptographer.

The Eckart family states they have 19 close relatives, all veterans, including their son Michael.

Notably, the Legion Hall in Morristown is named after Sharon’s great uncle, Roy Leader, who died in service to his country during World War I.

Norman said the biggest lesson he brought home with him from his time in the military was to recognize and appreciate the freedoms Americans enjoy.

“Thank the military,” he observes.

Floyd Herme Janesville resident and Vietnam Veteran

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Floyd Herme turned 73 this past July. A veteran, he’s also Commander of Janesville American Legion post 281.

Having grown up in Winnebago, he graduated from high school there in 1970. He and a group of four others had agreed among them they were going to join the Army right after graduating. The agreement didn’t work out, however. Two backed out, the other two failed the entrance inspection, or, as Herme puts it, “They were 4-F’d and weren’t allowed to join the Army.” He spent a year in Vietnam and was discharged in 1973, completing his three-year commitment. He qualified for the Montgomery GI Bill, but did not apply for it. When asked if there was any advice he would like to give young folks contemplating military service,

““I’d say to the young people, ‘If you want an education, join the service because they will pay for college.’” He added for those who don’t want to join the service, “If they don’t want to go to college, then get out there and get a life.”

When Herme got out of the military, he first lived in Waseca where he met his wife at Mark’s Roller Rink. They married in 1972 before settling down for the long haul in Janesville. They built their house in the Janesville city limits in 1976. Driving to Mankato every day, he worked for Kato Engineering for 36 years. Not having attended college, he learned his craft by assembly for ten years, then through on-the-job training as a maintenance machinist or ‘trouble shooter’ via third shift before retiring in 2013.

His wife Barbara, 74, and he have two children, a boy and a

girl. His daughter, Kimberly, 47, is married to a farmer in Owatonna and they have one daughter. His son Nathan, 46, also lives in Janesville and has two daughters. Of Herme’s granddaughters, two have graduated from high school with one to go. “The last one will graduate pretty soon here.”

Herme likes to ride motorcycles in the summer and fall. Also, in fall he likes to hit the lanes for bowling league. His average now is around 150, but in his prime he was rolling between 170 and 180. He has been the current Commander of Janesville Legion post 281 since 2022, and also previously served in the position from 2013 to 2014. Although Janesville no longer has a space for the legion to meet, he says they meet once a month at the Purple Goose Eatery and Saloon in town. “That works fine for us,” he said. Also an avid

reader, he said it all began when he once picked up a James Patterson book. “I just started reading them and got interested, so I kept reading them.”

It can be disheartening to see how young people talk about military service or how disrespectful they can be while talking about America, but Herme said he had a recent experience with a more positive message. He and other Legion members were taking part in a brief ceremony after a funeral at the Catholic church in Janesville. Herme describes hearing a noisy truck approaching. “I heard him coming, then he quieted down and waited for us to be done with our ceremony before he continued on. As young as that kid was, I thought that was really nice.”

Veterans Day is November 11, remember to say thanks!



Floyd Herme

Janesville hires Cruz for cemetery maintenance

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

After a somewhat intense discussion among council members about the care of the Janesville Cemetery in section 34, members of the Janesville city council accepted Kruse Lawncare LLC on October 28 over Marty Erdman, who previously held the contract: councilmember Ivan Maas submitted the only opposing vote. Erdman’s bid was \$12,000, with Kruse Lawncare at \$10,000.

Initially, Councilmember Jim Mulcahey suggested the council refuse both contracts, since he believed \$9,000 was the highest reasonable amount for the work. One resident expressed concern grave-stones were not being treated respectfully; he mentioned seeing the stones being coated in grass clippings during the warm months and coated with snow in the cold ones.

“If it’s going to cost \$3,000 more, we get somebody out there that’s going to do a nice job, that’s well worth the money,” the resident claimed.

“There’s nothing in the agreement that says that they need to remove trimmings from headstones,” Mulcahey stated. “Maybe that should be added.”

Councilmember Ivan Maas pointed out that in the contract, however, it did promise the business would properly dispose of flower and grass trimmings.

Erdman named some of the steps he and his workers had taken to prevent problems like those described; he added that his phone was always on, but it never rang with any complaints.

In other business matters, the City Council accepted and approved a proposal from Community and Economic Development Associates (CEDA) to have a staff member in Janesville for two or three days a week to focus on EDA work which would include housing initiatives, grant funding within the community, and relationships with businesses. Rogers added the position would begin on January 1 and it would cost about \$71,000 to have the staff person present three days a week.

During the meeting, the council

JANESVILLE
CITY COUNCIL

members also approved the city’s two-year contract with its employees which takes effect November 2024 and continues through Oct. 31 of 2026. The contract included the addition of Juneteenth as a paid holiday and changed the hours designated as “night shift.” The contract gave employees a three percent increase in year one and four percent in year two.

“Keep in mind that when we start looking at our budgets next in June or July we will be plugging in a 4% cost of living for all departments,” Rogers said.

During the meeting, the council members revisited the topic of forbidding any motorized vehicles on paths. Councilmember Jim Mulcahey stated he didn’t understand any reason for it. He claimed allowing golf carts on the path would increase safety elsewhere.

City administrator Clinton Rogers clarified that the school district was making the request only for the trail by the baseball field. He said he believed the main reason was to ensure safety while students arrived and left the school.

Joe Ziemke, city public works director, proposed a rate increase for next year to help fund the sewer sanitary side of road projects in 2025 and 2026. Ziemke showed that the current rates are at a \$1,250 base with a \$3.50 per 1,000 gallons of water charge but the plan is to bump up the usage 75 cents for 2025 and again another 75 cents in 2026. So in 2025, Ziemke is proposing a \$13 base charge with a \$425 per 1,000 gallon usage charge.

“Even with those increases, we are still the second lowest for utility fees for sewer and water,” Ziemke informed.

“Will that give you sufficient funds to start pooling for the projects?” Mulcahey asked; Ziemke responded he had configured those numbers based on each new road expense with the intent of staying above and ahead of rates at the same time. Mulcahey praised Ziemke for being proactive.

The city adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

School safety grant to bolster NRHEG security

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

The NRHEG school district will be receiving nearly \$203,000 through the School Violence Prevention Program (SVPP) offered by the federal Department of Justice. The grant program offered \$73 million nationwide for school districts looking to improve safety and security. According to information shared at the Oct. 21 school board meeting, 1008 schools applied; 203 were awarded funding. NRHEG was one of three districts in the state of Minnesota whose applications met with success.

The specified use for the grant award is a project the school has been anticipating for some time: an upgrade to security cameras, entry-way technology, and the public address system—all of which are vital

elements of safety and emergency response—in both the Ellendale and New Richland buildings. According to district technology coordinator Angie Aaseth, those systems will benefit from an overhaul. “We didn’t know what kind of a chance we had at getting the grant, but knew with a project this big, we needed to try,” she said.

“We were pretty excited when we got the news!”

An expectation of the grant is that the district will pay 25 percent of the cost to complete the projects applied for.

Aaseth worked with district community education director Macy Whiteside to complete the required paperwork: they reported during the board meeting the form was roughly 30 pages long. Whiteside’s assistance was helpful not because the



grant applies to community education, but because she has experience applying for grants. The deadline to submit the grant was June 11; awards were announced in October.

Whiteside described the application as “pretty intense,” and told school board members “It really made my day when we learned we had received an award.”

Aaseth explained, “A few of the things that they were looking for were safety measures that we currently have in place as far as personnel, programs, policies and plans. Letters of Support were needed from

entities within our communities, in which we would like to extend a ‘Thank You’ to the New Richland police department and the City of Ellendale.”

Now that the district has received the grant, Aaseth said the next step is assessment and planning. “We are currently in the process of doing a site walkthrough with a few companies and will be looking to hopefully start the project this winter,” she said, pointing out the district has up to 36 months to complete the covered upgrades.

Since the district has been aware of the need for the project for some time, Aaseth suggests, progress should advance quickly. “We have been pretty much working on this project for over a year, we are anxious to get moving on it,” she said.

Waldorf public library "autumn art" project

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Waldorf Public Library offered an “autumn art” project aimed at children ages 4 to 7; rescheduled because of a conflict, it took place the afternoon of Friday, Nov. 1.

Cheryl Marquardt had the 6-seater table lined with a plastic tablecloth to keep the table itself clean. For the project, Marquardt had chosen autumn colors, red, orange, brown, yellow. There were bunched up Q-Tips rubber-banded together, and they made for excellent makeshift paint brushes; foam brushes were available for those bigger strokes. Serving as “canvas” for the project were sheets of paper printed with the leafless design of a tree. Ready for service were many, many, many wipes to keep little hands clean.

Marquardt has been working at the Waldorf Public Library for the past 20 years. Before that she volunteered at the Janesville Library and sometimes still does for its story time hour. She also occasionally volunteered in Elysian, but now focuses her time on Waldorf. Said Marquardt, “Twenty years ago this job became available and I was so excited.” She provides a range of ideas why she loves the job: “This past summer was wonderful, I did a bird display and got a lot of people coming through here.”

As Marquardt was speaking, the children behind her were chatting amongst themselves the ages of the kids they know with each other in common



From left: Alayna, 5, Cheryl Marquardt, Juniper, 11, Inara, 9, and Jenny, 7, were having fun at the Waldorf Library Autumn Art Project on Friday, Nov. 1, 2024.

kid-speak. Then the children picked up the skin-safe paint and began brushing their palms with the sponge brushes. They took turns mashing their hands into the paper, then painted autumn leaves around the handprints. A younger child, Alayna, produced an attractive fall sunset.

There were only four children present for the Autumn Project, said Marquardt, “Years ago I would have had two tables and 12 kids in here. It would be a total madhouse, and I just miss it.” As she said this, two boys came inside the library but

quickly exited; as the two left, one of them said, “Sorry Ma’am, we aren’t here to do activities today.” About them Marquardt said, “Those two are in here every day checking out books. Right now they want to get in as much bike riding as they can because they know the snow is coming. Otherwise, they spend hours in here and I like that.” When the young children were done with their artwork they helped clean up, the mess left behind wasn’t so bad, and neither were their paintings.

NRHEG school awarded \$202,000 safety grant

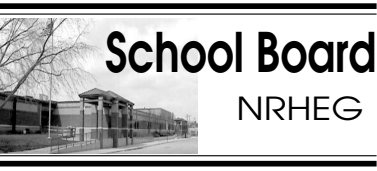
By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

During their regular Oct. 21 meeting, NRHEG school board members were informed a grant application submitted last spring by staff members Macy Whiteside and Angie Aaseth was awarded \$202,000 under a program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice to increase school safety.

Aaseth and Whiteside told board members NRHEG is one of only three schools in Minnesota to have been awarded grant money, and one of 203 schools nationwide. They went on to say the terms of the grant allow money to be spent on “nearly anything that improves school safety,” and they will be continuing to study stipulations and possibilities over the next few months to work toward an overall plan as to how the district can best benefit from the funds.

The accounting firm Abdo presented a “clean” summary of its required audit of the 2023-’24 school year financial management practices. According to the firm’s professional analysis, the district places a lower tax burden on its residents than many other districts of a similar size because it does not use an “operating levy,” that is, it does not ask area taxpayers for funds to meet everyday expenses such as utilities, transportation and wages.

The district also managed to exceed its policy of maintaining a “fund balance” between 22 and 28 percent, actually achieving numbers in the 30- to 36-percent range. A fund balance is money kept in reserve so that, if other sources of revenue are not delivered on time, the school can continue operations without interruption. The district’s annual operating budget in 2024 was set at about \$13 million, which means nearly \$4 mil-



lion are currently not scheduled to be spent.

The results of the school board’s recent review of school superintendent Michael Meihak’s job performance over the past year were shared. School board chair Rick Schultz summarized that the evaluation focused on areas including communication, creating a welcoming environment, managing finances and promoting growth. He stated Meihak meets or exceeds the expectations in all categories, and mentioned promoting the district at county fairs and on a weekly update the superintendent provides.

Secondary principal Grant Berg

reported during his administrative summary that a committee has been formed to consider ways to modify parent teacher conferences so that more parents will choose to attend. Berg estimated 10 percent or so of parents took part in October conferences. He cited that parents can easily monitor their children’s grades online as an important contributing factor to low attendance. “We have a group that is very interested in finding ways to improve this,” said Berg.

Student travel, including the fifth-graders’ trip to Eagle Bluff learning center near Lanesboro, and the FFA trip to the national convention in Indiana, were mentioned. Elementary principal Craig Kopetzke stated he was impressed and please with the teamwork and group bonding exercises at Eagle Bluff, and expressed his gratitude to the donors, staff, volunteers and parents who helped make the trip possible.



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Keen Bank receives community champion recognition

October 28, 2024 (Waseca, MN)—The Minnesota Bankers Association (MBA) has recognized Keen Bank as a Community Champion for their contributions, service and support to their local community. Keen Bank is one of 84 Minnesota banks to receive this recognition. Banks play a vital role in their communities and to honor and recognize their involvement, the MBA created the Community Champion recognition program.

In the wake of another challenging year for many, Minnesota bankers stepped up their efforts to give back to their communities and citizens. Just during the MBA's September Community Impact Month alone, the 84 banks and 383 branches devoted more than 3,600 volunteer hours, completed hundreds of community service projects, and donated tens of thousands of dollars to charitable organizations. In total, more than 244 distinct communities in Minnesota were impacted by their efforts.

Keen Bank participated in MBA's Community Impact Month in September by volunteering at Community Pathways of Steele County.

"Minnesota banks provide an extraordinary level of commitment to the communities they serve," said MBA President/CEO Joe Witt. "In addition to providing the capital that helps families and local businesses thrive, the banking industry's record of supporting charitable and community causes is second to none. The MBA is pleased to recognize Keen Bank for its commitment to making a real difference in their local communities."

Keen Bank is a local, third generation family-owned and managed community bank, with three locations in Waseca, Owatonna and Ellendale—committed to customers and their financial well-being by providing exceptional customer service and innovative, convenient banking solutions. For more information visit keen.bank.

401(k) limit increases to \$23,500 for 2025, IRA limit remains \$7,000

WASHINGTON — The Internal Revenue Service announced today that the amount individuals can contribute to their 401(k) plans in 2025 has increased to \$23,500, up from \$23,000 for 2024.

The IRS today also issued technical guidance regarding all cost-of-living adjustments affecting dollar limitations for pension plans and other retirement-related items for tax year 2025 in Notice 2024-80, posted today on IRS.gov.

Highlights of changes for 2025

The annual contribution limit for employees who participate in 401(k), 403(b), governmental 457 plans, and the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan is increased to \$23,500, up from \$23,000.

The limit on annual contributions to an IRA remains \$7,000. The IRA catch-up contribution limit for individuals aged 50 and over was amended under the SECURE 2.0 Act of 2022 (SECURE 2.0) to include an annual cost-of-living adjustment but remains \$1,000 for 2025.

The catch-up contribution limit that generally applies for employees aged 50 and over who participate in most 401(k), 403(b), governmental 457 plans, and the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan who are 50 and older generally can contribute up to \$31,000 each year, starting in 2025. Under a change made in SECURE 2.0, a higher catch-up contribution limit applies for employees aged 60, 61, 62 and 63 who participate in these plans. For 2025, this higher catch-up contribution limit is \$11,250 instead of \$7,500.

The income ranges for determining eligibility to make deductible contributions to traditional Individual Retirement Arrangements (IRAs), to contribute to Roth IRAs and to claim the Saver's Credit all increased for 2025.

Taxpayers can deduct contributions to a traditional IRA if they meet certain conditions. If during the year either the taxpayer or the taxpayer's spouse was covered by a retirement plan at work, the deduction may be reduced, or phased out, until it is eliminated, depending on filing status and income. (If neither the taxpayer nor the spouse is covered by a retirement plan at work, the phase-outs of the deduction do not apply.) Here are the phase-out ranges for 2025:

For single taxpayers covered by a workplace retirement plan, the phase-out range is increased to between \$79,000 and \$89,000, up from between \$77,000 and \$87,000.

For married couples filing jointly, if the spouse making the IRA contribution is covered by a

workplace retirement plan, the phase-out range is increased to between \$126,000 and \$146,000, up from between \$123,000 and \$143,000.

For an IRA contributor who is not covered by a workplace retirement plan and is married to someone who is covered, the phase-out range is increased to between \$236,000 and \$246,000, up from between \$230,000 and \$240,000.

For a married individual filing a separate return who is covered by a workplace retirement plan, the phase-out range is not subject to an annual cost-of-living adjustment and remains between \$0 and \$10,000.

The income phase-out range for taxpayers making contributions to a Roth IRA is increased to between \$150,000 and \$165,000 for singles and heads of household, up from between \$146,000 and \$161,000. For married couples filing jointly, the income phase-out range is increased to between \$236,000 and \$246,000, up from between \$230,000 and \$240,000. The phase-out range for a married individual filing a separate return who makes contributions to a Roth IRA is not subject to an annual cost-of-living adjustment and remains between \$0 and \$10,000.

The income limit for the Saver's Credit (also known as the Retirement Savings Contributions Credit) for low- and moderate-income workers is \$79,000 for married couples filing jointly, up from \$76,500; \$59,250 for heads of household, up from \$57,375; and \$39,500 for singles and married individuals filing separately, up from \$38,250.

The amount individuals can generally contribute to their SIMPLE retirement accounts is increased to \$16,500, up from \$16,000. Pursuant to a change made in SECURE 2.0, individuals can contribute a higher amount to certain applicable SIMPLE retirement accounts. For 2025, this higher amount remains \$17,600.

The catch-up contribution limit that generally applies for employees aged 50 and over who participate in most SIMPLE plans remains \$3,500 for 2025. Under a change made in SECURE 2.0, a different catch-up limit applies for employees aged 50 and over who participate in certain applicable SIMPLE plans. For 2025, this limit remains \$3,850. Under a change made in SECURE 2.0, a higher catch-up contribution limit applies for employees aged 60, 61, 62 and 63 who participate in SIMPLE plans. For 2025, this higher catch-up contribution limit is \$5,250.

Notice 2024-80 provides a listing of dollar limitations applicable to qualified retirement plans as adjusted for cost-of-living adjustments for 2025.

Notice 2024-80 will be in IRB: 2024-47, dated November 18, 2024.

Dog agility studio opens in Owatonna

While most women in their 70's are enjoying retirement, Susan Bernhart of Owatonna has been working hard to put the finishing touches on her new and fully equipped professional dog agility studio in Owatonna next to the new home of the Steele County Humane Society and the Chase Dog Park on State Avenue.

"We're all wagging our tails with excitement," says Susan, owner of Paws 4 Fun Dog Training, LLC, based in Owatonna. Susan is a CPDT- Knowledge Assessed dog trainer through ccpdt.org and has been training dogs for more than 14 years. "Our nearly 10,000 square foot facility is three times larger than our previous location and opens up a new world of possibilities for a wide range of classes, events, and special activities. There is nothing like it in Southern Minnesota or Northern Iowa. It's fully matted, heated, and we have the full slate of regulation agility equipment to lay out custom designed courses for any dog, any breed."

Susan hopes her expanded location will help stimulate more local and regional interest in what has been described as one of the fastest growing recreational sports in the country. Dog agility's increasing popularity is evidenced by its growing coverage by both cable and network television.

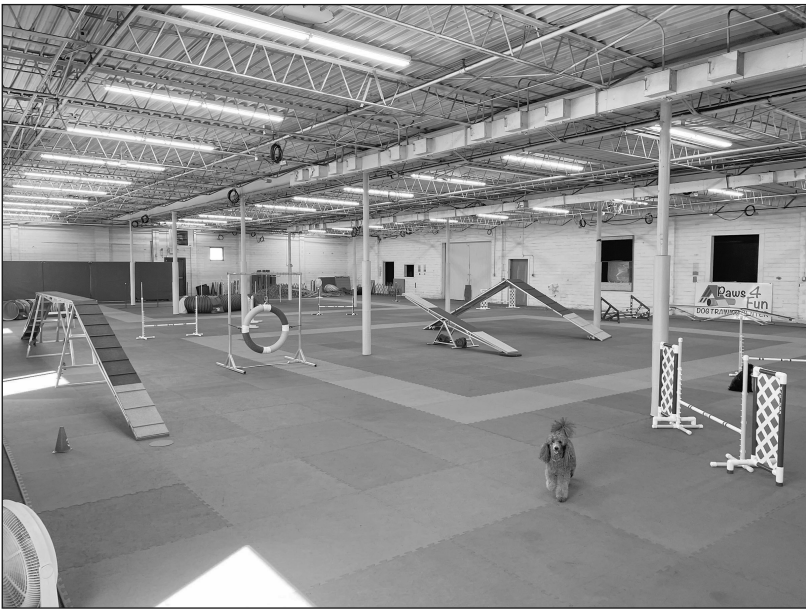
"People watch dog agility on TV and they're fascinated, but they don't think they can do it themselves. What they don't realize is that if their dog can sit, stay and come, they're ready for basic agility. If you still need help with those basic obedience skills, we can get you there."

Susan says that, with an experienced dog agility trainer, you'll have more fun than you ever thought you could have with your dog. "My students come from every life stage you can imagine, from young children to retirees. Many of the dogs actually bark with excitement when they arrive. An agility course is to dogs like a playground is to children; they love it and they can't wait to come back."

When Susan isn't teaching, she's busy competing in agility trials with her poodle throughout the upper Midwest and proudly displays many of the ribbons she has won as a top competitor. One of her dogs, Ninja, competed at the AKC national level and was ranked 11th among all dogs in the country in 2011.

"Being a competitor at that high level gave me the experience, skills and confidence I needed to become a highly effective dog training instructor. But we're not here for the competition. We're here to introduce people to the "fun" side of agility. Before you know it, you'll be guiding your dog through tunnels, over hurdles and across weave poles, while strengthening the loving bond you have with your pet and getting some exercise along the way. It's a win-win."

Susan says her journey as a dog training instructor began at a time when it was hard to find dog trainers in Owatonna. "I had to go to Mankato or Rochester or the Twin Cities to find instruction, and even then it wasn't the quality I was hoping for," she says. Susan decided to take matters into her own hands and learned to speak "dog," gaining the experience, skills and certifications to teach



Paws 4 Fun Dog Training is a new agility studio for dogs located in Owatonna.

her own dogs and then offering her expertise to others. Along the way she accumulated regulation dog agility equipment from the top manufacturers in the space. After years of study, testing, competition, and training more than 3,000 over 14 years, Susan is widely recognized as "the" go-to dog trainer in south central Minnesota with a training facility that attracts students throughout southern Minnesota and northern Iowa. "Our dog agility courses now rival the biggest and the best agility facilities you'll find anywhere else in Minnesota and northern Iowa," says Susan.

Susan points out there is often a common misconception among those who have never experienced dog training. "People think I train their dogs, I don't. I show people how to train their dogs. That is a key distinction. If I trained everyone's dogs, only I would have the dog's trust and control, but the owners wouldn't," Susan says that's one of the reasons she decided from the very beginning to offer private classes in order to provide one-on-one highly consultative instruction. "Compared

to a group environment, that kind of individualized one-to-one attention greatly enhances the learning experience," she adds. The only exceptions, she says, are with the younger puppies and special classes such as behavioral modification and aggression reactivity. "Puppies need socialization. They learn their boundaries, and then we let them romp, chase and play with each other. They have the absolute time of their lives and it is an incredible joy to watch."

Classes include life skills-obedience, behavior modification, agility, aggression, AKC S.T.A.R puppy classes and scent work.

Paws 4 Fun Dog Training is located at 1605 State Avenue NW, next to the new Steele County Humane Society headquarters currently under construction. Inquiries about classes can be directed to Susan Bernhart by email at sbernhart@gmail.com or phone at 507-363-1781. More information can be found on the Paws 4 Fun website at paws4fun-owatonna.com

Make the Season Bright for Local Families

Contribute to the iWealth Holiday Food Baskets!

OCTOBER 28TH - NOVEMBER 15TH

Together, We Can Make a Difference!

Join iWealth in our annual iWealth Holiday Food Baskets and help make the season brighter for those in need. We're proud to continue our tradition of giving back to the community and supporting the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center.

iWealth will again sponsor iWealth Holiday Food Baskets for the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center. All donations will be used to fund the iWealth Holiday Food Baskets, distributed by the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center. The iWealth Foundation will be donating \$3,000 again this year. Due to your faithfulness in giving, we were able to cover 100% of the cost of the iWealth Holiday Food Baskets in 2023!

Excess funds will be used to help support the WANSC Backpack Program which provides healthy food options for hundreds of students Pre-K - Grade 12 on weekends. If donations exceed the total cost of this year's iWealth Holiday Food Baskets, the WANSC Backpack Program will also benefit. They have seen a 40% increase in families needing help in our local community area.

2023 TOTALS:

\$9,245 community donations
\$3,000 iWealth Foundation donation
\$12,245 TOTAL = YES: \$12,245!

Total Baskets - 218
All Individuals Served=639
(Adults-283, Children-266, Seniors-90)

Total pounds of food distributed-2568lbs
Additionally, funds raised helped WANSC deliver 260-275 food backpacks per week.

YOU CAN HELP!

All tax-deductible donations should be made payable to: WANSC.

Write "iWealth Holiday Food Baskets" in the memo line.

Please mail your donation to:

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WANSC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit.

Scan Here to Donate online. Select iWealth Holiday Food Baskets when donating

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Meals from the Heart



A team of volunteers from First Congregational Church - Waseca packed around 2800 Alfredo Primavera MEALS FROM THE HEART on Saturday, October 19th. Tom Thiets, President and Co-Founder of MEALS FROM THE HEART, founded the organization and has served on the board since its inception. He has an extensive background in mechanical design, general contracting, trade show supervision, project management, and 25 years of local and global mission direction. All meals from this packing event were donated locally to the Waseca Area Food Shelf.

Erler reports observations of positive changes at JWP

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

In his report at the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton school district's regularly monthly meeting on Oct. 21, superintendent Jeremy Erler said JWP currently has five teachers who are testing education specific AI tools from three different vendors. He also mentioned Adam Mateske, Director of Technology and Integration and District Assessment Coordinator, is working on schedules for general testing which check JWP's security within the building. Erler said JWP also put a new door controller in for room E6 and one in the locker rooms to serve as a pilot.

"We'll see how that goes and if we want to move forward with that in the future for all of the

doors," he stated, adding how nice it is to have the ability to control doors directly from cell phones and that members of the physical education department are excited that since if they're out at the field or need to open the door for a student to get back in the building, they can.

Erler also updated the school board about Q-comp nearing the end of the first round of coaching and how grade letters have moved up and students are "doing well for the most part." Q-comp is a system which bases teacher pay increases on their participation in staff development activities.

Observations for teachers started on the week of Oct. 21. He said in the high school so far, late work and missing work are down

20 percent from 2023; there are as many as 70 percent fewer difficulties with student behavior from this time last year.

When a school board member inquired what contributed to the change, Erler said he felt it's become a better structured environment, possibly due to the lack of cell phones.

He reported that JWP is now currently fully staffed, excluding the position of the behavior interventionist position.

When the school board members shared positive comments in the meeting, Erler mentioned Aubry Weedman went over a thousand set assists for volleyball, Briel broke the school record for career digs at a count of a thousand, and Caleb Quast set a score record with 183 re-

JWP SCHOOL BOARD

ceiving yards in one game; Mackenzie Westfall, a cross-country competitor, also took first place in the overall meet. Erler said Laura Hoffman was asked to speak at the regional nurses' group about all her great accomplishments at JWP and Aidan Demarais spoke at the Career and Technical Education (CTE) conference about welding classes and the advanced metal sculpture classes which he teaches.

The school board accepted and approved the following donations: \$5,332.25 from Bulldog Backers for senior banners; \$1,000 from the American Legion for the dairy program; \$500 from

Janesville Chamber of Commerce for marching band shirts; \$50 from Grooming with Sunshine for Future Farmers of America (FFA); \$50 from Kubat CPA for FFA; \$50 from Rick's Appliance for FFA; 50 from Tesch Service Center for FFA; \$50 from Waseca Music Company Services for FFA; \$500 from Autumn Acres \$500 for FFA; \$100 from Bure Trucking for FFA; \$100 from Davis Marketplace for FFA; \$100 from South Central Seed for FFA; \$650 from Julie L. Tesch for FFA; \$100 from Waldorf Welding for FFA; \$50 from Ginger P Designs for FFA; \$200 from Janesville Service Center for FFA; \$150 from Jay's Auto Service for FFA; \$250 from McPherson Crop for FFA; \$2,115 from the National FFA Founda-

tion for grants for growing FFA; \$200 from Ronald and Charlene Cummins; \$550 from Guardian Energy; \$50 from Floyd and Barb Herme; \$50 from William and Patricia Hoversten; \$200 from Jetter Clean of Owatonna; \$21 from Robert and Jill Johnson; \$1,500 from the Bulldog Backers for a classroom rug for the Bulldog Academy room; \$35 from Precision Chiropractic for athletics; \$1,500 from Bulldog Backers for FFA; \$500 from Alternative Fuel Resources for FFA convention; \$100 from the Minnesota State Fair for FFA convention; \$50 from Jennifer Mocol for FFA convention; and \$100 from Guardian Energy for National Honor Society.

The school board adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

 *The Pastor's Column*

No matter who wins, we have a responsibility

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

I am writing this early Tuesday morning on election day. I have personal opinions on politics, but you won't hear me talk about who I am voting for, rather you will hear me address our current culture from a biblical point of view. I am not going to talk about politics, rather I am going to talk about God's plan to use politics for His glory.

In Romans 13:1-2 Paul shares how a Christian should respond to governing authorities, he writes:

1 Let everyone submit to the governing authorities, since there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are instituted by God. 2 So then, the one who resists the authority is opposing God's command, and those who oppose it will bring judgment on themselves.

No matter who won this election cycle, we as believers have a responsibility to submit to the governing authorities, not because of their policies, who they are, or what political party they are a part of, but because God is the authority over them. God has a plan to see people come to know Him as Lord and Savior, He uses all things to draw people to know Him.

Some people will say that I am not very Christian in this perspective, we should push for one candidate or another depending on what we believe. You can't be a Christian if you don't vote this way or that, is a statement that I have heard more than once. Your opinion about who I should vote for does not bother me much, be-

cause my view is not on one election, but on the eternal glory of God and His desire to see people saved from their sin.

Take an eternal perspective on politics my brothers and sisters in Christ. God is going to establish and use governing authorities to position people to put their faith in Christ. Let us absolutely engage in the civil process of elections but spend more of your time and energy pointing people to Christ.

No matter who has won this election, we have a responsibility to one another in Christ. Paul began His discussion on Governing Authorities by talking about submitting to governing authorities and he ends it by reminding us to act in love in Romans 13:8-10:

8 Do not owe anyone anything, except to love one another, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 The commandments, Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not covet; and any other commandment, are summed up by this commandment: Love your neighbor as yourself. 10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor. Love, therefore, is the fulfillment of the law.

We have a responsibility to reflect God's love to the world through our Christ-like behavior. Let us set aside sin and follow God's second greatest commandment to Love your neighbor as yourself. The greatest act of love that you gave to yourself was putting your faith in Christ, show that same love for your neighbor by sharing Christ with them.

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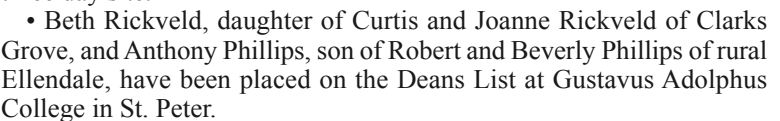
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New Richland

25 Years Back

- Belview-Danube-Renville Sacred Heart didn't give the Janesville Waldorf-Pemberton football team a chance to end its losing streak at Renville Friday. The Jaguars put five first-half touchdowns on the board and rolled to a 40-0 win over the Bulldogs. "We dug a hole for ourselves early," said first-year JWP coach Mike Mueedging, who is still searching for his first win. "We don't have the type of offense that can play from behind. The loss was the ninth in a row for the Dawgs, including all seven games played this year. JWP lost 14-8 to the Jaguars last year.

-The October report of the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation shows that the demand for farm labor for corn picking is light. This is in contrast to a strong demand for the same period last year and an average demand in 1922.



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END OF THE LINE — The season ended Friday in tough fashion for the Waseca High School football team, whose second-half rally fell short against Fairmont in the Section 3AAA championship game in New Ulm. At left, William Mansfield (28) and others react to the loss. In the middle, Waseca’s Lucas Selthun (55) and Ethan Hiller (5) make a big play on defense. At right, Tauston Rupe forces a fumble. Below top, Koltyn Quillen (6) and others react to a big defensive play on Elijah Johnson (8). Below right, Damarius Russell (3) makes a sensational catch. Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens

Second-half rally falls just short for Bluejays

Season ends for WHS football team in section finals

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

They didn’t quit. Falling down 17-0, possessing the ball for less than two minutes in the first half, the Bluejay Football team could have folded in their section championship loss to Fairmont, Friday, in New Ulm.

For the fourth consecutive season the Bluejays and Cardinals faced off in the Section 3AAA championship game. This year, the Cardinals edged the Bluejays 17-12.

“In the first half Fairmont was able to control the clock and limit our possessions,” Waseca head coach Brad Wendland said. “In the second half we made some adjustments and made some plays, but they played deep coverage to take away big plays, which made it challenging.

We wanted to play with the lead but weren’t able to do that.” Cardinal running back Elijah Johnson could not be stopped in the first half, carrying the ball 30 times for more than 160 yards in that time. He tallied both touchdowns for the Cardinals who added a late field goal. Johnson finished the game with 45 carries, 191 yards and one catch for nine yards.

With the wind at their backs, the Bluejays came storming back in the third quarter.

The first play from scrimmage was a 43-yard connection from Kellen Klinger to Bennett Ludwig. A few plays later Klinger lunged in from one-yard out on 4th and goal. The point after kick was blocked.

Fairmont was unable to get in the end zone on its next drive, handing the ball back to Waseca.

With 6:30 left in the quarter, Klinger connected with Damarius Russell for a 46-yard pass resulting in a touchdown. The Bluejays 2-

“You showed a lot of grit and fight in that second half. But you didn’t quit. You fought hard until the end.”
— Waseca coach Brad Wendland

point try was successful.

Fairmont’s defense was tested in the fourth quarter, with Klinger finding Owen Honstad three times for 10, 8, and 21 yards before finding the Bluejays found themselves in a fourth-and-long situation. The drive was put to an end by Oliver Tordsen, giving Fairmont possession with 10:25 left on the clock. Despite being helped out by two penalties putting Fairmont into scoring territory, the Cardinals were unable to extend the lead and gave the ball back to the Bluejays, putting the game on their defense. The Bluejays began their drive on their own 27-yard line with a minute left in the game when Klinger threw a pass that was knocked into the hands of Ethan Hiller at the 49-yard line, but the Fairmont defense held its ground, not giving another inch until the final whistle blew.

“It hurts,” Coach Wendland told players after the game. “You showed a lot of grit and fight in that second half. But you didn’t quit. You fought hard until the end.”

The Bluejays finish their season with an 8-2 record and graduate seniors: Bennett Ludwig, Damarius Russell, Solomon Wilson, Koltyn Quillen, Caden Danner, Carson Ohnstad, Maxwell Wirtz, Micah Allen-Haas, Benjamin Hagen, Kyle McGuire, Tauston Rupe, Cody Weber, Bradyn Jascha, David Hodgkins, Andy Balderas, Pablo Alvarez, Maxwell Howard and Joe Mixteco-Perez.

Fairmont is on to the state championship quarterfinals, which begin Nov. 9 at a time and location to be determined.

Fairmont 17, Waseca 12				
FMT	7	10	0	0 - 17
WAS	0	0	12	0 - 12
First Quarter				
FMT	— Elijah Johnson 3 run (Lucas Rosburg kick)			
Second Quarter				
FMT	— Johnson 4 run (Rosburg kick)			
FMT	— Rosburg 25 field goal			
Third Quarter				
WAS	— Kellen Klinger 1 run (kick blocked)			
WAS	— Damarius Russell 46 pass from Klinger (pass failed)			
Fourth Quarter				
No scoring				
	FMT		WAS	
First downs	16		8	
Total Yds.	266		201	
Penalties	3-20		2-20	

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS
Rushing — WAS: Bennett Ludwig 4-42; Kellen Klinger 5 —10; FMT: Johnson 45-189; Joe Long 11-51
Passing — WAS: Klinger 11-26-0, 169; FMT: Long 7-9, 26
Receiving — WAS: Carson Ohnstad 4-57; Damarius Russell 2-52; Ethan Hiller 2-34; Deron Russell 3-26; FMT: Schultze 2-11; Artz 3-10; Johnson 2-5
Defense: WAS: Damarius Russell 14T, 3A; Ethan Hiller 2T, 1A; Kolyten Quillen 9T, 6A; Deron Russell 3T, 2A; Carson Ohnstad 6T, 3A; Maxwell Wirtz 1T; William Mansfield 4T, 3A; Micah Allen-Haas 5T; Ben Hagen 1T, 1A; Tauston Rupe 8T, 3A; Lucas Selthun 5T, 4A; Max Howard 1T, 1A



Feldkamp, Bluejay runners finish season at state CC meet

The Waseca High School cross country teams wrapped up the season with the state meet Saturday at the University of Minnesota’s Les Bolstad Golf Course in St. Paul.

Senior Isaac Feldkamp, the lone boy to compete, finished in 81st place with a time of 17:03.9 for 5,000 meters.

The girls were led by a seventh-grader, Ella Kopischke, who clocked 20:05.04 for 61st place.

Following for the Bluejays were Stella Omvedt, 68th, 20:14.8; Callie Dufault, 72ns, 20:21.8; Maren Schimming, 121st, 21:26; Quinn Yoder, 111th, 21:26; Jenna Yoder, 137th, 22:14.6; and Taylor Markenson, 156th 23:27.7.

As a team, the Waseca girls finished in 10th place out of 16 teams with 254 points. St. Paul Highland Park took the top two places, buoying it to first place with 53



I. Feldkamp



Dufault



Westphal

points. The future of cross country in Waseca looks very bright, as Dufault was the lone senior in the lineup.

The lone area runner at state was WEM/JWP’s MaKenzie Westphal, who finished 64th among Class A girls with a time of 20:38.9.

BLUEJAY FOOTBALL

PLAYER of the WEEK

Carson Ohnstad

4 receptions for 57 yards and 9 total tackles

Bluejay Football Player of the Week Sponsored by:

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
WASECA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Waseca County East Annex (Small Conference Room)
300 N. State Street, Waseca, MN 56093
Wednesday, November 20, 2024

The Board of Commissioners (the "Board") of Waseca County Economic Development Authority will make a determination of acceptance, if any, of offer for purchase received on the sale of land described as: of PID No. 01.003.1050, also identified as 3071 380th Avenue, Janesville, Minnesota. The proposed sale of property from the Authority is authorized by Minnesota Statutes, Section 469.105, as amended.

The full Request for Offers of Purchase and Development documents and information can be accessed on the Waseca County Website Economic Development Authority page, <https://www.wasecacounty.gov/173/Economic-Development>, where the information packet may be viewed, or a copy may also be reviewed at Waseca County Planning and Zoning office, 300 N State Street, Waseca, MN 56093. Said offers must be received by November 12, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

Any questions may be directed to Tina Wilson, Community Development Coordinator, Waseca County. Tina.wilson@wasecacounty.gov or (507) 835-0538

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on November 7 & 14th, 2024

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642
November 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	2
3	4	5 Burger nite 5-7pm	6 6pm BAR Bin- go	77pm HALL BIN- GO	8 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	9
10 <u>Marine corps Birthday</u>	11 7pm Post & AUX. Meeting VETERANS' DAY Mash Burger night 5:00 to 7pm	12 Burger nite 5-7pm	13 6pm BAR Bin- go	14 7pm HALL BINGO	15 WALLEYE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm	16
17 <i>ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am – Noon Your Host Neighborhood Ser- vice Center</i>	18	19 Burger nite 5-7pm	20 6pm BAR Bin- go	21 7pm HALL BINGO <u>Grena- da Campaign ended</u> (1983)	22 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	23 TURKEY BINGO 7 PM Hockey Burger Night
24	25	26 Burger nite 5-7pm	27 6pm BAR Bin- go	28 7pm HALL BINGO	29 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	30

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