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Santa Anonymous

“Hymns in Faith” at First Lutheran Church, Waldorf, Dec. 12

The piano and violin duo of Ash St. John and Kurt Weber will be playing Christmas hymns beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 12 at First Lutheran Church at 120 Third Avenue in Waldorf. The performance is free and open to the public.

North Waseca Lutheran Lefse Sale; place order by Dec. 12

North Waseca Lutheran Church is selling bags holding 15 quarters of lefse for \$10 each. Orders must be placed by phone in advance; will be picked up using a “drive-through” system in front of the church from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14. To place order, call or text Greg Thomson at 612-619-3868 or Roy Srp at 507-521-1185.

Waseca Public Library will host Everything but the Kitchen Sink, Friday, Dec. 13

The Waseca Public Library will host Everything but the Kitchen Sink event from 1-5 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 13. Using unusual tools and supplies to create a collage or a mobile. This event is for ages 7-12.

St. Paul Drive-through Nativity Scene 5 to 7 p.m. Dec. 13 and 14

St. Paul Lutheran Church at 314 Fourth Avenue Northeast in Waseca will have a drive-through live nativity enactment from 5 to 7 p.m. on both Friday, Dec. 13, and Saturday, Dec. 14. There is no charge; visitors may either walk or drive past the scenes which portray the elements of the Christmas story.

Waseca County Fairgrounds holiday lights Sat., Dec. 14

The Waseca County Fairgrounds will have walk or drive through holiday lights from 6-9 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14. There will also be a meet and greet with Santa Claus.

Indian Island Winery will host music group Barn Boys, Sat., Dec. 14

The Indian Island Winery will host the music group Barn Boys from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14. They play live guitar and vocals and old country.

Pioneer won’t publish Dec. 26

As we have done each year since we opened, the *Pioneer* will not publish a newspaper the final week of the year.

Publication will resume with the Thursday, Jan. 2, 2025 edition.

Winter Wonderland Craft Sale at Starfire Event Center Dec. 14, 15

The Winter Wonderland Craft and Holiday sale will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Starfire Event Center, 206 Second Ave Southwest in Waseca, on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 14 and 15. This is the center’s largest show of the year, with a wide array of vendors. Mr. and Mrs. Santa will greet visitors from 10 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 3 p.m.

A word from
The Word



So that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:5



Pictured with the presidentially pardoned turkeys Peach and Blossom are Farmamerica staff members Kari Wadd, program director; Megan Mudgett, communication and engagement coordinator; and Rachel Berry, site assistant. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Two lucky birds: Farmamerica’s Peach and Blossom

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Northfield area turkey farmer John Zimmerman is the chairman of the board for the National Turkey Federation, a one-year office he has held since February. Because board officers follow a sort of cycle, he has known for three years he would be chairman in 2024—and so he knew it would be his job to raise the turkeys presented to and pardoned by the U.S. President this November.

Apparently not one to procrastinate, already in 2023 Zimmerman conferred about a future home for the birds with Sam Ziegler, director of Greenseam, a Mankato-based organization which advocates for regional ag businesses and growth. Ziegler suggested Farmamerica as a potential home for the birds, likely

to live another three or four years after being pardoned. Contacts were made and arrangements were put in place—more than a year before the turkeys in question were ever hatched.

Zimmerman mentions that previously pardoned turkeys have been housed in places like Disney World, Mt. Vernon, and a number of petting zoos.

According to Farmamerica program director Kari Wadd, the facility houses a few head of cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, chickens and—until November—one turkey through the warm part of the year, but nearly all are returned to the farms which supplied them as the tourist season

Lucky continued on 10

Problem solving was Fitch’s favorite role

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

As Ann Fitch prepares to move on from her six years as executive director for the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce (WACC), she believes she will miss the challenges and pleasures of helping people and organizations solve problems.

“Big or small, there’s something good about helping find the solution,” she comments. “It gives a person a sense of accomplishment.”

She goes on to mention some of the questions she and Kristie Biehl, the chamber’s administrative assistant, have encountered. “Anything from a good place to take Grandma out to lunch to whether the acorns are still falling in Trowbridge Park,” she says lightly. “You might never predict some of the questions we get.”

Alongside the straightforward solutions have been some far more complex ones.

“Maybe someone is looking to sell their business, and wants help building an exit strategy,” suggests Fitch. “And of course we’re always looking for ways to make our community stronger and more resilient.”

Having originally taken on the role of executive director in September of 2018, Fitch submitted her resignation from the position effective at the end of December. According to Chamber President Elect Mikhail Rostislavovich, the nominating and search committee has seen 11 candidates from as far away as Oregon and from as close as St. James. A job offer has been extended and an announcement

regarding Fitch’s successor can be expected any time.

He comments, however, that the Chamber is “going to miss her remarkable enthusiasm for our organization. We are so fortunate to benefit from the regional and statewide connections that Ann has made for our Chamber. Ann has certainly left her mark here, in the most favorable ways. She’s done an exemplary job, not only for the Chamber but for the City of Waseca.”

A lifelong Waseca resident and a graduate of Waseca High School, Fitch served as a member of the Waseca City Council for six years prior to taking on her role with the WACC. From her standpoint, her job serving the 200 member businesses is a continuation of that public service.

“The businesses and the city thrive together,” she comments. “I’m really proud that I’ve been able to help strengthen the relationship between local government and the Chamber, and see it become robust.”

One example of long-term collaboration she offers is a “workforce development center” proposed to be located on the bottom floor of the Waseca County Public Services building at 1100 West Elm Avenue. At this time, preliminary plans have been developed and further work is waiting on news regarding a grant application.

“That seems well on its way,” she says of the project, “and it will be an exciting development for the com-



Departing executive director for the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Ann Fitch, pictured with the Chamber’s president elect Mikhail Rostislavovich, left, and administrative assistant Kristie Biehl, right. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

munity.”

The Chamber of Commerce has also written letters of support for numerous other projects which were seeking grant funding, including the two broadband initiatives bringing high-speed internet to unincorporated areas of specific county townships.

“Many of the impacts this organization makes are not always seen by the general public,” Fitch observes. “But we’re happy to take a supporting role.”

When asked how her position has forced her to grow, Fitch admits her

writing skills have developed considerably over the past six years. “Communication is vital,” she comments. She has been called upon to compose writing for social media posts, for communications with Chamber members, and for reaching out to other agencies. Perhaps the most demanding task, she mentions, has been writing scripts for awards and acknowledgments. “It takes genuine effort to capture the character of an individual and help people see why someone was selected for an award,” she recalls.

Though she plans to stay in the

Waseca community and even to seek out some roles she has previously not had time for, Fitch says one thing she will not miss about being the WACC executive director is the feeling she is always at work. “When you live in the community and work to advocate for it, you’re sort of always on the job,” she mentions.

As she prepares to leave her position, Fitch says there are a few things she wants to share.

First, she says lightheartedly, she

Fitch continued on 6



Waseca County Commissioner Doug Christopherson speaks with Wayne Cords during a New Richland flood mitigation talk at city hall on December 5, 2024. Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

City hosts flood presentation

Houston Engineering discusses results of study, talks next steps

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

About three dozen New Richland area residents attended a community flood presentation at city hall the evening of Thursday, Dec. 5, 2024.

“(Tonight) will give you a chance to see where we are and, maybe, where we’re intending to go,” New Richland City Administrator Tony Martens began.

Joe Lewis of Mankato’s Houston Engineering, the main speaker for the evening, shared details of the city’s recent flooding mitigation analysis.

Also present to participate in the conversation were Waseca County’s Land and Water Resources Director Chris Howard, County Commissioner Doug Christopherson, city maintenance supervisor Erik Hen-

drickson, and Shell Johnson from People Service.

Lewis’s 20-minute presentation introduced existing conditions, alternative plans for action, the costs for said plans and what the city’s potential next steps might be. A video of his presentation, and a question and answer session, was more than an hour in length and is available on the city’s website and YouTube page.

The study commissioned by the city analyzed 10 square miles of land, with the majority of the drainage coming through two different systems. County Ditch (CD) 6, runs



Lewis

east, crosses Highway 13 through culverts and intersects CD 47 in the center of town. The combined water flow then goes south and west toward Highway 30.

The current system can handle about 400 to 600 cubic feet per second (CFPS) of water, the equivalent of 3.5 to 4.5 inches of rainfall over a 24-hour period.

A “100-year rain” is classified as rainfall totaling 7.7 inches or more in a 24-hour period and delivers water at approximately 1,200 CFPS.

The challenge facing the city and area residents is how extraordinary levels of water can be safely moved to avoid flooding during high-capacity events which appear to be grow-

Study continued on 2



Compostings

by Al Batt

Potatos are tradition on Thanksgiving

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING
I know what I'm getting for Christmas.

How could you know that?
It's a gift.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. The first three days of any season rule the weather of that season.

Will we have a white Christmas? The DNR defines a white Christmas as having 1 inch of snow on the ground on Christmas morning. Based on DNR data, Albert Lea gets a white Christmas 69% of the time, Austin 67%, Bemidji 92%, Brainerd 97%, Detroit Lakes 90%, Duluth 97%, Grand Rapids 97%, Hibbing 97%, Mankato 68%, Marshall 68%, Owatonna 71%, Rochester 78%, St. Cloud 74%, Twin Cities 71%, Waseca 81%, Willmar 70%, Winona 78% and Worthington 76%. If you want a 100% chance of a white Christmas, spend that day in Babbitt, Cloquet, Cook, Park Rapids, Roseau, Tower or Virginia. Do you know who really wants a white Christmas? Voles. Voles retreat to the subnivean zone, the area between the surface of the ground and the top of the snowpack, where they find protection from cold temperatures, bitter winds and predators.

MASHED POTATOES

I'd spoken with several families who told me that Mrs. Gerry's Mashed Potatoes had become a Thanksgiving tradition. They're delicious. Things change, but not all things. If you drove anywhere on Thanksgiving, you likely noticed lots of men standing outside on a driveway. What were they doing? They were looking at the new lug nuts on somebody's car, smoking (even though the cold weather made it difficult for them to gauge when they were done exhaling), spitting, criticizing Aunt Betty's messed up recipe for candied carrots with marshmallows, and discussing other matters of national security.

HOREHOUND CANDY AND MOON PIES

I hadn't had breakfast and it was lunchtime. I decided to have breakfast for lunch. I knew there was a place not far away where that could happen, but I had to walk through a garage sale first. There were rocking chairs, pancake syrup, John Deere hats (even though tractors refuse to wear them), record players, candles, Werther's candies, peanut brittle, pecan logs, Moxie soda, horehound candy, Moon Pies, a trapper hat like Cousin Eddie wore in "Christmas Vacation," and various CDs (Dolly Parton, Reba McEntire, Carrie Un-

derwood, Randy Travis, Lynyrd Skinner, George Strait, Elvis Presley and Creedence Clearwater Revival). The air smelled so much like candy, I could chew it. The only thing missing was a musty-smelling box of ancient National Geographic magazines. Had I angered a wizard and was destined to be a garage saler for the rest of my days? No, I'd taken a walk through the maze to reach the Cracker Barrel restaurant, where the food was as good as grits.

I'VE LEARNED

Local singers are better at singing our national anthem than are famous entertainers.

I don't like bug zappers. They are fly-by-night operations.

Reading opens many doors, especially those marked "push" or "pull."

Extinguished candles smell like birthdays.

NATURE NOTES

Raccoons spend most of the winter hunkered down in dens, emerging occasionally to forage for food and drink water. They aren't true hibernators, entering instead a prolonged state of inactivity called torpor in which they can sleep for weeks at a time, relying on accumulated fat stores.

Why do vultures circle dying animals? Ah, the dreaded circle of death, seen often in cowboy movies and jungle films. Turkey vultures don't circle dying animals, waiting for them to go onto the menu. They ride thermals to travel and to find food. They investigate potential prey.

I spoke at a thing in Florida. I was on a beach because beaches were hard to avoid. It was a shore thing. I lacked a laser pointer, so I used my hot dog as a pointer, as any sane man would do when pointing out a bird. A gull took that as an invitation to have a bite. It snatched the food from my hand but struggled to carry it away, dropping the tasty morsel, mustard and all, which was greedily consumed by its bickering followers, who numbered more than those of Elon Musk. A kerfuffle or maybe a hullabaloo ensued. The gulls laughed because they were laughing gulls. I didn't ask, but I doubt the hot dog vendor offered refunds on pilfered frankfurters and who buys insurance on a purchased hot dog?

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

Husband says to his wife: "Our son is so bright, he must have gotten his intelligence from me."

The wife replies: "Probably, I still have mine."

MEETING ADJOURNED

"A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal."—Steve Maraboli.

Most importantly, we can turn on the lights

Living on a remote gravel road as I do, I feel as if I get an enriched understanding of what it may have been like to live long ago before artificial lights.

This time of year is a vivid reminder of why we should not take sunlight for granted. I am not "afraid of the dark." I take great pleasure from standing in a wide-open, unlit area and listening to the sounds of night. When there are no clouds, the stars draw my eyes upward; somehow the sky seems bigger in winter.

In his song "The Play," Minnesota artist Peter Mayer points out that, when the sun seems to be setting, what's actually occurring is that "the earth is turning somersaults." He comments "sometimes I lay on the ground and imagine that the sky is down. And



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

if the earth should then let go, I'd fall into the sky below."

Though it doesn't sound inviting to lie on the ground in winter, looking up at the sky and imagining oneself floating there seems like an exciting journey of the mind.

But I have the luxury of living in this century. When I grow cold, I can pick myself up and go inside...maybe have a nice hot cup of tea...ready in minutes thanks

to the array of appliances available to me.

What must it have felt like to see the hours of daylight shrink down to nine, with 15 hours spent in darkness? If we feel as if winter drags on forever, imagine what it must have been like to endure so much darkness and the nearly inescapable cold. One can hardly blame ancient cultures for coming up with some of their unsettling myths.

But then there are the comforting ones. The "Nisse" of Scandinavia were said to perform small chores and generally protect homesteads, as were their relatives the gnomes. Yes, they were a bit mischievous, but in the end they brought more figurative "light" than "darkness."

Why even have them, if that were not the case?

Nowadays we can measure and predict the length of a day down to seconds. We can look at a calendar and know the whole progression turns around on Dec. 21.

But perhaps most importantly, we can turn on the lights, distract ourselves with everything from books and crafts to woodwork, and recognize how blessed we are.

I promise I am the opposite of a 'dud'

I don't know how it happened, but I'm sick. Again. It was a solid couple of weeks in November that I had congestion, a cough, and possibly a fever, but the jury is still out on that one. According to my family, the sickness going around usually lasts three weeks. My grandma at the time was sad to hear that, considering she was on week two of her symptoms and was desperate to be done. Both my sister and I had just finished our third week and were feeling significantly better.

So all that being said, I thought I was done and finished with the cold for the season. That was ringing true until I stepped foot in the door of my parents' house this weekend. It felt like the second I got home, I was congested and mucus was running out of my nose. I took a short nap thinking it was a fluke and woke up with my throat sore and my mouth extremely dry from mouth breathing due to the congestion. I went to work, where I had to be careful



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

with my sneezes and prayed nobody would comment.

But now I'm back at work for my last couple days of school for the fall semester and I am once again feeling inflated with snot and weighed down by exhaustion. So much for the last hurrah of the semester. I guess instead of studying I will be napping (not actually, my fear of failure never lets me sleep).

In other news, I guess I am a "dud," according to numerous voices in my family. In the words of Inigo Montoya from "The Princess Bride," "I do not think that word means what you think it means." You see, a "dud" means

something that is "not working or meeting standards; faulty." My family members claim I am a "dud" because I work too much: Since that seems to be essentially the opposite of what they claim they intend, it seems obvious they need to find a new word. Normally I would not let their criticism go to my head (my family might say I already did, considering I thought about it enough to put it in the column), but I love word play and I have not heard the word "dud" used in a long while. In its place, I suggest the terms "hardworking," "independent," "diligent," "dedicated," and—I admit it—"over-thinker."

"Dud" is an unusual word, although I understand why they say it, considering I feel the need to work while on break or vacation. But when duty calls, I answer.

Despite all that, I will still try to focus on the things that are bringing me joy right now. Like the fact that I might buy myself an early Christmas present and get the box set of the eight-book series that I am currently reading. Or the fact that on Saturday, I convinced a guy at the bar that my middle name is Bedelia (he asked and I went along with it, incredibly funny). It brings me great joy indeed that after this week I will be free of many burdens of the current semester.

First, though, I have to study and do lots of work before I can relax, recover, and empty my nose of this sickness and my brain of too much thinking.

My Determination: "We're all crazy, some of us just hide it better than others." —Nathan Scott, One Tree Hill

Installation of rural broadband continues on schedule

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

Bill Eckles, chief executive officer of Bevcomm, summarized progress installing high-speed internet in the county's four southwestern townships during the Dec. 3 meeting of the county board of commissioners.

The Blue Earth-based company has cooperated with the county on two successful grant applications under the state-funded "border to border" program through the Office of Broadband Development. The first grant, for \$4.38 million, was awarded in March.

Installation of main lines in Byron, Freedom, Vivian and Wilton townships has been underway since June, but will stop for the season this week because the ground is already frozen to a depth of 5 inches. Of 190 needed miles of main line, more than 160 are in place, according to Eckles.

He reported the final main lines for the four townships will be laid as soon as possible in spring. When all

are in place, the boring crews will move on to begin laying main lines for more than 160 locations in Alton, St. Mary and New Richland townships made eligible under the second "border to border" grant awarded to the county in October for nearly \$1.2 million. Eckles mentioned Bevcomm will be holding an open house sometime in the spring to acquaint eligible property owners in Alden, New Richland and St. Mary townships with the installation process and encourage them to complete needed paperwork. The delivery system funded under the second grant is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2026.

Once main lines are laid, the next phase of the installation calls for placing "pillars" which allow individual connections to the main line, as well as running individual cables to the exterior of homes or businesses. These "service drop" lines will only be installed where property owners have signed required paperwork. Because the project is funded

by a grant, there is no charge to have a service drop line installed at this time. Any property owners who decide they would like the lines installed after the service network is complete will be required to pay for the installation.

Having the service drop in place does not require a property owner to subscribe to Bevcomm's services, which entail fees for any desired combination of internet access, telephone and cable television. County commissioner De Malterer encourages all eligible property owners to have the drop line installed: "Just having it there can increase the resale value of your property by as much as \$5,000," she told the Pioneer earlier this year.

Of 492 service drops which are part of the first grant, Eckles told board members about 100 will have been installed by the end of this week. Work on this phase will continue in spring as soon as weather permits.

The final step for the project is for technicians to install service lines leading into individual homes or businesses. That phase is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2025, with the system in Byron, Freedom, Vivian and Wilton townships operational by the end of fall. Under the terms of the grant, the deadline for full operation is June of 2026. This means that, barring any unforeseen complications, the project will be finished about nine months ahead of schedule.

Work on the installations in Alden, New Richland and St. Mary townships is expected to proceed one phase behind that under the first grant.

A major element of making the system operational, Eckles reported, is establishing a connection "hut." He told commissioners a location has been selected for the structure, which will be able to serve the 650 connections needed under the two grant projects. The hut will be located at 27851 Seventieth Street, on property owned by Todd Stencel.

■ Study

from Page 1

ing more and more common.

"When we look at a 100-year event today, it's more water than it was 10 years ago," Lewis stated.

Ten years ago a "100-year rain" event was measured at 6.25 inches in a 24-hour period. By 2040 or '50, this number is expected to be around eight or nine inches.

Lewis listed four project alternatives and explained that no one option alone will move enough water through the city to avoid flooding during future 100-year events. Different approaches must be used together to help offer a long-term solution.

The alternatives he offered include increased culvert and channel capacity; diversion; property buy-outs; and structural protections, levees or floodwalls.

The strengths and weaknesses of each alternative were discussed.

Widening channels and enlarging culverts could result in buildings like Neighbor's Meats or the funeral home having to relocate because the expanded waterways would impede on their structures.

Property buy-outs were not seriously considered because the cost came to more than \$20 million.

The early and not final consensus between Houston Engineering and the city of New Richland thus far is that a diversion plan along with increased culvert and channel sizes, and possibly levees will reduce the flooding risk to the highest extent.

The "Northern Diversion" alignment, the most viable according to Houston Engineering, will take water north, around New Richland and back out on the west side. This option can capture 60 to 70 percent of the drainage area.

"The city and the county are putting our heads together to see how we can collaborate to see what works best," Martens stated. "Who leads and how does it put the community in the best position to be ready to go after that external funding?"

In order to pay for this project,

which will cost anywhere from \$2 million to \$5 million, if not more, the city and county are going to apply for a grant through the State of Minnesota Flood Hazard Mitigation program.

Since 1987 this program, run through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, has awarded \$590 million. A local contribution of money is required, but is capped. The maximum amount contributed by local city taxpayers is estimated to be at about 10 percent of the total cost of the project.

Plans regarding which plan to submit and who will do the "technical work" will be done before a final grant application is submitted. In the meantime Martens has applied for a "planning grant" to help cover the costs associated with the necessary technical work.

During the question and answer session following the presentation, many frustrations, clarifications and alternative ideas were heard.

Residents asked whether the intended steps will actually be followed through, and how long it will likely take to do so.

"That's why we are taking this to the community," Martens answered. "We have to narrow down which options we have to choose to make the grant application."

No timeline was given due to the infancy of this project.

The first step to do something, however, was the flood mitigation study commissioned by the city through Houston Engineering.

After conversations with Senator Tina Smith, Congressman Brad Finstad, local state representative Peggy Bennett, and commissioner Christoperson, Martens said there is support for this project at every level of government.

"Local legislators are very aware...wanting to help," Martens shared. "Having this step ready to go is on their radar. We're making the progress we need to make."

Martens assured that the city is trying to do this project with "as little cost to taxpayers as possible."

The topic was on the agenda for the Dec. 9 meeting of the council.



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

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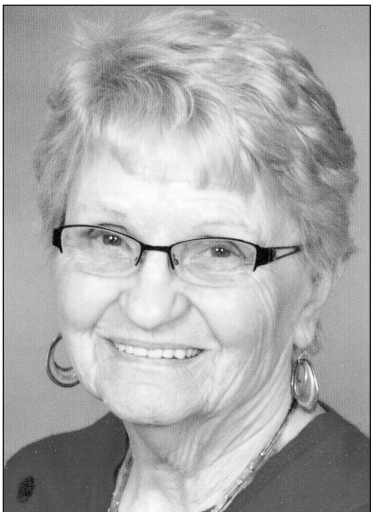
OBITUARIES

Gladys Bauman

GLADYS “GLADY” MAE BAUMAN, age 91 of Waseca, died on the evening of Saturday, December 7, 2024 at her Colony Court home in Waseca.

Glady was born in Waseca on January 1, 1933, to parents Albert and Mabel (Roesler) Wobschall. She attended school in Waldorf. On December 27, 1952, she was united in marriage to Marlyn Bauman. They lived and worked on a farm in rural New Richland until Marlyn’s passing in April of 2000. In 2007 she moved into Waseca. Over the years Glady was employed at the E.F. Johnson Company and the Brown Printing Company, although her primary career was the daycare business that she operated for over 30 years. Glady and Marlyn had a great love for fostering children and had taken into their home over 100 Foster children. In her later years she enjoyed traveling to Arizona during the winter, volunteering at the Waseca Clinic, the Neighborhood Service Center, and the Waseca Senior Center where she had formerly served on the board. She enjoyed gardening, dancing, playing cards, and being around children – especially the grandkids. She was a member of St. John Lutheran Church in Waseca, and she will be fondly remembered by every person she knew and loved.

Glady is survived by four children, Deb (Gary Young) Kahnke of Waseca, Sue (Randy) Borchert of Waseca, Jerome (Lynn Stoltzman) Bauman of New Richland, and Lorna (Dan Houdek) Warke of New Richland; ten grandchildren and their families, Jenae Peterson, Kyle Kahnke, Christa Kahnke, Joshua Warke, Jordan Warke, Shaun



Gladys Bauman

Borchert, Tyler Borchert, Katie Nelson, Ashley Bauman, and Hunter Bauman; twenty-one great-grandchildren; special foster children, Brandie Anderson, Heidi Zimbrich, and Sara Carroll; as well as many other special relatives and foster children. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband; and one brother, Lowell Wobschall; as well as many other special relatives.

The family would like to extend their deep gratitude to the dedicated staff at Colony Court and Ecumen Hospice for the loving care they offered to Glady.

Funeral services will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, December 13, 2024 at St. John Lutheran Church in Waseca. Visitation will be held for one hour before the service at the church. Interment will follow at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca. Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca is handling the arrangements. dsofuneral.com
Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt
Funeral and Cremation Service
Waseca ~ Janesville ~ Waterville

Shirley Burdick

SHIRLEY JUNE BURDICK, age 88 of Waseca, died Saturday, December 7, 2024, at Foxdale Assisted Living Facility in Waseca, MN, surrounded by her family.

She was born on June 28, 1936, in Morristown, MN to Christian and Mabel (Dartt) Gasner. On December 15, 1957, she married Claude LeRoy Burdick at the Owatonna United Methodist Church. She became a proud U.S. Army military wife, and moved the family 21 times before Claude was honorably discharged in 1976. The family settled in Waseca, but two months later, Shirley unexpectedly became a widow and a single mother of five children, ranging from age 10 to 18. Shirley said, “We can’t always have life the way we want. Life takes patience,” as she continued to work through the challenges of raising her kids alone, blessed with the loving support of her siblings. She took a job at the Waseca Public Library as a circulation clerk. Soon after, she was asked to lead the library’s 4-year-old weekly story time. This expanded to eight story times a week, each with 15-20 kids. While employed at the library, Shirley earned her associate’s degree in early Childcare Development from the University of Minnesota–Waseca. She used her degree and her love of children to develop, from the ground up, an extended day program for school-aged children at elementary schools in Waseca. Her program grew incrementally over the next 13 years. She then retired and filled the volunteer District Officer position with the Faith United Methodist SE District, traveling to attend meetings in the SE MN region.

Shirley remained determined, enthusiastic, empathetic, and busy her entire life: an active member of Faith United Methodist Church, choir member, Solo’s club member and officer, honorary member of the VFW, tourist, photographer, crafter, painter, author, and poet. She was a free spirit, fearlessly trying new things, undaunted by worries that her results may be less than perfect. Sometimes collabo-



Shirley Burdick

rating with friends, she published several books overflowing with photos, poems, and witty banter.

She is survived by her children, Barbara Seay of Colorado Springs, CO, Deb (Jim) Heine of Stillwell, KS, Carol (Al) Burdick-Nelson of Hill point, WI, Mary (Tom) Burdick-Lynch of Cold Spring, Barry (Ann) Burdick of Montrose; grandchildren, Michael, Steven, Matthew, Jessica, Nik, Ryan, Andrew, Joshua, Kali, Sarah, Jacob; great-grandchildren, Elijah, Isaiah, Peter, Anna, Sadie, Casen, Aven, Brinley, Kinsley, Liam, and Vivian; sister, Carol Karsten. She is preceded in death by her parents, her husband, and her siblings, Leslie, Margaret, Dorothy, Christ Jr., Duane, JoAnn, Robert, Russell, and Vernon.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, December 14, 2024, at 2:00 PM at Faith United Methodist Church in Waseca. Visitation will be held for one hour prior to the service at the church. Interment will be held at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca. Memorials are preferred to Faith United Methodist Church - Waseca. Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service is handling the arrangements. Dsofuneral.com

The family would like to thank the staff at Foxdale, St. Croix Hospice, and Colony Court for their kind, compassionate, and respectful care of our mother.

Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt
Funeral and Cremation Service
Waseca ~ Waterville ~ Janesville

Larry W. Kelling

LARRY WILBERT KELLING, age 79 of Waldorf died on Monday, December 9, 2024 in Waseca.

Born on November 26, 1945 in Waseca, Minnesota, he was the son of Wilbert and Eva (Gregory) Kelling. Larry graduated from Waldorf-Pemberton High School in 1963 and went on to graduate from Mankato State College in 1968 with degrees in Business Administration and Geography. Larry also served with the US Army Reserves.

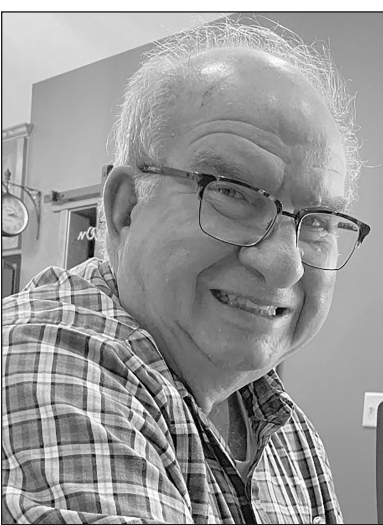
Following his schooling, Larry took over his father’s business, Kerr McGee delivering bulk oil products. After selling the business, he con-

tinued to work for Cenex for a number years and retired from Itron in Waseca in 2015. Larry married JoAnn Borglum in 1973 and they later divorced. Larry was a lifelong member of First Lutheran Church in Waldorf where he served on the finance board. He was also a former member of the Waldorf Fire Department. Larry was especially proud to call Waldorf his lifelong home. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, collecting nutcrackers, and sports of all kinds. Larry especially loved spending time with his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

He is survived by two children, Kristi and her husband Augie Fennert of Waseca; Dawn Kelling and

her husband Doug Gerdts of Rochester; three grandchildren, Andrew (Alicia) Morales of Kasson, Kaleb Fennert of Waseca, and Bella Kelling Gerdts of Rochester; and two great grandchildren, Cameron and Eilee Morales. He is also survived by his sister, Yvonne Kelling and honorary sister, Jean Fiskey of Mankato. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Memorial services will be held on Thursday, December 12, 2024 at 2:00 PM at First Lutheran Church in Waldorf. Visitation will be held from 12:30 PM until the time of services at the church on Thursday. Burial will follow at First Lutheran Cemetery. dsofuneral.com



Larry Kelling



The six members of Mariachi America, a Twin Cities group who were part of the Our Lady of Guadalupe observance, with Patricia Valencia, who was visiting family members in Waseca this past weekend, in a traditional Mexican dress.

Mariachi Church Service celebrates 1531 miracles

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Father Gregory Leif, who officiated at the well-attended Dec. 7 service at Sacred Heart Church celebrating the Feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, added one “miracle,” to the two well-known events which occurred long ago in Mexico.

An indigenous peasant, Juan Diego, encountered skepticism in 1531 when he told a local priest a glowing pregnant peasant woman had spoken to him and requested that a shrine be built on a specific hill, the one where she appeared.

When Diego returned to the hill knowing he would not be listened to without proof, the woman ap-

peared again. She instructed him to climb to the top of the hill, where he found flowers blooming, even though it was December. The flowers were bundled into his traditional cloak, known as a “tilma,” which was woven from cactus fibers and other natural materials.

Diego took the cloak holding the flowers to the priest. When he poured them out, the priest recognized them as Castilian roses—which do not grow in Mexico. Furthermore, an image of the woman now appeared in the fabric of the tilma.

To the miracles of the roses and the imprinted tilma, Father Leif added one more: the priests of the

church listened to a member of the Aztec people. Citing recent apologies issued to indigenous peoples by Pope Francis in Canada in 2023 and President Biden in Arizona in 2024, he said an important lesson from the events is that people should “listen to God, one another, and the earth.” He offered recent hurricanes and extreme weather as examples of messages humans should take note of.

“If we do not listen, that will get worse,” he said of natural disasters and human indifference to the suffering of others..

“Let’s have an end to the need for apologies,” he suggested, saying change has to begin as a

transformation within people’s minds and hearts.

A defining element of the Dec. 7 church service were the contributions of Mariachi America, a six-member group out of St. Paul who played and sang many liturgical elements of the service, and then stayed as entertainment during a social event afterward.

Following the service, about 150 people made their way to the church social hall, where Waseca’s El Molino restaurant provided a meal. All free-will donations received were donated to the church to support similar future events.

■ Council
from Page 3

the ‘tax abatement policy’ program which sunsets, or ends, at the end of 2024. Under the program, persons building new homes in the city of Waseca were allowed to abate their city taxes up to 100 percent for three years, 75 percent for 6 years, or 50 percent for ten years.

“I want to continue it in its current form and add another 2 years,” Conrath stated. “If you want to build the town, it might not be the deciding factor, but it’s certainly a helping factor.”

Conrath speculated if the city ends the program the county will likely end its abatement program as well.

“I would like to offer a tax abatement to existing properties for any improvements that are done,” Mayor Randy Zimmerman introduced. “By a dollar amount or a percentage of increased value.

“People are afraid to make improvements to their home because they don’t want to deal with the tax increase from the increased market

value.”
“That would be 3,800 houses you could help immediately,” Christians stated. “I’m fine with [the current tax abatement program] sunsetting. I think if you’re comfortable building a \$400,000 house, I think you’re doing okay.

“I’d like to see those houses that are [valued at] \$100,000 to \$200,000 get more people into those,” he added

“I agree with the mayor.”
Council member John Mansfield said he agreed with the idea of an abatement for existing homes.

City manager Sonnenberg said the item will be up for a vote at the Dec. 17 meeting. If the council decides to

in the future, reinstate the program, a public hearing must be held prior to approval.

State Representative-Elect Tom Sexton and local resident Matt Petsinger spoke during the public comment portion of the meeting. Sexton said the Lake Association will continue to host Lakefest. He will continue as chair unless another individual takes the position.

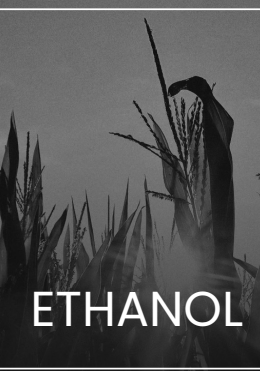
Petsinger invited the public to attend “Christmas Time at the Mill,”



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Waseca Senior High School choir concert 7 p.m. Monday, Dec. 16
The Waseca High School vocal department will present its annual holiday concert in the high school performing arts center beginning at 7 p.m. Monday, Dec. 16 beginning at 7 p.m.

W-E-M High school hosts Firefighter Floor Hockey Sat., Dec. 14
Waterville, Elysian, Morris-town and Kilkenny Fire Depart-ments will be playing floor hockey at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14 at the W-E-M High School. Suggested donation of \$5 per person or unwrapped toy. All proceeds will go Toys for Tots.

Janesville Public Library will hold Lego-building club Tuesday, Dec. 17
The Janesville Public Library will hold a Lego-building club at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 17. This is free of charge and geared towards children 7-12. Each event will have a Lego based theme to build on.

Farmamerica Santa Experience Dec. 14
There will be a Santa Experi-ence from 4-7 p.m. at Farmame-rica on Saturday, Dec.14. Meet Santa and his farm animals, de-corate cookies and much more.

Waseca high school Band Booster chili feed 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 20
The Waseca high school Band Boosters will host a band booster all-you-can-eat Band Booster chili feed in the high school commons from 5 to 7 p.m. Fri-day, Dec. 20. Presale tickets are \$9: Cost at the door \$10; 5 and under are free.

Melissa Schulz at New Richland Liquor Company Dec. 20
Local Musician Melissa Schulz will be performing at the New Richland Liquor Company from 6-9 p.m. on Friday, De-cember 20. She plays keyboard with drum tracks and performs pop, rock, and country covers from the 50s to today's hits.

Indian Island Winery will host the Wendt Sisters Saturday, Dec. 21
The Indian Island Winery will host music duo Wendt Sisters from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 21. They play a wide vari-ety of music from the 50s to the 90s, country and gospel.

Santa Anonymous Program receiving applications
The Waseca Area Neighbor-hood Service Center (WANSC) is now taking applications for the Santa Anonymous Program. This annual event provides gifts, toys or clothes to Waseca fam-ilies 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 stop-ping at the WANSC building at 203 Third Avenue Northwest in Waseca to make an appointment or inquire about eligibility re-quirements. Applications can also be picked up at the County Health building, 1000 West Elm, or at the Minnesota Valley Ac-tion 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.

CredibleMind offers free mental health re-sources
All area residents are eligible to use free online access to men-tal health resources available at MNPrairie's "CredibleMind" website.
The site offers interactive, evi-dence-based ways to explore local and national mental well-being resources. Free and anony-mous at www.mnprairie.crediblemind.com



Exchange Club representatives Mark Butterfield, Jake Lieser and Mikhail Rostislavovich with Waseca high school seniors who were named as a "Student of the Month" for the 2024-'25 school year: Sophie Chawra, Collin Dettmer, Callie Dufault, Isaac Feldkamp and Maxwell Wirtz. Honoree Hazel Moore is not pictured. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Exchange club honors six students of the month

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Waseca high school seniors Sophie Chawra, Collin Dettmer, Callie Dufault, Isaac Feldkamp, Hazel Moore and Maxwell Wirtz have been selected as the Waseca Exchange Club's "Students of the Month."
The Exchange Club invited most members of the senior class to com-plete applications for the Student of the Month program. Criteria for se-lection included academic success, involvement in school activities, in-volvement in community activities and a description of the student's most outstanding achievement. Each of the six selected students will be in-vited with his or her parents to be recognized and have his or her ac-complishments celebrated during an Exchange Club meeting.

One student will be awarded a \$500 scholarship based on an essay between 800 and 1,200 words in length. Exchange Club members will read the students' writing and select a recipient. The topic: "In a world that is constantly changing and ever-evolving, our youth play critical roles in shaping the future of their communities. From advocating to leading, young people are taking charge and making significant im-pact. How have you personally con-tributed to society and how do you envision your future in community service?"
The local honoree will also be eli-gible for a \$1,000 scholarship offered at the district level. The district hon-oree will be eligible for consideration at the national level. The scholarship amount there is \$15,000.
Sophie Chawra, 17, when asked

why this is so important, said, "Com-munity service is very important to me. It's important to give back to the town I'm in. When I graduate and go to college and tackle my community there, I want to accomplish good things."
Maxwell (Max) Wirtz, 18, said what he expects of himself when he's older: "I want a chance to improve myself and stand out. I want to ac-complish a place of leadership and have others look up to that—not to me, but to what I did."
Callie Dufault expressed her hopes for her life going forward: "I want to be active in sports, to be a leader to younger kids. I'm captain of my cross-country team and in my adult life I want to be active in all activities and to be a respectable leader."
Collin Dettmer, 17, said of his in-volvement in government and stu-

dent government, "It's a really cool community aspect. I love being in-volved in student council; it's some-thing I really like to do. I would like more opportunities like this for others and their student involvement. More students being active will give them more chances."
Isaac Feldcamp, 17, described what it takes to be recognized: "I got here because of all my involvement. I want the honor of having been in it, and others who have accomplished this have gone on to do really great and big things. I haven't started my essay, but will write on my experi-ences in student involvement and hopefully pass out tips for up and coming kids."
Due to a class schedule conflict, Hazel Moore, the sixth student se-lected, wasn't available for picture or comment.



iWealth financial advising of Waseca raised money to support the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center's initiative to present Holiday Food Baskets to eligible families. The local company has been making the gifts possible for the past 15 years.

'Bringing hope and food'

iWealth Holiday Basket program raises \$11,725 in 15th year

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Since 2009, iWealth has been working with the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center (WANSC) each year bringing hope and food to Waseca County residents during the holidays. On Tuesday, Dec. 4, the local financial planning firm once again helped by presenting a check for \$11,725 to WANSC, symbolizing the generosity of those who gave to this year's iWealth Holi-day Food Basket program. The gray skies and chilly weather outside did nothing to dampen the mood inside.
iWealth's Chief Executive Officer, Brad Connors said, "It is heartwarm-ing to see our clients and business partners continue to collaborate with our iWealth team to support Waseca area families so that everyone can enjoy a delicious and nutritious meal with loved ones. We are thankful for each and every person who sup-ported our holiday food basket pro-

gram in 2024, as well as those who donated over the past 15 years." The donation total includes a \$3,000 matching contribution from the iWealth Foundation, which allocates one percent of its net profits annually to these efforts. The iWealth team members themselves put an ad-ditional \$800 toward the grand total; 60 clients and business partners also contributed generously, resulting in the cumulative donation amount for 2024, and exceeding a grand total of \$130,000 over the past 15 years. Brad Connors continued, "Initially we sent letters to our clients who were local. Now we have clients from far and wide giving to this." Al-though a little emotional, Trudi Con-nors added, "This is very near and dear to my heart," slight pause here, "some donations were coming in from as far as Arizona, and Cindy does such an amazing job with this."
Cindy Kolander, the WANSC Ex-ecutive Director said, "The Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center

is so thankful for the support iWealth has provided for the holiday food baskets and our 'Backpack' pro-grams. These programs are essential in providing food support to families during the Christmas holiday and students throughout the school year. We hope to continue this partnership for many years to come. When people come by, whether they just lost their job or whatever, that's what we're here for. We help people when they need it."
Matt Potter, Chief Operating Of-ficer of iWealth, said, "At iWealth, one of our core values is supporting our local community. Initially this program solely provided Holiday meals for Waseca Area residents, but through everyone's generosity, we've been able to grow and support WANSC's food backpack program for Waseca Area students as well. Given the rising cost of living every-one is facing, we are incredibly grateful for all who selflessly con-tributed to ensure others are blessed

this holiday season and throughout the year."
Baskets will be assembled on Fri-day, Dec. 13, by Waseca High School students and other committed vol-unteers, to be distributed on Sat-urday, Dec. 14 by Scouts BSA Troop 85. These Christmas meals will go to over 230 Waseca area families, about 600 individuals altogether. All re-maining funds go towards the WANSC Backpack program, which is distributed through Waseca schools to hundreds of children weekly.
For anyone who would like to help area families, it's not too late. WANSC is still accepting donations either online or by mail. To give on-line visit https://givebuttr.com/FcUW2X and select the iWealth Holiday Food Bas-ket fund. To give by mail, please send a check to WANSC, 203 3rd Avenue NW, Waseca, MN 56093, with "iWealth Holiday Food Bas-kets" in the memo line

WASECA SCHOOL BOARD

Spotlight focuses on maintenance

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

The staff spotlight at the Waseca school board's December work-shop focused on the district's maintenance team; Director of Buildings and Grounds Jeff Jensen and maintenance worker Kyle Gallagher. Gallagher, a 2014 WHS graduate, began in 2015 working the Tuesday-Saturday night shift, but has since switched to days and gotten his chief boiler's license. Jensen said Gal-lagher is an asset to the district with his assistance and depend-ability.

Superintendent Eric Hudspith introduced his recap of high school sports and activities as a way of celebrating the accomplishments of the students during their fall season. Girls' tennis assistant coach Trish Mercier, head football coach Brad Wendland, and boys' soccer coach J.D. Delgado spoke briefly about their season and the positive growth and development of their teams.

The next agenda item was a re-view of the thirteen specialized committees school board members will be forming during the orga-nizational meeting in January. Board members are expected to serve on at least three committees. The possibility of adding a "clubs and activities" committee was ad-dressed; the main focus of such a group would be general business matters including recommending whether group trips proposed by staff members and activity leaders should be approved.

Hudspith provided board members with information from Humanex Ventures, a company that specializes in leadership de-velopment and equips school leaders to select better staff devel-opment opportunities. Hudspith shared results of interview analysis done with leadership team members by Humanex; the district leadership team showed strength in twelve "talents" or qualities in-cluding mission, mastery, relation-ships, and conceptualization.
The next Waseca school board meeting will be 6 p.m. Dec. 19; the district "Truth in Taxation" ses-sion will be at 5:30 p.m. that day in the Central building.

Petersburg celebrated for service

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

A celebration acknowledging the service of John R. Peters-burg, who has held the District 19B seat in the Minnesota House of Representatives since 2012, took place the evening of Thursday, Nov. 21, at the Alex-ander House in Waseca. Peters-burg an-nounced earlier this year he would not be running for re-election. Waseca re-sident Tom Sexton won election to his seat. The last day of Pe-tersburg's current term will be Jan. 7 of 2025.

During the celebration, U.S. Congressman Brad Finstad pre-sented Petersburg with a flag which had been flown in his honor over the State Capitol, along with a proclamation thanking him for his service.

Among the many leadership roles Petersburg has taken in ad-dition to his role with the House are ten years on the Claremont School Board, five years as Basic Political Organizational Unit (BPOU) Chair for Dodge City; six years as Waseca County BPOU Treasurer; and three years as Finance Chair for Congressional District one. Pe-tersburg is a member of the Min-nesota School Board Association, the Steele/Waseca Electric Cooperative Advisory Board, treasurer for the South-east Minnesota Synod of Evan-gelical Lutheran Churches in America, and administrator for the Trinity Lutheran Church of Owatonna.



Petersburg

Bell ringing competition raises nearly \$3,500



Holiday Cookie Dazzle



From left: Alexis Brinkman, Nancy Tollefson, Sue Sather, Diane Roesler, Jennifer LaCroix, Karri Haslip, Ben Sather, Gabe LaCroix, Stacie Brinkman, Beth Lieser, Melissa Langager and Jen Williamson were all helping at the Waseca Senior Center Holiday Cookie Dazzle on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024. \$8 for a dozen cookies, they sold 250 dozen total. Together they raised \$2,000 for Dreams for Disabilities of Waseca County. There were also competing cookie sales at St. Paul Lutheran Church and the Waseca American Legion.

Photo by Ben Revermann



Waseca area safety agencies engaged in a friendly competition to see which of them could raise the most money "ringing the bell" for the Waseca County chapter of the Salvation Army. For the third year, each agency took a two-hour time slot in front of the Waseca Walmart using various vehicles and other attractions to call attention to their efforts. A total of \$3,493.41 was brought in. The Sheriff's Department and the mounted posse (top right photo) brought in \$1,481.99, and will take possession of the traveling trophy held by the police department for the past two years. In second place was the fire department (below), which brought in \$1,215.42. The police department (top left photo) collected \$796 in donations.

Representing the fire department were (from left): Ryan Bruegger, Jay Dulas, Kyle Petersen, Brian Lange, Kevin Chinlund, Charlie Rohwer, Brian Voss and Edgar Trevino.

Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann and Deb Bently

The Pastor's Column

A joy in serving others

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

I haven't bought diapers in years. This week I have needed diapers twice. No, not adult diapers, nor diapers for some child related to me. I got diapers because they were needed. I am not saying this to make myself out to be a hero, because I am not. Someone else paid for the diapers, I needed help to pick out what to get, and someone else picked them up.

I guess, in reality, I didn't buy diapers, but I got to deliver them. How did I get into this position? A need was made known to me, I made myself available and figured out a way to get what was needed. It was a joy.

It was inconvenient, awkward, embarrassing for the people that asked, and took a lot of time for communication. It was so much easier when I lived in a larger town, there was a diaper closet nearby, one phone call and I could send the person on their way to get diapers. Much simpler, but it took the joy out of the ministry.

There is joy in serving other people, if you are willing to be inconvenienced. There is nothing easy about serving other people, people are sinners in need of grace and mercy. People struggle with embarrassment at their situation, anxiety over their need and your response, fear of the future, and if there will be judgment by those who hear about their need. When people ask for a need to be met it can be a hard conversation because they are bringing all these emotions plus past experiences to talk with someone that they trust. These conversations are hard, but also joyful.

If you have ever had the chance to give someone exactly what they need, at the right time, you know the joy of giving. It is never easy nor convenient, but it is joyful. Do not focus on the barriers to giving, rather focus on joy of being used by God to meet a need. Paul speaks of the needs of the church in Jerusalem to the Corinthian church in 2 Corinthians 9:7 telling the church that, "7 Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver."

Take time to discern a need around you, seek to meet the need with as much help as you need to gather, do so discretely for you are doing things for God's glory, not your own. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 9:12 "For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God." We give not only for the needs of people, but also as an act of thanks and worship towards God for meeting our own need.

In this season of giving and receiving, worship God for His provision for you and look for an opportunity to thank God by giving to others. Happy Holidays!

Fitch from Page 1

will miss the phone calls she persistently receives from James Christiansen.

Second, she wishes to thank the members of the Chamber of Commerce and its leadership for their support and friendship across the past six years. She also thanks president elect Rostislavovich for his role as the "transition officer"

leading the search for her successor.

She says if she were to offer her successor any advice, it is to be flexible, and even "ready for anything."

"You may think you know what this job is like," she suggests, "but it's much different from what it may seem when you're looking from the outside in."

Finally, "I genuinely enjoy serving this community," she says. "And I plan to keep serving it by volunteering in some other capacities."

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507-835-4640
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Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor
Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship
Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters
Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship
* * *

ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Otisco, Minnesota
Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor
Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study
Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship
* * *

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Pastor Mary Iverson
Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee
Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting
Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting
* * *

LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Pastor Dan Kordahl
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting
* * *

VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Pastor Dan Kordahl
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship
- * * *

VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Brian Schanil Pastor
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School
Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark
* * *

ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Father Glenn Ferichs
Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass
Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m.
* * *

FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod
Waldorf, Minnesota
Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Larry Sipe
Sundays: Worship 8 a.m.; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class
* * *

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Freedom Township
Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship
* * *

ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Pastor Ava Adams-Morris
Waldorf, Minnesota
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship
* * *

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC
Waldorf, Minnesota
Father Brian Mulligan
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship
* * *

TRINITY LUTHERAN
Wilton Township
Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor
Sunday - 8 a.m. summer worship; 10:45 a.m. Worship starting Sept. 1
* * *

THE CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Brad Donner, Branch President
Waseca, Minnesota
www.lds.org
Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School
Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18
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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
- 412 N. Main Street, Janesville
Interim Pastor
Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:15 a.m. Worship
* * *

JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
401 N. West St., Janesville
Pastor Kathy King
Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship
* * *

BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
43089 180th St., Morristown
Pastor Kathy King
Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Summer worship hours, (10:45 a.m. Worship, winter)
* * *

ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH
307 W. 2nd St, Janesville
10 a.m. - Mass
* * *

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
300 Owen St., Janesville
Pastor Sarah Krolak
* * *

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH
Alma City, Minnesota
Pastor Robert Harting
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship
* * *

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Smiths Mill, Minnesota
Pastor Robert Harting
Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship
Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship
* * *

NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA
404 30 120th St. Waseca
Pastor Sarah Krolak
507-234-6463
Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; Second Sunday "Young at heart"
Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation
* * *

NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.

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Janesville

1924

- Waseca County’s dairy cow population is increasing, according to figures announced by the Blue alley Creamery Institute. The statement covers an area embracing approximately one eighth of the state in this section, and is believed to hold true for the county proper. A 7. percent gain in the number of dairy cows two years old and over is noted for the district over the preceding year, while the increase for the state as a whole was 8 percent as compared with 13. The entire ited States shows an increase amounting to six percent, government figures show.

- “Last year, my nephew installed a radio, which I regarded somewhat skeptically as to its commercial value until the forecast of a general storm due next day. We were nearly out of coal so I made a nine-mile trip to town that afternoon and got home with my load before the snow began late that night. I believe the one program I enjoyed the most was a play broadcasted from Carleton College of Northfield. Music is easier to listen to than talks, we think, and we used to tune in on a musical program and not mind the talks. The bedtime stories we grownups enjoyed, too.

- The Mankato Free Press and many other papers complain that the auto bright headlight law is a dead letter, is not observed, and no attempts made at enforcement. tirely correct, but why not crack down on the legislature to get the condition cured. This law is one which is left more or less up to the individual to observe and, in such cases, you know what happens nothing to it.

1949

- The Waseca County Library bookmobile is now rolling through the country and giving service in rural schools, according to an announcement by the library board. Schools in the nesville area to the north and east were served last week and this week, the board hoped schools to the south of nesville and those near New Richland will be reached. The bookmobile started its initial run when Herman A. Panzram, former county auditor and superintendent of schools, watched if loaded with books and took the first ride out to District No. 3 which is taught by his granddaughter, Miss Janey Noetzel. County Attorney Elmer C. Iversen filled the gas tank as his gesture of good luck.

- Minnesota farmers were urged to say thanks this Thanksgiving season by helping feed the hungry overseas through the Christian Rural Overseas Program, now carrying on its 1 appeal throughout the state. counties already are organized or started on their farm-to-farm canvass for corn, wheat, milk, meat, and other farm products.

- Waseca County farm, owners needing loans for building, remodelin or repairing farm dwellings or other structures, and who are not able to get adequate necessary commercial or cooperative credit, may now apply for loans under the new Housing Act. This announcement was made by Harold A. Peterson, Farmers Home Administration Supervisor for Waseca, Rice, and Steele counties at Faribault, Minnesota.

1974

- Mr. and Mrs. Gaetano Lombardo of Pordenone, Italy, wish to announce the engagement of their daughter, Patrizia Lombardo, to Sgt. David Osborne, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Osborne of Janesville. Patrizia is a college student at the iversity of enice in her fourth year and studying glish as her major and German as her minor. David has been in service since ly of 1 1 and has been in Italy one year. No date has been set for the wedding.

- If you like the idea of free merchandise, free turkeys, free parking, and friendly service, you'll want to do your Christmas shopping in nesville. Again this year the Chamber of Commerce, through local merchants, will be sponsoring a pre-Christmas promotion to give you even more reason to shop at home. Main Street merchants will have individual drawings in their stores every Friday, beginning Friday, November 2 Other merchandise drawings will be held December and 13.

- Janesville matment will have to make up in quality what they lack in quantity this season. Only 23 reported when wrestling practice opened here November 11. Head Coach Mike Niemezyk has eight returning lettermen compared to ten when the season opened last year. He will be looking for leadership from seniors Rich Frank, Time Sheeran, Tom Burke, and Dan Jewison. wison hurt his knee during the football season and is trying to strengthen it for wrestling. His status is unknown.

1999

- Members of the Janesville City Council reviewed the profit and loss statement of Prairie Ridge Golf Course. Even though during the last few weeks it was discovered that approximately \$40,000 had been earned in 1998 to be recorded in 1999 had recently been recorded in 1999 because an accrued bookkeeping system, the predicted losses for Prairie Ridge will exceed 1998’s losses. At the last city council meeting, there was some concern about the accuracy of the city’s financial records of the golf course compared to the golf course numbers. Although, the final numbers for 1999 will not be available until the year has ended, the current loss may be between \$85,000 to over \$92,000 which will be approximately \$30,000 more than in 1998.

- Minnesota has long been considered a national leader in education, and that is evidenced by the fact that Minnesota is tied with California with four national teachers of the year. However, the state’s teacher salaries have fallen behind the national average. This is one of the main reasons there is a severe teacher shortage in Minnesota. The 1998-99 average national teacher salary was \$40,462, while the average salary of Minnesota teachers was \$39,979. Along with lower salaries, the pool of Minnesota teachers is aging. The average age of teachers in Minnesota is 42. An aside to that, 487 of the state’s 1,647 school buildings are at least 50 years old.

- Rebuilding a portion of the main street of nesville came under discussion at the County Board of Commissioners meeting last week. e Duncan of Bolton and Menk Inc., a consulting engineering firm in Mankato, gave a progress report on the plans to rebuild County State Hwy 19. The highway runs north and south through nesville’s main street. he street is really in poor, poor shape. It’s deficient; it’s time to take care of that, Duncan said. The cost for grading, concrete pavement, curb and gutter, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, and water main will cost approximately \$1.2 million according to the engineer’s preliminary budget.

Waseca

25 Years Ago

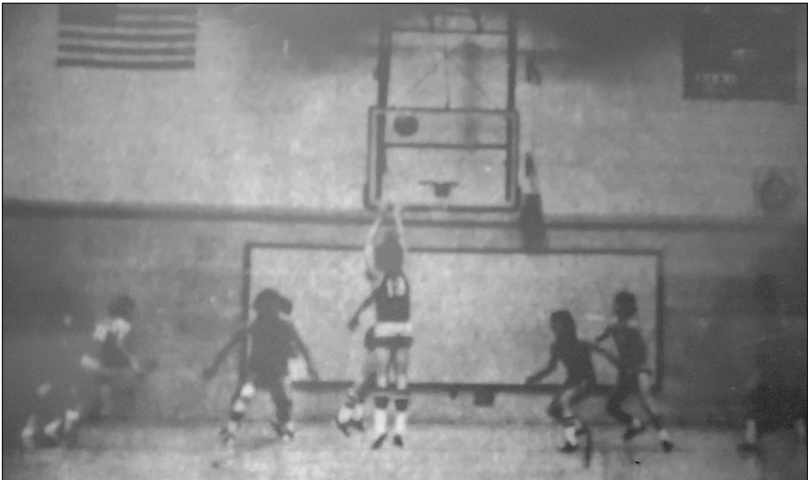
-Waseca firefighters battled flames and smoke at the downtown site of Hunee Studio on Saturday afternoon. No one was injured in the fire.

-Festival of Trees Opens – The Waseca County Historical Society opened its month-long Festival of Trees at the museum on Saturday. The event co-incided with the Waseca Arts Council’s annual Christmas House Walk. Trees at the museum are decorated by groups from across the country.

-Waseca area legislators were happy to learn of yet another projected state budget surplus. State officials on Thursday selected an amazing projected budget surplus - \$1.6 billion – that nearly assures of another rebate and tax relief in 2000.

50 Years Ago

-JANESVILLE – Jenny Hinton, 10, adopted daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Hinton, rural Janesville, was naturalized recently at the Federal Building, St. Paul. She became a U.S. citizen, along with 64 other persons. Fourteen of the 64 persons were juveniles.



-NO THE SCORE is not 67-0 in the first quarter. It is 100-67 with 1:11 to play in the ball game as the Rams from UM-W ran into a red hot team from Northwestern Bible last night and lost their first game of the season. In the bottom photo big Jeff Koehler pulls down a rebound for the Rams in the second half of play.

75 Years Ago

-Waseca employees of Swift & Company with 20 years or more of continuous employment received recognition in the annual Service Recognition issue of the company magazine, Swift News, issued today. Swift has three employees here with 20 years or more service. Those with the longest service records are: John Lueck, Waseca, 20 years; Lloyd Hoberg, Waseca, 21 years; T.P. McDonough, Owatonna, 26 years.

-MR. AND MRS. JULIUS MYERS: who observed 52ND wedding anniversary Thanksgiving Day at a family dinner. The date also marked the 25TH anniversary of their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Myers.



-SACRED HEART HIGH SCHOOL basketball squad, which has tacked up two consecutive victories in as many starts this season, is shown above. Left to right, front row, Dave Anthony, Jerry Sexton, Harry Miller, Bill Fitzsimmons, Tom Rohde, Lyle Bollum and Damon Conway. Back row, left to right, Tom Haggerty, Jerry Myers, Dick San-kovitz, Fran Murphy, Dick Fitzsimmons, captain; Roger James, Bill Sturner, Jim Myers and Coach Hugh Miller.

100 Years Ago

-Gust. Boettcher, a meat butcher proprietor at Elysian, was arrested this week on a charge of cruelty to animals, preferred by Perry Simons, who lives near Elysian. The case was tried in municipal court here Tuesday and a jury declared Boettcher not guilty. The evidence submitted showed that Boettcher bought a cow from Simons, that the animal broke away and was caught after quite a chase, that she was tied behind an auto with a hitch around her nose and dragged on the ground part of the way.

-Believing that “one good term deserves another,” the members of the Waseca County Fair Ass’n re-elected eight of the eleven directors who had charge of this year’s fair. The annual meeting was held at the Waseca city hall last Saturday afternoon and the reports of the secretary, E.H. Smith, and the treasurer, C.P. Sommerstad, showed that the 1924 fair was the most successful held in this county in many years.

-Having reached the patriarchal age of “three score and ten,” Wm. H. Boyle was relieved from further duties at the Northwestern railway shops the first of this week. Mr. Boyle was supply man at the shops and has been in the employ of the coming here for 18 years, coming here from Walnut Grove, where he operated a farm.

New Richland

25 Years Back

- Tha Panther Fall Athletic Banquet was held on Thursday, November 18 at the Ellendale School Gymnasium. Athletic Director Ted Pelzl, gave the introduction remarks to one of the largest groups attending the banquet. The captain's parents helped organize and set up the event, as well as helped with clean-up. A total of 59 athletes received their “Panther Letter Awards.” A total of 11 cheerleaders, 12 volleyball members, 13 cross-country runners and 23 football players received letters.

- NRHEG Graduates Ryan Stringfield, NAte Posschl and Matt Marcus were initiated into the Alpha Lambda Delta at Minnesota State University, Mankato on Sunday, November 7, 1999. The Alpha Lambda Delta Pledge is:
I accept membership in the National Alpha Lambda Delta...
With the understanding that in doing so I accept the responsibility...
Of Continuing to maintain its standards of service, of industry and of integrity...
And giving support to the recognition...
And development...
Of meaningful goals for students...
I shall endeavor to maintain a high scholarship...
And to use my education...
For the benefit of my community, my nation, and the world in which we live. Congratulations.

37 Years Back

- Marianne Christensen, Child Care Services, daughter of LeRoy and Agnes Christensen of rural Ellendale, has been named to the Chancellor's List at the U of M Technical College, Waseca.

- The Celebration Ringers, a concert handbell choir, will present a concert at First Lutheran Church in Ellendale on Saturday, March 14, at 7:30 p.m. The thirteen senior high youth ring a set of 70 handbells. They are from First Lutheran Church in Columbia Heights and are directed by Paul J. Christensen. Their repertoire includes classics, sacred and popular music. An offering will be received.

- The Ellendale Geneva girls basketball team ended their season Saturday in the District 2A quarterfinals. The Raiders ended a very good season with 16 wins and 5 losses. The Raiders met the Blossoms in first game action with the Blossoms coming up the victor, 50-43. Blooming Prairie had some very strong shooting from the outside.

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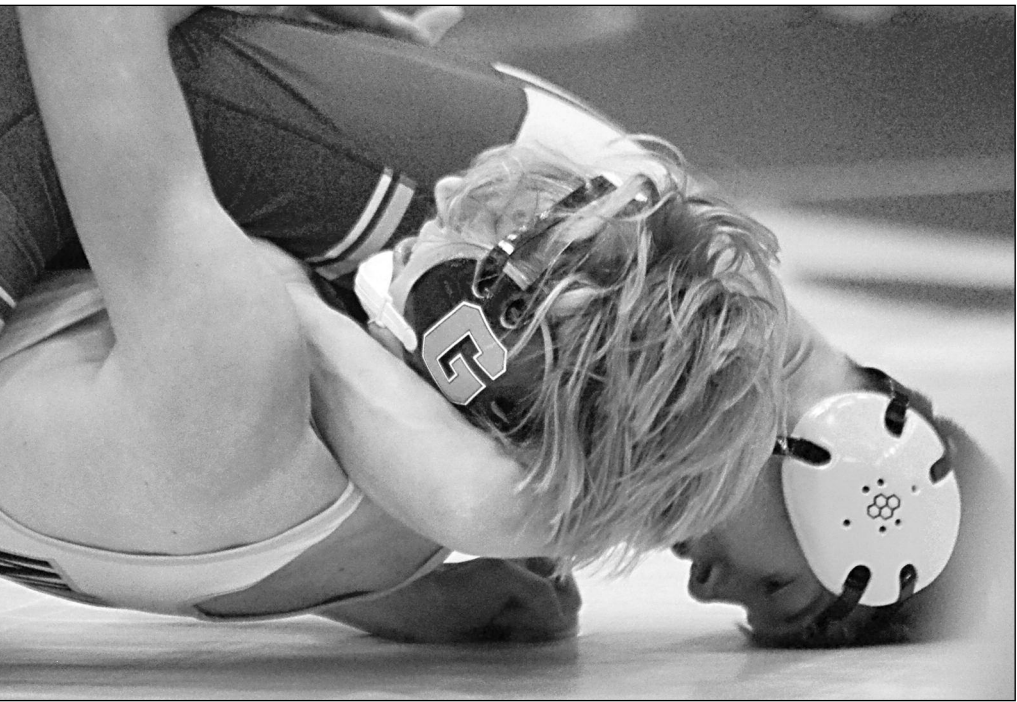
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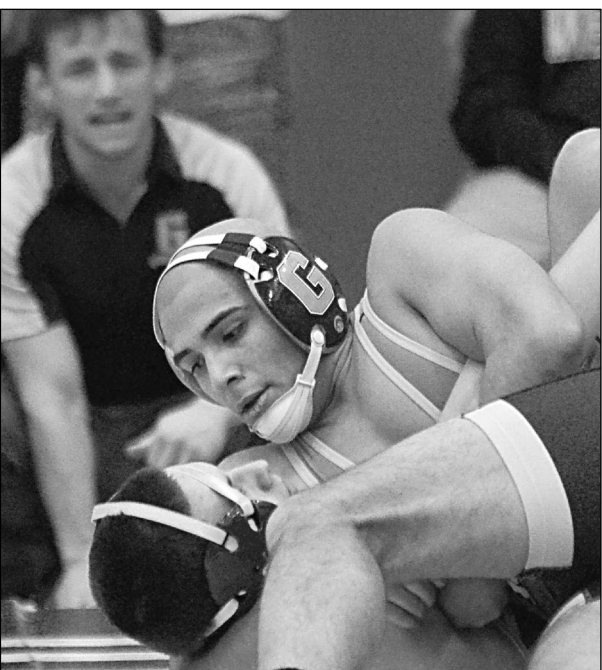
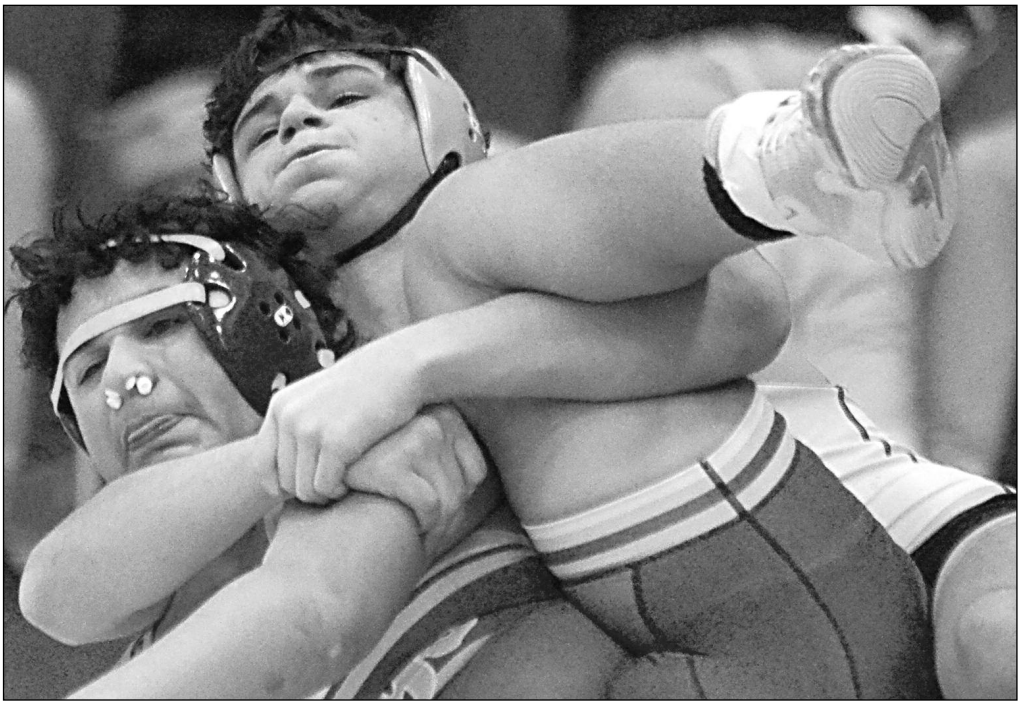
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UNDER PRESSURE — At left, the Bluejays’ Jaiden Schaffer puts WEM/JWP’s Parker James on his back. At right, Kavan Sheehy of WEM/JWP works for a pin against Waseca’s Michael Victorino. Below left, Waseca’s Sam Selthun takes down his WEM/JWP opponent during their 152-pound match at Waseca High School last week. Below left: the Bluejays’ Sam Selthun scores a takedown and back points on Zach Quast of WEM/JWP. Below middle: Lucas Selthun of Waseca scores a takedown and back points against Avery Fall of WEM/JWP. Below right, Maddox Moreno of WEM/JWP works for a pin against the Bluejays’ Ton Bethke while Grizzlies co-head coach Adam Roesler offers encouragement.



Solid start

Bluejays bury TCU, MVL

Coach Seth Anderson was quick to point out that the Waseca High School boys’ basketball team has a challenging part of the schedule forthcoming.

He also could not deny the Bluejays are off to a solid start.

The WHS boys improved to 4-0 with a pair of one-sided wins last week, 86-16 at Tri-City United Friday and 94-59 at Minnesota Valley Lutheran Saturday.

“I thought we did a great job defensively and sharing the ball against TCU,” said Anderson. “Our players did a great job of staying disciplined in their assignments.”

The game was the first ever in MVL’s new gymnasium.

“It was a really nice facility,” said Anderson.

The Bluejays made themselves, shooting an impressive 62.7 percent from the field.

“I think most of what led to the good shooting was how well we got the ball out on fast breaks and that led to a lot of easy baskets,” said Anderson.

Junior Deron Russell led the Bluejays with 29 points, three assists, and one steal, making 12 of 16 shots from the floor.

Carson Ohnstad also had a big night with 25 points (9-for-13 shooting), eight assists, five rebounds and two steals. Damarius Russell finished with 14 points, nine assists, six rebounds and four steals.

Others: Ethan Hiller 4P, 6E, 3A, 3S; Cyrett Long 2P, 1R, 4A, 2S; Caden Danner 3P, 1A, 3S; Logan Reger 3P, 1R; Isaac Feldkamp 4P, 5R, 3A, 2S; Wyatt Hager 1P, 1R, 2A; Riley Mitchell 2P; Isaiah Johnson 1R, 1A; Max Howard 2S; Brandyn Jascha 3P, 2R.

Statistics from the TCU game: Hiller 11P, 3R, 1A, 1S; Deron 13P, 2R, 3A, 1S; Long 3P, 1R, 1A, 1S; Damarius: 4P, 2R, 7A, 5S; Danner 8P, 1A, 3S; Ohnstad 18P, 3R, 1S; Reger 2R; William Mansfield 4P, 3R, 1S; Owen Honstad 1R, 1A; Feldkamp 10P, 6R, 4A, 2S, 1B; Amin Shariff 3P, 1R; Hager 2P, 3R, 1A, 1S; Mitchell 1S; Johnson 2P, 2R, 2A, 1S; Jascha 2P, 2R, 1A.

“We now have a big couple weeks of games with Belle Plaine on Tuesday, which is a rematch of the section final last year, and at New Ulm on Friday. We have a big stretch of competitive games now.”



De.Russell



Ohnstad

Barnett leads WHS wrestlers at Blue Earth

Slade Barnett produced the biggest highlights for the Waseca High School wrestling team at the Blue Earth Area Invitational.

Barnett was dominant, taking the 160-pound championship while winning by technical fall, fall and, in the finals, by major decision. He was awarded the Dick Boran Award for outstanding sportsmanship.

Also making the finals for the Bluejays were Lucas Selthun, 189; and Ben Hagen, 285. Deven Parpart finished third at 139.

Bluejays open season with three tough losses in home quadrangular

Also wrestling for the Bluejays: Jacob Knutson, 133; Jaiden Schafer, 145; Sam Selthun, 160; Ton Bethke, 172.

The Bluejays opened the season with a four-team meet on Thursday.

They fell 51-19 to WEM/JWP in the opener. Waseca winners were Archer O’Brien, 121; Sam Selthun, 152; Barnett, 160; Lucas

Selthun, 189.

Winners for the Grizzlies: Brenden Masso, 114; Trey Richards, 127; Carson Petry, 133; Brady Murphy, 139; Parker James, 145; Maddos Moreno, 172; Kavan Sheehy, 215; Keegan Kuball, 285.

Elgin-Millville upended the Bluejays 60-18, with Waseca wins by Knutson, Parpart and

Barnett.

The Bluejays lost 46-23 to LeSueur-Henderson, with wins by Kaiya Stagman, Parpart, Barnett and Alex DeRaad.

The Bluejays have a Thursday quadrangular at Tri-City United starting at 5 p.m. On Saturday, they’re at the Jackson County Central Invitational, starting at 9:45 a.m.

Wikan, Weber pace gymnasts at Byron

The Waseca High School girls’ gymnastics team had a solid season opener against a strong opponent, falling 136.325-123.575 at Byron last week.

The Bluejays were led by captains Bella Wikan and Katelyn Weber in the all-around, placing second (34.2) and seventh (30.675), respectively.

Wikan put up a 9.0 for second on the floor exercise. She was third on the balance beam at 8.6, third on uneven parallel bars with a 7.9 and fourth on vault at 8.7.

Other highlights included freshman Avery Carda scoring a personal best on beam with a 7.775 and Enja Francois-Saint Cyr making an impressive varsity debut.

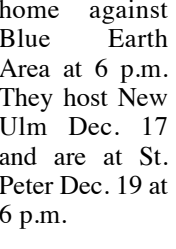
The Bluejays compete Friday at



Wikan



Weber



Carda

home against Blue Earth Area at 6 p.m. They host New Ulm Dec. 17 and are at St. Peter Dec. 19 at 6 p.m.

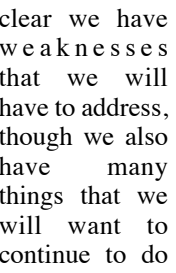
NRHEG wrestlers eighth at St. James

Cromwell, Ryan Schlaak reach finals

The NRHEG High School wrestlers traveled to St. James for the Paul Krueger Classic Saturday, finishing in eighth place with five placewinners.

Finishing second for the Panthers were senior Harbor Cromwell, 172 pounds; and sophomore Ryan Schlaak, 189. Others: Owen Schlaak, third, 107; Grahm Jacobson, fourth, 114; and Aidan Schlaak, sixth, 160.

“This is a good tournament with good competition,” said NRHEG coach Shawn Larson. “We were looking forward to seeing how we measured up. We had a decent effort this week. It is very



Cromwell

clear we have weaknesses that we will have to address, though we also have many things that we will want to continue to do well.”

The Panthers opened the season earlier in the week, falling 46-18 to Maple River/USC and 43-27 to Martin County West.

The Panthers wrestle Thursday at 7 p.m. at LeSueur.

Flyers 4-3 after loss to Fairmont

The South Central Flyers girls’ hockey team dropped a 3-1 decision to visiting Fairmont Saturday at Waseca Ice Arena.

The Cardinals dominated the first period, outshooting the Flyers 19-5 while taking a 2-0 lead.

It was 3-0 before the Bluejays’ Madalyn Benson scored on an assist from Emma Huelsnitz at 16:59 of the second period. Ilamay Draheim was the South Central goalie.

The Flyers, 4-3, face Minnesota River Thursday at 7 p.m. at Faribault Ice Arena. They meet Marshall Saturday at 7 in Waseca, play Dec. 17 at 7 at New Ulm and Dec. 19 against Visitation at St. Thomas Ice Arena at 7:30.



A South Central skater absorbs a check from a Fairmont opponent during Saturday’s game in Waseca. The numbers in the program did not match jersey numbers.



SLOW START — The Waseca High School girls’ hockey team fell behind early against Fairmont last Saturday and never could catch up. Above, the Bluejays break out the puck during a tough first period.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

WHS hockey boys 3-0-1 after tying Luverne

The Waseca High School boys’ hockey team tied 3-3 at Luverne last Thursday.

Scoring for the Bluejays were Easton Danks, Jude Gehring and Otto Schoenrock, with assists going to Gehring, Hunter Anderson and Griffin Storey.

Waseca served 14 penalty minutes on seven infractions, Luverne eight on four. Waseca outshot Luverne 37-31, including 9-3 in overtime. Josiah Schmidke was in goal for the Bluejays, totaling 28 saves.

The Bluejays, 3-0-1, play Thursday at 7 at Windom and host Marshall Saturday at noon. They face New Ulm at home Dec. 17 at 7:30 and LaCrescent-Hokah Dec. 21 at 1 p.m.



WIN NO. 1— The NRHEG girls’ basketball team topped Maple River 54-41 for its first win of the season last week. From left: The Panthers’ Gabrielle Schlaak (1) defends against the Eagles’ Olivia Sellers. In the middle, Clara Buendorf drives into a crowded lane. At right, Izley Boerner takes the ball to the hoop. Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

Lady Panthers hold off Maple River, overwhelm Medford

After starting the season with a pair of losses, the NRHEG girls’ basketball team broke into the win column in impressive fashion last week.

First, the Panthers held off Maple River 51-45 on Tuesday in New Richland. Two nights later, they overwhelmed Medford 68-17.

“It was great to get the first win of the season, said Peterson of Tuesday’s home victory. “We are continuing to build off of each game looking at how we can improve. We had some moments tonight where we did some things very well, and we had some moments where we still have some work to do.”

Camryn VanMaldeghem had a big night with 25 points, 7 rebounds, 3 assists, 5 steals and 2 blocked shots. Others: Gabby Schlaak 2 points, 2 rebounds, 1B; Ezra Boerner 2P, 1R, 2A, 4S; Quinn VanMaldeghem 4P, 8R, 3A, 1S, 1B; Izley Boerner 9P, 6R, 2A, 2S; Clara Buendorf 2R, 1A; Savannah Farr 1R; Cloie Stork 3P, 4R, 1A; Kylie Olson 5P, 10R, 2S, 2B.

The Panthers cruised past Medford after leading 43-4 at halftime.

Individually: Schlaak 9P, 7R, 3A, 2S; E.Boerner 3P, 3A, 3S; Q.VanMaldeghem 15P, 6R, 2A, 6S; I.Boerner 8P, 5R; Buendorf 6P, 4R, 1A, 3S; Kenley Gehrke 1R, 1A; C.VanMaldeghem 12P, 6R, 1A, 3S, 1B; Farr 1P, 1E, 1S; Stork 1R, 3A, 3S, 1B; Olson 14P, 11R, 1A, 1S, 1B.

“It was a great team win,” said Coach Peterson. “We were able to get all of our kids in the game, build some confidence in our shooting, and work on our defense. We have a big break until our next game on Friday vs. Sibley East and we will turn around and play Saturday vs. Winona Cotter, both games in Mapleton.



NOBODY SAID IT WAS GOING TO BE EASY — The Waseca High School girls’ basketball team was overwhelmed by visiting TCU during Friday’s game in Waseca. Above left, the Bluejays’ Callie Dufault (1) is fouled on a drive by Emma Skluzacek and another TCU opponent. Above right, the Bluejays’ Mia Kanewischer and Maren Schimming go after a loose ball. Below left, Schimming and Kanewischer compete for a rebound against Grace Hennen. Below right, Kanewischer looks for a teammate. The Bluejays lost 53-29, falling to 0-5. Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

Waseca girls off to 0-5 start

It could be a tough season for second-year head coach Anthony Jackson and the Waseca High School girls’ basketball team. At least that’s the way it looks after five games.

The Bluejays hosted a taller and more talented TCU squad Friday and lost 53-29, their fifth loss in as many games. Waseca previously fell 33-30 to Blooming Prairie, 44-37 to MVL, 60-46 to Faribault and 62-37 to St. Peter. After playing Belle Plaine Tuesday, the Jays host New Ulm Friday at 7:15 and play Dec. 17 at 7 at LCWM.



NRHEG boys off to rough start

After falling to a very strong Triton squad at Dodge Center last week, coach Dan Schmidt and the NRHEG boys’ basketball team were hoping for a better showing in Friday’s home opener.

They’re still hoping.

The Panthers lost 80-25 to Madelia.

“As the score indicates, we need to clean up a lot on offense,” said Schmidt. “We have to work at running our offense to the point of trusting it.”

That hasn’t happened yet.

“Right now, we have a tendency to be undisciplined offensively, which is translating to turnovers and forced shots, which is negatively affecting our defense, as well as our shooting percentage,” explained Schmidt.

“We still have a lot of work to do on that end of the court to try to take some pressure off of our defense. We also need to work on playing defense with our feet rather than our hands, to limit our foul trouble. We need to do a better job of getting to the line as well.”

Jase Knudson led the Panthers with seven points and three rebounds, with Owen Wayne totaling six points and six rebounds and Brendan Schmidt six rebounds, two assists and a steal. Others: Aaden Hanna 2R; Greyson Schaefer 2P, 4R, 2A, 1S; Justin Beauvais 2P, 1R; Lavon Lewison 2R; Hudson Chrz 6P, 2R, 2A, 1S, 1 blocked shot; Jordan Brouwers 5R; Rick Zapata 2R.

“We have a lot of work ahead of us, but I have confidence in the boys that we’ll get it figured out as we move along,” said Coach Schmidt. “I felt we’d be inexperienced from the get-go, and that is showing right now. But we have a determined group that wants to right the ship.

Schmidt said the Triton game was not a favorable matchup for the season opener.

“Things went south in a hurry,” he said. “Triton is one of my favorites to battle for the conference championship and they proved why tonight.”

The Cobras raced to a big early lead.

“They took us completely out of our offense early, and killed us in transition,” said Schmidt. “Teams will have a hard time running with them this season.”

Triton was paced by Pierce Petersohn with 36 points. The Panthers were led by Chrz with 7, Brendan Schmidt and Zapata 5, and Knudson 3.

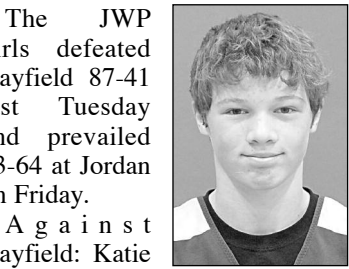
JWP basketball teams start season with success

The JWP High School boys’ basketball team improved to 3-0 with a 60-59 victory over Hayfield/Schaeffer Academy Friday in Janesville.

In an 83-64 triumph over Jordan, Gavin Bauer totaled 34 points and four steals, Caleb Quast 23 points, Daulton Bauer 20 points and seven assists, Landon Johnson six assists and seven rebounds, Ethan Born 10 rebounds.

The Bulldogs opened the season with a 71-51 victory over USC Nov. 26.

The Bulldogs play Friday at home at 7:15 against Blooming Prairie and Dec. 17 at 7:30 at Belle Plaine.



Bauer

The JWP girls defeated Hayfield 87-41 last Tuesday and prevailed 83-64 at Jordan on Friday.

Against Hayfield: Katie Olson 15 points, eight rebounds, seven steals; Mikayla Wheelock 13P, 12R; Presley James 12P, 18R, 4 blocked shots; Hope Dimmel 7R.

The JWP girls are at Blooming Prairie Dec. 17 and host Maple River Dec. 19, both at 7:15 p.m.

WEM/JWP WRESTLING

Dick Maher Invitational (12/07/2024) 107: Jacksten Knish - 4th 114: Brenden Masso - 1st 127: Trey Richards - 5th 133: Carson Petry - 2nd 139: Brady Murphy - 2nd 145: Parker James - 4th 152: Zach Quast - 5th 160: Lucas Morsching - DNP 172: Maddox Moreno - DNP 189: Trenton Huber DNP 215: Kavan Sheehy 3rd 285: Keegan Kuball 1st	Zach Quast (WEJW) (Fall 0:51) 160: Lucas Morsching (WEJW) over (LSH) (For.) 172: Maddox Moreno (WEJW) over Luke Miller (LSH) (Fall 5:11) 189: Peyton Telljohn (LSH) over Avery Fall (WEJW) (MD 13-4) 215: Kavan Sheehy (WEJW) over (LSH) (For.) 285: Keegan Kuball (WEJW) over George Doherty (LSH) (Fall 3:16)	Sheehy (WEJW) over Aiden DeRaad (WASE) (Fall 1:42) 285: Keegan Kuball (WEJW) over Ben Hagen (WASE) (Fall 1:54)
WEM-JWP (WEJW) 51.0 Waseca (WASE) 19.0 12/05/2024 107: Jacksten Knish (WEJW) over Zander Rahe (WASE) (Fall 1:40) 114: Brenden Masso (WEJW) over (WASE) (For.) 121: Archer O'Brien (WASE) over (WEJW) (For.) 127: Trey Richards (WEJW) over (WASE) (For.) 133: Carson Petry (WEJW) over Jacob Knutson (WASE) (TF 17-1 3:02) 139: Brady Murphy (WEJW) over Deven Parpart (WASE) (MD 10-2) 145: Parker James (WEJW) over Jaiden Schafer (WASE) (Fall 1:46) 152: Sam Selthun (WASE) over Zach Quast (WEJW) (Fall 3:16) 160: Slade Barnett (WASE) over Lucas Morsching (WEJW) (Dec 7-5) 172: Maddox Moreno (WEJW) over Ton Bethke (WASE) (Fall 2:48) 189: Lucas Selthun (WASE) over Avery Fall (WEJW) (MD 13-4) 215: Kavan	WEM-JWP (WEJW) 51.0 Waseca (WASE) 19.0 12/05/2024 107: Jacksten Knish (WEJW) over Zander Rahe (WASE) (Fall 1:40) 114: Brenden Masso (WEJW) over (WASE) (For.) 121: Archer O'Brien (WASE) over (WEJW) (For.) 127: Trey Richards (WEJW) over (WASE) (For.) 133: Carson Petry (WEJW) over Jacob Knutson (WASE) (TF 17-1 3:02) 139: Brady Murphy (WEJW) over Deven Parpart (WASE) (MD 10-2) 145: Parker James (WEJW) over Jaiden Schafer (WASE) (Fall 1:46) 152: Sam Selthun (WASE) over Zach Quast (WEJW) (Fall 3:16) 160: Slade Barnett (WASE) over Lucas Morsching (WEJW) (Dec 7-5) 172: Maddox Moreno (WEJW) over Ton Bethke (WASE) (Fall 2:48) 189: Lucas Selthun (WASE) over Avery Fall (WEJW) (MD 13-4) 215: Kavan	Plainview-Elgin-Millville (PEM) 50.0 WEM-JWP (WEJW) 18.0 12/05/2024 107: Reid Ihrke (PEM) over Jacksten Knish (WEJW) (Fall 1:50) 114: Cooper Mack (PEM) over Brenden Masso (WEJW) (TF 15-0 2:31) 121: Carson Rahman (PEM) over (WEJW) (For.) 127: Nash Graner (PEM) over Trey Richards (WEJW) (Fall 5:02) 133: Carson Petry (WEJW) over Tucker Binner (PEM) (Fall 0:40) 139: Brady Murphy (WEJW) over Joshua Schad (PEM) (Fall 1:11) 145: Aiden Graner (PEM) over Reed Sammon (WEJW) (Fall 1:02) 152: Nolan Pfeilsticker (PEM) over Zach Quast (WEJW) (Dec 11-4) 160: Nolan Ford (PEM) over Lucas Morsching (WEJW) (Dec 7-0) 172: Alexander Bedsted (PEM) over Maddox Moreno (WEJW) (Fall 3:26) 189: Alex Hinrichs (PEM) over Avery Fall (WEJW) (Fall 1:18) 215: Maeson Tradup (PEM) over Kavan Sheehy (WEJW) (Dec 14-9) 285: Keegan Kuball (WEJW) over Drew Rahman (PEM) (Fall 0:49)

■ County from Page 3

ject to future large increases, again without prior notice or compromise.

The memorandum of agreement was passed after lengthy discussion which extended across two board sessions.

Also during the Dec. 3 meeting, administrator Johnson reviewed the 2025 county budget and tax levy. The preliminary tax levy increase was set at 1.5 percent in September; board members anticipate specifying it as the final number during the Dec. 17 county board meeting. The statutorily required "truth in taxation" meeting will be at 6 p.m. that same day in the courthouse annex building at 300 North State Street, across the street to the east of the main courthouse.

During his review, Johnson showed the 1.5 percent increase is the lowest among all 87 Minnesota counties; Waseca's increases are also among the five lowest when amounts are averaged across a five-year period.

Ann Fitch, departing executive director for the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce, expressed her gratitude to commissioners during the "public comment" portion of the meeting, saying she appreciated the strong collaborative environment made possible by their professional, thoughtful leadership style. She also complimented county staff members, whom she called "top-notch."

County commissioner De Malterer responded by thanking Fitch for her "partnership" in helping build local commerce.

As Fitch finished her brief statement, she presented the county with a personal donation of \$500, designating it to "do something nice" as a "token of appreciation" for snowplow drivers.

Waseca County Engineer Jim Kollar, who took the podium shortly after Fitch, commented on the thoughtfulness of the gift, and how much drivers would appreciate it. Malterer mentioned the winter of 2022 into 2023, when snowplow drivers' Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays were interrupted by weather. "There's really no such thing as a day off," she observed, when a job depends on the weather.

Bill Eckles, chief executive officer of communications company Bevcomm, based in Blue Earth, reported to commissioners regarding the installation of high-speed internet lines in unincorporated areas of seven county townships: Byron, Freedom, Vivian, Wilton, as well as portions of Alden, New Richland and St. Mary. Eckles told commissioners work will be stopping for the season after Dec. 6. More of his comments and observations are summarized in a separate article in this week's edition of the Pioneer.

Christopher Deiker with the county's information technology (IT) department, asked commissioners to formally accept a grant of \$140,000 from the State Homeland Security Program through the Homeland Security and Emergency Management office. The funds will cover the cost of replacing security cameras currently being used in all county-owned buildings: Under the "National De-

fense Authorization Act," the cameras are not in compliance with federal standards.

County emergency management director Denise Wright worked with the IT department to apply for the grant, which is expected to cover nearly all costs of the replacement. Deiker told commissioners his department had sufficient funds to cover any incidental expenses.

Community development coordinator Tina Wilson asked board members to approve a loan of \$40,000 to Morgan's Meats in Waseca. The money would come from the economic development department's revolving loan fund; terms of repayment were not disclosed. Wilson mentioned to commissioners that expansion at the well-known meat processing company has led to the company employing at least three new employees over the past couple of years, and the continued improvements made possible by the loan will likely lead to at least that many again.

Land and water resources director Chris Howard reported the county's aquatic invasive species prevention efforts are due to receive well over \$46,000 in state funding in 2025. The amount is based on the number of boat launches and associated parking spaces within the county. The program already has an existing balance of more than \$183,000.

He reported the elements of the invasive species prevention plan include fluridone treatments to control invasive species growth in Clear Lake and others, watercraft inspection staff placed at boat landings at Reeds, St. Olaf, Elysian and Clear Lakes; grant programs for lake associations or other groups who create plans for dealing with invasive species and then apply with the county; education and outreach programs; an electric fish barrier located in joint ditch 11 near Janesville; and administrative costs.

As the administrator of county ditch systems, Howard requested the county temporarily provide \$555,000 from the general fund to ensure none of the county's 44 systems would have a negative balance as 2024 closes. He explained recent "redeterminations of benefits" have led to assessments being imposed on many property owners who have not yet paid them. Howard stated the full amount might not even be needed, depending on how many landowners meet their obligations yet during the month, but that it is not legal for any ditch system to end the year with a negative balance.

The county board approved "second half" allotments to a number of agencies and initiatives it has chosen to support. Funds to be paid to various groups include New Richland Ambulance, \$1,250; Historical Society, \$35,000; Southern Minnesota Tourism Association, \$478; Minnesota Agricultural Interpretive Center/Farmamerica, \$7,500; Tourism Advisory Committee, \$1,500; Waseca Art Council, \$6,000; Senior Citizen Center, \$2,500; Minnesota Valley Action Council, \$4,500; Open Door Health Center, \$250; Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center, \$5,000; Agricultural Society, \$25,000; Small Business Development Center, \$1,000; Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, \$2,650.

■ Lucky from Page 1

comes to a close. The poultry was the lone exception, since the flock numbers fewer than 10 and can easily be housed in a small, temperature controlled structure on site.

The as yet unnamed turkeys would be a new level of responsibility, but also represented a remarkable opportunity to enhance the organization's purpose of educating about agriculture and the rural lifestyle while also advocating for agribusiness.

Having seen the interest the birds generated during the Nov. 29 "Turkey Trot" event, and having fielded numerous calls from television stations and other media, Wadd says it's clear any complications the birds might represent will be vastly outweighed by the benefits they bring. Attention regarding Peach and Blossom began rising shortly after the state fair, which is when it was publicly announced the birds would be living at Farmamerica.

"It's an honor to have them," she observes. "We will be keeping them in the kind of environment where they're comfortable and they can thrive."

Zimmerman points out the annual "pardoning" of turkeys is important to the National Turkey Federation because of the publicity and attention it brings, helping consumers recognize that by buying turkey meat

they are helping support a farmer who raises turkeys.

"The days are gone when a large share of people had grandparents still living on a farm," he comments. "People are becoming less and less aware of that human connection. We want them to know there's a family helping make sure their family gets healthy, nutritious food."

When it came time to begin raising the needed turkeys, Zimmerman conferred with past chairmen about their methods. Having been told others began with 20 or 30 turkeys, he acquired 44 hatchlings in mid-July. He created a designated space in one of his buildings and set about the task of ensuring he would have at least two high-quality birds which dealt well with human presence and distraction.

Zimmerman's fourth-grade son Grant was brought into the project; neighbor children were invited to help care for and to interact with the flock as much as possible. Music of all types was played in their vicinity—country and western, rock, polka, and more. The objective was to have at least two birds which were friendly, calm, docile, didn't struggle when picked up or handled, and, of course, were excellent specimens.

Any flock members which showed failings along the way were removed and placed with the birds being raised in the larger barns on Zimmerman's property.

Zimmerman says that as the time approached to select the two "pardonees," he had twelve or so birds, any

of which might have been suitable.

He gathered some fellow turkey farmers to help make the choice. "We had laser pointers," he remembers with a laugh. "We wanted the prettiest ones," he describes. "We would point out different birds and compare their appearance, their behavior. We were really nit-picky, finding some really arbitrary reasons to eliminate some of the candidates."

The birds traveled to Washington loose in the back of an SUV. "Once they got used to the motion, they just settled down, watched the sights, and enjoyed the music," Zimmerman observed, saying although past pardonees have been taken by airplane, they do much better in a ground vehicle.

Zimmerman's family and invited representatives were able to visit personally with President Biden during the presentation and pardoning of the birds. "Grant was able to sit in the president's chair in the oval office," he said.

"We made a lot of special memories that week."

During the pardoning ceremony, President Biden named some personal characteristics for the birds, including that they like hot dish and tater tots, and ascribe to being "Minnesota nice."

Zimmerman explains the characteristics were devised by staff members at the National Turkey Federation, all with the intent of representing the state where they were raised.

As has been the case with all pre-

viously pardoned turkeys, the president chose the birds' names: That is the reason two birds from Minnesota ended up with the names of the Delaware state flower, the peach blossom. Delaware is President Biden's home state.

Now that the two turkeys are at Farmamerica, their lives continue to be somewhat privileged—although not quite the "spa" that was mentioned on one national talk show. They are housed in their own enclosure built specially for them by John Zimmerman and will never have to worry about their water dishes freezing. To help them remain docile, they are persistently exposed to human presence and are even taken outside for occasional walks. Come summer, of course, they will spend much more time outdoors.

Their next command appearance will be from 4 to 8 p.m. this Saturday, Dec. 14, when they will greet visitors arriving for Farmamerica's Santa Experience. The evening will include crafts, activities, the chance to visit with Santa, and even to see two reindeer between 6 and 8 p.m.

The cost is \$5 per child: adults and very young children (2 or younger) get in free.

As Peach and Blossom continue to settle into their new home, according to Wadd, the Farmamerica staff will continue finding ways the two can fulfill their roles as educators and advocates for agriculture.

■ Ditch from Page 3

built and all landowners who benefited from it were assessed a share of the cost; the share was determined based on the amount and types of land experiencing improved water removal. Since some of the county's 44 public ditches were first established in the 1920s or earlier, Howard mentions, the landowners who filed those original petitions—who understood the system and how it is paid for—are no longer the primary users.

Now, with landowners removed from the original process by two or three generations, "It's possible some of those folks weren't even aware of the public system," observed Howard. "Or that they had only a vague understanding of how it works and what their responsibilities are." Howard has been with the county department of land and water resources for about three years: prior to his arrival, he described, work to inspect, improve, repair or "clean" county ditches had been carried out in reaction to requests, more than by a carefully planned schedule.

Now that some of those tasks are being accomplished more vigorously, he says he is hearing from more and more landowners with questions and concerns. Howard admits he hopes giving landowners access to the new policy will help reduce the number of times he must explain the same process or answer repeated questions. State Statute 103e, which governs public administration of ditch systems, is dozens of pages long, so Howard points out the brief summary in the newly produced policy statement does not address every element. "But it explains the ones that people have the most questions about," he says. Some of

the finer points of working with public drainage, he comments, are like "balancing on a piece of dental floss," given that so much about the practice has changed over time. He points out that, where statute and policy once supported draining marshes and sloughs, there is now a requirement that, when areas of water retention are removed "upstream" in a drainage system, compensating retention must be created or considered "downstream."

"On one side is the producer who has paid a great deal for the land and wants to see it be as productive as possible," Howard describes. "On the other side are conservation and special interest groups who might be happiest if the land was restored to

its original status. "The best we can do is be aware of the laws and requirements and act within them."

Howard encourages individuals who have questions about public drainage systems to refer to the

newly drafted policy, which is posted on the county website under "Waseca County drainage and repair maintenance policy." If questions remain, he invites individuals to contact his office.

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December 2024

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1	2	3 Burger nite 5-7pm	4 6pm BAR Bingo	5 7pm HALL BINGO <u>Somalia Campaign began (1992)</u>	6 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	7 <u>Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day</u>
8 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your Host BOY SCOUTS	9 7pm Post & AUX. Meeting	10 Burger nite 5-7pm	11 6pm BAR Bingo	12 7pm HALL BINGO	13 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm <u>U.S. National Guard Birth-day</u>	14
15 Official <u>End of War in Iraq (2011)</u>	16	17 Burger nite 5-7pm	18 6pm BAR Bingo	19 7pm HALL BINGO	20 <u>WALLEYE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm Panama Campaign began (1989)</u>	21 <u>TOM AND JERRY NIGHT 4PM TO 7 PM</u>
22	23	24 CLOSED	25 CLOSED	26 7pm HALL BINGO	27 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	28
29	30	31 Burger nite 5-7pm NEW YEARS EVE BINGO 7 PM <u>Kosovo Campaign ended (2013)</u>				

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ACTING AS THE DRAINAGE AUTHORITY FOR WASECA BLUE EARTH LE SUEUR JOINT DITCH 11

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Waseca Blue Earth Le Sueur Joint County Drainage Authority Board of Commissioners, acting as the public drainage authority under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 103E ("Joint County Drainage Authority") for Waseca Blue Earth Le Sueur Joint Ditch 11 ("JD 11"), will hold a public hearing on 12-20-2024 at 10:00AM, or shortly thereafter as the agenda allows, in the Waseca County Commissioners Room of the East Annex, 300 N State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

At the public hearing, the Joint County Drainage Authority will consider a proposal by the Waseca County Highway Department to replace the existing 78.5' timber slab span bridge (BR 81509 OLD) with 2-line configuration of 14' x 12' box culverts all with end sections (BR 81126 NEW) at the CR55/380th Avenue crossing of the JD 11 drainage system between the Northwest Quarter (NW¼) of Section 4, Township 107 North, Range 24 West (Alton Township) and the Southwest Quarter (SW¼) of Section 33, Township 108 North, Range 24 West (Janesville Township), Waseca County, Minnesota. The public hearing will be held pursuant to both Minnesota Statutes, sections 103E.525 and 163.17. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 103E.525, approval of the box culvert capacity is being sought by the Director of the Division of Ecological and Water Resources in the Department of Natural Resources. The Waseca County Highway Department and its engineering consultants at Widseth, Inc. have filed a plan showing in detail the alteration or change to replace the existing bridge with box culverts, and a report of findings that the proposed alteration to the crossing will be a minor alteration or change to the JD 11 drainage system that will not affect the functioning or efficiency of the JD 11 drainage system. A copy of the plan and engineer's report of findings is available for public inspection at the Office of the Waseca County Land & Water Resources Director, Chris Howard, at 900 3rd Street NE, Waseca, MN 56093 and is available for viewing during normal business hours, or by contacting Chris Howard at 507-835-0534 or via email at chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov.

All owners of property affected by the JD 11 drainage system are invited to attend public hearing. Written comments will be accepted by mail or email to the Waseca County Land & Water Resources Director, Chris Howard. Written comments may be mailed to Waseca County Land & Water Resources Director, 900 3rd Street NE, Waseca, MN 56093 or emailed to chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov. Any comments received by mail or email prior to the public hearing will be read into the record at the public hearing.

/s/ Michael Johnson, County Administrator
Waseca County, Minnesota

/s/ Robert Meyer, County Administrator
Blue Earth County, Minnesota

/s/ Dani Ongie, Auditor-Treasurer
Le Sueur County, Minnesota
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer
on November 28, December 5 and 12, 2024

Date: 11-21-2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

AA Self Storage will sell at public auction the contents of several storage units in Waseca on which payment is past due. The auction will be conducted online at storagetreasures.com beginning about December 16, 2024.

The contents of these units is unknown, but are believed to be miscellaneous household and personal items.

The names of persons renting the units are as follows:

Brandy Hott
Tyler Kiekenapp
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on December 5 and 12, 2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

The City of Waseca will be operating an aeration system on the north shore of Loon Lake immediately south of Loon Lake Park as soon as December 11th, 2024, or as soon as ice conditions permit.

Extreme caution should be used when the system is in operation

Thin ice and open water will be created on the lake, especially in the vicinity of the area posted with "THIN ICE" signs. If there are any questions concerning this aeration system, please contact the City of Waseca Engineering Department at 507-835-9730.

Loon Lake is located within the City limits of Waseca, in Waseca County.



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Waseca Junior Senior High School grades 7 and 8 had their choir concert Monday, Dec. 2, 2024.



Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

Waseca Junior High choir concert held Dec. 2

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

A Waseca Junior Senior High School choir concert was held the evening of Monday, Dec. 2, featuring seventh- and eighth-grade choirs in the Creative Arts Center. Each group presented three numbers, and also joined for a combined mid-concert performance.

Directed by Angela Andreen, the seventh-grade choir members performed first: their three songs were “Over the River and Through the Woods,” which was originally a poem published in 1844 by Lydia Maria Child and was written to celebrate Thanksgiving. The second song was, “Give up the Glory” by Mike Wilson. The third was a fun

song made famous by the National Lampoons movie “Vacation” called ‘Holiday Road’ by Lindsey Buckingham.

During “Holiday Road,” one of the four chorus girls in the front row was seventh-grader Keira Holmgren, when asked about it she had never heard the song before practice started, “I thought the song was nice, I haven’t seen the movie but I kinda want to.” Said Keira, “We started rehearsing in October, before Halloween.” Fellow student Alex Revermann said his favorite song was also “Holiday Road.” Alex, said he felt all choir members “were singing their best on that song. It was my favorite because I’ve seen the Vacation movie, I liked it.” Then he added, “I

was up on stage and because of the lights I couldn’t see more than three rows back into the crowd.”

The combined piece was “Snow on Snow” by Andy Beck. When it was complete, the seventh-grade students exited the stage and took their reserved seats in the front row of the Creative Arts Center.

Directed by Megan Kreinbring, the eighth-graders presented “A-Caroling we Go!”, “Winter Lights” with an instrumental by Sheila Driessen and “A Theme from Elf” from the “Elf” movie starring Will Ferrel.

Eighth-grader Kenzie Morrissey said, “My favorite song was ‘Winter Lights.’” She said she was pleased with her group’s performance because “We all worked hard

and the best part about the concert was showing off that hard work for my family and my friends.” Kenzie’s father, Mike Morrissey said, “I wish it could last longer, it’s so great to see the kids’ progression year to year.”

Tammi Attenberger and her husband Jason, who were there for their daughter Reagann Attenberger said, “It was a great show, we love coming to these things whenever they have them. A little short, but that’s okay.” When the show was over and the kids took a bow, the theater slowly emptied and people going outside into the cold were rewarded with a light dusting of snow.

Fourth annual Christmas Time at the Mill

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

An annual event since 2021, “Christmas Time at the Mill” is planned and carried out by Matthew Petsinger, who says he does it all because, “‘Tis the season.” The first 200 children to arrive at the Mill on Saturday, Dec. 7 got one of 200 hot dogs donated by Morgan’s Meat Market on buns donated by Kelm’s BBQ and Waseca Kwik Trip.

Said Petsinger, “There are so many fundraisers going on right now and those are good, but I’m here, it’s a great day, it’s for a good cause and it gets kids even more ready for the Christmas season. Christmas Time at the Mill is about having fun and taking a day off from donating.” At the door, children were handed red tickets which gave them a chance to win door prizes: Donated by the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center (WANSC) and other anonymous donors, the offerings were oversized stuffed animals with the winners to be announced later.

From noon through 7 p.m. there were free cookies and hot chocolate. There were tickets for free face painting and three face painters present, Mia Whyttenbach, 7, was on a chair receiving butterfly swoops on her face, there was a smile there as well. At the cash bar, Charlie Harguth and Matt Olsem were serving drinks: \$2 children versions of holiday punch with a \$1 refill by using the same glass. For adult punch it was \$5 a drink with a \$3 refill, again same glass. Harguth said about the day’s events, “I just like seeing all the kids and the fun they have.” Olsem added, “I really like the community involvement.” At the bar, a list of adult beverages offered choices such as Christmas Cran Mimosa, Frosty the Snowman, The Grinch, and Pepper-

mint Cocoa.

The owners of Kelm’s BBQ, Kevin and Amy, were serving hot dogs and brats. Amy said she and Kevin were there “Because I love Christmas and spreading that cheer. This is a great event; Matthew did a great job getting people out.” Next to Kelm’s was Barb Timlin setting out cookies from the Owatonna HyVee. She said, “Matt’s my insurance guy. He told me about it and I thought it was such a great idea. I hope to be involved in many more of these. This idea of bringing everyone together is so wonderful.”

Performers for the stage included Pastor Michael Grannis of St. Paul Lutheran Church singing Christmas carols; a reading of Clement Clarke Moore’s “A Visit from St. Nicholas”; the Waseca High School State Street Singers, and the High School Jazz band. As Pastor Grannis sang, children sitting on the ground in front of him looking up and watching. In another area of the room, toddler Arlo and his brother Camden Helton, 5, climbed nervously onto Santa’s lap, staying calm enough for their parents to get a picture but mom still had to hold them because sometimes Santa can be a little scary for the younger ones.

Speaking of pictures, four celebrities were present for Christmas at the Mill: Elsa, Anna and Olaf from the movie “Frozen,” and their friend from another movie, the Grinch. Taylor Tolzman, Mia and Macy Skluzacek were posing and snapped a pretty good photo. Rachel Hinton was sitting at a table passing out face painting tickets, papers and pens for letters to Santa, three tables of crafts and coloring pages of Christmas scenes. Hinton said about all the kids coming up to her and how busy she was, “To see all these people from the community come together and have a good day,



The Grinch, Olaf, Elsa and Anna posed with Taylor Tolzman, Mia and Macy Skluzacek at Christmas Time at the Mill.



Arlo, 1, and Camden, 5, Helton got a picture with Santa, with a little help from Mom.

One kid colored a picture, brought it back to me and said, ‘I love you.’ That was really nice.”

Near the entrance, one table offered free books for children courtesy of the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center. Nearby was a table full of teddy bears, trinkets and toys, also free of charge. Children were running to and fro with arms full of everything; the one common element was their smiles. Near the ramp, a woman took a breath and leaned on her

stroller as her child ran between her legs back to the cookie table, Jennifer Cheney exhaled and said, “My kids wanted to see Santa and have a good time, the Christmas at the Mill was expertly timed this year and today there’s no better place to go.” Her boys, Peyton, 9, and Zachary, 2, seemed to agree.

As people left, Matthew Petsinger of American Family Insurance said, “Thank you guys for coming. This is all about fun.”

Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

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