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WASECA
COUNTY
PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 6 Vol. III \$2

Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca

Friday, February 9, 2024

■ Page 6



New Sergeant

Waseca Junior and Senior high bands performing Feb. 10
Waseca Jr/Sr High Jazz Bands are performing at Farmamerica Saturday, Feb. 10 from 7-9pm. Swing dance lessons will be provided from 7-7:30, with open dancing from 7:30-9. Dance lessons are free with admission. Admission is \$7 adults/\$4 students. Age 5 and under is free. Refreshments available for purchase.

Swing Dance Concert at Farmamerica 7 to 9 p.m. February 10
Swing dance music by the Waseca Jazz Band will be accompanied by dance lessons and dancing at Farmamerica. Admission is \$7. Tickets available at Waseca Music and Four Seasons. More information at Farmamerica.org

S.A.L. burger and fish fry 5:30 p.m. Feb. 16 at American Legion
Sacred Heart Church in Waseca is hosting a burger and fish fry at 5:30 p.m. at the Waseca American Legion. Cost is \$10. There will be karaoke with Jim Kozan from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. in the Lounge. Meat raffles at 5:30 p.m.

The Catholic Daughters will be selling homemade pies, pop and coffee.

Benefit for Mike Coy, 2 to 6 p.m. Feb. 17
A benefit for Mike Coy, who has been diagnosed with cancer of the liver, will be at the Waseca American Legion hall from 2 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 17. Silent auction, music and entertainment will be featured.

Team Academy “Books and Blankets” 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Feb. 22
Families are invited to read books and make blankets for Waseca’s Bethlehem Inn charity. Families need not have a student at Team Academy. Call the school for more information: (507) 833-8326.

SWCD Tree Order open house 8:30 to 4:30 Feb. 23
An open house will provide the opportunity to learn more about the county Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) “tree order” opportunities. Visitors will be able to acquire information and to place orders for trees to be delivered at a future date. More information is available from the SWCD office at (507) 835-0607.

Blood Drive at Farmamerica 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 1
Visit Farmamerica.org to book an appointment to donate blood during the March 1 donation event at Farmamerica’s main building, 7367 360th Ave, rural Waseca. For more information, contact Farmamerica at (507) 835-2052.

TEAM Academy Open House 5-6 p.m. March 19
Area families interested in learning more about TEAM Academy charter school can visit the facility, meet the teachers, and find out about the school’s methods and philosophy.

Briefs continued on 5

A word from
The Word

Strive for peace
with everyone.
Hebrews 12:14

NRHEG Snow Week



Snow week royalty gathered in the NRHEG high school gymnasium Tuesday afternoon, January 30 to find out who amongst them would be crowned King and Queen. Royalty for 2023 Snow week are, back from left: Reese Routh, Sam Olson, Levin Kitzer, Parker Bunn, Erin Peterson, Elsie Schultz, Evelyn Nydegger, and Kyra Cain. Seated, King Danny Deniz-Clark and Queen Malonna Wilson. Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

Quast, Sack crowned at JWP

JANESVILLE JOURNAL - The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School celebrated Snow Week... without the snow...starting with a coronation ceremony on Monday, Feb. 5. Queen Lydia Sack and King Austin Quast were chosen to take the throne. The 2024 candidates for the queen’s crown were Caitlin Sheeran, Cyndal Coult, Kelsey Loeffler, Makae Erdman, and Lydia Sack. Vying for the title of king were Austin Quast, Cole Gartner, Steven Denn, Austin Carda, and Memphis James. Seniors Gavin Krause and Ali Olson were Masters of Ceremonies. During the coronation, the basketball, wrestling, cheerleading, and speech captains discussed their seasons. Sophomore Daulton Bauer and junior Ethan Born praised the boys’ basketball seniors for their outstanding leadership. They stated the team has a chance to play in a conference championship, a level they haven’t reached since 2006. The girls’ team had all its captains —Lexie

Dahlberg, Ali Olson, Katie Olson, and Lilly Strauss — give a synopsis of their season. They’ve had their best season since 2013-14, and can close in on 20 wins if they win their next four games. They also brought up their win against NRHEG, which hadn’t happened since 2005. Sophomores Tiera Anderson and Victoria Blomstrom represented the cheerleaders and were excited to talk about the new WEM-JWP cheerleading program, which consists of eight cheerleaders, most from JWP. “It gives us opportunities to try out new stunts and improve upon everything we do,” Anderson said. “We’re excited for sections to come up because our wrestling team’s going to be very good this season,” Blomstrom said. For wrestling, emcee Krause represented the team and shared that three wrestlers had 20 wins on the season, while the team

JWP continued on 13



Lydia Sack and Aust Quast were crowned King and Queen during Monday’s Snow Week Coronation at JWP High School

Pioneer writers, newspaper earn 10 awards during annual banquet

Second in General Excellence, Reporting; two first place finishes

The Waseca County Pioneer and its writers took home ten awards during the Minnesota Newspaper Association’s annual awards banquet February 1, 2024 at Marriott North in Brooklyn Park. As a newspaper, in its first year of eligibility, the Pioneer earned second place in General Excellence, second in General Reporting and third place in Sports Reporting. Judges comments included, “Always find great reporting in the Pioneer... a close second.” And, “Front page layout grabs your attention... Nice inside news content and there was clear thought put into each photo. Sports was impressive.” Categories were entered in the non-multi day, 1,000 and under circulation size. More than 4,400 entries were submitted to MNA for consideration this

year, the most entered in more than two decades. Of the roughly 40 categories, writers Deb Bently, Jim Lutgens and Eli Lutgens earned seven individual awards. Bently earned two second place finishes and a third. Last year’s article on Waseca’s Sleigh and Cutter Festival took second in the Arts and Entertainment Category. In the Human Interest Story - Personality Feature/Profile, Bently earned third place for an article written about Dolores Sommers. Bently also earned second place for an article published in the Star Eagle, in the Business Profile category for her piece titled, “Hartland Gold Rush” about the Prairie Gold Rush Magazine produced in Hartland. Jim and Eli Lutgens together took home a first place plaque for a sports

feature written about Ted Hammond, titled “Against the Odds.” Judges comments read, “Interesting writing and a great job telling this story. Nice lede. This story is really overflowing with detail, and packaged together in a way that makes me want to keep reading and root for this guy. This was an easy choice for the winner of this category.” Eli Lutgens took home his first-ever first-place finish from MNA in the Social Issues Category for an article titled, “Drug program improves lives” written about the Steele/Waseca County Drug Court program. The judge’s comments were, “Great program. Shining a light on another way to help those who battle addiction. Good work walking us through the help provided.” Eli Lutgens also took home a third-place plaque in the “Business



Pioneer Sports Editor Jim Lutgens, Publisher Eli Lutgens, and News Editor Deb Bently together at the annual Minnesota Newspaper Association awards banquet February 1, 2024. Profile” category for his article, “A new chapter” written on Dave’s Body Shop changing ownership. As a columnist, Eli Lutgens also earned a third-place plaque. For Eli Lutgens, in his writing career, he has accumulated five statewide awards from MNA, two first place finishes, and three thirds. He was also featured in this year’s Editor and Publisher magazine’s 25 under 35 edition. For the Pioneer and Bently they were their first such awards. Jim Lutgens, as a sports editor, his honors are too numerous that he cannot recall. He has many first place finishes for his sports reporting. All of the articles referenced here can be found online at waseca-countypioneer.com.



Compostings

by Al Batt

Rapid climate change or stolen covers?

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

Hi, Allan.
It's Allan.
My apologies. I hate mispronouncing someone's name.
DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. The calendar lies. The seasons tell the truth. Fog had become a regular companion and it quieted things. I wish the weather would look at what I'm wearing and adjust itself accordingly.

On a chilly January night, I suffered from rapid climate change. My wife had stolen my covers.

We all live on a snowplow route, but this winter, the course hasn't been a busy one. The wind chimes still work overtime as the wind turbines continue to produce wind. Groundhog Day is past. I enjoyed the movie. February gives us our first 10 hours of daylight in a single day. The interiors of parked vehicles warm in sunlight. Greenhouse plants become as perky as Mary Richards in February. February is like the theme song of "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," which described the character Mary Richards played by Mary Tyler Moore, "Who can turn the world on with her smile?" February can.

SCHOOL DAZE

Back when schools smelled of pencil shavings and chalk dust, and texting involved a school book, I went to a small school through the sixth grade. There were around 15 kids in my grade. I spent two years in each of the three classrooms. Every other year, we were warned about the new teacher we'd have the following year. There was no moving from one room to the next other than for lunch. Then, my class transferred to the big school for seventh grade. There may have been 60 kids in my class there. Uffida! There was excitement and dismay about the need to move to another classroom every hour. I had some country miles on me and I worried about becoming hopelessly lost in a building without end. That's where and why this conversation took place. A classmate asked, "What class do you have next?"

My retort was, "I'm not sure. What class was this?"

I became a teenager before I was ready. Each day, when I arrived home from school, my mother asked me what I'd learned in school. I went from covering her in an avalanche of words to the following conversation.

"What did you learn in school today?" Mom said.

"Nothing."

"How was school?" Mom continued like a grand inquisitor.

"Good."

"How about something more than a one-word answer?" Mom was no quitter.

"Pretty good," was my answer.

I'VE LEARNED

Save something for a rainy day: dry socks.

A hamburger by any other name costs more.

One sigh fits all.

If my car is running, I'm voting for it.

You're in decent shape if you can clip your toenails and breathe at the same time.

There is a federal government agency to fit every initialism.

Driving through a roundabout is standardized texting.

The most used handcuffs in the world are cellphones.

I can't believe Meatloaf didn't sing "Mashed Potato Time."

Russian dolls are full of themselves.

BAD JOKE DEPARTMENT

When smoke rises from a toaster, it means a new pope tart has been chosen.

Darth Vader's sister is named Ella.

The Miss Universe pageant is rigged. Every winner has been from Earth.

All the shingle women are at the Lady Roofers Convention.

What did one rock say to another rock? Nothing. Rocks can't talk.

I have only two faults. The first one is I don't listen. I've no idea what the other fault is.

NATURE NOTES

House finches were originally a bird of the western US and Mexico. In 1940, some house finches were released in Long Island, New York, after failed attempts to sell them as caged birds called "Hollywood finches." The population became established and spread throughout the country. House finches are about the same size as house sparrows but more slender. Most adult males are rosy red around the face and upper breast, with a streaky brown back, belly and tail. Adult females aren't red but are grayish-brown with indistinctly marked faces.

Bird poop is brownish, the white pasty excrement is uric acid, the equivalent to a mammal's urine. Eating mostly fish results in primarily white droppings because fish can be absorbed almost completely. This leads to whitewashing. Hawks, falcons and eagles forcefully eject their droppings, shooting them away from the nest to keep things sanitary. This process is called slicing.

MEETING ADJOURNED

"Human kindness has never weakened the stamina or softened the fiber of a free people. A nation does not have to be cruel to be tough."—Franklin D. Roosevelt.

A severe case of early onset spring

The warm weather has given me a severe case of wanderlust. Deep in my soul I know it's not spring, but boy...it sure looks and feels as if it is. Geese are in the air, the lakes and rivers have open places, the temperatures are in the range we expect in April. The grass is turning green.

What's a psyche to do?

I find it funny how quickly I leave each season behind as the next one approaches. I have jokingly commented before that I spend all summer wondering why I bother to keep all those sweatshirts and long pants, then spend all winter wondering why I waste the space to store those shorts and short-sleeved shirts.

And then there's the matter of the increasing amount of sunlight. According to the Old Farmer's Almanac, we are gaining roughly three minutes of daylight every day. It doesn't sound like much, but that means roughly 20 minutes over a week. Still, as I awaken each day and notice how much brighter it is—take note that it's light outside, even though it was dark out at the same time a week ago—I can't help feeling



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

an unnatural sense of optimism.

Don't get me wrong: there ARE things I like about winter. Sledding on a slippery hillside, cuddling under a blanket while it storms outside, watching the birds forage for seeds under my feeders, admiring the snow-white beauty of fresh snow or hoarfrost.

I know many people feel cheated by the warm weather which has kept us from accumulating snow for trails or creating "fishing villages" on our lakes. I agree, we were cheated in that way.

Something I definitely feel cheated about is the need to move the Feb. 18 giant kite show to the open field west of the junior/senior high school.

Sean Beaver, the owner of Great American Kite and Balloon out of Missouri, has given two shows on Clear Lake. Both have been spectacular, although in different ways. The first one, in my humble opinion, was simply perfect. The temperature was warm, the wind was from the south, the kites floated serenely in a bright blue sky. The second time was neither warm nor sunny; the wind was cold, biting and unreliable. Kites would get up in the sky, then come down again. Sean informed us he took advantage of the uneven wind to "bounce" the kites—bring them down where children could walk up alongside and push on them.

One kind of funny thing, prior to being booked in Waseca, our man

from Missouri had no idea ice ever gets thick enough to hold up cars and hundreds of people. Ken Borgmann jokingly commented, "I practically had to sign an affidavit to show the ice would be safe."

What Sean is used to doing at traditional shows is to tie some of his larger kites to trucks just to serve as sufficient anchoring. He was impressed that, out on the lake, it was simply a matter of planting enough stakes in the ice. That first year, Sean spent much of his time looking around in confused wonder.

I can comfort myself that, at least the lack of ice did not cancel the show as it has for so many others.

I hope every child (or child at heart) in the county gets to the giant kite show set for Feb. 18. It is truly wondrous to see those huge, colorful, creative shapes peppering the sky. At least our "year without a winter" hasn't taken that away from us. Thank you to the Sleigh and Cutter Festival for bringing this enjoyable opportunity back for us again!

A stroll down to the courthouse, and then...



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

watch the people who come to play pick-up games.

This week is a busy one for me, filled with fun things. On Tuesday, I got to wake up early and take the light rail down to the Hennepin County Courthouse to scroll through criminal records and see what I want to write about for a crime story for one of my classes. There were a couple of interesting cases, but it's hard to decide what's newsworthy from looking at the probable cause sheet the public records show. I will say, though, that some people have lived interesting lives and have made some interesting decisions.

On Wednesday, I will have woken up at the bright time of 5 a.m. to go to the 6 a.m. Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) physical training

at 6 a.m. for a Minnesota Daily story. It's going to be a "Day in the Life" type piece. Many college students join ROTC for reasons of their own, including to help pay for college. Once they've finished their degrees, they are obligated to serve a stint in the military. A member graciously agreed to let me follow him around for the day, so on Wednesday I will be at personal training, followed by a military science class, and then my own classes on top of that. I'm kind of excited, although nervous to go to PT. The guy said I could join them in their exercises (sled pulling, burpees, mountain climbers, and running with medicine balls), and I initially agreed. But now that I've had time to think about it, I think I might pass. See, the social media team also

wants me to take videos and pictures so they can make a TikTok about it, and I just don't think I am capable of doing that along with the exercises. At least that's the excuse I'm telling myself.

Thursday is a chill and normal day, but then my weekend is filled with hockey! There is a gentleman who comes into the bar when I work on occasion, and he tells me he sees me on TV when he watches the men's gopher hockey games. I'm pretty sure he only saw me once, but every time we come across each other, he likes to tell me that he saw me. It's almost endearing and slightly annoying. I just hope the men's hockey team can win so we can go to the Frozen Four and the championships or something, even though they're in Minnesota this year, so we don't get to travel anywhere. I still enjoy playing in the pep band for the games, and that's all that matters.

My Determination: "What I was born does not matter, only what I will make of myself, only what I will become." — Diana Gabaldon, The Fiery Cross

A year full of memories in one evening



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

about it. I, as I often do, asked for story recommendations and this particular person didn't skip a beat.

At this most recent graduation ceremony, she was there to congratulate graduates, and actually spoke during the program.

The article that took first place also couldn't have happened if I hadn't reached out to Waseca County Attorney Rachel Cornelious and asked her about the program. She told me she was speaking at a Rotary Club meeting and invited me to come listen.

I'm grateful the story won. It was certainly memorable, but not one which I would have expected to win. I would have bet good money some of my sports features would win. Turns out, Dad's did.

After speaking with Ted Hammond numerous times on the sidelines of Waseca High School football games, and after he was honored during a halftime ceremony, I was determined we write about him.

And I really wanted the author of the story to be my dad.

This was before my dad jumped head first into his role as sports editor. He never said he wouldn't do the story, but I was reminded of how, in my early days as a writer, I would tell my dad all the reasons I wasn't pursuing any given assignment.

I say often that my dad is my favorite writer. And I really wanted this story to be the one that sparked his interest and got him back into writing. It did just that.

After my dad wrote the story, which he spent a very, very long time on, he couldn't stop talking about it for a week. At this time my dad had just gotten dental surgery and refused to go out in public. So, he asked me to take Ted's picture. He gave me

exact instructions.

Specific.

Direct.

"It has to be great," he told me. "It needs to be a great picture, because his story is great."

He must have used the word "great" 10 times in his explanation. Which was all he gave me for instructions, by the way.

So when I met Ted at the school, I was very careful, causing him to suffer through a photo shoot that took approximately 45 minutes, included three different locations, and about a dozen angles per shot.

Ted rewarded me with his famous "dessert," a pastry he made, but whose name I have allowed to escape me. I bet, though, if you ask any of his former players, they could tell you.

For the record, my dad remembers Ted from his days either in high school or as a young sports reporter. I cannot recall which.

The business profile I wrote which took third was about Dave's Body Shop changing hands.

This story was unique because it fell into my lap on a press day. I learned about the change and called them up. They were all gathering together that day for an interview with the Waseca County News and it would likely be the only time both families would be together in their entirety. So, they extended an invitation for me to come interview the families an hour before their other interview.

I had zero time to prepare, besides maybe a few minutes.

But none of that really mattered.

Once you got the Krampitz and the Malecha groups together, they couldn't be stopped.

It was an exciting, memorable interview and one which I had to write up immediately in order to print it in that week's paper which went to press that same day.

I wrote the story, had Deb make sure it wasn't awful, and sent it back to them to look at all in the space of a couple hours. Just in time to squeeze it in on that week's front page.

Maybe if I'd had a little more time it, too, could have garnered first place.

As for the other categories, second place in general excellence and general reporting gives us something to aim for next year. Anyway, it probably wouldn't have been fair to win first place in our first full year publishing.

And, we're already working on next year's entry. The only critique we received from judges was on our advertising. Since opening, we've hired a new advertising design team member, Jon Lucca. I've tasked him with remaking all of the original ads created during our first year. I will not begin to tell you the stories of how those ads were designed, other than to say something like "many hands sometimes don't work well together, and can create many, many headaches."

Lastly I was recognized with a third place finish in the "columnist" category for my weekly contribution to "Stargazing" in Waseca and "Just a Thought," in New Richland.

This is a very competitive category and I feel very honored to have placed at all.

Here's to what's on the horizon.

Thank you to our readers and our advertisers for making any of this possible.

"The very basic core of a man's living spirit is his passion for adventure. The joy of life comes from our encounters with new experiences, and hence there is no greater joy than to have an endlessly changing horizon, for each day to have a new and different sun."

— Christopher McCandless



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Brad Milbrath

Milbrath believes ‘Waseca can still grow’

Brad, 57, is one of two candidates vying for Waseca County Commissioner for District 3

By JESSICA LUTGENS, Staff Writer
Originally published in November prior to the primary

Throwing his hat in the ring for Waseca County Commissioner is Brad Milbrath, 57, former sheriff of Waseca County for 12 years. Milbrath grew up in Waseca County, having graduated from Mapleton High School in 1984 before going on to obtain a degree in criminal justice from Minnesota West Community College. He has three children and seven grandchildren and lives in Waseca with his significant other, Cindy Lou Johnson.

Currently, Milbrath is retired from law enforcement and works part-time with Borneke Construction in Janesville as well as helping the Schlaak family from New Richland with farming. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time outdoors and with his grandchildren, as well as farming and gardening.

His decision to run for county commis-

sioner was due mainly to the untimely passing of former commissioner, Blair Nelson.

“Blair and I have always worked well together,” Milbrath said. “Part of our discussion was that I wouldn’t run against him as long as he was there. He and I had the same philosophies on how things should be done.”

His passion for public service, Milbrath added, also contributed to his decision to run.

“I’ve been helping Waseca County for 24 years, and I believe Waseca can still grow and thrive with some push.”

If elected as county commissioner, Milbrath says his focus will be on development, progress for the county, and being mindful of the budget and taxes for the citizens of Waseca County and District 3.

“My vision is to keep the board’s vision progressing forward using common

“I would like to see the jail stay here.”
— Brad Milbrath

sense, yet being mindful of the budget and how it affects constituents, not only for District 3 but for Waseca County as a whole,” he said. “I want to be open to constituents within my district, as well - listen to their concerns and try to address those the best that I can.”

He noted the importance of a county commissioner’s role in helping the county government meet the requirements of unfunded state mandates, including identifying sources to pay for the required services. Examples he provides include the jail, public health, emergency management, planning and zoning, human services, etc.

“Most of these are unfunded or under-

funded as a whole - that’s where property taxes come in,” Milbrath said. “Granted, our taxes are high, but you’ve got to weigh those services with what you tax people and what people want for services. We can’t always lower taxes, but we can try to stabilize them as best we can while providing the services that everybody wants or needs and make sure that people are taken care of. It’s a balance.”

When asked about his take on the county jail, which is in need of either upgrades or replacement in order to remain functional, Milbrath said it would be beneficial to the county to keep the jail in Waseca. However, he commented the complexities involved make it a difficult decision that requires more input from local citizens and officials.

“One of the things that has been going around is that they would regionalize the

Milbrath continued on 4

Fitch hopes to ‘be a part of county growth’

Ann, 43, is one of two candidates vying for Waseca County Commissioner for District 3

By JESSICA LUTGENS, Staff Writer
Originally published in November prior to the primary

Ann Fitch is one of three candidates vying for the District 3 seat on the Waseca County board of commissioners this year. Fitch, 43, is a native of Waseca, having graduated from Waseca High School in 1998. She is employed as the Executive Director of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce, a position she has held for five years.

Fitch is currently attending Waldorf University online to obtain her bachelor degree in Organizational Leadership and lives in Waseca with her husband. In her free time, she enjoys watching basketball. Her other hobbies, she says, are supporting and serving Waseca. When Fitch was a child, her father was chief of police while her mother ran the Neighborhood Service Center, both providing examples of the importance of serving your community.

“That’s why I do what I do in getting involved in my community, because that’s what my parents did,” Fitch said.

Fitch described her decision to run for community commissioner as “the most tragic of opportunities” due to the sudden passing of former commissioner Blair Nelson.

“I would rather not be in this position - I would rather Blair be here,” she said.

Her experience on the city council, where she held a seat for almost six years, along with serving on the economic development authority (EDA) and with Discover Waseca Tourism, has prepared her for a role as county commissioner, Fitch said.

“I know I have the experience and the wherewithal to do this,” she said. “I enjoy serving my community. I’ve had people ask me if I would run, and having that community confidence was very helpful in making my decision.”

“I want to be a part of the growth of the entire county. Since being the director of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce, I’ve gotten to know people in the other communities, so it’s nice to be able to expand my leadership in my county.”

“Our prisoner population here is low on average. I don’t know if it’s sustainable to continue to have a jail. Having court services, a courtroom, a probation office - absolutely.”
— Ann Fitch

If elected, Fitch says she plans to focus on public transparency, accessibility, and sound decision making for Waseca County and District 3.

“The nice thing about the current county board is that they are a very functional board,” she said. “I want to keep that functionality going. I want to pick up right where Blair left off.”

She explained that at times, county government can be daunting to understand due to its numerous facets. Fitch hopes to make that aspect more accessible and transparent for the citizens of Waseca County. During her time on the city council, she was very active on Facebook, which allowed her to hear

from citizens firsthand - and obtaining that public input is something she would continue if elected.

“Something I’d like to add to the county board where I think they might be lacking is a little public transparency,” she said. “Not to say that the county board is hiding anything, but I think there is some accessibility that is missing. I want to be approachable and communicate with citizens of the third district and Waseca County as to what’s going on in county government.”

When asked about the situation regarding the future of the jail in Waseca

Fitch continued on 5



Ann Fitch



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OBITUARIES

Cynthia Yess

CYNTHIA “CY” SUE YESS, died on the morning of Thursday, February 1, 2024 at Lakeshore Inn in Waseca.

Cy was born to Marvin and Milly (Holtz) Yess on July 26, 1949. She was their second child and was an amazing sister to her big sister Carolyn and her baby brother Curt. Cy was baptized into Christ’s family and confirmed her faith at Saint John Lutheran church in Waseca. She attended Southside Elementary and graduated from Waseca Central High school in 1968. Her summers were consumed by backyard ballgames barefoot with the neighborhood kids or with all of her cousins at their farms, and fishing and hunting with her Dad and dog Patty. Cy went Wartberg College in Waverly, Iowa. She played French Horn in the band, played half-court woman’s basketball, and graduated with honors earning a degree in Parish Ministry.

Cy’s sister Carolyn developed Polio at an early age and Cy learn and accepted the role of a caring protector. Carolyn was sometimes not allowed to go places unless Cy went along as her parents were very protective and knew Carolyn would be in good hands with Cy. She carried this trait of helping throughout her life. If she liked you, you were a dear friend for life. She could see past people’s mistakes and deficiencies always looking for and finding the best in people.

Cy was briefly married to Harold Schoenfeld of Waseca. After their divorce she became a family with Pauline and her kids Chris and Bob. For over forty years they spent their lives together sharing all of life’s trials and joys as a family.

If you knew Cy, you knew softball was written within her heart. Cy was a dedicated player winning national championships. Cy spread her love for the game by coaching some of her closest friends and continued her dedication to the sport through advocacy and organization. Her efforts were recognized in 2001 as she was inducted into the Minnesota Softball Hall of Fame. She remained close to her teammates and enjoyed their weekly visits as she transitioned from her home to assisted living. Laughter and comradery could be heard down the hall in the days and weeks leading up to her passing.

Cy dedicated her career to serving The International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 49. Cy was able to greet each union member by name and was able to know everyone personally. Her “boss”, Clayton Johnson, became more like family and Cy treasured his friendship.

Cy continued to remain devoted to God’s service throughout her life by being active at church, do-



Cynthia Yess

nating blood, volunteering with meals on wheels and visiting the homebound. Cy would do anything for anyone. She was amazing at organizing the “details” and was always able to develop a solution for any need. Cy LOVED spoiling her nieces and nephews. She would Shop ‘til she dropped waiting in long shopping lines for the best toy of the year. Cy also loved finding the twirliest dresses for her nieces and enjoyed making the best Easter baskets for them.

One of her greatest joys was her family. Cy glowed when telling stories about her nieces and nephews and Sydney, Colton, Eli, and Ethan. Cy was the perfect blend of best friend, aunt and grandparent. Cy and Pauline loved doing things together like babysitting, traveling and being at all of the activities and events.

Left to honor Cy’s Legacy are her family, Her brother Curt (Deb) Yess of Waseca. Brother-in-Law Randy (Sharon) Sjogren of Apple Valley. Lifelong friend Pauline Fligge of Rochester and Pauline’s children Chris (Scott Welch) Clanin and Bob (Carol) Fligge and grandchildren Sydney, Colton, Eli and Ethan. Devoted friend LuAnn Rueb. Nephews, Shane (Kyla) Sjogren, Aaron (Terri) Sjogren, Josh (Melissa) Sjogren, Matt Wantoch, and Nick (Ashley) Wantoch. Nieces Emily (Ben) Johnson, Jill (Jon) Stagman, Jocie (Zac) Karbo, Jenni (Colby) Schmidt. Uncle Emerson (Val) Yess, Aunt ThelmaYess and many dearly loved cousins. Cy was preceded in death by her parents Milly and Marvin, sister Carolyn Sjogren, and nephews Jacob and Jason Yess and many aunts and uncles.

Funeral services will be held at 11:00 a.m.on Friday, February 9, 2024 at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Rochester, with Rev. David Berg officiating. Visitation will be held from 9:00 a.m. until the time of the service at the church. Interment services will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 10, 2024 at the Wilton Cemetery in Waseca County. Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Services in Waseca is handling the arrangements. dsfuneral.com

Charlene Briese

CHARLENE LOUISE BRIESE, age 50 of Waseca, died unexpectedly on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, at her home.

Charlene was born on May 1, 1973, in Mankato. She was the daughter of David and Cathy (Fortney) Briese. She attended school at South Central High School. She was a very kind-hearted, creative, caring, and personable person, who always put others before herself. She had a great sense of humor, and she really enjoyed her arts and crafts. She was raised Lutheran and was very devoted to her faith.

Charlene is survived by her mother, Cathy; her children, Ryan Briese (Abby Sargent), and Alejandra Briese all of Waseca; siblings, George (Misty) Briese of Eagle Grove, Iowa, Gaile (Dan) Schwickrath of Platteville, Wisconsin, and David (Lisa) Briese of Webster City, Iowa; nieces and



Charlene Briese

nephews, Walter, Josh, Cole, Justin, Nicolle, and George. She was preceded in death by her father.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held at a later date.

Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service is handling the arrangements. dsfuneral.com

Mary Schnepf

MARY LOUISE (OSKEY) SCHNEPF, age 83, of rural Janesville, died on Sunday, February 4, 2024 in Mankato with her family and friends by her side.

Born on January 5, 1941, in Milaca, Minnesota, Mary was the daughter of Lloyd and Margaret (Hayes) Oskey. She attended school in Milaca, and completed her schooling at Mankato High School. She moved to Waseca where she met her future husband, Richard Schnepf. They were united in marriage on June 6, 1959 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Together they made their home on the Schnepf family farm where they raised their five children.

Mary dedicated her life to raising her children. She was a pillar in the Sprintways International Raceway operations, which was founded by Mary and her husband. Mary was the ultimate homemaker, and everyone

looked forward to her home-cooked meals. Once her children graduated and left the house, Mary occupied her time with tutoring and volunteering as a guardian ad litem. Mary’s pride and joy were her grandchildren. Her home was a second home to all her grandchildren. She enjoyed traveling around the world, but also loved the view from her home. She would enjoy watching the wildlife with her family from her windows. She also enjoyed reading, shopping and gardening. She was involved with Dorcas Society, Ladies Aid at Trinity Lutheran, and Book Club. She was a longtime member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. She was a wonderful wife, mom, grandma, and friend who will be dearly missed.

Mary is survived by her children, Bradley (Kimberly Christenson) Schnepf of Waseca, Dana (Kathleen) Schnepf of North Mankato, Trent Schnepf of Colorado Springs, CO,

and Melanie (Lee) Born of Janesville; grandchildren, Ben (Amanda Danberry) Schnepf, Brandon (Chelsea) Schnepf, Jessica (Joshua Browne) Born, Kira (Krystal) Born, Jeremy (Caroline) James, Cody (Brandi) Schnepf, Heather (Brent) Smisek and Rita Osborne; six great grandchildren; siblings, Doug (Deanna Winegar) Oskey of Waseca, Katherine (Dean) Hagen of North Mankato, Dale (Virginia “Ginny”) Oskey of Minnetonka, Eileen (Richard “Rick”) Wood of Waseca; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

She is preceded in death by her husband of 64 years, Richard Schnepf; parents, Lloyd Oskey and Margaret Lindly; son, Corey Schnepf; brother, Donald “Donny” Oskey.

Memorial service will be 11:00 AM on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Interment will be in St. John Trinity Lutheran Cemetery in Iscoso



Mary Schnepf

Township, Waseca County. Visitation will be for one and a half hours prior to the service at the church on Tuesday. DSOFuneral.com

Gerald Stanke

GERALD “GER” DUANE STANKE, age 71, of rural Janesville, died unexpectedly while vacationing in Texas on Tuesday, January 30, 2024.

Ger was born on September 16, 1952, in Waseca, to Marvel “Bud” and Janice (Bull) Stanke. He received his education at Janesville Public Schools, graduating with the class of 1970. On August 11, 1973, Ger was united in marriage to Lois Ann Kopischke at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Together they made their home on a farm in rural Janesville while raising their three children. Ger farmed and worked construction for many years. For the past 11 years, Ger had been working for the United States Postal Service as a Mail Carrier. He was an avid hunter, and enjoyed spending

time watching wildlife and being outdoors. Ger loved going on vacation with family and following his grandchildren’s activities. He was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville and Ducks Unlimited where he spent many years organizing their annual banquet. More than anything, Ger cherished his family. He will be dearly missed.

Ger is survived by his loving wife of 50 years, Lois; children, Amanda (David) Slaughter of Janesville, Jolene (Jason) Krause of Chaska, and Mark (Whitney) Stanke of Owatonna; grandchildren, Hailey, Breahna, and Dawson Slaughter, and Nevin and Bryn Krause; mother, Janice Stanke of Janesville; siblings, Sandy (Donnie) Ewert of Janesville, Kathy (Carl) Friedrichs of Mankato, and Greg (Sue) Stanke of New Market; uncle and

aunt, Murt and Lorraine Bull of Pfarr, TX; many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Preceded in death by his father, Marvel “Bud” Stanke; mother-in-law and father-in-law, Art and Dee Kopischke; grandparents, Edward and Margaret (Harty) Stanke and Howard and Ethel (Schauer) Bull.

Visitation was from 4-7 p.m. on Monday, February 5, 2024 at the Janesville Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service. Visitation continued for one hour prior to the service at the church on Tuesday.

Funeral service was 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Interment followed in St. John – Trinity Lutheran Cemetery in Iscoso Township, Waseca County.



Gerald Stanke

In lieu of flowers memorials are preferred to Ducks Unlimited.

Mildred Gerlach

MILDRED LEONE GERLACH, age 77, of Waseca passed away on Thursday, January 31, 2024 at Colony Court Senior Living.

Born on March 8, 1946 in Long Prairie, Mildred was the daughter of Raymond and Myra (Gatz) Gerlach. She went throughout her life being known as “Mildie” to her family and “Millie” to her friends. She graduated from Waseca Central High School with the class of 1964. Following her education, Mildred held many accounting and administrative positions through various industries until she retired from Winegars.

In her free time, Mildred spent a

lot of time volunteering. She enjoyed being involved in the community and was an election judge for many years. She was a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca where she was very active. She was the church secretary and taught confirmation classes to help guide the younger generations in the church. She loved her Ford Ranger that she always kept pristine, and adored her fur babies that were her entire world. She was an avid Twins fan, and would always let folks know that she would not be answering her phone while the game was on.

A special thank you to Rhonda and Harold Christenson for their care and friendship throughout the years.

Mildred is survived by her aunt, Arlene Gerlach of New Hope; many Gerlach and Gatz cousins and their families and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Raymond and Myra Gerlach, and her fur babies, Lovey, Chauncy, Freddie, Clementine, Henry, and TC (The Cat).

Memorial service will be held at 1:00 PM on Sunday, February 18, 2024 at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service at the church. Interment will follow at Woodville Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials preferred. Dsofuneral.com



Mildred Gerlach

■ Milbrath

from Page 3

jail,” he said, referring to the idea of contracting with a surrounding county - namely Steele or Blue Earth - to house prisoners. “Sometimes that’s not always the best answer. [Regionalized jails] work better for larger counties - the metro area, suburban areas. I’m not sure that Waseca would fit into that as well.”

The cost savings of contracting with another county are something to consider, according to Milbrath, who said that the county would save approximately up to \$800,000 per year on costs of housing prisoners.

“Our jail is one of the oldest in the state at this time,” he said. “It’s a huge cost factor as to which direction we want to go. I would like to see the jail stay here. What that shows is that we’re not sending where everybody seems to go, to Steele County, and we’re not going to start paying Steele County to house our prisoners, [which would] help their economy and not ours.

I think future businesses would come in and say, ‘Well, they didn’t want to invest in the government part

of it, why should we invest in Waseca County?’ I think that plays a factor.”

He also mentioned that the staff at the jail are all Waseca County residents and taxpayers, who would be out of jobs if the jail were to move to another county.

Milbrath discussed the multiple factors that come into play regarding the jail and the justice building, including the impact it would have on Waseca County citizens if they were to be arrested and had to be transported to another county as well as the safety of inmates and the public with the current system, which requires inmates to be transported in public areas from the jail to the courtroom.

“I know it’s all about the money - to save taxpayers money - but it would be tough to lose the jail. You lose a little bit of your identity,” he said. “At some point something needs to be done; we’ve kicked the bucket down the road for 20-some years now, and the cost has just increased. It’s a matter of how we’re going to do it and where the funding is going to come from. I believe the board and county administrator have created a plan where it wouldn’t affect the levy quite so bad - it would be spread out over time.”

Another key issue on Milbrath’s

radar for Waseca County is development - bringing new businesses and residents into Waseca County while keeping those which are already part of the community, rather than losing them to other settings.

“There are incentives out there - tax abatements that could be used, EDA (Economic Development Authority) monies that can help coordinate and work together with cities,” he said. “Our industrial park has empty buildings off Highways 13 and 14 that can be refurbished or utilized somehow. It’s trying to get out and tell people, ‘Come to Waseca County. We’ll give you whatever we can for breaks to help you get established and get going.’ Whatever we can to get the businesses back, along with housing here for all walks of life.”

What sets Milbrath apart from other candidates, he says, are his years of experience and knowledge in government and the goings-on in Waseca County. These were gained during his years as sheriff, where he also attended board meetings regularly for more than 12 years, along with his years on the fire department,

time on the Waseca Sheriff’s Posse, and other county activities.

“I have extensive knowledge of where the policies and procedures, department activities and responsibilities fall,” he said. “I’ve worked with everybody in Waseca County, not just at the city level but county-wide. I think my knowledge of how Waseca County operates will help me get going with the board right away without too much of a learning curve behind it.”

When asked why people should vote for him, Milbrath said it goes back to experience and knowledge.

“My history as sheriff has shown that I take care of Waseca County,” he said. “I think I’m a good leader - I’ve taken staff and people in general and helped them in any way I can. Part of our philosophy when I was sheriff is that we don’t just go to a call, we take those two extra steps, no matter what the cause. If it’s a flat tire on the side of the road or a leaky pipe - stop by and help them out. My goal is to help people in any way I possibly can, and make life a little bit easier for everyone.”



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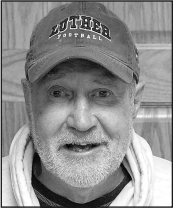
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Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika



Only thing I have not observed is a flying squirrel

A (very) common, popular hobby with Americans is bird feeding. Some 60 million of us feed birds in our yards in winter or summer: that's 40 percent of all Americans. It's roughly a \$6 billion industry. I have several different bird feeders and stations spread out at our cabin; our favorite is the hummingbird feeder on a tree just off the deck. We enjoy watching all of our feathered friends coming in for a snack, but watching a hummingbird is something special.

A fair number of bird breeds stick around for the winter. Some of the most common we can see at this time of year are black-capped chickadees, nuthatches, goldfinches (although they're not gold right now) and, of course, sparrows. The group that is always a bonus to observe includes the woodpeckers: downy, hairy, red-bellied, and even the gigantic striking pileated woodpeckers all stay for the winter. To attract them, you must buy a feeder designed for suet and peanuts.

Woodpeckers are very different from other birds in several ways. We've all heard woodpeckers hammering away, drilling holes looking for insects or creating a space for a home or nest.

If most birds tried that, they would have to check into the bird infirmary the next day with a concussion or fractured beak. Not the woodpecker: it has a beak larger and stronger than the average bird and an extremely long tongue. Woodpeckers have their brains slightly above the planes of their bill. In other words, the impact from striking the tree is concentrated just below the brain cavity, avoiding direct impact to the brain.

Woodpeckers have a different toe arrangement from typical birds, which have three toes pointing forward and one back. Woodpeckers have two toes forward and two back. This allows a woodpecker to land on trees, defy gravity, and creep up and down. Their tail also acts as the third leg of a tripod when they land on a vertical surface. The tail feathers contain a great deal of black pigment which makes them stronger than those on other parts of the bird's body. The long feathers are also based in a strong set of muscles that control the tail movement and push the tail downward as a brace against the tree.

Nature has given the woodpecker an arsenal of adaptations to make the bird completely unique. I just purchased a suet bird feeder

at a close-out price. I'm very excited to see the woodpeckers at the cabin this spring. I hope I don't regret it and wake up to the sound of woodpeckers hammering away at the cedar siding of the cabin, enjoying a breakfast of tiny insects.

With the warm weather we've experienced, squirrels have been active all winter season. They've been visiting bird feeders and raising havoc as they always do. I'm pretty sure I've observed every species of squirrel that resides in Minnesota, except for one: I've seen gray, albino gray, fox, red, black and ground squirrels.

The only one I haven't observed is the flying squirrel: Yes, they do live in Minnesota. They are little, furry, and have a membrane which connects the front and back legs. This extra surface area makes it possible for them to glide. They have large eyes because they are nocturnal, and exhibit social behaviors because they live in colonies. To me, they resemble a flying hamster.

At our cabin last summer, at times, we heard scratching sounds and soft screeching late at night. Our oriole feeder filled with jelly hangs just off the deck. Several times, the jelly trays were emptied late at night. It couldn't have been a gray squirrel or young raccoon because the feeder would have been trashed and the trays littered on the ground. I couldn't help wondering if that might have been the work of a flying squirrel!!

I'm constructing a feeder designed for them. I will hang a camera to see if I can catch some late action animal dining. I'd be delighted to see a flying squirrel at the cabin this spring.

February 2 is always Groundhog Day. When the groundhog comes out of hibernation for a stretch, it makes a traditional forecast. If it sees its shadow, the legend is that there will be six more weeks of winter: If it doesn't see its shadow, spring is on the way.

It doesn't take a meteorology genius to realize that, if the sun is shining, the groundhog will see a shadow. If it's overcast and gray, there won't be one. This year, 2024, the groundhog saw no shadow so, SURPRISE!, we can expect an early spring. One of my top 10 movies of all time is Groundhog Day, made in 1993. It stars Bill Murray and Andie MacDowell. If you are looking for a good laugh and would like to learn the true meaning of Feb. 2, give the movie a viewing.

Pigs will fly Feb. 18

Giant kites returning to Waseca

By TRISTAN GEHRING
Staff Writer

The annual Sleigh and Cutter Festival Kite and Balloon Show is scheduled for Sunday February 18, 2024. The show begins midmorning, approximately 10 a.m., and continues to about 3 p.m. Due to weather concerns, the show will take place on the soccer fields to the west of the Waseca Intermediate School, instead of on Clear Lake as advertised. All festivities are weather-dependent, and any further changes will be communicated through official channels. Anyone who can come out is encouraged to make this colorful show, in full or in part.

The Kite and Balloon Show became a part of the Sleigh and Cutter Festival three years ago, after several members of the Sleigh and Cutter team heard of the shows in Iowa and were inspired to bring it home to Waseca County. According to Ken Borgmann, the key person in that is Molly Conway.

Borgmann says a highlight of the show for him is watching large numbers of children react to the kites flying overhead. These are not standard kites, like one would purchase at the store. "Our showcase will feature an extraordinary array of giant flying kites, ranging from majestic animals to iconic characters," said Sean Beaver, co-founder of Great American Kites, adding that "the vibrant colors and intricate details of our kites promise to paint captivating stories across the festival sky, creating a mesmerizing experience for all attendees. The majestic flight of these giant kites stands out as one of the highlights, capturing the imagination of onlookers."

The Kite and Balloon Show will also include interactive games for younger attendees to enjoy, including parachute races and a candy canon.

Great American Kites is the company providing the kite and balloon show, which was co-founded by Sean and Stephany Beaver over ten



SIGHT TO BEHOLD — A dozen or more large-scale kites, some measuring up to 140 feet long, flew over Clear Lake in Waseca last year as part of the city's annual Sleigh and Cutter Event.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Lawns to Legumes fall applications available

ST. PAUL, Minn. —The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is accepting applications for fall 2024 Lawns to Legumes pollinator habitat projects.

The Lawns to Legumes program aims to increase habitat for at-risk pollinators in residential settings across the state by providing people with cost-share funding, workshops, coaching and gardening resources. Anyone who lives in Minnesota and has a yard,

deck, or other outdoor space for planting can apply to be reimbursed for up to \$400 in costs associated with establishing new pollinator habitat in their yards. The program is available to both homeowners and renters.

"Lawns to Legumes helps Minnesotans be part of the solution to the challenges facing declining pollinator populations," said BWSR Executive Director John Jaschke. "The gardeners involved in this program prove that

small-scale habitat projects can have big impacts."

Applications will be accepted through May 15, 2024. If you previously applied for the program, you will need to reapply to be considered for fall 2024 funding.

More than 4,000 residential habitat projects across all 87 Minnesota counties have been implemented since the program launched in 2019. The program shares online resources such

as gardening templates, habitat guides and advice about selecting native plants for all Minnesotans interested in creating pollinator habitat in their yards. Lawns to Legumes receives funding from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and the state General Fund.

Apply online at Blue Thumb's website. For more information about Lawns to Legumes, visit BWSR's website.

■ Fitch

from Page 3

County, Fitch questioned the sustainability of keeping the jail due to the low daily population and the cost not only of housing inmates but making the necessary upgrades required by the Department of Corrections (DOC) to keep the jail functional as it is.

"Based on the information that I have, it sounds like we're the second oldest jail in the state," she said. "Our prisoner population here is low on average. I don't know if it's sustainable to continue to have a jail. Having court services, a courtroom, a probation office - absolutely, we have to have those."

Moving forward with a jail and a justice center, said Fitch, would cost about \$40-\$45 million. Eliminating the jail aspect of that would cut the price tag in half.

"That would be an annual savings of about \$600,000 per year for our residents," she said. "Those net savings for our residents and still being able to serve our population - I think it might be worth it to not have a jail, but still have those court services."

Fitch also talked about the possibility of losing jobs with the jail staff, which she said would be unfortunate. However, she stated, some of those jobs could be moved to whatever county Waseca County decides to contract with, if they so choose, meaning not all jobs would be lost - just moved to different areas, such as transport.

"We need to think about what's financially sound, and that \$20 million price tag - we can bond for that and not have it affect the taxpayers, based on the information I have," Fitch said, referring to the cost of constructing a justice center without a jail.

Other issues Fitch is focused on for Waseca County include workforce and economic development - namely the Workforce Development Engineering Center for Excellence, a project started by the city and the Chamber of Commerce in 2019. The project was then passed to the county to be a grant writer/holder, and the county has partnered with MSU on the project.

"I think that is a program that needs to come to fruition," Fitch said. "It is a focus on the trades - not only getting students ready for jobs in the trades with hands-on training, but also to help businesses work on innovation so they can develop new product lines and training for their employees."

Access to broadband for the county, particularly the rural areas, is also something Fitch believes is important. She noted a project with

Bevcomm that would bring broadband coverage to a large portion of the rural area, stressing the need for coverage for the whole county.

"That's going to affect all of our residents," she said. "Broadband is no longer a luxury; it's a utility. In our more rural areas, about 75 percent of our county is unserved. That's unacceptable. We need to increase coverage - it's not about having the internet and streaming movies. It's about telehealth, staying connected with family, applying for a job. It's an absolute necessity to live."

Growth of Waseca and the county as a whole is also something Fitch cares about, though she said that it is difficult for a county to lead economic development.

"When a business comes to town or they want to relocate, they typically don't come to a county first - they come to city hall first," she said. "As long as a county is always willing to be a partner to whatever city is leading the way, that's exactly what they should be doing. And the county has always been a willing partner with Waseca as well as other cities and townships."

What sets her apart from other candidates, Fitch says, is her reliability, preparedness, and dedication to the public and the county.

"I do my homework, and I am an elected official who always shows up," she said. "I go into a meeting

knowing the subject matter, trusting staff, trusting the experts, yet knowing enough to ask questions that need to be asked."

She noted she has a strong attendance record as an elected official, stating that she shows up for the citizens she represents. She also makes decisions for the long-term future, thinking about the next ten and twenty years for Waseca County rather than only the immediate future.

"I believe in what former commissioner Nelson would always say - as far as Waseca goes, so goes the county. What is good for Waseca will be good for the county as well," she said. "I'm very approachable, and people know that I am here to listen. I will always tell them the truth about what is going on. They may not like the truth, but it will be the facts. If I don't know something, I'm going to go and learn it. This is not a part-time job; I would have two full-time jobs, essentially."

When asked why people should vote for her, Fitch stated her constituents will get a very dedicated public servant.

"They will not get a placeholder," she said. "They will not get someone who is just there to show up to some meetings sometimes. They will get someone who is here to represent them and the citizens of Waseca County."

■ Briefs

from Page 1

phy. For further details call the school: (507) 833-8326.

3 on 3 basketball tournament April 6

The inaugural 3 on 3 Blair Nelson memorial basketball tournament will be held April 6, 2024 at Waseca high school. Games begin at 9 a.m. Divisions for grades 4th-8th and a high school division. Max of 6 players per team. Three point and free contests and other fun events will also take place.



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Longtime Janesville officer promoted

Sergeant Mark Vanderwilt

JANESVILLE JOURNAL - After years of serving the Janesville Police Department, Mark Vanderwilt became its second-ever sergeant at the start of 2024.

“There hasn’t been much change quite yet,” Vanderwilt commented on transitioning from from his position as a full-time patrol officer.. “I haven’t had a lot of the sergeant duties come up quite yet.”

Sergeant Vanderwilt has been in the police department since 2010, starting as a part-time officer before the Janesville city council decided to add a full-time position in late 2015. Before that, former police chief Dave Ulmen and current Chief Steve Johnson were the only full-time staff members.

Vanderwilt was raised in Mankato and graduated from Mankato West. When he entered college, his original career path was to become a teacher. “I was going to be an educator; I had not set out to be in law enforcement,” he said.

But while attending Minnesota State University in Mankato, he worked with the MSU security staff and found interest in the work. “It was exciting to me. It was at that point I decided to change my major to law enforcement.”

He graduated from MSU with his bachelor degree and was officially licensed as a police officer in 2005. He got his start in Good Thunder when they had a police department, then joined the staff at Madison Lake as a part-time officer in 2009. He stayed there while working for Janesville’s police department until he was offered the opportunity to work full-time in Janesville starting in early 2016.

He said he has always been thankful for being a full-time officer in the community. As he pointed out, usually, part-time officers have to work another job to make ends meet. However, some might not understand how part-timers handle cases or calls differently.

“Part-timers might get something big near the end of their shift and have to hand it off to someone else,” Vanderwilt explained. “Officers on the scene know some tiny things that may be missed when handing off a case. It makes the work tougher.”

That is one of the reasons why Janesville’s police department was keen on adding another full-time position. Another rationale was that adding a sergeant position was to lighten the load on the police chief.

“Now that Johnson is settling into the chief position, he’s learning everything that comes with it,” Vanderwilt said. “As a police chief, he handles many audits and crime statistics. The sergeant position was created to help take care of the administrative side of the department.”

Vanderwilt takes his job seriously...most of the time. While he acknowledged that not everyone in Janesville knows him, he joked that it’s usually a good thing. “I tend to meet most people when I pull them over,” he added. “I don’t usually try to make a point of introducing myself to everyone. When you knock on some people’s doors, some might not appreciate it, especially if you’re a police officer.”

Although he tries his best to lighten the mood in certain situations, he always treats the job with the respect and gravity it deserves. It’s why he was offered the sergeant position. Another reason is although he has nearly two decades of experience working as a police officer, he has many years of valuable experience training recruits aspiring to be officers. From 2005 to 2015, one of his former jobs was training MSU graduates in a skills program with the college.

“You learn four years of theory when you’re working toward a degree in law enforcement,” Vanderwilt explained. “But next you need to take 100 hours of practical, hands-on learning. That’s what I did.”

He believes that the best area for recruits to start in is any small town like Janesville.



Sergeant Vanderwilt

“Everyone should start out in a small town. You learn to be nice and respectful to others. You’re not always going to be respected, but we need to be respectful because we might meet people on the worst day of their lives. Hopefully, the one-time interaction was the worst day, and we made it alright for them.”

A tiresome subject when it comes to law enforcement is the lack of trust in police from the public and the politics that come with that. “We get beat up pretty badly in the media,” Vanderwilt said. “Often, it seems like everyone’s got a camera, and they’re making videos. And they are usually cut to make us look bad. You don’t know what’s happened prior to that video recording. Many judge us immediately, and that’s hard for us.

“People have trouble understanding the job and the responsibility we have,” he continues. “In Minnesota, you have to have a college degree to be an officer. On top of that, you must do additional continual training that’s constantly changing, whether online or hands-on.”

While he recognizes why some people might not trust the police, Vanderwilt stated there are better ways to discuss the issues between the police and the public. “There have been lots of calls for better-trained officers. In Minnesota, I don’t think that’s necessarily the case.”

Laws constantly change: Law enforcement is expected to know what to do in every situation at any given time.

Recently, the state legislature made marijuana legal; Vanderwilt pointed out that law enforcement agencies have not been provided with the specifics they need to discern what is legal and what isn’t. “There are lots of questions we still have,” Vanderwilt admitted.

He believes in the principle of “qualified immunity” for police officers. “To do this job, you have to have some sense that in good faith, you do what you’re trained to do and what you know is right. There’s a buffer system to help with that.”

That’s why one of the pieces of advice that Vanderwilt has given recruits coming into law enforcement is, “Always pretend that there’s a newsgroup standing behind you. Whatever you do, how you treat everyone, imagine them videoing.”

He believes police officers should consider their reputation when dealing with specific situations. “If I run around and treat everyone disrespectfully, that will come down on my family as well as me. The kids will start hearing negative things. We always say, ‘You got a reputation and your honor.’ That’s important. Once you lose your reputation and your honesty is questioned, it’s very difficult to do this job.

“You have to be careful.”

Vanderwilt said he also believes it is important to be involved and connecting with the local community. “I’ve lived here since 2016. My family members have all been from Janesville. You’ll run into your neighbors at the hardware store or Casey’s. If you respect them, most residents here will understand that being an officer is a job and meets a need. As long as you’re respectful and professional, you won’t run into any level of animosity.”

Vanderwilt is excited to serve as Janesville’s police sergeant. He’s ready to take on the role to help keep Janesville safe and the police department respectable. “I’m thankful for this opportunity to serve as this city’s police sergeant.”



A memorable 100th birthday Crumb receives 170 cards from across the country

Richard Crumb, of Matawan, was born on January 17, 1924. A life-long area resident, his only time away from home was serving as a Sgt. in World War II. In 1945 he was hoping for a birthday card, but none came. He felt a keen disappointment. His family, of course, had sent a birthday greeting, but things happened during a global war. There was a plane and fire, and some mail got burned, and that included his birthday greeting that would never get delivered.

When he came home, all this came to light, but it didn’t make him feel better at the time.

Daughter Kim Crumb, ‘69 NRHG graduate, wanted to do something special to celebrate this centurion. To do that something special, Kim contacted Janine Strange who starred in the patriotic



Richard Crumb celebrated his birthday in special fashion on January 17, 2024. He turned 100 years old and received cards from all over the country.

movie “National Anthem Girl.” Strange has sung the national anthem in all 50 states. She asked her social media audience to consider sending Richard a 100th birthday card.

Nearly 170 cards and counting were received. Each one contained touching patriotic messages. Each and every card was read.

“I’ve never had so much attention,” Richard said. “Nobody called me a hero before.”

Richard still resides on the Crumb family farm near Matawan which was homesteaded by his grandfather in 1878. Richard has lived there all his life.

Cards and messages from all over the country helped make for a very memorable birthday. Richard remains one of only about 2% of World War II veterans alive today.

Some things fade away, think eternal

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

I am in trouble. I forgot to winterize things at my house this year. The front porch chairs are still out, I didn’t get a chance to rake my leaves, and my garden hose still has water in it. Naomi mentioned it this past weekend and I realized that I have so much to do outside. Good news though it is supposed to be warm this week.

The last time I looked at my garden hose in December it didn’t have a leak, but the spray handle had shattered in half. I bought the handle 15+ years ago, it is made of brass, and has served me well in three houses. It seems to have frozen from the water in it and now I need a new one.

What are you going to do this week? Spend time outside? Go for walks? Clean up your yard again? It seems that we spend a lot of time caring for the things we have, but then suddenly something will break. We rush out to replace it and wonder if it



The Pastor’s Column

will last like my spray handle did.

That is the problem with this world, not everything lasts forever. We have a desire to care for things and make them last, but they never do. All things break down over time, they slowly wear out and need to be replaced.

Jesus spoke specifically about this problem, challenging us to think about eternal things rather than those that fade away. Matthew 6:19-21 reads:

19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for your-

selves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

I treasured that Garden Spray Handle, it suited my needs well and was fun to use, but it was not meant to last forever. My house has lasted longer than the spray handle and my life longer than my house. We can see the temporal things of this world and in some ways, we expect them to last with maintenance.

These treasures we hold onto on earth will pass away, our treasures of life, spouses, children, finances,

houses, cars, and so on will grow old and pass away. We do not want to think about them passing away, but it is inevitable that it will happen. Christ calls us to store up treasures not here on earth, but in heaven.

Have you invested eternal life into the things that matter the most? Have you shared with your family what God has done for you? Have you invested into the relationship you have with God? We need to be more concerned with eternal things than temporal things. We will spend more time in Heaven than we ever will on Earth, if we are followers of Christ.

If we are focused on Heaven and eternal life, then we will be concerned about who will join us there. Our treasure and reward is in heaven, let our hearts long for an eternity with God and those that call upon His name. This focus on the eternal puts a broken garden spray handle into perspective.

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CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m.	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m.	New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship	TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH 412 N. Main Street, Janesville Interim Pastor Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:15 a.m. Worship
4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m.	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m.	VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Brian Schanil Pastor Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School Tuesdays: The Shepherd’s Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark	JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m.	CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY 900 14th Ave SE, Waseca 507-833-1082 Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m.	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father Glenn Ferichs Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m.	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)
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Worship Sundays traditional 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship; 10:45 a.m. contemporary service	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship	FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Larry Sipe Sundays: Worship 8 a.m., 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class	ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St, Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m.	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Vgshing
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 314 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-2647 Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m.	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Smiths Mill, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickory-tech.net) Worship Sunday 10 a.m.	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Pamela Jensen Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship	ST. JOSEPH’S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship	NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 404 30 120th St, Waseca Pastor Sarah Krolak 507-234-6463 Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; Second Sunday “Young at heart” Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m.	LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting	THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS Brad Donner, Branch President Waseca, Minnesota www.lds.org Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18	NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca Father Glenn Ferichs 507-835-1222 Worship Sundays 10:00 a.m., Tues. and Wed. at 8:30 a.m. and Thurs. at 7 a.m.; Saturdays at 5:15 p.m.	REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca 507-607-8245 Sunday worship 10 a.m.	VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH	

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Argus Archives

1924

- We occasionally encounter in our rounds of Janesville and the neighboring community the type of man who believes that a newspaper is eager to publish derogatory things, or items about people that are sure to embarrass or render those same people unhappy. This a mistake, and one we regret to call to attention, because it is so unnecessary. There isn't a newspaper man in this country but who could spring a sensation in his community if he wanted to at any time, by merely printing the things he knows, but does not print. Deciding what not to print is the most troublesome part of editing a newspaper.

- L. T. Silkey drove down from LeRay Township Thursday afternoon and called at this office to say that he is preparing for his big annual sale of blooded hogs to occur in February, the date to be announced in advertisements soon in these columns. The sale will be larger than ever before and will attract hog buyers from all parts of the country. The day was pretty cold and the roads none the best. But this did not in the remotest degree operate to lessen his enthusiasm. He wants everbydoy to know that the coming sale will combine all the essential elements as to breeding that is the result of years of study and experience. Farmers from this vicinity are especially interested and they will attend generally, as will those from other parts of the state and from Iowa and Wisconsin.

- Mr. Edward Willis, son of J. A. Willis, of Janesville, with the Bureau of Good Roads at Washington, under the control and direction of Secretary Wallace, of the Agricultural Department, is now at Ames, Iowa, where he was recently sent by the Bureau as a good roads instructor. He is giving demonstrations at the university in that city for the benefit of good road enthusiasts connected with that educational institution.

-The high school basketball team met with defeat at the hands of the fast De Molay team of Mankato last Friday evening. This team is composed of some of the best high school players that Mankato has had in the last few years. Consequently, the local team does not feel so badly over being defeated by such a large score (35-12). This team already has victories over such high schools as St. Peter, New Ulm, and Wells, by scores just as large as that secured against Janesville, in addition to having met and defeated some of the best independent teams in this section of the state.

1949

-The Golden Bears traveled to Freeborn, Friday evening, and won teir third of the four conference tilts they have played this season by a decisive score of 53-33. The Bears jumped off to a fast start and obtained an early eight point lead which was at no time challenged by the quint of Freeborn. The type of offensive play Freeborn used was three men in the front court and two in the back court, enabled Bailey and Dimmel, Janesville's two husky centers, to get more than their share of the rebounds. Bailey connected for 9 points and Dimmel 7.

-St. John's Episcopal church members held their annual Epiphany party at the Guild Hall last Thursday evening, January 13. About fifty partook of a potluck supper. Mrs. Chas. Nyquist received the traditional ring in a piece of the Epiphany cake, so she will furnish the cake for 1950.

-Senator Claude G. Baughman, who represents Steele and Waseca counties in the State Senate, has been made chairman of the Senate Committee on civil administration for the current legislative session and will be in good position to exercise a helpful influence on legislation on this subject and, through membership on other committees, on other subjects in which the people of the district are interested.

-Private James Cunningham, son of Mrs. George Cunningham of Rt. 1 Janesville, is a member of the 65th Engineer Combat Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. H. A. Holstrom which is a part of the 25th Infantry (Tropic Lightning) Division commanded by Major General William B. Kean. Private Cunningham entered the Army on Dec. 15 1947 and received this basic training at Fort Ord, California.

1974

-Tom Hinton, Janesville dairy farmer, was elected president of St. Ann's Catholic Church Parish Council last Thursday night. He replaces Linus Hoehn whose term expired. Jim Keeley has also completed his term on the council.

-Both Janesville and New Richland lost a wrestler for the tournaments when the two arch rivals battled to a 22-22 tie here Thursday night. Janesville's Mark Berndt suffered a shoulder separation when he was pinned by Jim Lilleave. Then New Richland's Rich Westland was forced to default his match to Chuck Wilmes when the Cardinal wrestler was injured in the third period. The two matches give you a rough idea of the kind of rivalry that exists between the two Gopher Conference teams. Before Thursday's match the New Richland coach had made no secret of the fact that his team's goal was to beat Janesville.

-Gerald Splett and Greg Dennis, Janesville policemen and county deputy sheriffs, have completed the eight-week Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) course. They graduated January 25 in ceremonies held at the Inn Towne in Mankato. The two local deputies have been attending the course in the Mankato Law Enforcement Building from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily for the past eight weeks. They have also continued their police duties during that time.

-After 31 years with the Municipal Power Plant and working part-time as a justice of the peace and a broker of fancy bottles, George Tetzloff is ready to stack arms. At 66, he figures it's time to stop working and start doing a little fishing and traveling. George officially retires as power plant superintendent and chief engineer February 1, 1974.

1999

-Jon Paul Dierks, 18, of Waldorf has earned the highest advancement award the Boy Scouts of America offers to scouts, the Eagle Award. Dierks will be recognized in ceremonies on Sunday, Jan. 24, at 2 p.m. at the Janesville American Legion. A member of Janesville Boy Scout Troop 89, Dierks is one of approximately 2 percent of all Boy Scouts who attain the Eagle rank, according to Scoutmaster Tom Gibson.

-After many years of cooking and catering, Margaret Drager has decided to hang up her apron for retirement. "I'll miss the people," she said. "I've enjoyed working for the Legion." Most people know Margaret as the cook at the Janesville American Legion. In fact, this past September marked her 15th anniversary at the legion. Margaret worked at the Legion almost every day. When she was not cooking, she was busy meeting the trucks and salesmen. Along with cooking the Legion's meals, Margaret also catered to the many weddings and banquets held at the Legion.

-One employer's gain has turned into a major loss for the city of Janesville. During its Monday, Jan. 25 meeting, the Janesville City Council regretfully accepted the resignation of Tony Newman, nursing home administrator. "I look at his resignation in extreme sadness," said Jim Hesch, council member. "I really feel Tony was an outstanding administrator." Newman has served as the Janesville Nursing Home's administrator for over seven years. He has resigned to accept a position with a healthcare facility in Chatfield. His last day of employment will be Sunday, March 14.

-Forget the strategy of taking away the inside to defeat the Waterville-Elysian-Morristown boys' basketball team. The Buccaneers buried 16 three-pointers on the way to a 91-50 thumping of Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton at Waterville Friday. "When they shoot like that, it's impossible to stop them," said JWP coach Dave Tonolli. "WEM was on fire; there didn't seem to be anything we could do." WEM, which won its fourth game in a row, improved to 4-0 in the conference and 9-1 for the season. The Bucs, who are 4-0 on their home court, remain tied with Alden-Conger for first place. JWP, which has won only one of its last seven games, fell to 2-3 in the Gopher and 3-7 for the year. The Bulldogs, who are 1-5 on the road, are fourth in the conference.

Waseca Archives



25 years ago

100 Years - 1924

- The receipts from the benefit dance given in the city hall Tuesday amounted to \$191.70. This money is to be used for a skating rink out at Clear Lake and for the building of a warming house.
- Genial Jim McGuigan left last week for Garrison, N.D., where he intends to visit until spring with Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kelly, former Iosco residents.
- Edgar Peterson of Hartland spent Saturday evening in this city as a guest at the Wm. Farrell home while enroute to Mankato to enter the Commercial College at that place.
- Mrs. Hanson and baby, of Waterville, came over Saturday and spent the day and Sunday as guests of her sister, Mrs. F.W. Bettner, and family. Dr. Hanson joined them Saturday evening and spent Sunday here.
- The members of the W.R.C. Sewing Circle elected the following officers for the ensuing year at their meeting held at the home of Mrs. W.C. Johnston last week: Mrs. Ed. Madden, president; Mrs. M.R. Kakuske, secretary; and Mrs. Charles Laudert, treasurer.
- Miss Dorothy Larson, of Otisco, returned home Monday after making a short visit here with her sister, Miss Ruth Larson, who is employed at the telephone office.

75 Years - 1949

- Mrs. Lelace Ellis, sister of Mrs. Ed. Stevens, Mrs. William Bathke and Fred Gray, writes from Spokane, Wash., that her daughter bought her grandson a fly-tying kit for Christmas. When they opened the book of instructions they found that it was printed by the Brown Publishing Co., for Herter's of Waseca. George L. Herter is author of the book which has had world-wide reception by fishermen.
- Joe Eustice, Walter Pommeranz, Vern Hand, Norbert Sonnek, George Bogenschultz, E. and Walter Goltz attended a national turkey convention held at the Savory hotel in Des Moines, Iowa, Friday and Saturday.
- Waseca County banks are bulging with money according to the reports issued at the close of business on Dec. 31, 1948. At that time deposits totaled over 13 million.
- A group of neighbors, relatives and friends gathered at the Sidney Dahle home Tuesday afternoon for a post nuptial shower honoring Mr. and Mrs. Jimmie Dahle. Numerous gifts both useful and beautiful were presented.
- Mrs. John Lever and daughter, Agnes, Mr. and Mrs. George Lever and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Bennie Schlossin were last Sunday dinner guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Kroll.
- George Hackett, Fred Popp and Robert Martin were in Minneapol.is Tuesday where they attended the advance showing of the new Philco refrigerator, freezer and radio lines for 1949.

50 Years - 1974



Bluejay wrestlers and coaches are pictured with the St. Francis Tournament Trophy won by the Jays before the holiday break. Front row, left to right: Terry Timlin, Jay Sybilrud, Blain Nelson, John Sybilrud, Todd Eustice, Rich Kraus and Tom Rosenthal. Back row: head coach Bill Bezdichek, assistant coaches Paul Andrejewski and Gary Meurer, Steve Milbrett, Doug Bartelt, Kevin Musel, Doug Miller and Jay Woychick.

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Looking Back (New Richland)

100 Years Back - 1924

- Hollandale, the new village created by the Payne Investment Co., boasts a hotel, lumberyard, store, cement works, restaurant, and a creamery on its first birthday. Besides these establishments it has such improvements as electric lights, running water sewer system and a contract was let last week for a new \$30,000 school house.
- Six persons attending a meeting in the county nurse's office at the Steele county court house at Owatonna narrowly escaped death last Saturday when a 1,500 pound weight attached to the winding mechanism of the court house clock broke loose. The clock had just struck three when the weights broke loose and crashed through the third floor and came to a halt when it struck the floor of the second story. The clock had been inspected two hours previous.
- Misses Margery McLoon and Maime Praxhl of Waseca were guests Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Root.
- About fifty were present at a parcel shower at the Jens Loken home Thursday afternoon of last week which was given in honor of Mrs. Andrew Fretham of Waseca, who was a bride of this month.
- Dr. F.D. Brandenburg has been nursing a couple of fractured ribs (this time on himself) which he sustained when he, with Peter Weydert, tipped over in a sleigh while driving east of Otisco two weeks ago.
- Walter Johnson received official notice the first of the week of his appointment as Postmaster of the New Richland post office, having taken effect on December 19.

77 Years Back - 1947

- After more than 16 years in the office of the New Richland Produce Co., without a day's absence from work, Gehard Strenge put in his last day with the company's successor, Land O' Lakes, Tuesday.
- In a statement issued today by Sheriff R.G. "Happy" Lowe, all gambling devices have been ordered out of Waseca County. According to Sheriff Lowe these machines must be taken out immediately or they will be subject to seizure and confiscation.
- Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Ganske have given up the management of the Standinger's Sweet Shop and Carl W. Neihaus of near Hartland is in charge.
- Mr. and Mrs. Irvin Greenwood and family of Albert Lea were Sunday afternoon and supper guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Morris Berg.
- Mr. and Mrs. David Ratigan, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Krause and sons, Michael and Monte, spent Saturday evening at Minnesota Lake.
- Misses Lillian and Eleanor Quickstad of Waseca spent the week end at the home of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. H.O. Quickstad.

50 Years Back - 1974

- Word was received Tuesday by Colonial Manors, Sioux City, Iowa, that the nursing home for New Richland will be a reality. The council is in the process of selecting a site and will now proceed to choose a plan for the home.
- Gary Crumb of rural New Richland won the grand prize of a trip to Las Vegas for two at the VFW Fishing Derby in Waseca Sunday.
- Kristine Hagen, 15-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chris Hagen of New Richland was selected as the senior division champion 4-H Public Speaker in Waseca County Saturday afternoon. Peter Scheffert, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Scheffert, was the winner in the junior division of the contest.
- Sunday, Mr. and Mrs. Luverne Joecks accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Cleon Christensen to East Freeborn church to attend the wedding reception of Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Jacobsen of Albert Lea.
- Monday evening visitors at the Martin Roeker home were Mr. and Mrs. Carl Tesch and Jeanne, Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Becker and Mr. and Mrs. Burt Coy, Bradley, Scott, Kevin, Keith and Tracy.
- Dinner and supper guests at the Orvin Morstad home Sunday were Mr. and Mrs. howard Gallentine of Geneva and Mr. and Mrs. Gene Peterson and family.

25 Years Back - 1999

Winners at the New Richland Cub Scout Pinewood Derby, front from left: Thomas Wacholz, Aren Payne, Brian Bayerkohler, Josh Dalbec, James Bently, Gene Lynne; back: John Bently, Logan Johnson, Tyler Johannsen, Keith Billing, Nick Hiennenkamp.

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NEVER EASY — The Waseca High School girls' basketball team defeated Blue Earth Area at home last Friday. From left: the Bluejays' Mia Kanewischer (12) and Avery Gaul (31) harass a BEA ball handler; Lily Owens (24) battles for a rebound; Gaul takes it to the basket. Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

WHS basketball girls stifle BEA

Bluejays notch 2nd Big South victory before falling to 2nd-place New Ulm

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

It's been a season of challenges for the Waseca High School girls' basketball team, but the Bluejays were up to it last Friday. Hosting a Blue Earth Area team that is yet to win a Big South Conference game, the Bluejays started fast and never looked back in a 56-30 victory in the WHS gym.

"I am really proud of our defensive effort on Blue Earth's point guard," said first-year Waseca head coach Anthony Jackson. "She is a talented player, and it took everyone on our team to limit her offensively."

The Bluejays scored most of their points in the post, with Avery Gaul totaling 22 and Grace Gurtiz 19. Addison Weiseler scored five, Lexi Kanewischer three, Mia Kanewischer three.

"I am very proud of Grace Gurtiz's performance, for she con-

"It was a nice victory for the seniors in our program."
— Waseca coach Anthony Jackson

trolled the paint and helped our team gain leverage on the court," said Jackson "Avery Gaul scored very consistently for us during the game, which was nice to see. Callie Dufault brought her excellent on-ball defense to the game and distributed the ball nicely. Mia Kanewischer displayed a great one-more pass mindset and did a great job getting the ball inside. Addie Wiesler did a very nice job managing foul trouble and being a rock star defender."



TO THE HOOP — Taking the basketball to the hoop for the Bluejays against Blue Earth last Friday are Addison Weiseler, left, and Grace Gurtiz.

It was Senior Night for the Bluejays, who honored Gurtiz, Wieseler and Ella Krautkremer. "It was a nice victory for the seniors in the program," said Jackson. "They are excellent role models and have had really nice seasons."

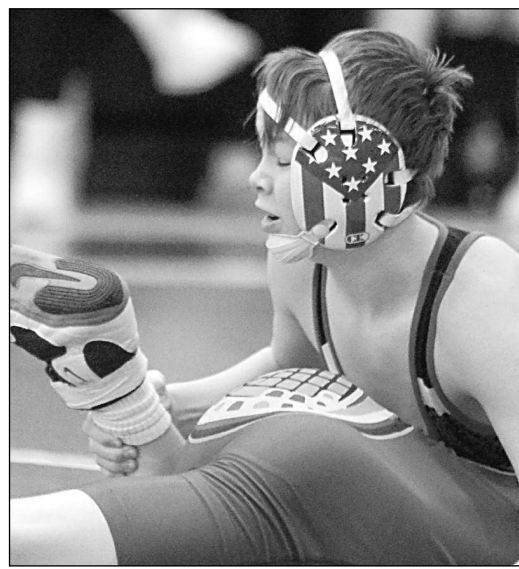
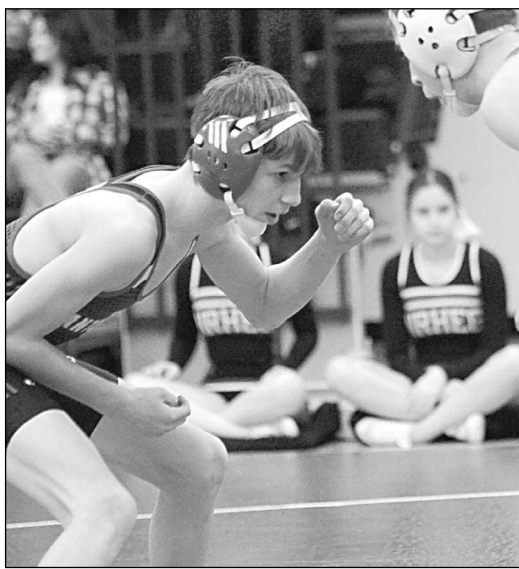
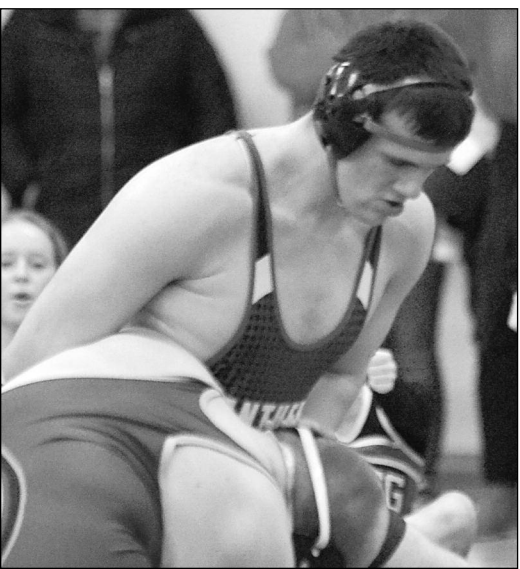
The Bluejays hosted New Ulm, the second-place team in the Big South East, Tuesday and lost 83-48. It dropped the WHS girls to 5-17 overall and 2-4 in conference while the Eagles improved to 17-6 and 5-2.

Jackson said he's pleased how the Bluejays have remained positive despite often times falling short on

scoreboard.

"I am really proud of the consistent positivity of the team," said Jackson. "We are doing a nice job defensively, and we are doing our best to take strides offensively. The girls play hard and continue to bring the enthusiasm necessary to create a meaningful experience for everyone involved."

The Bluejays have four regular-season games remaining, Friday at St. James Area, Feb. 13 at home against St. Peter, and at Maple River Feb. 22 and at Belle Plaine Feb. 23.



ACTION ON THE MAT — NRHEG High School wrestlers in recent action, from left: Cole Hutchens, Dakota Schlaak and Charlie Tufte. The Panthers split in a home triangular last week against St. Clair/Mankato Loyola and WEM/JWP. File photos by Jim Lutgens

NRHEG wrestlers nearly sweep triangular

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The NRHEG Panthers brought in two section opponents for a wrestling triangular last Thursday. It was a good night for the home team.

The Panthers nearly swept it, defeating St. Clair/Mankato Loyola 45-24 while getting edged by WEM/JWP 37-33.

"Things are really starting to come together on our team, after we have been having some difficulties," said NRHEG coach Shawn Larson. "Although we did not win the match with WEM/JWP, we were in control through most of it, and we had a chance to win. If we can continue to get people healthy, and in the right place in the lineup, we will hopefully be ready to make a run in a couple of weeks at the

"Things are really starting to come together on our team, after we have been having some difficulties."
— NRHEG coach Shawn Larson

section tournament."

As usual, the Panthers started in a hole against St. Clair/Loyola, which claimed forfeits at 107 and 114 pounds before deciding Dakota Schlaak 6-0 at 121.

It was almost all Panthers after that.

Seth Staloch and Parker Bunn won by forfeit at 133 and 139, and Reese Routh won by fall at 145 to put NRHEG up 24-15. Harbor Cromwell was nipped 3-2 at 152, Ryan Schlaak scored a 12-5 decision at 160.

George Roesler and Wyatt Larson scored second-period falls at 172 and 189, respectively. Cole Hutchens was pinned at 215. Jace Ihrke won by forfeit at 285.

Against WEM/JWP, Charlie Tufte won a 6-4 decision at 107 and Dakota Schlaak got a first-period pin at 114.

After a forfeit to the Grizzlies at 121 and a loss by fall for Staloch at 127, Bunn and Deven Parpart won by fall at 133 and 139, respectively. The other Panther wins were by Ryan Schlaak and Roesler.

It came down to the 285 match, and it didn't take defending state champion Keegan Kuball long to pin Ihrke.

"We had a great showing from Parker Bunn, Deven Parpart, Ryan Schlaak and George Roesler," said Coach Larson. "All four of these wrestlers were unbeaten on the night, with Deven and George earning falls in both matches. Ryan wrestled a very disciplined match at 160 vs. St. Clair, in which he won a highly-touted match over Chase Bade 12-5. Even though things are better for us than they have been in recent weeks, we know that we can not stop working now, and we need to continue to improve."

The Panthers wrestle Saturday in the Takedown on 22 Tournament in Mapleton. Wrestling begins at 10 a.m.

WHS hockey boys sweep in St. Paul

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

After playing in Warroad the previous week, the Waseca High School boys' hockey team completed its brief tour of Twin Cities rinks Tuesday night with an exciting 5-4 overtime victory over South St. Paul at Doog Woog Arena.

It improved the Bluejays to 13-9 overall. They're 9-4 in the Big South Conference, good for fourth place.

Waseca coach Chris Storey acknowledged the Bluejays are enjoying a good season.

"Yes, we have a really nice young team this year," said Storey.

They played like veterans on Tuesday.

Jayden Gehring got the Jays on the board, scoring at 11:31 of the first period on an assist by Henry Huttemier. The first stanza ended 1-1.

Huttemier scored an assist from Hunter Anderson at the 9:05 mark of the second period. South St. Paul tied it twice more, but the Jays took a 4-3 advantage when Otto Schoenrock scored on assists from Griffin Storey and Huttemier at 11:22, and Jude Gehring scored unassisted at 15:01.

South St. Paul tied it at 2:53 of the third period, but despite a 16-4 advantage in shots on goal for the home team it was 4-4 at the end of regulation.

Cash Lynch scored the gamewinner at 3:40 of overtime. Keaton Roeker assisted.

Josiah Schmidtke registered the

victory in goal, totaling 42 saves.

Each team scored a power-play goal. Waseca had two tries, SSP three. The Bluejays were outshot 46-28.

The Bluejays dominated St. Paul Johnson 8-2 Saturday at Gustafson Phalen Arena. They led 5-2 after one period and 7-2 after two, outshooting SPJ 44-22.

Anderson scored three goals for a hat trick, with one goal apiece by Hutemier, Lynch, Jayden Gehring, Storey and Jackson Tesch. Huttemier had three assists, Brayden Hesch-Priem two, Lucas Groll two. Adding one assist each were Schoenrock, Easton Danks, Jayden Gehring and Storey.

Schmidtke totaled 20 saves.

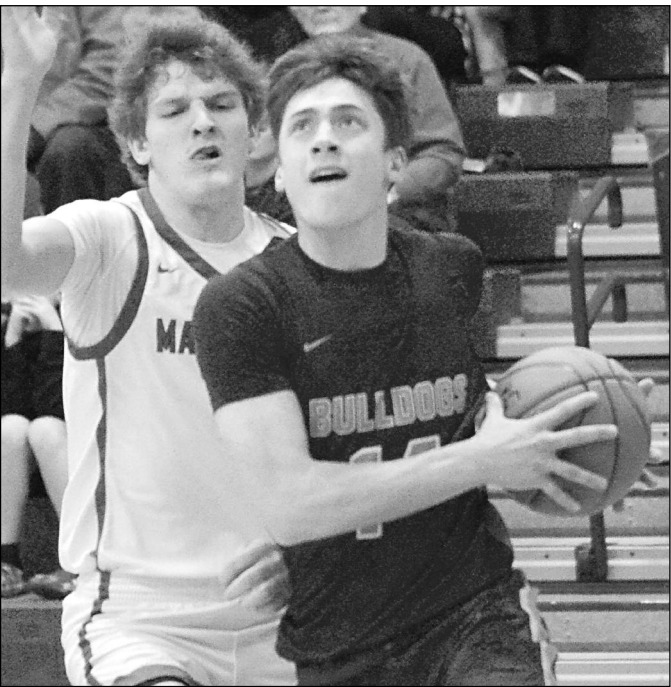
The Bluejays overcame 27 penalty minutes on eight infractions.

Last Thursday, Feb. 1, the Bluejays were victorious 9-1 in a Big South game at Fairmont. They led 5-0 after one period and 5-1 after two, outshooting the Cardinals 52-36. Waseca was 3-for-6 on power plays, Fairmont 0-for-3.

Jude Gehring scored twice. Huttemier, Roeker, Schoenrock, Storey and Jayden Gehring netted one goal apiece. Schoenrock, Groll and Storey each had three assists, with one each by Roeker, Lynch, Anderson and Beckett Srp.

Schmidtke made 35 saves.

The Bluejays have three remaining regular-season games, Thursday at New Ulm, at home against Luverne Tuesday, Feb. 13 and at Marshall Feb. 16.



INTENSITY — At left, the Bulldogs’ Daulton Bauer drives between Maple River’s Cole Davis (21) and Aaron Pawlitschek (12) during Monday night’s 61-53 Gopher Conference boys’ basketball clash. In the middle, the JWP’s Daulton Bauer and Gavin Bauer apply full-court pressure. At right, leading scorer Ryan Krohnbach sets his sights on the hoop.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

JWP boys one step closer to a championship

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School boys' basketball team hasn't clinched anything just yet.

But it's close.

The Bulldogs took a commanding lead in the Gopher Conference East Monday night, defeating a strong Maple River crew 61-53 at Janesville.

The Bulldogs upped their record to 16-4 for the season and 6-0 in the Gopher Conference West, with a two-game lead over United South

Central with four games to play.

"We did not clinch anything as of yet," said JWP coach Nick James. "We need to win the next couple conference games to clinch it. We should be good, but you never know."

The Bulldogs were good enough to win Monday, dropping Maple River to 10-12 overall 3-3 in the Gopher West and cooling off a squad that had won seven of its last eight games.

"They have been playing really well, so we knew coming in they would make us work for it," said Coach James. "I don't think we played

great, and definitely didn't shoot it well. Though we had some good looks, we just didn't knock them down. Despite that, we were able to pick up the win. We had some big offensive rebounds down the stretch, which led to some second-chance points, which was big for us."

The Bulldogs threatened to break it open in the first half, but the Eagles kept it close with three-point baskets and it was 34-34 at the break.

Ryan Krohnbach led JWP with 17 points, adding five rebounds, three assists, a steal and

a blocked shot. Others: Daulton Bauer 12P, 6R, 3A, 1S, 1B; Memphis James 11P, 4R 4A, 1S; Gavin Bauer 5P, 8R, 2S, 2B; Austin Quast 5P, 4R, 1S; Caleb Quast 3P, 4R, 6S, 1S; Cole Schuleter 4P, 3R; Landon Johnson 2P, 1R, 2S; Ethan Born 2P, 1R.

Cole Davis scored 15 for Maple River on five three-point baskets.

The Bulldogs play Friday against NRHEG at Janesville, Monday at Sibley East and Thursday, Feb. 15 at Triton. They host Cleveland Feb. 19 and finish the regular seasons Feb. 23 at home against USC.

Gymnasts top BEA, Austin

Keith continues to stand out

The Waseca High School gymnastics made it two straight dual-meet victories by defeating Austin Tuesday night at Waseca Junior High School. The Bluejays totaled 135.024 points, the Packers 134.625.

Layla Keith again claimed the all-around title with 35.95 points. Hannah Parks was fourth with 33.25, Haydn Lynch fifth at 33.0. K a t e l y n Weber totaled 32.275 all-around points, Lindy Caldwell 32.1.

Keith dominated the vault with a first-place score of 9.05. O t h e r s : Weber 8.6, Parks 8.35, Caldwell 8.225, Lynch 8.225.

Keith tied for first on the uneven parallel bars at 8.45. Parks scored 8.225, Lynch 7.75, Weber 7.55, Caldwell 7.2.

Keith took her third of four firsts in the balance beam with an 8.975. Lynch finished at 8.475, Parks 8.125, Caldwell 7.925, Weber 7.825.

Keith was tops on floor exercise at 9.475. Also: Caldwell 8.75, Lynch 8.55, Parks 8.55, Weber 8.3.

The Bluejays prevailed 135.025-133.525 at Blue Earth last Thursday.

Keith scored 35.95 all-around points for first. Parks was third with 32.1. Others: Weber 31.425, Bella Wikan 17.4, Elli Hoban 16.9, Caldwell 16.725, Lynch 15.675.

Parks took second on vault at 8.7 while Keith was third with the same score. Weber scored 8.525, Caldwell 8.475, Hoban 8.4.

Wikan won the bars with a 9.2. Keith was second at 8.85. Also: Parks 7.825, Lynch 7.775, Weber 7.5.

Keith was second on the beam with 9.0 points. Others: Caldwell 8.25, Lynch 7.9, Parks 7.15, Weber 6.8.

On floor, Keith finished first at 9.4. Also: Hoban 8.5, Parks 8.425, Weber 8.35, Wikan 8.2.

The Bluejays are off until Feb. 15, when they travel to St. James for the section meet starting at 6 p.m.



Keith



Lynch



Weber

NRHEG girls endure as tough schedule continues

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Admittedly, the NRHEG High School girls' basketball isn't currently firing on all cylinders.

But the Panthers picked up a win anyway at Wells last Friday, defeating United South Central 62-54 in a Gopher Conference game.

The Panthers, who recently completed what coach Onika Peterson figured to be their toughest stretch of the season, led 23-21 at halftime.

"A win is a win," said Peterson. "Unfortunately, we aren't playing well right now."

The adversity came after the Panthers started the season extremely strong.

"These last couple of weeks, we have run into some tough competition and things haven't gone our way," said Peterson.

Camryn VanMaldeghem scored a season and career-high 30 points, making it a double-double with 17 rebounds. She also had five steals, three assists and two blocked shots.

Others: Faith Neilsen 12P, 3R, 2S; Izley Boerner 2P, 4R; Clara Buendorf 3P, 1R; Hallie Schultz 6P, 6R, 1A; Addy Stadheim 5P, 3R, 1A,

1S; Ezra Boerner 1S; Presley Nielsen 2P, 1R; Kylie Olson 2P, 13R, 1S, 1B.

"We are fighting hard to compete, but are struggling to make shots and play solid defense," said Coach Peterson. "We need to relax, play loose, and get back to playing Panther basketball."

The previous night, the Panthers dropped a nonconference game to Triton, 64-54. The Cobras led 32-25 at the intermission.

"It was an extremely physical game all night," said Peterson. "We put ourselves in a hole, climbed out

of it, put ourselves in a hole again, to climb back out of it, but we never could take control of the game."

Triton used full-court pressure defense to try and rush the Panthers into a faster style than they would have liked.

And the Panthers were less than full strength.

"We are dealing with some injuries, hoping to get some kids back soon," said Peterson. "We have a tough week next two weeks playing WEM on Tuesday, at JWP for a boy/girl double header on Friday, and round out the regular season

with Maple River on the 16th."

Individually vs. Triton: F.Nielsen 10P, 1R, 1A; I.Boerner 2P, 8R; Buendorf 1R; Schultz 2P, 6R, 1 S ; C.VanMaldeghem 22P, 7R, 2A, 4S, 2B; Stadheim 5P, 5R, 1B; P.Nielsen 4R, 1A; Olson 13P, 7R, 2S, 3B.



C.VanMaldeghem

WHS hockey girls seeded 5th in section

By the time you read this, the first round of Section 1A tournament play has been completed by the Waseca High School girls' hockey team.

The Bluejays drew the No. 5 seed out of six teams in the section and played at No. 4 Winona Wednesday, Feb. 7 in the single-elimination tourney. The winner plays Saturday at 7 p.m. at No. 1 seed Dodge County.

The section championship game is Thursday, Feb. 15 at 5 p.m. at Owatonna's Four Seasons Arena. The winner there advances to state.

Simley is seeded second, Albert Lea third and Red

Wing sixth.

The Bluejays wrapped up the regular season at Minnesota River last week, falling 4-1 to finish 10-10-3 overall and 6-7-1 in the Big South Conference. Minnesota River improved to 13-12 and 9-5.

The lone Waseca goal, by Emily Gordon assisted by Emma Keith and Izabela Slechta, came at 14:10 of the opening period and tied it 1-1. Minnesota River scored three unanswered goals in the second stanza.

The Bluejays were outshot 26-21, with Ilamay Draheim in the nets for Wasec

Veroeven garners gold at Big South tourney

The Waseca High School wrestling team came home from the Big South Conference meet at Jackson County Central last Saturday with three placewinners.

Returning state entrant Matthew Veroeven led the Bluejays, winning the championship at 215 pounds.

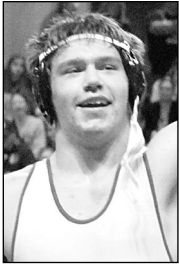
After a first-round bye, Veroeven registered consecutive falls to reach the finals, where he prevailed 4-0 over Gavin Schaefer of Marshall.

Jacob Knutson finished fifth at 121.

Kellen Klinger was sixth at 160.

Also wrestling though not placing was Peyton Sommers at 139.

The Bluejays are off until the section team preliminaries Feb. 15 against an opponent not yet determined.



Veroeven

Maple River dashes JWP girls' title hopes

Is the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton girls' basketball team ready to challenge for a conference championship?

Not this year, it appears.

The Bulldogs were dealt a big blow to their title hopes last Thursday when they fell 69-51 to first-place Maple River at Janesville. A win Monday left the girls 16-7 overall and 4-4 in the Gopher Conference West. Maple River leads it at 7-1, with NRHEG 6-2 and WEM 5-3.

At Maple River, Katie Olson had a big game with 21 points and 10

rebounds. Also scoring: Neveah Weimert 13, Lilly Strauss nine, Lexie Dahlberg eight, Presley James four and Hope Dimmel two.

The Bulldogs won handily at Medford, 76-29.

Katie Olson had 23 points and eight rebounds. Also scoring: Weimert 13, Mikayla Wheelock 11, Ali Olson nine, Autumn Thissen seven, Strauss four, Aubrey Adams three, James two, Dimmel two and Ava Appel two. James also grabbed five rebounds.

The Bulldogs host NRHEG Friday and play Tuesday at



K.Olson



Weimert

Cleveland. They conclude the regular season Feb. 16 at WEM.

Three Grizzlies claim crown in tourney

The WEM/JWP High School wrestling team finished fourth among six schools in last Saturday's Mike Fashacht Memorial Tournament in Janesville.

Chatfield won with 189 points, followed by Simley at 128, Dover-Eyota 114.5, WEM/JWP 95.5, Medford 95 and Triton 57.5.

Finishing first for the Grizzlies were Carson Petry, 127 pounds; Avery Fall, 189; and Keegan Kuball, 285. Maddox Moreno was the runner-up at 172 and Gavin Bauer took third at 152.

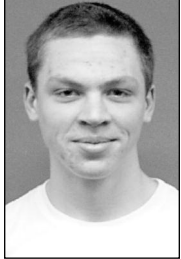
Also placing were Parker James, fourth, 121; Trenton Huber, fourth, 139; Carson James, fifth, 133; Patrick Adams, fifth, 152; Isaac Quast, sixth, 160.

The Grizzlies had their Senior Night Thursday.

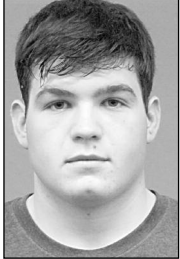
The junior varsity has a Saturday tournament in



C.Petry



Fall



K.Olson

Janesville starting at 9 a.m.

Th varsity returns to action Thursday, Feb. 15 with the Section 2A quarterfinals. The tournament continues Feb. 17 at LCWM High School.

Champions



The Waseca 10U B1 girls' hockey team won the championship in Waseca's Tracey Jevning Classic last weekend. The team includes Brayleigh Kuball, Kelsey Lawson, Halle Casterton, Lennox Swatkowski, Amelia Madsen, Charlotte Mister, Violet Farley, Chloe Cherro, Lauren Tegmeier, Joslyn Wiblin and Reese Roemhildt. The team is coached by Bryan Lawson and Jesse Roemhildt.

Submitted photo

Brilliant Bluejays!!

January

Brilliant+ BlueJAYS





Finley

Kindergarten

Coming prepared everyday, ready to learn, being a hard worker, and a wonderful role model of staying on task while always doing her best is why Finley has earned the Brilliant Bluejay award for respecting yourself. We can always count on Finley to do what has been asked and will complete ALL tasks with pride! Congratulations Finley - Keep up the great work!



Charlotte

1st Grade

Charlotte is a Brilliant Bluejay because she comes to school ready to learn, is a hard worker, and enjoys learning new things. She participates in class, is willing to helps others, and is a wonderful role model for her peers. Way to go, CHarlotte! Keep showing the Bluejay Way!



Charli

2nd Grade

Charli comes to school ready to learn everyday and is a great role model! She stays on task, follows directions, participates in class, and always does her best work! Keep showing the Bluejay Way, Charli!



Kimora

3rd Grade

Kimora is a Brilliant Bluejay because she always makes sure she is able to do her best learning. She asks questions when she needs help and participates in the classroom learning everyday. Way to go Kimora! Keep showing the Bluejay Way!



Britanny

Kindergarten

Britanny is a Brillant Bluejay because she is always calm and ready to learn! She stays on task, tries her best each day, and is so helpful to others.



Brilliant+ BlueJAYS





Alaina

Kindergarten

Alaina is a Brilliant Bluejay as she always demonstrates respect for learning while being an active participant in our activities. She is an academic leader - showing a genuine interest in learning and always doing her best. The sky is the limit!



Jayson

1st Grade

Jayson is a Brilliant Bluejay because he always respects not only his own learning, but also the learning of his classmates. He is a great leader in our class, and always not only completes his own work, but goes beyond and about in helping his classmates who need some help. No matter how hard, Jayson is always up to the challenge!



Paislee

2nd Grade

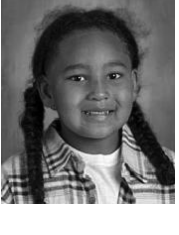
Paislee is a Brilliant Bluejay because she is always quick to do her job, and is a great example to her peers. She is helpful, gives her very best each and every day, and spreads kindness to everyone. Keep it up Paislee!



Eva

3rd Grade

Eva was chosen as a Brilliant Bluejay because she respects learning at ALL times. She is attentive, focused and is a great role model for others. Way to show the Bluejay Way Eva!



Isaiah

Kindergarten

Isaiah is a Brilliant Bluejay because he is kind to others, takes turns, and works hard. Isaiah is a friend to others and follows expectations. Good job, Isaiah!

December

Brilliant+ BlueJAYS





Britta

Kindergarten

Britta is a Brilliant Bluejay because she helps keep our room tidy and organized. She is always willing to help out with clean up, and she uses classroom tools and toys respectfully. Britta does a great job of sharing with others and is so respectful with materials when playing and learning. Way to go, Britta!





Tucker

1st Grade

Tucker is always willing to lend a helping hand to ensure that our classroom stays clean and organized. He puts things back where they belong, is responsible with learning tools, and takes time at the end of the day to help other students stack their chairs. Way to go Tucker!



Dhriti

2nd Grade

Dhriti is a great example of respecting property because she always has her desk area, cubby, and coat hook area clean and tidy. She helps keep our classroom clean and ready to learn in. When working with others so is respectful with them and the materials being used. Way to go Dhriti!



Kayson

3rd Grade

Kayson, is a Brilliant Bluejay because he is a great role model. He is always ready to help friends and volunteers as needed and he makes sure that when it's time to be at a level 0, he demonstrates to others how to do that with kindness and respect. Keep up the great work!



Leo

2nd Grade

Leo is a Brilliant Bluejay because does he not only takes care of his materials and books, he helps with clean up and making sure things are put away and the media center is looking great. Thank you Leo for always lending a helping hand.

Straight A Honor Roll

The following Waseca High School students grades 7 through 12 made the A Honor Roll during the first semester: Liah Adams, Rylee Ahlschlager, Abigail Berge, Brayden Butler, Bryan De Jager, Maahin Lad, Maurice Lopez, Braxton Nelson, Gavin Riehm, Carson TRUE, Tomas Vasquez-Neigebauer, Allyson Holmseth, Oriana Jewison, Charley Kietzman, Maren Schimming, Cyrus Wilson, Ryan Yoder, Addison Zimmerman, Madelynn Benzick, Lauren Holmseth, Colby Hoof, Violet Rohwer, Savanna Vagts, Katelyn Weber, Slade Barnett, Paige Dufault, Hannah Heusinkveld, Layla Keith, Kaylee Lawson, Vivian Mader, Corrick Medina, Pearl Moore, Logan Reger, Jaiden Schafer, Sadie Schimming, Andres Vasquez-Neigebauer, Ellery Waldron, Nathanael Andrs, Kendall Bowers, Oriana Jewison, Charley Kietzman, Maren Schimming, Cyrus Wilson, Ryan Yoder, Addison Zimmerman, Madelynn Benzick, Lauren Holmseth, Colby Hoof, Manthe, Kyle McGuire, Lily Owens, Addison Pfeifer, Levi Root, Nevaeh Sampson, Leah Scheffert, Jackson Tesch, Cody Weber, Kendra Young, Sage Barnett, Lylah Bauman, Noah Dahle, Emily Gordon, Dominic Grunzke, Mason Jes, Daniel Kohler, Josie Madson, Alison Mumme, Evelyn O'Brien, Ava Omtvedt, Oliver Rohwer, Norah Schimming, Ethan Stenzel, Trista Stinehart, Cherilyn Thissen, Addison Wieseler.

A Honor Roll

The following Waseca High School students grades 7 through 12 made the A Honor Roll during the first semester: Hector Beltran, Keenan Collins, Isaac Deleon, Maxwell Deml, Sheila Driessen, Shylo Driessen, Nolan Dufault, Gavin Farley, Chloe Hagen, David Haley, Nicholas Harguth, Dalisaya Howe, Abigail Jarrett, Jaiden Johnson, Jacob Jyrkas, Kooper Lindquist, Dominik Mansfield, Ava Miller, Kenna Miller, Libby Miller, Lilly Miller-Williams, Nicholas Nelson, Wyatt Partain, William Peavy, Macy Peterson, Jaxson Roemhildt, Hannah Sommers, Cadence Stenzel, Myles Stenzel, Samantha Sutton, Connor Vosejpka, Aiden Walker, Sophiel Weber, Evan Worke, Jenna Yoder, Quinn Yoder, Ava Young, Wyatt Arndt, Armaan Bhatti, Isaiah Dymeck, Ashlynn Eldeen, Ashley Fleet, Mailee Gilmore, Brier Hayes, Kelly Hernandez-Verde, Toby Jeske, Jack Kelly, Jacob Knutson, Ty Krautkremer, Allison Mader, Max Malouff, Khloe Nelson, Archer O'Brien, Lillian Petersen, Enoch Possin, Violet Ray, Reese Rodriguez, Claire Roemhildt, Mandi Root, Hannah Rugger, Patsy Sandoval, Asha Sharif, Ava VanDenHemel, Grace Chawra, Makya Donovan, Noelle Drake, Brody Dufault, Zoey Dunn, Chelsea Eneboe, Isabella Garza, Jacob Harguth, Megan Hudak, Henry Huttemier, Kasey Ibarra, Jacey Jensen, Abigail Lapides, Landon Lewer, Taylor Markeson, Nolan McQuery, Belle Miller, Coy Miller, Kaylie Morrissey, Tristan Nelson, Elsie Owens, Otto Schoenrock, Owen Wieseler, Aera Zimprich, Brooklyn Anderson, Andrew Bartelt, Brooke Bartelt, Natalie Berndt, Maximus Bodenweiser, Ella Bulfer, Alexis Claybaugh, Lauren Grant, Wyatt Hager, Kody Hess, Ethan Hiller, Sophia Hillsmann, Jenna Hudak, Anders Jorgenson, Haley Kahnke, Allen Kopetzki, Madielyn Larrabee, Jolee Larson, Gabriella Maas, William Mansfield, Dakotah Marik, Mia Mitchell, Remy Murphy, Catherine Olson, Chloe Roemhildt, Madison Roessler, Jett Rohl, Lillianna Sanchez, Wyatt Schroeder, Kaiya Stagman, Hannah Teague, Brady Kaiya, Caleb Wulf, Reed Anderson, Adrian Arreguin, Andrick Balderas, Alexis Brinkman, Caden Danner, Emma Donnay, Eden Eads, MaLanie Engel-Mueller, Isaac Feldkamp, Lucas Groll, Jennifer Hernandez-Verde, Brayden Hesch-Priem, Brayden Hoof, Tyler Jellum, Chloe Johnson, Peyton Kalbow, Mia Kanewischer, Addison Kelm, Sierra Krause, Bennett Ludwig, Kennedy Lynch, Mason Matz, Katlyn McMurphy, Lucas McQuery, Oz Meyman, Jacob Mlenek, Hazel Moore, Aayu Patel, Cejay Pickett, Erik Radke, Tauston Rupe, Damarius Russell, Kenzie Sandborg, Katlyn Schueler, Jordan Sell, Takara Slattery, Mason Wadd, Solomon Wilson, Maxwell Wirtz, Henri Wobschall, Jack Anderson, Charlie Androli, Cecelia Bjerke, Mallory Bruhn, Jose Cruz, Quinn Dahle, Allie Eldeen, Ahmed Farroq, Tegan Flatau, Grace Guritz, Sarah Haley, Kadynce Hansen, McKyla Hasselquist, Bailey Hodgkins, Samuel Hyland, Kaeden Johnson, Emma Keith, Elijah Miller, Preston Miller, Emma Keith, Isabel Olson, Amanda Riecke, Andrew Robran, Colton Schroeder, Kayla Schulz, Clarissa Seeley, Cameron Stagman, Jacob Thompson, Noah Thompson, Cody Vagts, and Isabelle Wilhelm.

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LEGAL NOTICES

Notification Requirements
Minnesota Rule 7070.2000, subp. 4
NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR LIVESTOCK FEEDLOT PERMIT

Notice is hereby given perm Minnesota Statutes 116.07, subd. 7(a), that Taylor Holland will be applying to Waseca County and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to modify an existing permitted feedlot site, resulting in an expansion. The proposed feedlot expansion will be on the Taylor Holland Pork LLC – Matawan farm, located at 23225 70th St. New Richland, MN in the SE ¼ of Section 18 of Byron Township, T105N, R23W, of Waseca County, Minnesota.

The existing feedlot components of the site are comprised of one 260’ x 60’ total confinement barn housing 2,000 swine between 55-300lbs, another 260’ x 60’ total confinement barn housing 2,000 swine between 55-300lbs, and one 288’ x 71’ total confinement barn housing 4,000 swine under 55lbs. All the existing total confinement barns have an under-floor reinforced concrete pit to hold manure generated by the swine. The feedlot site is currently permitted for 1,400 animal units.

The proposed construction will consist of remodeling the existing 288’ x 71’ total confinement barn. This total confinement barn will be remodeled to no longer house 4,000 swine under 55lbs; but converted to house 800 swine between 55-300lbs. The barn will continue to have an under-floor reinforced concrete pit to hold manure generated by the swine.

The final animal unit capacity for the site will be 1440 animal units after the construction modification, resulting in an overall increase of 40 animal units. The feedlot will be owned by Talor Holland Pork LLC.

This publication shall constitute as notice to each resident and each owner of real property within 5,000 feet of the perimeter of the proposed feedlot expansion as required by Minnesota State Law.

Published at the request of Taylor Holland.

EMPLOYMENT
MDA HIRING FOREST PEST (SPONGY MOTH) SURVEYORS
The Minnesota Department of Agriculture is hiring temp/intermittent Surveyors for the 2024 Spongy Moth Trapping Survey season. Start at \$17.14/hr, then \$20.21/hr starting 7/1/2024! View job post (Job I.D. 73150) & apply online through February 28th: <https://mn.gov/mmb/careers>. MDA is an equal opportunity employer & provider. Questions 651/201-6692 or natasha.northrop@state.mn.us

KMS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
has FT Choir position available August 2024. Qualifications: MN Education Licensure. Apply: www.kms.k12.mn.us. Attach letter of interest, resume, transcripts, copy of license, three letters of recommendation.

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February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7pm HALL BINGO	2 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	3 Four Chaplains Day STEAK or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm Your host Waseca Food Shelf
4	5	6 Burger nite 5-7pm	7 6pm BAR Bingo	8 7pm HALL BINGO	9 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	10 Neighborhood Service Center Ham/Turkey dinner 5:30 to 7:
11 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast 11PM-8:00am - Noon Your HOST SAREC HEART	12 7pm Post & AUX. Meeting	13 Burger nite 5-7pm	14 6pm BAR Bingo	15 7pm HALL BINGO	16 Sleigh and Cutter Festival Dinner/Dance	17
18	19 COAST GUARD RESERVE Birthday	20 Burger nite 5-7pm	21 6pm BAR Bingo	22 7pm HALL BINGO	23 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm Lenten Meal	24
25 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast 11PM-8:00am - Noon Your HOST COMMUNITY EMERGENCY Response Team	26	27 Burger nite 5-7pm	28 6pm BAR Bingo	29 7pm HALL BINGO		

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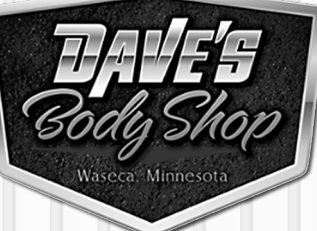

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Please consider hosting foreign exchange students

It could change your life and theirs

By **TRISTAN GEHRING**
Staff Writer

Nacel Open Door is looking for local host families for foreign exchange students. Hosts must be at least 26 years old and able to provide a bed and three meals a day for their exchange student, and all adults in the household must pass a criminal background check. "You aren't expected to go out of your way to provide them with certain experiences," explains representative Katrina Schlie said. "The main goal is for them to be able to experience an American high school, because Nacel is an education based program, and we want them to experience every day life." Those interested in hosting may contact Schlie at 507-995-6423.

When potential hosts contact Schlie, she'll provide them with more information about hosting and answer any questions they have. Most of the exchange students will arrive in August and leave the following June, but some only come for a single semester. Families choose the student they'd like to host, so that they can host someone who fits best with their family. "The goal is to include them as a part of your family," Schlie said. She explained further that it's a valuable experience for families to learn about other cul-

tures in a direct way that books can't provide, from the comfort of your home, while also providing this same benefit to the exchange student. "I think it's a really good experience for the kids in the household, it gives them a good experience on how other cultures are different, how other kids are raised," Schlie said.

Over 40 students have been placed with host families so far across all Nacel Open Door representatives, most of whom are in the Twin Cities area. Schlie represents the Waseca County area and shared that one student is expected to attend Janesville school so far. There is no "typical" demographic for hosts – anyone who meets the requirements is welcome and encouraged to volunteer. In the Twin Cities area, many hosts continue to host every year because they value the experience – this is something the Waseca County area can aspire to. A different kind of success story came out of the Lake Crystal school district – an exchange student who attended school there recently returned to attend their 50th class reunion. According to Schlie, "It's a good experience and there's a lot of people who have a relationship with the child even after they go home – even for the rest of their life."

Lewer named to Carthage Dean's list

KENOSHA, WI (01/22/2024)-- Carthage College recognizes Jay Lewer from Waseca, Minnesota for being named to the Fall 2023 Dean's List.

Dean's List honors are accorded to Carthage students who achieve a minimum 3.5 grade-point average while carrying at least 12 letter-graded credits in a given semester.

ABOUT CARTHAGE

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perience. It blends the best liberal arts traditions with desirable degree programs, transformative learning opportunities, personal attention from distinguished faculty, and a focus on career development, which makes its graduates competitive in the workforce. Founded in 1847, Carthage is located on an idyllic shore of Lake Michigan in Kenosha, Wisconsin, in the thriving corridor between Milwaukee and Chicago. Grow with Carthage: www.carthage.edu

DeKruif makes Dean's list at Iowa

IOWA CITY, IA (01/22/2024)-- Mason DeKruif of Waseca MN was among the more than 7,900 undergraduate students at the University of Iowa named to the dean's list for the 2023 fall semester.

DeKruif is an undergraduate - second year student in Iowa's Col-

lege of Liberal Arts and Sciences and is majoring in Exercise Science.

Dean's list status was earned by 1,810 first year undergraduates during the 2023 fall semester at Iowa, 1,773 second year students, 1,940 third year students, and 2,458 fourth year students.

John Hoehn graduates from Wartburg College

AVERLY, IA (01/23/2024)-- Wartburg College awarded diplomas to 58 students during its December Commencement on Sunday, Dec. 10.

John Hoehn, of Waseca, graduated with a Bachelor of Music in music therapy.

Wartburg College, a four-year liberal arts college internationally recognized for community engagement, enrolls about 1,500 stu-

dents. A college of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Wartburg is dedicated to challenging and nurturing students for lives of leadership and service as a spirited expression of their faith and learning. The college is characterized by vigorous academic expectations and community engagement within an environment of strong personal support.

Diedrich named to MSOE Dean's list

MILWAUKEE, WI (01/24/2024)-- Benjamin Diedrich, from Waseca, was named to the Milwaukee School of Engineering's Dean's List with High Honors for the 2023 Fall Semester. Diedrich is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering.

MSOE encourages excellence in academic achievement and, as a result, publishes the Dean's List and Honors List each fall and spring semester. Students taking

undergraduate courses who have earned at least 12 credits in residence at MSOE, are in good academic standing, and have a cumulative GPA of 3.20 or higher are on the Dean's List. Students on that list who have maintained a 3.70 or higher receive "high honors." Students with a term GPA of 3.20 or higher, who are not on the Dean's List, are on the Honors List.



The Waseca High School State Street Singers practice for an upcoming competition.

Pioneer photo by Tristan Gehring

State Street Singers to perform Feb. 17

By **TRISTAN GEHRING**
Staff Writer

The State Street Singers, Waseca High School's premier show choir, will compete in Minnesota State High School League competitions February 17 and March 2. The choir is under the direction of Megan Kreinbring, who is new to Waseca Public Schools this school year. The theme of the show is "What Home Feels Like." Soloists are Collin Dettmer, Ava Omtvedt, Norah Schimming, Layla Keith, and Emma Keith.

On competition days, the choir will travel by bus in the early morning to their location, where they will have time to get into costumes, hair and makeup before going to the warm-up room to prepare for their performance. They'll perform their set for the judges, which lasts twenty minutes in performance. The judges will provide critique immediately following the performance, then the choir will wait until the awards cere-

mony to learn whether they've progressed to finals. If they win a spot in finals, they'll perform again in the late evening. The State Street Singers are also working with a live backup band, consisting of 9 instrumentalists – 6 of whom are students at Waseca High School. The band will travel to both performances with the choir.

The State Street Singers is an audition-based group, and practices twice a week before school. They have been preparing their twenty-minute set since fall, when the music was first introduced. Kreinbring explained that the students learned the music and rhythms first, then added choreography. "Along the way the students have done part checks, choreography checks, and had a Saturday where we went through choreography for eight hours," Kreinbring added, emphasizing the effort and commitment the students have put into their performance. Choreography was written by virtual choreographer Ria Matheson and students Norah Schimming and Ash-

ton Jenzen have served as the "dance captains," teaching Matheson's movements to the choir as a whole and providing advice and help as the ensemble learned their dances.

"At the end of the day I am here to instill a life-long love of music in kids and have fun while doing it!" said Kreinbring. The competition matters not because it is important to win but because of its effect on the students performing. Kreinbring has a relaxed but energetic teaching style when working with the show choir, meeting students where they are and helping them to extend their abilities. "I do my best to engage the students in an environment where they can be creative, disciplined, flexible and work cooperatively with others," she explained.

Nathanael Andrs, who has performed two and a half seasons in the State Street Singers, says he is "absolutely, completely stoked" about the upcoming competition. "I really just want to perform," he says. "I don't need to win, just get a good per-

formance or two under my belt and have fun with it." His favorite aspect of the State Street Singers is the community that forms within the choir and at competitions, he added. Sara Haley, another student, agrees that the best aspect is the people. "I have made so many great friends that I probably wouldn't have met without choir, everyone is also super helpful and inclusive." She added that she is grateful to have Kreinbring working with the choir this year, and considers her a great source of support. Haley has been in show choirs for five years, beginning with the eighth grade ensemble before progressing to Showtime and then the State Street Singers. "When I started show choir my goal was to gain confidence, better my voice, and to have fun," she concluded. "Having completed these goals, this year my goal is to have as much fun as I can and to try something new."

Identify Frosty and win \$1,750

It's time again for the annual Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Identify Frosty event. This year's event is the 27th installment of the annual contest.

Who is Frosty?

Identify FROSTY and win some cash! Prize money totaling \$1,750.00 is waiting to be won. FROSTY is a Waseca County resident chosen to be an ambassador for the Waseca Sleigh & Cutter Festival. Follow the clues and guess FROSTY'S name.

Grand prize is \$350.00. If you are at the official unmasking at 9:00 p.m., on Friday, February 16, 2024, you will win an additional \$50.00. Unmasking is at the VFW Club 113 West Elm Avenue, Waseca, MN. First correct guess from Janesville, New Richland and Waseca win \$150.00; and if you are at the unmasking you will win an additional \$50.00. Only five names will be drawn for \$100 – must be present. Five names win \$50.00 – attendance is not necessary.

Contest rules

1. Clues are published by the Waseca County News (wasecacountynews.com and Facebook); NRHEG Star Eagle; Waseca Chamber of Commerce; Waseca County Pioneer and KOWZ/KRUE radio.
2. One guess allowed each week.
3. Each entry must have a name and complete address. Entries without complete information will not be entered.
4. Entrants must live in Waseca County and be over 18 years of age.
5. If there are multiple correct guesses, a drawing will be made to determine the winner.
6. If there are no correct guesses, a drawing will be made from all entries received.
7. Entries must be received before

3:00 p.m. on Friday, February 16th, 2024.

8. Submit entries to:

- A. WASECA: Submit entry at Waseca Music; 111 South State, Waseca, MN 56093; or via mail.
- B. JANESVILLE: Mail or drop off at Waseca Music; mark your entry as Janesville.
- C. NEW RICHLAND: Drop off at NRHEG STAR EAGLE NEWS; or mail to Waseca Music - mark your entry as New Richland.

Frosty sponsors: CULLIGAN, iWEALTH, Brad Connors, DOMINOS, MEDIACOM, ICAN, SUBURBAN FURNITURE, and EXCEL ENERGY. Please thank these sponsors for supporting the 27th Annual Frosty Contest!

Frosty: Week 1 Clue

*It's that time of year again,
As we say hello to 2024,
And enter the 74th Festival season,
The Frosty contest is one not to ignore.*

*Much like the past 27 years,
And in Sleigh and Cutter tradition,
This year's Frosty
To the Waseca community, is an addition.*

*Follow along each week,
As there is money you have a chance to win.
Compile the information and make a guess,*

*For the contest, today it will begin.
Will you pass Frosty in public,
As you support businesses in town?
Likely, that is very possible.*

Use the clues to narrow Frosty down.

Frosty: Week 2 Clue

*Like all that have come before,
This year's Frosty calls Waseca Home.
All these years, Remaining in the area
Away from Waseca, they did not roam.*

*To Waseca,
Frosty is tried and true
Graduating as a 2-sport athlete,
A Bluejay Forever - Go. Big. Blue.
But first, Growing up on a farm,
Located on the outskirts of town,
Frosty helped in raising animals and crops.*

*In the fall, they helped to knock them down.
Moving to town,
Not long after
Frosty continued their hard work
Filling the air with laughter.*

Frosty: Week 3 Clue

*Have the clues given enough?
Who will be the first to guess?
There's little to go off of,
That I must confess.*

*To add some more facts
And aid in the identification,
This year's Frosty
Is a wealth of information.*

*Supporting the Legion
A member for 50 years plus
The stories in their time,
That would be something to discuss.*



*50 years a member,
Gives clue to Frosty's age
Born in the late 40s,
A clue to help you gauge.*

Week 4 - Frosty Clue

*Now Frosty is in Week 4,
His identity is still hidden.
Make multiple guesses if needed,
That is not forbidden.*

*Let's bring back some basics,
Frosty, he raised two daughters,
And with 6 grandkids he shared
his love of looking over the waters.*

*Enjoying time hunting and fishing,
Supporting in many ways,
Pheasants Forever and Ducks Unlimited,
Has been Life long, it wasn't just a phase.*

*Frosty enjoys his waterfowl,
Collections he has around,
Duck and geese decoys alike
Dozens to be used on the ground.*

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Hedevare updates board on athletics

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

WASECA SCHOOL BOARD

Activities Director Joe Hedevare was spotlighted at the Waseca school board’s February 1 work session sharing information about both current activities taking place at the high school as well as Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL). Hedevare shared when he checked registration that morning, there were currently 457 individual registrations. “That’s not duplicate, that’s not people playing two sports, that’s just fall and winter single registrants. We’re on a really good pace right now.” Hedevare spoke about how Waseca won the boys’ class AA state track and field championship with one of the smallest contingents of runners at the event. He commented that success isn’t measured only by wins and losses, but by how participants respond to difficult situations such as the one faced by the girls’ volleyball team in the fall. “How the girls responded to that, how the coaches responded to that, our community, our people, was just absolutely amazing. We got those girls back playing volleyball in two weeks,” he said, referring to the bus and vehicle accident that occurred while the team was returning from an away game.

Hedevare explained how the 100+ year-old MSHSL organization, designed to ensure a fair and equitable climate for high school athletics, arts, and activities in Minnesota, oversees the rules, regulations, and policies, and how games and contests are scheduled. “If we don’t follow those rules and policies, we put ourselves in danger of violating our agreement with MSHSL,” he said. “These policies create an equal playing field for every school, whether public, private, charter, or online. Everybody has the same set of rules.”

Several board members asked questions about potential athletics and activities that could be added in the near future, including boys’ volleyball, girls’ wrestling and trap shooting. Hedevare said all of those are definite possibilities.

Superintendent Eric Hudspith shared the district’s new website manager Aptegy, a company that streamlines communication for school districts. “The good news is that it costs the same as the pre-

vious system. We’re just switching to a new forum which is more up-to-date,” Hudspith said. “It’s much more convenient and user friendly.” Hudspith showed the new website to the board and demonstrated some of the new links, making note of how things are no longer “buried” when parents or staff need to quickly navigate somewhere. He also pointed out how administration is now able to use the new school website to quickly send out information across other platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, voice calls, email, or live feed. “I think of a snow day. It takes me about twenty minutes to get through all the different communication pieces. This is a one-stop shop,” Hudspith chuckled. “I type what I want my message to say, then click click click click, Send across the top line where all our other platforms are.”

Hudspith pointed out the way to have the web pages appear in Spanish, as well as a new WPS app available for phones in both the app store or Play store. Hudspith said he’s excited about the app, which “increases the accountability for us to keep things current and keep them up to date. You don’t always get back to a website, but if you have people looking at the app regularly, plus it’s your Parent Portal for Infinite Campus and teachers make sure that’s up to date as often as they can, the app will also do the same thing.” Hudspith said the website change will take place next week.

Also addressed were updates to the registration guide for students at the Junior/Senior high school. Currently the registration guide is an active page on the website where students can go into the parent portal and, with their counselors, create their four-year plan to get through school. Hudspith pointed out the menu options where students can see the graduation requirements and electives recommended for a particular career pathway as well as information about obtaining college credit in high school.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 15 at 5:30 p.m.

Death reported at Waseca prison

On Sunday, Feb. 4 at approximately 6:18 p.m., Jessica Wallowingbull was found unresponsive at the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) Waseca in Waseca, Minnesota.

Responding employees initiated life-saving measures. Emergency medical services (EMS) were requested while life-saving efforts continued. Wallowingbull was subsequently pronounced deceased by EMS personnel. No further details on the nature of her death were shared.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation was notified.

No employees or other incarcerated individuals were injured and at no time was the public in danger.

Ms. Wallowingbull was a 29-year-old female who was sentenced in the District of Wyoming to a 45- month sentence for Assault Resulting in Serious Bodily Injury. She had been in custody at FCI Waseca since February 15, 2023.

FCI Waseca is a low security facility.

Additional information about the Federal Bureau of Prisons can be found at www.bop.gov.

Nexus offering youth Ag scholarships

Newly formed Nexus Cooperative will award five \$1,000 Ag Youth Scholarships to graduating high school seniors attending any two- or four-year college. Eligibility requirements are that the high school senior graduates in the spring; is a legal U.S. citizen or permanent resident; majoring in or planning to major in an agriculture related field; and the student, parent or grandparent of the student must be a patron member of Nexus Cooperative.

“We’re excited to help build the future of agriculture by investing in our area students,” said Jason Schwenneker, Nexus Chief Executive Officer. “The agriculture industry continues to grow and become more heavily dependent on technology while still requiring strong leaders. We know that by

assisting young people to study for a career in agriculture, our company and the cooperative system, will continue to thrive into the future.”

Interested students can contact their High School guidance counselor, Ag instructor-FFA advisor or visit www.nexus.co-op for an application. Completed applications must be postmarked by March 15, 2024. Mailing address is: Nexus Cooperative; Ag Youth Scholarship Program; 615 Union Street, Stacyville, IA 50476. Failure to enclose all required information, sign the application or meet the deadline date will result in disqualification.

More information and continued updates can be found by visiting, www.nexus.coop/scholarship.

Stretching the canvas

Waseca Art Center hosted reception Feb. 1

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Mikhail Rostislavovich, Chief Administrator and Vice President of The Waseca Arts Center, hosted an arts reception on February 1. The artists were Oil-based Painter Dan Petrov from Lakeville and Botanical Printmaker Linda Snouffer from St. Paul.

Born in Serbia, Petrov spends most of his summers in Northern Italy studying painting techniques of the Renaissance time period and painters. After studying at the university, his interests and passions extended to France, England, and Holland where he copied old masters. One of his favorites who he named was Antonio da Corregio because of his dark backgrounds.

“It’s almost theatrical,” Petrov said, “when something emerges from the background into the light. It’s really thematic and opens up the edges.”

At the time Petrov studied at the different museums in Europe, he explained that when he copied other artists’ works, he could only pick a portion of the painting to focus on. Otherwise, as he further explains, it became easy for someone to steal the original and replace the original with the duplicate.

Petrov combines direct and indirect methods of painting that he has learned from over the years and incorporated techniques into his work of still life, landscape, portrait, and figurine. Since he was born in Italy, he would attend various art camps, mostly focused in Renaissance and French oil paintings in the summers as a teenager. It was at that time he learned how he could create different layers from the direct and indirect methods.

He presented mostly still art as part of his work in the arts center but also included models he has painted. Mostly, he focuses on portraits and his subjects will also be doctors, lawyers, and CEOs who hang oil paintings of themselves in their offices. He likes to paint landscapes and mentioned he was especially impressed with the North Shore, Duluth, and Grand Marais because of the diverse rock formations.

A specific state park he visits frequently is Tetegouche because he said, “It has a really nice shore.” Over the course of three consecutive days, he said he produces three sources of different studies he uses to take back to his studio for the large painting: black-and-white, color, and photograph.



From left Mikhail Rostislavovich, artists Linda Snouffer and Dan Petrov. Pioneer photo by Rachael Jaeger

He sticks with still life as a side gig because he notices how popular they are and that people like to collect things.

From 1992 to 2006, he studied visual art in Canada where he associated with the Studio of Sergio DePaoli. In 2006, he relocated to Minneapolis and until 2010, he was involved with Richard Lack’s Atelier comprehensive studio art program.

Now Petrov teaches Renaissance and Flemish Oil Planting Method, courses in Alla Prima Method, and other various courses in oil painting genres for beginning, intermediate, and advanced students.

Describing herself on her personal website as “wandering the meadows and wetlands,” Snouffer absorbs “both the stillness and bustle of nature’s elements - the quiet prairie abounds with rhythmic motion and colors that are both monochromatic and kaleidoscopic.”

She tries to maintain the truth of the natural elements by using green as the overall color to represent plants during their growth period and brown during the times of year when the plants are dormant. At the same time, she deepens the dimensions by creating colors

Consequently, Snouffer balances her printmaking process between uniqueness and simplicity. She said she inks a plant and pressing it onto paper to create the abstract colors and layers of depth.

As Snouffer says on her website: “...a closer look in reveals myriad verdant tones of summer, and autumn months filled with rich ambers, sienna, and rust.”

While she talked at the reception, she pointed to the timothy grasses that forms into the shape of cattails. A few years ago, she discovered a process in working with nano rays. She started with a fiber artist who introduced her how to dye with fibers and mix pastel colors and acrylics which bring out different layers in her work.

“This process can result in something as thin as tissue paper or as thick as cotton rag paper or long canvas, and everything in between,” she added. “So I work with a lot of different materials, I’ve worked with a lot of different backgrounds and mediums, but fundamental continuity comes from the leaf printing.”

After she applies ink to the plant, she presses it to the surface and the result is whatever she gets from the pressure and shape from the plant.

“People will say, ‘How do you come up with all the different ideas?’ I say it’s like dealing myself five cards from a deck,” Snouffer said. She also went on to describe that she creates the mood she wants from the lighting and likes to be random and fun from what’s on her Spotify playlist.

“Having these two diverse artists and their works in our galleries exemplifies the Waseca Arts Council’s mission of providing the people greater Waseca County of the greater Waseca County area opportunities in which artistic heritage and creativity of all its people may find expression through art,” Rostislavovich said.

“It is my greatest hope that our community will take some time to come to the art center and enjoy these artists,” added President Missy Donner.

JWP

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was 14-10 in duals. “We are third in our section, and a lot of our guys are sitting on the top of their weight class for the section tournament.”

The speech captains, juniors Eric Daschner and Madyn Holland, spoke last. Although their season will not start until Saturday with a meet at Mankato Loyola, they couldn’t wait for it to begin. “Our goal is to see the team grow in the upcoming years,” said Holland. Daschner invited the crowd to join the speech team during their “Friends and Family Night” on March 19.

As part of the snow week celebration, the elementary and high school designated dress-up days throughout the week. Everyone had pajama day on Monday. On Tuesday, elementary students dressed up in their favorite holiday clothing while the high school did Safari Day.

For the elementary students, Wednesday was designated as “wacky,” while the high schoolers were encouraged to dress up in their favorite celebrity “beef” for Beef Day. On Thursday, the high schoolers chose costumes representing various board games by class, with the elementary wearing Minnesota sports jerseys. The two schools joined in celebrating “white out” on Friday, with the elementary school celebrating its 100th day of school. There will be plenty of activities during Snow Week, such as karaoke and bingo during lunch, a rock-paper-scissors competition, and best-dressed competitions. The high schoolers will cap off Snow Week with an afternoon of games on Friday.



JWP Snow Week Royalty





Steve Fields
Minnesota Attorney



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Talent on Display



Performers from Monday evenings talent show performed at the Waseca Performing Arts Center. Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger

WHS snow week show

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

A large audience at Waseca High School’s Snow Week talent show reacted with enthusiastic applause, cheers and whistles after each of the acts put on the evening of February 5.

Students kicked off with a jazz performance called “Pure Imagination,” which was directed by Mr. Devon Lawrence and arranged by Craig Skeffington. The students who showcased their musical talents were Cyrus Cuse, Amerette Nevalainen, Hannah LaCroix, Addison Bomsta, Taylor Markeson, Ethan Stenzel, Kaden Elias, Andrick Balderas, Noah Dahle, Isaac Feldkamp, Mason Jes, Norah Schimming, Tarun Ewest, Corrick Medina, and Aston Jenzen.

The opening act was followed by a silent skit called “Snow Week Court” which featured an array of costumes, each with some particular part made conspicuously of leather that had leather in some part of the costume: pants, vests, and jackets. Some performers wore white t-shirts and black sweatpants.

After two acts, Violet Rohwer played “Old Jow Clark” on the violin followed by Patrick Howe singing “Just like Heaven” by the Cure, the troupe of performers put on another skit. This second one was called “Senior High Student Council,” in which students told a few punny jokes.

The Waseca High School Female Sextet, directed by high school vocal music teacher Megan Kreinbring, performed “Bring Me A Little Water, Silvy” by Moira Smiley.

Ashton Jenzen performed “Burn” from the Hamilton musical.

Adrian Arreguin performed “a special song.” As he sang, he moved around the perimeter of the stage, eventually returning to his starting point.

The high school students performed one last skit called “Homecoming Court,” also silent. One student wore a white gown while another wore one with a leopard-skin pattern, perhaps meant to symbolize the snow king and queen.

Accompanied by Mrs. Becky Borneke on the piano, Sophie Chawra

sang Dolly Parton’s “Jolene.”

Layla Keith sang “Stick Season” by Olivia Rodrigo.

Together Ashron Jenzen and Norah Schimming sang “Edelweiss” from the musical The Sound of Music as a duet.

Second to last, Oliver Rohwer performed “Odessa” by Matthew Lorick on the marimba.

Finally, Waseca High School State Street Singers performed “Anywhere” by Ben Wexler; the girls wore glittering gold and black dresses and the guys wore dressy pants and a jacket over a blue vest.

The State State Singers included: Ava Omtvedt, Aston Jenzen, Sarah Haley, Trista Stinehart, Allison Chicos, Mallory Bruhn, Tegan Flatau, Eryn Harrison, Ryleigh Ebnet, Mia Mitchell, Layla Keith, Sadie Schimming, Norah Schimming, Lauren Grant, Evelyn O’Brien, Emma Keith, Addison Wiesler, Leah Schefert, Callie Dufault, Gaby Lopez, Chelsia Eneboe, Nathanael Andrs, Andres Vasquez, Collon Dettmer, Aiden Harrison, Adrian Arreguin, Brayden Hoof, and Adian Androli.

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