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WASECA

COUNTY

PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

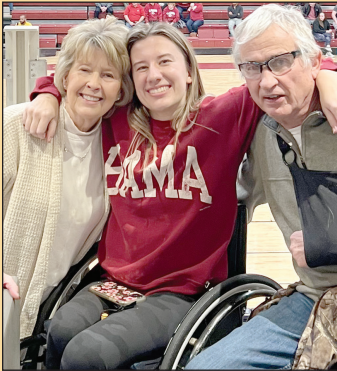
No. 9 Vol. III \$2

Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca

Friday, March 1, 2024



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Abby's Journey

World Day of Prayer Event at Grace Lutheran, Waseca, all day March 1

World Day of Prayer is an international event held annually. All are welcome to attend a twenty-minute time slot for prayer for the world, our country, and our community. Prayer slots begin at 10 am and continue through 10 pm at Grace Lutheran Church's Third and Elm Chapel. There will be prayer stations and suggestions for prayer and/or to walk the labyrinth. To sign up contact Robin at 507-835-1709 or link to this url: <http://tinyurl.com/2p83etv5>

Fish/Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 p.m. March 1

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Friday until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 pm. Cost is \$15.

Blood Drive at Farmamerica 11 am to 4 pm 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.

Wayne Breitbarth Memorial Bockfest 4 to 10 pm March 2

Wayne Breitbarth was a Waseca County dispatcher who died unexpectedly in August. A fundraiser in his honor will be from 4 to 10 pm on Saturday, March 2 at the Waseca American Legion Hall. Gyros, chips and dessert will be served from 4 to 8. A silent auction and tastings will be from 4 to 8. Music by Los Tequileros from 8 to 10. Funds raised will benefit the Minnesota Invisible Wounds Project.

Sleigh and Cutter Dreamcatcher Fund-raiser 12 pm March 2

The Sleigh and Cutter festival is raising funds for their Dreamcatcher charity with live and silent auctions, bingo games, and food sales at the Starfire Event Center from 12 to 3 pm March 2. The charity benefits children with life-threatening conditions by fulfilling their dreams. The Sleigh and Cutter committee is still seeking auction donations, which can be brought to the event center the morning of the fundraiser.

Lego story time at Waseca Library March 2

Kids ages 4-6 can join Waseca Public Library's monthly creative Lego-building group, with an adult. This month's Lego Story Time will be held on Saturday, March 2nd at 10 am. Each event will include a story to inspire the builders.

SKYWARN Spotter Training 6-8 pm March 5

"Skywarn" is a two-hour class

Briefs continued on 3

A word from

The Word



Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

Matthew 5:37

'A blessing in disguise'



Due to the weather, the Kite and Balloon show could not be held on Clear Lake as it has been in the past. Instead it was held on the soccer fields west of the Waseca Intermediate School. Pioneer photo by Tristan Gehring

Third annual Sleigh and Cutter Kite and Balloon show

By TRISTAN GEHRING
Staff Writer

The third annual Sleigh and Cutter Kite and Balloon Show drew a crowd which organizers estimate to be the largest yet, with spectators arriving as much as an hour early and staying well past the scheduled end time of 5 pm on Saturday, Feb. 24. No one seemed to mind.

In charge of the display were Sean Beaver and his son Joe Beaver of Great American Kites, based out of Missouri. "Amid hard times, we're helping communities look up," Sean Beaver said. The Beavers traveled to Waseca with around 300 kites, many of which were tens of yards long and longer.

Molly Conway of the Sleigh and Cutter committee explained that a colleague of hers discovered Great American Kites in 2021 at the Colors of the Wind kite festival in Clear Lake, Iowa. "It's been a wonderful partnership," she said.

While watching the many shapes, colors and lengths of the sculptures in the sky, children and families flew many of their own kites, and also enjoyed ribbon streamers. One of large piece, a brightly-colored caterpillar at least 20 feet long, was flown intentionally low to the ground where children could touch and interact with it. In addition to the show, there were food trucks and Girl Scout cookies for sale.

Ken Borgmann, also of Sleigh and Cutter, called the changes to the planned schedule a "blessing in disguise." Indeed, Sean Beaver said the weather was terrific - "It's warm, it's windy, there's not a cloud in the sky. It's perfect; a kite flying utopia." The first change to the original program was the location - due to the mild winter, the show could not be held on the ice of Clear Lake as it has been in the past. Instead it was held on the soccer fields west of the Waseca Intermediate School; this location led directly to a change in date due to conflicts with scheduling. Still, the show must go on, and go on it did.

Winter sparkle

Fireworks finale always a hit for Sleigh and Cutter

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"Every show we give is better than the last one," jokes pyrotechnician Tim Boese, leader of the five-person crew putting together the Feb. 24 fireworks display which was part of the annual Sleigh and Cutter celebration.

The crew spent the afternoon placing firework "mortars," filling them with "shells," and then wiring them in preparation for electronic firing.

Boese says that he has been in charge of the Sleigh and Cutter fireworks display every year since it became part of the schedule. Indicating the open field to the west of the Waseca Junior/Senior High School football field where the show is being prepared, he observes this is the first time firing has taken place anywhere other than on the ice of Clear Lake. He recalls the show was canceled one

Sparkle continued on 2



A crew of five pyrotechnicians assembled the sleigh and cutter fireworks display which was fired Saturday Feb. 24. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently



Waseca County Director of Property and Election Services Tammy Spooner issued the oath of office to newly elected county board member Brad Milbrath.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Milbrath sworn in at county meeting

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Newly elected Waseca County Commissioner Brad Milbrath was sworn in to his seat on the county board during the group's Feb. 20 meeting. Milbrath fills a spot left vacant by the sudden death of then-chair Blair Nelson last year.

Board members Doug Christopherson, Brian Harguth, Brad Krause and DeAnne Malterer welcomed Milbrath and expressed gratitude that the board again has its intended five members.

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Items of business for the day included approving a conditional use permit requested by Conagra. The company requested the opportunity to construct a spray field on a 190-acre parcel of land owned by John Byron in St. Mary township.

The site is along the north side of

County continued on 5

Dreamcatcher organization fundraiser Saturday

Waseca's "Dreamcatcher" organization raises funds to be given in support of granting a special wish for area children who are experiencing difficult or tragic circumstances due to their health or because of other facets of their lives which are beyond their control.

Operated by local individuals and focusing on Waseca County families, the non-profit organization has a goal of offering a dose of positivity in the midst of what may be rather bleak circumstances.

The group's largest fundraiser of the year will be from noon to 3 pm Saturday, March 2 at the Starfire Event Center. There will be both live and silent auctions: Sale items are being accepted on site right up to noon as the event begins.

Bingo games will be open to players of all ages; anyone under 18 must be in the company of an adult.

Food sales will be ongoing during the afternoon. Anyone wanting further information can contact Ken Borgmann at 507-461-3727.

Rural fire district holds annual meeting

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"Many people don't realize how much equipment we own," observes Waseca Rural Fire District (WRFD) board chair Bernie Frederick. "We're pretty much a full fire department."

The WRFD exists to establish a system to respond to fires and emergencies in townships, and even sections of townships, located within a certain range of Waseca. This includes all or parts of Blooming Grove, Iosco, Otisco, St. Mary, Wilton and Woodville townships. Separate rural fire districts own equipment kept with fire departments in Janesville and New Richland.

Under a "mutual aid" agreement, equipment and workers from any fire department in the region will respond to any emergency where their contributions would be helpful.

The seven-member WRFD board meets as needed, typically about four times a year, to handle necessary business. Members add, however, that making recent arrangements to purchase a new fire truck has kept them busier than usual.

By "bundling" the order for the rural district with the city's order for its new \$2.1 million ladder truck, and by paying for its new truck "up front," the WRFD was able to get a reduced price of about \$1,136,000 for the truck it has ordered. The purchase agreement was signed this past October; delivery is expected in 2027.

The WRFD held its first meeting of 2024 the evening of Monday, Feb. 19. Business included some details regarding the new truck purchase, discussion regarding the possible sale of older equipment owned by the district, and a report from Waseca Fire Chief Jason Forshee regarding services provided to WRFD locations in the second half of 2023.

According to Forshee's report,

Rural continued on 7



Compostings

by Al Batt

A sound investment

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I had a colonoscopy last week. Did they discover anything? They found one of my high school football coach's shoes.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. The weather was so nice for this time of the year that I felt as if we were swiping it from somewhere else. I stopped at a convenience store because it was convenient. I headed to the convenient section offering convenience foods. Bread or wrap? It sounds like money or clothing. I grew up eating with wonder—Wonder Bread. Because of that, it's difficult for me to wrap my head around a wrap. I'm working on it. When I was eating Wonder Bread, it took a brave or foolish man to eat gas station food. That's changed. Should I get a sandwich or a wrap? I was trying to keep it all together. Is a hot dog a sandwich? Of course, it is. Merriam-Webster came down decisively on the side that a hot dog is a sandwich because its definition of a sandwich is "two or more slices of bread or a split roll having a filling in between." Joey Chestnut ate 76 hot dogs in 10 minutes. He's no one-trick pony. He devoured 121 Twinkies in 6 minutes. The bread-enclosed convenience food known as the sandwich is attributed to John Montagu, the fourth Earl of Sandwich. The wrap is attributed to John Montagu, the fourth Earl of Wrap. I purchased a wrap and drove to a nearby park. I sat at a picnic table and ate a wrap on a sunny February day, as I watched the squirrels scamper and frolic. It was a good day.

I've listened to the scarecrow sing, "If I only had a brain" in "The Wizard of Oz." When I was a boy, I wondered how anyone could talk if they didn't have a brain. Thanks to social media, I no longer wonder that.

We all make mistakes when we speak. I heard a basketball announcer describe a pass as being like a needle through a thread.

The last couple of growing seasons haven't been wetter than the underside of a duck. I'm thinking of telling myself that we need an extra moist rain.

I gave my wife candy and coffee for Valentine's Day. It was impossible to match what I got her for Groundhog Day—a woodchuck.

I'VE LEARNED

Wind chimes are a sound investment.

If a toy on a store's shelf carries a "Try me" label, I'm pushing that button.

If you don't think people care about your health, get the hiccups. People will rush to your aid and offer cures.

People don't seem to have fun while watching an NFL game.

We eat the heels of a loaf of bread as a punishment for not buying enough bread.

I wanted to be a Gregorian monk, but I never got the chants.

That when pigs fly, the price of bacon will skyrocket.

Nothing makes sleep more critical than a snooze alarm.

Every box of cereal has a back-story.

Long division is any division done without the use of a calculator.

The usual is unusual.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

I asked my friend when his birthday was, and he said, "March 1st." So I walked around the room like a soldier and asked him again.

I started seeing into the future next Thursday.

I lost my job at the steel mill because I smelted bad.

I tried to buy an Operation game, but there was an 18-month wait.

NATURE NOTES

Some bluebirds return as early as February, but most arrive in early March.

They nest from late March to early August.

Current events include woodpeckers finding timber with good timbre. They drum on resonant wood, tattooing communication to other members of their species. Goldfinches turn yellow on their faces, barred owls become more vocal, red osier dogwood becomes the red veins of spring and weeping willows glow.

Both the male and female bald eagles have brood patches and take turns incubating eggs, but the female, being larger, takes the extended incubation periods overnight and during cold weather and storms. Incubation begins after the first egg is laid, meaning in a nest with more than one egg, there will be the oldest eaglet and the youngest. The eggs are rolled regularly to make sure the lighter yolk doesn't rise, touch and stick to the shell and kill a developing chick.

MEETING ADJOURNED

You can't help someone climb a hill without getting closer to the top yourself. Be kind to the kind and the unkind.

How quickly things can happen

My secret is out. In his column last week, Eli let the whole world know that I am hesitant to write a weekly column because I sometimes have trouble finding a topic I feel inspired to write about. I am occasionally approached by folks who say they follow my column—I bet those people can easily tell when I am writing from my heart and when I am simply fulfilling an assignment.

Just now, the March 5 "Skywarn" training session is on my mind. The 2-hour class will be at the Waseca County Annex (north of the license bureau in the same building) beginning at 6 pm next Tuesday.

I went to my first Skywarn class back in the 1980s during my earlier incarnation as a newspaper writer. Although I had a vague understanding that the purpose of the class is to train people to recognize what elements of a developing thunderstorm might signal extreme weather (think "tornado"), I didn't realize how enthralling it would be.

Class members learned about the atmospheric conditions which allow



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

storms to develop. We were shown the inner workings of an "anvil" cloud—the precursor to extreme weather. We had stories shared with us of past spotter experiences and of how quickly things can happen in the swirling maelstrom of a thunderstorm.

It was a scientific examination of a nearly mystical topic, and it changed the way I have seen weather ever since.

Despite my fascination, I never registered myself as a volunteer spotter, and so have never been officially deployed to any particular location. Given that my rural residence affords me a clear view of the southwest sky—the direction storms frequently approach from—I have often stood

awestruck on my lawn and studied the clouds. Perhaps three times I have called Waseca County dispatch, identified myself as being "skywarn trained" and reported certain information about threatening conditions.

I have attended Skywarn sessions roughly every five years since the 1980s. It is a chance to refresh my knowledge and to hear more hair-raising stories. No two presenters are the same, so someone with scads of time might consider attending a few skywarn classes in a single season. Most counties offer the session about this time of year. Most times, a person reads that a class about extreme summer weather is being offered in

early March, looks at the snow on the ground, and wonders what the rush might be.

However, at the class they will tell us the severe weather season begins in March and lasts into the fall. Recent experience shows it may be becoming a year-round threat.

I hope my ramblings have motivated you to sign up for a Skywarn session. As I said, it's a grand opportunity, whether you are there to become qualified to serve as a spotter, whether you like hearing the stories and experiences of people crazy enough to station themselves outdoors during a weather event, or even if you just happen to be intellectually curious. As I said, I attended the first time not knowing what I was getting into, and have never looked back.

To help assure there will be sufficient coffee and cookies for everyone, you might consider preregistering with an email to denise.wright@waseca-county.gov. But know that, even if your decision to attend is spur of the moment, you will still be allowed in. Perhaps I'll see you there.

Just kidding, I do eat, sleep and go to the gym



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

should be doing anyway.

This semester has been tricking me. My school calendar shows I have little going on, not a lot of homework to do. But then the next thing I know, I'm swamped with work and do not have time for anything else. I barely eat, barely sleep, and haven't gone to the gym in days. I'm just kidding, it's not that bad. I do eat, I do sleep and I went to the gym yesterday.

On top of homework, I have to now start thinking about thesis work for next year, because I decided to stay in an honors program—which means I must write a thesis. But that's next school year, and I should probably figure

out what I'm going to be doing this summer first. I've applied to publications and companies here and there, but nobody wants to make any decisions until later, so here I sit waiting to hear my future like someone who's getting her palms read. Just tell me already.

Anyway, I know I talked about spring break last week, but I am really looking forward to getting some sleep and being able to read for leisure. I am in the middle of reading four different books at the moment, along with following the story lines of four different television shows. There's just no time for anything anymore.

In my global communications class, we learned about the beginning of clocks and how time went from organic (like working only when the sun was out) to mechanical. The invention of the clock is the reason the world is so fast-paced: we began following "man-made" time frames that ignored the changing lengths of the days and the various challenges created by weather. It's crazy to think about. The pope wanted a way to keep time so that people could be a little more organized and less chaotic and we ended up with assembly lines and a universal sense of urgency. Also fun fact, but the reason we have GPS and can tell where we are longitudinally is because someone set a clock differently. I can't really explain it because I wasn't paying close attention, but if anyone's interested, just look up John Harrison.

My Determination: "It is easy to forget how full the world is of people, full to bursting, and each of them imaginable and consistently misimagined." — John Green, Paper Towns

I really had nothing to worry about



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

Many other activities were happening that same day, so I count myself lucky for being able to attend.

I had photographers lined up for the State Gymnastics meet and both section wrestling meets.

At gymnastics, my photographer fell through because, it turned out, the other gymnasts he had to take photos of were competing at the same time.

Zero for one.

The same photographer, however, managed to get me some photos of the Bluejays wrestling in Rochester.

My dad was assigned to the New Richland wrestlers in Blue Earth. He didn't go.

That was disappointing. As a favor I also took photos from the Blooming Prairie perspective Saturday night: The Steele County Times and I have a very good working relationship under which we help each other out by taking photos we know each other's newspapers may want.

The Bulldogs/Blossoms game was exciting.

JWP led by as many as 16 points

in the second half, but failed to score more than one basket over the final nine minutes of the game. They lost on a last-second shot.

So, I got to take many great photos of Blossoms celebrating. The atmosphere was loud, chaotic, and exuberant. A good warm up for me, since I will be covering the state wrestling tournament this weekend.

Monday I interviewed my aunt, Julie Arnold, who recently became the owner of the Willows restaurant in New Richland after being one of its employees for most of two decades.

Despite patronizing the Willows nearly all my life, I didn't know she was my aunt. But, to give me credit, she didn't start dating my uncle John Arnold until 2014 and didn't marry him until years later.

Julie was nervous during the interview. She felt, as she puts it, "out of her element."

I thought it went great. We spent almost two hours together talking about her life, the Willows, and plans for the present and future.

Monday night I spent quite a bit of

time working on a story for the Star Eagle. Adam Finseth, nephew of my life-long neighbor Barb Finseth, was killed last week in a shooting in Burnsville while providing medical aid to wounded officers. The family released a letter, as did Adam's wife, Tara. Between that, and reading the stories, I was emotionally spent.

Many folks continue to share kind comments with my staff and myself. I like the direction the Pioneer is heading and will work hard to keep it growing. Reader feedback is helpful.

I don't write as many stories as I used to, partly due to all of the managing and time spent laying out the newspaper pages electronically. That, and tendonitis in my hands still plagues me. It is much better than last year at this time, but that's really only due to my reduction in writing.

Thankfully, Deb is an incredible writer and editor. Tristan is growing in her writing of features. Rachael is picking up many stories and learning quickly. And Dave—God bless Dave Zika. We all love him.

Congratulations to the many distinguished athletes still competing or, who have completed their winter sports seasons. May those memories stay with you for a lifetime.

"The secret to winning is constant, consistent management," - unknown.

"Do you know what my favorite part of the game is? The opportunity to play."

"Baseball is the national pastime."

the shell, the higher it rises and the more complex its display. "And the more it costs," commented one crew member. Also included were 20 or so "cakes," pre-assembled miniature displays which provide fast-paced, lower-level effects.

"The finale was especially spectacular," commented Sleigh and Cutter planning committee member Ken Borgmann. "People were honking their horns all over the parking lot to show how much they enjoyed it."

toes. Instead, pyrotechnicians had to stop working occasionally to warm their fingers before continuing the small-scale tasks of wiring the product.

As dark approached, the west parking lot of the school quickly filled up with vehicles. Viewers either brought chairs or blankets to sit on, or stayed in the warmth of their cars.

The evening's show featured dozens of "shells" two and three inches in diameter; a few larger pieces measuring up to four and five inches were also included: the larger

In the past, the lake has sometimes been "a small village" of fishhouses. Folks have had grills set up and have gathered outside in small groups to watch the show.

"It was like a scene out of a movie," he observed. "If I could have what I want, every year would be like that."

With the unseasonably warm weather and the open field for a setting, firing crew members commented their work was reminiscent of a typical summertime fireworks shoot, minus the usual frustrations of hot weather, sunburn and mosqui-

■ Sparkle

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year due to unstable ice conditions; that year a suitable replacement venue was not found.

While Boese expressed gratitude for the warm weather—especially while remembering the bitter cold and wind of last year's display—he commented that the lake has often provided a "hometown" atmosphere.



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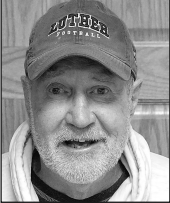
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Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika





Abby, Linden, and Toni Bauleke

Unbelievable journey for Abby

Whenever I'm out for coffee with my fellow seniors and friends, once in a while the conversations can slow down. The ice breaker that always gets the conversation rolling is the question, "Does anyone have any grandchildren?" The group immediately becomes animated and lively. Every grandparent is grateful and thankful for the spirited gift from above. Grandchildren reach for your hand and also touch your heart. Our crazy world is much better with grandchildren in it; they make the world a little softer, warmer, and kinder.

To a grandchild, grandparents are the best kind of grownups; their visits bring gifts, treats, and so much love. Guess you might say "Grandparents take pride in spoiling their little angels."

Grandmothers, in most situations, have their calendars full of events for the year, the majority of the filled dates are all about the grandchildren. And of course Grandpa will be at all of the events as well. Youth athletic events, recitals and dance programs give grandparents something to look forward to. School grandparent programs and lunch afterward in the school cafeteria bring grandparents back to school, a place they all attended many, many years before; also band, choir, plays, and maybe even a speech or debate contest. A church service brings grandparents so much joy, as they watch a grandchild sing a special Christmas hymn or play Mary or Joseph in a Christmas pageant. Birthday and holiday celebrations become big affairs with lots of laughs and hoopla. A grandchild graduating or even getting married becomes such a wonderful milestone to be a part of. Being a grandparent rocks!!

Linden and Toni Bauleke have resided in Waseca their entire lives. They raised six wonderful children, all of them graduated from Waseca High School, all are married, all have children. Linden and Toni, now retired, will happily tell you their life is presently consumed with family—especially the 18 grandkids and 2 great-grandkids. During February, Toni was busy sending out valentines to everyone in the family, both young and old. Linden and Toni both take pride in the fact that they give gifts to everyone in the family at Christmas; kids, spouses, and grandkids.

Chris, the Bauleke's oldest son, and wife Natalie, have given Linden and Toni a very special granddaughter, Abby.

Abby, at a very young age, contracted leukemia, which she beat

and became cancer free. Unfortunately she developed Gullian Barre Syndrome (French Polio) which caused paralysis at a very early age from the hips down. Abby became a very avid reader; at age 12 she also developed a passion for wheelchair basketball at a Courage Center. Abby became an outstanding wheelchair basketball player thanks to the coaching and help she received from "Kenny" at the Courage Center. Abby went on to graduate from Burnsville High School, where she competed in swimming and was elected captain. She swam without the use of her legs and competed against her own personal times.

Abby's unbelievable journey was just beginning. She was given a scholarship to play wheelchair basketball at the University of Alabama. I've always thought that Alabama was an elite college football powerhouse: I was surprised to learn it is also a wheelchair basketball powerhouse. Alabama has its own wheelchair basketball field house and Abby was an instrumental defensive specialist on three national champion teams, playing against teams like Illinois, Wisconsin, Texas and other wheelchair teams before a packed house of spectators.

Abby has trained in Colorado Springs, played on a USA national team against other teams from countries like Chili, Brazil and Thailand, and won a bronze medal in basketball at the Paralympian games in China.

I watched a Channel 5 news segment that Toni and Linden had recorded—an interview with Abby about her remarkable journey. Time and time again both grandparents told me how special their granddaughter is; loving, kind, humble and courageous. During the interview Abby was asked what she always looks forward to. Her response was "I always look forward to going home and spending quality time with my family." When Abby graduates she wants to give back to children who have had the same health problems she had to overcome. She's looking at work in a hospital as a child life specialist who brings hope and joy to young children with health problems.

Abby is currently training and working out for a possible spot on the Paralympian USA wheelchair basketball team. The Paralympics will be held in Paris. If she's selected, I'm sure the Baulekes will be there cheering for the USA and Abby. Will she earn a spot on the USA basketball team?? I would not bet against her!!

'Kindness booth'

Books given to area first-graders

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"It's been a long-time goal to have a book specifically from the United Way," observes Laura Murray, author of "The Kindness Booth" and Greater Mankato Area United Way worker. Murray points out that both social issues and children's literacy are topics the organization works on.

"So a children's book about kindness meets at least two of our goals at once."

"The Kindness Booth," written by Murray and illustrated by Italian artist Andreana Boatta, was published by Capstone Press, an international company based in North Mankato. Its official release was at the end of January with a celebration and book signing at Barnes and Noble in Mankato. The book is available for purchase at Barnes and Noble, and online. Profits from any sales of "The Kindness Booth" will go to support the United Way.

In the meantime, to support children's literacy in the region, about 2,000 paperback copies of the book are being distributed to first-graders at public and private schools.

Author Murray and Karlie Swearingen of the United Way visited JWP, Hartley, Sacred Heart and Trinity elementary schools on Tuesday, distributing about 200 free copies of the book. According to Murray, the organization donates about 30,000 books each year as part of its literacy program.

"We're really excited for this community outreach," Murray said during Tuesday's distribution. "It's nice that we can focus on kindness and what we can do to be kind to others, since that's something we can all use more of."

During the presentation at Hartley Elementary, Murray read the book out loud to about 100 first-graders. The story tells of a group of friends who set up a "kindness booth" with a sign saying "We will brighten your day for free."

When asked what they could do to show kindness to others, first-graders suggested possibilities including "hugging friends," "helping friends when they're having a bad day," "playing with new people," and "don't hit or push."



Author Laura Murray read her book "The Kindness Booth" out loud to first-graders at Hartley Elementary, telling them they were "some of the first to hear" the book's story. After the reading and a brief discussion, all students were given their own free paperback copy.



Left, Hartley Elementary first-grader Gavin VonRump began reading his copy of "The Kindness Booth" the moment he received it. Pioneer photos by Deb Bently

■ Briefs

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meant to train volunteer spotters in recognizing and reporting the various features of severe thunderstorms. The March 5 class at the Waseca County Annex will be taught by meteorologists from the National Weather Service. All interested parties are invited to attend, whether they wish to serve as spotters or not. There is no cost; pre-registration is preferred at denise.wright@waseca-county.gov. Walk-ins will also be welcome.

Steak Fry for Waseca

Fusion Volleyball Friday March 5

The Waseca American Legion and Waseca Fusion Volleyball are hosting a steak fry and bake sale fundraiser Friday March 5. Menu includes steak, shrimp, or a combo and ranges from \$10-\$18.

Beginners' Sourdough Workshop 5 pm March 7 at New Richland Library

The New Richland Friends of the Library are hosting a Sourdough Workshop for beginners at the New Richland Library, March 7 at 5 p.m. The workshop will cover everything one needs to know to get started making sourdough bread, from starter maintenance to recipes.

Fish or Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 pm March 8

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Friday until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 pm. March 8 features a choice of shrimp scampi or baked salmon. Cost is \$15.

Open House at The Pines Retreat 12-5 March 9

An open house is being held at The Pines Retreat, a new craft retreat center in the old Whispering Pines Restaurant building in Ellendale. The Open House will be from 12 to 5 on

March 9.

Fish or Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 pm March 15

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Friday until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 pm. March 15 features walleye and shrimp. Cost is \$15.



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OBITUARIES

Carol Anthony

Carol A. Anthony age 78, passed away peacefully on January 26, 2024, at Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center, Waseca, MN.

Born July 16, 1945, in Rolla, North Dakota, she was raised in Floodwood, MN, and spent a great deal of time at Lake Pokegama. She graduated from Minnesota State University, Moorhead, MN, with an education degree and earned a Master of Arts degree from University of St Thomas. She spent the first part of her career teaching health and physical education in Wisconsin and Cole-raine, MN. The remaining years were at Waseca Middle/Jr High School where she retired in 2004. She was a long-time member of Delta Kappa Gamma.

On September 2, 1979, Carol married David E. Anthony in Grand Rapids, MN. They resided in Waseca, MN, David's home-town. Both had a strong faith and were members of Sacred Heart Catholic Church. They served the Lord by faithfully distributing communion to residents at Lake-shore Inn. They built a summer cabin together on Lake Pomme de Terre in Ashby, MN and spent their summers enjoying family and friends there.

After David's death in 2001, Carol continued hosting at the lake; baking, fishing, playing games, and driving the boat for all to enjoy. She was very industrious and tackled multiple carpentry projects. She had a passion for gardening and was especially proud of her dahlias. She was wonderful in the kitchen; canning, cooking, and baking her signature treats.

Animals were a large part of Carol's life, from horses to the dogs and cats she had throughout her life. Her eleven-year-old dog, Carlie, passed away only a few weeks before Carol.

In her later years, Carol wintered in Texas which was close to her brother, David, and her friends from Lake Pomme de Terre.

Carol was a strong independent woman. When health and other adversities were in her path, she met them full steam ahead. Her faith



Carol Anthony

guided her, and she was an inspiration to all who knew her. She will be laid to rest next to David, under the beautiful gravestone she designed when he passed away. It reads, "In His Will Is Our Peace."

Not only was Carol devoted to her late husband, David, she was a remarkable stepmom and grandmother to Todd (Sue) Anthony and their daughter, Heather; and Sara (the late Timothy Harris) and their children Rachel (Steven) Grenawalt and Emma (Joshua) Yonker.

Carol was the loving daughter of Warren and Clara Naegeli who preceded her in death. She was a loving sister and aunt and adored spending time with her brothers and their families: David (the late Sylvia) Naegeli and their sons Warren and Vincent (Priscilla); and the late Wilson (Marcia) Naegeli and their daughters Kristen (Timothy) Engrav and their children Abigail, Alexander, Asher and the late Matthew; and Jodi (Brady) Coulombe and their children Emma and Katelyn. Carol's brother, Newell Naegeli, passed away as an infant.

A Memorial Mass will be held on Saturday, March 2, 2024, at 11a.m. at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca, MN. Visitation will be one hour prior to the service. Interment will be at the Alma City Cemetery.

Memorials may be given to Sacred Heart Catholic Church or to the donor's choice. DSOfuneral.com

Mark Jewett

Mark Allan Jewett, age 60 formerly of Waseca, died on Thursday, February 22, 2024 in Texas as a result of a motorcycle accident.

Born on November 17, 1963 in Flandreau, South Dakota, he was the son of Richard and Alice (Nelson) Jewett. At a young age, Mark moved with his family to Waseca. He graduated from Waseca High School in 1982. Mark worked at Brown Printing Company and Federated Insurance. He later moved to Bemidji where he ran his own lawn service. He recently relocated to Texas in his RV. Mark enjoyed snowmobiling, riding motorcycle, playing softball and pheasant hunting.

He is survived by his father, Richard Jewett of Flandreau, SD; sister, Kathy Kastens of Waseca and her children: Jamie (Jenny) Nace of Paynesville, and Shaun (Shags) Nace of San Diego, CA; brother, Larry Jewett of Flandreau, SD and his children, Rob and Sam Jewett; half siblings, Lisa (KK) Drapaeu, Danny (Stacy) Jewett of Crooks, SD, and Michael (Michelle) Jewett of Brookings, SD;



Mark Jewett

and many aunts, uncles, great nieces and nephews, and other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his mother and step-father, Alice and Ralph Williamson; and his dog, Basil.

A memorial service will be held on Friday, March 8, 2024 at 2:00 PM at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis Steffel Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation will be held on Friday, one hour before services at the funeral home. Burial will take place on a later date in South Dakota.

Anita Hildebrandt

ANITA MARTHA (EWERT) HILDEBRANDT, age 92, of Waseca passed away on February 24, 2024 at Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center in Waseca.

She is survived by four children, Jeanne (Marshall Kath) Hildebrandt of Prior Lake, MN; Gerald (Dawn Felber) Hildebrandt, Lake Forest, IL; Lori (Larry Bondhus) Hildebrandt-Bondhus, Grand Rapids, MN; Scott (Peggy) Hildebrandt, Waseca; five grandchildren, Andrea Hildebrandt Hoehn, Elliot (Lauren Van Crey) Hildebrandt, Hannah (Jay Zaleski) Hildebrandt, Paige (Blake) Wolters,

Emily (Mathew) Lindquist and two great grandchildren, Lucas Hoehn and Hattie Wolters.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Merlin Hildebrandt in 2008; son, Mark Hildebrandt in 1985; her mother, father, sister and brother.

A private family service will be held.

Memorials are preferred in lieu of flowers to St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca, or a charity close to your heart.

Arrangements by Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Crema-tion Service in Waseca. Dsofuneral.com

Finding value in community

Lynch honored by Waseca Chamber with award

ICAN Director shows dedication

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

ICAN Business Development Director Tiffany Lynch was honored for her service as a chamber ambassador during a community awards banquet held at the Starfire Event Center in January.

Lynch's dedication to service and consistency is evident in many facets of her life. She literally worked her way to her position in management with ICAN, having begun her employment with the agency at the age of 18. At that time, 2002, she was staff support for community residential setting available to individuals with intellectual or physical disabilities.

During those first years, she took on extra duties to expand the ways she could serve ICAN clients. Consequently, in 2005, the organization promoted her to Personal Support Manager. When an opportunity arose to begin working with finance in 2007, Lynch took classes at South Central College where she acquired her AAS degree in accounting.

Now as Business Development Director, Lynch manages finances, marketing, public relations, and business operations and development. She treasures her experiences working alongside ICAN founder Tracy Jevning, who lost her battle with cancer in 2017.

Jevning was also an inspiration regarding work with the Waseca Chamber of Commerce.

In her personal life, Lynch says she values being active with her children's schools, community events, and past experience as an Olympics Coach. She is also an active member of the Lions Club.

In her work as a chamber ambassador, Lynch helps out with events like Business After Hours, grand openings for businesses, Chamber Pluck Program, and Walk to the Park.

"I enjoy being busy at work. I enjoy my co-workers and the mission we accomplish together," Lynch said about her profession at ICAN, adding that ensuring the business runs smoothly means a



Tiffany Lynch

lot to her. "Checking for accuracy for things that come in and out of our business. I'm a numbers girl."

She also said that working around her co-workers inspires her because of their ambition and their dedication, including being part of other businesses.

"Being an ambassador for the Chamber of Commerce means you promote the value of a chamber membership and recognize the investments in the community," Lynch said. "As an ambassador, we present progress awards to businesses that have made improvements to their business or started or acquired businesses within our community."

She offered examples of acquiring a new office,

relocating, or providing services which benefit the community. The Chamber also celebrates milestones, including acknowledging anniversaries of longstanding businesses.

Ambassadors, Lynch added, also provide information to entrepreneurs, businesses, and organizations. Essentially, she said, an ambassador helps support and expand the community network.

"My commitment to being an ambassador is, if there's a need Ann (Fitch) or Kristie (Biehn) have, I'm willing to help out," Lynch said. "I'm thankful that my job allows me the flexibility to be active in the Chamber, including, if I'm needed to, during the workday."

Frederick received Don Eustice Award

God, family, community and agriculuture

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Ed Frederick, 94, who received the Don Eustice Award during the Community Awards Banquet last month, has a clear love for his community. Though others might take the opportunity to boast, Frederick credits his impressive list of personal and professional accomplishments to God and his community.

"When I hit 90 years old, I decided that since God had given me some extra time that he doesn't give everybody, I took a week or two to pray about what I should do," Frederick said. "Finally, what I came up with was that I should be a cheerleader for God and his message on earth, the family, the community, and agriculture."

He added that, once he had gotten that straight in his mind, he had a reason for getting up in the morning. His wife Shirley, had died in 2016: Frederick says she is busy preparing a place for him.

During the time *The Pioneer* spent and conversed with Frederick, it became clear that all of what he had mentioned – God and his message, family, community, and agriculture – meant and still mean a lot to him. Since he doesn't drive anymore, mentioned how much he appreciates the members at Sacred Heart Church who come pick him up for mass and other services. He also appreciates others who help him not to miss a Rotary Club meeting.

It was through the Rotary Club that Frederick became acquainted with Eustice, the namesake of the award.

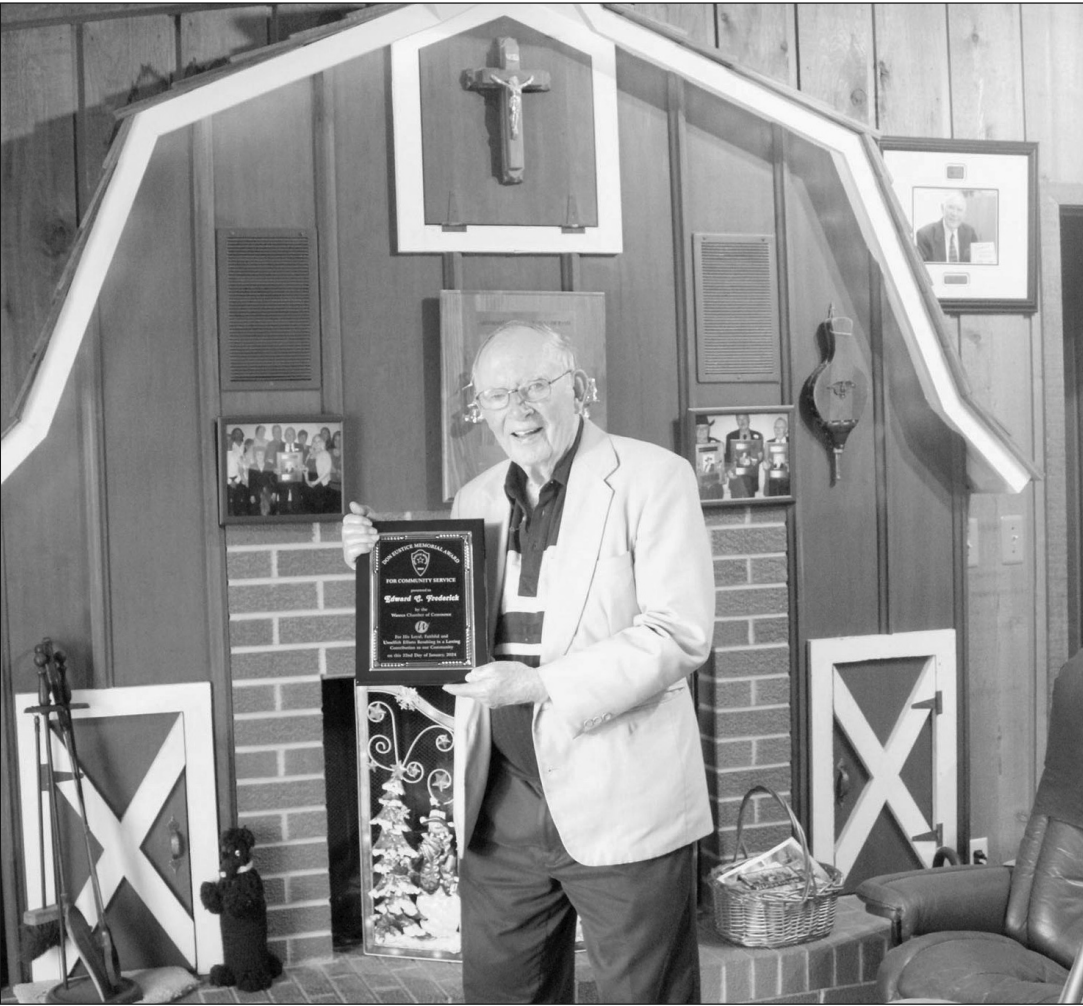
"I knew him very well," Frederick said of one-time county sheriff Don Eustice. Frederick recalled a time when Eustice told him the two of them should travel to Chicago, claiming "There's a big national meeting out there and we need to be there!"

The topic of the convention was a warning about certain drugs that were about to infiltrate college campuses nationwide.

"Unfortunately, they didn't tell us just how bad it was gonna get," Frederick said. "But fortunately, we did a pretty good job of keeping [drugs] out of the college or at least repressing them."

Frederick expressed particular pride that he has maintained sixty years of perfect attendance at Rotary Club. He added that he acquired a Baccalaureate Degree in Agricultural Education, Masters Degree in Dairy Production, and in 1957 earned the Ph.D. Degree in Dairy Physiology at the University of Minnesota. He was a member of the University of Minnesota Dairy and General Livestock judging teams. He served as an animal scientist at the University of Minnesota Northwest School of Agriculture in Crookston from 1958-1964.

Frederick became superintendent of the University of Minnesota Southern School of Agriculture



Ed Frederick

and Experiment Station in 1964 and later became Provost, then Chancellor, of the University of Minnesota-Waseca, serving in that capacity until 1990. Since leaving the Waseca program, Frederick has served as a senior fellow with the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs and been associated with the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences.

Recently, Frederick was invited back for the sixtieth anniversary of the university at Crookston; his son Kenny drove him there. Frederick mentioned a surprise element of the trip: after a large group banquet, everyone was invited outside for a ceremony in which the university dedicated a rock to him.

"It was quite an experience," Frederick remembered. "I've been fortunate."

Along with his impressive resume, Frederick cites one of his most important accomplishments as his lifelong relationship with his wife, Shirley. The two of them met through 4-H, an organization which was just being established in Waseca County during his youth.

While Frederick said he had plenty of opportunities outside of agriculture, he stuck with agriculture because that's where his passion lay.

"It comes from growing up on a farm, being in 4-H and being in Future Farmers of America (FFA). I saw a need for someone to be passionate about agriculture and decided I would defend it every step of the way," Frederick said. "So I went to school for that purpose, I went to the university for that purpose."

He named 4-H as the first organization he was

"really involved in." He told a story about being too shy to get in front of a group and speak. Yet Waseca's county agent at that time, Leonard Hart, placed him on the program for the annual banquet.

"So he had me get up and recite a prayer," Frederick remembered. He also remembered a time when a calf got burned during a fire in his barn, but since it was the only one he had, he showed it. As anticipated, the calf came in last. "It taught me to go ahead, even though it wasn't going to do very well," he added.

Through 4-H, he mentioned he got a chance to work as a grandstand usher during performances at the state fair; one of his favorite elements of the job was that he had free time to play softball during the day. The second year, the state fair brought Frederick in as a camp counselor.

While Frederick acknowledges he has received many honors over time, he credits others for their roles in helping him earn them. He names co-workers, family members, and teachers. He mentioned a former student, Roger Odegaard, who went on to become a good friend after being in an animal science class Frederick taught 67 years ago.

"He still stays in touch over the phone," Frederick said. "Birthdays, anniversaries, that sort of thing." When Frederick celebrated his ninetieth birthday, Frederick remembers Odegaard and his wife driving all the way down from Crookston.

"You've got to recognize other people are a part of any award you get," Frederick observed. "And I do recognize that."

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School sponsored events on Sundays considered

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

In observance of February as Minnesota’s school board appreciation month, NRHEG School board members were presented with certificates of service and with churro flavored cookies prepared by members of the Pro-Start food preparation and serving class as their monthly meeting began.

School board members were also presented with two difficult questions during their regular monthly meeting the evening of Tuesday, Feb. 20.

One item discussed was the possibility of allowing school-sponsored activities, “anything with the name ‘panthers’ attached to it,” to be scheduled on Sundays.

Controversy is based in the fact that other groups, including sports associations, frequently rent school facilities for weekend events, filling the school with children and their families often from a very wide area.

Yet, thanks to a longstanding policy, Panther teams are not even allowed to hold practices on Sunday.

Board chair Rick Schultz pointed out that the question of Sunday events has been brought to the school board for consideration in the past; at that time, he said, board members held firm to the idea that “there should be at least one day a week that is strictly for families to spend time together.”

Community Education director Macy Whiteside let the board know that competition for gym space makes it “harder and harder to avoid scheduling events on Sundays.”

Board members discussed the possibility of allowing Sunday activities with the specific proviso that any students who did not attend would not suffer negative consequences. When asked for his input, secondary principal Grant Berg described the idea as a “slippery slope,” suggesting that, even if there were no direct repercussions for missed events, team members would be likely to experience indirect consequences—for example, less developed skills because of missed practices leading to less play time during games.

After discussing the question a bit longer, board members decided not to take any action, but for each to do his or her own research on the question and give deep consideration toward a possible future vote.

Whiteside also took about half an hour of the meeting to summarize what she sees as a quandary for the Panther Preschool program. Whiteside pointed out that the community education program’s two preschool teachers—one located at each site—supervise more than 80 students ages 3 and 4 who attend between 4 and 12 hours of schooling each week.

Parents of preschoolers pay to have their children take part in the program with a certain number of “scholarships” offered to families for whom the cost would be a hardship. Whiteside explained that the pay for the preschool teachers has been “pretty much a break-even prospect,” with the income from tuition and grant-based scholarships.

This has led, however, to a disparity of nearly \$10 an hour between the wages of the preschool instructors



and the average wage paid to staff teaching students in kindergarten through senior high under their master agreement.

Whiteside praised preschool teachers Elizabeth and Grace Nelson, commenting that it would be a tremendous loss to the district if the two—who happen to be sisters—should be drawn away by the prospect of higher wages.

After summarizing her points, Whiteside requested that the board consider finding a way to pay the preschool instructors at the same level as other teachers.

This question, too, was taken under advisement; no action occurred during the Feb. 20 meeting.

The prospect of a third difficult question was raised by a resolution recommended to the board by district superintendent Michael Meihak. Meihak was unable to attend the meeting, but asked board members to vote on a resolution meant to open the possibility of future reductions in school staff.

No names or programs were provided; the resolution simply met certain requirements to pave the way for possible future reductions. Board members commented that supplemental funds offered by state and federal agencies in response to the Covid pandemic are no longer available, possibly leading to a need to reduce spending. They passed the requested resolution, mentioning that further discussion on the topic will occur during an upcoming work session.

During his report to the board, elementary principal Craig Kopetzki observed that absences have been on the rise, with 64 students gone from his site on Feb. 20. He also described a recent successful “Kindness Campaign” which included a visit from the Austin Bruins hockey team. A “kindness tree” is now on display at the elementary site where everyone has been encouraged to post positive statements. Finally, he told school board members that the annual “Green Eggs and Ham” breakfast held during the first week in March is already sold out.

Secondary principal Berg reported that Snow Week had been successful at his site. He mentioned that students have completed registration for the classes they plan to take during the 2024-25 school year and that a master schedule of classes is being constructed based on that information. He told board members the National Honor Society is sponsoring a blood drive on Friday, March 15. Berg also mentioned that the secondary site is looking at developing a peer tutoring program centered around helping students with their math skills.

District Teaching and Learning coordinator Jason Toupenec told board members that ACCESS testing for students whose first language is something other than English will take place in March, as will certain state-wide Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) at various levels.

Maintaining rural electric lines

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

“There are very few weather conditions we won’t go out in,” observes Dan Meier, 51, Operations Manager with Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric. He mentions snowstorms with zero visibility and extreme thunderstorms.

He goes on to say that one of the best ways to assure power is delivered during extreme weather conditions is simply to make sure the power lines are well maintained and thus less likely to fail.

Steele-Waseca, according to Meier, provides electricity to about 11,500 meters in 1,200 square miles of territory touching on nine counties. The organization’s roots go back to the 1930s and ‘40s, when investors supported private companies delivering electrical power to in-town addresses, but could see no profit in stringing the miles of power lines needed to reach widespread rural homes and farms.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s “New Deal” included the “Rural Electrification Act,” which made loans available to farmers who wished to work together to arrange for power plants and electric conductor lines.

“Work together” was no mere euphemism: In many cases, crews of volunteer farm workers dug the holes and raised the poles into place themselves. Meier reveals that at least a few of the poles still supporting lines in the Steele-Waseca network are from those original installations: he

says anyone paying attention would likely be able to identify those stretches, since the poles are about 100 feet further apart than their modern counterparts, and are not as tall, since farm equipment at that time was much smaller than today.

Many of those original poles were made of cedar, he adds, which has a reputation for resisting decay. It wasn’t long, though, before demand outstripped supply, given that cedars are relatively slow-growing trees.

Pine soaked in creosote became the industry standard until relatively recently, when more environmentally friendly preservatives began being applied in pressure chambers to help assure the entire log is infused.

Poles installed these days tend to be either Southern Yellow Pine or Northeastern Red Pine. Steele-Waseca typically uses poles anywhere from 40 to 55 feet in length weighing at least 1,000 pounds each.

It no longer takes a crew of strapping farm workers to install them, though. Steele-Waseca has 12 linemen who can make use of the cooperative’s five “bucket” trucks, two digger derrick trucks, and a skid loader which has an attachment capable of picking up a power pole from the ground, lifting and rotating it, then placing it in its pre-dug hole.

The equipment comes in handy, since the cooperative replaces between 11 and 15 miles of line each year, based on a four-year work plan. A private company has been engaged to check standing poles for any sign of rot. Meier says roughly 200 poles



A Steele-Waseca crew in the process of replacing a Waseca County power line. The poles of the existing line have been set at an angle to allow the new poles to be installed.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently only experience a very short interruption, or possibly none at all.

Meier finishes by saying he enjoys working at a non-profit cooperative rather than a for-profit utility. “My ‘bottom line’ is making sure we deliver safe, reliable, affordable electric power to our members,” he explains. “The focus is on integrity and doing the right thing rather than profits alone.”

He credits the cooperative’s board of directors, General Manager and the employees for keeping aware of member concerns and deciding the most fair way to meet everyone’s needs.

“It’s refreshing,” he says. “Although margins are necessary to be viable, making money is not the first concern—the welfare of our members is.”

Council considers truck ordinance

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

A lengthy element of discussion at the Waseca City Council’s regular meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 20 was a proposed new ordinance regarding food trucks, including regulations regarding when and where they will be allowed to carry out business. After learning of misunderstandings a some residents had about the proposed ordinance, council members decided to review and probably revise its terms before considering it again at a future date.

The confusion revolved around various aspects like whether a back mirror was required to operate a food truck, what time food trucks should close as well as where they would be allowed.

“Looking at the map, there’s not a lot of prime locations,” said resident Robert Christensen who earlier said he was advocating for his neighbors, the Sanchez family, who had recently started a food truck. “The city luster behind State Street doesn’t get any visibility because there’s not the traf-

fic.” Then Christensen advised the council to consider city hall or the public safety building as options for food trucks.

“So do you have any thoughts or recommendations as to any space we could add?” City Administrator Carl Sonnenberg inquired.

“You know, I think everybody goes to Bomgaar’s because it’s easy to get in and out,” Christensen responded. “It’s a high traffic area. You’re visible from the road. So it’s kinda the prime location. I think if you get south of Elm, there’s usually not as much traffic in town.”

Mayor Randy Zimmerman asked about the Waseca High School area because of the tournaments and other ongoing activities. After further conversation among the council and Christensen about whether the city or the school can make decisions regarding that area, Christensen said there are plenty of upcoming opportunities for food truck owners to get in on, such as LakeFest.

“It would be a profitable day, so I could see where they would want to

WASECA CITY COUNCIL

get the city permit and pay \$50 a year,” Christensen added.

With that, Councilmember Mark Christianson advised Christensen to touch base with Tom Sexton, the coordinator for the summer LakeFest event.

“I believe we’re installing at least six additional circuits [at Clear Lake Park] at the city’s expense to accommodate LakeFest,” Sonnenberg said. “It’s an example of Tom [Sexton] had a plan, he came forward, and we accommodated him because we want the park to be used.

“We are doing what we can to make this less constrictive and more conducive to allow food trucks,” Mayor Zimmerman agreed. “There is a desire and a market for it. It’s going to bring vibrancy to our community.”

During the meeting, David Berg from Dave Berg Consulting, LLC of

Rosemount summarized the results of a study he conducted regarding the city’s charges for electric service. Despite expenses going up and revenue staying the same, Berg complimented Waseca for being in such good shape with its figures and for being honest with its residents and commercial customers alike. He noted particularly that because the city changed its lights so they’re LED, each household pays \$1.99 a month instead of \$3.10; the city also experiences considerable savings.

Because Berg’s review returned such positive results, he told council members he had no recommendations for changes at this time. He did suggest changes to the way the city finances large future projects.

In other business, the Waseca City Council approved a revision to the floodplain ordinance. The council also approved an authorization for Sonnenberg to sign an early access agreement with Waseca Real Estate Fund.

projects. The plan is a comprehensive document which must include information about drainage patterns and nearby water—both open and underground.

Regarding the complex county document, commissioner Malterer stated it is essential that it makes clear the respective responsibilities of the state, the county and the individual planning a construction project. In response to a staff suggestion that the new regulations should include a checklist, Malterer suggested the list also include typical time frames needed to complete each step, thus making it clear that preparing a SWPPP is “a lengthy process.”

Drainage management coordinator Howard said it will be an important part of the county’s role in the process to “guide [developers] to seek out a professional to ‘help make an applicant aware of what they are getting into.’”

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Devon Lawrence

Lawrence joins Prairie Lakes Regional arts council board

The Prairie Lake’s Regional Arts Council announced last month that Devon Lawrence has joined the board representing Waseca County. “We are excited for his expertise and ideas,” a statement released reads. Devon graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire in 2018 with a Music Education degree. There, he was a member of the Marching Band, Wind Symphony, Symphony Band, Orchestra, and various other small ensembles. Now in year five of teaching, he directs the 9th-12th grade Concert Bands at Waseca Jr. Sr. High School in addition to the Pep Band, Marching Band, Pit Or-

chestra, and various other small ensembles. Other involvement from him includes serving River City Rhythm Drum and Bugle Corps (Anoka, MN) in varying capacities, first as a member in the 2015 and 2016 seasons, then on the admin team (Assistant Corps Director and Corps Director) from 2017-2021 and is now the Program Coordinator for that organization. This group serves young musicians from all across the world, giving them an opportunity to participate in the Marching Arts on a professional scale. Lastly, Devon is a part of multiple performing groups in the area including Little Chicago (New Prague, MN) and Southern Minnesota’s Real Big Band.

Open House



The Waseca Soil and Water Conservation District held an open house on Feb. 24 to publicize its service of offering low-cost trees to area property owners for use in beautifying their property or for creating or maintaining wind breaks. Here, El Molino workers Maurilio Rios and Hugo Mariano have a look at the display set up for visitors.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Down memory lane

Fitch awarded for ‘Service Above Self’

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Ann Fitch has participated in different activities in Waseca since her childhood when she doodled in a notebook or played quietly to the side while her parents attended meetings and events. Fitch feels indebted to her parents who have shown her what it’s like to serve others. “They put me in situations that were very adult and very community-oriented,” Fitch said. “Unbeknownst to me, I was listening and learning. It probably expanded my vocabulary a bit early, but that’s okay.” Fitch received the Rotary Club “Service Above Self” award on January 22 at the Starfire Event Center. When The Pioneer asked her what it was like to receive her award, Fitch said it was a little awkward – mostly because she loves “showering others with praise” – but she accepted the award with “a spoonful of humility.” Because she has participated so much in the community, she said she realizes how much teamwork a community requires for its success. She expressed her wish for her late parents to have been there when she received her award. In choosing its honoree, the Rotary Club considered seven areas of focus which include promoting peace; fighting disease; providing clean water, sanitation, and hygiene; saving mothers and children; supporting education; growing local economies; and protecting the environment. “It’s the job of the local clubs to find a way to apply those causes,” she explained. On the Feb. 23, 1905, Paul P. Harris, founder of the Rotary Club, called a meeting with three business acquaintances in downtown Chicago. These acquaintances were: Silvester Schiele, Hiram Shorey, and Gustavus Loehr whose office was located in the Unity Building on Dearborn Street. Together they formed an international organization which ultimately encouraged community connections based on service and friendship. “The first two years were really based upon friendship,” Fitch said about the history of the Rotary Club.

“It was a couple of guys who just wanted to get together and then they got into service work. Something that’s really cool about Rotary is you get to serve with your friends.” But, she clarified, that’s true of nearly all service clubs including, among others, the Lions, Exchange, the VFW, the American Legion, Knights of Columbus, the Masons, and more. They all value serving their communities; each member wants to have a positive influence. Personally, Fitch sits on the public image committee for the district and is on the diversity, equity, and inclusion committee for the district. She goes around to other Rotary Clubs and gives speeches about those different topics and is also a presenter at different district and statewide meetings. While growing up, Fitch remembers her parents advocated for those values which Rotary Club stands for. She said that a week didn’t go by that her parents didn’t attend a meeting or organize fundraisers. “The value of service clubs has come through loud and clear my entire life,” Fitch said. “I encourage anyone and everyone to look at joining a service club. But it does not have to be Rotary. All clubs serve a valuable purpose in this community.” Rotary Club was the main organization Fitch’s dad, James Staloch, had mostly served as well as his profession as a police chief for many years. She still proudly wears his Rotary pin. “Watching my dad engage with all sorts of people and how he always kept calm and let his sense of humor come through, really showed me you can have difficult conversations and still have it be enjoyable,” Fitch said. Her mom, Vicki Staloch, served as a director of the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center in Waseca and Exchange Club for Family Unity in Owatonna. Fitch also mentioned Vicki had played a major role in igniting the Early Childhood Development Program in Waseca. Fitch remembers helping Vicki with Santa Anonymous, and also volunteer with different fundraisers for the Exchange Club in Owatonna



Ann Fitch

and Waseca. “Watching my mom be the captain of so many moving pieces really prepared me for life, actually,” Fitch stated. “It helped me with big picture planning.” Currently, she is a Big Sister to a young man who has straight As, is an athlete, and involved in the artistic community. Fitch mentioned that her Little Brother also has a job and great parents. “There’s a misconception that the Littles come from a bad home, their parents aren’t there for them, or something to that effect,” Fitch said. “That’s just not true for all the Littles. His parents thought he could benefit from having another adult mentor in this life. And it’s been fantastic.” Fitch continued to speak about how it’s been wonderful to get to know this young man and his life story, and watch him as he continues to evolve as a student and a person. “I don’t have kids,” she said. “Just getting to be a part of that young man’s life has been super fun and interesting.” With a spark of humor, she added, “I forget that I’m getting older and not as ‘cool’ so I need to stay connected with that youthfulness.”

Jasinski kicks off the ‘24 legislative session

Minnesota State Senator John Jasinski (R-Faribault) returned to the capitol on Monday, February 12 for the beginning of the 2024 session of the Minnesota Legislature. The agenda and debate this session will be shaped in large part by the forthcoming February revenue forecast, scheduled to be released later this month, which will detail the state’s financial picture. A report issued by the office of Minnesota Man-

agement and Budget last December projected a small budget surplus for the upcoming session and a \$2.5 billion deficit in the following budget cycle. “Last session was one of the most partisan, divisive, and controversial in memory,” Senator Jasinski said. “I hope that approach changes this year, because our success as a state depends on cooperation and bipartisanship. So I really hope my friends on the other side

of the aisle will be more willing to work together and more open to constructive feedback this year. It is for the good of the state.” Sen. Jasinski is serving his third term and is the ranking Republican



Jasinski

on the Senate’s Transportation Committee. He represents Senate District 19, which includes all or parts of Goodhue, Rice, Steele, and Waseca Counties. Contact information: Constituents are encouraged to contact Senator Jasinski with any questions, concerns, or feedback: Email: sen.john.jasinski@mnsenate.gov Phone: 651-296-0284

WAF: Having a Philanthropic Heart

Waseca Area Foundation People helping people is the essence of philanthropy. They want to alleviate human suffering to advance the best quality of life. That is why 1988 was an instrumental year for Waseca County. A group of individuals at the All School Reunion took the initiative to formulate the creation of a community fund we now know as the Waseca Area Foundation (WAF). As our community has grown and become more diverse, so have the many non-profit organizations working diligently to support families who choose to live here. In 1988, the WAF started, and they had one fund with a balance of \$6,000. We now have a fund balance of over \$12,000,000 and over 65 funds. This year, the Waseca Area Foundation celebrates our 35th Anniversary! Money doesn’t grow on trees. Even though Waseca is a strong and vibrant farming community, we haven’t found

this elusive holy grail. The Waseca Area Foundation is a valuable asset to this community in making a difference in people’s lives. Our donors are not only individuals who have an endowment fund set up in memory of a loved one but also people who want to share their wealth and can see the impact it is having now. A financial donation is not the only way to support the WAF. Non-cash assets that are accepted are artwork, crops, farm equipment, publicly traded stock, livestock, and many other ways. Last year, the WAF awarded over \$240,000 in grant money in Waseca, New Richland, and Janesville communities to over 30 organizations. These organizations ranged from mentoring opportunities to field trips for students to supporting local events during the year and funds to aid in archiving our history for many more generations to enjoy. Some organizations have dynamic impacts on the

welfare of people through food programs and offering safe living spaces in an emergency. Our students have also benefited from the generosity of others. \$98,800 in scholarship money was given to many well-deserving students last year. There are over 65 funds housed with the WAF and broken down into four categories: Community Advised Funds, Donor Advised Funds, Non-Profit Endowments, and Designated Funds. Depending on how the funds are designated will determine how the WAF can grant funds to projects and programs that meet the criteria of education, arts & culture, health, human services, recreation, and community service. We grant money two times a year. In the Spring, the Community Advised Funds within WAF and the New Richland Area Foundation Fund allocates disbursements. Furthermore in the Fall, the EF Johnson Foundation

Fund as well as the Janesville Area Foundation Fund Grant Awards allocate their disbursements. Our goal as board members this year is to educate the public on how the Waseca Area Foundation works and how the public can utilize it for their philanthropic goals. Whether you want to set up a fund or learn how your organization can apply for a grant to enhance your programming needs, we are here to assist you. More and more people want to find ways to support the communities they live in and to find ways to sustain a healthy future. Watch for upcoming articles as we celebrate our 35th anniversary year. Please check out our website <https://wasecaareafoundation.org> for more information on giving a gift to a current Fund or learn how to set up a new Fund, see our existing Funds, and apply for a grant. Our phone number is 507-835-5990. Amy Potter is our Executive Director.

DJ

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Rachel Reese, Keen Bank Officer

Rachel Reese named an officer at Keen Bank

February 19, 2024 (Waseca, MN) — Rachel Reese has been promoted and named an officer of Keen Bank. Reese will continue her role as commercial lender and credit analyst. Reese has been with Keen Bank for five years and is a graduate of the University of St. Thomas with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Financial Management. “We are excited to make her a member of the officer team and the bank’s credit committee,” said Bernie Gaytko, President and CEO of Keen Bank. “Rachel was recruited by the bank from the University of St. Thomas where she excelled in her finance studies. Since her hiring, she has grown in her analytical skills and has been given increased responsibilities including credit analysis and commercial lending. Her understanding of our markets, our

customers and their needs makes her a strong advocate of our customers and a great member of our team.”

For more information visit keen.bank.

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About Keen Bank
Keen Bank is a local, family-owned and managed bank that has been proudly serving southern Minnesota since 1874 with three locations in Waseca, Owatonna and Ellendale, MN. Their commitment to customers, responsiveness to find solutions and genuine willingness to help is the makeup of their organization. Keen Bank meets the needs of customers while maintaining the personal aspects of service that are synonymous with community banking. For more information visit keen.bank. Member FDIC

Rural from Page 1

the district had 13 fire calls, 16 rescue runs, 28 medical calls and one “silent run,” which, he explained later, is a non-emergency status check in response to a caller’s request. WRFD members also reviewed district expenditures for 2024, confirmed the budget, and set a preliminary budget of \$145,600 for 2025—a four percent increase over 2024. “We try to be as conservative as we can while still

keeping people safe,” commented WRFD vice chair Lester Kroeger. According to discussion during the meeting, the WRFD owns one water tanker, one fire truck and all its equipment, a specialized trailer holding equipment needed during grain bin rescues, and a “brush truck,” a smaller vehicle with a water tank and equipment to put out fires in remote locations. The agency is also part owner of at least two other vehicles. WRFD members are Bernie Frederick, chair; Lester Kroeger, vice chair; Curt Keyes, treasurer; Judy Hoffman, secretary; Gary Meurer and Elaine Breck and Randy Peterson.

Working to support and encourage

Anna Pollock earns ‘up-and-coming young professional’ award

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Anna Pollock was honored as the Waseca area’s up-and-coming young professional during the community awards banquet at the Starfire Event Center on January 22. As executive director of the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, she sees her job as helping artists develop skills and confidence.

As part of that, Pollock says she is looking for ways to simplify the grant application process for her organization, while also making it less intimidating. Because she understands the joy that creative accomplishment can bring, she wants to extend opportunities for others to accomplish it. Something else she describes trying to overcome is potential applicants’ feelings of not being good enough—either at art or at grant writing. “I want everyone to apply,” she suggests.

“Grant writing is hard,” Pollock said and emphasized it by adding, “It is. It’s a difficult thing. It doesn’t mesh well with artists’ skills. That’s why we’re hoping to make the grant process less intimidating. I think about it constantly, and I know making the change will take time. Still, I want to break down barriers for both artists and art organizations.”

Pollock describes art as having a powerful influence all through her life. She describes her mother, Jodie, as being very musically talented. Jodie was persistently called upon for vocal performances not only with the church choir but also as a soloist at weddings, funerals, and other milestone events.

“Seeing her perform when I was younger sparked in me a curiosity about performance,” Pollock said.

Jodie was also a teacher at Hartley Elementary School in Waseca. Her sister, Kendra, was a photographer. Their father, Chuck, still contributes his skills to provide lighting and sound at events and performances. Pollock remembers there always being a piano in the house and music of some kind always playing.

“So, growing up, I always knew music was a big part of my life,” Pollock added. “Art was a big part, too.”

A variety of other factors have influenced Pollock including attending concerts and having persistent contact with many different types of art.

“I always saw theater as a living thing,” Pollock remembers. “It’s in-the-moment and even though you can record it and play it back, there’s nothing like the experience of being backstage or onstage. Not

knowing what’s going to happen—that’s something I’ve always enjoyed. It gives students an experience they’ll never forget.”

While in high school, Pollock took a variety of roles with the theater program. She was an on-stage actress for a few years and later became a stage manager behind the scenes. Karen Pfarr was Pollock’s English teacher and directed one-act plays. Pollock was a stage manager for “Alice in Wonderland,” “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat,” and contest one-act plays including “Governing Alice” and “Check, Please!”

“She was just a blast to work with,” Pollock said of Pfarr.

She mentioned the tremendous growth experience of recognizing all the work needed to bring a play to life: costumes, set design, makeup, and how it’s not just about learning lines; instead the theater experience is about how it all fits in together.

After she graduated high school, Pollock attended McNally Smith College of Music in St. Paul to study music composition. Eventually she decided it might be more tenable to major in music business, instead. While in college, she served as a marketer for the theater department.

During the pandemic, Pollock became interested in writing. She says that, after she watched television shows and observed the storylines, it occurred to her she could build her own world of romance plots. While she absorbed romance novels, she realized she wanted to create the types of characters she would like to read about, but that she wasn’t finding in the books she read. Most of what bothered her were themes of toxic masculinity and how women or the LGBTQIA community were treated.

“If it’s not out there, I’m going to create it,” Pollock recalled her initial thought.

Although she started writing, she mentioned it was mostly for personal gratification, with no real plan for eventual publication. She says she has sometimes worked with an online writing community of friends who are also writers.

From July to September of 2021, Pollock took a job with Cedar Creek Farm. Her duties included traveling to various farmers’ markets over a wide area. During her drives to and from her destinations, inspiration struck again.

“I began to think of these characters who would work on a farm,” Pollock said, then adding that was how she first thought of When the



Ann Fitch

Summer was Over which she released in 2022. “A guy comes in from New York and thinks he knows everything about running a farm and obviously, he doesn’t.”

She called herself very fortunate that she was able to explore writing during the pandemic.

This past November she released a book which she intends to be the first in a trilogy which she called “Scouts Honor.”

Recently, Pollock has also started a booster club for theater which fuels another one of her passions. It started when she directed her first musical, “Legally Blonde,” in 2022. “It was fun,” she remembered. “I had a great time.” Working on the production also led her to recognize an obvious need for additional funds.

“They wouldn’t necessarily be covered by the school,” she noted, “because our hands are tied in terms of what the school can pay for and what it can’t.”

Pollock wanted a way to pay musicians for their work in musicals, but saw the funds available for play

production would be used up by the many other needs.

“Families are already paying for activity fees,” she noted, adding that persistent fundraisers can be a burden on families. To help with the many needs, she founded a booster club for the high school drama department. Those who helped her with the club were Chuck Pollock, Karen Anderson, Kris Lapides, Ann Fitch, and Tracy Kopetzki.

“They’re all still there, fortunately,” Pollock said. “They’re a dream team.”

The high school’s spring musical will be “Beauty and the Beast,” scheduled to perform on March 21-24. In support of that production, the booster club is seeking corporate sponsorships. It also held a fundraising event at the Starfire Event Center on February 29.

Also part of the fundraising efforts will be “meet-and-greet” events with the cast and advance tickets. “All of that good stuff,” Pollock said lightly. “We’re hoping to raise some good money and keep building the program.”



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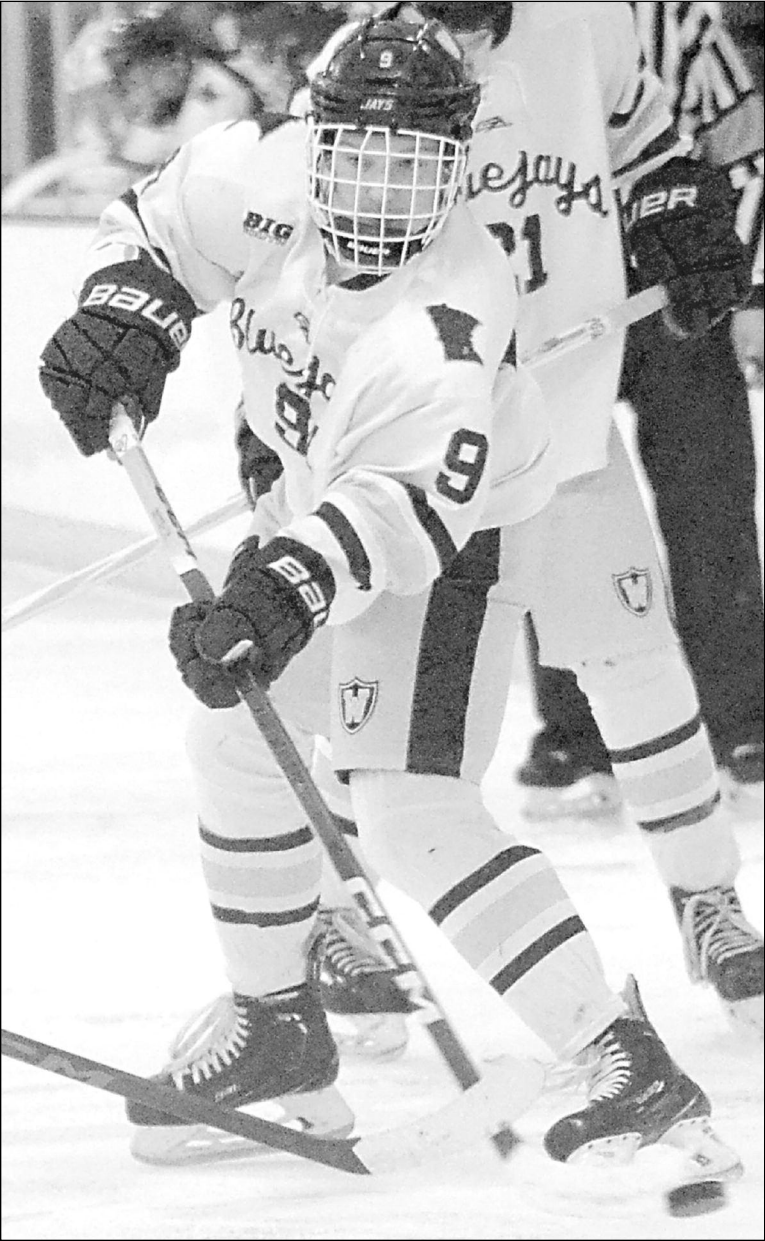
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ONE OF FEW — Keato Roeker (9) is only one of three seniors who will graduate off the WHS boys' hockey team.
File photos by Jim Lutgens



FIRE AWAY — Junior Brayden Hesch-Priem (33) scored a goal in the Bluejays' section loss at Dodge County.

Upset bid falls short for WHS boys' hockey

Season ends with 5-3 section quarterfinal loss at Dodge County

For much of the night, it looked like the Waseca High School boys' hockey team had a chance for a big upset in last Thursday's Section 1A quarterfinal game at Dodge County Ice Arena.

The Bluejays, seeded seventh in the single-elimination tourney, outshot second-seeded Dodge County 10-7 while taking a 1-0 lead after one period. But they had trouble putting the puck in the net after that as Dodge Center scored three consecutive goals and skated to a 5-3 decision.

The Bluejays ended their season with a record of 15-11. They were 10-6 in Big South Conference play, good for fourth place. Dodge Center, which improved to 19-7-1, went on to knock off LaCrescent-Hokah in Saturday's section semifinal, advancing to the final against top-seeded Northfield.

The young Bluejays looked like section title competitors early at Dodge Center, with Hunter Anderson netting the lone first-period goal at the 5:14 mark. Otto

Schoenrock assisted.

Despite holding a 12-7 shots advantage in period two, the Bluejays surrendered goals at 36 seconds, 1:30 and 7:31 to put Dodge County on top 3-1.

Jude Gehring narrowed the margin to 3-2, scoring unassisted at the 2:26 mark. Dodge County answered 4:48. It remained 4-2 until the 16:54 mark, when Brayden Hesch-Priem scored on an assist from Griffin Storey to again make it a one-goal difference, but Dodge County iced it with a goal just 12 seconds later.

For the game, Waseca oushot Dodge Center 31-28 and had four penalties to the home team's two.

Carter Martens was in goal for the Bluejays.

Waseca will graduate seniors Charlie Cariveau, Keato Roeker, Armando Baldarus and Preston Miller. Waseca played six freshmen and four sophomores.

The Bluejays are coached by Chris Storey.

Wikan, Keith save their best for last

Both Bluejays reach medals podium at state gymnastics meet

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

It's been a memorable, outstanding and at times challenging season for Waseca High School gymnasts Bella Wikan and Layla Keith.

But they saved their best for last.

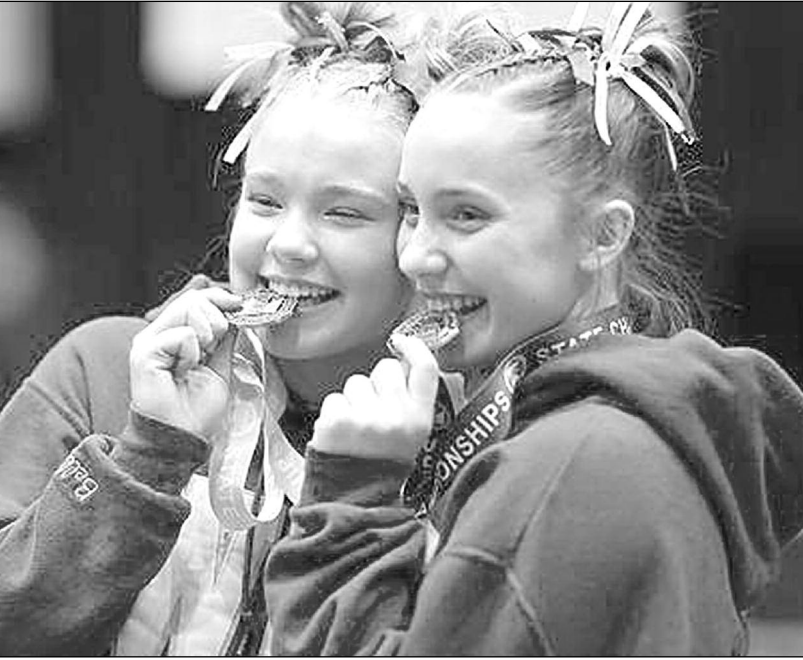
Both Bluejays reached the medals podium in Saturday's state meet at Roy Wilkins Auditorium in St. Paul, where Wikan finished fourth on the uneven parallel bars and Keith secured sixth place on floor exercise.

"We are so proud of these girls," said Waseca coach Kim Wendland.

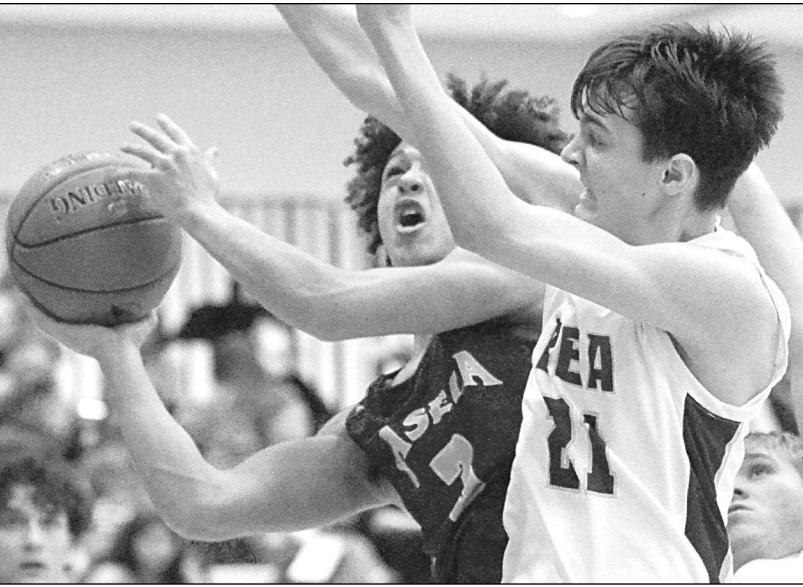
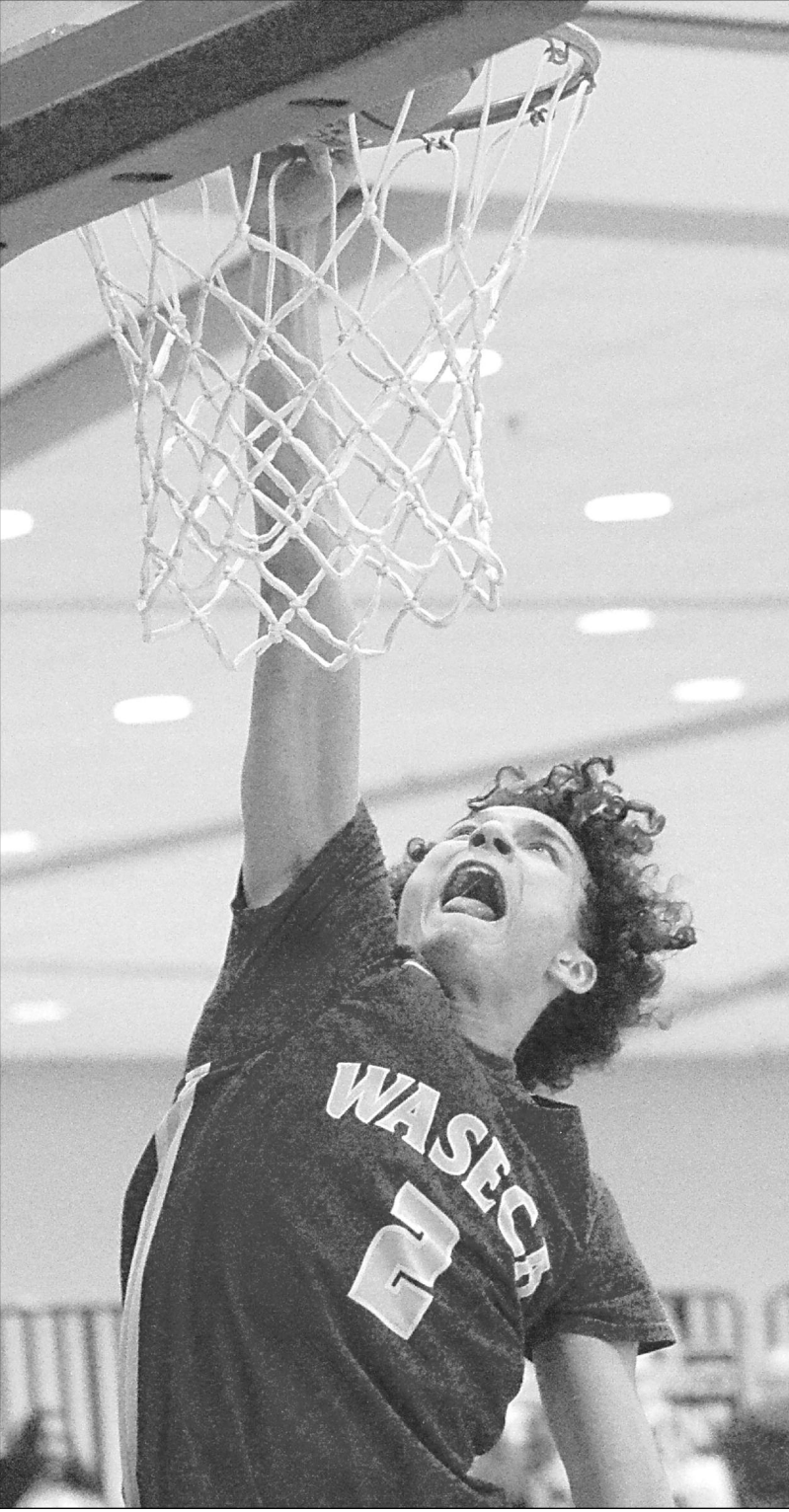
Wikan, a junior who battled injury this season, broke her own school record of 8.9 on bars with an impressive 9.325 at state.

Keith, a sophomore, scored a 9.3375 for her sixth-place showing on the floor.

The Waseca team also received the Gold Academic Award.



HOW SWEET IT IS — Waseca's Bella Wikan, left, and Layla Keith celebrated a memorable day last Saturday at the state gymnastics meet.
Photo by Kennedy Lynch



ONE-SIDED WIN — Although they lost at New Ulm Saturday night, the Bluejays dominated Blue Earth Area Friday. At left, Laird Keeton slam dunks. On top, Damarius Russell drives the lane. Below right, Carson Ohnstad drives the baseline.
Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

WHS boys prepare for section

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

It was a good news, bad news week for the Waseca High School boys' basketball team.

The bad news came Saturday, when the Bluejays let the game slip away in the Big South Showcase at New Ulm.

The good news? The Bluejays, 16-10 overall, should be one of the top seeds in the upcoming Section 2AA tournament.

Saturday's New Ulm game, which the Bluejays lost 83-75, was close all the way, with Waseca leading by four at halftime. It was tied with four minutes left in regulation.

"New Ulm made the plays at the end," said Waseca coach Seth Anderson. "We were very close to getting a few big plays, but the ball bounced against us. We played a great offensive game. I thought we created excellent shot attempts."

The biggest factor, according to Anderson, is that the Eagles had 14 more rebounds than the Bluejays.

"Overall, we played very well," said Anderson.

Damarius Russell led Waseca with 24 points, adding two rebounds, three assists and two steals.

Others: Deron Russell 13P, 10R, 5A, 1S; Laird Keeton 13P, 4R, 4A,

2S; Carson Ohnstad 5P, 3R, 2S; Zach Hulscher 14P, 2R, 1S; Jacob Thompson 6P, 4R, 1S; Andrew Robran 4R, 1S.

For New Ulm, Colton Benson scored 26, James Osborne 18 and Nathan Firlie 15.

The Bluejays hosted Blue Earth Area the previous night and won handily, 82-54.

"We got off to a very slow shooting start," said Anderson. "We ended at 37 percent for the game, but I felt like we had decent looks. We dominated the rebounding and only turned it over 10 times, so it was good to see us win the hustle areas and that we were fairly smart with the ball."

Individually: Ethan Hiller 2R, 1A 1S; Deron Russell 15P, 5R, 4A, 4S; Keeton 15P, 9R, 1A, 3S; Damarius Russell 12P, 5R, 6A, 3S; Caden Danner 3P, 3R, 1A, 1S; Ohnstad 12P, 3R, 1S; Cody Vagts 3P, 1A; Noah Thompson 3P, 1R; Hulscher 18P; Jacob Thompson 8R, 2A; Logan Hoyer 2P, 1R; Wyatt Hager 1R, 1A; Sebastian Teague 1R; Robran 1P, 5R, 1A, 2S.

The first round of the section tournament is Tuesday, March 5. Seeds were not set as this edition of the Pioneer went to press.

The Bluejays won the Big South East with a record of 5-1.

Three Grizzlies gain spot in state tourney

The season has been extended another week for three WEM/JWP High School wrestlers.

Keegan Kuball, Carson Petry and Avery Fall have advanced to state out of Saturday's Section 2A individual tournament.

Kuball, the defending state champion at 285 pounds, muscled through the section meet with a bye, a 6-0 decision and a pin in the finals.

Petry was dominant at 127, getting a bye, a fall and an 8-0 decision in the championship bout.

Fall finished second at 189, getting pinned in the finals but bouncing back in the true second-place match.

Three Grizzlies came within one win of state, finishing third, Parker James at 121, Lucas Morsching at 145, and Gavin Krause at 152.

Isaac Quast was fourth at 160, Maddox Moreno fifth at 172 and Kevin Sheehy fifth at 215.

Also wrestling but not placing for the Grizzlies were Brenden Masso, 107; Reed Sammon, 133; and Trenton Huber, 139.

Kuball, Petry and Fall will wrestle Friday in the state tournament at Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

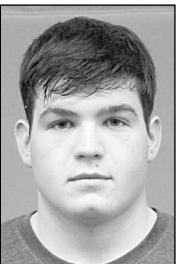
Kuball, a junior who has a season record of 38-4, will open the state

tournament against Section 8A runner-up Jonathan Rose of Fosston-Bagley, a sophomore who's 13-4.

Petry, a junior with a record of 31-4, has an opening-round matchup against Section 3A runner-up Brayden Burneister of Pipestone Area, a senior with a record of 37-2.

Fall, a senior sporting a season record of 24-6, will face Paynesville Area junior and Section 5A champion Peyton Hemmesch in his first match at state. Hemmesch is 27-3.

The state tournament concludes Saturday.



Kuball



Petry



Fall

Three Bluejays just miss state

Veroeven, Selthun, Barnett third in section wrestling

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

If close counted, the Waseca Bluejays would have three wrestlers in the 2024 state tournament.

As it stands, they had three extremely close misses.

The Bluejays' Slade Barnett, Lucas Selthun and Matt Veroeven finished in third place in Saturday's Section 1AA individual tournament at Rochester, missing state by one place. All three lost in the toughest way possible, dropping true second-place matches.

Veroeven, a state entrant last year, looked like he was on his way again, pinning his first two opponents before taking a 4-2 decision in the semifinals at 215 pounds. He was edged 5-4 by Jacob Duitsman of Kasson-Mantorville in the championship bout and, in the match for true second, was pinned by Alexander Bedsted of Plainview-Elgin-Millville. Veroeven finished the season with a record of 29-5.

Selthun had a long road at 189, dropping his first match but winning the next four in the wrestleback before taking a 7-5 decision in the third-place match. It put him in the true second bout, where he was pinned by Owen Nelson of Kasson-Mantorville. Selthun finished his season 15-14.

Barnett pinned his first opponent at 152 and claimed a 10-4 decision before being major-decisoned in the semifinals. He battled back to win 8-2 in the consolation semifinals, advancing him to the third-place bout where he prevailed 7-6 and advanced him to the true second match. There, he lost a 7-0 decision to Laiken Copeman of Zumbrota-Mazeppa. Barnett was 28-7 for the season.

Also wrestling but not placing for Waseca were Jacob Knutson, 121; Oliver Staloch, 133; Sam Selthun, 145; and Kellen Klinger, 160.

It marked the end of the season for the Bluejays, who are coached by Jake Janike.



TURN HIM OVER! — Waseca's Matthew Veroeven, top, controls his Byron opponent in last Saturday's Section 1AA wrestling tournament.
Photo by Johnnie Phillips, Steele County Times



CHALK TALK — Waseca girls' basketball coach Anthony Jackson, left, addresses his team during Monday's sub-section loss at New Richland.
Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Season ends for WHS girls

Bluejays bow to NRHEG in sub-section opener

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

NRHEG girls' basketball coach Onika Peterson's favorite part of the season is here.

"You have to love playoff time," said Peterson. "Survive and advance."

That's what Peterson's Panthers did Monday night.

NRHEG, seeded second in the south sub-section of Section 2AA, pulled away in the second half and defeated seventh-seeded Waseca 55-39.

The Panthers improved to 19-7 and advanced to face sixth-seeded St. Clair Thursday, Feb. 29 at Mankato East High School.

Waseca finished 7-20 under first-year head coach Anthony Jackson.

"It is nice to get the first win in the playoffs under our belt," said Peterson. "Waseca is a tough defensive team and they caused us some issues throughout the night. We are excited to get back to Mankato East on Thursday for the second round against St. Clair. It should hopefully be a fun and competitive game."

Monday's game was competitive. The Panthers threatened to pull away more than once in the first half, but the Bluejays wouldn't let it happen. NRHEG led 24-20 at halftime.

"New Richland played a nice game," said Jackson. "The three-point shooting of New Richland in the sec-

"New Richland played a nice game."
— WHS coach Anthony Jackson

ond half allowed them to pull away. The girls fought hard and put some game pressure on New Richland."

Camryn VanMaldeghem topped the scoring charts for NRHEG with 13 points to go along with eight rebounds, two assists and a steal. Presley Nielsen reached double digits with 10 points, adding three rebounds and three steals while taking a charge.

Others: Faith Nielsen 7P, 4R, 2A, 2S; Quinn VanMaldeghem 8P, 10R, 2A, 2S; Izley Boerner 4P, 3R, 1A; Clara Buendorf 1R; Hallie Schultz 8P, 5R, 4A, 1 blocked shot; Kyrie OLSON 5P, 2R.

Addie Wieseler led Waseca with 11 points. Grace Guritz scored nine, Mia Kanewischer seven.

The winner of Thursday's game with St. Clair plays Monday, March 4 against No. 1 seed Maple River or No. 4 WEM at 7:45 p.m. at Mankato East. The winner of that game plays for the section championship and state tournament berth Friday, March 8 at 7:45 p.m. at Minnesota State-Mankato.

JWP boys fail to finish it off at Blooming Prairie

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Nine minutes stood between the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton boys' basketball team and its first conference championship in many years.

That, and a nearly-perfect (27-3) Blooming Prairie team.

After losing by three earlier in the season, the Bulldogs only trailed twice in their Saturday night conference championship showdown in Blooming Prairie.

The Blossoms scored the first four points of the game and the final basket, a jumper from the wing with 3 seconds remaining. They only traded the lead once in the time between, falling behind by as many as 16 points, before ultimately winning 61-59.

"We really hit a cold spot in the middle of that second half, and that cost us," JWP coach Nick James said after the game. "They have a lot of tall guys on their team, and they were able to use their height against us."

After jumping to a 4-0 lead on early Bulldog miscues, the Blossoms fell behind, and stayed behind. The game was tied multiple times during the first half, but more Blossom mistakes lead to free throws and fast break opportunities in the final two minutes, propelling the Bulldogs to a 35-26 advantage at the break.

In the second half, the Bulldogs couldn't miss for about the first night minutes. And the Blossoms couldn't keep pace. With 10 minutes remaining, the Bulldogs led 52-36.

With a little over four minutes to go, the Blossoms finally cut the score to single digits, 58-50.

A three-pointer from Blossoms guard Brady Kittelson sent the Blossoms crowd into a frenzy.

The Bulldogs had what should have been two opportunities to win or tie the game when they got the ball with the score nodded up at 59 with a minute to go. It was so loud, however, that the Bulldogs didn't hear the whistle when the shot clock violation alarm buzzed with 34 seconds left.

The Blossoms held the ball for the final shot.

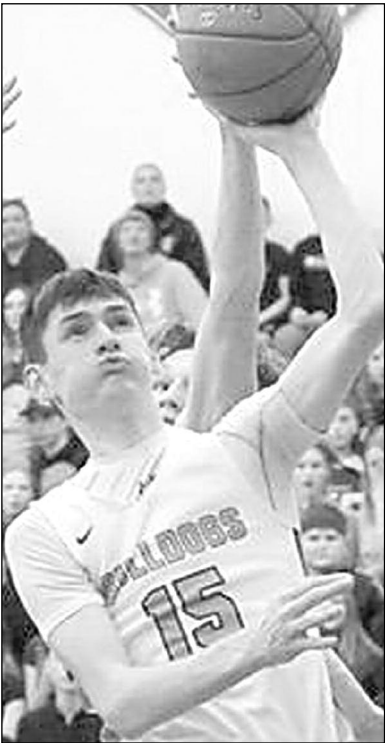
It was Kittelson again, this time, from the wing.

Fans rushed onto the court, but were pushed back as the referees added three seconds onto the clock, not enough time for the Bulldogs.

"It was a tough loss for our boys tonight," Coach James said. "They proved that they deserved to be here. It's something they worked hard for. There's some disappointment on how that went down the stretch. But the season's still going. It's something you want for the kids. They worked hard for this moment. It's a tough loss, but you still got to hold your head high."

Coach James said the boys have to put this loss behind them, focus on practice and make sure they're ready for the section tournament, in which the Bulldogs received the 2-seed. They will host a playoff game March 5.

Daulton Bauer led the Bulldogs in scoring with 15 points, followed by



DRIVING — JWP'S Memphis James drives the lane at Blooming Prairie last Saturday.
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

Memphis James 14, Ryan Kronbach 8, Cole Schluter 7. Gavin Bauer, Landon Johnson and Caleb Quast each had 5 points.

Depleted NRHEG boys drop a pair

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The NRHEG boys' basketball team has not stopped battling.

But it gets tough sometimes with so many players missing from the lineup.

The depleted Panthers lost twice last week, 79-57 at LeSueur-Henderson Thursday, two days after a 78-53 setback at St. Clair.

The Panthers kept it close early against a solid LSH team, but the Giants went on a 12-0 run to go up 28-13. Led by the hot shooting of starter Greyson Schaefer and Levin Kitzer off the bench, NRHEG went on a 20-10 run of its own to pull within 38-33 at halftime.

"After the break, we slipped a little bit early, but kept it to within 10 or 12 points until around 5 minutes left in the game," said NRHEG coach Dan Schmidt.

Then the Giants went on another run to put it away.

Schaefer led the Panthers in scoring with 16 points, including an outstanding 5-for-8 from the three-point line. Will Tuttle added 15 points on 6-for-7 shooting from the field and 3-for-5 from the free-throw line; he added five rebounds. Jared Lee and Jase Knudson had seven points apiece, Kitzer six. Jackson Chrz and Sam Olson each had three.

Grant Adams of LSH led all scorers with 21 points, followed by Logan Freeney with 20.

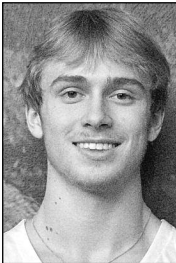
After struggling the last month putting the ball in the basket, the Panthers were looking to get some sort of offensive rhythm in a nonconference game at St. Clair. They found it, but lost 78-53.

"It was easily our best effort since the end of January, even if the score didn't show it," said Coach Schmidt. "We really battled for three-fourths of the game, trailing by 10-15 points until about 5 minutes to go. St Clair went on a little run at that point, and put it away."

Schmidt said the Panthers received another great effort from Tuttle, who totaled 22 points and eight rebounds, and a great effort from Lee, who scored 13 points and hit a couple three-pointers.

Jackson Chrz added eight points and five rebounds. Hudson Chrz added four points, Aaden Hanna and Brooks Gilliland two each each. Olson and Jordan Brouwers added a free throw each.

The Panthers, 3-23, are off while awaiting seeding for the sub-section playoffs starting Tuesday, March 5.



Tuttle

Roesler, Schlaak to join Petsinger at state

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Minnesota high school wrestling season wraps up this week with the state tournament at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

The NRHEG Panthers are again represented.

Senior George Roesler and freshman Ryan Schlaak advanced out of the Section 2A individual tournament Saturday at Blue Earth, earning a trip to state. They'll be joined by senior Annabelle Petsinger, who earlier qualified for state.

The Panthers had a fine day in the section meet, with a total of 11 placewinners.

The biggest highlights, though, belonged to Roesler and Schlaak.

"We are so happy for Ryan Schlaak and George Roesler," said NRHEG coach Shawn Larson.

Roesler, the Panthers' most consistent wrestler this season, captured the section championship at 172 pounds.

"George has been solid all season, and his dominant performance today was impressive," said Larson. "George looks like he is ready to try to make a run at the state tournament. It is nice to see George get the reward for all of the work he has put in."

Schlaak was the runner-up at 160. "Ryan had a great day, earning his way to the finals with two pins," said Larson. "In the finals, he lost by major decision to Tommy Elwood of

Medford. Losing to Tommy in the way that Ryan did was actually respectable, and Ryan definitely deserved his berth into the state tournament, the way he was aggressive and attacking today."

Deven Parpart missed the state tournament by one place, finishing third at 139. Placing fourth were Parker Bunn, 133; Reese Routh, 145; Harbor Cromwell, 152; and Cole Hutchens, 215.

Dakota Schlaak was fifth at 114. Wyatt Larson fifth at 189. Charlie Tufte, 107, finished sixth, as did Jace Ihke at 285.

Roesler will take a 25-7 record to state. His opening round opponent is freshman Lucas Fuhr of Redwood Valley, the Section 3A runner-up who owns a season record of 14-1.

Ryan Schlaak, 22-14, meets Section 5A champion Jett Olson of Kerkhoven-Murdock-Sunberg in the first round at state. Olson, a junior, has a record of 38-6.

Petsinger, a returning state champion, finished second in section competition at 142 and will take a 16-1 record to state, where her opening-round opponent will be Brianna Berg, a senior from Thief River Falls who sports a record of 31-11.

Roesler and Schlaak will wrestle in the opening round Friday, with Petsinger competing Saturday.

"It makes for an exciting week ahead for us," said Larson. "We are hoping that we can represent the area well."

JWP basketball girls finish fine season with 20 wins

The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton girls' basketball season came to an abrupt end in the opening round of sub-section Monday night.

But it was still a very good season.

Although the six-seeded Bulldogs lost 52-37 at third-seeded St. Clair, they finished with an impressive record of 20-7.

The Bulldogs, coached by Brandon Goebel, will graduate seniors Alison Olson Alexis Dahlberg.



The Pastor's Column

Recognize His call

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

There are patterns to my days that I follow, each day with its own specific tasks, goals and activities. I have things to do and want to do them on a specific day and time, because that pattern is comfortable and easy to follow. When Jesus interrupts it, with good things to do, I need to choose to abandon my pattern and follow Him.

We have a choice to make each day to follow Jesus, we make choices that will draw us closer or further from Christ. During Lent we make the purposeful choice to examine our own hearts and draw nearer to Jesus in everyway as we prepare to celebrate Easter. The first disciples had to choose to abandon their patterns and follow Him away from their comfortable lives.

Jesus began His public ministry in Matthew 4, starting in verse 17 the call to follow Jesus is clear and concise. "17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." The first step to following Jesus is to recognize our sinfulness and turn from it to follow Him.

Second, we need to be able to recognize His call. As you read His words through scripture and pray to build relationship with Him, His call become clearer. The first disciples were compelled by His call, got up from their normal patterns and followed.

18 As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 19 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." 20 At once they left their nets and followed him.

21 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, 22 and immediately they left the boat

and their father and followed him.

As we follow Jesus, we see Him working in a variety of ways and in the lives of people around us. Jesus is at work all the time; we need to be watching for His work. When people see miracles and amazing things it is easy to follow Jesus, it is easy to join in the crowd.

23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. 24 News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. 25 Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

Yet we know that not all our days are filled with miracles and sometimes it feels as if we are in the desert of our faith. The call to follow Jesus is to follow Him in the miracles and as well as in the deserts of faith. Our time of preparation for Easter challenges us to examine our own obedience in following Jesus. Are we looking for just miracles, healings, and meals? Or are we willing to follow Him to the cross? Our commitment to Jesus should go beyond the simple patterns of worship and into the deep realms of obedience in all things.

The disciples were called to follow Jesus, to be fishers of men. When Jesus prepared for the cross, one disciple betrayed Him, one denied Him, and the others abandoned Him. He calls us to follow, we don't know where we will go, but we should be prepared to go to into all eternity with Him. Choose today to follow in obedience by preparing your heart through prayer, study, fellowship and worship so that you will be ready to follow Him to the cross.

MVAC fix-up loan program is available

There is a shortage of available housing in the United States, and many of those homes are old or middle aged.

The number of single-family homes available for sale has been declining for years, but especially since the 2007-09 housing crisis. In many areas, people who own their homes are not selling and there are not enough new homes to keep up with the demand.

The number of housing units in the United States increased between 1980 and 2022, but so did the population of the U.S. When accounting for population, the number of housing units was essentially stagnant over this period, according to a Congressional Research Service July 2023 summary.

One result of this stagnation is that the housing stock – the available housing units in the country – is aging. The median age of an owner-occupied house in Minnesota is 39 years. Many of these older homes require updates and rehab.

Minnesota Valley Action Council can help. MVAC has a Fix Up Loan program to help homeowners make updates and repairs to owner-occupied homes to keep them safe and energy efficient.

Projects may include (but are not limited to) porches and decks, bathroom or kitchen remodels, basement refinishing, furnace, boilers, water heaters and central air conditioning, windows and siding, insulation, roofs, or property regrading, septic system repairs or replacement, radon mitigation, accessibility improvements, garages, home additions, internal/attached accessory dwelling unit construction.

A Fix Up Home Improvement Loan features fixed interest rates and longer repayment terms to make the loans more affordable than typical home-repair loans. Loan amounts can range from \$2,000 to \$75,000, and there is no prepayment penalty. Did you just complete a project? Some homeowners can finance projects that have already been started, or that were completed within 120 days of applying for the program.

The loan program has secured and unsecured loan options and requires little to no equity in the home. There are income limits for some projects, but there are no income limits for energy or accessibility loans. Homeowners must meet a minimum credit score, and the home must be owner-occupied.

MVAC is a private, nonprofit Community Action Agency serving Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, and Watonwan Counties since 1965. For more information, contact MVAC at 1-507-345-6822 or www.mnvac.org.

TEAM Academy, books and blankets event



Jill Courtney, Director of TEAM Academy, ties the end of a dinosaur blanket with her husband Kyle and her two children, Hugh who is in third grade and Georgia who is second grade. Their goal was to finish 14 blankets by the end of the night.



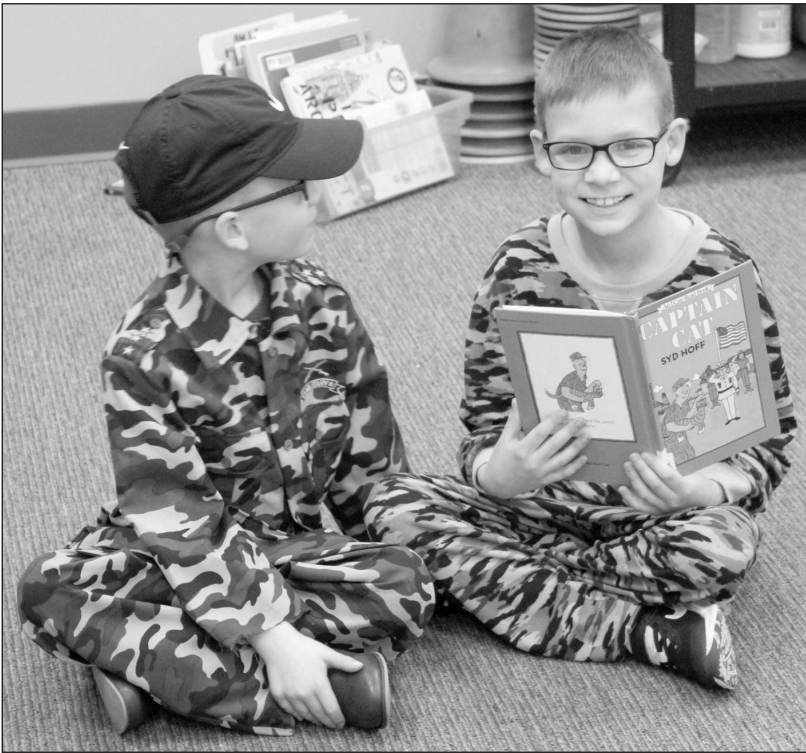
Lexi Thompson, Robin Negrete, and Rachel Holweger finished their first blanket to donate to the fire department at TEAM Academy. Below: From left: Reggie, Amber, Adrian, and Anthony Uballo pitch in and tie a sports-themed blanket on Thursday evening, February 22 at TEAM Academy.



Waseca area families were to read books and make blankets for Waseca's Bethlehem Inn charity on February 24 at TEAM Academy. Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger



Kaylee Monbahl designed a card for residents at a local nursing home creatively using stickers. Below: Jax Olsen reads to his twin brother, (left) Axel, in the reading room at TEAM Academy.



Immanuel Freedom's Anniversary Celebration continues

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

As one of four quarterly observances during its one-hundred-fiftieth year, the congregation of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Freedom Township—located a few miles south of Janesville along County Highway 3—will have one of its former pastors in the pulpit this Sunday, March 3.

Reverend R.E. Langhorst served Immanuel Lutheran from 1979 to 1989 and will be guest preacher at the service, which will begin at 9:30 a.m.

Langhorst currently serves congregations in Sandstone and Giese, Minnesota. He and his wife, Gail, expect to be joined by a number of their

children and grandchildren.

Langhorst commented he is very much looking forward to seeing the familiar faces and hearing the stories of how people's lives have developed since his time as pastor. He plans to speak on the topic of "commending ourselves to God's care."

After the service, time has been set aside to visit with Pastor Langhorst and his family, and to view artifacts from church history which will be on display.

Immanuel Lutheran Church was founded in 1874. Pastor Langhorst's visit is the second of four quarterly observances meant to highlight the congregation's one-hundred-fiftieth year.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m.	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m.	VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship	Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18
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	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
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.	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.	JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship
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	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)
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	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. 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	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 Owen St., Janesville Pastor Sarah Krolak
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwasceca@hickory-tech.net) Worship Sunday 10 a.m.	LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Wogship
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m.	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Pamela Jensen Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship	ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN Smiths Mill, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca Father Glenn Ferichs 507-835-1222 Worship Sundays 10:00 a.m., Tues. and Wed. at 8:30 a.m. and Thurs. at 7 a.m.; Saturdays at 5 p.m.	REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca 507-607-8245 Sunday worship 10 a.m.	THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS Brad Donner, Branch President Waseca, Minnesota www.lds.org Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School	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



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Waseca



50 Years - 1974
A ribbon was cut to officially open the new Christensen Tire Service in Waseca. Pictured with Mayor Carl Swanson are Chamber of Commerce Goodwill Ambassadors, from left: Jim Mitchell, Harold Worke, Pete Schmilling, Firestone representative; Owners Dennis and Linda Christensen, Swede Lundberg, former owner; Bob Johnson, Tom Kuyper, Oather Troidahl, Darrell Kahnke and Gene Slama.



50 Years - 1974
The second grand opening held today was at Mark's Pheasant Café. Mark Worke is wished well upon his venture by Chamber Goodwill Ambassadors and Waseca's Mayor Carl Swanson.

100 Years - 1924

- R.E. Hodgson was adjudged the winner of the best poem received by the Wolf Electric Co., by unanimous vote of the judges last Friday afternoon. Mrs. E.W. Kuhl of Waseca and Miss Barnadine McGruder of Waseca were second and third prize winners, respectively.
- The Methodist church at Morristown was considerably damaged by a fire which started from an overheated furnace last Sunday forenoon. The completion of the new waterworks system last fall was responsible for saving the building.
- The Sacred Heart school, regarded as one of Waseca's prominent buildings for about forty years, is now numbered with the past. H.A. Woyke, local contractor, has had a wrecking crew at work for some time and they completed tearing down the building last week. The old school gave way to the modern \$100,000 structure which was built last year.
- Donald Johnson, of New Richland, spent the week end visiting at the home of his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. P.J. Rasmussen.
- A company of twelve friends of the Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Tombs gathered at their home and gave them a very pleasant surprise last Thursday evening. A radio program was enjoyed and a delicious picnic luncheon was served.
- Misses Marion Spillane and Marcella McDonough attended the basketball game between the Sacred Heart team and the Heffron High School team at Rochester Thursday evening.
- Miss Thelma Gardner, who teaches in the public schools at Albert Lea, came up Thursday afternoon and spent the week end visiting here at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. M.E. Gardner.

75 Years - 1949

- Herman Woyke will move the Busy Bee restaurant off his lot and start construction of a new building about March 15. Merlyn and Percy Turnaciff have already bought new fixtures for the new café. They are the present owners of the restaurant business.
- John Crumb succeeded his father, W.M. Crumb, as president of the Mat-awan cooperative creamery. The latter had held the post for over 30 years.
- Fire, believed to have been caused from a short, burned out some of the wiring on the Alvin Koechel auto Tuesday night. Damage was about \$10.
- Ronald and Raymond Kelly, who are attending St. Thomas college in St. Paul, and Jim Holland who is also from St. Paul, spent the week end at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Kelly, parents of Ronald and Raymond.
- Mrs. Florence Bamford's two sons, Jerry and Bill, of Waterville, are spending this week at the home of Mrs. Bamford's sister and brother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. J.P. Schumacher.
- Mr. and Mrs. Erven Schroeder of Waseca along with Mr. and Mrs. Norbert Abbe and Loren Abbe of Owatonna and Miss Lillian Rick of Minneapolis spent Sunday attending the Ice Follies at St. Paul.
- Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Nyquist of Janesville and Mr. and Mrs. Glen Aldrich of Pemberton were supper guests Thursday evening at the Jim Anthony home.
- Mr. and Mrs. Charles Below and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. John Schlaak and Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Schlaak and daughter were Sunday evening guests at the Herbert Fennert home.

50 Years - 1974

-The Cannon Valley Girl Scout Council announced that on March 1 the annual cookie sale will kick-off in Waseca. Junior, Cadette, and Senior Scouts will be ringing your doorbell to give you the opportunity of ordering the cookies with which everyone is familiar. Last year Waseca scouts sold 5,130 boxes of cookies.

Janesville News

-Jim Eustice, who recently returned home from Germany, is spending two

weeks with his brother, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Eustice at Story City, Iowa, assisting them with remodeling their home.

25 Years - 1999



Ken Borgmann, Sleigh & Cutter Festival organizer, left; Culligan General Manager, Chuck Driessen; Sue Swenson, winner of this year's contest to guess Frosty's identity, and Frosty himself, Larry Krause, gathered for Driessen's presentation of a \$250 check to Swenson.



A successful auction was held at Barden's on Feb. 13. With more than \$4,000 raised for the fight against multiple sclerosis, Barden's has already reached its 1999 goal of \$10,000 for the charity.

-Although the Sjostrand brothers were inclined toward down-to-earth practicality and simplicity in their buildings, they were not immune to the allure of creating more opulent structures and settings. Whether motivated by the challenge to create a spiritually inspirational setting or by a desire for luxury and glamour in residential settings, they sometimes built and decorated in elevated styles beyond their more clearly functional and modernistic buildings.

Compiled by Jessica Lutgens

New Richland

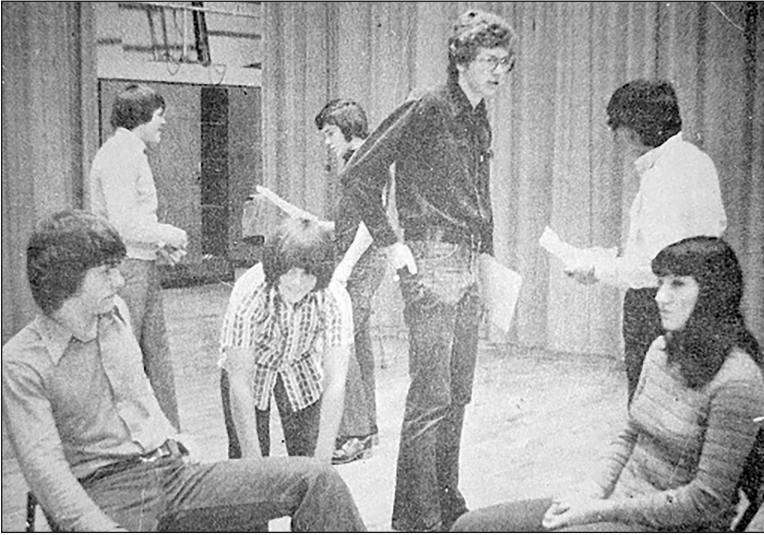
100 Years Back - 1924

- Messrs. Fred Bettner, A. Rotegard, C.E. Christenson, Bill Sutlief and Wm. Bauman of this place attended the 60th anniversary meeting of the Waseca County Anti-Horse Thief Society, held at the Waverly hotel at Waseca Saturday evening.
- E.J. Fogelberg, D.C. Brown and H.M. Woll drove to Waldorf Friday evening where the latter officiated at a basketball game between the Waldorf Consolidated school and the Pemberton Consolidated school in which the Waldorf team was an easy winner.
- Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Shea returned Monday from Hartland where they visited over Sunday at the Fitzgerald home. They were accompanied on their return by Miss Nellie Fitzgerald, a sister of Mrs. Shea.
- New Richland's Leap Year girl, Edith Mortenson, will celebrate her second birthday at the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. J.P. Mortenson, on Friday, Feb. 29, when a party will be given for eight of her classmates.
- The following friends and relatives spent Sunday evening at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ed. Grunske: Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Grunske and daughter, Ethel; Mr. and Mrs. Art Kaiser and son, Lawrence; Mr. and Mrs. Emil Wille and daughters, Olga and Erna; Mr. and Mrs. Rudy Schultz and son, Roger.
- The Arthur Blowers, Leonard Hanson and Mrs. Oluf Hanson families were guests at the L.H. Brandvold home Saturday evening.

76 Years Back - 1948

- Raul Donoso was eliminated from the Golden Gloves boxing competition after battling his way into the quarter finals. The fights took place in Chicago where fighters from 32 cities met to crown champs in eight weight divisions. In a fight with Jimmy Calland of Fort Wayne, Indiana, which Donoso won on a decision, he had the misfortune to break his left thumb. The injury caused him to default to Bob Rossi in the quarter finals.
- Little Herbert Johnson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey C. Johnson of the Lemond neighborhood, is celebrating his first birthday Sunday, although he will actually be four years old since his birthday is the 29th of February, falling this year on Sunday.
- Art Stensrud and his brother, Herbie Stensrud of Lakefield, have been digging in each other's ribs for some time over their bowling prowess and the thing came to a head last Sunday. Art picked a team composed of Billy Bell, Glen Nelson, John Greenwood, Russell Olson and himself and hied to Blue Earth where they met Herbie's team. Art's outfit won two out of three games.
- Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Foss, Marietta and Carol and Mr. and Mrs. Sylvan Foss of Clarks Grove motored to Hopkins Sunday and were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Semrud. They went especially to visit the new grandson of Mr. and Mrs. J.E. Foss.
- Mr. and Mrs. Lester Walstrom and Mrs. Caroline Verplank visited Martin Loken at the Carl Newgard home in Albert Lea a week ago Thursday.
- Mrs. Ted Lee, Mrs. William Jacobson, Mrs. Marcus Twisselman and Mrs. Ole Bakken spent last Wednesday at the home of Mrs. George Johnson. They helped Mrs. Johnson observe her birthday anniversary.

50 Years Back - 1974

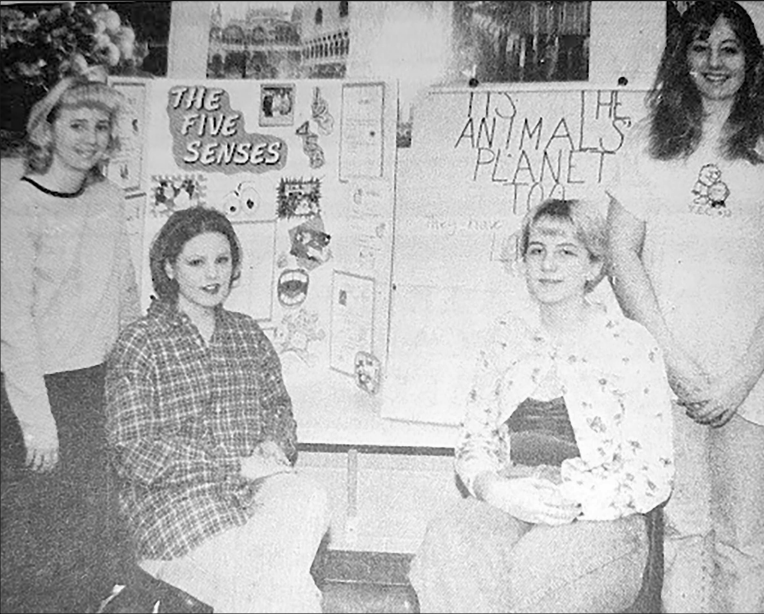


Several members of the New Richland-Hartland Oral Interpretation class are pictured practicing for their annual Oral Interpretation night. They are, from left: Rich Westland, Dave Arnfelt, Gary Walstrom, Don Krueger, Gary Hagen, Ron Soper and Dawn Janowitz. Others performing will be Bill Arneman, Rhonda Borchert, Ruth Brandvold, Ruth Hagen, Scott Kormann, Sandy Nelson, Linda Schoenrock, Susan Somage, Dave Shurson, Cindy Thompson, Scott Urban, Pam Schumacher, and Jerry Williams.

- Sunday dinner guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Vic Kluender were Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Schroeder, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Schroeder, Jodi and Dan, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Rosenau and Mr. and Mrs. Tom Traynor, Tracy and Todd. Afternoon callers were Mrs. Leona Habeck and Mrs. Lorraine Kirkpatrick.
- Mr. and Mrs. Albert Ganiere, Larry and Brenda were Sunday dinner guests at the Marlyn Gekeler home at Janesville in honor of Terry Gekeler on his seventh birthday.
- Friday evening supper guests at the Vernon Dezell home at Alden were Mr. and Mrs. Otto Sorenson, Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Dezell and family and Mr. and Mrs. Art Christensen of Freeborn.

25 Years Back - 1999

- The NRHEG School Board agreed to close school Thursday, Feb. 25 so that all students, faculty, and parents will have the opportunity to cheer the Panther Wrestling Squad to a Minnesota Class 2A wrestling title.



These four NRHEG members of the Future Leaders of America earned Gold Awards on their Star Events at Belle Plaine, from left: Melissa Berg, Jessie Bushlack, Amber Stohr and Tara Fricke.

Compiled by Jessica Lutgens

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Full Time openings in the following Minnesota counties: Martin County (Fairmont), Murray/Nobles Counties (one position) (Slayton and Worthington), and Rock County (Luverne). Primary responsibilities are program development and delivery; volunteer systems support and management; program operations; and communications & reporting.

To access complete job descriptions and apply online, go to: <https://z.umn.edu/EE4HYDPositions>

Application deadline is March 6, 2024. Projected start date is April 15, 2024- June 3, 2024

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Preschool & Elementary K-6 Teacher Positions

St. Casimir's School in Wells, MN is seeking full-time preschool and elementary teachers for the 2024-2025 school year and is offering a signing bonus of \$400. The candidates will uphold the values and philosophy of the school while enjoying small class sizes, a supportive teaching environment and staff who are dedicated to their students.

Please submit a cover letter, resume and references to Principal Hengel at principal@stcasimirsschool.net or by mail to: St. Casimir's School, 330 2nd Ave. SW, Wells, MN

WILTON TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF
ANNUAL MEETING &
ELECTION of OFFICERS

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Wilton Township, County of Waseca, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Election of Town Officers and Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2024. In case of inclement weather the meeting and election may be postponed until March, 19, 2024. Annual business meeting begins at 4 p.m.

Polls will be open from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
To elect:
ONE SUPERVISOR - 3 year term
ONE CLERK - 2 year term

The annual meeting and election will be held at Wilton Town Hall

Norman Gehring
Wilton Township Clerk

LEGAL NOTICES

ALTON TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS
Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Alton Township, County of Waseca, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Election of Town Officers and Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12th 2024. In case of inclement weather, the meeting and election may be postponed until the third Tuesday in March. The town board will also be holding the Board of Canvas on the Wednesday that follows the election at 6:00pm.

The Election Polls will be open from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm at which time the voters will elect:

One Supervisor – Term of Three Years
One Clerk – Term of Two Years

The Annual Meeting will commence at 4:00 pm to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law. On the agenda is setting levies for Road & Bridge, Revenue, and Fire Funds;

also, any other business relevant to township government.
The Annual Election and Meeting will be held at:

Alton Town Hall
35849 30th St
Janesville MN 56048

Deb Westphal
Alton Town Clerk

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on March 1, 2024

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PUBLIC NOTICE
ALTON TOWNSHIP

The Alton Town Board will conduct an annual audit of their financial books at the regular board meeting to be held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 6:00PM at the Alton Town Hall.

Deb Westphal
Alton Town Clerk

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on March 1, 2024

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Executive Assistant

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New Listing

812 5th St SW Waseca.....\$230,000
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1208 State St S.....\$389,000
Up and running successful Pizza Parlor in Waseca with loads of local history. Family-owned since 1968 with new owners in 2016. Interior walls are built with Chicago Brick that was from old Chicago buildings and beams were cut from the local Schroeder Sawmill. The brick in the floor came from an old Waseca street. The addition was built in 2004 and the new roof in 2015. Hard Ice Cream, Liquor License, and Seating for 100 + with gas fireplace.

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642
March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 LENTEN MEAL	2 STEAK or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm
3 Navy Reserve Birthday	4 HUG A GI DAY	5 Burger nite 5-7pm Seabee Birthday	6 6pm BAR Bingo	7 7pm HALL BINGO	8 LENTEN MEAL MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	9
10 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am- Noon Your HOST Waseca FAIRBOARD	11 7pm Post & AUX. Meeting	12 Burger nite 5-7pm	13 6pm BAR Bingo K-9 Veterans day	14 7pm HALL BINGO	15 WALLEYE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm External Order of Police YOUR HOST	16 ST. PATRICK'S DAY BINGO 7PM
17 ST. Patricks day	18	19 Burger nite 5-7pm	20 6pm BAR Bingo	21 7pm HALL BINGO Rosie the Riveter Day	22 LENTEN MEAL MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	23
24 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am- Noon Your HOST Neighborhood Service Cen-	25 Medal of Honor Day	26 Burger nite 5-7pm	27 6pm BAR Bingo	28 7pm HALL BINGO	29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm LENTEN MEAL	30
31						

HOURS OF OPERATION
SUN.- MON. CLOSED
TUE.- WED.-3pm to 11pm Tue. Is Lady's nite 2 for one-Men Busch light \$2.50 from 4 to 6pm.
THUR.—1pm to 11pm
FRI.- SAT.-11am to 1 am
POST & AUX MEETING 7pm club open 6pm MEMBERS only. Mn. Gambling license number 00385

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STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF WASECA
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
DISTRICT COURT
PROBATE DIVISION
Court File No. 81-PR-24-112
Estate of Thomas Frederick
Graham aka Thomas F. Graham, Decedent
NOTICE OF INFORMAL APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS (INTESTATE) Decedent

Notice is given that an amended application for informal appointment of personal representative has been filed with the Registrar. No will has been presented for probate. The amended application has been granted.

Notice is also given that the Registrar has informally appointed Kari B. Roepke, whose address is 1721 Shakopee Avenue East, Shakopee, Minnesota, 55379, as personal representative of the Estate of the Decedent. Any heir or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as personal representative or may object to the appointment of the personal representative. Unless objections are filed with the Court (pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-607) and the Court otherwise orders, the personal representative has full power to administer the Estate including, after 30 days from the date of issuance of letters, the power to sell, encumber, lease or distribute real estate.

Any objections to the appointment of the Personal Representative must be filed with this Court and will be heard by the Court after the filing of an appropriate petition and proper notice of hearing.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

Dated February 16, 2024

Deanna Verdick, Deputy Probate Registrar
Shannon M. Asselin, Court Administrator
Attorney for Personal Representative
Barbara J. Weckman Brekke

Brekke, Clybome & Ribich, L.L.C.
287 Marshall Road, Suite 201
Shakopee, MN, 55379
Attorney License No: 0349434
Telephone: (952) 402-9410
FAX: (952) 402 9410

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Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on February 23 and March 1, 2024

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STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
COUNTY OF LINCOLN
IN CIRCUIT COURT SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
In the Matter of the Adoption of AVA C. ANDERSON
Minor Child.
41 ADP. 24-6
NOTICE OF HEARING
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a hearing on Petition for Adoption of

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
COUNTY OF LINCOLN
IN CIRCUIT COURT SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
In the Matter of Termination of Parental Rights Over
AVA C. ANDERSON
Minor Child.
41 ADP. 24-5
NOTICE OF HEARING
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a hearing on Petition for Voluntary Termination of Parental

Child in the above captioned proceeding is scheduled before the Court, the Honorable Judge Jennifer Mammenga, presiding, at the Lincoln County Courthouse, located at 104 N. Main Street, Canton, South Dakota, 57013 for the 19th day of March, 2024, at the hour of 2:30 P.M., for a period of one hour. DATED this 9th day of February, 2024.

STRANGE, FARRELL, JOHNSON & BREWERS, P.C.
Amber J. Eggert
Attorney for Petitioner
4420 South Technology Drive
Sioux Falls, SD 57106 (605)339-4500 Phone
amber@strangelaw.com
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer February 16, 23, and March 1, 8, 2024

Rights in the above-captioned proceeding is scheduled before the Court, the Honorable Judge Jennifer Mammenga, presiding, at the Lincoln County Courthouse, located at 104 N. Main Street, Canton, South Dakota, 57013 for the 19th day of March, 2024, at the hour of 2:30 P.M., for a period of one hour. DATED this 9th day of February, 2024.

STRANGE, FARRELL, JOHNSON & BREWERS, P.C.
Amber J. Eggert
Attorney for Petitioner
4420 South Technology Drive
Sioux Falls, SD 57106 (605)339-4500 Phone
amber@strangelaw.com
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer February 16, 23, and March 1, 8, 2024

**Attention Woodville Township Residents**

The Annual Meeting will be March 12, 2024 at 7:30 PM in the Woodville Town Hall located at 200 3rd Ave SW Waseca, MN.

Topics to be discussed will be:
financial condition of the township,
financial statements of the cemetery,
township and Waseca rural fire district,
road reports, tax levies and any other issues the residents wish to discuss in regards to township business.

In case of inclement weather the alternative meeting date is
March 19,2024

Andrew Miller, Clerk
Woodville Township

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**

On **Thursday, March 14th, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.**, the City of Waseca will open and review all electronic bids received for the **8TH AVENUE NE (CSAH 13) RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT (CITY PROJECT NO. 2024-01, SAP NO. 172-020-009, & SAP NO. 081-613-011).**

Estimated major quantities are as follows:

PIPE REMOVAL (STORM, SANITARY, & WATER)	LIN FT	7,522
CONCRETE PAVEMENT REMOVAL	SQ YD	17,708
7.5" THICK REINFORCED CONCRETE STREET PAVEMENT	SQ YD	13,002
CONCRETE CURB & GUTTER (B624)	LIN FT	6,474
6" THICK CONCRETE DRIVEWAY PAVEMENT	SQ YD	1,394
4"-6" THICK CONCRETE WALK	SQ FT	13,166
BITUMINOUS PAVING (1.5"-2.5" LIFTS)	SQ YD	3,388
BITUMINOUS TRAIL 3.5" THICK	SQ YD	816
6" PERFORATED PVC PIPE DRAIN	LIN FT	6,507
12"-44" RC STORM SEWER PIPE	LIN FT	3,462
SANITARY SEWER LIFT STATION IMPROVEMENTS	LUMP SUM	1
6"-18" SANITARY SEWER MAIN & SERVICE PIPE	LIN FT	4,034
4"-8" WATERMAIN	LIN FT	3,721
STORM SEWER STRUCTURES	LIN FT	181.6
SANITARY SEWER STRUCTURES	LIN FT	129.1

Together with other related items of work, all in accordance with the Plans and Specifications.

Complete Digital Bidding Documents are available at www.questcdn.com for \$22.00 by inputting **QuestCDN eBidDoc #8960981** on the website's Project Search page. The online bidding fee will be \$42.00. Bid Documents may also be viewed at the City of Waseca Engineering Department located at 508 South State Street in Waseca (507-835-9730).

Bid Security of 5% of the amount of the Bid must accompany each Bid in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders.

The successful bidder must be a "responsible contractor" as defined in Minnesota Statutes Section 16C.285, subdivision 3.

The City reserves the right to retain the deposit of the lowest Bidder until the Performance Bond and Payment Bond have been executed and approved. No bidder may withdraw a Bid within sixty (60) days after the bid opening date.

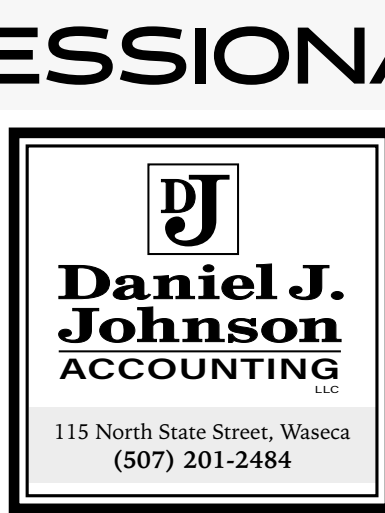
The City reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, waive irregularities and informalities therein, and award the Contract to the best interests of the City.

Direct any inquiries to Nathan Willey, the Waseca Director of Engineering, at (507) 835-9716.

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Pioneer photos by Deb Bently and Tristan Gehring

Best finish in school history



In February Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton 6th grader Erika Eilertson, competed at the regional spelling bee at South Central College in Mankato against all of the other area school champions. Erika lasted seven rounds and placed fourth overall. The champion was decided in round eight. JWP has competed in the regional spelling bee since 1975 and as far as the records indicate, a fourth place finish is the best finish in school history at the regional bee. Eilertson is pictured with Mr. Emory.

Scouting for food details

Be part of the biggest community service project of the year!

For over 100 years, the Boy Scouts of America has been an active participant in helping communities. In 1917-1918 Scouts collected nutshells and peach pits that were eventually used in the production of gas masks. In the 1930's Scouts collected clothing, household furnishing and food as aid to families during the depression. And in the 1940's it was aluminum as part of the war effort.

Whatever the need, Boy Scouts of America is there.

In March, Twin Valley Council Scouts will have the opportunity to once again help our communities by participating in Scouting for Food.

Scouting for Food is a National Good Turn of the Boy Scouts of America. Since 1988, over 200 million pounds of food has been gathered, making this the single largest food collection effort in the history of the United States. Local food banks and relief agencies within the communities distribute the food. Not only does Scouting for Food help feed the hungry of our communities, but it also teaches our Scouts that hunger is a problem. Millions of people go hungry every day. By participating in Scouting for Food, a Scout realizes there is a problem and he or she can help be a part of the solution. Scouting For Food provides a great service to our communities.

Twin Valley Council 2024 Scout-

ing for Food Campaign will begin by distributing post-it notes to homes in your community. Distribution of notices will be March 9th. Food pickup will be the following weekend on March 16th. We ask that all units co-ordinate with their families to make this project a huge success.

Thank you in advance for helping with this incredible project. Together we do make a difference.

Cholesterol-lowering diet supports heart health

With those New Year's resolutions six weeks behind us, some people may have reverted to less healthy ways of eating. Heart Month is a great time to remind yourself why a healthy diet is important for more than just your waistline.

"What you eat and drink affects your cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and if you have high cholesterol or triglyceride levels, your healthcare team may recommend following a cholesterol-lowering diet," says Ripu Singh, M.D., a cardiologist at Mayo Clinic Health System in Mankato and Waseca.

High cholesterol could cause your heart arteries to harden, a condition called atherosclerosis, which could lead to coronary artery disease. In addition, hardened arteries may allow a coating called plaque to build up and partially block your arteries. Blocked arteries can lead to low blood flow in the heart and chest pain.

What are triglycerides and cholesterol?

Triglycerides and cholesterol are types of lipids, or fats, which circulate in your blood. Triglycerides store unused calories and provide your body with energy. Cholesterol is used to build cells and certain hormones.

Cholesterol is made mainly by the liver but can also enter your body in the foods you eat that contain animal fat. Foods that come from animals or contain animal fat include meat, egg yolks, lard and dairy products. The type and amount of fat you eat can influence how much cholesterol your body makes.

Your body makes triglycerides from excess calories, regardless of the calorie source, such as fat, protein or carbohydrates. Triglycerides also are made from excess sugar and alcohol. High triglyceride levels are a risk factor for heart disease.

Lifestyle choices for improving your levels

Your healthcare team may recommend some of these lifestyle changes to improve your blood cholesterol levels and lower your triglyceride level:

- Eat a plant-based diet.
- Eat more high-fiber foods from plants. Choose 100% whole grains, whole fruits and vegetables.
- Exercise regularly.
- Get to and stay at a healthy body weight.
- Limit or avoid trans fats.
- Trans fats can raise blood cholesterol.
- Limit your intake of high-cholesterol foods.
- Reduce consumption of foods like egg yolks, organ meats, animal fat and high-fat dairy.
- Lower your total fat intake.
- All oils and fats are high in calories.
- Lower your saturated fat intake.
- Saturated fat can raise blood cholesterol.
- Replace saturated fats with unsaturated fats.

Unsaturated fats can lower your blood cholesterol levels. Monounsaturated fats are preferred. Polyunsaturated fats are OK.

"You can still enjoy foods you love, but you should prioritize a heart-healthy diet and eat less-healthy foods in moderation. Small changes can make a big impact in reducing your risk of heart disease," says Dr. Singh.

About Mayo Clinic Health System

Mayo Clinic Health System has a physical presence in 44 communities and consists of 53 clinics, 16 hospitals and other facilities that serve the healthcare needs of people in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The community-based healthcare professionals, paired with the resources and expertise of Mayo Clinic, enable patients in the region to receive the highest-quality physical and virtual healthcare close to home.

Media contact:

Kindergarteners Celebrate Completing 100 Days of School



Kindergarteners at Sacred Heart Elementary School decorated capes with pictures and words that represent their experiences during their first 100 days of schooling.

New Exchange Club Member



Bob Johnson, who joined the staff of Dennis Steffel Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Services last fall, recently joined the Waseca Exchange Club. Picture here with local president Mikhail Rosistlavovich, Johnson said he appreciates the community support and "Americanism" priorities of the organization. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

All-State



Addison Bomsta, director Devon Lawrence, and Hannah LaCroix. Bomsta and LaCroix participated in the 2023-24 All-State Concert Band February 17-18. They finished with a performance on the Minnesota Orchestra Hall stage.

Sommers selected to lead Bluejays softball

Waseca, MN - February 26th, 2024 - Amanda Sommers has been chosen as the next Head Coach of Girls' Softball at Waseca High School, pending approval from the school board.

Sommers, a 2002 graduate of Goodhue High School, excelled in Volleyball, Basketball, and Softball during her time with the Wildcats. Currently residing in Waseca, she serves as a project coordinator for the Minnesota FFA Foundation.

With extensive coaching experience in Softball, Sommers has been involved with the Mankato Peppers Softball Association for the past four seasons and previously coached at the junior high level in Waseca. She expressed her excitement for the opportunity, stating, "I'm eager to cultivate a strong culture within our Waseca Softball program and collaborate with the Waseca Softball Association to grow the sport in our community."

Sommers aims to bring fresh perspectives and a deep passion for

softball to the program, drawing from her coaching experience with the Mankato Peppers and Junior High teams. She looks forward to improving players' technical skills, fostering their love for the game, and nurturing respectful student-athletes.

Expressing her enthusiasm for her new role, Sommers said, "I'm thrilled to start working with the Waseca High School Softball players, building relationships, and hitting the field. Our community has a strong passion for softball, and I'm committed to revitalizing the program and keeping its momentum going!" Waseca High School softball practice begins on Monday, March 11th, with the Bluejays' first game scheduled for Thursday, April 4th against Blue Earth Area.



Sommers

Pinewood Derby



The Waseca Cub Scout Pinewood Derby was held on Saturday Feb 10, 2024 in the Scout Building at Waseca Fairgrounds. More than a couple dozen scouts took part in the event.

Youth of the Month



Waseca Exchange Club members and six 'Youth of the Month' honorees. First row from left: Trista Stinehart, Addison Wieseler, Tricia Cox, and Norah Schimming. Second row: Lucas Vasquez, Marck Butterfield, Amy Schmidt, and Ethan Stenzel. Third row: Jeanne Sexton, Mikhail Rostislavovich, President, and Caryn Wendt, Secretary

Youth of the month honorees

[Waseca, Minnesota] The Waseca Exchange Club announced the six Waseca High School students who are the finalists for their Student of the Month Program. "Each of these students was chosen for their outstanding involvement in the community," said Mark Butterfield Co-Chair of the selection committee. "These students have exhibited excellence in academics and leadership," added Amy Schmidt also a co-chair of the committee.

The Waseca Exchange Club joins with hundreds of other clubs across the country in an effort to identify and recognize the young leaders of our nation. The program not only enhances career opportunities for those honored, but it also promotes good citizenship, a desire for greater scholastic achievement, and the development of well-rounded personalities to other young adults in the community.

These students also submitted an essay for the 2023-2024 Youth of the Year Award the theme was: "How does the increasing emphasis on diversity and inclusion impact American youth?"

Exchange Club President Mikhail Rostislavovich concluded "Out of our Youth of the Month Honorees one student will be chosen and named our Exchange Clubs Student of the Year this April. At which time that student will receive a Five Hundred Dollar Scholarship. And progress to our District Competition and could very well go on to Nationals."

Both Butterfield and Schmidt said this group of young adults exemplified the best of young adults who excel in leadership, citizenship, and scholarship.

Thank You sponsors

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**CHILDREN'S
DREAM CATCHER
ANNUAL
FUNDRAISER**
SATURDAY, MARCH 2
12 Noon



At the **Star Fire Event Center**
**AUCTION,
MEAT RAFFLES & BINGO**

Under 18 can play bingo with an adult.

**Basket & Door Prize Donations needed
& welcomed. Please bring to event.**