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Milestones



The members of the honor guard firing line were flanked by law enforcement and safety officers during the Waseca Memorial Day program.
Pioneer photos by Deb Bently

Scherff serves as speaker during Memorial Day service

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Speaker Karla Scherff drew attention to the bittersweet importance of observing Memorial Day for those attending the Waseca County ceremony held on the courthouse lawn Monday morning. A few hundred people were in attendance for a program which began with a 9 a.m. parade featuring color guard details from the Waseca American Legion, V.F.W., and Legion Auxiliary; marching with them were the Waseca High School band and color guard, and Scouting America groups.

Solemn elements of the ceremony included reading the names of veterans who died during the past year and the laying of wreaths in honor of soldiers from armed conflicts beginning with the Civil War and continuing through the modern day.

NRHEG Senior Ashton Jenzen read Lincoln’s Gettysburg address; musical numbers presented



Color guard members from numerous agencies participated in the Memorial Day parade and ceremony held on the courthouse lawn the morning of Monday, May 26.

Program continued on 2

Waseca class of 2025 to graduate Sunday

Commencement exercises begin at 1:30 p.m.

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

The Waseca High School graduating class of 2025 takes the stage at the high school for commencement at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, June 1. This year’s graduates number 154, up from last year’s 120. There were 142 graduates in 2023 and 121 in 2022.

Instead of naming valedictorians and salutatorians, Waseca confers “Latin Honors,” the type of recognition often used at colleges. Students are recognized at levels such as Cum Laude (“with honor”), Magna Cum Laude (“with great honor”) and Summa Cum Laude (“with highest honor”) based on their grade point averages (GPAs). Under this system, all students in each grade range are recognized with no limits imposed by class rank or other systems of comparison.

At the ceremony, those with a GPA between 3.9 and 4 will be wearing white cords; those with a GPA between 3.75 and 3.89 will have blue and white cords; anyone with a GPA between 3.5 and 3.74 will have blue and gold cords. Plain gold cords will be around the shoulders of anyone with a GPA between 3.0 and 3.49.

Students who received a 4.0 GPA are: Sophie Nevine Chawra, Jack Xiang Chen, Collin Thomas Dettmer, Siri Anne Kuhns, Elizabeth Marie Manthe, Leah Marie Scheffert, Luke Anthony Yoder

Waseca continued on 10

JWP class of 2025

69 graduated on Friday

JANESVILLE JOURNAL - The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Class of 2025 was one of the largest graduating classes the school has seen in recent years, with 69 students receiving their high school diplomas on the football field on Friday, May 23. While the forecast threatened an overcast day, the weather was nearly ideal, removing all deterrents for the students to celebrate their achievements.

High School Principal Dave Rysdam offered brief welcoming remarks. He stated this class was special to him as they were students during the last year he was a classroom teacher prior to becoming principal. He shared that this distinction gave him some “unique perspectives” on the Class of 2025.

“The big part of growing, maturing, and progressing in life is ownership,” he said. “Owning who we are, what we do, how we relate to others, and owning the decisions we make that impact our lives as well as those around us...owning these various traits about ourselves takes reflection and the ability to adapt to new information as it comes to us.”

He went on to claim this class has an understanding of ownership. “It shows in their achievements, their relationships, their commitment to service to the community, and their commitment to each other. It is one of the many traits that sets this class apart.

“I would ask that each of you continue along this path, as it will serve you well. And with it, you’ll be able to achieve the many great things that



CLASS OF 2025 - Sixty-nine seniors, members of the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Class of 2025, threw their caps in the air in celebration Friday, May 23. Below, seniors walk to their seats on the high school football field.

you are capable of.”

Of special interest during this graduation ceremony was the original composition, “Silver and Blue,” written by class member Myles Kruger and being played at graduation as the school’s official song. He conducted the band during their rendition of his work down on the field.

The first two valedictorians of the class – Isaiah Berndt and Brielle Dessner – shared some words of wisdom and memories with their classmates. Berndt began the joint speech referencing poet Mary Oliver with the quote, “What will you do with your one wild and precious life?” Berndt pointed out how bold the statement was, saying, “It asks something we may not be ready to answer yet.”

“As we stand here today on the edge of everything we know and everything that’s coming next, it feels like the right question to ask,” he pointed out. Dessner added, “Because to figure out where we’re going, it’s only natural to look back on where we’ve been.”

Dessner shared many memories about elementary school, where she claimed their biggest worries were who’d be the line leader or “if your



shoes lit up when you ran.” She even brought up the dreaded “cooties” said to come from dancing with a partner during their gym class unit on dancing.

“It’s funny how it’s the smallest moments we carry with us,” she said. “While many of us share those moments from the start, not everyone’s journey began the same way.”

That statement was the perfect segue for Berndt, who was one of a handful of students in the Class of 2025 to begin their journey at Trinity Lutheran School. After graduating from Trinity in eighth grade, he joined JWP as a high school fresh-

man, unfamiliar with many of the teachers or staff. He admitted he felt an initial sense of panic going from Trinity to JWP. However, his mind was at ease once the transition took place.

“I was, in true 14-year-old fashion, absolutely terrified,” he shared. “All sorts of uncertainties ran through my mind. But the moment I stepped into the school, my fears were put to rest. We were welcomed with open arms, because that’s what this class is: welcoming, supportive...the kind of group you feel lucky to share four

JWP continued on 13

Board stymies CUP for communal colonies

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

After an extensive public hearing which drew about 25 observers and included comments from 12 county residents, no member of the Waseca County board of commissioners chose to support adding “organized farm colonies” to the list of 44 conditional use permits (CUPs) currently available to property owners under the county’s unified development code.

Beginning in March, and apparently in response to an informal request from the Hutterite group, the Waseca County planning and zoning board worked with county staff members to determine potential

terms and conditions under which a farm colony might be allowed within the county. The draft presented to commissioners included the possibility that, under a CUP, the population density requirements imposed on other properties would be suspended for the colony, allowing five or more family dwellings to be located near each other. Proposed application elements included a required site plan specifying the number and location of dwellings, buildings, water supply, and septic systems, as well as road access.

Detractors for the proposed CUP expressed numerous reasons for rejecting it, including the perceived unfairness that, although long-standing

county families have made requests in the past to locate a second home on rural properties, those have been persistently denied or delayed. “Why would you change the laws for one group, but not for people who are already here?” asked resident Brady Adams.

Other speakers commented that colonies might establish bakeries, greenhouses, or other businesses which would supplant existing providers.

Commissioner Brad Krause told of

having visited a Hutterite colony. “I was very impressed,” he says of what he saw and learned. Still, he said that, if the CUP came up for a vote, he would probably vote against it because “I don’t know what else we would be opening ourselves up to in the future.”

Fellow board member De Malterer pointed out that even long-established area families were once “new” to Waseca County. “Our parents and in some cases great-grandparents built their lives here not because they were born here, but because they saw opportunity,” she observed. “We

County continued on 3

County leaders meet over MNPrarie

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

During discussion in a May 20 work session which included the county boards from both Waseca and Dodge counties, commissioners seemed to be in consensus they would like to continue a two-county shared delivery system for human services programs even if Steele County removes itself from the three-county collaborative known as MNPrarie.

In March, the Steele County board of commissioners voted to take steps toward terminating the joint powers agreement (JPA) which established MNPrarie in 2014. An April 10 article in the Waseca County Pioneer reported MNPrarie has an annual operating budget of \$30 million. The three counties pay \$12 million toward its operating costs, with Steele County paying \$6.5 million.

In a session which lasted about 1.5 hours, commissioners heard from MNPrarie executive director Tara Reich and financial representative Kevin Vanenga. The two provided summaries of their research regarding a possible two-county collaborative, including what changes would be necessary to make it sustainable on a new, smaller scale. The two explained their figures were based on typical costs for various elements of the budget, and that there are numerous ways the downsizing could be accomplished.

Their summary began with a list of advantages to retaining a collaborative service; one was a reduction of “redundancy.” Reich explained all human services agencies must prepare numerous reports and summaries. A single, shared entity needs to prepare only one of each such document, whereas two agencies would need the staff to create separate summaries. When it comes to specialized skills or duties, only one person would need to be trained in them rather than two.

Among many examples, the document mentioned only one coordinator would be needed to ensure all staff members are scheduled for state-required training sessions.

Another form of redundancy, Reich reported, would come in the form of needed technology, specifically licensing for electronic programs and services.

She also observed that human services programs are required by law to fund certain vital services, including child placements,

Leaders continued on 2

*A word from
The Word*

One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

Psalms 27:4



Compostings

by Al Batt

Are owls really wise?

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

You know how in sports, competitors toss the ball to the fans after a victory?

Yes, but you're not supposed to do that in bowling.

I know that now.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I picked up sticks. That job done, I picked up more sticks. If you live amongst the trees in a windy location, picking up sticks is an endless job. I loaded 16 tons and what did I get? Another day older and deeper in debt. Thank you, Tennessee Ernie Ford, for that useful song.

THE NEWS FROM HARTLAND HAROLD

Hartland's lucky number is 59,493.

That number was derived by adding the year it was founded (1877) to its population (321) plus the elevation of 1,253 feet and its ZIP code of 56042.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

If you think your refrigerator collecting data and the TV spying on you is terrible, remember that the vacuum cleaner has been gathering dirt on you for years.

What do you call a hen that can count its own eggs? A math-emachicken.

Why did the cat cross the road? Because the chicken had a laser pointer.

Bouncer: "I'm going to have to ask you to leave."

Man: "Why?"

Bouncer: "Because I have no idea who you are, and this is my trampoline."

Bacon and eggs walked into a bar.

The bartender said, "Get out of here! We don't serve breakfast!"

I'VE LEARNED

I took a geology class where I learned that the most common rock in the world is a leaverite. If you see one, you leave 'er right where it is.

Former Federal Reserve head Alan Greenspan said men's underwear sales were a key economic predictor. When economic anxiety is pervasive (a recession), men don't replace their underwear. My wife would claim that we've been in a recession all our married lives.

My cousin is a famous archaeologist who found the largest known dinosaur tibia ever. It was a big shin dig.

If the Earth is flat, it's because its water isn't carbonated.

The price tag on a Hermes Birkin bag was \$350,000. That's for one handbag, not the company. When will the suffering of the ultrarich end?

I read in bed, which makes me a librocubicularist. This word is a combination of the Latin words "liber" (book) and "cubiculum" (bedroom), and was coined by Christopher Morley in his 1919 novel, "The Haunted Bookshop."

A wet basement is no Bay of Funday.

Green Bay is known as the "toilet paper capital of the world" because the first splinter-free toilet paper was produced there in 1935.

ASK AL

"What exactly is pop music?" It's the sound bubble wrap makes when you step on it.

"Where do you get your ideas?" Dollar Tree.

"Are owls really wise?" I grew up with a great horned owl. True story. It was easier in those days for an owl to adopt a boy. She wasn't that smart, but she recited a lot of poetry, which made her seem wise.

"Where do lost TV remotes go?" To a remote island in the South Pacific.

NATURE NOTES

A robin sang in the rain, polishing my day. Why did it sing in the falling moisture? Why not? We sing in the shower. The robin was singing in a shower. What does it mean when a bird sings in the rain? It's said to indicate that fair weather is approaching. That makes sense. My experience is that the rain always stops, and eventually, fair weather magically appears. A robin may sing to defend its territory or because it enjoys "Singin' in the Rain," a 1952 musical and romantic comedy film starring Gene Kelly, Donald O'Connor and Debbie Reynolds. I find comfort in the robin's rain song. I've used this written by Robert Louis Stevenson in eulogies: "Like a bird singing in the rain, let grateful memories survive in time of sorrow."

Among the earliest to bloom in spring, woodland wildflowers have value for pollinators when food is scarce. Spring ephemerals bloom, are pollinated and produce seed during a small window of time between snowmelt and leaf-out. Ephemerals are hearts drawn in the sand and quickly give way to more shade-tolerant flowers.

The cracks in the sidewalk showed many small, volcanic-like mounds of soil. Pavement ants are tiny ants about 1/8th inch long and are dark brown to black. The name for this ant comes from its habit of nesting under sidewalks and driveways, and piling the dirt removed from the nest in a mound on top of the pavement.

MEETING ADJOURNED

"We are told to let our light shine, and if it does, we won't need to tell anybody it does. Light-houses don't fire cannons to call attention to their shining—they just shine."—Dwight L. Moody. Be kind.

A comedy routine titled, 'Can you hear me?'



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

cause I am thinking about things we take for granted. My current "attitude of gratitude" perhaps stems from having been at Memorial Day ceremonies earlier today.

Whatever its source, I am busy being grateful for the birds on my yard. I am reminded of one day when the hostile cosmos drove me outdoors to speak with someone calling from another part of the country. I forget whether it was an order I wanted to place or some bureaucratic detail I had to take care of, but whatever it was, I handled it while sitting on my yard.

As the "real" business of the phone call was finished, the person said, "By the way, I can't hang up without mentioning how much I've enjoyed the birdsong."

Ironically, I had not even noticed the birds, even though I was more or less surrounded by them.

Their presence is no mere accident, of course. I expend plenty of money and elbow grease acquiring birdseed and filling my small buffet of feeders. As summer approaches

and the hummingbirds return, the buffet doubles in size. People at grocery store checkouts must really wonder how many cookies I bake when I go through the line with ridiculous amounts of sugar to make the "go juice" the hummers enjoy.

As any birdwatcher would tell you, if you sit still enough, the birds will forget you're in the vicinity and go back to their usual activities. At times like that, birdsong is only the beginning. Mourning doves feed on the ground. When they take off, their wings make a squeaking sound when they fly. Others create a subtle rhythm, since they flap once or twice, then wait a beat or two. I'm told that's called "roller coaster" flight, since they lift upward when their wings are in motion and drop downward when they coast.

Some orioles on my yard have a cry so like a whistle, I can repeat it note for note. It's almost as if the bird and I are arguing—unless he sees it in quite the opposite way... Someone else sounds like a disappointed parent clicking his or her

Summer of Amelia part two



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

get it.

There are some things that I didn't quite miss though.

Having my sister steal my clothes and wear them in front of me. The dog hair I find everywhere. Living a bit far from anything there is to do. Less privacy, more petty arguments, different responsibilities.

There is also the circumstance that, while things have stayed the same, there are still quite a number of things that have changed since I lived here last. A lot of people I went to high school with are now engaged, some even married. Other classmates are out exploring the world, traveling the country. Most have, or are in the process of graduating like me, off to do some

really cool or impressive job. There's construction in new places in town (can we talk about how big that house is on the north side of the lake? I can't wait to see it once it's done), new and retired businesses, a rearranged Walmart I still have to get the hang of.

But it's all fun, and I'm trying to take it all in as much as I can before I leave in August. This is probably the last phase of my life in which I will spend this much time with my family, in Waseca. Once I remind myself of that, my sister wearing my sweatshirt on our walk (even though she didn't ask) becomes so trivial it's not worth arguing about.

So I've looked at what I want to work on this summer. Does anyone remember the Summer of Amelia

that I attempted to name a couple of summers ago with the whole purpose of working on me? It will kind of be like that, but less planned and more just me trying to enjoy life.

I started a sourdough starter yesterday, so in seven days I'll be able to make something with it! I propagated more plants for my mom so she and I can enjoy some new baby plants in a couple months. I've been making fun, healthy meals and working on staying active in order to be healthy and feel good.

Life in Waseca sometimes just feels picturesque. Kind of like the world stops moving and I can simply enjoy life. The sun will shine, the birds will chirp, I am surrounded by the people I love doing the things I love. It feels like I can be the main character in a movie, although no one would watch that movie because I'm just doing the things of life, nothing unusual or extreme. And I'm okay with that.

My Determination: "Anyone can grow into something beautiful."—Vanessa Diffenbaugh, The Language of Flowers

■ Leaders

from Page 1

sending individuals to "detox," and even sometimes burials. She described these as "unpredictable and uncontrollable," in that the agency must fund however many of them occur. Having a larger, single agency would distribute the risk for these services, Reich stated, while reducing their impact, since they would be part of a larger overall budget.

Although Steele County commissioners voted in March that they would like to see the MNPrairie col-

laborative dissolved, the terms all counties agreed to in 2014 are that doing away with the collaborative altogether requires that at least two of the three member counties agree. Steele County would have the right to "withdraw" from membership, but would then lose voting rights during the months-long process of separating operations.

In a conversation with the Pioneer, some MNPrairie staff members expressed dismay regarding what it would take to separate the cases and records associated with any one county from those of the others, indicating it would be a lengthy and complicated process.

As reported in the previous Pioneer article on this topic, Steele

County attorney Robert Jarrett had told Steele County commissioners in March the terms of the Joint Powers Agreement are "awful" and implied that, since Steele's share of the costs is larger than of Dodge or Waseca, Steele County should have a stronger voice in the decision-making process.

The summary shared by MNPrairie leadership on May 20 took a contrasting approach, suggesting that at least in some budget areas, Dodge and Waseca are "supplementing" Steele, since the larger county is expending more than the 46 percent of resources its share covers.

Given their apparent consensus to work toward retaining a collaborative, commissioners speculated

about modifying the terms of the 2014 agreement to help facilitate Steele County's exit, but decided not to go down that path since, other than expressing displeasure, Steele County had not given a clear explanation of its reasons for wanting to leave.

Steele County attorney Jarrett was among audience members and raised his hand to indicate he wished to speak, but was not invited to do so. He spoke with media representatives afterward saying "To me, it's a farce to say [Dodge and Waseca] aren't aware of why we want to leave. That information has been shared."

Because the May 20 meeting was a work session, no official action was taken; discussions will be ongoing.

■ Program

from Page 1

by the high school band and vocal music departments included the national anthem, "Homeward Bound," and "America (My Country 'Tis of Thee)."

Wendt Sisters Brenda Kopsischke and Lynda Kiesler performed the "veterans' version" of "Hallelujah."

Karla Scherff is a "gold star mother," a title she acquired when her son, Caleb Erickson, was killed in action in Afghanistan in 2014.

Scherff observed that many people regard Memorial Day as an opportunity to enjoy a long weekend. But for those who have lost a loved one who was in the military, it is inescapably "a time to honor and remember our fallen, and the sacrifice they chose to make to keep us free."

She told of Caleb's desire to join the military, explaining he enlisted in the Marines six weeks after graduating from Waseca High School in 2012. He chose to be trained as a "motor team mechanic," and, when deployed to Afghanistan, was referred to as "A/C Man" by his fellow soldiers because he showed a skill for get-

ting all-important air conditioning units back up and running. Scherff said he was known for his "northern accent," his "trademark smile," and for being willing to take on jobs other people did not want to do.

He was a volunteer the day he joined his final convoy mission. He was in the turret of the last vehicle in line when it was attacked by a suicide bomber, and was the day's only casualty.

"They say it gets better with time," said Scherff of losing her son. "But that's not true.

"Love never goes away, so the pain never goes away. We just learn to live with it and keep mov-

ing forward."

For that reason, Scherff said, families of veterans should never be wished a "happy Memorial Day." She suggested it might be better to extend wishes for a "blessed" or "memorable" day instead, perhaps accompanied by the sentiment "we remember your sacrifice."

Scherff closed her speech with a line from the poem "The Young Dead Soldiers do not Speak," which she found engraved on a stone in Waseca County's Dusbabeck cemetery.

"We leave you our deaths," she shared. "Give them their meaning."



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

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Graduation Open house ads available
Celebrate this year's graduates in the paper with a photo and open house announcement. Cost is \$25 for one week or \$40 for two weeks.
Please email:news@waseca-countypioneer.com.

Waseca High School graduation 1:30 p.m. Sunday, June 1
Doors open at 12:15 for a 1:30 graduation ceremony for the Waseca High School class of 2025. The ceremony takes place in the Waseca Junior Senior High School gymnasium.

Marbled Coasters at the Janesville Public Library Tues., June 3
Create a chic and colorful spin on marbled coasters at Janesville Public Library on at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 3. Geared for ages 13-18.

Traveling show 'Reptiles Around the World' will visit New Richland, Waseca, Waldorf and Janesville June 4 and 5
Slither around the world to meet reptiles from every continent they're found. Learn what a Legless Lizard is, meet a gecko, hold a boa constrictor, watch a snake eat and more! Geared for ages 7-12. New Richland Public Library 10 a.m. Wednesday, June 4. Waseca Public Library 1 p.m. Wednesday, June 4. Waldorf Public Library 10 a.m. Thursday, June 5. Janesville Reading Garden (next to Library) 1 p.m. Thursday, June 5.

Waseca Public Library Summer Reading Program taking applicants
The Waseca Public Library is again taking applicants for their summer reading program. Designed to keep reading skills focused over the summer. In addition to the summer reading challenge where kids and teens read to win prizes, the libraries will be holding events with live animals, marionette shows, music, crafts and fun activities. Sign up at Waseca Summer Reading Program Registration – Waseca-Le Sueur Library

Taste of the Farm at Waseca Fairgrounds on Tuesday, June 3
Join the Waseca County Farm Bureau for their Taste of the Farm event at the Waseca Fairgrounds from 5-7 p.m. on Tuesday, June 3. This is a family-friendly event. A free meal will be served until gone, enjoy farm animals, farm equipment and other fun activities.

Aspyn Acres kids' wildlife clinic June 14
Contact Aspyn Acres for information about a kids' wildlife rehabilitation clinic scheduled for June 14. Using stand-in models, participants will use the resources of a new facility to help diagnose the needs of animals in distress and discover the best way to help them. Aspyn Acres is located at 41251 135 Street north of Waseca. Email contact is aspynacreswildliferehab@gmail.com.

MNVAC Waseca Head Start Preschool 0-5 accepting applications for 2025-2026
The MNVAC Waseca Head Start Preschool is accepting applications for children 0-5 years old for the 2025-2026 school year. Please either call Rachel Grunklee at 507-835-1282 or go to www.mnvac.org to apply. Free Home base and Center Classes, eligibility will be determined upon application.



Four Waseca seniors were among students statewide who expressed plans to become teachers and were selected by the Center for Educational Partnerships located at Minnesota State University-Mankato, but serving the whole state. Pictured here are the four students alongside members of the Waseca staff who were an inspiration to them. From left: Helin Cruz-Hernandez and J.D. Delgado; Kylie Snow and Bre Lawrence; Joseph Mextico-Perez and Teighlor Eilertson; and Cejay Pickett and Abigayle Holmberg.

Waseca seniors sign as future teachers

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

During a signing ceremony the morning of May 21, Waseca High School seniors Cejay Pickett, Helin Cruz-Hernandez, Kylie Snow and Joseph Mextico-Perez "signed" to indicate their commitment toward becoming future educators. Having expressed their intent to become teachers, they are eligible for significant financial aid through a program administered by the Center for Educator Partnerships at Minnesota State University-Mankato.

Dr. Teri Preisler, the center's director, was present for the signing ceremony and explained that as long as the four continue to move forward with their commitment, they will be eligible for \$5,000 in financial support each semester, up to a total of \$30,000 each toward their college educations.

To be selected for the program, Preisler said each one had completed a "rigorous" selection process including providing information about their academic careers and writing an essay about their reasons for wanting to become a teacher.

Among biographical information students had shared with the counseling department prior to the ceremony was the identity of someone associated with their education who had served as a role model and inspiration. Counselor Bre Lawrence then surprised each of the honorees by inviting that individual to give a brief introduction.

High school English teacher Abigayle Holmberg told of having taught Cejay Pickett in the eighth grade. She recalled his intellectual curiosity, his consistency, and his boldness. Pickett plans to attend Hamline University where he will work toward becoming a social studies teacher.

J.D. Delgado told of having tutored Helin Cruz-Hernandez in the subject of math during the unsettled months of the Covid pandemic. He praised her patience and empathy, and stated how pleased he is she plans to become a math instructor. He commented, "You will make a real impact in the classroom." Cruz-Hernandez plans to attend either SouthCentral or Mankato. Counselor Bre Lawrence introduced Kylie Snow, who plans to attend St. Cloud State where she will major in elementary education with additional training in sign language. Lawrence said that Snow "brings calm to a chaotic moment" and expressed confidence she would establish a classroom where "all children feel seen, supported and celebrated."

Family and consumer sciences teacher Teighlor Eilertson introduced Joseph Mextico-Perez. She described him as "kind, caring, and deeply empathetic," and stated his patience and encouragement would benefit all students. Mextico-Perez has indicated he will be attending Minnesota State University-Mankato.

As the brief signing ceremony closed, Principal Jason Miller stated "the future of education is in good hands."



Musicians Jack Walker, Matthew Byrne, Dravyn Spies, Owen Garth, John Schaefer and Gavin Listro make up the band Dravyn Spies and the Schizomatics who played at the Starfire Event Center on Friday, May 16, 2025. Photo by Daryn Spies

Schizomatics perform at Starfire

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The musical group Schizomatics, featuring Waseca native Dravyn Spies, performed at the Starfire Event Center the evening of Friday, May 16 to a full house and a packed dance floor. Along with live music and free admission, food and beverages were available for purchase.

Schizomatics is from Hillsdale, Mich., where Spies, a 2021 Waseca graduate, is attending Hillsdale College. The band consists of Matthew Byrne bass/vocals, Gavin Listro guitar/vocals, Owen Gerth saxophone, John Schaefer trumpet, Dravyn Spies drums/vocals, and Jack Walker keyboard/vocals. The six-member band played a few original songs off their recently released EP, but also covered artists and songs from Billy Joel's "Only the Good Die Young," to Michael Jackson's "Billy Jean." The band was energetic on stage and friendly off. Musicians mingled with the crowd before the show, talking to fans or signing autographs and letting girls snap pictures with them. They put a little spin on Dravyn's grandma's favorite song "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" by the Tokens, and sounded spot on with "Easy Like Sunday Morning" by The Commodores.

Dravyn Spies, 22, took a minute to chat during an intermission. Schizomatics played three sets in total, and their first had just wrapped up. Spies, who was on drums and vocals said, "We played 13 songs for our first set; it was fun to plan this out. My parents asked me to play at the Starfire, and we couldn't wait. I've been in town for a few days but have to leave for Hillsdale College in Michigan on Monday because we have another gig coming up. One of my friends is getting married." Daryn Spies, Dravyn's father, said, "I first heard about Hillsdale on the radio, I told Dravyn he should look at it and he ended up not bothering with any other colleges after he was accepted there, he liked that one so much."

Dravyn recently graduated with honors from Hillsdale College, having completed a major in economics and a minor in Latin. Along with his academic endeavors, he was a member of several college bands, including Big Band which received five outstanding performance awards at the Notre Dame Collegiate Jazz Festival this past February. Six of the 18 students who performed received awards at Notre Dame; one of the six was Dravyn.

Where does the name Schizomatics come from? According to an online source the definition of a Schismatic: a person who creates or incites schism in an organization or who is a member of a splinter group. When the group of musicians first started out as a band in 2022, there were three Protestant members and three Catholic members. There are now four Catholic members and two Protestant members, one has since converted to the Catholic faith. Speaking of "schisms," Dravyn isn't the only Minnesotan; trumpet player John Schaefer is from Stillwater.

While attending Waseca High School, Dravyn was one of 16 players to be named to the 2020 3A Academic All-State football team. He received the Triple-A Award for excellence in Academics, Arts and Athletics, was named the Exchange Club Student of the Year, and was a member of the Minnesota Honor Society.

■ County from Page 1

want to be welcoming; we want new people to arrive and be successful, so that we can all benefit mutually from that success."

Still, Malterer said, she would not support adding the CUP, but instead would encourage any interested colonies to work within the requirements currently imposed by the unified development code.

After roughly 45 minutes of discussion, the agenda item of the CUP died for lack of a motion in support of it from any commissioner.

In other business, county highway engineer Jim Kollar summarized an "exchange" with St. Mary Township under which the county is "revocating" 2.25 miles of roadway formerly identified as County Road 61 to the township, while taking on ownership and maintenance of 1.5 miles of 110th Street. The trade, Kollar explained in past conversations on the matter, has benefits for both parties. Final approval of the process, which

had included a public hearing on the topic the evening before, occurred during the May 21 meeting.

Also in response to a recommendation from Kollar, commissioners awarded a \$112,780 contract to refresh striping on 76 miles of county road, including "wet reflective" paint on part of county state aid highway 14.

WASECA CITY COUNCIL

Waterpark opens May 31

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

During its regular meeting the evening of Tuesday, May 20, the Waseca City Council set public hearings regarding the zoning of land for two significant developments currently in the planning phase. A hearing was held at the Waseca City Council meeting on May 20, regarding the rezoning of land for the Market Place Development, a 36-unit apartment complex planned for the currently empty lot between the high school and Walmart. A hearing was held at the Waseca City Council meeting on May 20, regarding the prospect of rezoning property for the Clearwater Preserve development planned in the southeast quadrant of the city.

Former congressman Tim Penny expressed thanks to council members for their continued support of the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF). Penny is retiring soon, but assured the council SMIF's good work will continue and that his successor, Venya Krause, will be just as effective. Aaron Johnson, SMIF philanthropy director, shared a presentation about the organization's "Small Towns Fund," which is accepting donations. Johnson shared that the fund specifically benefits communities with populations of 10,000 or fewer. Among the benefits it provides are providing paint for murals or other spruce-up projects, and books for children. Johnson stated SMIF has given more than \$460,000 in support to Waseca County and its communities over time.

Anna Thill of XCel Energy remotely shared information about a major powerline project intended to increase power transmission capacity from the city of Mankato to the town of Kellogg along the Mississippi River. Public hearings and meetings regarding the powerline have been being held around the region since 2023. As plans have developed, XCel has submitted plans to state agencies regarding potential routes for the line. According to information on the company's website, the preferred route for the lines follows roughly along State Highway 60 from Mankato to Faribault. An alternate plan submitted early in the planning process offered a path along Highway 14 as an option.

Thill told council members the Mankato-to-Mississippi-River line is part of a massive powerline transmission upgrade initiative. Benefits of increasing capacity include better distribution of energy added to the grade by solar gardens, wind farms, and other forms of renewable energy, strengthened reliability. Thill stated final routing decisions should be made late this year, with construction underway on various stages of the project from 2026 to 2028. Information about the project is available on the web at <https://www.mmtrproject.com/>.

Mayor Randy Zimmerman announced the "Fireworks Fund committee" has raised sufficient funds for the first phase of its project: the purchase of LED snowflakes to decorate the downtown area. Zimmerman requested permission for the snowflakes to be attached to city light poles by city staff during the holidays, and then to have city staff remove and store them when they are no longer seasonable. The purchase of the decorations is a private endeavor not funded by the city.

Zimmerman also mentioned donations are being sought for this summer's fireworks. This, too, is being paid for without the use of city funds. Donations can be submitted to

Council continued on 12



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NRHEG class of 2025 to graduate Sunday

Commencement exercises Sunday at 2 p.m. in NR

By ELI LUTGENS
Editor/Publisher

The NRHEG High School graduating class of 2025 takes the stage at the high school for commencement Sunday, June 1 at 2 p.m. This year’s graduates number 55, two less from last year.

There were 67 graduates in 2023 and 57 in 2022.

The valedictorian for the class of 2025, who attained a perfect 4.0 GPA is Sierra Misgen, daughter of Mark and Sara Misgen. Her future plans include attending Minnesota State University, Duluth for Exercise and Rehabilitation Science.

This year’s salutatorian is Tayla Sandry, daughter of David and Sherri Sandry. Her future plans include attending college for Elementary Education.

Musical selections, performed by the NRHEG High School Band and Choir, include “This is Our Day” the chosen favorite from the seniors’ four-year band careers, and “Jupiter: Bringer of Jollity” will be part of the commencement.

Class speakers, as selected by their peers, are Cole Hutchens, Harbor Cromwell and Grace Starman.

Leading the parent appreciation statement this year will be Gisele Cazares.

This year’s class officers and representatives are: Gisselle Cazares, Harbor Cromwell, Cole Hutchens and Logan Schiellt.

The senior class motto is, “You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough.”

The class colors are purple, blue and silver.

The class flower is the blue rose.

Graduates joining a branch of the military after graduation will be wearing cords in patriotic colors.

Presenting the class this year will be Principal Grant Berg.

Presenting diplomas this year are Superintendent Michael Meihak and school board members Amy Ihrke and Kelly Delacruz.

Alden Dobberstein and Mallory Schlinger will be reading the graduates’ names as they receive their diplomas.

The 2025 Honor Escorts are: Katelyn Dobberstein, Abbie Viktora, Chloe Stork, Molly Johnson, Jordan Brouwers, Wyatt Larson, Kaleb Hughes, and Quen Meyering.

WJH concert mixes jazz and brass

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

A small ensemble jazz band performed outside the auditorium for 15 minutes prior to the Waseca Junior High band concert at the high school’s performing arts center on Tuesday, May 20. Band director Anders Peterson informed the audience lightheartedly that, with seventh-grade jazz band members practicing on Tuesdays and Thursdays prior to 7 a.m. and eighth-graders on Mondays and Wednesdays, “Since I didn’t want any sleep at all, I also have jazz ensemble Fridays at 6:50 a.m.”

The seventh-grade jazz band started the show with “Uncle Milo’s Side Show” from the book Jazz Ensemble Method, followed by “Last Dance” and “Bossa Madeira.” Said Peterson, “This is my first year teaching; I just graduated college a year ago. They say the first year teaching is the hardest, but I have to say that doesn’t apply to working with these guys.”

Eighth-grade jazz band was next with “Blues in



The seventh-grade jazz ensemble performed outside the performing arts center prior to the Waseca Junior High Concert on Tuesday, May 20, 2025.

Hoss Flat” by Mark Taylor; “Yesterday” by Rick Stitzel and “Birdland” by Michael Sweeney.

The woodwind ensemble took the stage for “Pirates of the Caribbean” by Michael Sweeney, before the brass ensemble performed “Mission Impossible” by Paul Lavender. Said Peterson, “This song is from the show and movie ‘Mission

Impossible,’ which is kind of weird because they were allowed to vote on it and they keep choosing harder and harder songs. But that’s okay because it’s great practice for them.” Both bands combined to perform the finale, “A Million Dreams” by Michael Brown and “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows” by Ralph Ford.

May is Foster Care Month

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

In Minnesota, nearly 6,000 children and youth are in a foster care setting on any given day, according to preliminary 2024 figures recently released by the state’s department of youth, children and families.

Speaking with people involved in the foster care system, however, quickly reveals a set of fast-moving dynamics behind the apparently straightforward number.

Statewide statistics indicate caretaker drug abuse leads to about one-fourth of the removals, with allegations of abuse and neglect leading, respectively, to about 15 and 12 percent.

Billie Frantesl is a supervisor in the “child and family” department of MNPrairie, a collaborative social services agency shared by Dodge, Steele and Waseca counties. She and child foster care licenser Jill Gannon work with foster care providers in all three counties.

The two share that Minnesota emphasizes finding a family member or

familiar household when children must be removed from the care of their parents. They mention with pride that, while the state imposes a minimum of 35 percent “family” placements, MNPrairie consistently maintains about 70 percent.

“It reduces the amount of disruption the child experiences,” says Gannon of placing children with families. “And sometimes it means things start happening very quickly.” She goes on to explain that, once an unsafe home environment is recognized, children may be removed quite abruptly, leading to sudden, often unexpected requests that family members consider taking the steps to be licensed. Gannon explains that, though acquiring licensing may take weeks, the law allows provisional placements when needed.

Frantesl expresses frustration regarding negative public impressions. “Unfortunately, when the foster care system is in the news, it’s often for a negative reason,” she observes. “Our foster care providers are caring, well-intended people who work hard to help children.

“It frustrates me that those kinds of reports perpetuate a negative impression of absolutely great people.”

Requirements to become a foster care provider are simpler than many people realize, says Candy Picka of Lutheran Social Services out of Mankato. “If you have room in your heart and room in your house,” she says, “you can be a foster care provider on some level.”

Legal requirements are that an individual be at least 21 years old, have a stable home environment, pass a background check, and be willing to commit the time to follow through on the licensing process. Though some of the required paperwork can be intimidating, she goes on to say, agencies like MNPrairie and Lutheran Social Services are glad to provide support and assistance.

All three human services providers emphasize the need for foster care families, and the flexible ways the role can be worked into people’s lives.

“We have a desperate need for

Care continued on 12

Books and Babble at the Half Pint Brewery discusses “The Maid”

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

A group of seven women convened at the Half Pint Brewery in Waseca on Saturday, May 24 for another installment of the Waseca Public Library’s Books and Babble. These educated and well-spoken ladies had their drinks in front of them, and their opinions armed and ready for their read, titled, “The Maid.” Published in 2022 by Ballantine Books, “The Maid” is a murder mystery soon to be adapted into a full-length feature film starring Florence Pugh. The book’s author is Nita Prose, a Canadian who won the Goodreads Choice Award for Mystery and Thriller in 2022.

Erica Forsythe, Waseca Librarian, was heading up the conversation. The book’s main character is Molly Gray, a dedicated maid at the Regency Grand Hotel who sees it as her job to make sure things are perfect. That’s what she loves about her job, she can tackle each room after a guest leaves and make it perfect again. Said Forsythe, “I liked her phrase for her work and why she loved it, ‘We’re all worker bees.’” Dianne Laird said, “I liked the lawyer, she was very good at her job and didn’t take any nonsense from anyone.” There were nods of agreement around the table.

Stacy Ewert thought Juan Manuel was “cute and



Clockwise, Jonna Moen, Yvette Randall, Dianne Laird, Erica Forsythe, Kirsten Stege-man, Stacy Ewert and Lynn Gorski were at the Half Pint Brewery for Books and Babble on Saturday, May 24, 2025.

innocent.” They all agreed the writing of “The Maid” was, said Forsythe, “Nice and easy to follow, not a lot of confusion when you get to the end. There was a lot of information to take in the last three pages, but you got it.”

Recently, the author had an event in the Twin Cities, Forsythe said despite Nita Prose’s national success, only 15 people or so showed up to the affair, making it a very exclusive event. But the ladies all pondered, “How could there be such a poor turnout, especially with this book becoming a movie and how famous the author is?”

After all, “The Maid” was on the New York Times best sellers list and an Indie Bound best-seller. It was also the most checked out book at the Seattle Public Library in 2022. They eventually concluded that’s just how it goes sometimes.

Books and Brews associated with the Waseca Public Library will be taking a break over the summer, but will be back in September.

JWP SCHOOL BOARD

JWP considers renegotiation with city regarding SRO officer

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

A significant portion of the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) May 19 school board meeting was spent discussing the use of school safety funds, specifically, whether the district should continue to spend them reimbursing the city of Janesville for the time of School Resource Officer (SRO) Sheila Jewison, or allocate them toward other expenses.

Due to budget constraints, the school district had requested a decrease in its payments to the city for the SRO position. School superintendent Jeremy Erler reported the city’s response was to suggest reducing the position to 54 days per school year, the equivalent of 1.5 days a week, at a cost of \$20,000, or 108 days a year for \$40,000.

During the meeting, school board member Monica Erickson spoke directly to Jewison, telling her, “I think it’s important for you to know that your ability or performance in your job has never been in question. You do a very good job and we know that.”

Duties Jewison has performed over the school year included school patrol coordinator, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) instructor, and trainer and facilitator for the emergency Alert Lockdown Inform Counter Evacuate (ALICE) system. Jewison also monitors the general security of the building which includes checking camera footage when needed.

If the SRO position were eliminated, Erler said Jewison’s duties would be addressed in various ways. The school patrol coordinator tasks would fall on the elementary principal, he suggested, while he would probably take on the ALICE training. The DARE instruction program would likely be eliminated.

No decision or action was reached in regard to the SRO position and the use of school safety funds; discussions with the city are likely to continue.

In other business, the school board adopted an instrumental composition by Senior Myles Kruger for use during the graduation ceremony. Titled “Silver and Blue,” the piece was composed at the suggestion of JWP band director Adam Hille.

“I took about five tries with this since February,” Kruger stated. “What was really important to me was having it sound the same every year, especially in a small school where our ensemble is going to be different every year so we don’t have problems instrumentally with this.”

He shared he prefers to incorporate a significant amount of symbolism in his writing and based it off the school’s mission statement.

“That kind of resonated with me,” he said. “I don’t know how clear that symbolism is in here, but I think it reflects through how it’s orchestrated. Every voice can be heard, I feel.”

When asked if he wrote words accompanying the music, Kruger said he hasn’t but hopes to at some point. He went on to say it could “very easily” be adapted for choral use. Kruger plans to attend North Dakota State University to study instrumental music education.

In other news, as of June 2, the school district’s summer office hours will be from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday

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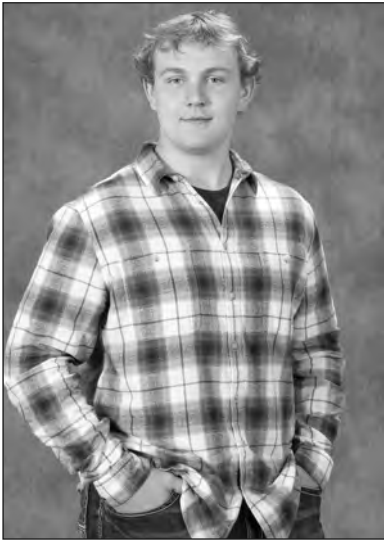
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Not pictured
Pablo Alvarez-Reyes

Mauricio Ernesto Barrientos

Allison Rose Chicos

Helin Dayana Cruz-Hernandez
Haley Marie Madson
Jack Daniel Luis Simonson

■ Waseca from Page 1

Musical selections to be performed by the Waseca High School band and choir include “You Do Not Walk Alone,” “Cornerstone,” “River of Life,” and “Shout Glory.” This year’s class officers and rep-

resentatives are: Sophie Chawra, Collin Dettmer, Elizabeth Manthe, Jennifer Hernandez-Cruz, Lucia Mansfield and Cejay Pickett. Class speakers are Ashton Jenzen, Cejay Pickett and Sophia Chawra. The senior class motto is “The end

of an era. The start of a legacy.” - Elizabeth Manthe The class colors are Blue and Gold. The class flower is a yellow rose. Presenting diplomas this year are Superintendent Dr. Eric Hudspith

and Board of Education members Alyssa Bowers; Dave Dunn and Grant Scheffert. High School Principal Dr. Jason Miller will be reading the graduates’ names as they receive their diplomas. The 2025 escorts are Mr. John

Hanson and Mr. Jake Nelson. The tassel turners are Mrs. Brenda Nelson and Mr. Dan Sharpsteen. This year’s graduates are pictured on Pages 5-10 of this week’s Pioneer.



From left: District President Dennis Kehoe, National Exchange Club President Michael Riechek, District Director Mikhail Rostislavovich.

Rostislavovich elected District Director for Exchange Club

WASECA, MN – At the recent Lakes and Prairies District Convention held in Cedar Falls, Iowa, Mikhail Rostislavovich of Waseca was elected to serve as a District Director for the National Exchange Club. In this role, Mikhail will support and guide the Exchange Clubs of Faribault, Mankato, Owatonna, and his home Club of Waseca. He succeeds outgoing director Katie Smith, who offered her full endorsement of his leadership. “Mikhail’s passion for Exchange and his remarkable impact on the Waseca Club speak for themselves,” said Katie Smith. “He brings energy, vision, and a deep commitment to the mission of Exchange. I am thrilled to see him take on this role and I have every confidence in his ability to inspire and support the clubs.” “Though he has only been an Exchangeite for just under two years, Mikhail’s swift rise to district leadership is a testament to his effectiveness and dedication,” said National Exchange President Michael Riechek. Under Mikhail’s guidance, the Waseca Exchange

Club has transformed from a struggling chapter to a vibrant, active force in the community. Now, he is ready to share that same enthusiasm and strategy with his fellow clubs. Dennis Kehoe, District President echoed the praise of Mikhail, “He is the kind of person every District hopes for, a defined visionary leader that accomplishes the important work and has an abundance of fun while doing it. Clubs will flourish with him at their side.” His commitment to club building and the Prevention of Child Abuse, the National Exchange Club’s signature program, makes him an ideal leader for the district. His efforts have already elevated the visibility and impact of Exchange in southern Minnesota. “I am deeply honored to serve as a District Director,” said Rostislavovich. “Exchange has given me the opportunity to serve my community in meaningful ways, and I’m excited to help other clubs thrive and grow. I believe in the mission of Exchange, and I believe in the people who make it happen.”

What or who is driving your life?

By Father Glenn Frerichs
Who or what is driving your life? We all have principles, people, and circumstances that influence the people we let into our lives and the decisions that we make. Some of these include our age, a spouse, children, job responsibilities, and more. We also make significant decisions based upon the wisdom or testimony of others. These decisions are based on faith. Faith is belief in the testimony of another. This can be as simple as inserting an address into a phone, trusting that its directions will get us to where we want to go, or buying the ingredients to try out a new recipe someone says is tasty. Faith is following a particular action based upon the testimony of another person. A childhood story that illustrates this as well as anything is when our family visited an uncle when I was about seven years old. He lived in the country and would raise two or three beef cows each summer. As we went



The Pastor's Column

out to see the cattle, Dad told us not to touch that single strand of wire holding the cows in the pasture because it would shock us. Having lived in the city to that point, my brother and I were curious to know if this was really true. Dad was providing the testimony. He told us what it was and what we were to do. After the adults were left, it was up to my brother and me to decide which of us would test it out. It looked and sounded like normal wire. The lot fell on me to touch it and see what happens. You can guess what happened from there. We quickly learned that Dad was right; it was not a normal wire. Dad’s testimony about the reality of that fence was no longer needed, and faith was no longer present. Why? Because experience supersedes faith. Whether I would have touched it or not, the electric fence was what it was, and prudence directed me to leave it alone. The faith of Christians relies on the testimony of the early disciples. The early apostles and disciples give us an account of their eyewitness testimony to seeing, talking to, and learning from the Lord. They even watched him die on the cross and then rise from the dead. After describing several eyewitness accounts of Jesus’ resurrection, Saint Luke concludes his Gospel with Jesus ascending on his own power into heaven. He told his disciples at the Last Supper that they should rejoice

because the Father is greater than he. Furthermore, when he returns to his Father, the Father will send the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, to teach us everything and to remind us of all that Jesus told us. The ascension of Jesus marks his definitive entrance into Heaven, signifying that He now sits at the Father’s right hand, where he intercedes for humanity. For those who have faith in Christ, this message provides hope. As we draw near the close of another Easter season, Christians would do well to reflect on faith and its meaning in their lives. Faith provides knowledge of something we have not gained on our own. It also informs our vision of the world around us and how we are to live. Supernatural hope is that virtue which motivates us to act in achieving what faith tells us is available. May we draw hope for what is held in store for those faithful to the Word given to us.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH
2200 4th St NE, Waseca
507-835-2235
Service times 9:30 a.m.

4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH
605 4th St NE, Waseca
507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker)
Worship Sundays 10 a.m.

FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
801 4th Ave NE, Waseca
507-835-3167
Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m.

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. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca
507-833-1703
Sundays 9:00 a.m.

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
314 4th Ave NE, Waseca
507-835-2647
Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca
507-835-4548 (office email: lwaseca@hickorytech.net)
Worship Sunday 10 a.m.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
300 E Elm Ave, Waseca
507-835-1709
Worship Sunday 9 a.m.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH
111 4th St NW, Waseca
Father Glenn Frerichs
507-833-1222
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.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS
1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca
507-835-4640
Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m.

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
1221 8th St SE, Waseca
507-835-2213
Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.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.

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

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

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

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

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

VISTA EVANGELICAL

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Brad Donner, Branch President
Waseca, Minnesota
www.lids.org
Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School
Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
412 N. Main Street, Janesville
Pastor Jason Wolter

Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:30 a.m. Worship

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Janesville

1925

- Janesville’s Legionnaires put on their drive for the five million dollar endowment fund for orphans and disabled buddies last Saturday morning. Before they had been on the job three hours that particular job was done with a nearness and dispatch very gratifying to the members of the local post. The quota set for the Janesville Legion men was \$300. In securing subscriptions that more than made up this quote in less than three hours, it is very likely that the local men back of the movement have established a record that other posts in Minnesota will find difficult to beat.

1950

- Mrs. Lester D. Rogers, a loved and highly respected pioneer of Janesville, passed away Thursday, May 4, at two-thirty o’clock at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Quade, Sr. in Janesville, where she has made her home for the past two and one-half years. Death was due to complications of old age. She had been seriously ill for two weeks. Nellie Brown, a daughter of Fletcher, and Sarah Brown, was born on August 27, 1863, at Henderson, Minn.

- When a young girl she, with her parents, moved to Blakeley, Minn., where she grew to womanhood. She taught school in Sibley and Waseca Counties, and while teaching in Waseca County, she met at married Lester D. Rogers, of Janesville, in 188. She had since made her home here. She was 87 years of age at the time of her death.

1975

- The E. F. Johnson Company, Waseca, has offered Janesville High School a \$1,000 scholarship to be given annually to a deserving senior graduate. The Board of Education accepted the scholarship, with gratitude, at the meeting Monday night. The student selected by the JHS administration must be in the top 20 percent of the graduation class and have a financial need. The first year E.F. Johnson will provide \$250 toward his college education. If the recipient maintains a “C” average in college studies, he will receive \$250 a year until the \$1,000 is expended. E. F. Johnson Company employs a number of Janesville residents and is concerned about graduates from the area.

- The Postal Service designates a week during May each year when customers on rural routes are encouraged to examine and improve, where necessary, the appearance of their mailboxes. The week of May 19-24 has been selected this year. The purpose of Mailbox Improvement week is to call attention to the need for providing mail receptacles which are designed to protect the mail from the weather and are near in appearance, conveniently located, and safe to use.

2000



- In 2000, the first graders at JWP presented the play “The Ugly Duckling” for their parents and grandparents.

- A proposal was made at Monday night’s school board meeting to consider hosting a day treatment program in Waldorf for emotionally disturbed high school students/ Linda Wintz, Special Education Director for JWP and 3 other school districts was present to make the proposal and answer questions. The day treatment program would be fully funded by an Adolescent Services Grant awarded to Waseca County. The grant was written by the Youth Awareness Coalition, a group that has been meeting for almost 2 years. Under the provision of the grant, a day treatment program would be funded for 3-4 students initially, and up to 8-9 high school students in the future. The students referred to this program would typically exhibit conduct disorders, and may be emotionally disturbed.

WE ARE NOW HIRING!

SOUTH DAKOTA

UNIFIED JUDICIAL SYSTEM

The state of South Dakota offers a competitive compensation package for employees, including health & flexible benefits, a 6-8% fully-matched retirement plan, 10-12 paid holidays, sick & vacation leave, birthday leave, paid family leave, work-life balance, and so much more!

.....➔ ujs.sd.gov/careers

PUBLIC SALE

SATURDAY, JUNE 7

12:00PM – 3:00PM

WASECA JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

OWN A PIECE OF WASECA BAND HISTORY!

We’re giving band alumni and community members the chance to take home a memorable piece of our tradition! For just \$100, you’ll receive a full marching band uniform that was retired after the 2023 season.

Supplies are limited, so don’t miss out!

Whether you marched in these uniforms or just want to show your support, this is your opportunity to celebrate Waseca’s musical legacy.

Scan this QR code to reserve a uniform before the sale:

Waseca

25 Years Ago

-The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School baseball and softball fields were under water Thursday after having five plus inches dumped on them last week.

-Waseca County farm fields received a much needed dose of rain last week. The city of Waseca in general received 3.4 inches of rain according to University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center (SROC) Soil Scientist Gyles Randall. Area south and east of Waseca received at least 5 inches or more.

-Members of the Dance Conservatory of So. Minnesota and Waseca Community Ed performed their spring recital Sunday night in Waseca.



-MPR’s Rachel Reabe was joined by Waseca farmers Scott Hildebrandt (center) and Greg Miller in a discussion of biotech crops. Also joining them at the open microphones was Extension Agent and long time Waseca resident, Jurgen Peters.

50 Years Ago

-HOME AT LAST – THIS MOTHER HEN MALLARD hatched her little ones in a little slough by the University Park softball field. When it dried up she tried to take them to Loon Lake some 10 blocks away, but was confused as she stopped at Birds Eye at top. Then Ambrose Wheelock herded them all the way to the lake and at last they found it.



-Final vagabond winner – The Dennis Ferch family from Owatonna was the recipient of the last of eight Vagabond vacation weekends. Barb Wheelock, owner of Carl’s Snack Shop, awarded the prize.



-National award – GENE GLYNN OF Waseca received the Fellowship of the Christian Athlete High School Athlete of the Year award Thursday in Kansas City. Presenting the award was Bob Williams, former star with the Minneapolis Lakers and Harlem Globtrotters.

75 Years Ago

-CARE OF TEETH – One of the prime considerations of the county nurse is the care of the teeth of school children. Here Mrs. Gloria Bartelt is showing district 24 students, south of Waseca, how to brush them properly. Left to right are Jeanette Bethke, Doris Wilday, Vernon Prechel, Leo Nissen and Evelyn Holmes. Mrs. Marvel Brecke, not shown is the teacher.

-POLIO VICTIM CHECKUP – Dale Fette, polio victim, who has been out of Minneapolis General hospital for six months where he received treatment, still must keep up with special exercise. It is part of Mrs. Bartelt’s job to check on Dale and other polio victims in the county. Dale is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Fette, 7 miles south of Waseca.

-The Waseca county librarian, Mrs. Nellie Yantes, handed in her resignation at a library board meeting Monday afternoon. She plans to accept a position as head librarian at Virginia, Minn., about June 13. Mrs. Yantes has been county librarian here for almost three years. She came here August 1, 1946. She is a graduate of Ohio University at Athens, Ohio, and took library courses at Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

100 Years Ago

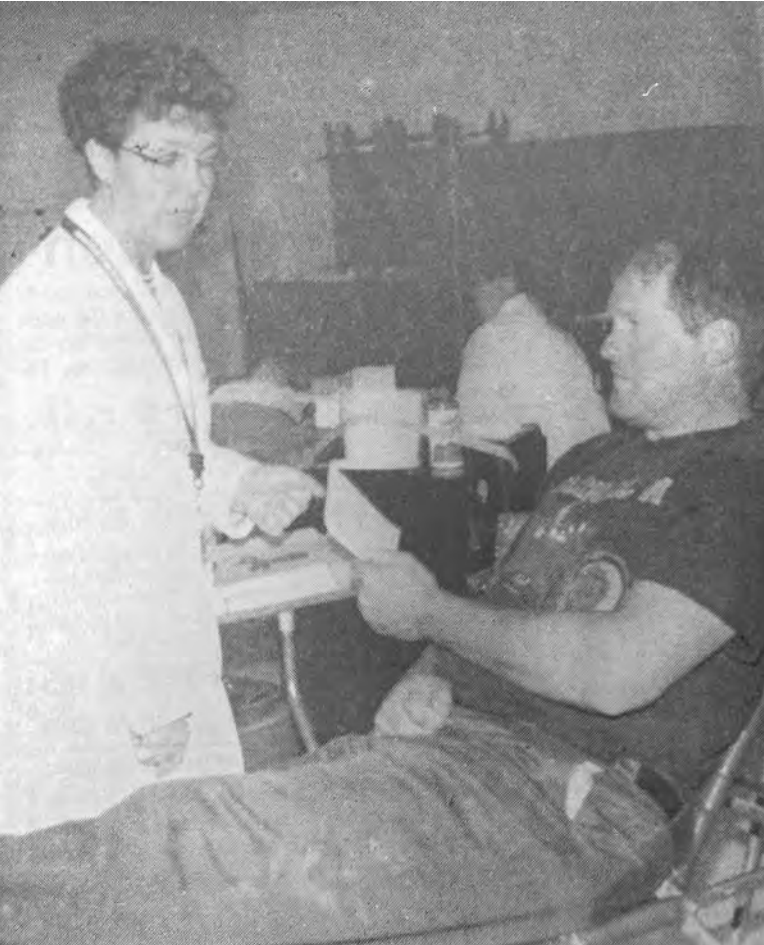
-The McCarthy Well Co. of St. Paul shipped in their equipment this week and are ready to begin drilling the new well ordered by the Water & Light Board. Our city now has three deep wells, one 450, one 700 and one 1,100 feet deep but it is said their combined capacity furnishes only about 450 feet gallons of water a minute if an accident happened to either of them, the city would be handicapped in its water supply, according to H.E. Isker, manager of the plant.

-Jos. Madden, who resides on the John Hess farm, collected \$42 in bounty from the county last week when he presented the hides of seven cub wolves, which he had found on a den on the place.

-The directors of the Otisco Creamery are making arrangements to hold a big creamery on Thursday, June 11. It will be held in the Chas. F. Bauman grove on Highway No. 13, a half mile west of the village of Otisco. Among the speakers for the occasion will be James Sorenson, secretary of the Minnesota secretary of the Minnesota Creamery Operators and Managers’ Ass’n.

New Richland

25 years back



- The very first to donate blood during the Red Cross Bloodmobile visit here, Monday was Richard Root. Here he receives instructions from one of the Red Cross nurses.

- Elizabeth Ganiere was among students graduating at The University of Wisconsin - LaCrosse College of Liberal Studies, on Saturday May 13, 2000. She received a bachelor of science degree in archaeological studies. The daughter of Jim and Carol Jennings of Otisco, Elizabeth is the granddaughter of Violet Yerhot and the late Bernard Yerhot and Edna Ganiere and the late Albert Ganiere, all of New Richland.



- Cullys Depot in New Richland owned by Chris Olson (left) welcomed chef Beau Brockman and his wife Ashley to the staff in April. Beau has worked as a chef and in food preparation at a variety of restaurants for 17 years. The Brockmans purchased a home in New Richland and moved here from Iowa City, Iowa, on April 15.

- Engagement Announcement. Sheila Pini and Jason Rud announce their engagement and forthcoming marriage. Parents of the couple are Sharon Habina of Lucerne, California and Doug Pini of Fresno, California and Mark and Melodie Rud of Owatonna. Sheila is currently a graduate student at the University of Arizona majoring in psychology. Jason is a 1990 graduate of New Richland -Hartland High School and is employed by delta Airlines. The wedding is planned for Saturday, June 10, 2000. The couple will reside in Arizona.

- The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School Knowledge Bowl team finished fifth when they competed against 23 other teams in State competition earlier this month. Wearing the medals they won, here, they displayed their fifth place trophy and other trophies they have won this year. They all agreed it was a great experience and they had a great time at Cragun’s Resort in northern Minnesota. They are from the left: Nick Kaplan, Amy Sack, Kristin Jessen, Holly Matthies and Paul Drube.

50 years back

- Rev. Rodney Slessor has accepted a call to be the pastor for the First Congregational Church (UCC), here. He will preach his first sermon, June 1st. Rev. Slessor and his wife, Carol, moved into the personage this past week and seem to be pleased with New Richlands small town atmosphere.

- The two girls selected to attend Legionville, this summer, by the Andrew Borgen Post 75 of the American Legion were Marcia Anderson (center) and Barbra Battenfeld (right). Denise Ferguson (left) was chosen as the alternate. Pictured with the girls are Sylvester Priem, District School Patrol Officer and Commander Herb Beckmann.

- Robert Westland, New Richland-Hartland High School guidance counselor, is pictured here presenting Susan Crumb with the Johnson Foundation Scholarship Award, at awards day, here. The award is given to the most deserving senior who is planning to pursue a four-year college degree. Susan plans to attend St. Olaf College this fall, majoring in music. The Johnson Foundation of the E.F. Johnson Company, Waseca, is making this an annual award that will total \$1,000 over the four year period that the recipient is attending college.

- Nathan Carl Manthe, born April 28 to Mr and Mrs Micheal D. Manthe of Pemberton, was baptized at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Alma City, May 18, with the Rev. Alfred Jannusch officiating. Sponsors were Matthew Manthe of Pemberton, Bradley Eichhorst of New Brighton and Kari Eichhorst of Waldorf.

75 years back

- A former Gustavus Adolphus football star from New Richland is the 1950 winner of the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce public speaking contest. Thirty-Year-Old Harold Sponberg, who is assistant dean of men at the Michigan State college, took first place in the annual contest Thursday at Chicago. He spoke on “This above all” a plea for individual freedom. The public speaking contest is run all over the U.S. in an effort to get jaycees to become better speakers, and to boast the American way of life, free enterprise, and democracy. Jaycee officials said.

- Miss Dorothy Sullivan of Minneapolis, daughter of Mr and Mrs Wim. Sullivan of New Richland, became the bride of Walter Petroski, son of Mr and Mrs B. F. Petroski of Minneapolis, at a nuptial mass ceremony performed by Fr. Rebiski at the Church of Visitation, June 17, at 10 in the morning. Church decorations were ferns, palms, white gladioli, snapdragons and lighted candelabra. The bride was gowned in white satin with net overskirt, allover lace bodice with points of lace extending into skirt, train and fingertip veil. She carried a satin covered prayer book with orchid and lilies of the valley streamers.

- Mr and Mrs Harvey Root became the parents of their first son, born at the Waseca Memorial hospital, Sunday, June 18. Mr. and Mrs. Root have two small daughters.



Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika



The wind leaves behind

Every morning when I wake up one thing is certain; there's going to be weather. As I sit back in my recliner, Sammy in my lap, sipping my wake up coffee, I tune into Fox 9 news. This spring had an exceptional number of windy days. The past few weeks, wind has fueled wildfires to the north. The metropolitan city of Chicago was hit by a dirt storm, being inundated by dirt from surrounding farm fields. Someone sent a video of a rotating funnel of dirt raging across a farm field. The weatherman called it a dirtnado. My personal favorite is a windy day in winter when "snirt," dirty snow, is blowing across the highway.

Lately it's seemed as if the wind was simply never going to stop. Some days it's been hard to stay upright, and we have had to adjust how we steer to keep our cars on the road—the wind has been so strong.

When I listen to the forecast, I sometimes plan my day according to the wind speed. A gentle breeze is 8 to 12 mph; a great time to be outside. If the wind speed is between 15 and 25, the forecast is breezy. "Windy" is anywhere between 25 and 35 mph; weather people always add gusty to the forecast as well. If winds are high and strong, they are probably blowing faster than 40 mph. We've had a great number of windy days this spring where moving air has been high and strong, tough sledding to enjoy the great outdoors.

There are some good things about a day of gentle or moderate breezes. People can open the windows and turn off the air conditioner. The wet grass of the early morning will be dry when I take out wonderdog Sammy for her morning duty. Wind chimes will be singing at the cabin. Anyone grilling out won't be bothered by mosquitoes and other annoying insects. On those days, a person can sit down and enjoy the breeze, cooling down even on a 90-degree day. Those conditions offer a perfect chance to go sailing or fishing; there's a wonderful walleye chop.

When the forecast for the day is high and gusty winds it might be wise just to stay indoors. If you are driving somewhere, your car may be all over the road. When you arrive at your destination, you may find your door either won't open, or flies out of your hands. Make sure you carry a comb or brush; it will be a bad hair day. Hold onto your hat walking into the store. I lost one of my favorite baseball caps this spring in a parking lot. The cap was long gone in the wind before I could make an attempt to retrieve it. The family picnic at the park has to be canceled. Paper plates

and food will be lifted from the picnic tables, it is useless to try to anchor down anything on the table. It is too windy to enjoy any activity at the park. Can't go fishing, the wind is gusty at 40 mph, blowing directly into the landing from the west.

As the wind gradually dies down, one can observe many things the wind left behind. Branches from trees, littered driveways, yards and streets. The hunt is on for plastic jelly dishes that have been blown from the bird feeder. Time to retrieve some of the deck chairs blown over the railing. In your backyard are pieces someone else lost in the wind: a piece of downspout, maybe a lawn chair cushion. Under your favorite tree lies a birdnest in shambles. It was garbage pick up day and windy. Garbage cans with lids blown open can be seen tipped over in driveways. Shame on those who didn't bag their garbage, letting litter blow into the lawns and streets of Waseca.

Perhaps you can tell, I would gladly live without days of high, strong wind.

Lisa has health issues, so I am her chauffeur for many of her outings. Probably my favorite is when I take her to her hairdresser, Lindsey. I get to chat with all the ladies getting their hair done, who will all leave feeling good and beautiful. A good haircut can last an hour while a perm or coloring might last for two.

I don't mind the wait because I learn a fascinating variety of useful things as the ladies laugh and visit. Did you know there's another name for your big toe? Next time your foot meets with a piece of furniture, you can say, "Ouch, I stubbed my papa toe!" It's certain you'll get a chuckle. If you are at your son or daughter's athletic game and the officiating is horrific, it's perfectly acceptable to give them the "naughty" finger. There's a new alcoholic beverage called Trail Magic. The beverage contains THC. Exciting things can happen at the swimming pool. Ladies diving off the high board can lose the bottom of their swimming suits.

By now, I'm sure you understand why I can hardly wait for Lisa's next haircut.

Fathers' day is rapidly approaching. You might consider a DeWalt portable battery vacuum as a gift. They are great for cleaning cars and trucks. For the dad who has everything. Kentucky Fried Chicken is offering a KFC electric toothbrush. Also a fried chicken flavored toothpaste. It promises fresh breath and long-lasting oral benefits. Great gift for dad; especially if he likes chicken. Such nonsense!

erty affected by last year's construction. . Nancy stated clay and rock were left in place of the good, black soil on lawns, "making it impossible to grow grass there." Dave Schnider suggested children who go fishing are leaving litter along the path around Clear Lake. He commented police should consider either actually ticketing the children or at least threatening to so they would be more considerate.

As the meeting closed, council member Mark Christensen said, "Congratulations to all our seniors. Go out, be successful, and then come back and live in Waseca."



From left: Eli Lutgens, Robin Dulas, Waseca Community Lights Committee Chair Mayor Randy Zimmerman, Tourism President Mikhail Rostislavovich, Jill Sollin-Strauss and Tiffany Lynch.

Community Lights committee receives \$5,000

WASECA, MN — The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism proudly presented a \$5,000 check to the Waseca Community Lights Committee in support of its mission to transform Waseca into a vibrant and welcoming winter destination.

Formed to enhance community pride, support local businesses, and celebrate Waseca's cherished winter traditions—most notably the historic Sleigh & Cutter Festival—the Waseca Community Lights Committee is

working in collaboration with the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism. The Waseca Art Center is serving as the fiscal agent for the initiative.

"This donation represents our belief in the power of community and the spirit of Waseca," said Mikhail Rostislavovich, President of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism. "The lighting project will not only beautify our downtown but also strengthen tourism, local commerce, and the bonds that make our city special."

Through a phased approach extending through 2028, the committee plans to install and maintain festive lighting and decorations that will create a magical atmosphere downtown and beyond during the winter season.

"This is about more than just lights—it's about joy, tradition, and community pride," said Mayor Randy Zimmerman, Committee Chair. "We are incredibly grateful for the Chamber's support and excited to continue working together to make

Waseca shine bright."

To support the Waseca Community Lights initiative, donations are welcome. Please make checks payable to the Waseca Art Center and note "Waseca Community Lights" on the memo line. Payments can be mailed or dropped off at the Waseca Art Center, located at 200 State St N, Waseca, MN 56093.

For more information, please contact the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism at 507-201-3082.

Chamber welcomes Waseca Marketplace, LLC

WASECA, MN – The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce that Waseca Marketplace, LLC has officially joined as a new Chamber member. The Chamber Ambassadors recently welcomed the organization, marking an exciting addition to the community.

Lori Bonin, General Partner of Waseca Marketplace, LLC and President of REVocity, expressed enthusiasm for the partnership: "We have enjoyed the opportunity to create relationships in the Waseca community. The Chamber has been a key connector for us to quickly establish partnerships to positively benefit our project plans. We are pleased to join the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce."

Chris Kennelly, General Partner of Waseca Marketplace, LLC and Chief Investment Officer at REVocity, shared similar sentiments: "The Chamber has been a wonderful partner to support our plans to build the

first new apartment building in over twenty years. We appreciate the commitment of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce to support strong economic development and partnerships."

Waseca Marketplace, LLC is leading the development of a 36-unit apartment building in Waseca, MN. This initiative is a public-private partnership involving local investors, the city, county, Chamber of Commerce, and other community leaders. The general partners of Waseca Marketplace, LLC are Brett Reese, Chris Kennelly, and Lori Bonin from REVocity, based in Northfield, MN.

REVocity specializes in helping smaller communities develop impactful real estate projects. The company's collaborative impact investing approach connects local investors, businesses, and partners, creating sustainable growth and financial opportunities for the community. REVocity currently supports 15



From left: Jodie Thompson, Katie Gonzales, Chris Kennelly, Lori Bonin, Mikhail Rostislavovich and Kristie Biehn.

established community real estate investments and is an affiliate of Rebound Partners, a Northfield-based integrated investment and management company.

Kristie Biehn, Ambassador Chair of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce, expressed her excitement: "We are thrilled to welcome Waseca Marketplace, LLC to the Chamber. Their commitment to investing in our community aligns perfectly with our mission to foster

economic development."

Mikhail Rostislavovich, President of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, added: "Waseca Marketplace, LLC brings a significant and positive impact to our community. We are proud to support their vision and look forward to seeing the growth they will bring to Waseca."

For more information, please contact: Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism

Council from Page 3

<https://discoverwaseca.com/donate/>.

It was announced during the meeting that the city waterpark would be opening Saturday, May 31. Residents Nancy and Dave Schnider shared some suggestions during the public comment portion of the meeting. Nancy asked council members to walk along Eighth Avenue Northeast so that they could get a close look at the condition of prop-

Care from Page 4

Gannon says she works with foster parents to find ways to help children gradually let go of old habits. "We work with them where they're at," she says of the children, "since we recognize their lives have been turned upside down."

One 17-year-old currently in foster care in Waseca County was placed for the first time within the past year.

"I was nervous," he admits as he remembers the process. "Everything leading up to it was bad, but I guess I knew I would be safer there."

With the perspective of the past months now behind him, he observes it has been good for him to be in a more stable setting, and even to have stricter rules imposed. "Now I know what a good, true, honest family looks like," he comments, "and I

know what I might want to change about the way I see the world.

"For me, it's been much better than being at home."

"It's not enough to 'just love' them," says Gannon of caring for foster children. "They need a connection and, in many cases, someone to hold them accountable."

"Sometimes, the harder they push, the more it's an indication of what

they need."

Anyone interested in more information about providing foster care is invited to connect with Lutheran Social Services at candy.picka@LSSMN.org or with Gannon at MNPrairie: jill.gannon@mnprairie.gov.

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"Footings to Finish"

■ JWP
from Page 1

years with. “As we all head off in a hundred different directions, these will be the moments I carry with me, and I know you all will, too.” Dessner then ended their speech with the same question Berndt began with: “What will you do with your one wild and precious life?” “Whatever that answer may be, we hope you live it fully, appreciating every moment along the way. We hope you’ll create new memories that’ll last a lifetime. But most of all, we hope you never forget where you came from and the people who remain by your side through it all.” The band and choir then per-

formed “Takeda Lullaby” by Benjamin Yeo, with the seniors performing with their respective ensembles one last time. Ethan Born and Luke Cahill, the two other valedictorians of the class, were next to speak. Born began the speech with the quote, “You are who you surround yourself with,” which reminded him of a Confucius quote, “If you are the smartest person in the room, then you are in the wrong room.” “To me, that quote perfectly encapsulates the spirit of the Class of 2025,” Born said. “I was never in the wrong room. When I look around at this group, I know I was never the most talented in the room. I look at this class, and I see accomplishments stacked on top of accomplishments. I didn’t get here on my hard work alone. My success is rooted in this class – your energy, your drive, your competition. You’ve pushed me and

each other to do better.” Luke Cahill provided a list of several accomplishments, ranging from small ones at homecoming to big ones, such as the girls’ track team leading to its sixth consecutive conference championship. He provided some comic relief, bringing up a memory of how they were packed like sardines in a bus, and enjoyed a field trip together despite the circumstances. “Seventy sweaty freshmen somehow still laughing and still having fun despite our discomfort...that is the power of the class. We make the most of it no matter what.” And as Born added, after all the quizzes and tests, all the early days and late nights, the good and bad and everything in between...they stand together as a graduating class. “Take this moment and let it sink in...look around. This moment is rare, and you will carry it with you for the rest of

your life.” Born reminded classmates this was just the start for them. “After all, commencement does mean beginning,” he said. “If there’s one thing I know about this class, it’s that we’re not done yet...not by a long shot. So, when we look back on today, this won’t be the peak of what we accomplished, but the foundation.” Cahill then channeled his inner Theodore Roosevelt – the character he played in this school year’s musical, Newsies, and shared some advice. “Fail. Fail once...fail twice. Fail a hundred times if you have to. Just make sure you always get back up. Failure isn’t a weakness. It’s proof that you tried, that you cared, that you were brave enough to step into the arena. Every stumble is a step toward something better, and every setback makes the victory even sweeter.”

The duo ended with a quote from the “Night at the Museum,” featuring Cahill as Roosevelt again. “You’ve done your job. It’s time for your next adventure,” Cahill said. “I have no idea what I’m going to do tomorrow,” Born replied. “How exciting!” Cahill exclaimed. And with that, the 69 members of the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Class of 2025 received their diplomas – some of them from their parents – turned the tassels on their caps to the right, and threw their caps in the air to celebrate their commencement, walking off the football field to “Auld Lang Syne,” many of them for the final time. While it’s become a cliché to call every graduating class “special,” the Class of 2025 truly symbolizes every interpretation of the word. Just a hint of what they accomplished includes the return of Show Choir (as juniors

last year with no seniors), to the basketball teams earning their first conference titles in many years, to the speech team sending the most individuals to state in the program’s history, to the chamber choir – small but mighty – defeating the odds for the choir program’s first superior rating in a decade, a student writing an original composition before graduating.... This class wasn’t just special because of its large enrollment numbers, but also for its leadership in excellence. Captains of sports teams, usually older and wiser, led not only by their words but by example. And that’s what the Class of 2025 should be remembered for: their camaraderie and ability to be the mentors many students need. There is no doubt these graduates will be leaders in all professions in the future.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the Waseca City Council will hold a **Public Hearing on Tuesday, June 3rd, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.** in the Council Chambers of Waseca City Hall, 508 South State Street, Waseca, Minnesota to consider the following:

Ordinance No. 1127 – Authorizing Sale of City Property

A complete copy of Ordinance No. 1127 is available for public inspection in the office of the City Clerk at 508 South State Street, Waseca, Minnesota, or via email request to juliah@ci.waseca.mn.us.

Julia Hall
City Clerk
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on May 29, 2025

**CITY OF WASECA
CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

NOTICE is hereby given that the **City of Waseca City Council** will hold a Public Hearing at **7:00 p.m., on Tuesday, June 17th, 2025**, in the **COUNCIL CHAMBERS of CITY HALL** located at 508 South State Street in Waseca, Minnesota.

The purpose of the public hearing is to gather information regarding the following:

- **ORDINANCE NO. 1126:** Proposed vacation of various access, drainage, and utility easements existing across Lots 1, 2, and 3 of Block 1 of the Market Place Subdivision.

Complete copies of proposed Ordinance No. 1126 are available in the office of the City Clerk located at 508 South State Street in Waseca, Minnesota.

Those interested in commenting may appear in person or by counsel or may submit written comments to the City of Waseca at 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

Upon request, accommodations will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Waseca services, programs, and activities.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on Thursday, May 29, 2025.

Jon M. Froke
City Planner

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
Before the
BLUE EARTH & WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SITTING AS DRAINAGE AUTHORITY
FOR JUDICIAL DITCH 83**

In the Matter of:	PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE:
Preliminary Survey Report Hearing for Proposed Improvement Petition for portions of Judicial Ditch 83 (JD 83)	Judicial Ditch 83 Preliminary Survey Report Hearing

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, the Blue Earth and Waseca County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Drainage Authority for Judicial Ditch 83, will host a Preliminary Survey Report Hearing on **June 10, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in the 2nd Floor, Board of Commissioner’s room at the Blue Earth County Historic Courthouse, 204 South 5th St., Mankato, MN.** The purpose of the hearing is to hear public comments on the proposed improvement petition for portions of Judicial Ditch 83. Any party wishing to comment may appear at the hearing and be heard. The hearing will be conducted in-person. Agenda information is available at www.blueearthcountymn.gov/agendacenter on the Thursday prior to the meeting. Written comments will be accepted at the hearings. Comments made by mail will be accepted up to the date and time of the hearing at the office of Property and Environmental Resources, Drainage Management, 410 South 5th Street, PO Box 3566, Mankato, MN 56002-3566.

The proposed improvement includes enlarging current subsurface tile sizes and capacities for portions of Judicial Ditch 83, mainline, public drainage system. Affected areas of the proposed improvement include sections 6 and 7 of Alton Township, Waseca County, sections 1 and 12 of McPherson Township, Blue Earth County, Minnesota.

Copies of the Preliminary Survey Report are available for inspection at the Blue Earth County Property & Environmental Resources Department, Drainage Management, or available online at <https://blueearth.drainagedb.net/#/portal>.

Ryan Hiniker
Drainage Systems Coordinator

Dated: May 30, 2025

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on May 29, 2025

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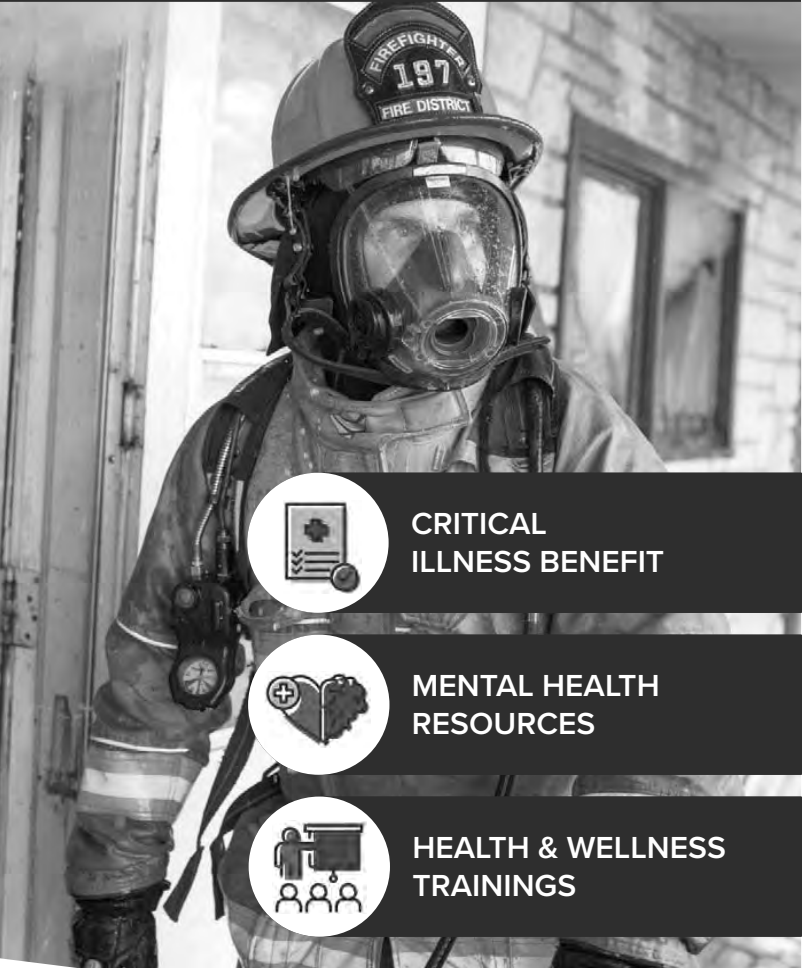
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**CITY OF WASECA
PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

NOTICE is hereby given that the **City of Waseca Planning Commission** will hold a public hearing at **5:30 p.m., on Tuesday, June 10, 2025**, in the **COUNCIL CHAMBERS of CITY HALL** located at 508 South State Street in Waseca, Minnesota.

The purpose of the public hearing is to gather information regarding the following:

- **ORDINANCE NO. 1128:** Proposed text amendments and the addition of Section 154.032 URBAN AND RURAL SERVICE DISTRICTS to Chapter 154 of the Municipal Code.

Complete copies of proposed Ordinance No. 1128 are available in the office of the City Clerk located at 508 South State Street in Waseca, Minnesota.

Those interested in commenting may appear in person or by counsel or may submit written comments to the City of Waseca at 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

Upon request, accommodations will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Waseca services, programs, and activities.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on Thursday, May 29, 2025.

Jon M. Froke
City Planner

Sartori, Wikan, Flatau pace WHS girls at conference

Mansfield, Johnston lead boys

The Waseca High School girls' and boys' track and field teams finished fifth and sixth, respectively, in Thursday's Big South Conference meet at St. Peter.

The host team won the girls division with 165 points, with TCU second at 133.5. The Bluejays totaled 83.

Waseca senior Kalea Sartori had a standout meet, winning the discus with a throw of 112-6 while taking the shot put at 37-5.5. Her discus mark was a season best.

The Buejays' Bella Wikan was the best in the triple jump, winning with a mark of 37-1, a personal best.

The Bluejays' other gold was in the 100-meter hurdles, where Brooklyn Flatau won with a time of 15.36 seconds.

Wikan was second in the 300 hurdles with a personal best 47.97.

Other places for the Waseca girls: Flatau, 5th, long jump, 15-11; 4x800 relay, 3rd, 9:53.74 (Stella Omtvedt, Maren Schimming, Elle Kopischke, Callie Dufault); 4x400, 5th, 4:18.46 (Wikan, Omtvedt, Kopischke, Reese Rodriguez); 4x100, 5th, 53.27 (Angelica Lopez, Camila Marquez, Katelyn Weber, Flatau); Dufault, 5th, 1600, 5:48.31; Omtvedt, 4th, 800, 2:24.2; Kopischke, 4th, 400, 1:02.64.

Marshall won the boys' division with 152.5 points, ahead of second-place Belle Plaine's 127. Waseca had 66.

William Mansfield, a junior, was of two gold medalists for the Bluejay boys, clearing a personal-best 14-1 for first place in the pole vault.

Jordan Johnston, a junior, won the 100 with a personal-best time of 11.24.

Tovin Grannis, Brady Tloutan, Wyatt Hager and Isaac Feldkamp combined for third in the 4x800, clocking 8:28.42.

Other WHS places: Grannis, 4th, high jump, 5-11; Jacob Hadley, 5th, high jump, 5-9; Toby Jeske, 6th, discus, 136-4; Tauston Rupe, 4th, shot put, 49-9.2; 4x400, 5th, 3:35.91; Grannis, Carson Ohnstad, Hager, Feldkamp); 4x200, 6th, 1:38.33 (Jonah Worke, Brady McKenna, Titan Rahe, Mansfield); 4x100, 4th, 44.47 (Ohnstad, Johnston, Bennett Ludwig, Tloutan); Tloutan, 7th, 400, 54.15.

Next up for the Bluejays is section competition Thursday and Saturday at Faribault.



GOING FOR THE GOLD – Brooklyn Flatau was one of several Waseca High School track and field athletes to win Big South championships Thursday. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Accolades continue to pile up for JWP girls

Bulldogs win sub-section, breaking two school records

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The accolades keep accumulating for the JWP High School girls' track and field team.

The Bulldogs' latest conquest was Thursday at United South Central in Wells, where they came home with the sub-section championship, topping a 12-team field with 124.5 points. Jackson County Central was second with 104.

The day was not without its highlights for the Bulldogs, who broke no less and five school records.

"These feats were achieved by five of our esteemed relay teams," reported Bulldogs coach Sam Schruin.

Two of the records fell on the girls' side, in the 4x400 meters where Ashlynn Wolff, Nevaeh Weimert, Katie Olson and Lilly Strauss combined for first in 4:05.25, and the 4x800 where MaKaela Westphal, Kwynn Krause, Wolff and MaKenzie Westphal finished first in 10:07.83.

Hermie, a senior, finished first in the 300 hurdles in 49.9. Freshman MaKenzie Westphal was golden in the 800, winning in 2:24.57.

Brielle Bure, Weimert, Olson and Strauss took first in the 4x100 in 42.34.

The Bulldogs went 1-2 in the long jump, Strauss winning at 16-10.5 and Olson taking second at 16.8.

Senior Presley James went 32-4.5 for first in the triple jump.

Other places for the JWP girls: Aubrey Weedman, 2nd, shot put, 33-11.5; Wolff, 2nd, high jump, 5-0; Ava Appel, 7th, 100 hurdles, 18.38; MaKaela Westphal, 4th, 200, 28.18; Kwynn Krause, 4th, 400, 1:08.2; Clare Groh, 6th, 3200, 13:37.55; Sarah Bulman, 6th, pole vault, 7-6; Autumn Thissen, 6th, shot put, 31-1.25.

Dual-meet season ends for WHS tennis boys

Jellum, Huttemier advance in doubles

The Waseca High School boys' tennis team finished two wins away from the state tournament, falling 5-2 to second-seeded Winona Cotter in last week's Section 1A semifinals at Rochester.

The Bluejays, seeded third, finished with the same record as last year, 13-4. Cotter went on to fall 5-2 to too-seeded Rochester Lourdes for the section crown and state tournament berth.

The Bluejays picked up one singles win against Cotter, by Italian exchange student Tomasso Scognamiglio in the No. 3 slot. He prefailed 7-6 (3), 6-1.

Waseca's other win was at No. 1 doubles, where freshman Armaan Bhatti and eighth-grader Keenan Collins combined for a 6-2, 6-4 decision.

Henry Huttemier went to three sets at No. 1 singles before falling 6-2, 5-7, 6-2. Tyler Jellum was defeated 6-3, 6-2 at No. 1 and Otto Schoenrock lost 6-4, 6-3 at No. 4.

Lucas McQuery and Tanner Hanson gave Cotter a battle at No. 2 doubles before succumbing 6-3, 4-6, 6-0. Allen Kopetzki and Brayden Hoof lost in three sets at No. 3 doubles, 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.

The Bluejays opened Section 1A individual play Thursday at Rochester.

Schoenrock, a sophomore, prevailed 6-2, 2-6, 6-0 in the opening round before falling to top-seeded Evan Ritter 6-0, 6-2 in the quarterfinals.

Kopetzki, a senior, lost 2-6, 6-2, 6-1 at singles.

Jellum and Huttemier, seeded No. 3 at doubles, won 6-0, 6-1 in the opening round, then swept a Cotter duo to advance to the section semifinals.

Bhatti and Collins also won in the first round, 7-6 (2), 6-2 but lost in the quarterfinals 6-1, 6-0 to the top-seeded duo.

The section semifinals for singles and doubles were Tuesday at the Rochester Athletic Club. The final, third-place and possible true-second matches followed.

The top two singles players and top two doubles teams advance to the Class A individual tournament June 5 and 6.



SINGLES WIN – Senior Tomasso Scognamiglio was the lone Waseca singles winner in the Bluejays' 5-2 section semifinal loss to Winona Cotter last week. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Season ends for WHS baseball, other area teams

Bluejay softball team falls at LSH

The season ended with a one-and-done in the section tournament for five of six area baseball and softball teams. Only the NRHEG baseball squad advanced.

The Waseca High School baseball team, seeded 11th in its section, lost 9-2 at sixth-seeded Triton Thursday. The Bluejays finished with a record of 2-16. They were 1-7 in Big South play.

"Going into the game we thought we had a good chance to win, but we got off to a bad start in the first inning, falling behind 6-0," said Bluejays assistant coach Tink Larson. "After the first inning, Colton Ruedy pitched very well."

Devon Parpart led Waseca with two hits Owen Honstad, Brayden Hesch-Priem, Ruedy and Riley Mitchell had one hit apiece.

"Their pitcher did a good job of keeping us off balance at the plate with his curveball, and they made some nice plays on defense," said Coach Larson.

The softball Bluejays saw their season end with a 10-0 loss at LeSueur-Henderson. They finished 6-15 overall, 2-6 in the Big South.

The 13th-seeded JWP baseball team lost 5-4 at fourth-seeded Hayfield. The Bulldogs were 8-10 overall, 4-4 in the Gopher Conference.

JWP's softball team, seeded 8th, hosted 9th-seeded Springfield but dropped an 18-0 decision. The Bulldogs, 4-6 in the Gopher Conference, finished 7-13 overall.

The NRHEG softball team was shut out 13-0 at Belle Plaine, finishing the year 5-13.



DIALED IN – Owen Honstad delivers a pitch for the Waseca High School baseball team, which saw its season end with a section loss at Triton last week. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Braves win big at Cleveland

The Waseca Braves amateur baseball team had a good outing Sunday, winning 13-2 in seven innings at Cleveland.

The Braves broke out the bats in a big way, led by Kyle Waugh who was 3-for-5 with a home run and three runs scored. Kelvin Nelson was 3-for-5 with a run and an RBI, Zach Hoehn 3-for-4 with two RBIs and two runs. Tyson Reger and Payton Garza had two hits apiece. Jimmy Loonan scored twice.

Sebastian Teague pitched a strong game for the Braves, going all seven innings while striking out 10 and walking two.

"It was a good game for the Braves," said coach Tink Larson. "Teague did a nice job on the mound. We had some guys that had good games at the plate. We are looking forward to our home opener on Wednesday at 7:30 against Lake Crystal."

The Braves' record stands at 2-1.

The JWP boys finished fourth among nine schools with 72 points. Maple River won with 128.

The boys took down two school records, the 4x100 with Derek Gustafson, Alex Kleve, Tyson Kronbach and Daulton Bauer winning in 45.27, and the 4x800 team of Luke Cahill, Gustafson, Gavin Weedman and Tyson Kronbach placed third in 8:40.19.

Other highlights for the boys: Berndt, 3rd, 100, 11.66; Luke Cahill, 3rd, pole vault, 11-3; Daulton Bauer, 2nd, triple jump, 39-10 and 3rd, long jump, 20-1.5; Gavin Weedman, 3rd, triple jump, 39-5;

Other JWP placewinners: Alex Kleve, 4th, 400, 54.67; Ethan Born, 7th, 300 hurdles, 45.77; Weedman, 6th, 800; Berndt, 4th, long jump; Isaac Gahlon, 6th, pole vault, 10-6; 4x100, 3rd, 45.27 (Gahlon, Berndt, Bauer, Born).

The top 8 individuals and top four in relays will be heading to section Saturday at Mankato West High School.

"Many surpassed their prior bests, setting new personal records," said Coach Schruin. "And a multitude now prepare to advance unto the sections, where greater glory yet awaits."

Schruin extended deepest gratitude and heartfelt recognition to seniors Ariana Aguilar, Eric Daschner, Madeline Hoehn, Paige Walz, and Shane Witts.

Baseball Panthers walk off on WEM NRHEG prevails 8-7 in 10 innings at Reese Field

It took 10 innings, but the NRHEG High School baseball team survived the opening round of Section 2AA play with an 8-7 victory over WEM at Reese Field in New Richland Thursday.

The Panthers, seeded seventh, led early, 3-0 after two innings and 4-1 after three, but the 10th-seeded Bucs plated four runs in the top of the fourth to take a 6-5 edge. The Panthers tied it in the sixth. Both teams scored in the eighth, and a scoreless ninth was followed by a walk-off win for the Panthers.

“Persistence paid off for us this time,” said NRHEG head coach Shawn Larson. “The team has been working on moving forward in a game whether it is going well or not. I think that was our strongest quality today, that we didn’t let the ups and downs of the game change how we approached the game.”

Larson said the Panthers had a great day with the bats, totaling 17 hits.

“Our biggest lapses came running bases, which was not our strongest aspect in this game,” said Larson.

Four NRHEG players had three hits.

Ryan Schlaak was 3-for-6 with two RBIs, Carter Martens 3-for-5 with two RBIs, Aaden Hanna 3-for-6, Dakota Schlaak 3-for-5 with two RBIs. Owen Wayne and Aiden

“Persistence paid off for us this time.”

— NRHEG coach Shawn Larson

Schlaak each had two hits, Alden Dobberstein one. Martens, Dobberstein and Dakota Schlaak had stolen bases. The Panthers combined for six walks and six strikeouts.

The Panthers’ pitchers were effective, with starter Ryan Schlaak going 4 2/3 innings, striking out seven and walking four. Wayne went the final 5 1/3, striking out eight and walking five.

“We were great again with the bats, with hits on the day coming from up and down the lineup,” said Coach Larson. “Ryan Schlaak and Owen Wayne both pitched well and did their parts to give us a chance to win. We are so proud of what we have done this year, and we are ecstatic about having more opportunities to play.”

The Panthers continued the section tournament Tuesday against Sibley East at Gaylord.



YOU MAKE THE CALL – Above, NRHEG shortstop Owen Wayne, left, applies the tag to WEM’s Brady Murphy an attempted steal of second during last week’s 8-7 Section 2A victory for NRHEG. The umpire called the runner safe. Below left, the Panthers’ Ryan Schlaak delivers a pitch. Below right, Dakota Schlaak follows through after connecting for a single. Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens



SHE’S SAFE! – The Panthers’ Ezra Boerner slides safely into third. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

NRHEG softball team falls in section, ending season

The season came to an abrupt halt for the NRHEG High School softball team last Wednesday with a 13-0 loss at Belle Plaine in the opening round of the Section 2AA tournament.

The Panthers, seeded 12th in the section, did not register a hit against three Tiger pitchers, who combined for nine strikeouts and seven walks.

Brooklyn Summer pitched for the Panthers, allowing 12 earned runs through four innings. She walked four and fanned two.

“Our season came to an end with the loss to Belle Plaine,” said

NRHEG head coach Wendy Schult.” “I appreciated the work ethic and effort the girls gave at both practice and games throughout the entire season. We are going to miss our lone senior, Aspy Stenzel, and wish her well with all of her future endeavors. We had a pretty young team, one senior and four juniors, with girls playing in new positions. They gained valuable playing time and experience, and will be playing softball this summer.”

The Panthers finished the season with a record of 5-13.



SUB-SECTION STANDOUTS – NRHEG’s Julianne Wobbrock, left, and Chloe Riewer, right, were among many section qualifiers for the Panthers in last week’s Class 2A South Sub-section meet at United South Central. Wobbrock finished third in the 1600 while Riewer was second in the 100-meter dash. Photos by Larry Nydegger

NRHEG track girls 4th in sub-section

Olson finishes first in shot put; Riewer takes second in 100-meter dash

The NRHEG High School track and field teams competed in the Class 2A South Sub-section meet Thursday at USC High School in wells.

The NRHEG girls finished fourth out of 12 teams, totaling 79 points. JWP won the championship with 124.5 points.

The top eight individual finishers and top four relays advance to section.

“It was a wonderful day to see so many of our athletes achieve their personal-best performances today.”

The Panthers had one gold medalist for the girls, sophomore Kylie Olson, who won the shot put with a toss of 35-1.25, a personal best mark.

The Panthers’ Chloe Riewer was

“It was a wondrul day to see so many of our athletes achieve their personal-best performances today.”

— NRHEG coach Larry Nydegger

second in the 100-meter dash, clocking 13.27 seconds. Quinn VanMaldeghem was third in the 400 in 1:03.82, and Julieann Wobbrock was third in the 1600 in 5:37.53. Gabby Schalak took third in the 100 hurdles in 17.45.

The Panthers finished third in three relays.

Riewer, Anika Ladlie, Schlaak and Clara Buendorf clocked 57.17 in the 4x100, the 4x200 team of

Riewer, Sierra Misgen, Buendorf and VanMaldeghem posted a season-best of 1:50.89 in the 4x200, and Misgen, Peyton Frye, Buendorf and VanMaldeghem clocked 4:25.92 in the 4x400.

Other second-qualifying performances: Anika Ladlie, fourth, high jump, 4-11; Riewer, fifth, long jump, 14-11; Wobbrock, fourth, 800, persona-best 2:39.3; Misgen, sixth, long jump, 14-6.5; Ella Jeno,

sixth, 800, personal-best 2:46.46; Schlaak, sixth, 300 hurdles, 53.72 and seventh, high jump, 4-8.

The NRHEG boys finished 11th among 12 schools.

“It was a tough day for many of our guys,” said Nydegger. “This is a high level of competition and our guys gave their all.”

The most exciting event, according to Nydegger, was the high jump, where Lavon Jewison finished first while tying the school record of 6-4.

Other places for the Panthers: Jacob Karl, fifth, 1600, 4:57.97; Charlie Fuller, eighth, triple jump, 37-7; Brandon Schmidt, eighth, pole vault, 9-6.

The Panthers compete in the Section 2A meet Saturday at Mankato West High School.

Arnold posts 18-hole best 92 as NRHEG golfers compete at Lakeside

The NRHEG golf teams were at Lakeside Golf Course in Waseca last week for the Panther Invitational.

The NRHEG boys finished sev-

enth as a team. Braxton Arnold led the Panthers with a personal-best 92 strokes for 18 holes. Reid Sandry shot 96, Matt Williams 101,

Braydon Rollag 114, Dakota Clark 134.

For the girls, the Panthers’ Olivia Wilkenson finished fifth overall

with a 115. Gabrielle Nelson shot 134, Alexis Olson 136.



The Waseca Rotary Club, in partnership with the Greater Mankato Area United Way, is delighted to announce the annual distribution of *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein to every enrolled fourth grader in Waseca.



Waseca Rotary and United Way gift Waseca 4th graders

WASECA, MN — The Waseca Rotary Club, in partnership with the Greater Mankato Area United Way, is delighted to announce the annual distribution of *Where the Sidewalk Ends* by Shel Silverstein to every enrolled fourth grader in Waseca. This collaborative effort aims to foster a lifelong love of reading and creativity among youth, while supporting one of Rotary International’s core causes: Supporting Education.

Where the Sidewalk Ends, a beloved collection of whimsical poems and drawings, is a perfect fit for this age group. Fourth graders are at a pivotal stage in their reading journey, and Silverstein’s work, blending humor, heart, and imagination, helps bridge the transition from picture books to more complex literature. The book sparks both laughter and thought, inviting young readers to explore language, emotions, and the power of creative expres-

sion. “This partnership represents what community collaboration can achieve when we invest in our children’s development,” said Cassie Meister, Co-President of Waseca Rotary. “Books open doors to new ideas, perspectives, and dreams. We’re proud to help put this timeless classic in the hands of every Waseca fourth grader.” The Waseca Rotary Club is honored to continue this growing tradition, now becoming an annual highlight of its local outreach. The initiative underscores Rotary’s global commitment to improving access to education and encouraging youth to reach their full potential, starting right here in our community. For more information about this program or how to support Waseca Rotary’s efforts, please contact wasecarotary@gmail.com.

Waseca Education Association celebrates member milestones

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Waseca school district teachers and their guests celebrated accomplishments and milestones in a gathering of about 165 people at The Mill the evening of May 21. Special guests for the night were three retiring teachers, each of whom was introduced by a selected colleague, and then given some time to share his or her thoughts, impressions and memories. Emcees Karen Pfarr Anderson and Jacque Karaus announced that, among them, the retirees had been teaching more than 135 years, with 117 of them in the Waseca district. Also sharing her thoughts and memories was high school office manager Mary Jo DeLaitich, who worked in administrative roles with the district for 29 years. Craig Brendan, intermediate level band teacher, is retiring this year after 33 years as an educator, having worked in the Waseca district for 19 years. Tricia Mercier was introduced by her brother, fellow teacher John

Hansen. With their family for the evening was their mother, Patricia Hansen, 97, who retired from teaching in the early 1990s. Mercier is currently a sixth-grade teacher. She completed 31 years as a teacher, 28 of them in the Waseca district. Jody Schlichte is retiring after 41.5 years in education, 41 of them in Waseca. Schlichte spoke of having loved each of her students, stating she regards them as “hers” to this day. Schlichte is a fifth-grade teacher. Other honors presented during the evening included recognizing the Owatonna Hy-Vee store as the group’s “Friend of Education”; local resident and Hy-Vee manager Justin Lower accepted the award. Suzanne Johnson was presented as the “Support Staff of the Year,” and Teacher of the Year Meghan Selvik was presented with an engraved plaque after having been announced as the selectee last fall. High school senior Collin Dettmer was acknowledged for having served as a student representative to the school board. Certified staff members honored

for completing 25 years in education were Joe Hedervare, Donna Hodgkins, and Ben O’Brien. Education Association members honored for having been with the district for 20 years were Kristin Guse, Ann Kaiser, Ben O’Brien and Amy Straube. Teachers acknowledged for completing 15 years with the Waseca School district were Jessica Androli, Jen Follstad-Popp, Amy Krautkremer, Sue Malterer, Grant Popp, Cynthia Ruedy and Julie Sass. Honored for having been Education Association members who have been with the district for 10 years were Brandon Guse, Andrew Hopkins, Lyndee Huper, Jacque Karaus, Emily Krueger, Brooke McGuire, Jenny Sandbeck, Sandy Schumacher and Meghan Selvik. Recognized for five years with the district as members of the Education Association were Angela Andreen, Teighlor Eilertson, Abigail Holmberg, Rachael Ingalls, Samuel Jans, Kathryn Lundin, Kelsey Palme, Allison Poppe, Shealyn Salgado and David Schmitt.



Teachers acknowledged for being members of the Waseca Education Association for five years were, from left, David Schmitt, Teighlor Eilertson, Kelsey Palme, Abby Holmberg, Allison Poppe, Sam Jans, and Shealyn Salgado. Not pictured are Angela Andreen, Rachael Ingalls, and Kathryn Lundin. Pioneer photos by Deb Bently



Teachers (from left) Jacque Karaus, Jenny Sandbeck, Lyndee Huper, Meghan Selvik, Sandy Schumacher, Brandon Guse, and Emily Krueger were honored for being Education Association members for the past 10 years. Missing from the photo are fellow honorees Andrew Hopkins and Brooke McGuire. Below, left: Kristin Guse and Ben O’Brien were among those acknowledged for being WEA members in the district for 20 years. Also honored were Ann Kaiser and Amy Straube.



Teachers (from left) Jessica Androli, Amy Krautkremer, Jen Follstad-Popp, Sue Malterer, Grant Popp, and Julie Sass were acknowledged for having been with the Waseca school district for 15 years. Not pictured is fellow honoree Cynthia Ruedy. Below left: Justin Lower (right), who works with the Hy-Vee store in Owatonna, accepted the “Friend of Education” award for Hy-Vee during the May 21 event. With him is teacher Connolly Turek, who introduced the award.



Ben O’Brien and Joe Hedervare received plaques acknowledging 25 years in education. Also acknowledged, but not pictured, was Donna Hodgkins.



Meghan Selvik