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WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 32 Vol. III \$2



Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca

Thursday, August 8, 2024

Page 17

PSRST STD
ECRWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM Retail



Model building

Thank you for two incredible years

And many more... *Pioneer* to begin publishing on Thursdays

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

With little fanfare, the *Waseca County Pioneer* celebrated its second anniversary in July. The *Pioneer* and its staff are grateful for the support and best wishes shared by community members and subscribers over these past 26 months. It is with great excitement the paper announces a significant change: from now on, its publishing date will be one day sooner. Going forward, subscribers will find their copies of the *Pioneer* in their mailboxes on Thursdays, rather than on Fridays as it's been for the past two years.

On behalf of the *Waseca County Pioneer* staff and my-

self, the publisher, I would like to thank you for allowing us the privilege to serve you another year.

Starting and continuing to publish the paper has been an incredible ride shared by those who create the news, those who read it, and we who record it.

I'd like to thank our dedicated readers and advertisers: I trust you know we could not keep our doors open without both sets of you, our supporters.

To the advertisers who signed up with us before we even printed our first newspaper and remain with us today, *thank you*.

To the businesses who've joined the team along the way, *thank you*.

The faith you've shown in us and the community tells me why you've been a legacy here in the Waseca community. Thank you for helping us be a part of your story and the history of Waseca County.

To the readers we've served: *thank you*.

Your feedback is invaluable. The positive and the negative, of course—but I am glad to report the vast majority has been positive.

It's interesting starting a newspaper – besides the obvious challenge of printing nearly a book worth of information on a deadline, week in and week out.

I stopped from other tasks to write this piece as I was entering our subscription renewals in the middle of July.

More than half of the *Pioneer's* subscribers today joined within the first month of the first printing of the *Waseca County Pioneer*. I jokingly told our editor Deb that this is the time of year I find out whether we get to operate another year. Wonderful news—we do.

Since we've opened, we've seen a few faces come and go.

To Editor Deb, *thank you*.

To my dad, *thank you*.

To my newspaper family, literally and figuratively, *thank you*.

To everyone who makes the *Waseca County Pioneer* possible, *thank you*.

How to subscribe to the *Pioneer*

To subscribe to the *Waseca County Pioneer*, simply stop in our office at 111 Elm Ave. West in Waseca with your address or mail a check to:

Waseca County Pioneer
P.O. Box 578
Waseca, MN, 56093

Community Salad Luncheon 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, August 9 at Waseca's St. Paul Lutheran Church

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Waseca is offering a salad luncheon open to the public from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at its community hall at 314 Fourth Ave Northeast on Friday, August 9. The meal is \$8 per person.

Annual Waseca Band Garage Sale at County Fairgrounds 4-H building Aug. 8, 9, 10

The Waseca Band Boosters organization will be holding its annual garage sale fundraiser across three days at the 4-H building located on the Waseca County fairgrounds. Donations can be delivered August 5, 6 and 7 during the afternoon and the morning of August 8. The sale begins at 4 p.m. August 8 and continues on Friday, August 9, and Saturday, August 10.

Soapbox race Sat., Aug. 10 from noon - 3 p.m.

The Waseca Freemason's are sponsoring a soapbox race on Saturday, August 10 from 12-3 p.m. It will be held on the west side of Tink Larson Field, 4th Street NE.

The funds raised will go toward Fire Suppression Kits.

We are looking for kids 6 years and older to participate in the race. Contact Kevin Clemons at 507-461-2388 to sign up for the race. Everyone is welcome to watch.

Briefs continued on 3

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.

Psalm 27:4



Waseca's Tink Larson says the best advice he's ever received was from longtime Waseca boys' basketball coach Manny Beckmann. "I remember Manny telling me in my first year of coaching that a coach will never please all the people all the time, so do it the way you want to do it and hopefully you will please yourself."

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Mr. Baseball

Waseca legend Tink Larson

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Tink Larson does not believe his life story would make much of a book. Others might disagree.

For instance, there's the time he was pushing age 60 and was forced into action for the Waseca Braves amateur baseball team, replacing the late Todd Mann, who sustained an injury, at catcher. They were hosting the Minneapolis Angels, who won three state championships in the 1990s.

"It was kind of a fluke," said Larson. But it's a great story.

Larson entered the game in the sixth inning and got a base hit in his first at-bat.

"The crowd clapped a little," he said.

Then, in the seventh, he threw out a runner attempting to steal second base. The crowd clapped a little louder.

In the bottom of the eighth, Larson threw out another baserunner trying to steal; the crowd clapped louder yet.

When he came to bat in the bottom of the ninth with two outs, two runners on base and the Braves trailing by three, the crowd was clapping enthusiastically.

The Angels catcher turned to Larson and said, "Sounds like you better do something good or this crowd is going to be disappointed."

Larson, who had never hit a home run at the Waseca field, stepped into the

Tink continued on 10

Courthouse clock tower is more than meets the eye

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

The 1970 Joni Mitchell song claims "you don't know what you've got till it's gone."

Turns out, the lyrics even seem to apply to one of the Waseca area's most "lofty" accomplishments, the four-faced clock in the county courthouse's 80-foot tower.

"It just keeps ticking away," comments county facilities director Brian Tomford. "We don't hear much about it until something goes wrong."

According to Tomford and county facilities supervisor Teddy Hoehn, the mechanisms to keep the clock faces operating occupy three floors near the top of the courthouse tower. Located in the center of a somewhat dusty space which is about 10 feet wide and 14 feet long are the actual works of the clock. Occupying about the same amount of space as a tall chest of drawers, it's a sturdy metal frame supporting interacting gears. It

sports a small clock face, about 10 inches across.

Rory DeMesy of the Minneapolis company Mechanical Watch Supply has specialized in tower clocks like Waseca's for the past 35 years. DeMesy has been called in a few times to work on the clock, which he describes as a "high production model."

"Every tower clock is special," he points out. "They have a history and a connection with their community that has often been growing and evolving for a century or more."

Given the courthouse cornerstone shows a construction date of 1897, Tomford and DeMesy say the clock works were probably built and installed around 1900. The mechanism is clearly labeled as the work of the Seth Thomas company, located in Thomaston, Connecticut. According to DeMesy, the company's special-

Tower continued on 17



Waseca County facilities director Brian Tomford examines one of the courthouse clock faces from behind during some maintenance work. Made of a special type of glass called "vitrolite," the faces are between five and six feet across.

Jury trial set for Waseca Mayor

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

A jury trial for Waseca Mayor Randy Zimmerman has been scheduled for October 28 through 31 beginning at 8:30 a.m. each day.

In 2023 the mayor was charged with two counts of perjury under oath when he signed his affidavit of candidacy to run for mayor two years ago, allegedly stating his address was within the city limits of Waseca despite all records point-



Zimmerman

Trial continued on 10

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WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

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Compostings

by Al Batt

‘Give people flowers while they’re still here’

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS’ CLUB MEETING
I’m going to see a different audiologist.

What’s wrong with your current audiologist?

He keeps telling me I need a heron egg.

DRIVING BY BRUCE’S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Deep thoughts occur as I drive past his drive. I bobbed and weaved my way through a crowd at a county fair to get to my parked car, which had become an Easy-Bake Oven. It wasn’t frying eggs on a flat rock hot, but it was sizzling. The temperature was 87, but it was humid, which made it feel hotter than the hinges of Hades. I can hear a resident of Yuma, Arizona, saying, “Oh, so you think 87 degrees is hot. That’s so cute.”

I attended the funeral of a legendary domino-playing lady, Lois Bushlack, where I was served a fine funeral fare—scalloped potatoes and ham (I call them “funeral potatoes,” a title often given to potato casseroles involving cheese, cornflakes or crushed potato chips), coleslaw, dill pickles and dessert bars. I call them funeral potatoes because they’re often served at funerals. For that, I am most thankful. Lois and the late Donna Ferguson played the piped tiles with gusto, each accusing the other of cheating. As a boy, I was told that the one who complained the most about cheating was typically the biggest cheater. Lois and Donna held themselves to a higher code of ethics than a Supreme Court Justice. Neither cheated nor thought the other had.

A family elder used to dismiss another by saying, “I wouldn’t give him the time of day.” Someone asked me the time, I’m rarely asked for that. I gave him the time of the day. Why not? I’d found a cart with good wheels and pushed it merrily from store aisle to aisle, working conscientiously on the shopping list my wife had entrusted to my care. Everything was copacetic until I ran over a squirrel. It rattled my cart. I looked for a panicked squirrel. There was none. What I had hit was an ink pen.

I’VE LEARNED

Hands down, the best time for anything is 6:30.

Don’t blame a clown for acting like a clown if you keep going to the circus.

Hors d’oeuvres prove we have no willpower.

I petted a porcupine in Alberta. Always pet a porcupine with the

grain.

I never complain about the long lines to a men’s restroom.

I’m glad that I knew Ryan “Juner” Johnson, who used spoonerisms on stage to tell the tale of Rinderella, who lived with her mugly other and her two sad bisters. The storl of the mory is this: If you ever go to a bancy fall and want to have a pransom hince loll in fove with you, don’t forget to slop your dripper.

BAD JOKES DEPART-MENT

Two conspiracy theorists walk into a bar. You can’t tell me that’s a coincidence.

How do you catch a squirrel? Climb a tree and act like a nut.

Do they use seahorses in water polo?

NATURE NOTES

“I know a chickadee and a killdeer call out their names. Do any other birds?” Some bird names are imitations of their songs/calls, yet there isn’t a single bird species named chirp. Some onomatopoeic names are the phoebe, peewee, to-whhee, cuckoo, jay, bobwhite, kis-kadee, willet, curlew, whip-poor-will, chuck-will’s-widow, hoopoe, kittiwake and chachalaca. A crow might be imitative of the bird’s cry.

“What’s an easy way to tell a raven from a crow?” Check the range maps. The much larger common ravens can be distinguished from American crows by their massive bills; by their tails, which come to a V (like the V in raven) behind them; and by their croak compared to a crow’s caw.

“Do monarch caterpillars use dogbane as a host plant? Dogbane’s name refers to its supposed toxicity to dogs. The perennial plant’s strong fibers have made it prized for cordage and threads. Young dogbane plants are often mistaken for milkweed. Injured dogbane oozes a white sticky sap with the consistency of latex paint. It’s native to Minnesota and was once thought to be a larval food for monarch butterflies, but research has shown that while female monarchs occasionally lay eggs on this species, their offspring will not mature on it. Dogbane grows 5 feet tall and blooms in white flowers in June-August. I enjoy seeing the iridescent dogbane beetles on dogbane. The gold, blue, green, yellow and red insects are stunners.

MEETING ADJOURNED

“Never admire quietly. If I admire something about someone, I tell them. We humans are so fragile. It’s important we give people their flowers while they are still here.”—Chimamanda Adichie.

The difference between stupidity and genius

By the time you read this, I will already be back on home turf, but as I write it I am at the Pyrotechnics Guild International convention, which is taking place in Brainerd. For anyone not familiar with the term, “pyrotechnic” is the word used to refer to fireworks. There have been some spectacular displays already, with more to come. But just now I want to mention an incidental lesson that came up during the “chemistry of pyrotechnics” course.

The instructor, who is apparently not only a very knowledgeable chemist but also a medical doctor, provided two incidental lessons which I found truly enriching.

The first was that he gave a simple explanation of “quantum energy.” The instructor offered the examples of a faucet and fan. He pointed out that a faucet has a variable rate for delivering water. It can be set to trickle water



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

out or, at the other extreme, to send it pouring forth; at least technically, there is an unlimited number of “settings” which can be used to regulate the rate the water is moving. When it comes to a fan, he pointed out, it has distinct settings, typically “high,” “medium,” and “low.” There are only three selections, with no options in between

He used those two examples to explain why electrons do not get pulled into the center of their atoms. After all, electrons are negative, protons are

positive, and it’s been repeatedly pointed out to us that opposites attract—yet the electrons stay in orbit.

The reason they don’t move, you see, is because their energy can only be received and delivered in distinct “packages” called “quanta.” It was mentioned that a photon, a single piece of light, is exactly that, a “quantum” package of energy. Electrons stay in orbit because they do not have the correct setting of energy to move in toward the atom’s center.

I have read numerous books on

quantum theory—not because I think I’m smart, but because I know I’m not. This particular explanation was the clearest, simplest one I have come across.

So now you know that everyone gathering at a fireworks convention isn’t there just to blow things up. There is much more art to fireworks than most people have a chance to realize, and some people in attendance are there for the sake of that art. That just happens to mean they also get to blow things up—under controlled circumstances.

And I’m betting you will get my point when I share the second thing the chemistry instructor shared that has stayed with me. He told us his favorite quote from Albert Einstein: “The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits.”

Dear Editor,

I have had the honor of serving this district for 12 years and your support has been greatly appreciated. I believe Tom Sexton is the best candidate to garner that same support and who will serve this district extremely well.

His 26+ years of commendable combat & military service indicates his willingness to fight for our con-

stitutional rights and freedoms. His unwavering support of pro-life and 2nd Amendment rights align with the core values of this district. He has been endorsed by the Mn Police & Peace Officers Assoc. showing his commitment to law enforcement. He is a family man with deep rooted family core values.

He has been a member of the Waseca City Planning Commission

and current chair of the 4th of July Lakefest in Waseca showing his community involvement and understanding of local politics. He gives back to his community and knows how important involvement is.

Tom’s experience as Sr Educator at the US Army War College proves his ability to educate other legislators on the beliefs and needs of this district. His ability to listen and under-

stand other’s needs has made him a great educator. The perfect person to represent us in St Paul.

For all these reasons I believe Tom is the best candidate and I highly endorse him for your vote on August 13. Please vote for Tom Sexton in the primary.

**State Representative
John Petersburg**

Enjoying the little things before school starts

While everyone else is out doing grown-up jobs, I have been finding myself enjoying the little things of life while I count down the days until school starts. Here are some of the things I’ve realized or noticed in life recently.

I actually just recently got back from Denver, Colorado, where I helped move my boyfriend into his fancy new apartment. I learned Colorado is a lot more hot and desert-like than I originally believed. Then again, I guess I hadn’t previously put much thought into what Colorado is really like.

The Olympics are really cool and I’m wishing I had been paying more attention. I watched St. Paul’s Suni Lee get bronze on the beams and I watched the U.S men’s swimming relay lose (get silver) for the first time in Olympic history while the women’s relay team won gold and beat a world record. Kind of feel bad for those guys. It gets me thinking some “typical” athletes should be mixed in among the competitors at the Olympics just so we can fully understand how gifted these athletes are.

There are a lot of crazy drivers out there nowadays. While I will be the first to admit I may not go the exact speed limit, I can assure I am a safe



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

driver. I drove home from the Cities the other day and experienced either really slow drivers or really crazy drivers just on 35W. Why don’t people understand the importance of good driving...or why must they be crazy?

As it is hot out (here and in Denver), I battle with either being hot from being outside or being cold from air conditioning. I dislike being cold, so I always bring a sweatshirt with me wherever I go, no matter how hot it is outside. It was almost 100 degrees in Denver when I was there and I realized I might be slightly crazy as I wore my sweatshirt out of the apartment, in the car, and in the store - where I was justified, as we were walking through the freezer section and I wasn’t shivering for once. Yes, sometimes I am hot in the sweatshirt, but honestly, it’s kind of nice sometimes. Sometimes I will get in the car

after it’s been sitting in the sun and just appreciate the sauna-like warmth before turning the key and blasting the AC.

Students need to retain their grammar lessons. I was getting gas in Rochester the other day with my mother after she had taken me to Costco. We saw a car parked with “I Heart Fly Ride’s” written on the back, the guy’s instagram handle was printed underneath. “Ride’s” with an apostrophe s, which isn’t the correct usage at all. There is no need for an apostrophe! But then five or so young guys probably of early high school age got out and it started to make sense. Best of luck to them in their endeavors.

Two of my former roommates who, after a certain amount of drama, went looking for a different apartment, came recently and removed their stuff from the apartment where I live. That

included many of the dishes and everyday items kept in the kitchen. I didn’t know what day this was going to happen, so I was surprised when I got back from my flight at night, went to look for a glass for water, and opened the cupboard to bareness. I didn’t realize how many dishes we had in the apartment until they were all gone. No bowls, plates, silverware, or glasses—although I guess we were left with one pity glass. I get it: it was stuff they had bought for the apartment, but a little heads up would have been nice. Then I had to start considering how difficult it is to find the right plates or to decide whether or not to get a set.

I discovered Facebook Marketplace is the best place to find cheap plants and pots, since my fixation on having and growing plants expands larger than what I can fit in my apartment. Thankfully, I have not actually pulled the trigger and bought anything off of there yet, but it’s just fun to look at all the possibilities as I long for a house and more space for plants.

My Determination: “We’re at terror alert orange! Which means something could go down somewhere in some way at some point in time, so look sharp!” — Stan Smith, American Dad.

People care enough to say something

Hanging on the wall in my office are numerous pictures, sayings and mementos. Among them is a copy of the first newspaper my dad published after he purchased the New Richland *Star* in 2005. I feel very lucky to have it, since the only copy I’ve ever found happened to be squirreled away in my dad’s basement; I came across it by chance. On the front page is a black-and-white picture of my dad shaking hands with previous publisher Lavonne Meyer in front of the *Star* office in New Richland. The sun was shining in their faces and they both look grumpy as they squint their eyes.

Immediately to the left of that front page story is an article titled. “My first column at last.”

My dad starts his story talking about how difficult it was to write this first column.

How does one show the world he’s crazy?

By purchasing a newspaper of course.

I’ve read both articles many times. In the feature story announcing the change in ownership, the headline reads “The *Star* is sold.”

I used that same headline when I purchased the *Star Eagle* from my dad four years ago.

Many lines stick with me from those two pieces.

“The *Star* remains the best choice for local advertising and news.”

And.

“I wrote and rewrote this column a dozen times.”

My goal when we started the *Waseca County Pioneer* was and remains, producing a quality news-



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

paper of value to our local community.

I really do love people.

I want to hear your story.

I enjoy when you stop in the office and chat.

And it hurts when I make mistakes.

But people care enough to say something, and that matters.

My dad always said it was a good thing if our coaches in sports growing up were pointing out our mistakes. It meant they were paying attention to what we were doing, he said.

It meant they hadn’t given up on me or deemed my performance irrelevant.

The newspaper I found in my dad’s basement that day remains a memento, framed on my office wall.

I’ve been writing and rewriting this column in my mind for weeks. I find that to be more productive than using the delete key over and over again.

My main message, I suppose, is fairly straightforward: I want this publication to be the best version of itself it can be. We’re not there yet. No one person ever truly gets there.

It’s about the journey, about always striving to be better—which is what remains our goal, getting better every

week, every month, every year.

Over the past two years—three if you count the time spent considering, planning and preparing—we’ve gone through a roller coaster here at the paper.

I remember finishing our first paper two years ago and thinking, “I get to do this every week now, forever...”

“What have I gotten myself into?”

I was exhausted but exuberant.

Two years later, I’ve learned a lot.

Here’s some of what’s happened in two years. My original co-publisher chose to return to working with his hometown newspaper. Numerous writers have come and gone. There have been many, many typographical errors.

We’re still here.

Every obstacle we’ve faced has made us stronger.

This past year, Waseca County picked the *Pioneer* as its legal newspaper despite our paper not submitting the lowest bid. That was a strong statement of support. What we’re doing *matters*.

The city of Waseca and Waseca Public schools chose the *Pioneer* as their legal newspaper of record.

This past year Deb Bently has taken on a stronger role with the paper. She found us our new writer,

Ben Revermann.

The way people talk about Deb and her love for the community makes my heart sing. To know she’s a part of our paper, our community, makes me glad.

To see my dad excited to write again makes me smile.

The impact of these and many others who have been part of the *Pioneer* serve as a vital reminder of what makes Waseca County great: the people.

To our readers, the ones who stop me on the street and the ones who don’t: thank you.

To our advertisers: thank you. You took a chance on me and our newspaper when we opened two years ago. You continue to support us today.

Many people didn’t think we’d make it through our first year.

But here we are.

When my dad purchased the *New Richland Star* in 2005, people told him he was crazy. They told him taking out a mortgage on his house for the down payment would mean he would lose his home.

Well, they were right about one thing. We certainly are crazy.

As we look forward to the future, the newspaper hopes to grow with your help. In exchange, we will work to provide a tool which helps the community grow—more informed, more connected, more grateful for the many stories, experiences and achievements we share.

Please let us be part of all the ways you grow your future.

In the meantime, *Thank you*.



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

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DEADLINES: Pioneer: Noon Monday
GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

ELI LUTGENS
DEB BENTLY
JIM LUTGENS
JON LUCCA
BEN REVERMANN
TERESA ROSACKER
JESSICA LUTGENS
RACHAEL JAEGER
MELISSA DUNN
AMELIA ROESSLER

Publisher
News Editor
Sports Editor/Dad
Ad Design
Staff Writer
Advertising Sales
Staff Writer
Staff Writer
Editorial Assistant

Contributing writers/photographers: Dave Zika, Al Batt, Pastor Ken Andrs

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$59 Per Year, Waseca County Residents

\$69 State of Minnesota • \$79 Outside Minnesota

Waseca County Pioneer (USPS permit #25304) is published weekly on Thursday, by Pioneer Publications Inc., 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca, MN, 56093. Entire contents copyright © 2024 PIONEER Publications, Inc. and respective authors. Opinions expressed in editorials or letters to the editor are those of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the Waseca County Pioneer or PIONEER Publications, Inc. Letters may be edited for content or length. Periodicals Postage at New Richland, MN. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Waseca County Pioneer, P.O. Box 578, Waseca, MN, 56093.

Happy Days in Waseca August 10
Happy Days in Waseca, an event aiming to bring more community to Waseca is taking place August 10 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
There will be a car roll-in, live music, vendors, and food trucks. The event will take place in the lot downtown behind Refinery 507.

Duke Zecco will be at the Indian Island Winery Sunday, August 11 at 1-3:30 p.m.
Duke Zecco will be performing at the Indian Island Winery in Janesville on August 11 from 1pm through 3:30pm. He plays 50s, 60s and 70s. The Indian Island Winery is located at 18010 631st Ave Janesville MN.

Midwest Farewell will be at the Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm August 11 at 1 p.m.
Midwest Farewell will be performing at the Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm Sunday, August 11 at 1:00pm. Midwest Farewell is an acoustic band trio. They cover everyone from Dawes to Van Morrison to The Last Revel and much more.

“A Hard Day’s Night” free band performance 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 13, at Waseca’s Trowbridge Park
The Beatles cover band “A Hard Day’s Night” will be giving a free performance open to the public at Waseca’s Trowbridge Park pavilion at 7 p.m. the evening of Tuesday, August 13. The band bills itself as having an “authentic Beatles sound.”

Chris Holm will be at the Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm Thursday August 15 at 5 p.m.
Chris Holm will be performing at the Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm Thursday August 15 at 5:00pm. He plays acoustic blues and folk music. He is a songwriter in Minneapolis influenced by Delta Blues and early country music.

Bob Stephan will be at Club 57 Thursday August 15 from 6-9pm
Bob Stephan will be performing at Club 57 in Waseca on Thursday August 15 from 6-9pm. He plays 50s, 60s, classic rock and country music.

World Honeybee Day at Hofmann Apiary 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. August 17
The Waseca County History Center is sponsoring an observance of World Honeybee Day from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, August 17, at the Hofmann Apiary, 4661 420th Avenue, Janesville.
The day will include the chance to meet local honey producers, tour the historic site’s honey house and wax shed, and learn more about pollinators and honey production. More information is available from the History Center at 507-835-7700.

Mal Murphy will be at the Indian Island Winery Sunday August 18 from 1-3:30 p.m.
Mal Murphy will be performing at the Indian Island Winery on Sunday August 18 from 1-3:30pm. He performs folk music, alternative and country covers and originals.

Briefs continued on 5

Got news?
507-837-6767

Putting heart in healthcare

Bentson operates only medical clinic in Janesville

Heartland Healthcare open since 2023

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Mayo Clinic closed in Janesville in August of 2023; it was officially finished moving out on March 1, of 2024, leaving Heartland Healthcare the only medical provider remaining in town. Just two blocks off Main Street across from the Summers Ridge Veterinary Clinic, the facility’s address is 303 East First Street.

Open since October 2, 2023, it has been a one-man operation from the get-go. Physician’s Assistant (PA) Ken Bentson is in charge of this small-town family practice. He answers his own phones and manages his own schedule, a pair of cost-cutting measures, he says, that results in significant savings for his clinic’s patients.

Bentson pointed out the “bigger guys” may charge as much as \$260 just to walk in the door. “Even with a deductible, you’re still paying 80% of \$260,” he said.

At Heartland Healthcare, the base charge for a visit is \$55, “Cash, check or pay next month if you need.” Said Bentson, “If you can’t afford it, we’ve gotten others to donate. We make sure you get taken care of.” One of his highest goals, Bentson said, is to make healthcare affordable for those who live in and near his community. He has a long history in the healthcare industry; many of his more than 20 years in the field have been spent serving Janesville residents. He said, “Small towns are more relaxed. You get more satisfaction in getting to know people over time.”

Bentson also knows family life very well. With a strong marriage of 27 years, he has four children. He’s also had a hand in raising foster children. Already a very personable man, he seems highly focused on his practice: “All my patients are special. Our differences make up everything.” Adding to his experience with children, he fondly remembered, “At my old clinic, kids always got a Ring Pop when we were finished. Now as adults, those same ‘kids’ see me and still expect a Ring Pop when they’re done.”

The building for Bentson’s Heartland Healthcare clinic was remodeled from a mechanic’s garage. The posh remodel it underwent left no sign of the former purpose; now patients spend time in the office, waiting room, small playroom, or one of the three exam rooms. Bentson explained one is for procedures, one for general examination and one for pediatrics. In the waiting room he pointed around and said, “This room we’re in now used to be a detailing station for cleaning cars.”

But with the cars long gone, at the door there’s a coat rack with an interesting history. A jacket and hat belonging to Bentson’s uncle, Frank Keeley, have been there for the last three years. His uncle passed away, but his hat and jacket remain as an understated memorial. An old cuckoo clock ticks away on the wall with rustic pinecone-shaped weights from the Black Forest of Germany keeping it in time. In the corner stands an antique wooden highchair, another leftover from Bentson’s Janesville farmstead roots. On a bookshelf is a family bible from 1957. On the floor are a rug and toy box filled with toys or coloring books to give the kids something to do while waiting.

Bentson said he currently lives in Mankato, but has a long line of Janesville heritage running through his veins. “My family has been in this area since 1860.” He had four great uncles who farmed nearby their whole lives. Just like them, Bentson says he plans to be here forever.

Not stopping his service to Janesville with just medicine, Bentson also has extensive seminary



Heartland Healthcare owner operator Ken Bentson
Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

Heart continued on 12



New Richland Farm and Home Supply owner Bruce Meyer has recently opened a laundromat next to his main street business.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Laundromat opens in New Richland

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

New Richland Farm and Home Supply, formerly Gambles, owner Bruce Meyer opened what he calls a “basic and efficient” laundromat along New Richland’s main street earlier this summer. He says he is glad it was an option for those who had extra cleanup to do after recent flooding, and for those whose washers or dryers may have been damaged. He points out customers can accomplish their work more quickly at the laundromat because they can use more than one machine at a time.

Entry to the facility is right next to the entry to the Gambles store. Inside are four high-capacity washers, four dryers, and a raised counter for folding laundry. Meyer has observed that, over the two months it’s been open, the amount of use it’s receiving has been increasing.

The retail store, which offers a broad line of products for household upkeep and repair, is open Monday through Saturday until 3 p.m.

The laundromat has its own hours, with doors which are automatically controlled to be open seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Meyer warns, however, that the lock engages at 7:30 p.m.

He mentions customers may want to be careful of a situation encountered by one customer who carried the first basket of her laundry to her car, then realized 7:30 had passed and she could not re-enter the space. Getting back in was accomplished with the assistance of the police department, who got in touch with Meyer.

He also mentions there is no change machine in the space; he suggests

Laundromat continued on 8

WAGE program extended

Transitional programing for students with disabilities

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires states to provide free, appropriate public special education and related services to students with disabilities. In Minnesota in 2023, a federal judge ruled that as Minnesota offers adult basic education programs to all ages, special education services, often in the form of transition programs, continue until a student turns 22. In a previous version of the law, services ended July 1 after the student turned 21.

A “transition” program offers a bridge between the closely supervised atmosphere of a school classroom and the personal autonomy of life on one’s own. The first transition program begins in some high schools.

Many school districts outside of the metro area struggle with locating appropriate transitional programming for their students with disabilities; the Waseca Public School system offers a Work Assessment for Gainful Employment (WAGE) program that serves not only Waseca students, but also eligible individuals from NRHEG, JWP, and WEM.

Diane Roesler, special education teacher of the program from 2016 until 2021, described WAGE as part of a larger curriculum called Practical Assessment Exploration System (PAES); PAES is a hands-on comprehensive work development curriculum that operates in a simulated work environment. Students get the feel of real work while they also learn about and explore new vocational areas.

Roesler described what a day in PAES might look like: “Students are transported to the site (located at the Central Building). The class is a simulated work environment. The students are employees and the staff are supervisors. When they arrive they clock in, they have a work folder and are assigned to a job in one of five stations: construction/industrial, consumer service, business and marketing, processing/production or computer/technology. Students report to the designated work stations; they find the instruction card for the job they’ve been assigned. They read the instructions independently. They call a supervisor and describe what they are about to do. The student starts a timer and begins working. When they finish, they stop the timer and rate their level of interest in the job. They call the supervisor over; the supervisor corrects the job task, rating the student’s level of accuracy, the amount of assistance the student required and their apparent level of interest. If the job is done correctly, the student chooses a new job at the job station. If there is a mistake, they repeat the job until they can complete it accurately.”

Roesler says all of this data is recorded and entered into a computer program that generates a report which helps guide the student’s vocational plan. At the end of each class period, the students rate their employment soft skills, which helps identify strengths and areas that need to be developed such as attendance, being on time, responding to correction, communication with super-

WAGE continued on 10

WASECA COUNTY
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Steele County Fair kicks off Aug. 13

The Steele County Free Fair is ready to kick off another year of entertainment and fun August 13-18, 2024. The Steele County Free Fair, one of Minnesota's Biggest County Fairs, has over 5,000 free exhibits – including 200 animals – to delight fairgoers, including the FFA Children's Barnyard, the Great Outdoors Center, and Thorni Ridge Exotic Animals, sponsored by Community Bank Owatonna and R&K Electric. Free entertainment abounds on four outdoor stages as well as in Ye Olde Beer Garden. In addition, more than 300 indoor commercial exhibits and over 200 outdoor vendors – including more than 100 food stands – and up to 40 thrilling carnival rides on the Gold-Star Amusements midway will be available daily.

Halls of Fame and Century Farm Recognition

The Equine Hall of Fame program, sponsored by Farmers Feed and Pet Supply, will be at 1 p.m. Tuesday, August 13, in the cattle show arena. Honored and inducted into the Equine Hall of Fame this year will be the Albert Sr. and Marge Kath Family and Tank the horse, a registered Dakota Clabber. Tank is owned by Monte and Nancy Mowry. The Livestock Hall of Fame and Century Farm recognition will follow in the show arena at 2:30 p.m., sponsored by Central Farm Service. Inducted into the Livestock Hall of Fame this year will be Jane and Allen Nelson, and Dr. Les Hansen. The Steele County Free Fair will be recognizing two Sesquicentennial Farms this year. James R. and Elaine Springer and Eugene and Carol Stoltman, all of Hill Crest Farm, and Mark and Ruth Pfeifer.

Old Time Music

Fairgoers who enjoy listening to some great polka music will want to be in Fair Square Park on Thursday, August 15. The Charlie Sticha Band will take the stage at 12:00 p.m., followed by the iPolka Band at 2:30 p.m. And at noon on Friday, August 19, the Dan Stursa Band will be playing some great old-time music on the Wenger Fair Square Stage while you enjoy lunch from one of our food vendors.

The Dan Stursa Band will return to entertain fairgoers at 1 p.m. Sunday, August 18, in Ye Olde Beer Garden. The Dan Stursa Band is sponsored by Ritchie Brothers.

The Village Stage in the Village of Yesteryear will also feature toe-tapping old-time tunes throughout the week.

Ride Specials

GoldStar Amusements Midway will feature daily ride specials

again in 2024. During Power 96 Radio Night on Tuesday, all rides are only \$2.00 each from 5-11 p.m. Wednesday is Horizon Eyecare Professionals Kid's Day and features a \$25.00 ride pass for unlimited midway rides from noon to 5 p.m. Gold Star Amusements will honor Senior Citizens (62+) with a super-special from noon to 5 p.m. on Senior Day (Thursday) when seniors can enjoy Carousel & Ferris Wheel rides for just one coupon. Culver's brings Moonlight Madness on Thursday. Bring a Moonlight Madness coupon (available at Culver's Owatonna location) and enjoy unlimited midway rides from 5-11 p.m. for only \$27.00; \$30.00 without Culver's coupon.

Friday is North Risk Partners/TPS Insurance Family Fun Day and features unlimited rides from noon to 5 p.m. for just \$25.00. Saturday is Profinium Inc. ride day, when a \$30.00 wrist band entitles the wearer to unlimited rides from noon to 5 p.m. plus a chance to win one of eight bicycles being given away by GoldStar Amusements Midway. The fair wraps up on Sunday with Hy-Vee Family Day, when a \$30.00 wrist band entitles the rider to unlimited midway rides from noon to 9 p.m.

The Gold Star Amusement Mega-Ride ticket is \$60 and is on sale through 5 p.m. August 13, the opening day of the fair, at Hy-Vee in Owatonna only. The mega-ride ticket is redeemed for a ride wristband/lanyard which entitles the holder to unlimited midway rides all week. The mega-ride ticket can be redeemed at the midway entrance starting at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, August 13, and may be redeemed at a midway ticket office during midway hours throughout the fair.

For senior fairgoers

On Senior Day (Thursday), all seniors 62 years old or older coming to the fair before noon, may park free in the general parking lot on the ball diamonds. Shuttle service will be available from the parking lot to the west side of the fairgrounds. The Steele County senior citizen volunteers of the year, Diane and Dale Hendricks, will be recognized at 11:30 a.m. on the Wenger Fair Square Stage. Gold Star Amusements will also honor Senior Citizens (62+) with a super-special from 12 to 5 p.m. when seniors can enjoy Carousel & Ferris Wheel rides for just one coupon. There will also be senior citizen discounts available from many of our vendors between noon and 5 p.m.

New shareholder

Joe Heinrichs joins Patton, Hoversten and Berg

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"It's a big deal to become a shareholder," says Joe Heinrichs, 28, of his new partial ownership with the well-established law firm Patton, Hoversten and Berg, P.A. (PHB). He compares joining PHB with being put behind the wheel of a precision automobile. "All the support and resources are in place; I don't have to worry about building the road, I have the straightforward job of representing my clients—while knowing I have a high-quality vehicle."

He explains the term "shareholder" is what applies when joining an incorporated law firm. It means much the same as being a "partner."

"Becoming part of the firm is an investment that signifies pride in what the business is accomplishing and a commitment to help it continue building," he observes.

Heinrichs has been with PHB since 2022, and became a shareholder earlier this year. He currently works out of the firm's Faribault office, spending time in the courtrooms of Rice, Steele and Waseca counties.

His connection with the southern Minnesota court system began earlier, however, when he was selected to serve as a "judicial law clerk" in May of 2020.

Heinrichs explains the typical path to becoming a lawyer begins with earning a bachelor's degree; in his case, in psychology. After that, one applies to law schools for what is typically a three-year program. Heinrichs, an Iowa native, attended the University of St. Thomas in downtown Minneapolis. With that program finished, beginning lawyers sometimes serve a sort of "apprenticeship" by applying to be a judicial law clerk.

While a clerk, beginning lawyers are assigned to draft documents for the judge, keep track of records, and generally perform whatever tasks the judge requests.

Heinrichs remembers being encouraged to apply for a "one-judge county," having been told he would get the largest variety of assignments in a small setting and would work most closely with the judge. "All judges were once lawyers," Heinrichs mentions. "And they were good ones—that's why they were selected as judges."

Based on that advice, Heinrichs applied and was accepted for a judicial clerkship in southern Minnesota, where he served as a judicial law

"It was the best experience I could have hoped for."
— Joe Heinrichs

clerk from May of 2020 to August of 2021.

"It was the best experience I could have hoped for," he says. "I got experience writing numerous proposed orders. The judge treated it as a genuine learning experience for me. If I had an opinion, she would listen to me, even when it disagreed with hers."

While serving as a clerk, Heinrichs says he began keeping two lists. "One of what to do as a lawyer, and one of what not to do." Heinrichs mentions sitting in on court sessions and observing how various lawyers handled their cases. "Afterwards, the judge would ask me what I thought," he says. "We would discuss other ways things might have been handled, or maybe even where things went wrong."

"The judge would say, 'Well, add it to your list.'"

The smaller size of the court also allowed him to become better acquainted with others who came and went there frequently. He mentions support from the court reporter who helped him gain a stronger understanding of other tasks needed to keep everything operating smoothly.

"Getting to know the individuals who manage the day-to-day organization of the court helped me form connections; it let me build a better understanding of the big picture."

Being present for jury selection was another learning experience. "You get to know who your neighbors are," he said of the many, often searching questions that would be asked.

"All in all, being a clerk is a rich experience that serves as a really important foundation for everything that comes after," Heinrichs says. "I feel really fortunate to have been a clerk."

After working in the position for a year and three months, Heinrichs began looking around for possible positions as a lawyer in the area.

Heinrichs found himself at an interview with long-time PHB firm leader Bill Hoversten.

Heinrichs says he quickly realized PHB is a setting where he could



Joe Heinrich is newest shareholder with the legal firm of Patton, Hoversten and Berg.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

grow personally and professionally. With offices in Faribault, Owatonna, Waseca and Janesville, the firm has 10 lawyers on staff.

Heinrichs admits that, even though he has been with the firm since 2022, "I sometimes still feel like I'm proving myself; these guys are respected and admired, and here I am working with them."

By making his recent decision to become a shareholder in the Professional Association that is PHB, Heinrichs says he is benefiting from the organization's reputation, and making a serious commitment to keep adding to it.

But that all falls in line with the dream of becoming a lawyer Heinrichs has nurtured since he was in eighth grade, and which was so deeply enriched by his experience as a court clerk.

"You have to be disciplined," he observes. "You have to work hard. You want to get all the information you need so you don't make mistakes."

"Or, if you make a mistake, you have to learn from it so you don't make it again."

Though his younger self once thought it would be "cool" to wear a suit and tie all the time, he has discovered that's one facet of the job

that can "wear off."

While he recognizes it as a vital element of the job, he says how he dresses is not the most important facet of "presentation."

"When I meet new clients, I want them to know I'm personable," he observes. "It's important to remember they're probably coming to a lawyer because they're going through a tough time."

"I want them to know I have the kind of personality and character they want speaking for them in a courtroom."

Now one of six shareholders in Patton, Hoversten and Berg, Heinrichs says he appreciates the trust placed in him by the more longstanding shareholders who invited him to join them. Thanks to their leadership and support, he says he has already helped numerous clients achieve their desired outcomes—his favorite aspect of being a lawyer.

"It feels good to help people," Heinrichs observes. "Honestly, when you're doing something you like, it barely feels like work. The look of gratitude on people's faces and the conversations that follow, that good feeling makes all the stressors that come with this job worthwhile."



Adventures to Explore in 2024

August 13-18

2024 Grandstand Entertainment

Tuesday-Aug. 13	5:00 PM
FFA Alumni Antique Tractor Pull	
Wednesday-Aug. 14	7:00 PM
Hailey Whitters with special guest Adam Calvert	
Thursday-Aug. 15	7:30 PM
Snake Oil Concert	
Friday-Aug. 16	7:00 PM
Chris Janson with special guest Mason Dixon Line	
Saturday-Aug. 17	7:30 PM
Bulls N Barrels with local Mutton Bustin	
Sunday-Aug. 18	2:00 PM
IMP Demolition Derby	

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Joe Heinrichs

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Demonstration of
Antique Hand Tools at
Waseca Library 6 p.m.
August 19

Jeff Dickie, an area resident and collector of antique hand tools, will be demonstrating some articles from his collection at the Waseca Public Library during a free, public event beginning at 6 p.m. on Monday, August 19. Among his demonstrations will be making a dovetail joint.

Generation Gap will be
at the Janesville Veterans
Memorial Park
on Thursday August 22
from 5:30-8 p.m.

The band Generation Gap will be performing at the Janesville Veterans Memorial Park on Thursday August 22 from 5:30-8pm. Classics from both young and old will be played by this duo who is also young and old.

Ben Scruggs will be at
Club 57 in Waseca on
Thursday August 22
from 6-9 p.m.

Ben Scruggs will be performing at Club 57 in Waseca on Thursday August 22 from 6-9 p.m. He is a singer/songwriter of folk, blues and Americana music. He is a resident of Mankato.

Waldorf Antique Car
and Truck Show will
be held Friday, August
23, 2024, followed by
the Waldorf Fire and
Rescue’s Annual Sweet
Corn, Burger Feed
and Dance

The Waldorf Antique Car and Truck Show will be on Friday August 23 from 4-7:30 p.m. Pre-Register your vehicle to be a part of the drawing to win a nice prize. The annual Corn and Burger feed will be from 5:30-8 p.m. The dance will be from 8:30 p.m. to midnight.

Doggy Play Date and
Picnic, Waseca Dog
Park, Saturday August
24 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

A doggy play date and picnic will be held at the Waseca Dog Park on Saturday August 24 from 10am-2pm. This will include a tail wagging talent show. A dog costume contest, a dog race and a visit from Sparky the Waseca Firemen Dog. Also visiting will be four-time Iditarod dog sled musher Linda Jay. Picnic food provided by Barney’s Drive-In.

Vatos Locos will be at
the Indian Island Winery
on Saturday August
24 from 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Vatos Locos will be performing in Janesville at the Indian Island Winery on Saturday August 24 from 5:30-8:30pm. As a trio they focus on playing rock, classic rock and country.

Waseca Area Foundation
Anniversary 7 to 9
p.m. September 19 at
Northeast Park Pavilion

The Waseca Area Foundation will be celebrating its thirty-fifth anniversary from 7 to 9 p.m. the evening of Thursday, September 19 at Waseca’s Northeast Park. Food trucks and live music will be featured. More information is available from the Waseca Area Foundation at 507-835-5990..

Got news?
507-837-6767

‘Tell Me Something Good’
Paul Stewart Show performs at Club 57

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

What had originally started out as a band named ‘Sumthun Good,’--a play on words from a song called “Tell Me Something Good,” written by Stevie Wonder and performed by Rufus in the 70s--eventually evolved into The Paul Stewart Show.

On August 1 at Club 57 in Waseca, Paul Stewart of The Paul Stewart Show was setting up the stage and microphones. There was supposed to be a banner flying behind Stewart, but he explained, “It’s too windy to hang it.” He looked around a little at the pavilion on the Club 57 patio and added, “Not really sure where I could hang it if it wasn’t windy, but that’s okay.”

Stewart sat down and ordered a drink, a Michelob Golden Draft Light. He said he chooses the brand because its bottle fits in the cup holder on his microphone. His co-star Jim Bob approached and set his drink down, a draft Hazy IPA. That drink was in a full-on mug: Bob said, “I should’ve thought that through a little better, I don’t know where I’m going to put it while we play.” There was a strong wind, but not strong enough to blow beers over.

Stewart, can be termed a master of the guitar--both unplugged and electric. He plays mostly electric for his shows. He also does magic; he even owned a magic and costume shop once in St. James. A full-time resident of Waseca for the past



Members of the Paul Stewart Show during their outdoor performance at Club 57.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

four years, Stewart plays all over Minnesota, up to four shows a week when he’s on the road.

Stewart’s fellow band member Bob also plays guitar and has for the last 60 years. These two met at a Paul Stewart Show in a Shakopee Legion Hall in 2021 and have been together ever since. Both

Stewart and Bob were sporting healthy, well-groomed salt and pepper beards. As they talked, a third member of the band, named Spoony, ap-

Show continued on 8



Cal Spooner and Jim Steinworth of the River Rats Dueling Pianos.
Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

River Rats duel at
Indian Island Winery

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

It was a perfect summer evening at the Indian Island Winery on Saturday, August 3--slightly warm at 85 degrees, but the sun was shining, the crowd was getting their dinners and drinks and a light breeze cooled things down. Around the patio was a spectacular view of the surrounding fields, green as far as the eye could see.

Cal Spooner of River Rats Dueling Pianos, a 46-year professional, was sitting in front of what looked like a grand piano on the Indian Island Winery patio twenty minutes before the show. Jim Steinworth, Spooner’s co-star, was busy setting up his half. Spooner has been playing piano professionally for the past 46 years. When asked about the grand piano he was sitting in front of he said, “Look under the bottom of it, it just folds up.” A keyboard slides right into the front giving it the look of a grand piano. On the side, the word “Steinworth” was painted in yellow--a slight alteration from the well-

Dueling continued on 12

Stacking animals in an old freezer

Our first house was located on Northeast Sixteenth Avenue. I stood in a line at Associated Lumber Mart and qualified for a loan at 6.5 percent interest, which was a very low interest rate at the time. The crew from the lumber mart would build us a new split foyer house. Lisa picked out fixtures, trim, flooring and carpet. I would sod the yard and cement a driveway with the help of good friends. It wasn’t long before Katie and Marc also took up residence in our new house.

We were on a very tight budget and Lisa figured out we could save 10-20 cents an item if we loaded the car with groceries once a month at Cub Foods in Mankato. After shopping we would stop at Mexican Village for a Sunday lunch because kids ate free. For their beverages, Marc always ordered a purple cow and Katie a pink pony.

We needed a slush fund for extra outings with the kids, a movie, trip to a waterpark or maybe an overnighter in the Twin Cities. The motel had to have a pool and a free breakfast.

The price of animal fur was at an all-time high. When I was teaching sixth grade, I was always fascinated by the chapter in our Minnesota history book that covered fur trading times. I decided to become a trapper and put money into the family slush fund. I trapped muskrats, mink, raccoons and tried to trap fox--but they were just too smart for me. If you skinned, stretched and tanned your animal hide, it was worth an extra buck or two. I had



Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika



neither the time nor space to hang critter hides.

Lisa gave me permission to stack my animals in an old freezer in the garage only because they were worth needed money. Once every two weeks, a fur buyer from Wells set up shop in the Sportsman’s parking lot, inspected your furs and wrote out a check. Trapping is only legal in the fall when the animals’ fur thickens and becomes prime.

A couple of quick trapping notes: A red fox was worth top dollar. I never trapped one, but I cashed in on two. One of them was acquired on the way to Lisa’s folks in Redwood Falls; we spotted a recent roadkill fox on the shoulder of the road. Lisa gave me permission to stop, bag it and throw it in the truck. The second came into my possession when game warden Lloyd Billiar called me and asked me to retrieve a red fox caught in a trap south of town. Every trapper must have their name on a trap and check them regularly; the fox had been in the trap for a couple of days. Lloyd instructed me to retrieve the fox and pull the trap for

him. The warden would deal with the negligent trapper. All of my animals were piled neatly in the bottom of an old freezer in the garage. Once, Lisa asked one of her friends to go out to the top shelf of the freezer to get a frozen apple pie. The friend came running back into the house screaming, “You have dead animals in your freezer! Oh my.”

My days of trapping became history when I found an easier way to earn extra money: coaching three sports. I gave my traps and trapping supplies to a couple of outdoor students in my sixth-grade class.

I’ll always be thankful I never had to deal with a trapped skunk.

The water in flooded Waterville had receded. We pulled into our uphill driveway and as we drove by the utility shed I noticed the pavers to the main door entry were all uprooted. There was a hole next to the door and a cute little head was peeking at us. As I mentioned in a previous article, we had a family of darling woodchucks under the shed. I admit I was really angry at the time, but I’ve mellowed since. I de-

cided to let the pellet gun gather more dust in the corner of the cabin. I went down to the shed and set a live trap baited with lettuce and blueberries.

The next morning as I poured a cup of coffee, I looked out the window: I had a critter in the trap. I got dressed and headed down to the shed. Surprise, no woodchuck. Instead I had caught a little raccoon. I loaded the cute little guy up and headed to the country. I release it in an area with a pond and trees. It brought me great joy to see the little guy scamper away and celebrate freedom.

The next morning I poured a cup of coffee and looked out the window, another critter in the trap. Surprise, no woodchuck, a great big opossum. I think opossums are a very stupid critter. Even though it was captured, it still ate all the bait.

Same program; I released it in the same spot I’d given Little Rocky freedom. The opossum ran out of the cage, jumped into the pond and swam away much like a beaver. I did not know that opossums are excellent swimmers.

I set the trap again for several days but there were no takers. The family of woodchucks had moved on. As I sat on the deck that evening swatting mosquitoes and watching fireflies I couldn’t help but wonder. Maybe the raccoon and opossum had crossed paths on a trail next to the pond leaping high into the air, giving each other a high five.

WASECA
SCHOOL BOARD

Busy
summer
at Waseca
Schools

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

“Summertime is one of the busiest times in our district,” Superintendent Eric Hudspith said to members of the Waseca School Board during their August workshop meeting. Spotlight presentations for the evening were building and grounds director Jeff Jensen and seasonal groundskeeper Harold Christenson.

Christenson, whose work hours start in April, said his primary job is using the 10.5 foot wide mower on all the large areas such as the baseball fields, the football field and playgrounds. “If there’s any extra time, we trim the trees. There wasn’t this year, with the rain.” Christenson’s seasonal employment typically ends around the second week in October, after the leaves are on the ground.

“These guys are also out there mulching the flowerbeds, keeping an eye on things,” Jensen said. “Really keeping a critical eye on the grounds, and also an extra set of eyes and ears on the ground.” Jensen said he gets messages throughout the week concerning grounds issues needing to be addressed. “It’s helpful to have people out there on the grounds on a daily basis.”

In addition to hearing the presentations, board members reviewed the three-year governance work plan which covers district policy, operations oversight and long-range planning, board operations and development, superintendent relations and development, and public engagement. After discussion, Hudspith summarized the topic suggestions from the board as phase training and/or continuing board education, holding the workshop session at another location within the district, the 100 year celebration of the Central building, and some formal direction for facilities.

The final item on the agenda was a summary of a facilities analysis for fall 2024. Hudspith presented a two-slide PowerPoint to the board. “How do our buildings create learning for all? How do our buildings create effective and efficient use of resources?” Hudspith asked. “These are the questions that will guide our work.” Hudspith went into more detail about each of the six questions on the first slide, then jumped to the second one. “Once we can answer those six questions, our facilities plans should be pretty well developed,” he said, referring to the 5-year facility plan and 15-year facility vision outlined on his second slide.

There was some discussion from board members concerning the city’s status with Vision 2030. The facilities committee will continue working on the facilities plan during their August meeting.

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OBITUARIES

Nina Marie Youngberg

NINA MARIE (NELEMANS) YOUNGBERG, age 103 of Waseca, died, Thursday, August 1, 2024, at Whispering Creek Nursing Home in Janesville.

She was born on July 27, 1921, in Sully, Iowa. She was the daughter of Benjamin and Cornilia (Van Der Meer) Nelemans. She attended Northside School through the 8th grade, when she was 15, she moved with her family to Otisco, Minnesota. On February 21, 1942, she married Glenn Youngberg. Glenn and Nina were married for 61 years before his passing. She loved writing letters to people, gardening, canning fruits and vegetables, embroidering, and playing Bingo at the care center. Throughout her life, Nina worked at Birds Eye Canning Factory, Brown Printing, EF Johnson's, Herter's, and Hammer's Clothing Store. She retired from Hammer's after 13 years; Hammer's was her favorite place where she worked. She had the best boss there, and loved being able to help people find a great outfit. Nina's greatest accomplishments were having her four children; she would spend several years of her life becoming a caretaker to her infant son, Chuck, who suffered from spina bifida, and making sure that he was taken care of. Nina loved spending time with her family, she always loved to visit. She always remembered birthdays and anniversaries by sending a card or a letter. She was very proud of her Dutch heritage, as you would see all her Dutch figurines on her shelves at home and who could forget those wooden clogs. She was very proud of her house-keeping and was quite the baker. Her favorite food was a chocolate brownie; at Christmas time, you could look forward to her famous fudge-Yummy! Nina had always wanted to be a teacher. Though she may not have been able to become one, one of her greatest gifts was that you were always learning something new from her wise, wisdom. One of her greatest memories of her 103 years was being able to watch TV, something she never thought would happen. She loved her soap operas and always thought you knew the character that she was talking about. The biggest



Nina Youngberg

change that she saw was the rising cost of things, and how much rain we had gotten nowadays. She loved to keep calendars and would write down the temperature for each day so she could look back for years and tell you whether it was sunny and hot, or cold outside; she also kept notes about events that would happen on each day. Her love and silly wit will be dearly missed by all who knew her. One thing she always thought to be funny, in making the plans for her funeral, was that when you walked past her casket, she would wink at you, to make you laugh.

She is survived by her children, Carol Meyer, Rita Johnson, Craig (Arllys) Youngberg, all of Waseca; grandchildren, Stacie (Nate) Brinkman, Shannon (Scott) Hedberg, Shelby Meyer (fiancé Nate Hunt), Lance (Karyn) Johnson, Kim Johnson, Chad (Dani) Youngberg, Katie Youngberg; great-grandchildren, Kelsea, Tanner, and Alexis Brinkman, Jordyn, Rylee, and Ethan Hedberg, Ryan, Camie, and Madisyn McClune, Cade Meyer, Jaxtyn Fredricks, and Brayden Youngberg. She is preceded in death by her parents, her husband; son, Charles Youngberg; grandson Shawn Meyer; siblings, Henry "Hank" Nelemans, Lyle (Reka) Nelemans, Ann (Victor) Swenson.

Funeral services were held, Tuesday, August 6, 2024, at 11:00 AM, at Faith United Methodist Church in Waseca with Pastor Kathy King officiating. Visitation was held for one hour prior to the service at the church. Interment followed at the Woodville Cemetery in Waseca. dsfuneral.com

Daniel Ryan

DANIEL "DANNY" ARTHUR RYAN, age 81, passed away on Wednesday, July 31, 2024, peacefully at the New Richland Care Center in New Richland, Minnesota, following a series of health issues.

Born on January 15, 1943, in Janesville, Minnesota to Daniel Michael and Viola Mary (Eustice) Ryan. He attended school in Janesville and Waseca. He enlisted in the Navy just out of school and shyly admitted he was honorably discharged; due to the fact he was not ready for military life. Danny's brother, Dickie Ryan was born in 1944, who would be his best friend until the time of Dickie's death. His sister, Colleen came along in 1955, Colleen and the boys were extremely close their whole lives. Sadly, their mother passed away at the age of 31, in May of 1957.

Danny was united in marriage, 63 years ago, on July 29, 1961, to Darlene Ann Meger of Le Center, Minnesota. They lived much of their married life in Waseca while raising four children: Kim, Susie, Vicky, and their son, Troy, whom they were blessed with for just thirteen short years, as he tragically died on September 19, 1981.

His work history created lifelong friendships. He worked for Floyd

Lamont Sr. and Floyd "Punk" Lamont Jr. right out of school. He then began working at Bock's Service, pumping gas and mechanic work. Bill Bock along with Danny's uncle, Don Eustice, became huge mentors throughout his life. He was known to enjoy working on Lynn Below's "57 Chevy" after hours at the station. His daughters knew better than to ever drive a Ford. He then went on to work at Morton Buildings in Janesville, picking up and continuing friendships with Cliff Strand and Lynn Below. He enjoyed working with and hauling junk cars for Glen McClellan and later Jim Kukuzka. He worked at the Chevy Garage which at the time, was Johnson Chevrolet. He then moved into working a long time at J & J Auto Crushing for Jack Johnson in Eagle Lake. He later bought a flatbed truck from Jack and started hauling for himself. Years later he began a long and enjoyable career working for Jack and Betty Fitzsimmons and later John and Erin Fitzsimmons. He developed friendships working over the road, like his friends Joe (Lorelle) Sexton. He eventually bought his own truck and was a self-employed owner operator and was labeled "Wild Dan"! Danny and Darlene enjoyed many years traveling over the road together.

Danny was happiest while working in his shop and even happier if his brother Dickie was right alongside him. If you needed a part for your car, he could find it. He was also known as a sharp and serious Pfeffer card player. He spent years stock car racing, seldomly easing off the gas pedal. In retirement he enjoyed various custom hauling jobs. He particularly took great pride in caring for his wife, Darlene, as her mobility became more difficult. He will be sadly missed by everyone who knew him.

Danny is survived by his wife, Darlene of New Richland; daughters: Kim Williams of Buffalo Center, Iowa, Susie (Greg) Harguth and Vicky (Mark) Hager all of Waseca; nine grandchildren: Brandon (Audra) Ryan, Adam (Anne) Harguth, Amber Harrison, Brittany Robertson, Eric Robertson, Jennifer (Mike) Bartelt, Kayla Williams, Haley Williams, Megan (Dillon) Frechette; step grandson, Joe Hager; 19 great grandchildren; sister, Colleen Gerdt of Waseca; step sister, Marilyn (Brad) Hardt of Mankato; step brothers: Ivan (Janice) Maas of Janesville and Orlen Maas of Forest City, Iowa; many nieces, nephews, other family and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents; beloved son, Troy, brother: Richard (Marylou) Ryan; brother-



Daniel Ryan

in-law, Doug Gerdt; sisters-in-law, Florence (Bob) Campbell and Shirley (Ben) Barta.

Funeral services were 11:00 AM on Tuesday, August 6, 2024, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca with Fr. Glenn Frerichs as Celebrant. Interment was in Calvary Cemetery in Waseca. Visitation was held for one hour prior to the service at the church on Tuesday.

The family wishes to give a special thanks to the caring staff at New Richland Care Center and the loving care Danny received from St. Croix Hospice.

'A true labor of love'

Young and old welcome at local 'Homestead'

Waseca store reflects years gone by

By RACHEL LOVERINK
Contributing writer

There's a quaint, red house in the 900 block of Waseca's North State Street. At first glance, it may seem like just any ordinary abode; however, it's actually a renovated two-story that has turned boutique.

In the last 10 years, owner Nancy Walters and her family have gone to great lengths to bring this property back to life. Now every Thursday through Saturday, Walters unlocks the front porch door and welcomes young and old into this "Homestead" of sorts.

"I wanted the name to reflect what an old Homestead would look like years back," Walters said. "I have memories of both my grandparents' homes and the feeling I got when I was in their homes."

This Mapleton resident lives in a century-old farmhouse herself, so she wanted to recreate the calming, yesteryear atmosphere for any customers who step inside. It wasn't an easy task, but she and her family defied the odds.

"When we purchased the property, some people thought we were crazy to buy something so run down and in disarray," she said. "The store renovations have taken several years to accomplish. We put life back into the property and added a wonderful vision for everyone to see when they drive by."

That hard teamwork and dedication, well, Walters said that took a lot of patience. Once one project reached completion, the next project went underway. And so on, and so forth.

"The biggest project was the initial preparations for opening it with fresh paint and general repairs," she said. "It has been a true labor of love for myself and my family. My husband and son are very handy, so that has saved a substantial amount of money by being able to do it ourselves."

Now that every project is checked off her list, she gets to fill the main level rooms with "different, unique and affordable" décor. Whether it be a Mason Cash mixing bowl or a soft blanket, she wants each customer to walk away with a little skip in their step.

"I try very hard to be different from other shops," she said. "Not only for shops in Waseca, but the surrounding areas as well. Finding the primitive or colonial style is getting to be a challenge. I travel to other states to find home goods that fit my store."

Practical items like a handmade candle, picture frame or colorful florals -- these are all items that she puts her heart and soul into finding. For Walters, there's no better feeling than seeing a customer "ooh and aah" over that perfect addition to their home.

"It's a feeling of accomplishment and success I can't even put into words," she said. "There is a lot of thought in selecting home goods for Homestead. If I don't go the extra mile for my customers, I would have no customers."

This small-town business' homey aesthetic makes for many happy customers, even if they leave empty handed. From the front porch all the way back to the kitchen, those that step across the hardwood floors are often mesmerized.

"I wanted Homestead to feel as if you are truly



Homestead owner Nancy Walters, below the Homestead store located in the 900 block of Waseca's North State Street.



walking into someone's home," she said. "I am fortunate to have that setting to do it in. Staging the rooms came pretty easy because I knew I wanted them to reflect how they were once used."

Upon entrance into the porch, Walters also has

hopes that new and old customers alike can take a short breather. With a decorative swing dangling from the ceiling and pendants draped overhead,

Homestead continued on 19

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From left, Lodge brothers Kevin Clemons, Rick Kritzer, Scott Singlestad and Mikhail Rostislavovich.

Sixth annual Waseca soap box races set for Saturday

Rick Kritzer, Master of Tuscan Lodge No. 77 of the Waseca Freemasons, announced that his lodge of brothers will be hosting its sixth annual Soapbox Race and Carnival on Saturday, August 10 from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. “We are excited to hold the races for the first time since we moved the Lodge to just west of the Tink Larson Baseball Fields on Fourth Street Northeast.” Kevin Clemons, one of the co-organizers of the event, said “We are looking for young people 6 years of age and older to participate in the races. It’s a great time for people of all ages. We are hoping to make this our biggest race ever. Even if you’re too old to race, but young at heart, come by and cheer on the drivers.” The proceeds raised at this year’s

race will go toward fire suppression kits for our Waseca County first responders. One of our core responsibilities as Masons is to perform public services. “This project will go a long way to help protect the public’s safety, while at the same time providing a day of fun for the whole family,” said Adam Strand of Tuscan Lodge No. 77. Over the last few months, the brothers have been building cars, looking for car sponsorships, and selling hay bales for sponsorships. Those hay bales protect the drivers from going too far off course. Brother Mike Lee said, “It takes our entire lodge and the help of the Eastern Stars and volunteers to make our race a success.” The homeowners on or near



Northeast Fourth Street were contacted to let them know what we were doing, the city was notified to barricade the street, and food vendors were contacted for beverages and sustenance—after all, these races can take a lot out of the drivers, crews, and observers. Power sources, trophies, pit crews, signage, photog-

raphers, judges, and a whole lot of other details need to be taken care of to make this a fun-packed afternoon for our community. Master of the Lodge Kritzer said, “I truly hope the whole community will come over to help raise the dollars needed to purchase these life- and property-saving kits for our first responders.”

Isder leads by example in many ways and places

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Joe Isder, Manager of Waseca’s Elegant Creations, has been in his position for four years and received a “Boss of the Year” award at the Starfire Event Center this year from the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce. He said that, when Chamber leader Ann Fitch told him about the honor in advance, he believed she meant it as a joke—especially given her reputation as a bit of a prankster. When the news turned out to be genuine, he said he was shocked and surprised. The title is perhaps not a surprise to those who have visited Isder’s business, located along Waseca’s South State Street. Isder sends an impression of being straightforward and down-to-earth. He even likes to have his dog, Goldie, on hand at Elegant Creations as an unofficial greeter. As he tells the story, about 21 years ago Isder was “the new guy” who became “the boss” by accumulating experience in the services Elegant Creations offers, including installations, production, sales, and marketing of stone products for the kitchen and home. As he puts it, he

has done “Everything from Internet Technology to safety management.” “I’ve appreciated the fact I’ve been able to do all these roles,” Isder said. “It’s resulted in the earned respect of the other staff.” He further explained that, because he’s had all these experiences, if he needs to help his employees on a project or take something on himself, he can. Elegant Creations was started by Isder’s uncle. Isder has officially taken over as the manager in the past four years. Isder expresses gratitude to his wife, Bonnie, and his son, Easton, for their patience and understanding even when a work call interrupts their valuable family time together. When asked what his employees might say about his leadership, Isder said he hoped they would feel appreciated. “I try to put them in a position for growth and success,” Isder added. “I hope they would say I’m respectful and lead by example.” He mentioned that he also strives to treat each customer who comes in with value, which involves hon-

esty as the best policy. “What we’re doing, it’s about transparency and setting appropriate expectations that match with real-life scenarios,” Isder said. “With countertops, there are obviously a lot of different businesses for people to choose among, so we try to be up front with full disclosure.” Sometimes, Isder mentioned, this means telling people things they don’t necessarily want to hear. “Is it easy? No,” Isder added. “But the goal is to have the customers come back and I want them to come back.” Isder said he counts a day as “good” when things “go according to plan, as they should,” clarifying that he likes to see each step of a project completed correctly and according to schedule. Calling himself “competitive by nature,” Isder said he likes to participate in the community by coaching eighth-grade basketball in his free time. Last year he coached seventh-graders. When he’s put pictures of the same players side by side, he can see how they’ve changed in just one short year. He described his coaching style



Joe Isder

as, “stern but respectful and also playful at times.” “Life in general is too serious as it is, so you have to make light of and look back and laugh at the small things you were upset at yesterday.” While he admits some days can be challenging, says he enjoys being a coach and wouldn’t want it any other way. “I like to see the growth over

time,” he said of his team members, adding that “a number of years ago,” he coached a boys’ team from third to sixth grades and now they are juniors in high school.

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Poems about small town life

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Palmer Bus Service earns ‘Top Transportation Team’ honorable mention

Palmer Bus Service proudly announces it has been awarded the “Top Transportation Team Honorable Mention” by Transfinder, a leading provider of routing software solutions for school districts and transportation contractors. This award, presented at the STN Expo Conference in Reno, Nevada, marks a significant achievement as Palmer Bus Service becomes the first contractor in North America to receive this award.

Transfinder’s competition evaluates both school-district-run and contractor-run bus services across North America. The “Top Transportation Team Honorable Mention” acknowledges exceptional performance in delivering safe and efficient transportation. The award highlights Palmer Bus Service’s commitment to leveraging innovative technology to enhance service delivery.

Trace Johnson, Director of School Bus Technologies at Palmer Bus Service, accepted the award on behalf of the company. Johnson participated in a panel discussion with Antonio Civitella, CEO of Transfinder, and other award winners, where they shared insights on the journey to winning the award and its significance.

“The software solutions that Transfinder has offered us have

significantly improved our ability to provide safe and efficient bus routes, student and bus tracking, and streamlined vehicle maintenance,” said Trace Johnson. “We are honored to receive this recognition and grateful for Transfinder’s support.”

Shane Johnson, COO of Palmer Bus Service, expressed gratitude: “Palmer Bus Service thanks Transfinder for recognizing the hard work and dedication our transportation team does daily to safely transport our students. We are proud of the partnership and relationship with the Transfinder team. Thank you for all you do to help us be successful.”

Palmer Bus Service is excited to continue its partnership with Transfinder, with plans to further integrate and expand the technology and software solutions across its operations. The company remains dedicated to enhancing its services and ensuring the highest standards of safety and efficiency for the communities they serve and students they transport.

Palmer Bus Service is a regional contract student transportation provider servicing 28 school districts across Minnesota and is celebrating 50 years in business. To learn more about Palmer Bus Service, visit www.palmerbusservice.com.

■ Show

from Page 5

peared moments before the show was to begin. The only one not working on a beard, Spoony took out two belts lined with harmonicas, fastened them around his waist, adjusted his microphone and was ready to play.

The Paul Stewart Show plays 50s, 60s, country, classic rock and blues. Not having a drummer at the moment, they rely on a computer for backtracks of piano, fiddle and, of course, drums. Their online schedule lists more than 45

concerts. Last week the Scott County Fair, next week Indian Island Winery of Janesville, and then the Prairie Saloon in Kasota.

Of equipment on stage were two electric guitars, three speakers, one monitor and two amps. Band members do their own lighting. Setup for them takes an hour and a half, it’s usually a 3-4 hour show, tear down takes an hour. From start to finish they can be in and out of a venue in 5.5 hours.

Sadly, there’s no Steele County Fair for The Paul Stewart Show this year. But they have a full lineup on Facebook which can be found by typing in “The Paul Stewart Show.” To get in contact or to book a show call 507-351-5855; ask for Paul.

Waseca County History Center

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This historical series explores the questionable medical practices in Minnesota over 100 years ago, highlighting unregulated treatments and the notorious Snake Oil Shows that captivated the public.

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AUTUMN SERIES

EXHIBIT: SNAKE OIL: THE DARK SIDE OF EARLY MINNESOTA MEDICINE
Free: Opens Sept 17

EVENT: MR. AND MRS. FORTHWRIGHT QUACKS AND CURE ALLS TRIVIA NIGHT
\$7: September 19 6:30

EVENT: STEP RIGHT UP: VIOLET MCNEAL'S MEDICINE SHOW
\$20 October 19 6:30

wasecacountyhistorycenter.org

WCHS announces new exhibit

Exhibit Opens September 17th - The Waseca County Historical Society is thrilled to announce the opening of its newest exhibit, "Snake Oil: The Dark Side of Early Minnesota Medicine," on September 17th at the Minnesota History Center. This captivating exhibit delves into the questionable medical practices that were rampant in Minnesota around 100 years ago, providing a fascinating look at the era's unregulated treat-

ments and the notorious snake oil shows that captivated the public.

Autumn Series Events:

September 19th: Dr. and Mrs. Forthwright's Quacks and Cure Alls Trivia Night (6:30 PM - 8:00 PM) Test your knowledge of early 20th-century medicine with a fun and interactive trivia night. Compete with friends and family for prizes while learning fascinating facts about medical history. Our host and hostess, Dr.

And Mrs. Forthwright, will lead the trivia action in full period costume and with lots of sass.

October 19th: Step Right Up: Violet McNeal's Medicine Show World - A Sensational Snake Oil Show Recreation (6:30 PM - 8:00 PM)

Step back in time and witness a live performance of a snake oil show, complete with vaudeville acts (see the Human Snake!), a charismatic

and completely historically verifiable peddler, theatrical pitches, a lot of laughs, and the "miracle cures" that were sold to the unsuspecting public.

Tickets for both events will soon be available on our new website: wasecacountyhistorycenter.org.

Location: Museum Building 315 Second Ave. NE Waseca, MN

WAF celebrating 35th anniversary in September

Waseca Area Foundation celebrates it's 35th anniversary this year! To celebrate there will be a few different events throughout the year. The public is invited to join in on the celebrating on Thursday, Sept 19th at the NE Park Pavilion. There will be food trucks, live music and cupcakes! Please come and help us celebrate this milestone!

In 35 years, the growth has impacted Waseca County by granting 5.8 million dollars to a wide variety of nonprofits that serve Waseca County. In the beginning, 1989, only one grant of \$400 was given and today there are over \$300,000 in grants and scholarships distributed annually across Waseca County. The growth comes from generous, phil-

anthropic minded people who want to see their community flourish.

Memorials are the most common type of donation that the Waseca Area Foundation (WAF) receives. These donations can be given online at wasecaareafoundation.org or can be sent to 501 E Elm Ave, Waseca. There are over 65 different funds all started by an individual, family

and/or organizations that want to leave a lasting impact. To learn more about the fund types and how to create a channel for giving that has tax advantages, please visit the WAF office located in the Central Building.

■ Laundromat

from Page 3

customers arrive with the needed combination of coins to pay the \$2.75 per washer load and \$1.50 per

dryer load; they can, of course, also get change at the Gambles store. He says he intends to install a dispenser offering single-use packets of detergents and other laundry products sometime in the relatively near future.

Meyer, a 1987 graduate of NRHEG, says he hopes the new laundromat will increase traffic in

the hardware store, and perhaps help increase people's appreciation of the value of having local retail stores like his. He stocks a wide range of tools, equipment and supplies for customers working on their plumbing, electrical, lawn and garden and painting projects. He also has a line of pet supplies. He expresses a willingness to expand his available pro-

ducts if folks let him know of their need.

He describes having taken over ownership of the store with the intent of supporting the community. "I can keep the doors open as long as people support me by shopping here," he observes.

Schuch joins Waseca Realty team

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Traci Schuch, a licensed real estate agent since 1996, has recently joined the staff of Waseca Realty. Since June of this year, she's been beating her feet to help make sure the housing market keeps moving in the Waseca area.

Waseca Realty, run by Chuck Huebl, is now her home office, but she's so new there her business cards aren't available yet. When Linda and Larry Johnson, Schuch's parents, were easing into retirement and shutting down Assist 2 Sell out of Janesville, Schuch was on the verge of

being without a real estate home until she found the opportunity to link up with Waseca Realty.

She recalls a moment or two of nostalgia as she visited the Waseca County Fair this year and remembered Assist 2 Sell had consistently had a booth there through 2021, before the Johnsons began easing into retirement. Schuch regards herself as a Waseca local, since she has always come to town frequently to shop, visit friends or show houses. Not only that, said Schuch, "I really prefer small towns and am excited to work at Waseca Realty."

Schuch, a lifelong resident of Ja-

nesville, is very familiar with the area. When referencing homes and addresses, she knows the market inside and out. It was a surprise to learn that with all the rain Waseca has had this year, not many basements have experienced significant damage. The rain hasn't dampened her sales, either. Said Schuch, "The summer market is the best time to sell, rain might be a factor, but it can be avoided, you just have to wait for a clear day."

In addition to real estate sales, Schuch also works part time at The Purple Goose Eatery and Saloon and at Arnold's Good Spirits, both in Ja-

nesville.

Speaking of the types of sales she has worked on, Schuch said it is mostly homes. "Businesses like 'The Backyard Bar and Grill' out of Pemberton or 'The Yellow Mushroom' of Waseca aren't for sale every day." Despite having lakes aplenty in the area, lakeside homes for sale are rather rare. She tells of once having been approached by a client who placed ten different listings, all in different places. "That doesn't happen often," she said. Part-time jobs are also a great way to meet everyday people in town, no matter which town you're in.

But Schuch said the number of houses in Waseca going up for sale is increasing almost by the day. Janesville has a population of 2,500, whereas Waseca has a population of 9,200. Schuch says people go where the houses are. When asked about any haunted houses, she said she had none, then added with a smile, "I couldn't tell you even if I did have a haunted house for sale."

Traci Schuch, the newest real estate agent at Waseca Realty: call her anytime at 507-835-8116. Or visit her new office located at 215 North State Street in Waseca.

Traci Schuch

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Tom Sexton

Tom Sexton Republican candidate for 19B

Two primary candidates for Republican district 19B representing the city of Waseca, portions of Woodville Township, Owatonna, and parts of Steele County were both asked to submit 500 word essays introducing themselves and making their case to potential voters at the August 13 primary.

Although Sexton earned an overwhelming 61 percent of the votes to secure the Republican Party endorsement in only two ballots on April 6, he will be competing in the primary on August 13.

Sexton is a graduate of the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management, with a B.S. in Business Administration. He earned his first Master of Science degree in Aeronautical Sciences from Embry-Riddle University, his second M.S. in National Securities Studies from the US Air Force Air Command and Staff College, and his third M.S. in Strategic Studies from the US Army War College as well as graduating from the hand-selected National Security Policy Program.

Colonel (Ret) Tom Sexton is a Command Pilot, former Squadron Commander, combat veteran, and former US Army War College instructor prior to retiring after more than 26 years of active service in September 2012. He briefly returned to Waseca before starting work in heavy construction, where he led multiple projects as a construction project manager. Next, Tom accepted an executive management position in Houston, Texas, where held the role of vice president of construction management for a noted engineering, procurement, and construction firm.

Retiring again in 2021, Tom returned to Waseca and became active in capacities as the co-chair of the City of Waseca planning commission, a member of the Waseca County planning commission, chairman of LakeFest starting in 2023, the Waseca American Legion Post 1642 and Honor Guard, Waseca VFW, the Knights of Columbus (Sacred Heart), and Waseca Lakes Association.

Tom and Jeanne will celebrate 38 years of marriage in September 2024. They have two US Air Force officer sons, both married, and two wonderful grandchildren.

While southern Minnesotans face many issues, Sexton's top three include public safety, rural infrastructure development, and deep concerns over the heavily bloated state budget and taxation.

In the area of public safety, Minnesota is short 1000 officers today with 2500 additional officers' retirement-eligible in the next two years. This is a brewing crisis as fewer officer candidates are entering the career field. For his efforts, the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA) awarded Sexton their coveted endorsement before the primary election.

In the area of rural infrastructure development, outstate Minnesota was deeply hurt by the legislature's failure to pass a 2024 bonding bill with no hope of reprieve without a special session. So that critical resource will not be available again until 2026 when more state-wide projects will be competing against the existing projects shelved in 2024.

In the area of the state budget, the one-sided legislature spent the \$17.8 billion surplus and raised taxes and fees by over \$10 billion. Thus, the budget increased 40 percent— from \$55 billion to more than \$70 billion, and is still counting upward. This trend must be reversed.

Asked why he is coming out of retirement, Sexton stated he once answered the call to serve our nation and now feels compelled to answer the call to serve our state and the great citizens of southern Minnesota.

Mick Ditlevson, Republican candidate for 19B

Two primary candidates for Republican district 19B representing the city of Waseca, portions of Woodville Township, Owatonna, and parts of Steele County were both asked to submit 500 word essays introducing themselves and making their case to potential voters at the August 13 primary.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information to voters about my candidacy, personal life, and the leadership I will bring to House Seat 19B. My campaign moniker is Pick-Mick; with my campaign focus on curtailing excessive government spending. My website can be followed at www.pickmickmn.com. My qualifications are highlighted below, and my policy platform follows.

I have extensive experience working on behalf of the Republican Party as a presidential appointee under the 2016 Trump Administration. My work in Washington D.C. began as an advance team member. This position allowed me to travel with the former presidential administration—both domestically and globally—and in doing so, I became versed in governmental policy-making decisions. This position led to work with the EPA; its focus on environmental regulation was a good fit with my agriculture background. I was ultimately selected to work with the United States Secretary of Energy. At the Department of Energy I became familiar with energy policies, learned the ropes of policy enactment and the management of budgets.

I come from a family of leaders. My brother Roosevelt Ditlevson is a United States Naval Academy graduate, commissioned as an EOD officer. His deployments included South Korea and East Asia. I followed suit and participated in ROTC during college, but military service was not my calling—leading instead to development of more divergent roles in public service. My mother Renee Worke was a lawyer, then appointed as a Judge in the Third Judicial District (Waseca), now appointed and serving on the Minnesota Court of Appeals. Her influence allows me to understand the three-branch workings and the interplay of legislation and rulemaking. My father is Mark Ditlevson, a fourth-generation farmer who has influenced my land stewardship principles, my conservation ethics, and love of agriculture. My local farm ownership assures voters of my on-going commitment to rural Minnesota. My personal passions include music—violin and piano—fishing, and hiking. I attend St. Joseph's Church, belong to the Owatonna Knights of Columbus and volunteer often—soon, as a new superintendent at the Steele County Fair.

My initiatives are budget minded and practical. My slogan is to "Reel in Reckless Spending." Clearly, we need to curb the deficit spending which contributes to the on-going financial distress. An important focus will include the repeal of harmful regulations that hamper the growth of rural Minnesota businesses. Supporting local industries is essential in recruiting and retaining people in our communities. Cleaning up died-on-the-vine legislation is also a realistic goal. An example is in a double down effort to repeal double taxation of social security benefits. Acting with like-kind, strong-minded legislators can bring this relief to our seniors. Lastly, Republican leadership has proposed an "A+" plan in promoting common sense energy initiatives which I support. My experience under the Trump Administration will benefit us in reaching those energy goals.

I urge you to vote for Mick Ditlevson as your chosen Republican candidate in the primary election on August 13.



Mick Ditlevson

Joe Staloch, DFL candidate for Minnesota House District 23A

My name is Joe Staloch and I'm running to represent district 23A in the Minnesota house this November. I want all Minnesotans to live better lives, to improve access and affordability of services, and to grow our rural communities.

I grew up on a family farm outside of Wells with my three siblings. I graduated from USC High School, earned a degree in geology from Winona State University, and spent ten years working for a company in St. Paul on public health and safety, natural resources, and national security projects.

Returning to greater Minnesota wasn't my plan. Health and family issues led me to move back to Wells and eventually Albert Lea where my long-term partner Danielle and I now live with our five cats, three of them rescues. Moving back was the best decision for my health and my relationships. There's less pressure to "keep up with the Joneses" and there's a sense of community throughout the region. Some of this is economically driven but I also credit schools, churches, and nonprofits in our communities for creating a sense of togetherness and belonging that is hard to replicate in the big city.

Moving back was the right decision for me, but I've been reminded that we face challenges that I believe are stifling opportunity and growth. When I moved back I had a hard time finding a healthcare provider and I recently lost my father when he was unable to reach a hospital in time. While we continue to invest in healthcare, small town clinics close, hospitals cut back or eliminate services, and ambulances struggle with staffing and funding. It's been less than a year since my father passed and I miss him dearly. My family is important to me and although I'm not a father myself, I am an uncle. My sisters and brother have young and growing families and have been lucky to have our mother, who has always been willing and able to provide childcare when they've needed it. I'd like to go to work on behalf of working families and ensure that healthcare and childcare are given the attention and support they deserve.

I have an opponent in this race, a long time incumbent who's a nice enough person but is not doing enough to push back against the worst impulses of the base of her party and, with some votes, actively works against improving everyday Minnesotans' lives. So I ask you to look past the flag waving this election season, and support the party that is protecting your freedom and working in the interest of you and your family. I am a Democrat and I believe in freedom from hate and from fear, the freedom to vote, and the freedom to control our own bodies. I believe that fair wages, affordable services, and human rights are Minnesota values worth voting for.

Election day is Nov 5th. I'd be honored if you would vote for me to represent you in St. Paul.



Staloch

Fernandez is DFL candidate for 19B

Edel Fernandez, whose full name is Edelgard Fernandez Mejia, is the DFL Minnesota House Candidate for House District 19B. The Republican Candidate will be determined in the Tuesday August 13th primary election. Edel is currently the Director of Admissions at South Central College serving locations in Faribault and North Mankato. Edel's experience includes working at Ridgewater College in Wilmar and at Riveland Campuses in Albert Lea, Austin, and Owatonna. Edel had been a player, coach and referee in soccer throughout his teaching career and most recently instructing and refereeing in the Owatonna Soccer Program. Edel was born and raised in Guanajuato, Mexico and is now an United States Citizen having lived and raised a family here in Minnesota for the past 23 years. Edel believes his career in education helps instill the skills and training needed for students to be successful throughout their lives.

Edel understands that legislators need to listen to their constituents and to each other and be willing to compromise in order to improve the lives of Minnesota Citizens. Edel accepts the fact that Minnesota's population is becoming more diverse and will continue to do so, that fact is recognized by the present DFL majority in our state government. Continuing improvements in Education, Healthcare, accessible and affordable housing are needed to enable families and individuals in this State to continue to thrive. Edel is asking for your vote on November 5th to elect him your next State Representative so Minnesota can keep moving forward and improve the lives of all our citizens.



Fernandez

DJ

Daniel J. Johnson

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The Pastor's Column

Nathanael means 'Gift of god'

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

My senior is back home. Nathanael spent the summer serving as a counselor at Camp Nathanael. Yes, I named my son after a camp, sort of. Nathanael means "Gift of God" and after two girls we were excited to be gifted a son. Camp Nathanael played an important role in my discipleship, and, after this past Sunday, we can say the same for our son.

3 years ago, we sent a young man with minimal life experience to spend the summer learning to lead children and to be disciplined in ministry. Naomi and I have invested in him, teaching him how to serve in the church and share Christ with others. Camp is different though, and children need faithful followers of Jesus to share the truth with them. My son learned to lead campers and peers through an intentional discipleship program, being mentored and mentoring younger counselors. Ephesians 4:15-16 says,

15 But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into Him who is the head—Christ. 16 From Him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part.

The church, under the leadership of Christ, it to grow together as followers of Him and to grow individually in their faith and knowledge of Christ. A lot of people ask me how they can grow in their faith and become mature believers in Christ. It is much simpler than you think but requires much more intentionality to grow into a mature Christian.

The process is to start with what you know, we know that the bible is the word of God, it is His truth spoken to us. We ask God to speak to us through His word, we read His word, pray about what we read and look for Him to apply it to our lives. We don't grow in faith alone; we need the church.

The church provides for us fellowship, accountability and a mirror to reflect back what God is doing in our lives. We see His work in others and "Speak the truth in love" to one another. We read God's word, pray, and fellowship with one another as the church; this is the simple plan to grow in faith and knowledge of God. In all this study we have been called to apply God's word to our hearts and lives to be transformed in the likeness of Christ and encourage one another in their growth.

Naomi and I were invited Sunday night to see the culmination of 3 years of discipleship in our son in receiving the highest honor at camp, the legacy award. We met his mentor, heard the words spoken over him, we met his mentee and the encouragement my son had for him. We saw his friends and the Godly love they had for one another. The excitement of the recognition of his growth was worth the loss of sleep.

God has big plans for him, just as He has big plans for you. God desires that you "grow in every way into Him who is the head—Christ." He desires your maturity and usefulness in His kingdom, because as a follower of Jesus you are a member of His church. Be strong and courageous in your faith, show yourself mature in Christ, supporting the work of His body in the world.

WAGE

from Page 3

visors, communication with co-workers, staying on task, keeping work areas clean, and so on. They clock out at the end of the shift. Their time is recorded and they receive a mock paycheck every other week. Roesler says students deposit their pay and can write checks to purchase items in the school store. They keep track of deposits and withdrawals in a check register.

A student enrolled in WAGE usually takes three trimesters to complete the entire program, Roesler says. "Each job station has approximately 300 jobs." Roesler says, "My primary job was to make sure that the PAES program is run according to the protocols. I worked with individualized education plan (IEP) teams to share information to help make individualized transition programs. I developed work projects outside of the PAES program that used the skills they learned in the program to form small businesses. We used our sewing skills to make and sell lanyards. I had a student who enjoyed photography, so he did all the layout designs for our marketing. We made ornaments and holiday items to sell. Sometimes I had students do independent projects that were in their interest area.

One student wanted to work at Itron so we helped him develop soldering skills. One student was interested in jewelry making, so we had her develop a jewelry making business where she sold her jewelry. We had a garden and we learned garden design, plant maintenance, dehydration methods and canning skills. Most of those projects were based on individual interest areas but expanded into including others."

Roesler said she also found ways to help students develop and improve soft skills and job acquisition skills. "We go to the Work Skills Competition each spring. When students complete a section such as data entry, they receive a certificate that lists the skills they mastered in that job task. We practice including those skills when we are practicing writing job applications and when we practice interviewing skills."

Roesler summed up the main purpose of WAGE; to help the students identify areas of interest. "After completing each task they document their interest level. The report generates a list of their strongest interest areas," she said. "They learn that work is much more enjoyable if you are doing something that you are interested in. They need to leave understanding what soft skills are required of them to be successful employees. They need to understand their strengths and weaknesses in those areas as well."

Trial

from Page 1

ing to his home in Woodville Township as his primary residence. Zimmerman is seeking election

Waseca class of 1974



Eighty-five members of the Waseca High School Class of 1974 attended a reunion at the Mill from July 26 to 28 to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of their graduation. An important feature of the event, which drew additional class members, was a tour of the Junior/Senior High School. "Once a Bluejay, always a Bluejay."

Submitted by Jeanne Swanson

Tink

from Page 1

batter's box against a hard-throwing Angels pitcher, who played in college.

"That was good for me because he must have supplied all the power," said Larson.

The first pitch was about eye high.

"I can still visualize where it was located," said Larson.

And he'll never forget where it wound up, about four rungs up the light tower in left field. A home run.

"When I got to the plate, some of the crowd was there to greet me," he said. "It might have been my best game as a Braves player."

For many years, the 82-year-old Larson has been known as Waseca's "Mr. Baseball." At one time he coached the high school, VFW and American Legion teams while also directing the Parks and Recreation summer baseball program and playing for the Braves.

After he had spent years meticulously manicuring Waseca's Community Field, it was officially dubbed "Tink Larson Community Field."

The number of awards, "halls of fame" recognitions and honors he's earned are far too numerous to mention.

These days, he lives in a house across the street from the baseball field. He says he is genuinely grateful for most everything. And, believe it or not, he's still active in competitive baseball.

The sport was one of several he participated in at Kasson-Mantor-

ville High School. By the time he graduated, Larson had lived at eight different locations.

His dad, Levern Larson, was a hired farm hand. He had never owned property until he bought a house in town for \$8,000 when Larson was a senior in high school. His father worked the rest of his life grinding feed at a grain elevator and helping his brother on the family farm.

"When he was doing this, he would go on three hours of sleep each night," said Larson.

Larson's great-grandfather bought the farm in 1864 and it has been in the family ever since. A log cabin that was built at that time is still on the farm, filled with a lot of very old items. The barn, built in 1879 in a style from old Norway, is possibly the only one of its kind in Minnesota.

Larson's mother, Wava, was a homemaker before working for 25 years at Dayton's in Rochester. Larson had two younger sisters, Laurie and Karen.

Larson said it's too long of a story to discuss why he did so many sports, but admitted, "There were mitigating circumstances sometimes."

Though he doesn't talk much about it, Larson was reportedly a very good wrestler in high school.

"If you listen to Blaine Nelson, he thinks I wrestled in eighth and ninth grade," said Larson. "By his unverified accounts, I supposedly lost only one match in two years and that was in a tournament to open the season of that eighth-grade year and it was in the semifinals of a 32-man tournament. Supposedly, I was leading a state champion from Albert Lea when I made a mistake and got pinned. Allegedly, in the

first match I wrestled, I pinned a state champion from Mankato."

A highlight in the second year would have been the final match of the season, when Larson supposedly was wrestling another undefeated wrestler and there was a big write-up about it, and rumor has it that he pinned him in 12 seconds of the second period.

Larson didn't get to wrestle in the tournament again that year because a bigger wrestler was horsing around and pushed on his Adam's Apple too hard, putting him in the hospital for a while.

Larson said he would have started in basketball his senior year, but he couldn't play, so he boxed Golden Gloves and was undefeated for the winter.

But he broke a thumb in his final match, right before tournament time.

"I guess I was injury prone," he commented.

As a youngster, Larson dreamed of being a professional baseball player.

"But, obviously, as I grew older, I knew I wasn't good enough to do that," he said, so he went to college to play baseball and get a teaching degree so he could coach.

"I was influenced in that direction by the way I got along with my high school and college coaches, Dale Timm and Jean McCarthy," said Larson.

Another thing he doesn't talk about often is his stint as a minor league baseball umpire.

"I did it for two years, but the money was so poor that I was having trouble supporting a wife and two kids...and she was pregnant with another one," said Larson. "It might have worked out for me had I stayed with it because I was graded

way ahead of some guys that made it to the major leagues. But it's just like being a professional player. Just because you might be better in the minor leagues doesn't mean you'll make it to the major leagues. So just because I was ahead of those guys that made it doesn't mean I would have made it. I try not to think about it because I had such a great life coaching here in Waseca and now both here and at MSU, Mankato that I don't regret anything."

Larson attended umpiring school with John McSherry, whom older folks may remember dying while umpiring home plate seven pitches into the Cincinnati Reds' home opener in 1996. McSherry was the top-rated umpire at the school. Larson was second.

While at umpire school, Larson registered the record for the best score ever up to that time on the rules tests given to potential graduates.

One funny story: "I was on the bases one night in pro ball and it was Appreciation Night with a huge crowd there for all the prizes they were giving away," said Larson. "There was a name drawn and he was from the State School for the Blind. Of course, everyone was looking around to see this person and the first base coach was a nice man named Pel Austin. Well, he hollers and gets the crowd's attention, then points to me and says, 'Here he is.'"

While Larson had a no-nonsense approach to teaching physical education, health, history and sociology and coaching baseball and basketball, there were some lighter moments.

Part 2 next week continued next week.

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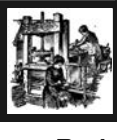
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**City of Waseca, Minnesota
Annual Disclosure of Tax Increment Districts
For the Year Ended December 31, 2023**

TIF District Name:	TIF 22 Charter Oaks Project	TIF 27 Fox Meadows
Current net tax capacity	\$0	\$16,046
Original net tax capacity	\$0	\$133
Captured net tax capacity	\$0	\$15,913
Principal and interest payments due during current year	\$0	\$22,951
Tax increment received in 2023	\$17,457	\$26,192
Tax increment expended in 2023	\$33,559	\$25,232
Month and year of first tax increment receipt	6 / 2002	7 / 2013
Date of required decertification	12/31/27	12/31/37
The total increased property taxes to be paid from outside the district if fiscal disparities Option A applies *	\$0	\$0

* The fiscal disparities property tax law provides that the growth in commercial-industrial property tax values is shared throughout the area. In a tax increment financing district, this value sharing can either result in a decrease in tax increment financing district revenue or a tax increase for other properties in the municipality depending on whether the tax increment financing district contributes its share of the growth. Amounts displayed here indicate that the district did not contribute its growth in commercial-industrial property tax values and represent the resulting increase in taxes on other properties in the City for taxes payable in 2023.

Additional information regarding each district may be obtained from-

Ms. Alicia Fischer, Finance Director City of Waseca
508 South State Street
Waseca, MN 56093
(507) 835-9700
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on Thursday, August 8, 2024

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
City of Waseca**

Pursuant to MN Statue 471.6161, notice is hereby given that **City of Waseca** requests proposals for
Group Life and Long Term Disability Insurance.

Specifications will be available from the City's agent of record, National Insurance Services, at 300 North Corporate Drive, Suite 300, Brookfield WI, 53045, phone 800-627-3660.

Proposals are due no later than 3:00 pm on Thursday, August 29, 2024 to 300 North Corporate Drive, Suite 300, Brookfield WI, 53045 and as specified in the RFP.

City of Waseca reserves the right to reject proposals, waive formalities, and to select the proposal that best meets the City's needs.

Criteria for the evaluation of proposals will be provided when the specifications are requested.
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on Thursday, August 8, 2024.

**NOTICE OF FILING DATES
FOR 2024 CITY ELECTION**

NOTICE is hereby given by the City of Waseca, Minnesota that the first day of filing of candidates for the November 5, 2024 City General Election is **Tuesday, July 30, 2024**, and the last day for filing is **Tuesday, August 13, 2024**.

The offices to be filled at said election are as follows:

**Mayor – two year term
Council member Ward 1 – four year term
Council member Ward 2 – four year term
Council member Ward 3 – four year term**

Candidates may file in the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 508 South State Street, Waseca, Minnesota, during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., from July 30, 2024, to August 13, 2024. The City Clerk's office will be open until 5:00 p.m. on August 13th. Candidates must be over 21 years of age and have maintained residence in the Ward from which the candidate seeks election for 30 days before the election. Filing fee is \$2.00.

Julia Hall
City Clerk

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 5, 12, 19, 26, and August 2 and 8, 2024.

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Debbie Briggs and Tim Kirchhof.
Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Briggs performs at Pleasant Grove

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

It was a cloudy day on Sunday, August 4, at Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm about eight miles northeast of Waseca. A humid eighty degrees, but with no chance of rain despite full cloud cover. Today's music at the farm was scheduled to be Debbie Briggs, with a show at 1:30 p.m. and another at 5:30.

Derek Adams, the establishments master of the wood-fired oven, was getting ready for a rush as cars and motorcycles pulled in and parked. Adams carried in five boxes of cheese and said, "There's been an accident, Debbie Briggs is fine but she was held up on the highway." Stoking the flames of the ovens, he began sliding pizzas inside before he scooted over to the bar to mix drinks for some patrons. As he finished, he pointed to an arriving vehicle and said, "She's here."

The online description of Briggs' act reads, "Shining a spotlight on the classic, jazz standards of the 1920s [to] 1960s." She stepped out of the car wearing fishnet stockings, a dark short skirt and flowered button top; this was her third time performing at Pleasant Grove.

Her co-star Tim Kirchhof plays guitar and piano, and can do whatever needs doing for the act. He was dressed in a Hawaiian shirt

and dark shorts; Briggs said the two of them wear whatever the venue calls for. She said while pointing at Kirchhof, "Sometimes he'll be in a suit, and I'll be in an evening dress. We dress certain ways for certain shows."

Briggs' website offers a range of themes for venues to select among, including a 1920s "Flapper" theme, a 1940s and 1950s "Pin-Up" theme and a golden age "glamour" theme celebrating the sophistication of 1930s to '50s old Hollywood. She also can perform when asked in duos, trios, quartets and quintets.

Briggs said while commenting on Patsy Cline, "She bridged a gap between jazz, country and popular music at the time. She was kind of a mixed bag." She also knows the very old stuff like Gershwin and loves crooners like Frank, Sam and Dean. Briggs mentioned she and Kirchhof had performed at a swing dance the night before. The August 4 show focused on jazz and country. Anyone unable to see Briggs and Kirchhof at Pleasant Grove this past week may like to know she has a weekly residency at 8 p.m. every Saturday until December 28 at The Velvetine in Stillwater.

Briggs' can be contacted through her website, using email at debbiebriggsmusic@gmail.com, or by phone 651-587-1482.

■ Heart from Page 3

training. Having completed his training in 2017, he volunteers time doing evangelical and outreach work at local facilities including the Blue Earth and Nicollet county jails. He described meeting with four to six women and eight to ten men each week. Another form of outreach he said he participates in is "JPay," an

email service for the incarcerated, kind of like pen pals for those in jail or prison. His work also extends to Broken Chains Fellowship, whose mission statement is to help people recover from drug addiction using Christ, motorcycles and fellowship.

Heartland Healthcare has a sister facility in Winnebago. To reach the Janesville office, interested persons can email Bentson at HeartlandHC@bevcomm.net, or schedule an appointment by calling 507-893-3072.

Waseca's Art Center bringing range of activities

The past three months have seen extraordinary changes within the walls of the Waseca Art Center. The Kent and Diane Schultz Performing Art Space is now home to the Art Center's Permanent Collection with over 90 pieces of art from local and state artists which have been collected over the last 30 years and are in view for the public.

This year there will be 16 art exhibit openings changing every six weeks featuring over 32 artists from around the state. There is sure to be a medium for everyone who loves art in the greater Waseca area.

The lower level of the Art Center now has a completely furnished pottery studio with seven wheels and three kilns. We are looking forward to having Jenny Bulfer and Missy Donner as our new pottery instructors as they guide our students on their artistic journeys over the coming fall season.

"I'm extremely happy to announce the hiring of Christy Easton as our new Director of Education and Programing, Christy a former Commander in the U.S. Navy brings a lot of energy and administrative expertise to the Arts Council" said Mikhail Rostislavovich Vice President and acting Executive Director.

He went on to say that the Art Center is gearing up for our Annual Great Fall Get together which will take place on October 26, 2024, from 6-9pm at the Starfire Event Center's Black and White Ball Room. The Theme this year will be Midnight in the French Quarter.

With all the new and exciting happenings at the Art Center, you should definitely come by and check us out. We are open Tuesday through Saturday from 12-5pm.



From left: Molly Erdman, Christy Easton, Mikhail Rostislavovich, and Anna Pollock

Jessica Navarro, DFL candidate for Minnesota House District 19A

Jessica has proudly called Faribault home for several years with her two children, La'Raina & James. Jessica has family roots in Faribault, spanning more than 15 years. She is a community organizer, advocate, and empowered community worker with lived and professional experience, running as the DFL-endorsed candidate for the Minnesota House of Representatives District 19A. She is a non-profit program manager, specifically in caregiver organizing, program coordination and facilitation, connecting families with essential local resources and services.

Years ago, a tragic car accident profoundly changed Jessica's life. The accident left Jessica severely disabled, spending nearly two years

in a wheelchair and forcing her to relearn basic tasks. She adapted from being right-handed to becoming left-handed and relearning how to walk. Since then, she has embraced every challenge with unwavering resilience, inspiring those around her with her determination to navigate life with a physical disability and achieve independence to the fullest extent possible. This personal journey has shaped Jessica's character and she is ready to use this fierce determination to represent you!

Her educational journey has been a testament to her perseverance and passion for social work. Jessica holds a bachelor's degree in social work and is currently pursuing her graduate studies at MSU, focusing

on furthering her knowledge and skills to better serve our community and her commitment to consistent growth and learning opportunities. She strives to create and build equitable communities.

With Jessica's unwavering determination and dedication to our communities, she is ready to represent everyone in District 19A effectively and advocate passionately for our community's specific rural needs. We can build a stronger, more inclusive District 19A for all. Living in a rural area, she understands our residents' unique challenges—housing shortages, limited childcare options, long distances to healthcare facilities, limited job opportunities, etc. She is committed to ensuring that our rural voices are



Jessica Navarro
heard and that our communities receive the resources and support necessary for families to thrive.

Jessica Navarro is focusing the campaign on the issues of Affordable and Accessible Health Care for everyone, Affordable and Accessible Child Care for working families, Support for Our Local Schools, and providing A Bipartisan Voice in the Legislature.

■ Dueling from Page 5

known classic 'Steinway' brand. Jim Steinworth used that to his advantage.

When asked what their song list was going to be tonight, Spooner replied, "We don't know what to play until someone requests something." The duo's website describes the two as "Masters of interactive rock-n-roll comedy for any event." If there were

any nervous feelings or jitters, they didn't show it, cool as cucumbers these two. They didn't have their drinks yet, but the night was still young.

"Usually," said Spooner, "The bars or venues provide drinks for us and sometimes a meal; we don't find out, a lot of times, until we get there."

Online is a long list of positive reviews. The longest running dueling pianos act in Minnesota. They were also the first to bring dueling pianos to Las Vegas. Today is their first time playing the Indian Island Winery; they also play trade shows, corporate

meetings, wedding receptions, fundraisers, comedy clubs and country fairs. They can play just about anywhere, if the crowd gathering at Indian Island is an indication.

Steinworth, 65, was playing under concert pianist James Bonn at age 5. A Master of Music Theory, piano tuning, voice training and improv. A musician and outgoing showman, he's been working with Spooner since 1993. The two say a significant portion of their shows are presented during the holidays, so late summer is a more relaxed part of the year for them.

In addition to their expertise at

playing music and entertaining crowds, Steinworth and Spooner have an array of related skills. For one thing, they relate they know how to repair "player" pianos, the vintage instruments which play themselves using scrolls of sheet music using compressed air created by pedaling. Not only those, but any other type of piano; they claim their skills are growing harder and harder to find. Anyone desiring more information can refer to the website www.river-ratsduelingpianos.com; the two can be called at 651-772-1622 or emailed at jsteinworth@comcast.net.

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642
August 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7pm HALL BINGO	2 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	3
4	5	6	7 6pm BAR Bingo	8 7pm HALL BINGO	9 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	10
11	12 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	13	14 6pm BAR Bingo	15 7pm HALL BINGO	16 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	17
18	19	20	21 6pm BAR Bingo	22 7pm HALL BINGO	23 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	24
25	26	27	28 6pm BAR Bingo	29 7pm HALL BINGO	30 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	31

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Janesville

1924

- John Manthey tells us that in returning from Merrill, Wis., last week, where he went in company with Roy Johnson for the purpose of bringing home Mr. Johnson's family, he drove his car continuously from seven in the morning until eight in the evening. If anyone imagines such a feat is an easy job, let them try it. He was stiff and lame the next day and did not get over it for a week nearly. He states further that for a hundred and fifty miles the other side of the river he drove amid bluffs and hills that were covered with rock and timber, the hills so steep in places that one could not climb them. There were no evidences of farming along the route as it winds around and curves up and down steep hills. He would not take the land as a gift if it were offered to him.

- Mr. Patrick H. Sullivan and daughter, Miss Johanna, who reside near Litchfield in Meeker County, were visitors in Janesville last week. On Thursday, Mr. Sullivan called at this office and stated that this is his first visit here in 21 years. Previous to that time he was a resident of Alton where he owned a farm and where he had lived many years. Recently he removed to St. Paul. But he does not like the city and is looking for another location.

- What is your son going to do in September? Has he finished the grade school or high school? Is he going to go to college, or is he going to go to work? Has he learned a trade? One or two years' training in a high school, in a business college, at a farm school, or in a trade school may give him a wage earning ability which cannot be taken from him. Neither can he lose it. (It would be fortunate if the same could be said of money advanced to our sons.) If your boy wishes to go into business, he should have a knowledge of the fundamentals of business procedure. Business courses in high school or in good business colleges give a good foundation. Likewise if he wishes to become a successful farmer or stock-raiser, a course at a farm school like that the University Farm School or one of its agricultural stations will prove invaluable.

1949

- During the past several seasons hundreds of acres of small grain were shocked by local business people throughout the area, according to a statement issued by Benjamin A. Iverson, Mankato Local Office Manager for the Minnesota State Employment Service. During the war when help was scarce local crews were organized to do this work. They were so successful that since the end of the war, many farmers have found the answer to their shocking problem in these local crews who spend their evenings in the fields.

- A total of 895 game law violators were arrested and convicted during the three month period, April through June, according to a summary compiled by the warden's supervisor's office, Division of Game and Fish The 1949 figure compares with 732 in 1948 and 576 in 1947. Violations of fishing regulations topped all others, 751 persons being arrested for failure to observe the law. Other infractions were netting, 53; small game, 23; guns set up, 22; big game, 19; trapping and fur, 10; game refuge violations, 6; and miscellaneous, 11.

- The Janesville Red Sox wound up their 1949 season in the South Le Sueur League by trouncing Waterville in a slugfest by a score of 20-14 on the latter's diamond last Sunday afternoon. Bob Schueneman and Story did the chuckin' for the Sox and gave up a total of 16 hits. McArthur and Schwartz twirled for Waterville and were combed for a grand total of 27 clouts.

- In a letter this week from Father Flanagan's Boys Home, comes the following: "Any magazine solicitor who represents himself as a Boys Town citizen, a former Boys Town citizen, or claims to represent Boys Town in any way whatsoever, is using the good name of Boys Town to promote his own personal ends. Please urge your readers that if any magazine solicitors call upon them using the name of Boys Town in any way whatsoever, they should immediately contact their local Better Business Bureau or Police Department so proper investigation may be made and this unauthorized practice may be stopped.

1974

- Motorcycle racing at the 95th Annual Waseca County Fair will take on an added excitement this year as mini-bikes are added to the lineup of racing machines. Also new to the meet this year will be the big 750 CC bikes which could possibly reach speed of 70 mph on the one-quarter-mile track at the Waseca County Fairgrounds. The Waseca County Fair will run from today through Sunday, July 21.

- Richard Ward has been raising hogs ever since his 4-H days on his dad's farm southwest of Janesville. He's still at it on his own place, but he says his new Northco system is a far cry from raising hogs in the open. "It sure makes the work a lot easier," he said. "That feeding system just amazes me. When we first put hogs in here. I used to stand around and watch it auger out the feed." The new 38'x72' Northco Farm Finishing Building has 22 pens, each equipped with an individual hopper for feeding and nipple waterers. Ward says the pens are large enough for 34-36 feeder pigs or 17-19 market-weight hogs. "We used to sell our young pigs as feeders, but now we're going to finish them out," he explained. Ward has had hogs in his new building for about a month now and hasn't had any problems.

- If the Janesville School Board agrees at their August 12th meeting, local teachers will receive a 14.76 percent wage hike for the 1974-75 school year. The tentative agreement was reached by teacher and board representatives when they met last Thursday. The 14-plus percent increase is a little above average for the 90-some school districts that have settled to date around the State of Minnesota. The state has about 450 districts. The proposed salary schedule will cost the school district an additional \$53,000 during the coming school year.

- Monday, July 22 - Stosh's Bar handed the Creamery their fifth straight loss by beating then 17-10. Duane Berndt, Terry Cahill, and Mike Finley collected three hits and Larry Kroeger added two home runs for Stosh's. The Trailer Court won their third straight game by smashing Wiste's 16-2. The win gives the Trailer Court a 3-9 record.

1999

- Christopher Thomas Johnson, son of Francis and Pamela Johnson of Janesville, has been named to the dean's list at Hamline University School of Law for spring 1999. Members of the dean's list achieve a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale. Johnson, who is active in the Republican party, recently flew to Washington, D.C., where he spoke before Congress concerning a bill he is co-sponsoring. He received an undergraduate degree from Hamline University.

- [From Janesville Nursing Home Activity Director Carol Armen-dariz]: We sure had some hot and humid weather this past week. We had a successful turnout at our annual family barbecue. We also had wonderful music performed by "Melting Point." Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy listening to the music, enjoying the delicious food and visiting with family and friends. We want to extend our deepest sympathy to the family of Fred Strunk who passed away this past week, he will be greatly missed.

- Southern Valley Co-op's newest fertilizer plant located on Highway 14 offers customers state of the art technology and services. The Janesville/Waseca fertilizer plant is a combination of efforts on the part of both Southern Valley Co-op and Cenex - Harvest States. The two companies formed a merger on June 1, 1998 and combined Southern Valley Co-op's Janesville and Waseca fertilizer plant. The new plant is located on Highway 14 between Janesville and Waseca. The consolidation of these three plants made it possible for Southern Valley Co-op to provide customers with a wider range of services while improving its facilities and efficient of operation.

- With the start of another school year just six weeks away construction in the JanesvilleWaldorf-Pemberton School district continues at full speed. "For the most part, we are on track," said JWP Superintendent Don Hainlen. JWP's \$11 million project entails both remodeling and new construction at its building sites in Janesville and Waldorf. Along with adding new classroom space, the project will bring the district u to fire code and will provide handicap accessibility. To date, 93 percent of the project is completed in Janesville and 89 percent of the project is completed in Waldorf.

Waseca

25 Years Ago: August 10

- Frank Hansen of Rollingstone, Minn., is the proud owner of the one and only oldest John Deere tractor produced (period). Hansen spent 13 years researching the tractor's history.

- People who enjoyed the Tractor Jamboree at Farmamerica this past Sunday had a chance to view a one-of-a-kind "mystery machine" they're not likely to forget. It's the number one tractor that John Deere & Co. ever produced.

- Lighted luminaries in memory of cancer victims and survivors lined the track at the Waseca high school for the sixth annual Relay for Life Friday night.



- Allison Barends of Waseca, and her collie, Trotsky, won Reserve Champion honors in their class in Dog Obedience, at the Dog Show. 50 Years Ago: August 8



- JAMIE FISCHER, 15 month old son of Mr. and Mrs. James Fischer of Waseca, displays a twin cucumber he found in his dad's garden.

- Jerry Copeland, formerly with Motorola, has been elected president of Communications Company (COMCO), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Waseca's E.F. Johnson Co., in Coral Gables, Fla. Copeland has also been elected a vice president of E.F. Johnson Co. Prior to his current employment he held positions with Motorola, most recently as product manager in land mobile, marine and amateur radio equipment.

- Retired Waseca Superintendent of Schools, Phillip C. Stoltenberg, 52, 203 4TH Ave. N.E. died today at his home. He had been ill 15 months. He was born in Amherst Junction, Wis., November 11, 1921 to Mr. and Mrs. Albert and Mabel (Riestad) Stoltenberg. Mr. Stoltenberg started his educational career in a rural state grade school in Amherst Junction, Wisc., in 1941. He was a member of the United States Air Force for three years, 1943 to 1946, being commissioned as a 2ND Lt. in 1944.

75 Years Ago

- LIKE COLONIAL PIONEERS this portion of the English section of the Parade of Nations recalled schoolboy history book pictures. In the foreground is John King. Left to right are Mrs. Donald Ruble, Donald Ruble, Mrs. Everett King, Virginia Ruble, Richard Grant and Winston Grant.

- RIGHT FROM THE OLD SOD - Participants in the Parade of Nations at the Fair Centennial program didn't all descend from nationalities they represented. But that wasn't true of Mr. and Mrs. Walt Barden, seem here marching with the Irish united. Is that a shillelagh you have there, Walt?

100 Years Ago

-To be able to celebrate their sixtieth wedding anniversary in the enjoyment of good health is a privilege accorded to few couples, but such an occasion was celebrated by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Bettner of New Richland last Sunday. But the happy old couple paid attention to the anniversary, aside from receiving congratulations of their children and enjoying an anniversary dinner.

-The Waseca Boy Scouts will have their annual encampment this year from August 19 to 29. The camp site will be located on the east shore of Lake Mazaska, eight miles west of Faribault and two miles from the village of Shieldsville. In a letter outlining the trip, Scoutmaster Hodgson states that the entire expense to each scout will be only \$5.

-Horsemen of the Waseca community are very much interested in the record being made this season by W.S. Brown's fast pacer, Hedgewood Patch, on the Iowa circuit.

New Richland

100 Years Back

John J. Sibilrud of Hartland and L. O. Hartz of Manchester were elected directors of the Service Relation Council, an organization recently formed by postal employees of Freeborn county.

W. J. Romig, C. A. Newgard, Peter Burtness and Ed. Westerlund drove to Charles Lake, near Elysian, Tuesday and brought home the Boy Scouts who had enjoyed a week's outing at that place.

Mesdames Harold Ryan and Harold Root were hostesses to the members of the Priscilla Club and their husbands at a picnic dinner given at St. Olaf lake last Tuesday evening.

Miss Jessie McGrath, who spent her vacation with her parents in New Richland and with relatives in Iowa, returned to her duties at the Eaco Mill office at Waseca this week.

Beryl and Loren Anderson spent a few days last week at the home of their aunt, Mrs. E. W. Tollin at Waldorf.

Little Eldon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Krueger, believes in cooning watermelons early. The other evening he picked a wash tub full of his dad's best melons and said he was going to have them for supper.

Lawrence Carey who has been assisting with the work on the Schue brothers' farm this summer left Tuesday for his home at Albert Lea.

The horses on Hound street are getting to be more popular than automobiles. Edward Anderson had a team run away from him Saturday and Orville Weed had a big smash-up Monday.

77 Years Back

C. O. Swenson, widower and old resident of Otisco township, received the startling information Tuesday evening that his daughter, Miss Francis Swenson, 25, is a victim of polio.

Many drivers of automobiles as well as pedestrians have made nuisances of themselves by following or going ahead of the fire truck when it is bound for a fire. It is unlawful to follow the truck within 300 feet and furthermore when the siren sounds every automobile occupying the street is required to immediately turn in to the curb. Motorists who are careless in this respect are going to find themselves in trouble unless they desist from these obnoxious practices.

Mrs. Erma Lee Winegar and "Smokey" Truhler accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Bud Johnson spent the week end at Clear Lake, Iowa.

Mr. and Mrs. Chester Herbst, Jackie and Connie, and Billy Bernstein were visitors at the Ray Callahan home Sunday evening.

Mrs. Minnie Proehl, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Proehl and daughter, James Strahlo of Mapleton, Frank Maas and Mr. and Mrs. R. Dahlberg of Pemberton, Mrs. Alvin Storlie of Palmer, Mrs. Dan Kaufman, and Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Hansen and daughters visited at the Willard Cook home Sunday.

Sunday evening Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Gehlhoff and son visited Mr. and Mrs. Louis Schlaak.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Loken and daughter, Beverly, were Sunday dinner guests at the home of Mrs. I. H. Foley near Manchester.

50 Years Back

The New Richland Royal Manor, housing for the elderly, is expected to be completed by September 15 and occupied by October 1.

The New Richland Development Corporation elected two new directors at their annual meeting. Elected to fill the terms of Leo Miller and Carl Mathiason, who have left the community, were Eldor Schoenrock and Leo Eckart.

Randy Knutson, a member of the Hartland 4-H Hi-Liners for the past seven years, took top honors in the 4-H Beef Show at the Freeborn County Fair as he was named 4-H Beef Champion Showman and his animal, 4-H Beef Grand Champion Steer.

All children who have completed the summer reading program at the New Richland Public Library are to meet the bus at the New Richland village park Friday, August 10 for their trip to Waseca for movies and fun.

Winning the Tug-o-War at the Waldorf-Pemberton FFA's livestock show was the following team of women: Beverly Kopesky, Donna Traynor, Dianne Schroeder, Maryls Gilster, Mosako Rossell, Judy Adams, Loretta Stencel, and Bonnie Neitzel.

Kelly Kipp, Roxanne Jane, Colleen Weir, Robin Peters, Jayne Meyer, Kathy Rausch and Carla Blashack are attending "Day Camp" at Maplewood Park at Waseca. Kathy Jensen and Tammy Ward are also attending as Cadette Councilor Aids.

The Waseca County Sheriff's department is investigating the theft of a 600 lb. hog from the Herb Clausen farm near Alma City Saturday night and an attempted burglary at Eisen's Sausage Company in Waldorf the same evening. The burglars were apparently frightened away when a motorist passed by.

25 Years Back

A feature of the Waldorf Days celebration Saturday, August 22 will be the ribbon-cutting ceremony and grand opening at the city's new Community Center.



Rebecca Lynnne claimed a Grand Champion ribbon with her market rabbit Ginger in the 4-H competition at the Freeborn County Fair last Tuesday afternoon. A block party in New Richland was sponsored by Theresa and Tony Kunkel and Brian and Julie Svoboda on Balsam Avenue in New Richland, Wednesday, Aug. 12, National Night Out. About 35 neighbors had the opportunity to eat together, play games together, and get acquainted.

Compiled by Jessica Lutgens

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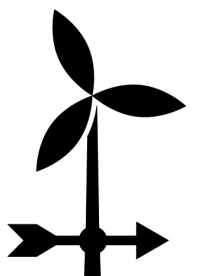
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Starting small and growing

Matawan Landscape and Supply

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Tyler Baumann, 37, opened Matawan Landscape Supply for a range of reasons. Perhaps lowest on the list is pulling in a large profit margin. “I like helping people,” says Baumann. “I like being outside.”

“I love the feeling of gratification when a project turns out,” he says enthusiastically. “It can transform a whole yard.”

Residents of Matawan, Baumann and his partner Amanda Weckwerth have been working together all through the past four months to build their landscaping business. Posted on the garage which is in the process of becoming their showroom is a huge sign saying “Under Construction.” An additional note enthuses “Exciting improvements ahead.”

Their business is located in the far southeast corner of the county in the small, but once-thriving town of Matawan. Some of the company’s products can be seen displayed on a triangular piece of property along Matawan Avenue which they believe was once a city park. Getting ready to open their business included revitalizing part of the one-acre area, since a former owner had left things in a bit of disarray.

The area now has regained its park-like appearance; mounds of various types of mulches, sands and soil display some of the materials Matawan Landscape Supply has to offer.

Galvanized edging for raised garden beds glint in the sun; white cedar planter boxes sport a variety of thriving plants. However, Baumann and Weckwerth explain, there is even more to their business than can be seen from the street.

Their website, www.matawan-landscapesupply.com, lists a variety of landscaping equipment which can be rented at a flat fee for four hours at a time; trailers, tillers, a power broom, a pressure washer, pole saw, and more. Also not visible to a passerby are some of the items kept indoors, including grass seed, fertilizer, erosion control fabric, edging, and the like.

But perhaps the most significant offerings are the experience and goodwill of Baumann and Weckwerth themselves. The two have worked together “flipping” houses and also own some rental property. They explain landscaping has been a significant element of those enterprises, including as many as a dozen projects a year. They say they have already used the contacts, knowledge and experience they have gained in helping some of their customers who have less practice.

“We’ll give people whatever level of help they need,” says Baumann. “We can help them get a good price on the supplies, we can do some of the more labor intensive work and let them finish up, or we can do the whole job for them.”

“Our goal is to give them that



Tyler Baumann and Amanda Weckwerth opened Matawan Landscape Supply this spring.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

same level of satisfaction we always feel when the job is done and the project looks good.”

Baumann says he loves the idea of being approached by a customer who has been told his or her project is “impossible.”

“I would just love to prove that wrong,” he comments.

Weckwerth and Baumann mention that, through the spring and first part of the summer, their business has been building only gradually. The year’s odd weather set a number of projects back, and kept Baumann busier than usual with his rental properties.

Still, Baumann says, they have helped quite a number of property owners with a range of projects. He and Weckwerth are happy with their progress so far and intend to keep expanding. Their 24-foot by 32-foot garage, for example, is on its way to becoming a showroom where even more products will be displayed.

“It’s a long-term goal to be more full service,” Baumann speculates. “We would like to have seasonal employees who go out and do these

projects all over the area.”

By this time of the year, Baumann says, many people have either completed their intended projects or the end-of-summer temperatures have led them to postpone them to next year. Grass seeding or fertilizing to take care of bare spots will be best left to fall, since grass does not propagate well in the heat.

“We’re here for people who still have projects,” he assures. “And we’ll have even more to offer next spring.”

“I’m excited,” observes Weck-

werth. “We’re open. We’re helping people, and we have an even bigger future ahead.”

At this time, Matawan Landscape Supply is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sundays. Baumann is also open to receiving phone calls both during business hours and at other reasonable times: available numbers are 507-340-1247 or 507-200-4674. He also encourages folks to visit the matawanlandscapesupply.com website to find out more.

First-place finish



The Waseca U16 boys' soccer team took first place at the North United tournament in Coon Rapids, Minnesota on Sunday, June 23. The squad is coached by Mike McQuery and Eli Nelson. The team, shown above, is comprised of: Sunny Mei, Jacob Harguth, Nolan McQuery, Matthew Nelson, Landon Rutt, Carlo Driessen, Sawyer Mairs, Dawson Goodlander, Owen Rupe, Nick Harguth, Tovinn Grannis, Brady Tlougan, Shilo Driessen, Jose Viera, Carson Harter, Logan Konz, and Amin Sharif.

State champions



The Waseca U12 girls' soccer team won the state championship during early July in St. Cloud. The team is coached by Neil Johannsen, Ann Johannsen, and Zach Jasper.

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■ Tower

from Page 1

ized branch built about 3,000 tower clocks during its time of operation which, online sources indicate, was from 1877 to 1944.

From the central works, four rods extend outward across the tower interior to operate the hands on the four clock faces. All four automatically show whatever is displayed on the small clock attached to the framework.

Hoehn, who visits the space regularly in order to inspect and oil the works, estimates the faces are between 5 and 6 feet across. The hour hands are about 2 feet long, the minute hands are about a foot longer.

The original faces of the clock, DeMesy says, were pretty certainly made of a special type of glass known as “vitrolite.” The process to make vitrolite was discovered around 1900. Online sources say the glass was very popular through the 1940s, since it was structurally strong enough to act as a wall covering, and was used as a high-end countertop in many bars, restaurants and homes. Neither DeMesy nor county facility managers Tomford and Hoehn are certain how much of each clock face is still original. Each has a center circle which is an off white in color, then an outer ring which is slightly purple. Tomford and Hoehn remember hearing from former clock keepers that some replacement has occurred, but no one has found any evidence showing when, how much, or with what. DeMesy speculates the outer, purplish rings are likely to be vitrolite, partly because the substance was known to turn purple over time.

Two stories below the clockwork is the bell used to create the chimes which can be heard all through Waseca. The courthouse clock counts out the time—meaning, for example, it will strike eight times on the eight o’clock hour—and provides one tone at the 30-minute mark.

The sound is created by a mallet-like hammer controlled by a gear. The hammer is actually pulled backward by the gear system, then driven forward to strike a large bell suspended from a heavy beam.

Hoehn says the bell is about 2.5 feet across and the hammer is about 2.5 feet long. “It’s pretty loud when you’re up there,” he can’t help observing. Something he particularly enjoys about the clock tower, he adds, is that there is “graffiti” from the time the courthouse was under construction written on the beam and some nearby panels.

DeMesy, Tomford and Hoehn speculate about something that is no longer in the clock tower—the weights and pendulum which allowed it to keep operating for most of a century.

Anyone who’s owned a manually wound grandfather clock, or even a cuckoo clock with the classic pine cone weights, is likely familiar with the concept, according to DeMesy. Gravity pulls the weights downward, putting pressure on the gears to turn. The pendulum’s very regular swing controls the speed at which the gears are allowed to move; the gears advance the hands on the clock face. The swing of the pendulum must be carefully engineered to match the gear ratios or the clock will run fast or slow.

In the case of the courthouse tower clock, the weights and other elements were removed, most

likely sometime in the 1970s, Tomford estimates. An electric motor was attached to the clockworks instead; ever since, electricity has provided not only the energy to turn the gears, but also the regulated pressure which decides how quickly they turn.

There once was a hole in the floor beneath the clock mechanism. A pendulum DeMesy says was probably between six and eight feet long hung through into the space below, swinging back and forth. There was also almost certainly a weighted chain which early caretakers had to climb the tower probably once a week to pull upwards and “wind” the clock. DeMesy says, given that the clock originated in the late 1800s, it probably did have chain. Many tower clocks made later on used cables to suspend the weights.

DeMesy and Mechanical Watch Supply were introduced to Waseca’s clock after a 2017 incident Tomford remembers well.

“I just happened to be walking into the courthouse, and I realized the clock was striking over and over again.

“I kind of stopped in my tracks and thought to myself, ‘Something’s not right up there.’” Tomford climbed the narrow, winding stairs up to the tower, where the hammer was repeatedly striking against the bell. “I looked it over, but I couldn’t figure out what was wrong,” Tomford says. “So I didn’t really have any choice but to disable it.” Tomford remembers trying to contact the company which had connected the electric motor, but the technician had since retired. He followed numerous leads over the next five or so years, none of which came to fruition.

“It was Joan Mooney [of the Waseca County Historical Society] who heard about Mechanical Watch Supply. She gave us the name and Rory consented to come have a look.”

DeMesy reveals he has a very full schedule, but said he made the time since Waseca is “so close” to his Minneapolis location.

The word “close” makes more sense knowing DeMesy is one of relatively few tower clock technicians nationwide. “You’ve got to have a passion for it to do it right,” he comments regarding the repairs and refurbishments he has done in towers all over the country. Perhaps the largest restoration he has done—or at least one of the “highest”—was in a 200-foot, 13-story tower in Dallas. He also did some repairs for the Wrigley building in Chicago—which he says has dials 18 to 20 feet in diameter—after the clock experienced hail damage.

His passion, DeMesy says, is associated with his respect for the engineering of the clockworks, and with the historic significance of the clocks.

“These were once, literally, the town’s clock,” he explains. “Everyone in town set their watches, and the clocks in their homes, to coincide with it.

“When they heard it chime, they knew it was time to go home for lunch, or to finish up for the day. It was the pulse of the community.”

And although society now sets its time using digital sources, DeMesy points out that tower clocks are still important to many people: “They’re a real asset to the community.

“The operators get telephone calls when anything’s wrong,” he observes.

Tomford confirms that, during the time the clock was not striking, he persistently received phone calls asking when it would be repaired.

“I got calls thanking me when it was working again, too,” he remembers. “People really missed it when it wasn’t there.”

Architectural appreciation

Hobbyist drawn to build model of county courthouse

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Shakopee resident Jerry Hackett, 85, says that if he had kept all the model buildings and bridges he’s constructed over the past 19 or so years, “There would be no room to walk, and I would be living alone,” he says, joking that his wife Pat would not put up with it.

During July, Hackett presented Waseca County with a model of the county courthouse built on a scale of one-eighth inch equals one foot. Built using toothpicks, basswood sheets and balsa wood, the model is about two feet long on each side; the clock tower is also about two feet tall. Despite its size, it weighs only a few pounds.

Hackett had visited the courthouse roughly six months before and told staff of his interest in building the model. Facility maintenance supervisor Teddy Hoehn had provided him with photocopies of old blueprints; Hackett also took pictures of the exterior of the building. “I always do that,” he said of his models. “It helps to have the details recorded.”

Hackett said he had no wish to be paid. “I pretty much always give them away,” he says. “Building them is fun for me. It’s my way of keeping out of trouble.”

Hackett has already built dozens, if not hundreds, of models, including bridges, iron structures and buildings. He apparently enjoys a challenge: the largest model he’s built to date is of Duluth’s Old Central High School, constructed in 1891. The full-sized building occupies an entire city block. Hackett says his model was roughly 6 feet long and 3 feet wide; a contingent from a Duluth preservation society had to bring an enclosed trailer to pick it up from his home.

Other models he has built over time include the Eiffel Tower, the Space Needle, merry-go-rounds, ferris wheels, three Shakopee churches and quite a few bridges, including some in Europe and the Duluth Lift Bridge.

Hackett says many of his models have been donated to the Shakopee library. Even there, he says, space was becoming limited, so the Shakopee library began sending them out on loan to other libraries.

Looking for new ideas, Hackett says he went online and found images of all 87 different courthouses located in Minnesota’s 87 counties. He rated each regarding how “unique” it was, and consequently how much fun he would have building it. In the end, he said, only six truly interested him. Three were located in the southern part of the state: Waseca, Washington and Steele counties.

“Anything built after 1900 just doesn’t seem to have the same character,” he observes.

Hackett says he began his hobby of constructing models almost two decades ago when a neighbor removed a cedar tree and offered him a number of scrap logs about three feet long. Hackett says he cut those into sticks about one-eighth inch on a side, then rounded off the edges to make miniature logs.

“I made a log cabin with them,” he said, saying the cabin was about eight inches high, ten inches wide, and a foot long. He also used the cedar to make a more modern house similar to the farmhouse he grew up in.

When he decided to donate the two miniature structures to a silent auction fundraiser, the coordinators asked what price would be appropriate. Hackett says he recommended \$40 for the cabin and \$60 for the house. Both were purchased at the marked price.

He went on to use the cedar scraps to build a log cabin for each of his six children and a total of about 20 cabins altogether. He also made six or seven of the model houses, and then the cedar was all used up.

At that point it came to him that, while his children were in school, they had all been assigned to make a structure of toothpicks somewhere during their education.

“So I thought I’d give that a try,” he says lightly. His first choice was the Eiffel tower. The measurements and many images were readily available online.

For anyone curious how his models can be so precise, he explains he creates a scale drawing of each flat section of wall on graph paper. He sets a sheet of wax paper on top of that, then begins putting a small dab of glue on each toothpick, which he sets in place with a tweezers. “I don’t work all that fast,” he comments. “I have to stop fairly often to let the glue dry.”

When a building section is curved, he draws out the dimensions on a piece of cardboard, then



Jerry Hackett constructed a model of the Waseca County Courthouse from toothpicks.
Pioneer photos by Deb Bentley



curves it to the correct degree. The technique is then the same as for flat sections: wax paper is laid across the curved drawing and toothpicks are set in place one at a time using tweezers.

Once whole sections are finished, he says he completely coats them in glue.

His glue of choice is Elmer’s “extra strong” variety.

He says he orders the round toothpicks in lots of 12,000, since that quantity will get him free shipping. For roofs, he uses basswood sheets. For details which need carving, he uses balsa pieces.

Using a nail clippers, he removes the points of each toothpick and is left with a 2-inch piece. He then determines what lengths will be needed and begins pre-cutting them. Frequently, he uses both the longer and shorter “halves” of the toothpicks for different sections of the building.

The very large Old Central School model, he said, took 30,000 toothpicks, plus the basswood and balsa features. The usual range is somewhere between 4,000 and 10,000.

Hackett estimates each model costs him “a cou-

ple hundred dollars or so,” and keeps him “out of trouble” for a few weeks to about six months.

He comments he has the most fun on the most ornate sections of the buildings. He enjoys engineering the small bits and pieces on decorative corners or around windows. He mentions he is currently working on a model of the Steele County courthouse, and expects to deliver it sometime in August. That building has an arched inset above the main entry doors where “Lady Justice” stands. He says he is enjoying the puzzle of how he can best represent the statue on his model. He recalls how, when he was building models of churches, he would take photographs of their stained glass windows, print them to scale, and put them in the window frames.

When it is time to assemble all the different sections, he places quarter-inch square basswood sticks inside and glues the walls to the respective sides.

“They’re very sturdy when they’re finished,” he comments.

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Liz O'Brien



Liz and Pete O'Brien.

Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

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‘Not as easy as it sounds’

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Still relatively new to the cat breeding scene is a woman who is helping put Waseca on the map— in the cat world, that is. Pawpeds, a cat website database dedicated to mapping out current bloodlines, family and genetic histories of cats shows new lines of exotic feline living in our area; their owner’s name is Liz O’Brien. It was she who brought these Maine Coon Cats here—she and her husband Pete.

O’Brien lives on the edge of the Waseca Lakeside Club (golf course), she has four Maine Coon Cats, three female and one male; her venture into the process of breeding purebred cats, she says, has taught her it is not as easy as it sounds. O’Brien’s beginnings raised her to be an animal person, “Growing up, we always had animals in Shoreview.” She entered her horses in 4-H competitions in the 80s. While attending post-secondary education, she worked at a pet clinic and has al-

ways had a knack for animal care. She acquired her bachelor’s degree in psychology and minored in art. She also studied graphic design at Hamline University.

Of her chosen cat breed, Liz comments, “I love the breed and its magnificent and easy-going nature.” She refers to the breed as having a “gentle giant size” that makes owning one almost like owning a dog, while being easier to maintain.”

Among her breeding stock, Nikolai is the male; “silver mackerel” in color, he is from Germany. Valkyrie is a female from Poland; she is a black, patched tabby with white. Adeline, is a female from Kazakhstan; she is a classic black tabby with white. Finally, Ella is a pure white female from Ukraine. While Liz’s cats are European-style Maine Coons, American Maine Coons generally lack the tuft of hair on their ears similar to that of Bobcats. Russian lines carry a more extreme, exaggerated wild look in their facial features. Fun Fact: Maine Coon cats

are fifteen percent less allergenic than typical cats.

Liz says she became a cat breeder as a hobby, and because she enjoys the Maine Coon cat breed. She mentions that, after years of working under tight deadlines in the corporate world, she appreciates being able to work from home, and to set her own deadlines. “I have the opportunity now working with art at home to make the commitment. I also enjoy the science and learning behind it, and want to preserve its breed standard while retaining high quality healthy kittens.”

Modern-day Maine Coons are descendants of some which were brought to America by Puritans in the 1600s and 1700s. On a genetic level, they are most closely related to cats from the United Kingdom. On May 8, 1895, the first North American Cat show was held at Madison Square Gardens: in that show, a female brown Coon Cat named Cosy won the silver medal and took home the “Best in Show” award. In 1985, the Maine

Coon Cat was named the official cat of Maine. There were even whispers of this breed mating with wild raccoons, resulting in their unique look. That is not true however, the Maine Coons have never crossed breeds with raccoons.

To keep her cats in the best of health, O’Brien gets her cats regularly tested with echocardiograms. Because they are larger than the average cat, they also need to be checked for Hip Dysplasia, a disease more commonly known for affecting larger-sized dogs.

O’Brien is planning to breed all three female cats to Nikolai before mid-January. There is a 65-day gestational period, so the new kittens will be available to buy in early spring of 2025. She says she charges around \$3,200 because pedigreed cats are expensive to maintain and they are in high demand. Said Liz, “If the price is lower than that, it means that it is possibly not a purebred cat, or scams are involved. If it’s more expensive that means not a lot of people can buy it.”



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A bold move

McQuery turns hobby into job

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Many people believe that turning a “hobby” into a “job” transforms what was once pleasure into work. That’s not the case for Mike McQuery, who owns Half-Pint Brewing Company, located a few miles northwest of Waseca on 150th Street.

Since the early 2000s, McQuery had had a passion for brewing beer at home. His “regular” day job was a direct sales installer for Comcast Cable in the Portland, Oregon area. He owes his new life and location as a professional brewer to his wife, Amy, who helped him find his way in the brewery business.

Amy had applied for a job as a diabetes educator in the Waseca area, knowing they would be visiting her cousin Teya Dahle in the area for vacation in January 2013. Amy says when she applied for the job in Minnesota, she knew the position called for duties very similar to those she had in Oregon; she claims her chief motive in applying was to nudge McQuery in a direction he would also love.

Because she has Type One Diabetes herself, having been diagnosed at age 7, the profession is very personal for her. At the time, McQuery told Amy it was good to interview for jobs for practice, but he had no plans to leave Beaverton, Oregon, the Portland suburb where they lived.

When Amy was offered the job, however, the couple took a closer look at the Waseca community. The two toured the area and the schools and were impressed by what they saw. Seeing the area as a good place to raise their children, the two decided they would buy some land. At the time, their kids were three and five years old. McQuery and Amy realized if they wanted to move anywhere, now was the time, especially

since their sons hadn’t developed friend groups yet.

“We got this sense of community when we came to visit that we didn’t have when we were in Portland,” McQuery said. “It wasn’t just about the brewery: the schools had great ratings, smaller class sizes.”

Chris and Teya Dahle used to be from Portland but had moved and established a group of friends whose children were the same ages as theirs. So when McQuery and Amy moved, the others in that social circle readily accepted them.

“When you open a brewery, it’s also pretty easy to make friends,” McQuery added.

The night Amy interviewed for her job, McQuery went out to The Boat-house with Chris, which is how McQuery became acquainted with Charlie Rohwer who shared McQuery’s enjoyment of breweries; McQuery had brought some of the beers he had made in Oregon. At that time, seventy breweries existed in Minnesota, the number has grown considerably since then.

While they talked, McQuery discovered that although Minnesota doesn’t have the right soil for hops, the land prices were lower than in Oregon. Oregon is one of the states that, along with Idaho and Washington, grows 95% of the nation’s hops; McQuery compares fields of the grain to those of corn and soybeans seen in Minnesota.

At the same time, Rohwer liked what he tasted so much that he still encouraged McQuery to move to Minnesota and start his own brewery. The next day, Amy got the job she had applied for; she told McQuery she would support him if he wanted to make brewing his profession. “I told her, ‘You’re crazy!’ But I knew if I didn’t take this opportunity, I may never get that chance again,” he said.

Back in Oregon, he had brewed beer at home and entered competitions simply because he enjoyed doing so. He won first place in one contest to name the “People’s Choice” and another for the “Brewer’s Choice.” Brewers in Oregon judged the different beers and picked McQuery’s as the best.

His friends asked him why he didn’t start a brewery. But since there were many breweries in Portland, he didn’t think there would be room for him in the market. When Amy got the job, he didn’t see why he shouldn’t make the move.

Six months later, in June, after Amy had her interview, the McQuerys moved from Beaverton to Waseca.

Initially, McQuery recalled that his dad, Warren, who then also lived in Oregon, didn’t want him to move. At the same time, Warren recognized that McQuery had an opportunity and he needed to take it. But five years later, in 2018, McQuery’s parents decided to come to Minnesota, especially after his brother Chris moved.

In December 2018, McQuery opened Half-Pint Brewing Company after he constructed the building himself.

“The only thing that I didn’t do is put the pole shed up, pour the concrete, and do the electrical and plumbing,” McQuery said. “Besides that, I did everything else with the help of friends and family.”

By “everything else,” he clarified that he meant the framing, tile, and the activities that went along with that.

But just because McQuery has been happy and confident with his move, it didn’t mean he hasn’t encountered challenges.

“To us, hops has been an education thing,” he said.

McQuery has about one-third of an



Mike McQuery

acre where he grows hops to use in his brews.

He went on to explain he doesn’t grow hops to save money because hops don’t grow well in Minnesota. McQuery said that he typically shows people to give them an idea how hops grow. He purchases about 90 percent of the needed grain from other suppliers.

Rohwer also informed McQuery about his own experience with growing hops. Moisture is part of the problem with downy mildew which affects the soil and the hops.

“You can combat the downy mildew with spraying,” McQuery said, “but I’m one guy who’s doing everything.” He added that as much as he wished he could, he doesn’t have enough time to do everything so he has to pick his battles. As far as McQuery knows, he’s the only owner in Minnesota who grows hops adjacent to his brewery. He invites locals to come and pick hops each year. He also has a working tap room

on his farm.

Aside from the agricultural aspect, it’s clear McQuery is passionate about what he does. Normally, he brews 300 barrels in a year, each with a capacity of 31 gallons. McQuery said he works with between forty to fifty varieties of beer, persistently experimenting with new techniques and flavors, while also keeping the most popular ones constantly available.

One of the ones that customers seemed to like most is an amber ale called Warren’s Wisdom. McQuery shared the story about the name’s origin.

“Dad would give me a hard time about not brewing an amber,” McQuery said. “I never wanted to brew an amber because I just don’t like that style of beer.”

Ultimately, McQuery decided to brew an amber ale for Warren, then to introduce it on a weekend when Warren was working. It ended up being the second-best seller.

Personally, McQuery prefers IPAs

Pioneer photo by Rachael Jaeger

because they have more flavor.

Depending on the processes, beers can take anywhere from three weeks to three months to brew.

“Ales, which ferment in warmer temperatures, usually take three to four weeks,” McQuery stated. “Lagers are about three months.”

Over time, McQuery has experimented with many different steps and techniques. He has devised systems which consistently produce beverages that meet his standards. In many cases, this includes five or six processes spread out across weeks.

He warns that making beer is not a neat process, and observes that cleaning is his least favorite part of the job.

Currently, McQuery is trying to find ways to spread word about his business. He wants people

to come experience his brewery, so he doesn’t make his products available in any local liquor stores. He is working on arrangements, however, to market them at specific stores in Mankato and New Prague.

First ever golf fundraiser a success for JWP Softball

JANESVILLE JOURNAL

Many enjoy golf. Janesville residents like supporting JWP in any way possible. When the two are combined, a golf fundraiser is the logical result.

The JWP softball program assembled an entertaining golf tournament at Prairie Ridge Golf Course on Saturday, July 20. To make things interesting, they made it a Bomba Night golf tournament. Around 14 teams smacked golf balls that lit up with each swing at bright golf pins, starting at 9 p.m. Although the circumstances admittedly limited depth perception, nearly all participants

enjoyed the challenge; despite the skill and dedication of the golfers, however, a walk through the course would have been a poor choice that evening.

Activities director Nicci Malecha, who served as the head coach of JWP’s varsity softball team last season, mentioned “We wanted to do something interesting to raise funds for our team: This is our first time trying a golf tournament. It will all go back to the golf course.”

Jeff Simonson, assistant coach for the varsity team last season, also shared positive thoughts about the tournament. “It’s good to see so



Many members of the JWP varsity softball team from last spring volunteered to help at its first annual golf fundraiser on Saturday, July 20. From left: Kayle Langford, Ella Lamont, Hudson Miller, Brielle Dessner, Victoria Blomstrom, Lexie Dahlberg, Brielle James, Autumn Thissen, and Ellah Oliver.

many people supporting our softball program,” he said. “We want it to grow.”

Steve James Excavating was the primary sponsor of the tournament. As they are in most golf tournaments, the results were split into two flights. The Schroer team won first place in the second flight, taking home \$100 as a cash prize. Jeff Simonson’s team won it all with a 31-

stroke night. Since Simonson helped run the event, his team agreed to give their \$200 cash prize back to the softball program.

For those who wanted to support the team in ways other than trying to hit lit-up golf balls blind, some extra fun started at 6 p.m., including door prizes, a raffle, a putting competition, and music provided by JWP students accompanied by Becky

Borneke. Infinity Catering had a food truck at the golf course.

Nearly all members of JWP’s varsity softball team volunteered, whether by running activities before the tournament, handing out raffle tickets, or providing refreshments and food to the golfers.

The event ended up going until nearly 1 a.m., with the first golfers arriving shortly before midnight.

The last ones were in about an hour later. Although everyone involved may have started getting tired, it was well worth it to them to raise nearly \$2,000 in funds for the JWP softball program, including the \$200 the Simonson team donated back. Organizers say they hope to see the tournament grow in popularity next summer.

■ Homestead

from Page 6

anyone who comes in for a gander might even feel transported back in time.

“I wanted the porch to feel refreshing and in season when customers walked in,” she said. “Making it a place where you can picture yourself having a cup of coffee or a glass of lemonade is the comfort I want my customers to feel.”

Open year-round, Homestead offers all the home décor goodies you can imagine. What’s more is that Walters offers many handmade items, including pumpkins, scarecrows, Santas, snowmen and everyday items as well.

“I love having new and different items for my customers,” she said. “I want people to be able to afford to bring things they love into their homes that are handpicked by me and are of great quality.”

Walters said all the artisan-made items are priced with that in mind as well. No matter what kind of piece customers are looking for -- Homestead offers them a chance to find something truly one-of-a-kind that doesn’t tug at the purse strings too much.

“It is very important to me to help other small businesses thrive,” she said. “I really love to buy things that are made in the USA. I buy candles from two different families in Wisconsin and Iowa. I buy cloth items from Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Virginia. There are signs from Iowa, textiles from Pennsylvania, wood items from Minnesota and Illinois, and painted furniture from a local Waseca small business.”

“The holidays are a busier shipping time for me,” she said. “I have always loved decorating and being creative in it. It took me a long time to believe that it was actually something I was good at, even though people would tell me all the time. Now I just love sharing my talent by helping customers with their own needs.”

She continued, “My life’s dream has always been to own my own store. I do the ordering, pricing, staging, bookkeeping, and working the hours all by myself.”

It was definitely a learning experience, as was the entire renovation process. From the landscaping projects to the total and complete transformation inside, her family has been there cheering her on every step of the way.

“There isn’t enough space in this paper to say how much my family has supported me,” she said. “They have been there through it all with me, including their support during the Covid shutdown, and now with the economic challenges small businesses are facing. There have been times when I have felt like giving up and they have always encouraged me to get back up and keep doing what I do.”

Much to her delight, her 1914 structure was recognized in 2016 with a “heritage preservation” award from the Waseca Heritage Preservation commission.

“We knew we didn’t want to

change the inside of the home, yet knew it needed some love,” she said. “So we put a lot of blood, sweat, and tears into the property to keep it as original as possible. And it even has everything including the cast iron kitchen sink yet.”

Original wood siding, windows, floors -- you name it and it’s been restored. And, as a result, a big portion of Walters’ heart has been refreshed as well.

“I look back at where I was 10 years ago and can only simply sigh because of where I am now,” she said. “I lost my mom two years ago and she was always my biggest supporter and always encouraged me to keep going. I still feel like she is cheering me on from heaven every day.”

She continued, “I worked corporate America jobs for many years. After two layoffs, I knew it was a sign that I was to do something else. There are still many challenges I face owning a small business, but it’s rewarding because I know the hard work, stress, worry, and success is of my own doing.”

One of those business hurdles, although somewhat of a disadvantage, also has its advantages.

“Living 40 miles away does have its disadvantages when it comes to helping customers after hours,” she said. “However, I’m able to separate business from family life.”

Her regular customers from near and far can rest easy; this Mapleton resident isn’t going anywhere anytime soon. Her love for antiques or old things cannot be vanquished, especially when it comes to Fusion paint.

“I’ve painted a lot of furniture over the years,” she said. “I’m in love with Fusion and knew I had to bring the love of the product to my store for my customers to use and fall in love with too. It’s the best paint on the market. With a primer and top coat built in, and little to no prep needed, it goes on like butter with a little bit going a very long way.”

In fact, any piece of painted furniture seen inside Homestead has a coat of Fusion on it. She just can’t help herself; Fusion is where it’s at. Fusion gel stain has even been ap-

plied to the floors and woodwork in the store. So it just goes to show how this medium holds up over time.

“Heck, even the shutters and doors are painted with Fusion because it is also an exterior paint,” she said. “I’ve never had a customer say they don’t love it!”

Aside from that and so many other items, customers also have the courtesy of purchasing custom arranged florals. Let’s just say the rewards with this job are unending for both Walters and her customers.

“Homestead also offers a loyalty program,” she said. “Each time customers makes a purchase of \$20, they receive a punch on their loyalty card. Once that card is full, they receive \$20 off their purchase.”

At the end of the business day, with her porch key in hand, she hopes to accomplish at least one thing.

“I want it to feel inviting and warm when customers walk in,” she said.

‘Flair for decoration’

Vintage Ford F-100 truck enhances Wilton roadway

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

For anyone driving south of Waseca on the Wilton Bridge Road, an old Ford F-100 pickup truck sits as a greeting to passersby where County Roads 4 and 23 meet.

James Priebe lives close to the truck, in fact, he’s the one who put it there. His girlfriend Laurie Mariner helped him do it. At the time, Laurie wasn’t there to speak for herself, but Priebe said of her, “Yeah, it’s Laurie’s cup of tea to decorate.”

The two brought in the truck on June 1; the tires are flat, but they don’t look it. Black mulch was bagged in and spread around the tires to give the setting a ‘finished’ look. Taken from a little-used barn owned by Lyle Kuhns, it had nearly ended up in a junkyard. The antique gas pump sitting near the truck, James explains, was set there “to add to the ambiance.” Up until this spring when it stopped working, the gas pump was actually still in use on the Lyle Kuhns farm.

James’s father, John Priebe, who is no longer with us, served in the US Army as a cook in the 1960s. James says he set a flagpole with an American flag waving over the scene in honor of his father’s service. The flag is still brand new.

Looked at from the road passing

by on the south side of the property, the view of the truck includes a Wilton Township historical marker which reads: “This stone marks the site of the building where the First Official Records of Waseca County were kept.”

Other than the historical marker, James said there was nothing particularly special about the spot. Conversation between them allowed the plans for the site to grow: “[We] had the idea to put the truck in there, then the flagpole and then the pump for decoration.” He said he bought the flagpole at Fleet Farm.

Wiping the sweat from his brow, Priebe pointed to an old milk can in his garden and a cupola riddled with hundreds of bullet holes which was removed from the top of an abandoned barn. Said James, “Laurie put a light inside the cupola, and it looks great at night.” A “cupola” is defined online as a structure set on top of a larger structure to help with air circulation in large spaces. Based on the clever touches, it becomes clear the two, “Especially Laurie” said James, “have a real flair for decoration.”

Not ones for sitting still, James and Laurie recently finished two projects; staining their house and adding stain to half a canoe destined to become another yard decoration. On a brief tour, James remarked about the grass



A rustic display catches the eye along Waseca County Highway 23 near the Wilton bridge. The nostalgic feature was made by Laurie Mariner and James Priebe, pictured here with grandchildren baby Charlotte Lund and Kenny Spiess.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Waseca County History Center

World Honey Bee Day
Polinator Party 2.0
Saturday, August 17, 11:00 - 5:00

4661 420th (42x) Ave. Janesville MN

Tacos La Reyna Food Truck

Ron Arsenault & Dave Pengra from 1 - 3 p.m.

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SUPPORTING SACRED HEART SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 13, 14, 15

FRIDAY:

- Fish Fry: 5 - 7 PM
- Live Auction: 6:30 PM
- Children's Dance: 6 - 8 PM
- Meat Raffles: 5:30 PM

SATURDAY:

- Bingo: 12PM
- Inflatables, Kid Zone: 12 PM
- Pork Loin Sandwiches: 4:30 - 7 PM
- Street Dance: 7 - 10 PM

SUNDAY:

- Kids Carnival: 11 AM - 2 PM (Games, Crazy Hair, Face Paint, Inflatables)
- Pancake Breakfast: 9 AM - 11:30 AM

For more details or to purchase tickets, email:
PTO@SACREDHEARTSCHOOLWASECA.COM

If you'd like to volunteer or pre-purchase wristbands, please contact the school:
(507) 835-2780. Thank you for your support!

EVENT DETAILS

Friday, September 13, 2024

Fish Fry: 5 - 7 PM
Live Auction: 6:30 PM
Location: Under the Tent at Sacred Heart Church, Waseca

Street Dance with Bryce Leppert
Saturday, 7 - 10 PM

Friday:
Fish Fry: Friday, 5 - 7 PM
Live Auction: Friday, 6:30 PM
Spirit Wall/Cork Pull: Friday, 5 - 8 PM; Saturday, Noon - 7 PM

Saturday:
Pork Loin Sandwiches: Saturday, 4:30 - 7 PM
Mass Children's Choir: Sat, 5 PM
Early Bird Bingo: Saturday, Noon
Super Bingo: Saturday, 2 PM

111 4th Street NW, Waseca, MN

Saturday, Sept 14, 2024

Early Bingo Games: Noon
Location: UNDER THE BIG TENT at Sacred Heart Church-Waseca
Super Bingo Ticket Prices: \$25.00 (advance sale), \$30.00 (at the door)
Note: All advance sale tickets need to be purchased by 5:00 PM on Friday, Sept 13. Tickets available in the Parish Office.

Sunday:
Pancake Breakfast: Sunday, 9 - 11:30 AM
Mass: Sunday, 10 AM
Raffle Drawing: Sunday, 1 PM

Friday, Saturday, Sunday:
Silent Auction, Book Fair, Country Store & White Elephant: Friday, 5 - 8 PM; Saturday, Noon - 7 PM; Sunday, 9 AM - 1 PM
Concessions, Children's Games & Activities: All weekend, Concessions available under the tent all 3 days

Farm Retirement Auction For Jason Kruggel

ONLINE ONLY!

Bidding Opens: Sunday August 11, 2024 at 8:00am
Bidding Starts Closing: Tuesday August 20, 2024 at 11:00am

Auction Location: 54203 164th Lane, Good Thunder, MN 56037 (From Good Thunder Take Co. Rd 1 North for 1 Mile to 164th Lane, Go West On 164th Lane for 4 Miles)

Cat MT765B & JD 4020
***'06 Cat MT765B Challenger, 5991 Hrs, PS, 3pt., Auto Steer Ready, 5 Hyd., 1000 PTO
***'67 JD 4020 Dsl, 6023 Hrs, Syncro, 3pt, PTO

Houle 7300 Tanker, Pit & Transfer Pumps
*** Houle 7300 Manure Tank, Model EL48-6D6100, Tri-Axle Steerable, Dietrich 5 Disc Injector with Double Disc Covers, New Impeller and Drive 4 Years Ago
*** Houle 10' Manure Pit Pump, Model SP-3B-8, 6"
*** Houle P-A-28 3Pt Manure Transfer Pump 6"
*** Nu-Tech 10' Manure Pit Pump, 1000 PTO, 6"
*** Stand Load Pipe on Transport

Hagie 2100 Sprayer, Tender Trailers, Tanks
*** Hagie 2100 Self Propelled Sprayer, 1000 Gal., 80' or 60' Booms, 5' Extension For 90', Triple Nozzle, 3415 Hrs, SCS460 Monitor
*** Van Semi Spray Tender, 28', (2) 1600 Gal. Tanks, Hose Reel, Banjo Pump w/ Honda Engine
*** 1000 Gal. SS Tender Tank On Tandem Axle Running Gear, Banjo Pump w/ Honda Engine
*** Banjo Pump w/5HP Electric Motor, 45 Gal. Chem Inductor
*** 3000 & 1200 Gal. Poly Tanks

IH 4900 Day Cab, Schien Aluminum End Dump
***'96 IH4900 Day Cab Semi, Wet Kit, Single Axle, Auto Trans, DT466, 207,319 Miles
***'84 Schien Frameless Aluminum End Dump, 36', Tandem Axle, Grain Door, Tarp
***'74 IH Grain Truck, Tandem Axle, 16' Box & Hoist
*** Semi 5th Wheel Implement Hitch

Deluxe 2515 Dryer, Holding Bin, Grain Augers
*** Deluxe DP 2515 Continuous Flow Grain Dryer, LP Gas, 3 Phase, Rebuilt in 2017, 3 Months To Remove
*** 2800 Bu. Wet Holding bin, Cone Bottom
*** Winger Bros. MFG Rotary Phase Converter, 1 phase to 3 phase, 15HP
*** Westfield J210-36 Grain Auger, 10hp
*** Westfield MK100-61 Swing Hopper, 540PTO
*** Walinga Agri-Vac 510 STD Grain Vac,
*** Brent 644 Gravity Flow Wagon, Ladder

Tillage & Planting Equipment
*** Wil Rich 3400 FC, 34.5', 4 Bar Harrow, 420 Gal. SS Tank
*** DMI 2800 Nutri-Placr Applicator Bar, 850 Gal. Poly Tank, 11 Disc, 30" Spacing, John Blue Pump
*** Elk Creek 3pt Caddy, 400 Gal. Poly Tank
*** CIH 14 V-Ripper Sub Soiler, 5 Shank, Coulters, 3pt.
*** AC 1500 Min-Til Disc Chisel, 11 Shank, 13.5'
*** White 588 Plow, 6 Bottom
*** MelRoe Multi-Weeder, Pull Type
*** White 12R30" Row Crop Cultivator
*** Sweiss 3pt. Bean Bar

Jason Kruggel, Owner/Seller 507-340-2519

Viewing Dates:
Friday August 16, 2024 from 9:00am to 5:00pm
Saturday August 17, 2024 from 9:00am to 3:00pm
Monday August 19, 2024 from 9:00am to 5:00pm

Payment and Loading Assistance Date:
Wednesday August 21, 2024 from 9:00am to 5:00pm
Terms: Cash, Check, ACH, Credit Card, All Sales Are Final. All Items Need To Be Paid For Within 48 Hours Of Auction Close. 10% Buyers Premium With A Cap Of 10% Per Item.

Go to HMAuction.com for more details or call 800-801-4502

HAMILTON-MARING Auction Group

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Adam Engen Lic# 25-93 | 507-213-0647 • Bill Hilton Lic# 50-24 | 507-279-9600
Andrew Hamilton Lic# 50-128 | 507-438-6693

CITY OF WASECA PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the City of Waseca **City Council** will consider **Ordinance No. 1117** at their meeting to be held at **7:00 p.m., Tuesday, August 20, 2024**, in the **COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL**, located at 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN.

Ordinance No. 1117 would adopt by reference a revised version of the 2024 International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) and amend portions of Chapter 91 (Public Nuisances), Chapter 116 (Rental Housing), and Chapter 150 (Building Regulations) of the Waseca Municipal Code.

A complete copy of Ordinance No. 1117 is available in the office of the City Clerk, Waseca City Hall, 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer Electronic 8/9 and Print 8/16