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**WASECA
COUNTY
PIONEER**

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

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Thursday, August 29, 2024



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Sweet summer



About 350 people visited during the event celebrating Keen Bank of Waseca's 150th anniversary. Elements during the celebration were a meal, live music, opportunities to visit with Sankovitz family members, and the public unveiling of the bank's new history timeline, on display in the building's lower level. Pictured from left: Max Gaytko, Peggy Hildebrandt, Ann Gaytko, Collin Worke, Liz Danger, Kevin Walter, Mikhail Rostislavovich, Diane Beckmann, Kristie Biehn, Dick Sankovitz, Bernie Gaytko, Gretchen Sankovitz, Jim Sankovitz, Tom Sankovitz, Larry Johnson, Abby Clemons, Tiffany Lynch, Marcy Buchele, Adam Worke and Amy Potter.



Keen Bank honored with Century Award

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors presented their Century Award to Keen Bank and the Sankovitz family on August 22, 2024, in recognition of the bank's 150th Anniversary of serving the community of Waseca. Past recipients have been the Waseca Mayo Clinic and the Waseca Lakeside Club.

Kristie Biehn the Ambassador Chair said, "The Century Award presented by the Chamber honors businesses that have demonstrated unwavering commitment to the community for 100 years or more. This

prestigious award recognizes chamber members whose longevity reflects resilience, adaptability, and a lasting impact on our local economy and community."

Marcy Buchele, Ambassador and Senior Vice President of United Prairie Bank of Waseca along with the other Chamber Ambassadors presented the award to Bernie Gaytko, president and CEO of Keen Bank saying, "Bernie, you and the entire Sankovitz family embody the spirit of tradition and progress, serving as pillars of the Waseca community and inspiring future

generations to build upon their legacy. The other ambassadors present were; Amy Potter, Kevin Walter, Diane Beckmann, Colin Worke, Peggy Hilderbrandt, Larry Johnson, Tiffany Lynch, and Mikhail Rostislavovich. After the presentation, the Sankovitz family showed the Ambassadors their History wall and gave an overview of the bank's historical timeline. After the tour, the Ambassadors joined over 200 hundred of the bank's patrons for pulled pork sandwiches with all the fixings with live music in the Keen Bank Parking lot.



Calonett to host Coach Finanger Invitation on September 6

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Calonett of rural Waseca is hosting a collegiate level 5k event featuring six colleges on Sept. 6 beginning around 5 p.m.

Walter, 75, and Cheryl, 70, Mishek, organized the 2024 Coach Finanger Invitational in honor of Cheryl's mentor and college cross country coach Kenton Finanger, 92. A collegiate coach for nearly three decades, Finanger holds more national championships at the Division 3 level at Luther College in Dubuque, Iowa, than any coach in the school's history.

Players, coaches and Luther alumni will begin arriving at the property, located at 14720 Old Highway 14, around 4 p.m. The women's division will run at 6 p.m.; the men's at 6:30.

The six schools competing in this officially sanctioned NCAA event are Gustavus, Luther College, Hamline, Bethany, St. Catherine and Martin Luther. More than 200 athletes are expected to run.

"Hopefully this will be a great honorary event for a well deserving coach," Walter said. "And a great event for all the athletes and spectators... The coaches who came to preview the course think it's going to be the prettiest, the best and the hardest course their athletes have ever run. Heartbreak Hill will be quite the event to see as runners

Finanger continued on 3

**A word from
The Word**

*The free gift of
God is eternal life.*

Romans 6:23



Waseca County commissioners and leaders, Waseca Chamber of Commerce members and others met with state-level leaders during a morning reception on Tuesday, August 20. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

State-level leaders visit county

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Area representatives, senators and candidates took part in a "legislative update" during the August 21 regular meeting of the Waseca County board of commissioners. Speaking for 10 or so minutes each were Representative Peggy Bennet (District 23A); Representative John Petersburg (District 19B); Tom Sexton, running for the District 19B seat for which Petersburg is not seeking reelection; Senator Gene Dornink (District 23); and Senator John Jasinski (District 19).

During the session, Commissioner

Doug Christopherson expressed frustration about what he perceives as a shift toward state-level control using farm field drainage as an example. "There are more and more permits needed, with more red tape, more permits, and more fees," he stated.

Petersburg, who has been a representative since 2013, told commissioners, "This biennium has been quite disappointing in a lot of different ways."

Petersburg criticized decisions made this past year as seeking too much jurisdiction at the state level. "We need to let those who are elected locally have more control," he stated.

Drawing a connection between "centralized control" and an increasing number of agencies and employees, he said "That doesn't sit well with those who actually know what's best for their communities."

He offered the example of school districts, which received funding increases but also had numerous new requirements imposed on them, so that "We haven't really given them any new money to work with."

Petersburg also commented that metropolitan area projects seemed to be prioritized, and expressed regret he was not able to steer funding toward infrastructure work and a new

water tower for the city of Waseca.

Representative Peggy Bennet also commented on funding for education, also expressing the opinion that, thanks to "sixty to seventy new mandates," the "unprecedented" amount of funding which went to schools does not provide the local flexibility she would rather see. She referred to the READ Act as "one ray of light" toward helping schools strengthen their literacy programs, and also mentioned some former barriers to having members of law enforcement

State continued on 2



County department heads and commissioners supplied the food and acted as servers for an appreciation lunch for county employees over the noon hour on Tuesday, August 19. Nearly 90 employees had reserved meals; on the menu were hamburgers, chips, beverages, a variety of salads and cookies.



Pioneer photos by Deb Bently

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

County considers grant application, Clear Lake harvester

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Waseca County Land and Water Resources Manager Chris Howard asked members of the county board of commissioners during their regular August 20 work session and meeting what they feel is the appropriate path forward for the "weed harvester" which has been used in Waseca's Clear Lake for the past three years.

Howard's extensive report regarding the harvester shared facts and information about the work it's been used to perform. He pointed out the machine's use to date has been partially funded under a federal program whose terms limited its use to Clear Lake only; with the federal money no longer in play going forward, Howard asked for guidance about how, and especially where, the harvester should be used in the future, proposing a \$45,000 budget for its use in 2025.

Mentioning that Clear Lake is known to have at least two invasive species of aquatic plants, Howard said the harvester is focused mainly on removing curly leaf pondweed. Over the past three years, Howard reported 399 truckloads, about 500 tons of plant material, have been removed. DNR regulations, he said, forbid harvesting any closer than 150 feet from shore, and also limit the process to only 138 specified acres within the lake's total area of 652. Howard

County continued on 2



Compostings

by Al Batt

The mystery of Croatoan explained

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING
I wish I could quit smoking. Have you ever tried?
Yes, but only between cigarettes.
DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Deep thoughts occur as I drive past his drive. Labor Day is galloping our way. It's the traditional day to take down the Christmas tree in the Batt Cave and for the man ahead of me in a checkout line to buy rubber bands. He must not have had a junk drawer. The most common item found there is the rubber band.

I spoke in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. I was thrilled by visits to Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Wright Brothers National Memorial at Kill Devil Hills, and Roanoke Island.

On August 1587, a group of 117 English settlers arrived on Roanoke Island, off the coast of what is now North Carolina. Later that year, the colonists decided that John White, the governor of the new colony, would sail to England to gather a load of supplies. Upon his arrival, a war broke out between England and Spain. Queen Elizabeth I called on every available ship to confront the mighty Spanish Armada. In August 1590, White returned to Roanoke, where he'd left his wife, daughter, infant granddaughter (Virginia Dare, the first English child born in the Americas) and the other settlers. White found a worm in his apple. There was no trace of the colony or its inhabitants and few clues to what might have happened, apart from the single word "Croatoan" carved into a wooden post. They'd disappeared like your brother-in-law when the collection plate was being passed. Croatoan was the name of an island (now Hatteras Island) south of Roanoke and home to a Native American tribe of that name. There are many theories about what happened. English settlers founded a colony 17 years later at Jamestown, a short distance to the north. I think about the Lost Colony every time I can't find something. It lessens my stress.

I'VE LEARNED

When you drive in opposite direction, you've made a wrong turn.

Be careful when carrying a vase of oopsie daisies.

If we are what we eat, shouldn't we be eating more rich foods?

When Midwesterners go to a casino, they win when they break even.

Men's belts shrink with age.

Cursive is a secret code only older people can read.

Eucalyptus is the only tree named

for the sound it makes when it's pruned.

What we need is a maximum wage law.

Money can't buy happiness because it's all used to buy votes.

Age is just a number found in deductibles, copays and coinsurance.

I can't get over how uplifting pole vaulting is.

Grilling steaks doesn't make you outdoorsy.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

Before the Iron Age, did people wear wrinkled clothing?

Is egagtrom another term for a reverse mortgage?

Would Noah be called a climate change extremist today?

How hard is it for a driver of a Jeep Compass to become lost?

Does artificial turf get artificial dandelions?

I made a tuna salad yesterday. It turns out tuna prefers herring.

The neighbor washed his car with his son. A chamois cloth would have worked better.

NATURE NOTES

I clung tenaciously to an agreeable day of incredible insect diversity. I noticed no wasp (hornet) looked cuddly, and cabbage white butterflies weren't everywhere, but they were trying. I looked up to check for winged ants. Cornfield and field ants swarm on late summer afternoons. Carpenter ants swarm in the spring. Thistle seeds blew in the wind. The striking orange and black painted lady is one of the most common butterfly species in the world and is called the thistle butterfly. It migrates to warmer climates in winter. Goldenrod bloomed. It isn't the bad guy that causes hay fever. Blame ragweed. Sunflowers and compass plants followed the sun. Chokecherries provided astringent fruit. Sumac turned red and wild cucumber bloomed. Crabgrass, an annual that gets its name from its stems that spread outward and resemble the legs of a crab, showed a dark-reddish stain.

Boxelder bugs congregate on buildings. This native insect feeds on boxelder, maple and ash trees. They love the warm sun on buildings with southern and western exposure. Adult boxelder bugs can easily fly several blocks and may travel as far as two miles. If you want them gone, a simple solution is to add Dawn liquid dishwashing soap to a spray bottle full of water and shake gently to combine. Spray directly on the bugs.

MEETING ADJOURNED

"Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves."—James M. Barrie. Be kind.

What are the three types of prayers?

I believe it was Grace Lutheran Church's Jillene Gallatin who once mentioned in my hearing that there are really only three types of prayers: "Please," "Thank you," and "Wow!"

As I write this over our warm weekend, I am definitely thinking along the lines of the third choice.

Though the options are endless, let me begin with trees.

The home I am visiting is ringed by timeless white pines, some of them probably 60 or 80 feet tall. Though I have long arms, I cannot reach all the way around most of them. Just now they are supplying shade on what threatens to become a hot, muggy day.

A few mountain ash trees in the vicinity are offering orange berries; a wooded area nearby has more types of vegetation than I can name. They are standing in soil that has hosted trees for millennia, and so which is composed of the forests which came before. Their branches intermingle, their leaves bud and grow in their turn, and the forest continues.

It is a busy place: birds are moving among the branches, squirrels are climbing around and collecting pine cones. Thanks to some feeders suspended among the branches, the hum and chitter of hummingbirds resonates.

Though none are here now, I have seen eagles keeping a lookout from the high branches of the evergreens. I cannot look at these trees without thinking "Wow!"

It seems I have already identified my next topic: birds. I am not sure which type I am more impressed



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

with, the ones that migrate or the ones that remain all through the winter. I am not sure how often I have mentioned hummingbirds in my column. If anything, I usually dissuade myself from writing about them because, once I start, I will have trouble stopping.

I hope you and your family have a chance to see these tiny wonders every once in a while. Thanks to their diminutive size, they would be easy to overlook if they didn't make so much noise. Not that you can hear them over heavy traffic or anything, but the distinctive "hum" of their rapidly moving wings is ear-catching. Then, of course, if there's more than one, they become downright argumentative. There might be 10 or more feeding ports, but still one will set itself up as gatekeeper and attack any others who come by.

The hummers at our feeders are constantly on the alert, not because of us or any human interference, but because they are positioning themselves to either fly away or fight back if another hummer should come swooping in.

Somehow, these tiny warriors manage to migrate north from South

America every spring and make their way back in fall. It's absolutely surreal: one day there might be a dozen or more little combatants charging about on our yard. The next day they are simply all gone, as though someone hit a "recall" button. How they know when it's time to leave and how they all manage to go at the same time are a mystery indeed.

Though the fiery action is over with the departure of the hummers, as the fall advances our regular feeders become busy places. The goldfinches, who have been small pieces of flying sunshine all summer, turn brown but stick around. The cardinals, bluejays, chickadees, nuthatches and others who have been a bit more reclusive all summer become more interested in the free food buffet. I am fascinated by the way nuthatches can walk face first down a tree trunk. I love the way chickadees come in, take one little seed, and fly away, almost as though they're embarrassed to be taking a handout. I shake my head in wonder as those winter birds come and go, somehow surviving through the frigid cold and harsh weather. Wow! And speaking of wonder, I have

just watched an awe-inspiring sunset. Every one of them, of course, is pretty amazing. Something you may not have noticed is how quickly they happen. It's happened lots of times I'll be driving as the sun is going down, and I will want to take a picture of whatever panorama happens to be unfolding that evening. It frequently happens that, in the few minutes it takes me to find a safe spot to pull over which also affords a reasonable view of the sky, the show has ended.

Our general perception, perhaps, is that sunrise and sunset are a gradual process—after all, the sun is overhead for quite a few hours every day—but the speed with which it's moving is positively phenomenal. And, of course, it's not actually the sun that's moving, it's planet earth, turning.

Down at the equator, our planet is almost exactly 24,000 miles in circumference. That makes for easy math: folks down there are spinning at 1,000 miles an hour. Up here, the earth is not as big around; based on some information I found online, we are spinning at about 750 miles an hour.

In the meantime, to make it around the sun in our 365-day year, we are flying through space at about 67,000 miles an hour. Wow!

And somehow, all those elements from the sun to our planet, from hummingbirds to regal evergreens, all interrelate in a tightly integrated system. The give and take among us all allows all of it to work.

Wow!

My first busy week of summer finally arrived

All my complaining about "nothing to do" this summer finally solved the problem - it's been a busy week with a lot of big firsts and changes. Come along with me as I process through them.

First, my family and I moved my younger sister into college for her freshman year. She is attending Winona State and is majoring in elementary education (bless her heart, I could not imagine being a teacher. All those who are teachers have my respect. I could not handle being with children all day every day). Like most new students, she was nervous about moving in—understandable when you are moving hours away from home for the first time.

But Lizzie had been preparing for college all summer, making sure she had everything from school supplies to cute clothes to decorations to make her dorm room feel comfy and welcoming. She found all the cutest decorations, including lights, a desk hutch, a snack cart, and a super cute knit blanket. I remember not putting in the same amount of effort, but



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

maybe I should have, as her room is literally adorable and I don't remember mine being that nice. Another way she approached the move differently from the way I did has to do with the other occupant of the room. I indicated I wanted my freshman roommate chosen at random: Lizzie found hers on a Winona student Facebook group. I'm happy she did, because from what I saw, she and her roommate seem to get along really well. They are both social, but also like to take naps and chill out in their room.

To my surprise, as we said our goodbyes and left her to continue unpacking, I was more excited than sad

to leave her. I know how much I have loved college, and I just know she's going to have an amazing time.

After we left, we headed to the bar because it just so happened to also be my twenty-first birthday. We went to a bar that I guess some cousin on my dad's side owns and it was pretty cool, but also kind of quiet for the middle of the afternoon on a Thursday. I had my first legal drink, a Malibu Coca Cola, and then we went home as we were all tired from the drive and helping Lizzie move.

On Friday I had my birthday party at the bar I work at; it was incredibly fun. Instead of serving the regulars, I was able to have fun and talk with

them for a longer time and not have to worry about doing my job. I received more cards and presents than I had expected, which was a really sweet surprise as I never expected or wanted them. I'm one of those people who doesn't make a big deal about my birthday; as far as I'm concerned, it's just another day. Heck, I don't feel any older.... And from what I have been told, that doesn't get any easier the older I get, when I'll probably not want to celebrate how old I am. But I'll wait until it comes to that.

The morning after, we packed up and headed up north to visit my grandparents and celebrate the last bits of summer, which was oddly also the hottest part of this summer that I can remember. Now I will be headed back up to school to stay for awhile. I'll be getting ready for my classes, my upcoming internship at MinnPost and, as always, work at the Minnesota Daily. This semester will surely be an interesting one.

My Determination: "It's just life, so keep dancing through." — Stephen Schwartz, Wicked

■ County

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explained permits are issued annually after the weeds in the lake are assessed and the DNR has determined the best ways of controlling them.

The second prominent invasive species in Clear Lake is Eurasian watermilfoil. Howard told commissioners plant removal is not an effective solution for the non-native plant because "as soon as it breaks in two, you have two viable plants." He reported two areas in Clear Lake, one 35 acres in size and another 42 acres, have been chemically treated to control curly leaf pondweed along with mechanical harvesting; the entire lake was treated with fluoridone in 2022 to help control the milfoil.

Howard said he is "excited" and "positive" about the difference the processes have made in Clear Lake. He said the machine itself is somewhat cumbersome to operate, especially the process of getting it in position to unload harvested material. The highly seasonal nature of the work also makes it difficult to keep trained staff. Despite these difficulties, however, he raised the possibility of transporting the machine to other settings.

In response to commissioner questions, he said the only request he has received for using it on other county lakes was whether the machine could be used to remove dead fish after a winter kill which had become evident in the spring of 2023. He revealed the machine is not set up for removing fish; to have complied, he would have had to have the harvester modified—and by the time the process

would have been complete, the fish would have been removed by natural processes.

He also described questions from fishermen, some of whom noticed there were fish among the weeds being removed. Howard said there was little that could be done about incidental catches, but also stated the staff makes a point of removing any turtles and larger fish they see tangled in the plant material.

Commissioner statements in response to Howard's report were positive. "I don't have a problem putting dollars into this program," stated commissioner Brad Krause.

In addition to county funds, commissioners suggested cities or lake associations could contribute to the costs of operation. "We've proven ourselves," stated Krause. "We can feel good about asking for support."

In business during the regular

meeting, commissioners heard a legislative update from a number of state-level leaders. Those comments are summarized in another article elsewhere in this edition.

Waseca Chamber of Commerce director Ann Fitch appeared during the public comment section of the meeting. She thanked commissioners for funding provided toward a summer internship program which helped provide area organizations with college-age workers. She described how the intern at the Chamber of Commerce began the summer communicating almost solely with "shoulder shrugs and smiles," but had advanced to being a very effective worker. Fitch pointed out the exposure to local employment would serve to encourage young people to seek out opportunities locally, rather than assuming they would have to live in a more urban setting to advance their careers.



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■ State

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as a presence in school buildings—referred to as a "resource officer"—have been removed. "Resource officers are back for those districts that want them," she stated.

Senator Gene Dornink criticized the DFL majority for its emphasis on creating an omnibus spending bill when the second year of a biennium has always previously been dedicated to "bonding" and "infrastructure." He mentioned a lawsuit has been filed claiming that this year's "omnibus" bill is unconstitutional.

He expressed pleasure, though,

with the bipartisan cooperation he experiences as a member of the agriculture committee, where he feels some good progress was made. As a member of the labor and industry committee, he expressed frustration that recommendations and action seem to be aimed more toward larger businesses, with minimal attention paid to the smaller businesses which are so important in outstate Minnesota.

Senator John Jasinski also referred to 2024 as a "tough" session, in which "lots of bad policy" was passed. He accused Democrats of creating the omnibus bill to advance their own agenda and fund initiatives rather than working on infrastructure.

After eight years in the senate, Jasinski called the 2023-2024 bien-

nium "The worst two years I've ever seen."

He classified this year's transportation bill, which passed unanimously, as a "bright spot" and expressed frustration with a change which now divides prison sentences for those convicted of minor crimes "half and half," meaning that 50 percent of the sentence will be spent behind bars and 50 percent will be served as probation.

Jasinski commented he hopes the next round of elections will undo the current DFL "trifecta."

"You want some checks and balances in the decision-making process," he said of this year's circumstances. "We don't want to leave 49 percent of the state without representation."

Candidate Tom Sexton drew attention to the shrinking number of people interested in law enforcement careers. He told commissioners his wife, Waseca resident Jeanne Sexton, had been rear-ended in a traffic accident only hours before, stated his gratitude for the quick, professional response by law enforcement and safety personnel.

He quickly pointed out, though, that "there is a crisis" in the law enforcement field which stems from the many restrictions and the threat of prosecution which have been imposed on the profession in the recent past. Sexton claimed "We're going to have to make some tough decisions," then said he looks forward to the opportunity to represent Waseca-area citizens at the legislative level.

■ Finanger

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come up for the finals.”

Following the event, competing athletes, approximately 30 Wasecans who are Luther graduates, and volunteers and staff will be staying for a complimentary dinner of sloppy joes, potato salad, coleslaw, potato chips, cookies, and an assortment of cakes and pies - all catered and prepared by Calonett Farm’s personal chef, Bradley Blackhawk.

Members of the general public are invited to come view the race and are encouraged to begin arriving around 5 p.m. and bring their own chairs if they would like. Wiste’s Food truck from Janesville and Snow Biz of Waseca will be on hand serving food available for purchase by the public. Parking and admission to the race are free.

Polka Service, meal at St. Paul Lutheran Church beginning at 5 p.m. September 7

A polka service and meal will be available at the St. Paul Lutheran Church beginning at 5 p.m. on Saturday, September 7. Everyone is welcome. Music provided by Chuck Thiel & The Jolly Ramblers.

Flood relief lunch and silent auction at St. John Lutheran 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sept. 15

A free will lunch and silent auction fundraiser will be from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at St. John’s Lutheran Church, 401 Third Ave NE, Waseca, on Sunday, Sept. 15. The meal will include hot beef sandwiches, salads and chips. Money raised will benefit three Waterville families who are members at the church and whose homes were damaged by flooding.

“Charlatan’s Cabinet” display beginning Sept. 17 at the Waseca County Historical Society

The Waseca County Historical Society is located at 315 Second Avenue NE in Waseca, and is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesdays through Fridays. The new fall exhibit, “The Charlatan’s Cabinet” features “the dark side” of medicine and some of the tricks and deception used to market medical products early in the twentieth century. Visit the display any time during the museum’s open hours at no cost. Visit the wasecacountyhistory-center.org website for more information or call 507-835-7700.

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.

Council pay, cannabis zoning questioned

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Members of the Waseca City Council unanimously approved a new ordinance regarding the “cultivation, manufacturing, processing, and extraction of cannabis, hemp, and THC products in the Industrial-2 zoning district” during their regular city council meeting Aug. 20.

City Attorney Chris Kennedy reminded the council that cannabis businesses can’t be treated differently than other, similar businesses. “We must be consistent on everything,” Kennedy said.

At the Aug. 7 meeting, the same ordinance was tabled for review of various setback options to residential housing districts from the I-2 zone.

After review, Kennedy said the city would be risking a lawsuit by the State if they were to only restrict cannabis manufacturing by regulating the setback distances.

Following the approval of the new ordinance, the council approved a motion to direct city staff to review the uses of I-1 and I-2 zones in relation to cannabis manufacturing.

The Waseca Investment group may be moving forward with development of the city owned Waseca Marketplace property. A few months earlier in the 2024 calendar, the local investment group came before the council to tell them they were unlikely to move forward with their project due to a lack of funding. At Tuesday night’s meeting, however,

WASECA CITY COUNCIL

Tim Collins informed the council they’ve made significant progress and are optimistic that the project could see a shovel in the ground by spring of 2025.

The exclusive rights contract for the Waseca Group to purchase the property ends Sept. 20 and Collins asked the council to put the idea of an extension of the contract on their radar.

“We feel good about it,” Collins concluded. “It’s gonna be great for the community.”

A heated discussion regarding whether to cut city council and

mayor’s salaries to \$1 per meeting for the coming year ended in a 4-3 vote.

Council members currently earn \$587 per month and the mayor receives \$728 per month. The rates were last adjusted in 2004. An additional technology reimbursement program is capped at \$1,000 per council member, per year.

During the public comment portion of the meeting, prior to the discussion on salaries, Gary Dobberstein told the council the topic of cutting salaries should be discussed. “You get the quality you pay for,” he stated. “I hope this [po-

Waseca continued on 8

JANESVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Janesville accepts Abdo’s 5-year plan

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

During their regular monthly meeting on August 12, Janesville city council members approved a long-term debt management plan suggested by Annette Stom of the consulting firm Abdo Financial Solutions. Stom told council members the five-year plan represents her firm’s analysis of the city’s general fund balance and budget status going forward.

On December 31, 2023, the general fund had a 41 percent unassigned balance. The Minnesota auditor’s office defines an adequate reserve as being between 35 and 50 percent of the city’s annual operating budget. The city has a policy in place which specifies maintaining a forty-percent balance.

Abdo’s analysis predicts the balance will remain within the 35- to 50-percent range until 2026, when it will dip below 35 percent. To achieve the city’s fund balance policy of 40 percent, either a transfer from the capital funds identified in the policy would need to occur or city taxes would need to be increased by about eight percent in 2025.

The city’s tax levy is projected to increase from \$1.2 million, certified in 2024, to \$1.5 million over the duration of this five-year plan. The levy increase will result in an increase in the projected tax rate, growing from 61 to 65 percent. Meanwhile tax capacity is assumed to grow at a three-percent rate. Stom said a growth in tax capacity in excess of these projections may result in lower tax rates in future years.

The annual tax amount for Janesville homes of median assessed value are projected to increase from \$1,227 in 2024 to \$1,280 over the plan’s longevity.

The total debt outstanding is projected to increase from \$8.9 million in 2023 to \$11.6 million over the duration of this plan. Stom said Abdo anticipates the city will need to borrow money in 2027 and 2029. Consequently, the debt per capita will increase from \$3,634 in 2023 to an estimated \$4,474. The total cash position of the city is projected to increase from \$7.9 million in 2023 to \$15.7 million in 2029.

As she reviewed the capital reserve fund with the city council, she pointed out that because of the two recent major street improvements, the property tax levy is projected to double from \$50,000 to \$100,000 so the city can sustain those for the proposed capital improvements.

“There is a debt service activity section that we have yet to see,” Stom said. “So for this particular fund, we are proposing that there is going to be debt issued in 2027 and 2029 for those particular street improvements.”

Council continued on 8

Sweets sounds of summer

Janesville’s ‘Music in the Park’ series continues through September

Generation Gap performed Aug. 22

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The sun was on its way down and kids were screaming at the playground. The wind carried the smell of hotdogs through the crowd. The fourth session of the city’s “Music in the Park” series was the evening of Thursday, August 22.

Performing on stage was the band Generation Gap, a duo of Rod Scheitel and Carter Quast, who are grandfather and grandson. A banner with ‘Music in the Park Series’ written in big letters waved in the breeze behind them. Ariana Aguilar, Miss Janesville 2024, elegantly dressed and wearing a sash and tiara, took a few minutes to enjoy her dinner at the picnic table near the stage before she returned to mingling and taking photographs with people in the crowd. Everyone looked like they were happy.

Kendra Hoehn and Mark Schultz, who will celebrate the fifth anniversary of owning Brew’d Awakenings Bistro in September, manned a table at the edge of the park selling drinks and Dilly Bars. Hoehn and Schultz also own the Dairy Queen in Janesville; they have also owned Infinity Catering & Shuttle for the past 7 years. Schultz said he was happy to provide his services to the festivities, “It’s a community event and we’re helping when we can.”

Hoehn and Schultz said aside from a weather cancellation and reschedule from June 27 to July 11, and a band cancellation on July 25, everything else has been great. Even though the band ATA, (Another Time Around) canceled, that open spot



Kendra Hoehn and Mark Schultz, owners of Infinity Catering & Shuttle, Brew’d Awakenings Bistro and Dairy Queen in Janesville offered a variety of tasty food items during the city’s “Music in the Park” series on August 22, 2024. Photo by Ben Revermann

was quickly filled by the band High Strung, out of Mankato. High Strung plays the 60s, 70s and many other cover songs. Schultz reported the Janesville Music in the Park series this summer has been a big hit with more people showing up at each event as the summer went on.

Paul and Shelly Voges, 28-year residents of Janesville, organized the events. The couple says they love live music and have a very musical family of six children. They pointed to the Wiste’s food truck and said, “Ryan with Wiste’s has been just amazing.” They admit the series has gone so much better than they thought it would. Said Paul, “The city council has been very supportive. We plan on expanding on this even more next year. Keeping ev-

everything here local helps make it that much easier.”

Also a feature of the evenings has been a school supply drive and collecting donations for the Janesville Food Shelf, which received \$500 because of these events.

Anyone who missed the former Music in the Park events can catch the next one on Sept 19. The band Family Tradition will be performing country music, both old and new, with some rock and pop mixed in. There may be a sixth Music in the Park event in the Veteran’s Memorial Park in Janesville, but that date hasn’t been set yet. The Voges recommend that folks watch the Janesville Facebook page for any updates or cancellations.

Mason Wadd continues annual sweet corn sales

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Located in front of the Waseca Bomgaars’ parking lot is a small-scale business labeled “Mason’s Sweet Corn.” The proprietor of the stand and the man working it himself is Mason Wadd, 17; he’s been selling his corn for the past 5 years.

Wadd lives about 5 miles north of Waseca, and is a senior at Waseca High School. The corn is his full-time job, but he sometimes volunteers out at FarmAmerica or pulls in summer hours at Morgan’s Meat Market. Right now, he’s just saving

up for college. His sister Kloe used to sell sweet corn also but she’s off to college in Crookston. Wadd hasn’t applied for any colleges, but says he still has time since he’s only beginning his senior year. When pressed about what he would like to major in during college, he says he’s uncertain, but is leaning toward writing or psychology.

Each day from 10 a.m. till the corn is gone, Wadd is out manning Mason’s Sweet Corn. The price is \$8 for a dozen ears, \$5 for a half dozen.

Wadd continued on 5



Mason Wadd, 17, selling his corn at Mason’s Sweet Corn stand in the Bomgaars parking lot on Saturday, August 20, 2024. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann



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OBITUARIES

Eileen Morgan

EILEEN ANN MORGAN, age 92 of Janesville died on Friday, August 23, 2024 at Whispering Creek in Janesville.

Born on August 28, 1931, in Waseca, Minnesota, she was the daughter of George and Goldie (Armstrong) Berry. She graduated from Sacred Heart High School in 1949 where she was crowned Homecoming Queen. She went on to attend Mankato Commercial College. Eileen married James Morgan on February 6, 1951 at St. Mary's Church in Waseca County. Following their marriage, they lived in Arkansas for a short time while James was in the service before returning to Minnesota where they lived and farmed in Iosco Township. Eileen also worked at Preuss' Bakery in Waseca and later worked at the Janesville Nursing Home and Lake Shore Inn in Waseca in the dietary department. She also was a cook in the Waterville Schools. Eileen enjoyed baking, cooking, tending her gardens, and sewing. She especially enjoyed entering her various canned and baked goods in the local county fair. Eileen was a long time member of Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Waterville, Catholic Daughters, and the Red Hat Society.

She is survived by four children, Patrick (Angel) Morgan of Janesville, Keith (Lori) Morgan of Janesville, Jane (Mark) Vortherms of Avon, and Dean (Barb) Morgan of New Richland; 12 grandchildren; and 15 great grandchildren. She is also survived by two sisters-in-law, Helen Berry of Altura and Therese Berry of Minnesota Lake; brother-



Eileen Morgan

in-law, Joe (Kathy) Morgan of Florida; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband; two brothers, James and Roland Berry; and infant great-granddaughter, Ada Lloyd.

Visitation was held on Monday, August 26, 2024 from 4-7 PM at the Waterville Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service. Visitation continued on Tuesday, one hour before services at the church.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, August 27, 2024 at 11:00 AM at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Waterville. Burial followed at St. Jarlath Cemetery in Iosco Township, Waseca County.

A special thank you to Dr. Xu and the nursing staff at MCHS-Mankato, the staff at Whispering Creek, and St. Croix Hospice for the exceptional care provided.

Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service

Ruth Gaylord

Ruth A. Gaylord, born September 6, 1942 in Waseca, MN, Ruth was a lifelong teacher and learner. She lived as a Franciscan sister for 9 years. She received a BA in Music from St. Theresa's College in Winona and an MA in Choral Conducting from the University of Minnesota. She taught music and led choirs at multiple high schools, including Hill-Murray, Grace, CDH, and Trinity School at River Ridge, where she founded the music program and taught for 19 years.

A 25-year Ovarian Cancer survivor and warrior, she was committed to furthering medical research to fight and end Ovarian Cancer. She was a 20-year resident of Becketwood Cooperative, where she had many beloved friends and was committed to her community. She sang in many Twin Cities choirs, including The Minnesota Chorale, The Augsburg Masterworks Chorale and The Basilica Choir. She was delighted to share her love of singing wherever possible. She married Bob Gaylord in 1970. They had 5 children together, were divorced in 2002, and remained close friends until her death.

She is survived by her children, Christian (Karen), Simon, Angela



Ruth Gaylord

(Chad), Andrew (Ruth), and Anne (John); 13 grandchildren, Adrienne and Sophia Gaylord, Devin, Isaiah, Landen, Ava and Aspen Winter, Corey and Isabella Nicholson, Samuel and Eve Naughtin and Henry and Gwentyth Gaylord; 3 sisters, Marie (Paul), Joyce (Dale) and Sheila (George) and brother Steve (Susie); Many nieces and nephews; Many close friends. She is preceded in death by her mother and dad, Dorothy and Robert Powell. A funeral will be held at the Basilica of Saint Mary, 88 N 17th St, Minneapolis, MN 55403, on Friday, August 30th at 11am, Visitation at 10am.



Volunteers at the Doggy Playdate and Picnic at Waseca's Memorial Park, left to right: Elain Spain; program coordinator Tammi Roeller; Pam Rudolf; PC assistant Jill Tobin; Kelly Parkinen; Sharon Jones; (kneeling) Iditarod musher Linda Jay; Linda Henslin; Kelly Boeddeker and Mike Singletad.

A memorable doggy play date

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Waseca's Memorial Park next to Barney's Drive-In on the south side of Clear Lake was bustling Saturday, August 24 with a "Doggy Play Date and Picnic" on the Dog Park grounds which began at 10 a.m. and continued until 2. A central attraction for the day was Iditarod dog sled musher Linda Jay, who spoke regarding her experiences as a four-time participant. Also present was Sparky, the Waseca Fire Department mascot. Picnic food was provided by Barney's Drive-In which included a hot dog, chips and a drink for \$9. Tickets for food were available at the Waseca Dog Park, otherwise this was a free event.

The day began with the "Tail Wagging Talent show." A puppy/dog costume contest and canine race followed. Sparky was present early in the event

Kelly Boeddeker, executive director of Waseca Area Caregiver Services (WACS), organized the day's event with help from numerous volunteers. WACS is a 501C nonprofit

organization whose published aim is, "To give back to caregivers. Also to educate people about what we do." Boeddeker explained "caregivers" are people who have family members or loved ones requiring around-the-clock assistance and supervision. Caregiver Services' aim is to provide safe places and suitable activities for elderly persons who spend much of their time alone. It also provides caregivers with much-needed free time and a break. The organization also sometimes arranges help with light handiwork and cleaning tasks, as well as meal and future meal preparation.

Linda Jay, a four-time Iditarod dog sled musher, was present to answer questions, pose for photos or tell stories about her journey across Alaska's frozen backlands. The Iditarod is the well-known, 938-mile dog sledding competition that has been held since 1973. Jay competed in 1996, 97,98 and 99. Mushers and their teams travel across Alaska from Anchorage to Nome; they are typically en route about 15 days. Waseca resident Jay was able to complete it

in 13.

Jay was raised in Key West Florida, a fifth generation, self-described "military brat." After her daughter graduated high school, Jay began volunteering at the University of Minnesota Hospital, Hugo/Centerville. There she helped special needs children on a trip up north so the kids could try dog sledding. She was inspired by Libby Riddles, the first woman to win the Iditarod in 1985, and Susan Butcher, who was not only the second woman to win, but went on to retain the title from 1986 to 1989. Their accomplishments fueled her desire to compete. She said, "When I first got to Alaska, I found 38 great dogs and not one man."

Jay commented on how quiet things were up north. She said she did not sleep every day of the 13 it took her to complete the race. Although she made sure her dogs did, she didn't always have time. "When you stop to rest, the dogs need sleep, but you can't. You have to check their pads, feed them, rub them down when they're cramping. Then you

have to eat, check your sled, make sure the dogs are resting. But the quiet, out there on the Yukon River while I was training, the Northern Lights were spirits, and they told tales. Not a person around for miles."

Another feature of the doggy play day was a Puppy/Doggy Race which took place in one of the fenced-in areas. Eleven dogs competed by running across the field from owner to owner. First place was a black and tan Doberman female named Shelby, owner Dan Bruns. Second Place was a black lab male named Bud; his owner is Morgan Stubbkiewicz. Third Place was Layla, a Siberian Husky female, owner Chris Ryan.

Donations for the dog competition were from Barney's Drive-In, Condon Farm Service, the American Legion and Camp Canine. Anyone wishing to attain the services of Waseca Area Caregiver Services, can find them at www.wasecacaregivers.com.

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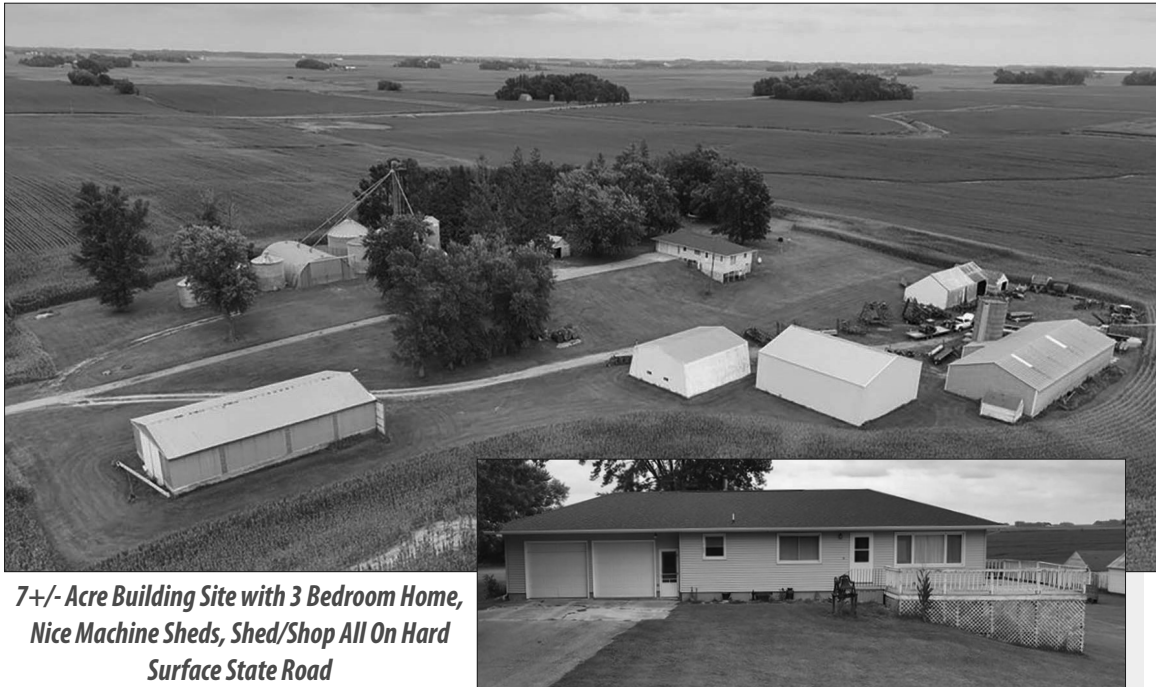
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Is it okay to use cruise control during any rain?

ASK A TROOPER
By Sgt. Troy Christianson of the Minnesota State Patrol

Question: My husband always used to say "never use your cruise control during any rain".

Is that still true with advances on tires and technology?

Answer: He is correct, cruise control should never be used on wet or icy roadways. If your wheels lose traction, the cruise control will continue to accelerate, causing the vehicle to skid. By the time you realize you are skidding, it could be too late.

With dry road conditions, cruise control helps you safely monitor your speed, stay within the speed limit and improve driving comfort on long, fairly straight stretches of road. It should be used only when you are able to drive at a steady speed with safe road conditions.

On icy, snow-covered or wet roads.

When deciding if you should set your cruise control:

- Ask yourself if it's safe to travel the speed limit. If not, it isn't safe to set your cruise.
- Is there limited visibility? If it's foggy, snowing, or raining and your range of visibility is significantly reduced, play it safe. Don't set your cruise.
- Is traffic moving smoothly? If it's stop-and-go, or there's heavy traffic around you, it's not safe to use cruise.

Remember that using your cruise control can be an advantage when driving long distances, but YOU are your vehicle's best safety

feature.

Question: Hello, we took a trip to the cities this summer. While down there we came across these freeway ramp meters. I know we don't have those in out-state Minnesota but I thought you might be able to write about it in one of your articles for anyone that travels. Thank you for all you do and be safe!

Answer: Thank you. I don't believe this is a topic I've wrote about before but I'd be happy to do so.

Ramp meters are signal lights on freeway entrance ramps that help control the flow of merging traffic. Like traffic signals at intersections, red, yellow, and green lights indicate when drivers can proceed. Only one car may proceed each time the light is green.

One Car Per Green Light: Used with freeway ramp meters at on-ramps to indicate that one car may proceed each time the light turns green.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson — Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us)



Dale Paulson won third place with his 1963 Chevy Impala.



Various scenes from the 2024 Waldorf burger and sweet corn feed which followed the annual car and truck show.



Rick Kendall won second prize with his 1950 Mercury.



Woody and Lori Underwood won first prize with their black 1969 Pontiac GTO.

Hundreds attend annual Waldorf event

Woody and Lori Underwood take first place in antique car and truck show

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Some 52 vintage automobiles were entered in the Waldorf Antique Car and Truck Show the afternoon of Friday, August 23, from 4 to 7:30 p.m. Winners included Woody and Lori Underwood who won first prize with their 1969 Pontiac GTO. In second

place was Rick Kendall with his 1950 Mercury; taking third was Dale Paulson with his 1963 Chevy Impala. Mayor Rob Wilkening had his own pick, a 1930 Model A Ford, owned by Neal Roesler.

The evening continued with the city Fire and Rescue department's annual sweet corn and burger feed from 5:30 to 8 p.m. With around 500

people in attendance, the serving line was out the door of the Community Center almost the entire time. For \$10, customers could choose a burger or hot dog, sweet corn, potato chips and all the burger fixings.

After that was the dance which had a \$10 admission fee; those paying for both the meal and the dance received a discounted price of \$15. The band

playing on August 23 in Waldorf was Red Dirt Road, a national band based out of Mankato. The group's website says about their music, "Top 40 Country music with great harmonies, killer musicianship, and an arena style light show." The dance went from 8:30 until midnight.

Cover crop strategies field day September 10

The University of Minnesota Extension and Olmsted County SWCD will host a field day focusing on cover crop strategies.

This free event will run 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. on September 10, located at Steve Lawler's place in Eyota (44.023910, -92.341220).

University of Minnesota Extension and Lawler Farms will host a field day from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. on September 10th, focusing on the A - Z of cover crop strategies. We'll highlight keeping the ground covered via inter-seeding cover crops into soybeans/corn and harvestable cash crops like Winter Camelina/oats. We'll have speakers from Albert Lea Seed, UMN Extension, Forever Green Initiative, Minnesota Ag Water Quality Program (MAWQCP), Olmsted SWCD, MN Soil Health

Coalition and NRCS. Highlights include species selection and equipment discussions from local farmers, a cover crop cost-share comparison resource, termination and grazing options, troubleshooting cover crop challenges and partner organization resources. We'll follow the event with dinner and a beef raffle. See the attached flyer for more details. Register by September 3 to secure a meal.

Registration and event information can be found at z.umn.edu/keepitcovered.

For more news from U of M Extension, visit www.extension.umn.edu/news or contact Extension Communications at extnews@umn.edu. University of Minnesota Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

Craftsman demonstrates hand tools at library gathering

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

"From 1885 up through the 1930s was 'The Golden Age of hand tools,'" said Jeff Dickie as he grabbed his antique handsaws.

Waseca resident Dickie gave a presentation regarding his hobby of collecting and using vintage tools to a small group at the Waseca library the evening of August 19. He told audience members that, with the arrival of the Great Depression in America, a severe decline in the quality of hand tools was happening because of WWII. The country needed metals and materials to support the war effort. The corresponding decrease in supplies on the home front led people to perform repairs rather than construction. That work was easier with electric tools, which were becoming more and more feasible as even rural residences were acquiring access to electricity. The rather abrupt change left many hand tools collecting dust.

Dickie said his father worked in insurance but did light handiwork around the house. He, however, got into the hand tool bracket when he bought his own house at age 23. Until then, he said, he had not paid much attention to hand tools. Dickie

moved to Waseca in 1968 from Rochester when he was a junior in high school; he has been a resident ever since. When he first moved here, there were three private professional saw sharpeners working from their homes in town. In addition, the hardware stores also offered the service.

In contrast, Dickie is the only saw-sharpener in town that he knows of. He said he learned the skill from an 80-year-old man. "Back in the '30s and '40s, everyone sharpened their saws themselves," he explained. Dickie got so good with tools he began flipping houses.

Another thing that led to the explosion of power tools was they became cheap very quickly, tempting more people to buy them. When WWII soldiers came home, many of them had been using power tools and products in the military. Once home, they wanted that same product and Black and Decker was happy to supply them. During the war, Black and Decker had switched its production lines to fuses, shells, and other products to contribute to the war effort, but Dickie said the company had prepared for an increase in power tool sales when the war was over.



Jeff Dickie demonstrated his old-fashioned hand tools at the Waseca Public Library on August 19. Pictured here with his favorite tool, a 1905 Pic Stanley 55.

Photo by Ben Revermann

Dickie pulled out a saw from the 1950s and pointed to the handle made of wood. In addition to the distinct shape, it was decorated with a few leafy designs. Then he took out a saw made in the 1800s: "This saw was in use when Custer was still in command." The wooden saw handle from the nineteenth century looked like something that belonged in an art show, leafy patterns flowered around the entire hand hold. Dickie pointed out the craftsman who made the older saw had put much more personalized effort into his work.

Dickie took out a miter box and showed how it could cut molding at a wide range of precise angles. His miter box was from 1902 and Dickie himself couldn't believe how accurate it was. Of the vintage tools he

owns, Dickie said, "It was easier to get into tools when I was younger because they were cheaper. Back then you could buy a full set of tools for \$100. Now a table saw itself costs \$350 or more. It's outrageous."

Dickie's named a 1905 Pic Stanley 55 hand planer as his favorite tool. He mentioned it was in production from 1899 to 1962, and is frequently referred to as "The Swiss Army Knife of Planers," meaning it can be used for a wide variety of purposes. For decades it outperformed every other planer on the market. Even today it sells with the promise of bringing back the pleasant 'whoosh' of a plane tool as opposed to the scream of a router. Jeff Dickie is keeping old tools alive and well.

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■ Wadd from Page 3

But Wadd doesn't limit himself to the parking lot in front of Bomgaars, he

also sells his sweet corn every Saturday at the Waseca Farmers Market. There is also another produce stand in front of his house in the country, but that is on the honor system because Wadd can't be in two places at once.

Because it was a little bit after

noon, his friend Pablo Alvarez pulled up in his car and got out eating a Dairy Queen ice cream. In his other hand was a bag filled with Wadd's lunch. Devoted to his sweet corn business, Wadd said he didn't leave out of fear he might miss or inconvenience a customer.

Said Wadd, "With the weather this year, it got a little tricky. Wednesday through Sunday I move 60-70 dozen [ears] per day, average. Mondays and Tuesdays it's much slower, 15-16 dozen." He goes on to mention his dad helps some with the work and his mother, Kari Wadd, who is also program coordinator for FarmAmerica, helps when she can.

Wadd said that when it comes to sweet corn for himself, he prefers something with spice, "Just butter, salt and pepper doesn't do it for me. I

need Lawry's Seasoned Salt or something like chili and lime." When asked about extracurricular activities at school, he said he likes theater and speech. He then said "Deadpool & Wolverine" was the best out of the three Deadpool movies. He hasn't seen "Alien: Romulus" yet, but he's looking forward to it.

The Mason's Sweet Corn stand sits in the Bomgaars parking lot overnight, Wadd said, "We bought it from a guy who was retiring [and] didn't need it anymore." From field to tote, from tote to Mason's Sweet Corn stand, Mason Wadd is marketing his product Monday through Friday along State Street North. Saturdays he and his sweet corn can be found at the Waseca Farmers Market at the county fairgrounds.

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More than 100 attend Back to School Bash

Christian Assembly’s Wickersheim: ‘I can make a sword, a wiener dog, a rabbit and a giraffe’



Manny Miller and Peyton Chenex were trying their best at the water balloon toss at the Christian Assembly Back to School Bash on Saturday, August 24, 2024. Photos by Ben Revermann



By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Christian Assembly held its free Back to School Bash at the southeast edge of Waseca the evening of Saturday, August 24. Children of all ages were encouraged to attend with the only requirement being a sign in sheet. More than 130 people showed up to the event held on church property with about 25 purple-shirted volunteers scattered throughout.

Two of the volunteers for the Christian Assembly Evangelical Church of Waseca, Jan Ross and Debbie Webster, were busy supplying energetic children with popcorn. While one woman told helped direct children to various features, another was filling bags of popcorn, adding butter and salt. Said Webster, “We just want to get kids interested in church and Sunday school, get families here talking about Jesus.” They brought the popcorn to the sign-up table and got back to work.

Pastor Wayne Matthews and Brad and Gayle Wickersheim were busy twisting and turning long balloons into various animal shapes. Said Wickersheim, “I got some lessons from a children’s pastor about balloon animals: I can make a sword, a wiener dog, a rabbit and a giraffe.” Matthews said he had hoped for at least a hundred children to attend the day’s event. “We did this as an outreach to the community before school starts,” he explained. The message, he said, is to say “We love you. We’re praying for you and for the teachers.” Back-to-school energy was in the air and all around during the Christian Assembly event.

Along with popcorn and balloon animals was a line of stations for children to choose among. Lisa Mokoff, a member of the church, helped with face painting. The paint was donated by Christian Assembly. Mokoff owns Grooming with Sunshine for pets in Waseca, “I wanted to do my part and we definitely want more kids here for church. I hope a lot of kids show up today,” she commented.

Next to the face painting there was a giant Jenga game; children who managed to pull out a wood block without knocking over the tower were awarded with a prize. A giant inflatable pirate ship was rocking as the shouting children inside chased and bounced each other around. Also available were the bowling pin challenge, the soda ring toss, and the duck pond. An apparent favorite was the water balloon toss; no matter how wet their t-shirts or shorts were, the line just seemed to grow as children were clamoring for, “One more time, can we have one more turn?” Still more options were a basketball challenge, a bean bag toss, and another bounce house rocking because of the screaming and laughing children.

Christian Assembly is at the southeast corner of Waseca at 900 14 Ave. S.E. The church invites new members, and can be contacted at 507-833-1082.



Kaia Albrecht deciding which picture to get painted on her face by Lisa Mokoff at the Christian Assembly Back to School Bash on Saturday August 24, 2024.

Below, Jaxon Johnson playing the bowling pin challenge at the Christian Assembly Back to School Bash Saturday night.



The Pastor’s Column

Going the extra mile can change everything

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

Go the extra mile. This saying has been used to emphasize the need to do a job well and to completion, but the etymology of this saying takes us back to the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5. Jesus is just beginning His ministry and is speaking to crowds who are hearing Him for the first time. Jesus is clarifying and expanding upon the Old Testament laws, calling for a transformation of the heart and turning people from a legalistic view of the law into the realization that they need the Messiah to fulfill the law.

Matthew 5:38-42 reads:

38 "You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. 39 But I tell you, don't resist an evildoer. On the contrary, if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 As for the one who wants to sue you and take away your shirt, let him have your coat as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and don't turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

These sayings may seem like they are unconnected and disjointed, but they describe how to deal with unjust situations in our lives. The Old Testament describes the justice that was allowed to be meted out for injuries, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Equal justice for intentional injuries incurred.

Jesus clarifies for us how to deal with unjust situations. Turning the other cheek, give up your coat, go the extra mile, lend to those that can't repay. Our perspective when bad things happen should shift from seeking justice to trusting that God has a plan for

it. No one likes to deal with unjust situations but trusting that God is going to work through it helps us keep an eternal perspective.

In Roman society a citizen-soldier could command non-citizens to carry their sixty plus pounds of armor one mile. Non-citizens knew how far one mile was, they would take the exact number of steps to make it one mile and would lay their burden down as soon as they could. Jesus asks us to go the extra mile, why? It is unjust, you are not required to do it, but it could change everything for you.

We deal with life in an eternal perspective. Every unjust situation is there to teach you to trust God more. Trust in His sovereign plan, focus on His grace and mercy. He is extending His offer of salvation to all peoples and maybe in your response to injustice someone may ask, why? Then in that moment you can reveal God's love to them and for them.

We were all once sinners in need of grace, we sought to take matters into our own hands and hurt others unjustly, we sought our own selfish gain, we demanded our own comfort, or sought to take advantage of others. I am glad that God still extended His hand of mercy and grace to me in the midst of my sin, and I am sure you are too. So friends, go the extra mile, it may make all the difference in the world to those that are watching you. In going the extra mile remember that in each step you are expanding the impact of the kingdom of God, and God will use your willingness to see others come to know Him.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m. * * *	REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca 507-607-8245 Sunday worship 10 a.m. * * *	Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH 412 N. Main Street, Janesville Interim Pastor Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:15 a.m. Worship * * *
4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m. * * *	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m. * * *	VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Brian Schanil Pastor Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark * * *	JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship * * *
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m. * * *	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m. * * *	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father Glenn Ferichs Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m. * * *	BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 43089 180th St., Morristown Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Summer worship hours, (10:45 a.m. Worship, winter) * * *
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Worship Sundays traditional 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship; 10:45 a.m. contemporary service * * *	CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY 900 14th Ave SE, Waseca 507-833-1082 Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m. * * *	FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Larry Sipe Sundays: Worship 8 a.m.; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class * * *	ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St, Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass * * *
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m. * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship * * *	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship * * *	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 Owen St., Janesville Pastor Sarah Krolak * * *
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 314 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-2647 Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m. * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship * * *	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday — 9 a.m. Worship * * *	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * *
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: lcwaseca@hickorytech.net) Worship Sunday 10 a.m. * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting * * *	ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Smiths Mill, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship * * *
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m. * * *	LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting * * *	THE CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS Brad Donner, Branch President Waseca, Minnesota www.lds.org Sunday — 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18 * * *	NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 404 30 120th St. Waseca Pastor Sarah Krolak 507-234-6463 Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; Second Sunday — “Young at heart” Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation * * *
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca Father Glenn Ferichs 507-835-1222 Worship Sundays 10:00 a.m., Tues. and Wed. at 8:30 a.m. and Thurs. at 7 a.m.; Saturdays at 5 p.m. * * *	VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota		NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.

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Janesville

1924

- Mr. Julius H. Santo, son of Mr. Gust Santo, whom all our people know, was a visitor in Janesville Saturday. He came down from Minneapolis to see his parents after attending to business in that city. For about two years, Mr. Santo has been at the head of the Junior College in Ely, as director, so called. This is an educational feature of the state university involving two years academic work on the part of high school graduates. It is in the regular university course and where established is proving its value in many particulars. This is the system in which our County Auditor, H. A. Panzram, is so deeply interested and is attempting to put over for Waseca County. Rochester is the only town in Southern Minnesota that has the Junior College.

- The Minnesota Cooperative Egg and Poultry Exchange, which officially commenced business at St. Paul July 14, 1924, is now handling about six carloads each of eggs and poultry a week. The combined poultry and egg business, therefore, is about 50 cars a month. The value of each car of poultry averages \$2,500 and of each car of eggs \$3,500. On this basis the monthly business on poultry amounts to nearly \$85,000 and on eggs \$60,000.

- Interested in the gasoline tax, is popular now in 36 states collecting it and proposed in Minnesota, scores of Waseca County people are asking many questions about the plan, and these inquiries are commonest: Will the gas tax be two cents a gallon? Will it be an additional tax or bring a cut in the auto tax? Nickles N. Dines, the gas man, makes this answer: "Minnesota voters at the November election will not decide whether a tax is to be placed on gasoline, but only whether the receipts from such a tax, if one is levied by the state, shall be used for needed road work or to pay miscellaneous state expenses. If a majority of all votes cast are "yes" votes and the legislature places a tax on gasoline the money will go on the roads."

1949

- Need for pedestrian caution in crossing roads or streets is emphasized by the average driver's lack of knowledge of pedestrian rights according to the Minnesota Highway Department's summary of results of driver license examinations. Forty-eight percent of the 36,000 who took the road law tests in the first half of 1949 did not even know that pedestrians have the right-of-way "when in a crosswalk, at an intersection, whether the crosswalk is marked or not."

- Herman Blasing, former resident of this community and Minneapolis, died in Santa Barbara, California, Sunday, August 14, of a lingering illness. He was born in West Prussia, Germany, August 15, 1884, and came to America with his parents when still a small child. Their first home was in Alton Township, later settling in Janesville Township one mile north of Smiths Mill, where he grew up. He was married April 18, 1911, to Zula Ryan of Smiths Mill, who passed away in Minneapolis in November 1942.

1974



- In 1974, the Wiebusch family were the first of three Janesville host families to house foreign exchange student Christina Vallari of Cordoba, Argentina.

- The man sent his little boy over to borrow a copy of the home paper from his neighbor. In his haste the little fellow ran over a hive of bees and in ten minutes he looked like a warty squash. His cries reached his father who ran to his assistance, and failing to see a barbed wire fence, he ran into it and broke it down. The blow took a handful of flesh from his body, and ruined a \$20 pair of pants. The cow took advantage of the gap in the fence and got in the com. "It is cheaper to have the paper delivered," said the farmer. "I will from now on."

- Stosh's Bar staved off darkness and a last-inning comeback of Jerry's Cover to take the championship, 25-22, in the Jaycee's Softball League playoffs at Lakeview Park last Tuesday night. The champions built up a big early lead then hung on tough when the Cove came on in the late innings. The last inning of the game, fielders were at a real disadvantage because you could hardly see your hand in front of your face, let alone a hard line drive. Although the Princess Kay crown eluded her, Gail Westphal says her trip to the finals of the contest is an experience she will always remember. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. LaVern Westphal, Gail represented Region 9 at the Princess Kay Contest held at the State Fair last Thursday Night. Names Princess Kay of the Milky Way XXL was Julie Tessmer, 19, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Glenard Tessmer of Rogers, Minnesota. Her attendants are Marlene Jacobson, 18, of Donnelly, Minnesota, and Karen Boyum, 18, of Peterson, Minnesota.

1999

Janesville's youth will have to start minding their watches after dark. During its meeting on Monday, Aug. 23, the Janesville City Council adopted an ordinance which provides a curfew for minors. The curfew, which applies to youth 17 and under, makes it unlawful for persons to loiter on the streets and in public establishments after hours. The ordinances establishes two curfews. The first curfew for outh ages 15 and under will be 10 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and midnight Fridays and Saturdays. Youth ages 16 and 17 will have a curfew of midnight Sunday/Thursday, and 1 a.m. Fridays and Saturdays. U.S. Sen. Paul Wellstone is committed to helping save the family farm and is asking area farmers to make their voices heard. "We need to turn the heat up," Wellstone said. "I don't think anything will change unless rural America makes a stand." It was for this purpose that Wellstone made a stop at Jim and Irene Mulcahey's rural Janesville farm on Thursday, Aug. 19, to conduct a news conference. The stop in Janesville was just one of several farm meetings Wellstone held throughout southeastern and south-central Minnesota last week as an effort to draw support and attendance for the Minnesota Rural Unity Day on Saturday, Aug. 21 in Waconia.

Waseca

25 Years Ago: August 24

-U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.) talked with farmers at the Jim and Irene Mulcahey farm in rural Janesville. The senator was urging people to fight for the future of the family farm.

Minnesota's Sen. Paul Wellstone is trying to get farmers riled up. He wants them to organize and put grassroots pressure on federal lawmakers to save American's family farms.

-Rezoning of Waseca's North State Street to a Residential and Business Zone (RB) is hardly a done deal after last week's city council meeting. Although the planning commission had approved the plan the week before, the council was not ready to schedule a public hearing for the necessary ordinance to change zoning.

-LakeFest Success – Sunday saw dancers, artisans, stampers, and vendors take to Clear Lake Park as the Waseca Arts Council sponsored the first ever LakeFest celebration. Activities included five musical performances at the Clear Lake bandshell along with a car show at the fairgrounds. Pictured is Chris Fall of Waseca with her dog, George. Fell was the winner of the dog show competition sponsored by the Humane Society.

-Waseca School Members John Priebe and Bonnie Priebe (no relation) announced at Thursday night's board meeting that they will not seek reelection in the upcoming November School Board election.

50 Years Ago: August 22



-Big and Little – BIRDS EYE PERSONAL MANAGER, Dave Armstrong visited with two of the children and their supervisor at the Parkview DayCare Center. The day care center is offering Birds Eye employees reduced child care rates while they are employed during corn pack. Pictured: Bonnie Miller, Supervisor, and Jenny Nyquist, 2 1/2 , daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Nyquist and John Miller, son of Mr. and Mrs. Stu Miller.

-General Foods Corp.'s Birds Eye division in Waseca is again anticipating a shortage of employees for their corn pack processing next week when high schools in the city and area open for the 74-75 session. "We have a lot of high school students working for us during the summer," Dave Armstrong, personnel manager said. "We lose most of them when school starts, even with special shifts designed for high school students."

-Family film – ALLEN FIUZAT and Cynthia Smith star in "Benji." Neither have acted prior to this experience but movie director, Joe camp, finds their performances equal to the most seasoned cast members. Benji is played by Higgins, a regular for years on "Petticoat Junction."

-Ready to go – WATERVILLE- ELYSIAN returning veterans are front row left to right: Rick Prah, Mike Sheehy, Paul Pommeranz, and John Jobe. Second row left to right are: Jack Hackett, Greg Bernard, Jim Simpson, and Randy Coon.

75 Years Ago: August 25



-CHARLES V. SIMPSON, Waterville is show test-weighing barley for exhibition at the Minnesota State Fair, August 27 through September 5. Firsts on Clinton oats, Dakota flax, and red and sweet clover, and first and sweepstakes on Mandarin soy beans, were won by him in 1948. He also was the grand champion Minnesota Crop Improvement Association exhibitor at last year's state fair.

-An all-out attack on grasshoppers was recommended this week by county agent Cletus F. Murphy as a two-fold benefit for local farmers. Early matured hoppers are now beginning to lay eggs in dry ground, according to reports from H. L. Parten, University Farm extension entomologist.

-Farmers who haven't vaccinated their hogs should be watching their animals closely for signs of high fever and lack of appetite. Reports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicate that many of the heavy swine losses occurring in this and nearby states may be caused by cholera.

100 Years Ago: August 21

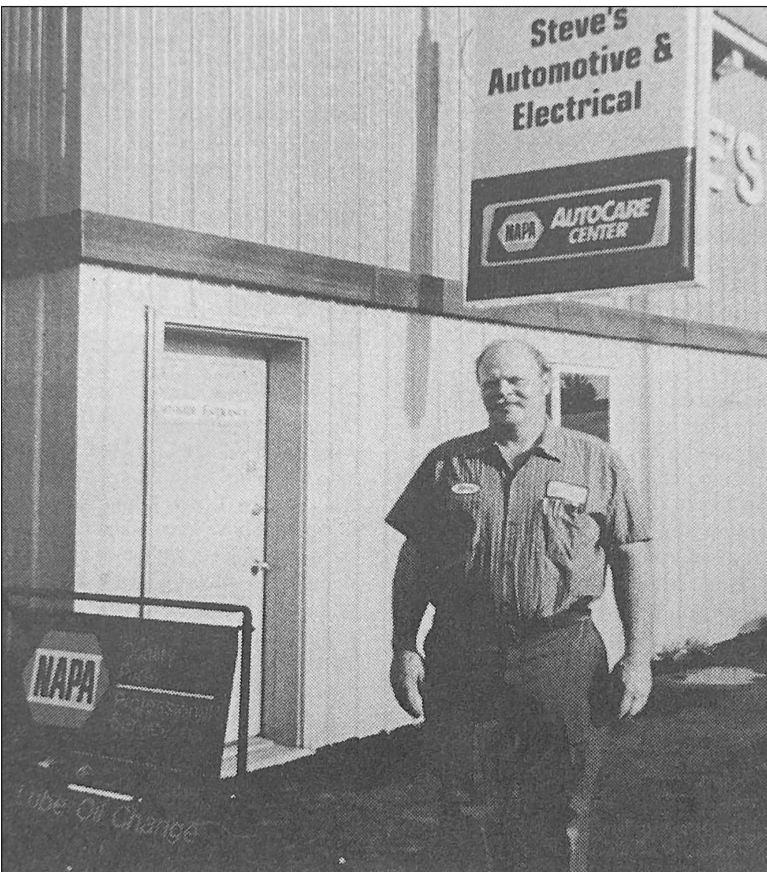
-The Waseca baseball team scored their first win of the 1924 schedule of the Southern Minnesota league Sunday when they handed Blooming Prairie a 5 to 1 defeat on the local fair grounds before a very small crowd. Fourteen previous contests had been lost to league opponents through one way or another and Sunday's game came very near not being a victory as rain commenced to fall in the fourth inning, but patience and persistency rewarded Messrs Wallschlaeger and Sterling's athletes as the last half of the fourth and the first half of the fifth innings were completed in the heavy downpour, thereby giving Waseca its first league win.

-There seems to be a misunderstanding in regard to the amount of tuition charged high school pupils. This article is written that prospective pupils and their parents may be informed on the subject. It was the practice until recent years to allow a qualified pupil from any school district in the state to attend any high school without tuition. A flat state aid was extended to all high schools to offset the extra cost of educating the outside pupils.

-Feeding oats bundles that were somewhat mouldy is said to have caused the death of eight fine horses, aged 5 to 12 years, on the George Boucher farm in Blooming Grove township last Thursday. They were threshing on the farm that day and the horses were fed bundled oats from the field. Due to the unusually wet weather, it was noticed that the bottoms of some of the bundles which contained some solver and weeds, were mouldy.

New Richland

25 years back Ellendale Eagle



• Steve VanRavenhorst stands in front of his new building, Steve's Automotive/Electrical. Steve's Automotive and Electrical is now at a new location. Steve Van Ravenhorst of Clarks Grove started out his automotive repair business in the back portion of the Clarks Grove Hardware store on May 15, 1995. The business grew and soon had outgrown the space he had to work in. That new building became a reality exactly three years later and on May 15, 1998, he opened the doors at his new location. Steve's Automotive and Electrical is a NAPA Auto Care Center. "I have really good mechanics working for me and they are Tino Flores, Mike Piechowski, Mike Nelson, and several who work part time: Del Brouwers and Cory Westeng. Lois Snow does the Secretary work.

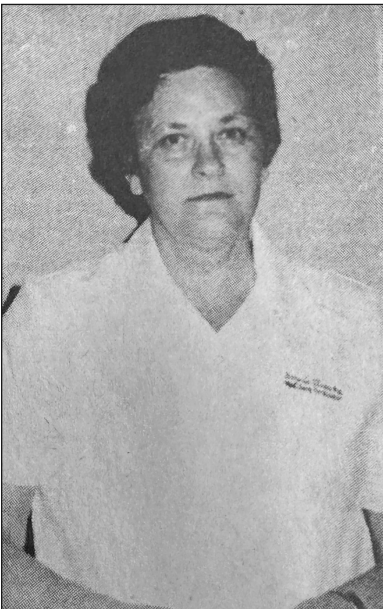
• "Rebuilding" a supportive program for the separated, widowed, or divorced, will begin a new session Tuesday August 17, 7:30 p.m. at the Associated Church, 800 Havana road, Owatonna. The "Rebuilding" program offers a nonthreatening supportive atmosphere assisting in personal growth and socialization. Topics on any evening may include feelings dealing with denial, loneliness, rejection, guilt, grief, anger, letting go, self concept, friendships leftovers, love, trust, sexuality, responsibilities, singleness or freedom.

• Nikki and Todd Schumaker of Glenville became the parents of a son on August 2, 1999. Proud grandfather is Kent Toft of Blaine and proud first time great grandparents are Kenneth and Evie Toft. Hildred Sorenson has moved to Country Neighbors in New Richlands and I am sure that she would appreciate visits and cards from her many friends and family in our area. Wyman Jensen underwent a heart surgery at St. Marys Hospital in Rochester this past week. We hope that Wyman is soon feeling much better, and will be able to return home again to Mabel.

• A recent study conducted by the American Veterinary Medical Association showed that more than half the households in the United States are home to one or more companion animals. Many owners consider their pets to be members of the family and display photographs of tier pets in their offices and on their walls at home. According to Dr. John Freeman, the immediate past president of the American Veterinary association, "Animals are becoming increasingly important within the family structure. Twenty years ago it was almost unheard of for people to treat pets like one of their children."

50 years back

• Mr. and Mrs. Jim Anderson and Jodi of Crystal were Saturday and Sunday guests of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. N.H. Ohnstad. Sunday evening guests of Gen and John Wayne were Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Koppen of Rake, IA and Mr. and Mrs. They enjoyed supper at the Standard together and returned to the Wayne home for visiting. Mr. and Mrs. N.H. Ohnstad visited her sister Lillian James Sunday evening at the Lakeshore Inn Nursing Home in Waseca. Mr. and Mrs. George Moriarty visited the Larry Bennett family in Clinton Falls on Sunday.



• Pictured, Bonnie Sloan, Mable Dobberstein. Nursing– a profession of service that is often unseen, almost always unheralded. Mabel commented that she has worked in every department since 1947. She has also worked in Waseca, Wells, and Mankato, and outpatient home care and dialysis. Her love of nursing started when she was very young. Bonnie Sloan took a three-year RN program and has worked at Owatonna hospital for 18 and a half years.

• The annual Freeborn County Hall of Fame fastpitch softball game was held in Geneva on Friday night. The Albeart Lea city team took home the victory with a 13-7 score. The Albeart Team consisted of Jim Beach, David Gilbertson, Bill Chicos. Wayne Feurhelm, Carl "Bud" Hoffman, Don Drommerhausen, Viril Ryan, Dennis Jensen, Joe Carlin, Herb Sorenson, Ron Mathews, while the country team consisted of Warren Togerson, Brian Muri, Gary Hanson, Harold Thompson, Barry Hoffman, Bill Kaiser, Eldon Kath, Ken Sibilrud, Robert Rickheim, Chris Peterson, Lewis Wasemean, John Stegenga, Vince Johnson, Elmer Stegenga.

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Marketplace project may move forward

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

The Waseca Investment group may be moving forward with development of the city-owned Waseca Marketplace property. The announcement came during the regular meeting of the Waseca City Council, Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

A few months earlier, the local investment group had come before the council saying it was unlikely to move forward with their project due to a lack of funding. At Tuesday night's meeting, however, Tim Collins informed the council the group has made significant progress.

"I said we'll be back," Collins told the council. "I can't say thank you enough for this opportunity."

In February of 2023, the group came before the council with plans for a two- or three-story apartment

and retail space at Waseca's city-owned "marketplace location," currently an open lot positioned between the Waseca Intermediate School and Walmart. At that time the group had raised nearly three-quarters of a million dollars en-route to their goal of \$3 million.

The group partnered with fiscal agent REVocity, an investment group out of Northfield with more than 30 years of real estate investment experience; it has also partnered with numerous Waseca businesses and individuals.

Some of their general partners in Waseca include Tim Collins, who has 30 years of experience as a superintendent; Benya Kraus, co-founder of Lead for America, National and Executive Director of MN Affiliate; Madison Murphy; Matthew Potter, COO at iWealth; Jon Stagman,

"I said we'll be back... I can't say thank you enough for this opportunity."
— Tim Collins

owner and president of Pantheon Computer; and Lauren Swanberg.

Members of the group were present to provide an update on the progress and also to 'put on the council's radar' the date of the maturation of the existing right to purchase agreement which ends in September.

The group said they had no ask as of Tuesday's meeting. They simply wanted to plant a seed of what an extension would look like.

A lofty goal of a 'shovel in the ground' by spring was mentioned along with a three track plan to get there which focuses on financing, design and entitlements, and carrying out due diligence.

Representatives said their goal is to get the project in front of a lending pool and have a lender selected for a primary source of loan funds sometime between early October and the end of November.

Following the approval of a loan, the group will come back to work with the city for a review process, which they hope will be completed by the end of the year. All of this would lead into the permitting process allowing construction to start when the frost comes out of the



One possible design of a potential real estate project at Waseca's "Market Place" property was shared during a February city council meeting.

ground in 2025.

"We have council meetings on the Third and Seventeenth," said city manager Carl Sonnenberg. "The exclusive rights contract ends on the

twentieth of September. That's your timeline."

"We feel good about it," Collins concluded. "It's gonna be great for the community."

■ Waseca from Page 3

tential motion] fails to receive a second.

"I wouldn't mind seeing a raise tonight," he added.

Council member Mark Christiansen made the motion to cut salaries to \$1 for the coming year.

Council member John Mansfield accused Christiansen of grandstanding.

Council member Jeremy Conrath said that Christiansen made this motion because he's facing three challengers in his district in the upcoming election.

"Why didn't you do this before the election filing process?" Conrath asked. "It appears to me, since you [previously] asked for [a salary] raise... You're not happy for the people filing against you."

"I'm doing it for the community," Christiansen pleaded. "If we're going to ask for cuts, then we should be willing to take a cut."

Christiansen has previously stated if members of the public are unhappy with his voting decision that they should run for office. Repeatedly, Christiansen has encouraged members of the public to run for city office.

Councilman Mansfield asked Christiansen what he did with his salaries every year since his election to the council in 2000. "You've had 24 years to give back your salary," Mansfield challenged.

Multiple members of the council stated they were not aware this was a paid position when they were elected.

Council members Christiansen, Stacey Schroeder and Daren Arndt voted in favor of cutting salaries for a year to \$1.

Council members Jeremy Conrath, James Ebertowski, Mansfield and mayor Randy Zimmerman voted down the motion.

Zimmerman said he is willing to

cut salaries to \$1 to reach their budget goals.

In the past, councilperson Arndt has spoken openly about the benefits of the salary from his council position and said it does supplement his income.

Zimmerman said this topic is available for further discussion in December.

Notably, a new city ordinance would be required to change the salaries for any period of time beyond one year.

A draft of the retail cannabis ordinance was approved. Following staff review, revision and a planning and commission meeting, a final review and adoption will be presented during the September 17, 2024 meeting of the council.

Information in the ordinance draft includes references to pertinent Minnesota Statutes, definitions of terms, an explanation of the cannabis license registration process; a system for annual compliance checks; a limit of five licenses in city limits for cannabis retail businesses; the establishment of "buffer" distance requirements from schools, day care businesses, residential treatment facilities, parks/attractions, and other cannabis retail stores; restrictions on hours of operation; and a system of allowing permits for temporary cannabis events.

Numerous meeting dates and updates were provided at the end of the meeting.

The first budget work session of the year is set for Aug. 26, followed by additional sessions on Sept. 3 and 17. The preliminary budget will be approved at the Sept. 17 meeting. An assessment math work session was scheduled for Oct. 1 at 6:30 p.m.

The Waseca water park has closed for the season due to staffing and safety concerns. Notably, many water parks close for the season as their employees return to college. Attendance was down about 2,000-3,000 this year due to the weather.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

JWP approves cell phone policy

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) school board approved a cell phone policy for the district's 2024-'25 school year during its regular monthly meeting on August 19. Under the policy drafted by school principal David Rysdam, students will be allowed to use their cellular devices at mealtime and between classes. At any other time, phones are to be either in the students' lockers or kept in the office.

District superintendent Jeremy Erler told board members that Rysdam foresees a day when the phones are not even allowed in the building. Erler said the expectation is that students will require so many reminders regarding when and where the phones are permitted, that it will become necessary simply not to permit them at all.

Erler went on to say Rysdam would not be surprised to have to revisit the topic within the next two to three months. In response to their questions, Erler assured board members Rysdam has been communicating with at least some staff

members about the possibility of prohibiting cellular devices in the building. So far, he said, Rysdam has received mixed reactions from staff.

A month ago on July 15 during a closed special session, the JWP school board evaluated Superintendent Erler's success in meeting his stated goals across the 2022-'23 and 2023-'24 school years. The first two main were maintaining regular communication with school board members and reviewing and updating the district's job descriptions, human resources procedures and pay equity.

"Jeremy consulted with growth operators to do a comparable job study that was used during recent negotiations," business manager Wendy Dieker shared. "This was a great initiative on Jeremy's part as it helped the negotiation committee as well as Jeremy and his team during the negotiations."

For goal three, Erler created, with the help of the administrative team, an onboarding process for the different positions in the JWP school district. Newly hired staff members

JWP SCHOOL BOARD

now receive direct evaluation reports and have specific mentors assigned to assist and guide them.

Erler's fourth goal was to work with his staff to create expectations for behaviors happening in the school; Dieker went on to say that Erler has worked with the principals on behavior expectations and has added a behavioral interventionist.

"There are still a few behavior issues and Jeremy has held accountability to a high standard," Dieker added and stated other issues that were discussed included new expectations for staffing changes and holding students and staff accountable for their actions.

"The board is happy with Jeremy's performance," Dieker said. "He will work toward meeting his new goals and continue to address the previous goals."

The school board approved a state-mandated policy which allows students or staff members who are

members of indigenous tribes to use tobacco, sage, sweetgrass, or cedar to conduct individual or group smudging in public schools. Erler clarified the definition of "smudging" for those who didn't know it is a process of burning plants to create an atmosphere for a religious ceremony.

When asked whether those taking advantage of the policy would have to prove their eligibility, Erler confirmed that they would.

The school board approved proposed non-certified substitute rate of hourly pay of \$14.40. Typically, the non-certified substitute pay is 90% of teacher starting pay, but Erler shared that JWP did not have an increase last year because JWP didn't have contracts settled.

The school board approved their membership agreement with the South Central Services Cooperative; the annual fee is about \$1,100.

The school board approved a range of policies including one which requires school bus drivers and those applying to be school bus drivers to supply samples of their saliva to test for cannabis use.

■ Council from Page 3

As she continued, she also predicted a four-percent revenue increase in the water fund over the next five years.

During the public forum, Eric Daschner from Boy Scout Troop 89 described his intended Eagle Scout project, a retired flag collection box. Daschner explained the box, structured much like a traditional post office mail box, would be set up in the city park. Area residents with faded or damaged flags could place them in the box to be dealt with according to accepted standards: namely burned in a ceremony overseen by a local veteran organization. He stated his idea complements the project proposed by his fellow Eagle Scout candidate, Cole Blomstrom, who designed a firepit in the city park.

He planned to vinyl-wrap the

mailbox and label it with the logos of Boy Scouts of America and the American Legion.

Initially, Daschner had the idea of purchasing a USPS mailbox or acquiring one as a donation, but told council members he was uncertain how to move forward without one. After council member Mulcahey expressed his concern about how long the implementation would be delayed, Daschner stated that if he can't get the mailbox he needs, he will partner with Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) High School and build one himself with some support of other classmates.

He asked council members for funds toward the cost of laying concrete and incorporating mulch; he estimated the concrete would be around \$50, but was unsure of what landscaping the city council would want.

"When Evan Olson did his project, we left the design to him as far as the rocks and flowers," councilmember Ivan Maas said; councilmember

Andy Ahlman added that he remembered previous similar projects were around \$250.

Mulcahey asked, "After you've graduated and moved on, do you have a plan who would monitor this?" Daschner said the local American Legion would since they're his project beneficiary.

Mulcahey praised Daschner for thinking his project through pretty well and asked him to keep in touch with the city council as he advanced his plans.

Police Chief Steven Johnson reported that officers of the department dealt with a total of 723 calls for services during the second quarter in 2024--547 more than last quarter and 595 more than last year at the same time.

"Any opinion on why it was higher?" Mulcahey inquired.

"We ended up getting full staff with the full time employees during the same timeframe," Johnson replied. "The laws change. I think it's a totality of factors -- inflation, stress-

ors. We had an uptick in liquor violations this year. Assaults seem to be a little bit on the rise."

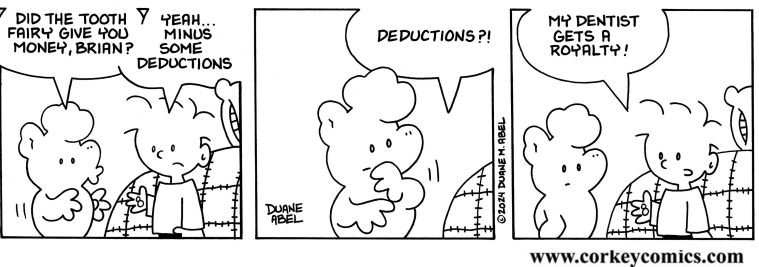
"Sorry to hear that," Mulcahey said. "Those are two I'd rather not see increase."

"We did have some uptick in traffic enforcement," Johnson added. "We've had some complaints and so I've been encouraging officers to stay proactive in those areas."

Mulcahey asked whether the speed and noise complaints on North Street from a couple months before had been curtailed; Johnson responded he believed they were, and that the speed trailer and the visibility of officers had helped.

During the meeting, the council members approved the preliminary and final plats for the utilities in the Schuch Subdivision. The council also approved the statewide primary election of 2024 for the hours of 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and voted to compensate election judges with wages of \$10.85 an hour with the exception of city employees.

ZED by Duane M. Abel



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September 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 6pm BAR Bingo	5 7pm HALL BINGO	6 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	7
8 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your HOST BANTAM HOCKY	9 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	10	11 6pm BAR Bingo	12 7pm HALL BINGO	13 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	14
15	16	17 Burger nite 5-7pm	18 6pm BAR Bingo	19 7pm HALL BINGO	20 WALLEYE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm	21
22 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your HOST HOPE CHAPTER EASTERN STAR	23	24 Burger nite 5-7pm	25 6pm BAR Bingo	26 7pm HALL BINGO	27 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	28
29	30					

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

STATE OF MINNESOTA
WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SITTING AS THE DRAINAGE AUTHORITY UNDER STATUTES CHAPTER 103E
FOR THE REDETERMINATION OF BENEFITS AND DAMAGES
OF WASECA COUNTY DITCH 47

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING

Please Take Notice: The Waseca County Board of Commissioners, Drainage Authority for Waseca County Ditch 47 (“CD 47”), will hold a final hearing on the viewers’ report of benefits and damages for the pending redetermination of benefits and damages of CD 47. The viewers’ report has been filed with the Drainage Authority. The hearing will be held on September 20, 2024, at 10:00a.m., or thereafter as the agenda allows, in the Commissioners’ Room of the East Annex, 300 North State Street, Waseca, Minnesota 56093. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

CD 47 consists of open ditch and subsurface tile. CD 47 starts with subsurface tile just south of the north quarter section line of the Southeast Quarter of Section 32, then drains northeasterly across the Northeast Quarter of said Section 32, then across the southeast corner of Section 29 and the southwest corner of Section 28, then draining northwesterly across the West Half of Section 29 where it outlets into the open ditch portion of CD 47, then continues north and northwesterly across Section 20, where the open ditch outlets into subsurface tile draining northeasterly across the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 20 and into the southeast corner of the Southwest Quarter of Section 17, where the tile outlets into an open ditch portion of CD 26 that drains northerly, then westerly across the Southwest Quarter of said Section 17, then westerly across the Southeast Quarter of Section 18 where it terminates at State Highway 30, all in Township 105 North, Range 22 West (New Richland Township), Waseca County, Minnesota. CD 47 includes branches and laterals in the West Half of the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 33, the southwest corner of Section 28, the Northeast Quarter of Section 29, and the East Half and Northwest Quarter of Section 20. CD 47 provides an outlet for drainage for the Waseca Freeborn JCD 6 drainage system which confluences with CD 47 in the Southwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of said Section 17.

The viewers’ report, along with amendments, if any, all property owners’ reports, and records describing the drainage system are available for inspection by contacting Chris Howard by email or phone chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov or (507) 835-0534.

At the final hearing, the Drainage Authority will accept public comment regarding the viewers’ report. Any party having an interest in the proceedings may appear and provide comment per the instructions above. Written comments may be submitted by email or by U.S. Mail to Chris Howard (chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov or Land & Water Resources Director, Chris Howard, at 307 North State Street, Waseca, MN 56093). Written comments received before the final hearing will be submitted into the record.

The following properties are affected by the redetermination of benefits and damages for CD 47:

New Richland Township, T105N-R22W, Sections 17, 18, 20, 28, 29, 32, and 33, Waseca County.

The following owners of property are affected by the redeterminations of benefits and damages for CD 47:

BAYERKOHLER, DALE & CAROL; RAUSCH, DONNA TRUSTEE; AMUNDSON, BLANE L TRUSTEE; WENZEL, DENISE; BADEN FLP; SCHLAAK, KEITH & KELLY; MOXON, MICHELE ETAL; WANGEN, TRENT/KUHNS NICOLE; MOXON, JEFFREY A & MICHELE A; PROEHL, KARL D & TAMARA J; WACHOLZ, LANE & LYNN; IND SCHOOL DIST 2168; DAWSON, CLAYTON G & SHANNON P; THOMPSON, TROY W/ERICKSSON, JENNIFER S; REESE, JOYCE TRUSTEE/REESE, MARY THERESA TRUSTEE; JOHNSON, JEREMY; GUARDIAN CHARITABLE TRUST; SCHLAAK, CAROL J TRUSTEE; RJP PROPERTIES LLC; CARGILL INC; WACHOLZ, LANE A TRUSTEE/LYNN M WACHOLZ TRUSTEE; SCHLAAK ACRES LLP; WACHOLZ, LYNN M & LANE A; PECHACEK, TERRY D/EVONNE MARIE MEADE PECHACEK; BERG, NIEL E TRUSTEE/RANAE L BERG TRUSTEE; ROUTH, LUCAS R; DM&E RAILROAD; FLOR, BRADLEY; PETERSON, THOMAS & TAMARA; PEDERSON, CORBIN D & SAMANTHA L; FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NR; VERTIN ACQUISITION ENTITY; SNOW CONSTRUCTION; NEIGHBORS MEATS; NEW RICHLAND BUILDING SUPPLY & HARDWARE; FLOR, DAVID A; LAUE, JUSTIN D; LEONARDO, KEITH R & MELISA K; BESSER, MARK; WALLER, REED DOUGLAS; STOLTZMAN, LYNN & BAUMAN, JEROME.

The following governmental entities are affected by the redeterminations of benefits and damages for CD 47:

CITY OF NEW RICHLAND; STATE OF MINNESOTA/ DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION; WASECA COUNTY ROADS; NEW RICHLAND TOWNSHIP.

Outlet Charge Determination for Waseca Freeborn Joint County Ditch 6

The following properties are affected by the redetermination of benefits for CD 47 because of an outlet charge recommended by the viewers to Waseca Freeborn Joint County Ditch 6:

New Richland Township, T105N-R22W, Sections 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35, and 36, Waseca County.

Hartland Township, T104N-R22W, Sections 1, 2, and 3, Freeborn County.

The following owners of property are affected by the redetermination of benefits and damages for CD 47 because of an outlet charge recommended by the viewers to Waseca Freeborn Joint County Ditch 6:

PETERSON, GEORGIA M. TRUSTEE; JOHNSON RICHARD A/NANCY JOHNSON; JOHNSON, RICHARD A; QUERNA, MARK T; STENNES, PAUL C; WENZEL, TODD J; SCHLAAK, KEITH DEAN/KELLY LEE SCHLAAK; NEW RICHLAND AREA SPORTSMAN CLUB; WACHOLZ, SARAH A TRUSTEE; WACHOLZ, LANE A TRUSTEE/LYNN M WACHOLZ TRUSTEE; SCHULTZ, RICHARD N; WACHOLZ, LANE & LYNN; THOMPSON, TROY W/JENNIFER S ERICKSSON; CROSS, BOBBY L; BUDACH, KRISTINE K; FLOR, A DAVID TRUSTEE; JOHNSON, RICHARD A ETAL; FREEBORN COUNTY COOP; JOHNSON, BRIAN C; SUPALLA, MICHAEL L/GRETCHEN SUPALLA; MIDWEST PROPERTIES OF NR SOUTH; TOMSCHE, DONALD G & LORI L; KLIMMEK, RICHARD P & BARBARA A; HOLZ, RYAN R & SUE ANN E; REESE, JOYCE E TRUSTEE/MARY THERESA REESE TRUSTEE; NORTHERN NATURAL GAS CO; SWENSON, DUANE & DONNA; KOFSTAD, ISAAC H & MARTHA J; SUPALLA FAMILY ACRES LLC; POSSIN, CHERYL M; KLIMMEK, RICHARD P ETAL; KULLA, RICHARD R; HAGEN, RANDY & CHARLES; GOETTE, MARCELLA R; MILBRETT, MARK/PATRICIA MILBRETT; STALOCH, NICKLAS R; NEUMANN, OTTO E TRUSTEE; KLIMMEK, HARLIN K & RICHARD; WAKEFIELD, KYLE R & EMILY B; KYLE R & EMILY WAKEFIELD; THOFSON, ARLENE I TRUSTEE/VIRGIL D THOFSON TRUSTEE; ROUTH, DAVID A TRUSTEE; ROUTH, LUCAS R; HAGEN, CHARLES & BARBRA & RANDY; MUCHA, ROBERT A/DARLENE

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D MUCHA; PETERSON, JEREMY/ STEPHANIE WECKWERTH; SERVICE, SHANE M; ROUTH, DAVID & PAULA; WAKEFIELD, KYLE R; MILBRETT, PATRICIA A; HINZ, MARCIA; RATH ACRES LLC; HANSEN, RAQUEL S/TODD A HANSEN/HANSEN, RAQUEL/TODD A. HANSEN; ERIC HANSEN; PETERSON, CURTIS; TUKUA, ORIALE; KRUEGER, RAYMOND E TRUSTEE/EVON I KRUEGER TRUSTEE; PHILLIPS, JOANNE P; DM&E RAILROAD; THOFSON, ARLENE I; BIAS, ALOYSIUS; GOSKESEN, ROGER K/PEGGY A GOSKESEN; HAGEN, CHARLES &/RANDY HAGEN; GOETTE, VERNON F &/ALICE I GOETTE; KRUEGER REVOCABLE TRUST; BIAS, JOHN K; ECKSTROM PROPERTIES LLC; LEWER, DANIEL R & AMBER M/OLSON, CHRISTOPHER; DOKKEN,RANDY; BOHLEN, RICHARD J & JAMES E; BERG, BURTON D/CONNIE J BERG; PRIEBE, TYLER G/SHELBY E SHLIE; SNOW, BRIANNA PAIGE; OLSON, ALLYSON & DAVID; WILDGRUBE, DAVID S & BARBARA R; CHRAPLIWY, PHILIP C; SCHROEDER, KELLY/ DAKOTA SORGATZ; CMD EXPRESS.

The following governmental entities are affected by the redetermination of benefits and damages for CD 47 because of an outlet charge recommended by the viewers to Waseca Freeborn Joint County Ditch 6:

STATE OF MINNESOTA/ DEPT OF REVENUE; CITY OF NEW RICHLAND; STATE OF MINNESOTA/ DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION; WASECA COUNTY; NEW RICHLAND TOWNSHIP; HARTLAND TOWNSHIP; WASECA FREEBORN JOINT COUNTY DRAINAGE AUTHORITY FOR WASECA FREEBORN JOINT COUNTY DITCH 6.

Dated: August 20, 2024

WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WASECA COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
CD 47 DRAINAGE AUTHORITY

/s/ Brian Harguth, Chairperson

/s/ Michael Johnson

STATE OF MINNESOTA
WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SITTING AS THE DRAINAGE AUTHORITY UNDER STATUTES CHAPTER 103E
FOR THE REDETERMINATION OF BENEFITS AND DAMAGES
OF WASECA COUNTY DITCH 32

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING

Please Take Notice: The Waseca County Board of Commissioners, Drainage Authority for Waseca County Ditch 32 (“CD 32”), will hold a final hearing on the viewers’ report of benefits and damages for the pending redetermination of benefits and damages of CD 32. The viewers’ report has been filed with the Drainage Authority. The hearing will be held on September 20, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., or thereafter as the agenda allows, in the Commissioners’ Room of the East Annex, 300 North State Street, Waseca, Minnesota 56093. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

CD 32 consists of subsurface drain tile starting in the Northeast Quarter of Section 17, then flows south and westerly through the North Half of Section 17, then northwesterly across the Northeast Quarter of Section 18, the northwesterly across the East Half of Section 7 and the northeast corner of the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 7, then northwesterly and westerly across the South Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 6, where it terminates into Boot Creek in the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 6, all in Township 105 North, Range 22 West (New Richland Township), Waseca County, Minnesota. CD 32 includes Branches A-F, with Branch A starting in the Southwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 7 and draining northwesterly across the North Half of said Section 7 and the South Half of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 6 where it confluences with the main tile. Branch B is in the Southeast Quarter of said Section 7. Branch C is in the West Half of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 17. Branch D is in the Southwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 17. Branch E, and Branch E-1, are in the South Half of the Northwest Quarter and the Northeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 17. Branch F starts in the Northeast Quarter of said Section 17 just south of the north section line, then drains southeasterly where it confluences with the main tile.

The viewers’ report, along with amendments, if any, all property owners’ reports, and records describing the drainage system are available for inspection by contacting Chris Howard by email or phone at chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov or (507) 835-0534.

At the final hearing, the Drainage Authority will accept public comment regarding the viewers’ report. Any party having an interest in the proceedings may appear and provide comment per the instructions above. Written comments may be submitted by email or by U.S. Mail to Chris Howard (chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov or Land & Water Resources Director, Chris Howard, at 307 North State Street, Waseca, MN 56093). All comments received prior to the final hearing will be submitted into the record.

The following properties are affected by the redetermination of benefits and damages for CD 32:

New Richland Township, T105N-R22W, Sections 6, 7, 17, and 18, Waseca County.

The following owners of property are affected by the redeterminations of benefits and damages for CD 32:

PETERSON, SHARON K/SANDRA L RANKIN; RUSSELL, DAVID; SCHLAAK, LYLE; ROOT, RICHARD L; NELSON, MILTON C & PHYLLIS I; NELSON, PHYLLIS I; WACHOLZ, LANE A TRUSTEE/LYNN M WACHOLZ TRUSTEE; RAUSCH, DONNA L & JOSEPH BRITTON/W L SCHUE TRUST TRUSTEES; SCHUE, TROY TRUSTEE/CHRISTINE L SCHUE TRUSTEE; SCHLAAK, LYLE W/DIANE M SCHLAAK; ST. PETER CEMETERY ASSN; WACHOLZ, LANE & LYNN; WESTRUM, KIPP A & BRENDA J; 13188 24TH AVE NEW RICHLAND LLC; SCHULTZ, RICHARD N; PFEFFER, JOHN H & KRISTINE A; CALVARY CEMETARY; CONDON, DONALD G & CAROLYN; JACOBSON, GREG A/JAN J JACOBSON; WHEELER, CATHERINE E; RAUSCH, DONNA L TRUSTEE; SCHULTZ, RICHARD N/JACQUELINE SCHULTZ; NELSON, DELANE R & DAWN I; ANDERSON, JASON T; AMUNDSON, GORDON TRUSTEE; WACHOLZ, KRISTIE K TRUSTEE; AMUNDSON, BLANE L TRUSTEE; DM&E RAILROAD.

The following governmental entities are affected by the redeterminations of benefits and damages for CD 32:

CITY OF NEW RICHLAND; WASECA COUNTY; NEW RICHLAND TOWNSHIP.

Dated: August 20, 2024

WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WASECA COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
CD 32 DRAINAGE AUTHORITY

/s/ Brian Harguth, Chairperson

/s/ Michael Johnson

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STATE OF MINNESOTA
WASECA FREEBORN JOINT COUNTY DRAINAGE AUTHORITY
SITTING AS THE JOINT COUNTY DRAINAGE AUTHORITY FOR
WASECA FREEBORN JOINT COUNTY DITCH 6

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING

Please Take Notice: The Waseca Freeborn Joint County Drainage Authority Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Joint County Drainage Authority for Waseca Freeborn Joint County Ditch 6 (“JCD 6”), will hold a final hearing on the viewers’ report of benefits and damages for the pending redetermination of benefits and damages of JCD 6. The viewers’ report has been filed with the Joint County Drainage Authority. The hearing will be held on **September 20, 2024, 10:00a.m.**, or thereafter as the agenda allows, in the **Commissioners’ Room of the East Annex, 300 North State Street, Waseca, Minnesota 56093.** Members of the public are welcome to attend.

JCD 6 consists of tile and open ditch, and begins at the quarter section line between the Northeast and Northwest Quarters of Section 2, Hartland Township, Township 104 North, Range 22 West, Freeborn County, and flows northwesterly through the Northwest Quarter of said Section 2, then continues northwesterly across Section 34, New Richland Township, Township 105 North, Range 22 West, Waseca County, the Southwest Quarter of Section 27, then northerly along the section line between said Section 27 and Section 28, then westerly by northwesterly across the Northeast Quarter and Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 28, then northerly across the Southeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 21, then northerly along the quarter section line between the Northeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter and the Northwest Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of said Section 21, then easterly along the quarter section line between the Northeast Quarter and Southeast Quarter of said Section 21, then northerly and northwesterly across the Northeast Quarter and the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 21, then westerly across the South Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 16 and southwesterly across the Southeast Quarter of Section 17 where it terminates at its outlet into Waseca County Ditch 47. JCD 6 includes tile and open ditch laterals and branches located in the Southwest Quarter of Section 35, the Northwest Quarter of Section 34, Section 33, Section 28, and the South Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 21, all in New Richland Township, Township 105 North, Range 22 West, Waseca County.

The viewers’ report, along with amendments, if any, all property owners’ reports, and records describing the drainage system are available for inspection by contacting Waseca County Drainage Inspector Chris Howard by email or phone chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov or (507) 835-0534. A copy of the viewers’ report is also available for public inspection at the Freeborn County Auditor-Treasurer’s Office, 411 Broadway S, Albert Lea, MN 56007.

At the final hearing, the Joint County Drainage Authority will accept public comment regarding the viewers’ report. Any party having an interest in the proceedings may appear and provide

Mail to Chris Howard (chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov or Land & Water Resources Director, Chris Howard, at 307 North State Street, Waseca, MN 56093). All comments received prior to the final hearing will be submitted into the record.

The following properties are affected by the redetermination of benefits and damages for JCD 6:

New Richland Township, T105N-R22W, Sections 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35, and 36, Waseca County.

Hartland Township, T104N-R22W, Sections 1, 2, and 3, Freeborn County.

The following owners of property are affected by the redeterminations of benefits and damages for JCD 6:

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The following governmental entities are affected by the redeterminations of benefits and damages for JCD 6:

STATE OF MINNESOTA/ DEPT OF REVENUE; CITY OF NEW RICHLAND; STATE OF MINNESOTA/ DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION; WASECA COUNTY; NEW RICHLAND TOWNSHIP; HARTLAND TOWNSHIP.

Dated: August 20, 2024

WASECA FREEBORN JOINT COUNTY DRAINAGE AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JCD 6 DRAINAGE AUTHORITY

/s/ Doug Christopherson, Chairperson

STATE OF MINNESOTA
WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SITTING AS THE DRAINAGE AUTHORITY UNDER STATUTES CHAPTER 103E
FOR THE REDETERMINATION OF BENEFITS AND DAMAGES
OF WASECA COUNTY DITCH 26

NOTICE OF FINAL HEARING

Please Take Notice: The Waseca County Board of Commissioners, Drainage Authority for Waseca County Ditch 26 (“CD 26”), will hold a final hearing on the viewers’ report of benefits and damages for the pending redetermination of benefits and damages of CD 26. The viewers’ report has been filed with the Drainage Authority. The hearing will be held on **September 20, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.**, or thereafter as the agenda allows, in the **Commissioners’ Room of the East Annex, 300 North State Street, Waseca, Minnesota 56093.** Members of the public are welcome to attend.

CD 26 consists of subsurface tile and open ditch, with the main tile starting in the Northeast Quarter of Section 8, just south of the north section line, then draining northerly into the South Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 5, then westerly into the Southeast Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 5, then northerly and northwesterly across the West Half of Section 5, then westerly along the quarter-quarter section line between the Northwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter and the Southwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 5, then outletting into the open ditch of CD 26 near 130th Street, where it continues as open ditch across the Northeast Quarter of Section 6, terminating into Boot Creek in the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of Section 6, all in Township 105 North, Range 22 West (New Richland Township), Waseca County, Minnesota.

CD 26 includes Branch A with Laterals A1 and A2, Branch C, Branch E, and the Madison Outlet. The starting point for Branch A is in the Northeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of Section 7 just west of 130th Street, then drains northwesterly into the Southeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 7, then north and northeasterly across the East Half of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 7, the Northwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 8, and the South Half of the Southwest Quarter of Section 5 where it conflues with the CD 26 main tile. Branch A includes Lateral A 2 in the northeast corner of said Section 7 and the southeast corner of said Section 6, and Lateral A-1 starting in the Northwest Quarter of said Section 8 just south of the north section line and draining northwesterly into the South Half of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 5 where it conflues with Branch A. Branch A also includes the Madison Outlet which starts in the Southwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 8 and drains northerly, east of 130th Street until it conflues with Branch A. Branch C starts in the northwest corner of the Northeast Quarter of said Section 8 and drains north into the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 5 where it conflues with the CD 26 main tile. Branch E starts just north of the south quarter-section line of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 5 and drains southwesterly until it confluence with the CD 26 main tile in the North Half of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 5.

The viewers’ report, along with amendments, if any, all property owners’ reports, and records describing the drainage system are available for inspection by contacting Chris Howard by email or phone at chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov or (507) 835-0534.

At the final hearing, the Drainage Authority will accept public comment regarding the viewers’ report. Any party having an interest in the proceedings may appear and provide comment per the instructions above. Written comments may be submitted by email or by U.S. Mail to Chris Howard (chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov or Land & Water Resources Director, Chris Howard, at 307 North State Street, Waseca, MN 56093). All comments received prior to the final hearing will be submitted into the record.

The following properties are affected by the redetermination of benefits and damages for CD 26:

New Richland Township, T105N-R22W, Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, and 17, Waseca County.

The following owners of property are affected by the redeterminations of benefits and damages for CD 26:

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The following governmental entities are affected by the redeterminations of benefits and damages for CD 26:

WASECA COUNTY; NEW RICHLAND TOWNSHIP.

Dated: August 20, 2024

WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WASECA COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
CD 26 DRAINAGE AUTHORITY

/s/ Brian Harguth, Chairperson /s/ Michael Johnson

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City of Waseca is requesting insurance carrier proposals for Medical Insurance. The RFP (with submission instructions, general information and all pertinent underwriting details) can be obtained by contacting Jake Owen at Gallagher Benefit Services -- 3600 American Blvd W – Suite 500, Bloomington, MN 55431-- Email: Jake_Owen@ajg.com. All questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Jake Owen at Gallagher. Quoting carriers must provide an emailed sealed proposal to Gallagher following the instructions outlined in the RFP no later than 2:00 pm on September 19th. Proposals received after the deadline will be considered late and ineligible for consideration.
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on Thursday, August 29, 2024.

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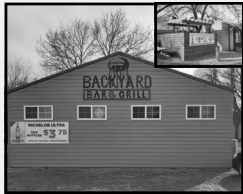
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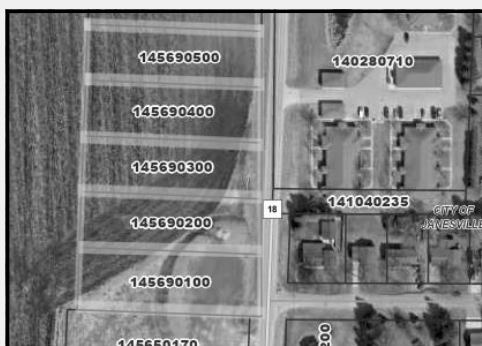
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Football Panthers expect success

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

If the offseason is any indication, it should be an exciting year for the NRHEG High School football team.

The Panthers, who have a slew of returning varsity players, have done plenty of preseason work to prepare.

"We have a lot of talent and experience," said seventh-year head coach Marc Kruger. "We are looking to build off last season and make a run at the sub-district and sections playoffs. We feel we can compete with all the teams in our area. We are still looking forward to very tough competition."

The Panthers, 4-1 in the Mid-Southeast District last year, finished 4-5 overall. That's their best finish in the last five years, and one they definitely aim to improve on this fall. Kruger's NRHEG squads have gone a combined 23-29, including a section tournament title and state berth in his first season.

Returning varsity athletes include seniors Aidan Schlaak (WR DB 6-5 175), Alden Dobberstein (QB DB 6-1 165), Aaden Hanna (WR DB 6-3 185), Owen Bartlett (WR DB 6-0 195), Harbor Cromwell (RB LB 5-10 180), Seth Staloch (RB DB 5-10 145), Gavin Sletten (RB LB 6-0 195), Carter Martens (OL DL 5-10



LEADERSHIP — The 2024 NRHEG High School football team seniors. Front from left: Gavin Sletten, Jace Ihrke, Carter Martens, Seth Staloch, Aidan Schlaak, Jase Knudson and Jayden Fleming. Back: Logan Schiell, Cole Hutchins, Owen Bartlett, Coach Kruger, Alden Dobberstein, Harbor Cromwell, Aaden Hanna.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

"This will be an exciting season for NRHEG football." — Coach Marc Kruger

360).

The Panthers graduated just one key player from a year ago, Jaylin Raab, who's now playing at Gustavus Adolphus College.

The Panthers have, in Coach Kruger's words, a loaded senior class, with many two and three-year starters.

"We may not be deep with experience beyond that," he said.

The key to success for the

Panthers, according to Kruger, are to maintain solidarity through the grind of a football season.

"We will have a lot of ups and downs, but this is a solid group," said Kruger, who's assisted by Neil Fuchs, Jeff Jimenez, Chad Sykes, Dan Bell, Jacob Schuller, Brain Belcourt and Aaron Gilliland.

"This will be an exciting season for NRHEG football," said Kruger.

"This team put in a lot of work this

offseason and I can not wait to see it pay out on the field."

NRHEG football 2024 schedule
Aug. 29 vs. Randolph, 7 p.m.
Sept. 6 at Norwood-YA, 7 p.m.
Sept. 13 vs. Mayer Lutheran, 7 p.m.
Sept. 20 at St. Clair/Loyola, 7 p.m.
Sept. 27 vs. Medford, 7 p.m. (HC)
Oct. 4 at WEM, 7 p.m.
Oct. 10 vs. JWP, 7 p.m.
Oct. 16 at United S. Central, 7 p.m.
Oct. 22 Section quarterfinals
Oct. 26 Section semifinals
Nov. 1 Section finals at JWP

JWP volleyball squad seeks continued progress

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Girls' athletic teams at Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School have made some outstanding strides in recent years.

This fall, the volleyball team is looking to get in on the fun.

"We are returning most of our starters from last season, so we have high hopes," said eighth-year head coach Jessica Keenan, whose squad finished 9-13 overall and 4-7 in the Gopher Conference last season.

Returning varsity players include Brielle Bure, Ava Appel, Nevaeh Weimert, Katie Olson, Lilly Strauss, Claire Walz, Aubrey Weedman, Ellah Oliver, Presley James, Paige Walz, Brielle Dessner, Mikayla Wheelock and Hope Dimmel.

They received a slew of awards. Bure, the Bulldogs' Defensive MVP, was selected all-conference, ranking second in school history for single-season digs (2023), fourth in single-season digs (22), and No. 3 in career digs. Weedman, an all-conference honorable mention selection, was the Bulldogs' MVP last year, ranking No. 4 in career ace blocks and No. 6 in career set assists. Walz, last year's Offensive MVP, is No. 3 in career ace blocks. Strauss, JWP's DAWG award winner last year, is

"Everyone has improved over the off-season and I have a lot of faith in them." — Coach Jessica Keenan

No. 10 in career ace blocks. Olson was voted Most Improved last year, while James ranks No. 1 in single-season blocks and No. 6 for career ace blocks.

The Bulldogs will start the season without Bure, a three-year starter at libero who's recovering from a broken jaw. It's not known when she'll return to the lineup.

The Bulldogs graduated a couple key players in Ali Olson, a captain, and Lexie Dahlberg, who finished her JWP career No. 6 in career ace serves and was named all-conference last year.

"The girls are stepping up to fill in (Bure's) place," said Keenan. "Everyone has improved over the offseason and I have a lot of faith in this team. They are fun, hard working, and ambitious! We are looking to win as many games as we can and improve a little bit every day!"

Varsity experience is perhaps the Bulldogs' biggest positive.

"We have lots of returners with lots of varsity experience and lots of leadership," said Keenan. "Many of this crew have been

starting since sophomore year, and we have 10 seniors. The girls are motivated to make it the best season yet!"

The biggest concern for Keenan is how the Bulldogs will fare while they wait for Bure to recover.

"We'd been working all summer and have to make some lineup changes," she said. "The girls are stepping up to the plate to tackle the challenge."

Staying focused, according to Keenan, is a key concern.

"Our girls need to ensure they are mentally strong throughout the season," she said. "Through both tough times and successes. We have the talent and the experience to do great things!"

Keenan, whose JWP teams have gone a combined 36-71, is assisted by Tater Schmitz and Kayla Holden. The Bulldogs' best season through the past five years was 2021, when they reached the section semifinals.

The Bulldogs opened the 2024 season with a 3-1 victory over Mankato Loyola, 25-22, 17-25, 25-22 and 25-10.



STRONG START — Members of the JWP High School volleyball team celebrate a season-opening victory over Mankato Loyola.

Photo by LeAnn Kavitz

Individually: Dessner 2 aces and 100% serving percentage, 8 digs; Strauss 5 aces, 3 kills, 2 blocks, 11 digs; Weedman 4 aces, 3 kills, 20 assists, 19 digs; Katie Olson 14 kills, 19 digs, 100% serving percentage; Claire Walz 3 kills, 2 blocks, 2 digs; James 8 kills, 2 blocks, 4 digs; Dimmel 3 kills;

Walz 2 kills; Weimert 6 assists, 13 digs; Oliver 8 digs.

JWP volleyball 2024 schedule
Aug. 27 at Cleveland 7 p.m.
Aug. 29 vs. Waseca, 7:15
Sept. 5 vs. WEM, 7:15
Sept. 10 at Medford, 7:15
Sept. 12 vs. Bethlehem Academy, 7:15

Sept. 16 at Alden-Conger, 7 p.m.
Sept. 17 at Blooming Prairie, 7:15
Sept. 19 vs. Hayfield, 7:15
Sept. 24 at Nicollet, 7 p.m.
Sept. 28 at Nicollet Inv., 8 a.m.
Oct. 1 at Kenyon-Wanamingo, 7:15
Oct. 3 vs. NRHEG, 7:15
Oct. 8 at Randolph, 7:15
Oct. 12 vs. Triton, 1 p.m.
Oct. 15 at United South Central, 7:15

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Panther CC teams return top runners

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

This fall, the expectations for the NRHEG High School cross country team may be higher than usual.

It's because almost nobody graduated off the 2023 squad.

Led by eighth-grader Julieanna Wobbrock, who emerged as the team's top runner about midseason last year, the Panthers and second-year head coach Larry Nydegger are cautiously optimistic.

In addition to Wobbrock, an all-conference performer who finished third in the conference and in the top 20 of Section 2A last fall, the Panthers also return junior Holly Bartness, sophomore Amelia Duryee and eighth-grader Elle Jenno.

Newcomers who figure to contribute to the varsity are senior Sierra Misgen, eighth-grader Devlin McWilliams and seventh-grader Violette Botten.

The girls finished fourth in the conference and 10th in the section last year.

Junior Jacob Karl led the boys' squad last season, when he was a consistent runner who took all-conference honors while taking third in the conference meet.

"He had a good summer program," said Nydegger.

According to the coach, the



BACK FOR MORE — The NRHEG High School cross country teams return their top runner for the girls' team, Julieanna Wobbrock, left, and Jacob Karl, right, for the boys' team.

Panthers will aim for continued improvement throughout the season, peaking for the postseason.

"The No. 1 goal every year is to improve," said Nydegger. "Improve times over last year and week to week. This is a young team with a great deal of potential. With such a small team, staying healthy is key."

Nydegger pegs Maple River and WEM/JWP as the conference favorites for both girls and boys.

NRHEG cross country 2024 schedule
Aug. 29 at Stewartville, 4 p.m.
Sept. 5 at Hayfield (Oaks GC), 4:15
Sept. 10 at Blooming Prairie, 4:30
Sept. 17 NRHEG Invitational, 4:30



"This is a young team with a great deal of potential."

— Coach Larry Nydegger.

Sept. 26 at WEM/JWP Inv., 4:30
Oct. 3 at Waseca Inv., 4 p.m.
Oct. 8 at USC (Oak View), 4:30

Oct. 15 Gopher Conf. Meet, 4 p.m.
Oct. 24 Section at Norwood-YA, 3:45

Former Bluejay to play at MSU Sept. 7

Former Waseca Bluejay Marcus Hansen, a top 10 Mr. Football candidate in 2021 and a standout in track and field, will be in Mankato Saturday, Sept. 7 as his Bemidji State University football team takes on Minnesota-State Mankato at 5 p.m.

Hansen, a junior, was named NSIC Player of the Year last year along with receiving national accolades.

In high school, he captured state championships in the shot put and discus and was named Minnesota's Boys' Track and Field Gatorade Player of the Year in 2021.

Hansen's mom, Barb, has been telling as many people as possible about the game, and hopes to see some Waseca people turn out to support him.

Hansen's jersey number is 36.

Get your sports in the Pioneer

• e-mail Jim Lutgens at sportswriter79@yahoo.com

High hopes for JWP football team

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

It could be a breakthrough season for the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School football team.

The Bulldogs, who at times have struggled to win games in recent years, have a horde of returning varsity players, sparking optimism for second-year head coach Ryan Luedtke and his staff.

"We are hoping to continue our growth from last season as students and leaders," said Luedtke. "On the field, we are striving to surprise people on offense and defense while having some fun when doing it. We have had a great fall camp, and I think it will show up on Friday and Saturdays!"

The Bulldogs finished 3-6 in the first season under Luedtke, who's assisted by Howard VanOtterloo, Sam Schruin, Brandon Goebel, Rich Davis, Bjorn Peterson and Jack Morsching. JWP's best record the past five years is 5-5. A long list of returning players has the Bulldogs believing they can top that mark.

Returning as varsity veterans are seniors Isaiah Berndt (RB/DB), Ethan Born (TE/DB), Luke Cahill (OL/DL), Max Davis (C/DL), Isaac Gahlon (WR/DB), Carter Hoehn (TE/DL), Landon Johnson (WR/LB), Gavin Marineko

(WR/CB), Preson Meihak (OL/DL), Jaxon Miller (OL/DL).

Lucas Morsching (RB/LB) and Peyton O'Brien (RB/LB), juniors Davien Weis (OL/DL), Daulton Bauer (QB/CB), Zachary Blasing (OL/DL), Aiden Cummins (OL/DL), Chase Gerds (RB/DB), Josiah Hagen (OL/DL), Dylan Hood (RB/DB), Caleb Quast (WR/DB), Rylan Rolfson (OL/DL), Rocco Scholl (WR/DB) and Zander Terbeest (OL/DB), and sophomores Michael Walker (TE/LB), Will Barbknecht (OL/DL), Seth Dahlberg (QB/LB), Parker Geariety (RB/DB), Tyson Johnson (TE/OL), Yale Johnson (OL/DL), Aidan Rider (OL/DL), Carson Schultz (TE/LB), Jeffrey Simonson (WR/DB/K), Blayne Wandrie (TE/LB), Gavin Weedman (WR/DB), Jason Wheelock (OL/DL) and Jackson Winters (OL/DL).

Freshmen figuring to contribute include Gavin Bauer (WR/DB), Blake Bure (RB/DB), Carter Freitag (OL/DL), Leighlan Harris (TE/LB), Tyson Kronbach (QB/LB), Brayden Neegaard (OL/DL), Ayden Peterson (WR/DB), Garrett Rienhard (OL/DL), James Schoenrock (OL/DL), Jett Sturdivant (WR/DB) and Jaxon Wolff (WR/DB).

Key players who graduated from last year's squad include Ryan Kronbach, Cole Schlueter, Austin

Quast, Austin Carda, Cole Gartner, Nolan Morsching and Dylan McWaters. Kronbach set school records for receiving yards in a game, single-season receptions, career receiving touchdowns, yards and receptions; he tied the season record for touchdowns. Schlueter, Quast, Carda and Gartner anchored the offensive line. Morsching was like a coach on the field from his free safety position, and McWaters was called a shut-down cornerback by Coach Luedtke.

"We have 13 seniors and 11 juniors on the team that we will lean on for their leadership and experience," said Luedtke. "Many of upper classmen have put in a solid offseason to improve their ability. I'm excited to see how it shows up on the field."

The coach's biggest concern is how the Bulldogs will match up with other Class AA teams.

"We are always trying to get more of our students out for football," he said. "Our players have done a great job of recruiting the hallways where our numbers have improved from last year. We are hoping to continue getting students out for football to improve our depth."

The key to success for the 2024 Bulldogs?

"We will have to play fundamental football, knowing our assign-

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Grizzly CC teams aim for championships

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The WEM/JWP Grizzly cross country teams appear poised to challenge for the Gopher Conference championship.

Both the boys' and girls' squads, second in the conference last year, return several runners for coaches Liz Kvebak of JWP and Skyler Petry of WEM.

Returning boys from JWP are Teagan Mulder and Alex Klieve, while WEM returns Wesley Heinz, Wyatt Jans and Maddox Moreno.

Jans made the all-conference first team last year, while Klieve and Mulder were named to the second team. Moreno won the all-conference Sportsmanship Award.

New runners include JWP's Avery Fall and WEM's Parker Smith, Auston Holicky and Charlie Dennis.

The boys finished 11th in the section meet.

The girls, eighth in the section last

year, return varsity veterans Anne Adams, MaKenzie Westphal, Emma Huelsnitz, Kwynn Krause, Madeline Hoehn and Lydia Huelsnitz of JWP, and Madalyn Miller, Lydia Coulseay, Ellie Schlie and Madeline Heuss of WEM.

Westphal was named all-conference first team and to the all-section team. Krause was second team all-conference while Miller received honorable mention.

Newcomers are JWP's Onikia Herme and WEM's Abby Crosby, Jaelyn Wilmes and Hailey Heinz.

"We lost Lauren White for this upcoming season," said Elvebak, a first-year head coach. "She really was a key asset to our team. She brought team leadership through connecting with her teammates and working hard. Lauren did everything she was asked and more. She was one of the hardest workers I have ever met. She reminded me of myself at her age."

Elvebak said one aim for this season is to put more miles on athletes' legs.

"I also want to win conference for both boys and girls teams," she said. "It will be a bit harder for the boys, but I am looking forward to our first meet and seeing where we are starting. We have a really strong training plan that will help us peak at the right moment. Another big goal of ours was growing our team and creating a positive, hard working, team culture. We took the kids up to "Make the Lake," Minnesota's largest cross country camp up in Detroit Lakes and the athletes had a blast. They got to camp, jump off bridges, run around the lake, and troll hunt. It was overall a great opportunity to build an amazing team culture."

One of the Grizzlies' strengths, according to Elvebak, is that they love hills.

Her biggest concern? Depth.

"We are a small team, but we are growing and I am excited to see how much we can grow in the next few years," she said.

The Grizzlies' key to success?

"The ability to go out and compete hard," said Elvebak. "I want our kids to be able to set personal records, compete against other teams, and have fun. Cross country is not an easy sport, and with the effort these athletes put in they will set new PRs and accomplish their goals throughout the season. They will learn how to be good teammates and support each other through the grittiness that makes Grizzly CC."

WEM/JWP cross country 2024 schedule
Sept. 5 at Hayfield, 4:15
Sept. 12 at Maple River Daly Park, 4:30
Sept. 17 at NRHEG Inv., 4:30
Sept. 26 WEM/JWP Inv., 4:30
Oct. 3 at Waseca, 4 p.m.
Oct. 8 at USC (Oak View), 4:30
Oct. 15 Gopher Conference, 4:15
Oct. 24 Section at Norwood-YA, 4 p.m.

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WHS soccer boys seek to move up

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Continued progress.

That's the aim for the 2024 season for the Waseca High School boys' soccer team.

"We want to move up in the conference and section," said veteran head coach Jenaro Delgado, whose team finished 3-11-2 overall and 3-8 in the Big South Conference last year.

The Bluejays graduated some strong players from last year's crew, including captain, all-conference and all-section defender Logan Heyer. Also graduated is Jenaro Delgado Jr., a captain and all-conference defender.

Delgado enters his 25th year coaching soccer, which includes 12 years as a Waseca head coach. He's assisted by David Vasquez and Mike McQuery.

Returning varsity players this season include seniors Ezra Skains, Christopher Badillo, Lucas McQuery and Isaiah Johnson, juniors Brady Tlougan and Amin Sharif and sophomore Sunny Mei.

Athletes whom Delgado is counting on for a great deal of help at the varsity level are juniors Christian Rodriguez and Diego Toapanta, and sophomores Josten Toapanta and Tovin Grannis.

As for team strengths, Delgado said the Bluejays are strong, very enthusiastic and willing to challenge any and all opponents.

The key to success?

"Our teams needs cohesion," said Delgado. "Once we are able to understand that we work as a team, that will be the success. Our team will do its best to represent Waseca soccer."

Waseca boys' soccer 2024 schedule
Aug. 22 vs. Mound-Westonka, 2 p.m.
Aug. 29 at Fairmont, 7 p.m.
Sept. 3 vs. New Ulm, 7 p.m.
Sept. 5 vs. St. Peter, 7 p.m.
Sept. 9 vs. Byron, 7 p.m.
Sept. 10 at Tri-City United, 7 p.m.
Sept. 12 at Worthington, 7 p.m.
Sept. 17 vs. SJ/Winom/Madelia, 7 p.m.
Sept. 19 at New Ulm, 6:45
Sept. 24 at St. Peter, 7 p.m.
Sept. 26 at Zumbrota, 4 p.m.
Sept. 28 at Red Wing, 12 noon
Sept. 30 vs. Kasson-Mantorville, 7 p.m.
Oct. 1 vs. Tri-City United, 7 p.m.
Oct. 3 Big South championship, TBD
Oct. 8 Section semifinals, TBD
Oct. 10 Section semifinals, TBD
Oct. 15 Section finals, TBD



CC GIRLS — The 2024 Waseca High School girls' cross country team. Front from left: Leah Wilson, Jenna Yoder, Noelle Drake, Quinn Yoder, Camilla Staloch and Ava VanDenHemel; middle: Ellie Kopischke, Maren Schimming, Violet Rohwer, Megan Tegmeier, Kelsey Draeger, Callie Dufault and Taylor Markenson; back: head coach Grant Popp, manager Katelyn Weber, Berkly Hinna, Stella Omtvedt, assistant coach Nancy Kaplan and assistant coach Heidi McCabe.
Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens



CC BOYS — The 2024 Waseca High School boys' cross country team. Front from left: Colin Guggisberg, Sam Feldkamp, Tristan Godwin, Luke Feldkamp and Miles Popp; back: head coach Grant Popp, manager Katelyn Weber, Tyler Jellum, Isaac Feldkamp, Ryan Yoder, Wyatt Hager, assistant coach Nancy Kaplan and assistant coach Heidi McCabe.
Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

CC teams hope to hoist a trophy

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

It's not certain that all the pieces are in place for the 2024 Waseca High School cross country teams.

But it should be fun to find out.

The Bluejays return some talented individuals and a plethora of varsity veterans, leading to optimism for eighth-year head coach Grant Popp and his runners.

The girls, who finished third in the Big South Conference meet last year, won a section championship as recently as 2022.

Leading this year's girls' squad are returning letterwinners Callie Dufault, Stella Omtvedt, Maren Schimming, Taylor Markeson and Kelsey Draeger.

There are a few new people who could impact the varsity. In the Bluejays' first scrimmage, seventh-grader Ellie Kopischke and freshman Ava VanDenHemel finished in the top five.

The most significant runner graduating for the girls was their captain, Nora Schimming.

For the boys, varsity veterans returning are Isaac Feldkamp, Tristan Godwin, Tanner Hanson and Tyler Jellum. Seventh-grader Luke Feldkamp and junior Wyatt Hager were in the top five of the Jays' first scrimmage.

The boys, fifth in the Big South last year, graduated consistent varsity runner Colton Schroeder.

Popp, assisted by Heidi McCabe and Nancy Kaplan, expects big things from the girls' squad.

"We returned almost all of our runners on the girls' varsity team, and have a lot of strong younger runners as well," said Popp. "I think we will have people competing for varsity spots all year and our girls' team has a good chance of qualifying for state. The girls' team is young, but we have most of the same core runners who went to state two years ago, and some strong younger runners who are only going to get better."

The boys also return most of the varsity.

"We're running faster than this point last year," said Popp. "With our new additions, I think the boys team will move up a few places at the section meet. The boys' team returns four seniors. Hopefully, that experience will pay off and they will be able to perform more consistently than last year. We are really thin on numbers with only 10 runners. A little more depth and competition would help us to improve during the season and build for next year when we lose our senior group."

A key to success is maintaining the positive attitude and work ethic the Bluejays have started the season with.

"Staying healthy will go a long way for us," said Popp. "The first two weeks of practice have been great, and between our new additions and the training our veterans put in, both the boys' and girls' teams will be stronger than they were last year."

Waseca cross country 2024 schedule
Aug. 29 at Stewartville, 4 p.m.
Sept. 5 at Montgomery, 4:30
Sept. 12 at Rochester, 4 p.m.
Sept. 17 at Albert Lea, 4 p.m.
Sept. 26 at Zumbrota, 4 p.m.
Oct. 3 Waseca Invitational, 4 p.m.
Oct. 8 at Jordan, 4 p.m.
Oct. 15 Big So. at Riverside GC, 3:30
Oct. 24 Section, TBD

New coach optimistic for NRHEG volleyball

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Bethany Tennis may be in her inaugural season as head volleyball coach at NRHEG High School, but she's no stranger to the sport.

And she's optimistic and excited for the 2024 season.

Tennis, NRHEG's eighth-grade volleyball coach the last two seasons, inherits a veteran varsity squad coming off a record of 14-11 overall and 6-5 in the Gopher Conference.

Returning varsity athletes include seniors Aryanna Howe, Mallory Schlinger, Avah Reich and Aspyr Stenzel, juniors Gabby Schlaak, Camryn VanMaldeghem, Chloe Stork, Addy Stadheim, Nora Flatness, Chloe Riewer and Izley Boerner, and sophomore Annika Ladlie.

The Panthers are looking to replace talented graduates Hallie Schultz, Faith Nielsen, Madi Murray and Tayler Schmidt. Schultz, an all-conference selection, finished her Panther career as the all-time leader in assists with 1,883.

Tennis, assisted by Corrine Schuller and Jen Hatton, said the Panthers aim to play competitive within the conference while growing in their skills.

"We want to create effective team dynamics in the gym that helps develop a positive Panther volleyball culture," she said.

Hard work is a must.

"We do not have many players with varsity experience, but our players this season have drive and determination to create a strong defense and dynamic offense," said Tennis. "We have a lot of work to do and these girls are ready to put in the time."

Maintaining consistency throughout all levels of competitive play and finding ways to adjust quickly to opponents is, according to Tennis, the key to success for the 2024 Panthers.

"We need to develop team perseverance and tenacity while facing the challenges throughout the season," she said.

Originally from Hayward, Minn., Tennis played volleyball for multiple clubs in Albert Lea, where she started at setter before transitioning to libero throughout high school. She was Academic All-State and a team captain. She played volleyball and softball through high school and club rugby in college for a year. She played college volleyball at Gustavus Adolphus.

What does Tennis expect to see in her first year as NRHEG head volleyball coach?

"One of the benefits I have coming into the head position is that I have made relationships with many of the younger athletes from being their 8th-grade coach," she said. "The girls all know I have really high expectations of them on and off the court and they have been working very hard in the preseason so far. I expect to see competitive teams throughout all levels of our program and hope that we can create a positive gym culture, one in which we can achieve team goals and face challenges with tenacity."

Practice has went well so far.

"The energy in the gym is high, but there is always room for more," said Tennis. "We have



VARSITY VETERANS — Returning for the 2024 NRHEG High School volleyball team are, front from left: Addy Stadheim, Mallory Schlinger, Chloe Riewer; back: Chloe Stork, Camryn VanMaldeghem, Gabby Schlaak.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently



NEW LEADER — New NRHEG head volleyball coach Bethany Tennis likes what she's seen so far from her squad.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

been injury-free so far and hope to continue that streak throughout the season."

Tennis' philosophy as a coach? "Philosophy is a challenging word for me," she stated. "I largely feel that my philosophy is still being developed given the fact that I am a young coach. As with most works in progress, I will do some things better than others and that's on me to assess and improve. Yes, I have many ideas as a coach I value, but most importantly it's as simple as supporting my athletes. Each team that I've coached has had a different skill set, strengths, and weaknesses meaning I need flexibility within my coaching style. Overall, I want my girls to know that I'm in their corner. I want what's best for the team while simultaneously working on each athlete individually. The journey is more important than the destination. Giving student athletes opportunities to find success, experience loss, and develop as a teammate is imperative for their journey. A few major things for me is teaching my athletes the inherent benefit of working hard at everything they do, creating a strong sense of drive and purpose not only in the gym but also in other aspects of life they are passionate about. I also stress the importance of intention during practice. I love to spend a lot of time on basic ball control drills because it's the foundational skill of every single point they will play. Every time we touch a volleyball we are being intentional with our thought process and body to make sure we are challenging ourselves to be the best we can be."

In conclusion, Tennis said she's grateful for the opportunity to be the Panthers' head coach.

"I am super thankful for the NRHEG community," she said. "This will be my fourth year teaching and third year coaching for the district. This community cares about their schools and athletes, and it shows."

NRHEG volleyball 2024 schedule
Aug. 27 at Alden-Conger, 7 p.m.
Aug. 30 at Tri-City United, 7:15
Sept. 3 vs. Waseca, 7:15
Sept. 5 vs. Triton, 7:15
Sept. 10 at United So. Central, 7:15
Sept. 12 vs. WEM, 7:15
Sept. 17 at Medford, 7:15
Sept. 19 vs. Bethlehem Acad., 7:15
Sept. 21 at USC Inv., 9 a.m.
Sept. 23 vs. Jordan, 7:15
Sept. 26 at Blooming Prairie
Sept. 28 at TCU Inv., 8:30 a.m.
Oct. 1 vs. Hayfield, 7:15
Oct. 3 at JWP, 7:15
Oct. 8 vs. Kenyon-Wanamingo, 7:15
Oct. 10 vs. Maple River, 7:15
Oct. 15 at Randolph, 7:15
Oct. 21 Section tournament, TBD
Oct. 24 Section tournament, TBD
Oct. 29 Section tournament, TBD
Oct. 31 Section finals at St. Peter

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All but two starters are back for WHS girls' tennis team

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Throughout his 26 years with the program, including 21 years as head coach, Kyle Collins has set a high standard for the Waseca High School girls' tennis team.

His teams have gone a combined 231-146, winning seven conference championships and four section titles.

But it's been a while since the Bluejays have hoisted a trophy.

Will this be the year?

With only two players graduated off last years squad - Sarah Haley and Lizzy Roessler - it looks like they may have a legitimate shot at a championship. It's almost a certainty the Jays will improve on last year's record of 7-13 overall and 1-4 in the Big South East.

Senior captains and three-year letterwinners Takya Schoenrock, Mia Kanewischer and Addie Pfeiffer are among the returnees on varsity. Senior Kennedy Lynch, in her first year out for tennis, is expected to play somewhere in the lineup.

Also returning are juniors Maddy Benson, Paige Dufault, Vivian Mader, Pearl Moore, Paola Sandoval, Lily Sanchez and Madilyn Larrabee. Junior Layla Keith, a state-caliber gymnast in her

"We are looking for players who have that compete factor when the match is on the line."

— Coach Kyle Collins "

first year out for tennis, will also play varsity, as will eighth-grader Ava Miller.

The rest of the squad includes sophomore Grace Chawra and freshmen Hannah Rugger and Sophia Abrego.

"We will rely heavily on our juniors and seniors to lead this year's team," said Coach Collins. "With seven letterwinners returning, their experience should help in the close matches. Our top six players are very equal in ability. After our top six, we have to findout who can play second and third doubles. These are critical positions to fill, when it comes to conference and section play."

The conference will have a new look this year with the addition of Belle Plaine and Tri-City United.

The Bluejays' goals for 2024:

1. Win the Big South East Division
2. Win the Big South Conference title
3. Win the Section 1A title
4. Compile a team GPA of 3.75 or higher

"We have to be consistent with our work ethic on the court, and we are looking for players who will have that compete factor when the match is one the line," said Collins. "This all comes with experience. We have many girls who have a lot of experience."

Collins, assisted by Tricia Mercier and Paul Marlin, guided the Bluejays to second place in the state in 2009, third in 2012, fourth in 2010 and sixth in 2011.

The Bluejays hosted a triangular in their season opener, defeating New Prague 4-3 while falling 4-3 to Belle Plaine.

Winners against New Prague were Mader at singles, and the doubles teams of Dufault and Benson at



GIRLS' TENNIS — The 2024 Waseca High School girls' tennis team. Front from left: Lily Sanchez, Takya Schoenrock, Vivian Mader, Madi Larrabee and Sophie Abrego. Middle: Grace Chawra, Paula Sandoval, Layla Keith and Addie Pfeiffer. Back: Ava Miller, Paige Dufault, Pearl Moore, Mia Kanewischer and Kennedy Lynch.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

No. 1, Moore and Miller at No. 2 and Keith and Lynch at No. 3.

Mader and Benson won singles amcthes against Belle Plaine. Pfeifer and Kanewischer won at No. 1 doubles.

The Bluejays then defeated Lake City 5-2 at home, sweeping the doubles with Kanewischer and Dufault

at No. 1, Lynch and Miller at No. 2, and Keith and Moore at No. 3.

Waseca girls' tennis 2024 schedule

Aug. 19 vs. Belle Plaine, N. Prague, 9 a.m.
Aug. 20 vs. Lake City, 11 a.m.
Sept. 4 at Faribault, 4:30
Sept. 7 vs. LSH, Mankato West, 9 a.m.
Sept. 9 vs. Northfield, 4:30
Sept. 10 at St. Peter, 4:30

Sept. 12 vs. New Ulm, 4:30
Sept. 16 at St. James, 4:30
Sept. 17 at Tri-City United, 4:30
Sept. 19 at Blue Earth Area, 4:30
Sept. 23 at Cannon Falls, 4:30
Sept. 24 vs. Rochester Lourdes, 4:30
Oct. 7 Section team, TBD
Oct. 11 Section team, TBD
Oct. 14 Section individual, TBD
Oct. 15 Section individual, TBD



VOLLEYBALL — The 2024 Waseca High School volleyball team. Front from left: Kendall Bowers, Ellie Hoehn, Takara Slattery and Malanie Engel. Middle: Kate Eldeen, Alyssa Kilmer, Lily Owen, Siri Kuhns and Ellery Waldron. Back: coach Krissy Plonske, assistant coach Kelsey Kahnke, Savanna Vagts, Kalea Sartori, Aliyah Taylor and assistant coach Kylie Hensch.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Plonske has high hopes for WHS volleyball squad

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Krissy Plonske, second-year head coach for the Waseca High School volleyball team, is not exactly sure of last season's win-loss record.

Not that it matters.

The Bluejays finished 2023 on a high note, losing a tough match in the second round of tournament play. It's safe to say Plonske and the players are hoping for and looking for a better showing this fall, when they'll employ some new tactics.

"This season, our team is working on fast tempo offense and on the toes defense," said Plonske. "They play so well together and they are always having each other's backs."

The 2024 Bluejays include seniors Kendall Bowers, Takara Slattery, Siri Kuhns, Aliyah Taylor, Lily Owen, Kalea Sartori, Ellie Hoehn, Malanie Engel and Katy Eldeen, juniors Alyssa Kilmer and Ellery Waldron, and sophomore

"I think everyone is going to be shocked how well this team is formed."

— Coach Krissy Plonske

Savanna Vagts.

Nine of the girls earned varsity letters last fall. Taylor, Kuhns and Hoehn earned all-conference recognition, while Slattery earned honorable mention.

Plonske is assisted at the B-squad level by second-year coach Kelsey Kanke. First-year coach Kylie Hensch will handle the C-squad.

Plonske expects solid play from Taylor, Kuhns, Sartori, Hoehn, Bowers and Slattery, and she has high hopes for Waldron.

How do the Bluejays shape up compared to the rest of the conference and section?

"I think everyone is going to be shocked how well formed this team is," said Plonske. "I don't have favorites; we will be ready for every type of competition."

Waseca volleyball 2024 schedule

Aug. 29 at JWP, 7:15
Aug. 31 at Rochester Inv., 8 a.m.
Sept. 3 at NRHEG, 7:15
Sept. 5 vs. Fairmont, 4:30
Sept. 10 at St. Peter, 7:15
Sept. 17 vs. Tri-City United, 7:30
Sept. 19 at New Ulm, 7:15
Sept. 20 at Austin Inv., 8 a.m.
Sept. 23 at Fairmont, 7:30
Sept. 24 vs. St. James Area, 7:15
Oct. 1 vs. Jordan, 7:30
Oct. 3 at Blue Earth Area, 7:15
Oct. 8 at Belle Plaine, 7:15
Oct. 10 vs. LCWM, 7:30
Oct. 21 Section tournament, TBD
Oct. 24 Section quarterfinals, TBD
Oct. 29 Section semifinals, TBD
Oct. 31 Section finals at St. Peter, 7 p.m.

Defending champion WHS soccer girls again optimistic

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Philip Bulfer enters his second season with optimism as Waseca High School girls' soccer head coach.

The Bluejays, who shared the Big South Conference championship last year, have plenty of varsity players returning. Their most notable loss, Evelyn Nydegger, is now playing at Minnesota State-Moorhead. She was a full-time starter for three seasons, including a senior season that saw her net 22 goals, twice earning all-conference honors while helping her team to two conference crowns.

Coach Bulfer, assisted by Jay Bulfer, Anastasia Garza and Neil Johannsen, said it will be a challenge to match last year's conference title, but he feels they have a good start.

The Bluejays will be led by senior

captains Ashley Sanchez and Lucia Mansfield.

Also returning for the varsity are seniors Emily Lemieux, Peyton Kalbow, Gabby Lopez, Camila Marquez and Jenny Hernandez, juniors Ella Bulfer, Rylee Schaeffer Chloe Fuller and Hope Nelson, and sophomores Angelica Lopez, Reese Ludwig and Reese Rodriguez.

Having his daughter, Ella Bulfer, back as starting goalie is key for Coach Bulfer.

"We have many key players to watch this year," said the coach. "But our experience in goal with Ella Bulfer is going to be key to our success. She was the all-conference goalie last year and it is looking like she will continue that reign this year. Our Lopez sisters, consisting of Gabby and Angelica, will be the two to watch. Their ability to work together and assist each other will be part of our highlights this year."

Coach Bulfer looks for big things from Rodriguez in her first year as a starter.

"She is going to be a key center back for us this year," he said. "Her ability to judge players and her speed will help us on the defense."

Last year's co-conference championship will not be easy to duplicate, but Coach Bulfer said it's not beyond the realm of possibility.

"It is going to be a challenge maintaining that this year," he said. "We have a great senior core, but we are going to have to ask a lot of the younger players coming up to be able to maintain that. It is always difficult to judge an upcoming season, but we have experienced players coming up from the last few years, and our depth on the bench is much better than in the past. "We are excited about our 2024 season and looking forward to making a run again at the conference title."



SOCCER GIRLS — The 2024 Waseca High School girls' soccer team. Front from left: Angelica Lopez, Jenny Hernandez, Payton Kalbow, Chloe Fuller, Reese Rodriguez, Reese Ludwig and Ashley Sanchez. Middle manager Kaiya Stagman, Reese Ludwig, Lucia Mansfield, Camila Marquez, Emily Lemieux and Hope Nelson. Back: head coach Philip Bulfer, assistant coach Anastasia Garza, Rylee Schaeffer, Ella Bulfer, Reese Rodriguez, assistant coach Jay Bulfer, assistant coach Neil Johannsen.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Waseca girls' soccer 2024 schedule

Aug. 22 vs. Mound-Westonka, 4 p.m.
Aug. 29 vs. Fairmont, 7 p.m.
Sept. 3 at New Ulm, 6:45
Sept. 5 at St. Peter, 7 p.m.

Sept. 10 vs. Tri-City United, 7 p.m.
Sept. 12 vs. Worthington, 7 p.m.
Sept. 16 at Byron, 7 p.m.
Sept. 17 at SJ/Window/Madelia, 7 p.m.
Sept. 19 vs. New Ulm, 7 p.m.
Sept. 24 vs. St. Peter, 7 p.m.
Sept. 28 vs. Red Wing, 12 noon

Sept. 30 at Kasson-Mantorville, 7 p.m.
Oct. 1 at Tri-City United, 7 p.m.
Oct. 3 Big South championship, TBD
Oct. 8 Section quarterfinals, TBD
Oct. 10 Section semifinals, TBD
Oct. 15 Section finals, TBD

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WHS FOOTBALL — The 2024 Waseca High School varsity football team. The Bluejays open the season Friday at defending state champion Stewartville. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

WHS football team returns some top-shelf athletes

Ohnstad moves to quarterback after Johnston injury

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

When you look at the roster for the 2024 Waseca High School football team, you have to consider the extremely talented athletes who graduated from last year's 9-3 squad.

The list includes Kaeden Johnson, Running Back of the Year in the Big South White Division who's now a preferred walk-on at the University of Minnesota, conference Defensive Player of the Year Carter Ellis, two-time Offensive Lineman of the Year in the Big South White Division Andrew Robran, and Shane Engel-Mueller, an all-state level defensive lineman.

In addition, the Bluejays will also take field without last year's starting quarterback Jordan Johnston, a junior who sustained a torn ACL while playing basketball.

Not much of that matters to head coach Brad Wendland, his staff and the Bluejay players, who aim to compete every time they step on the field.

"Every year we expect to be among the best 3A teams in the state," said Wendland. "This year is no exception."

The Bluejays return some top-notch talent, led by senior Damarius Russell and his brother, junior Deron Russell, who led the Bluejays' to the state tournament in

"All four captains are possible college players."
— Coach Brad Wendland

basketball last winter. Damarius has committed to play at defending FCS national champion South Dakota State.

Deron is the returning Big South Defensive Back of the Year.

The captains are Damarius Russell, a wide receiver/defensive back, linemen Ben Hagen and Braydyn Hascha and lineman/linebacker Tauston Rupe.

"All four captains are possible college players," said Wendland.

They lead a strong group of 18 seniors that includes Carson Ohnstad, who will assume the quarterback duties in light of Johnston's injury.

According to Wendland, Ethan Hiller had a great offensive season and is ready to take a big step as a WR/DB.

"Cody Weber is as hard of a worker as we have!" said Wendland. He is a returning starter on the offensive line. Kolyten Quiller, Jacob Root, Dylan Parpart and Lucas Selthun join Rupe as a strong group of linebackers.

Wendland is looking for a big senior year from Bennett Ludwig at running back.

"We believe we are very strong at both wide receiver and defensive back," said Wendland. "We should be strong at getting the ball to the perimeter and stopping the pass. We might struggle early against stopping the run, and we will likely have some growing pains offensively."

Avoiding injury is a key to success for the 2024 Bluejays.

Wendland and his assistants have instilled a winning culture in Waseca football, and the coach expects the Bluejays and Jordan to battle for the Big South White crown. Teams have gone a combined 145-74 in Wendland's 22 years as a head coach, 19 of them in Waseca.

The Bluejays won section championships in 2009, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2023.

They open the season Friday at Stewartville, who defeated them in last year's opener and again in the playoffs en route to winning a state championship.



COACHES — The 2024 Waseca High School football coaches. Front from left: Brian Rupe, head coach Brad Wendland and Connolly Turek. Back: Rich Wolf, Saiveon Williamson, Eric Teders and Bill Dwinells. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Waseca football 2024 schedule
Aug. 30 at Stewartville, 7 p.m.
Sept. 6 vs. St. Peter, 7 p.m.
Sept. 13 at Marshall, 7 p.m.
Sept. 20 at Belle Plaine, 7 p.m.
Sept. 27 vs. Jordan, 7 p.m.
Oct. 4 at Tri-City United, 7 p.m.
Oct. 11 vs. Albert Lea, 7 p.m.
Oct. 16 vs. Fairmont, 7 p.m.
Oct. 22 Section quarterfinals, TBD
Oct. 26 Section semifinals, TBD
Nov. 1 Section finals, TBD

Good luck Bluejays!

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