



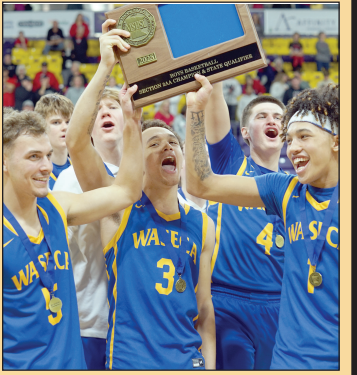
■ Inside:

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LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY
No. 12 Vol. IV \$2 Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca Thursday, March 20, 2025

■ Inside



State Bound

Lenten Soup Lunches every Wednesday at noon during Lent at Grace Lutheran Church

Grace Lutheran Church, 300 East Elm Avenue, is having Lenten Soup Lunches at noon every Wednesday during Lent. Thanks to the Greater Waseca Ministerial Association, Grace Lutheran, North Waseca Lutheran, Vista Covenant, Waseca Christian Assembly, St. John and Christ Community.

Waseca County Farm and City Luncheon at the Mill Thursday, March 20

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce will hold a Waseca County Farm and City Luncheon at the Mill from 11:45 a.m. till 1:30 p.m. on Thursday March 20. Must RSVP by Monday, March 10, cost is \$18 per person. Call 507-835-3206 or email info@wasecachamber.com.

Virtual Author Event for Waseca-Le Sueur library system on Thursday, March 20

There will be a virtual author event for the Waseca-Le Sueur library system at 1 p.m. Thursday, March 20. Award-winning journalist and author Clara Bingham will share her new book, The Movement: How Women's Liberation Transformed America, 1963-1973.

Mother-Daughter Book Club at Waseca Public Library Thursday, March 20

There will be a Mother-Daughter Book Club at the Waseca Public Library at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 20. Girls in grades 3-6 are invited to bring a significant adult female to join them as we discuss great new books, do activities, and enjoy treats. Stop by the library to pick up this month's book, Katie the Catsitter by Colleen A.F. Venable.

Drawing Club at Janesville Public Library Thursday, March 20

There will be a drawing club event at the Janesville Public Library at 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 20. At this drawing club for artists, teens of all skill levels will learn new techniques and sample a variety of drawing styles, including fashion, anime, nature, objects, illustration, doodles, portraits, and more. Exclusively for ages 12-18.

Password Night at the Mill Event Center on Friday, March 21

There will be a Password Night at the Mill Event Center at 5 p.m. Friday, March 21. Teams of 2 are \$20 entry, 21 and over only. This is just like on NBC. For more information contact the Mill, 507-461-1434.

A word from The Word

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

2 Corinthians 7:10

Luck of the Irish



Irish Royalty from left: Bella Kelling Gerdts, Grace Groh, Kwynn Elizabeth Krause and the 2025 royalty Miss Lily Quast as Miss Irish Rose and Stella Ziemke as the new Miss St. Patrick at the Irish American Club celebration at the Mill on Saturday, March 15, 2025. Photos by Irish American Club of Southern Minnesota



St. Patrick's Day brings celebration, Sunday Mass

By BEN REVERMANN Staff writer

Hundreds of people from all over southern Minnesota attended an all-day St. Patrick's Day celebration in Waseca on Saturday, March 15. The event began at Sacred Heart Church with a 10:30 a.m. mass. After a parade of clans, everyone headed over to the Mill at noon where there were Irish cuisine, contests, kids' fun and much more.

Among activities and giveaway items were face painting for the kids, free Irish wear, green glasses, hats, beads, glow-in-the-dark toys and lots of laughs. Laura Olson of Lo's Cookies was the first vendor inside the door, a member of the Irish American's Club for the past five years, she's been selling her cookies since 2019 and can be found on Instagram. She's also worked on the Irish Club's pageant since 2003.

Joe Hoehn was manning the beer taps; the bar was pouring the heavy stuff—he was serving only beer. When asked about the colorful drink he replied, "They brew the green beer at the brewer, it comes out of the tap that way." The green beer on the day's menu was Busch and Busch Light; plenty of patrons navigated through the crowd with pitchers of the green stuff. On the menu, brought to the Mill by Blake's BETtor Spread, was Corned beef, cabbage, candied carrots and a bun for \$13; Mulligan Stew and a bun cost \$8. Also available were cheeseburgers, hot dogs, egg rolls, and more. Lines were long, but moved steadily.

Blake's BETtor Spread was going to be serving food from noon till 7 p.m. or until the food was gone, but they were packed up and gone by 6:30 p.m. With many still hungry, it was common to see Domino's pizza boxes scattered throughout the crowd on tables later in the evening. As the sun went down and the pageant crept closer, the children running around at everyone's feet were slowing just a little, with some people having arrived right at noon, seven hours of play were tuckering little ones out. Tables near the stage filled up quickly as the pageant began and the emcee Clare Miller took the stage.

Walleye or Shrimp Dinner at Sweet-Sommers VFW Friday, March 21

The Waseca Area Care Givers are putting on a walleye or shrimp dinner from 5:30-7 p.m. (or till sold out) at the Sweet-Sommers VFW on Friday, March 21. Walleye is \$18 and Fish Fry is \$15.

Pizza and Puzzles at Farmamerica on Friday, March 21

There will be pizza and puzzles at Farmamerica from 5:45 p.m. till 8:30 p.m. on Friday, March 21. Gather friends and family for a jigsaw puzzle contest. Each team of two to four people will have 120 minutes to complete. Cash prize to the winner.

57th annual Irish celebration

By BEN REVERMANN Staff writer

The Irish American Club of Southern Minnesota presented the 2025 Miss St. Patrick and Miss Irish Rose pageant the evening of Saturday, March 15. Stella Ziemke of Mankato was crowned as Miss St. Patrick and Lilly Quast of JWP as Miss Irish Rose. The venue was the Mill Event Center in Waseca, which was richly decorated in green streamers, shamrocks, and Irish wear.

Clare Miller was Emcee, last year's royalty Ava Appel and Layla Keith all presented the winners. There was time for pictures afterwards, both on the stage and at the photo booths. Both ladies spent time taking pictures with anyone who asked. This contest has been in operation since 1968, with the first Miss St. Patrick crowned in 1969. The Miss Irish Rose title began in 1975. The emcee and queen candidate coordinator was Clare Miller. Last year's royalty included Miss St. Patrick 2024 Ava Appel, daughter of Sheila Jewison and Jesse Appel. Miss Irish Rose 2024, Layla Keith, daughter of Muriah Miller Keith and

Joe Keith. Miss Keith was quick to point out her mother was Miss Irish Rose 1994, "I'm following in my mother's footsteps."

This year's 2025 queen contestants included:

Grace Groh, graduation year 2026, a junior from Janesville Waldorf Pemberton, JWP, parents Theresa and Peter Groh. She performed a self-composed monologue, here is just a taste, "Cherish the heritage you come from. Honor the community you belong to."

Kwynn Elizabeth Krause, graduation year 2026, a junior from JWP, parents Andy and Beth Krause. For her performance she invited children to the stage and read a children's book for them.

Bella Gerdts, graduation year 2026, a junior from John Marshall High School in Rochester, parents Doug Gerdts and Dawn Kelling. She played a song on her Irish fiddle. Bella was born with pulmonary atresia; she is most proud of having survived that.

Irish continued on 4

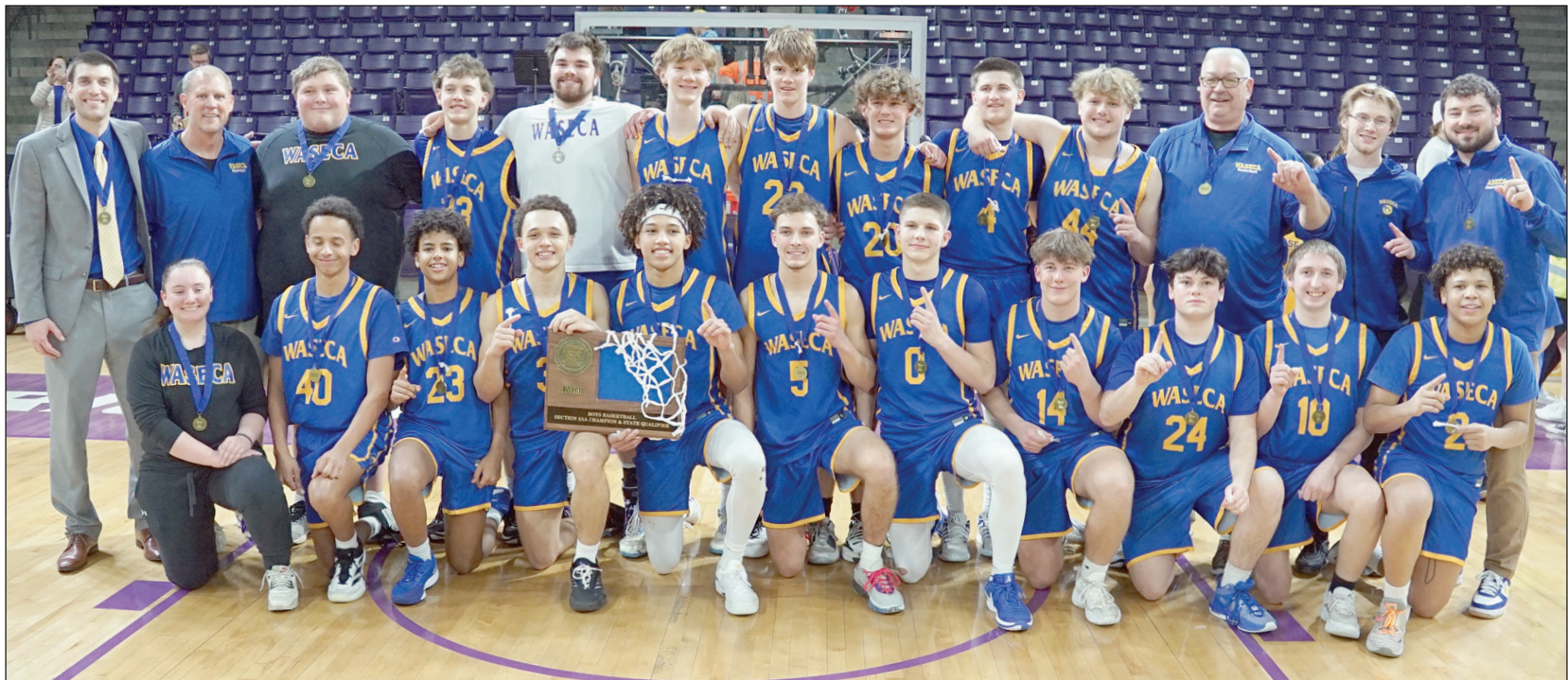


2025 Mr. and Mrs. Emerald Isle Irish Celebration - Doc & Barb Hoehn



2025 Grand Marshal for the 57th annual Irish Celebration Parade Faith Ryan.

Section Champions



Rattling off four straight wins through the Class 2AA Section 2 playoff bracket, the Waseca Bluejays earned a trip to the 2025 State Tournament. The Bluejays defeated Medford, Central Public Schools, Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton and Belle Plaine, improving their record to 30-0. On Tuesday the Bluejays play Pequot Lakes in the State Quarterfinal. This year is Waseca's 13th appearance in the state boys' basketball tournament. They also went in 1918, 1919, 1948, 1974, 1975, 1987, 1988, 2002, 2016, 2019, 2021 and 2024. The Bluejays were state champions in 1918 and 2021, finishing second in 2019. They reached the section finals in 2020, when the Covid pandemic prompted cancellation of the state tournament.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens



Compostings

by Al Batt

Birds are impressive

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS’ CLUB MEETING
Happy birthday. I didn’t get you anything.

That’s the same thing you got me last year.

And you haven’t used it up yet.
DRIVING BY BRUCE’S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I was navigating a new day. I had rings on my fingers and bells on my toes—or vice versa, and I could still fog a mirror.

I picked up a bunch of light bulbs at the hardware store. Many bulbs make light work.

The cashier said, “Lots of bulbs,” because she thought she should say something.

“I’m a light eater,” I responded, because I thought I should say something in return.

THE TABLE OF INFINITE KNOWLEDGE

I stopped at the Eat Around It Café because food tastes best with a home or a café surrounding it.

I’m not a coffee drinker, but a knight at The Table of Infinite Knowledge told me the coffee was so strong it mugged people. He described it as too thick to stir and too wet to plow.

I enjoy spending time in places where my visit doubles the town’s population. I’ve stayed in the dead guy’s cabin when the dead guy wasn’t there. The cabin had a shower, a bulletin board, a bed and a broken coffee maker that strong coffee had mugged.

I’VE LEARNED
I had a security blankie when I was a tot. I retired it on my 18th birthday. It was an emotional support blankie. Family and friends do that blankie’s job today.

The memory of a deceased loved one’s voice fades much too quickly.

There are never lines to the bathroom at a waterpark.

What I used to do without thinking, I now think without doing.

Thanks to leaky brains, life is made of moments we don’t remember.

ASK AL
“Who are Snap, Crackle and Pop?” They’re the sounds made during a football game.

“What does winter provide the most of in Minnesota—snow, cold, wind, ice or what?” Drama.

“How did your grandparents survive the Great Depression?” They saved string.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

The fellow told me he was in a McDonald’s drive-thru when the young woman behind him leaned

on her horn and started shouting because he was taking too long to place his order. What did she expect? There were over 100 menu items. When he got to the first window, he paid for her order and his own. The cashier must have told her what he’d done, because she leaned out her window and waved to him and mouthed the words, “Thank you.” Arriving at the second window, he showed the guy manning the drive-thru window both receipts and took his food and the young woman’s food. She had to go back to the end of the line and start over again. He said her order was better than his.

What’s the difference between a camera and a sock? A camera takes photos, while a sock takes five toes.

NATURE NOTES

It’s impossible not to be impressed by birds. One day, I watched a chickadee excavate a nest cavity. Its tiny bill had become a Swiss Army knife. Here’s an interesting fact: everything on Earth is either a chickadee or not.

Blue jays appeared to be having a party. They were likely celebrating a happy belated hatchday of one.

I saw seven crows perched, one each on seven fenceposts. I suspect it was a board meeting, and I hope good things came from it.

I enjoyed seeing a northern harrier, a slim, long-tailed hawk gliding low over a grassland while holding its wings in a V-shape and showing a white patch at the base of its tail. If I’d been closer, I’d have seen its owlish face, which helps it hear mice and voles. When I was a lad, it was called a marsh hawk as it hunted over agricultural land, marshes and shrubby wetlands. Its floating flight gave rise to the male’s nickname, “gray ghost.”

Steve Weston passed along the statewide 125th Annual Christmas Bird Count results from 90 counts done in Minnesota from Dec. 14 to Jan. 5. Frozen lakes kept Canada geese numbers 57% below the 10-year average. Wild turkeys, bald eagles, barred owls, Cooper’s hawks, red-shouldered hawks, red-headed woodpeckers, tufted titmice, eastern bluebirds, white-crowned sparrows and white-winged crossbills set records for high numbers. Ruffed grouse set a record, and sharp-tailed grouse nearly did. Pheasant numbers were down.

MEETING ADJOURNED

A kind word can improve the world. Anne Frank wrote, “How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.”

A lawn full of robins will soon be full of snow

Nature is amazing. I know this is overstatement, but it seemed as if there were 24 inches of ice on area lakes one day, and migrating birds on them the next.

I remember driving along the south shore of Clear Lake one day and seeing ice houses in the distance and a patch of open water a short ways out in the lake. The next time I drove by, the whole lake was waves of water.

When I shared my impression that the ice had gone out quickly with an acquaintance, he told the story of having driven his pickup out on 10 inches of ice on Leech Lake one day in March. He said it rained that night and strong winds came up—within 24 hours, the lake was open.

I happened to be in Janesville’s Lakeview Park Sunday morning; thanks to the brisk northerly winds, a small bay of Lake Elysian seemed to have become the holding tank for all the remaining ice. It was nearly hypnotic to watch as the foot-tall waves rolled in and lifted the various floating pieces which ranged in size from a few inches to a few feet—and were all rapidly shrinking.

Spring is probably one of the few times of year when a person can see



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

crusty waves.

A small body of water, maybe an acre in size or so, that I drive by fairly often had been completely clear of ice, then acquired a thin crust when we had a couple chilly days. One day I drove by to see a small cluster of birds ringing the only space of open water; overhead, an eagle was perched on a branch. I drove as slowly as I could, hoping to see that majestic bird dive down after a snack, but it did not choose to oblige me.

Another surprise were my flower bulbs—tulips, daffodils and crocus. With the warm days we’ve had, I knew they would be popping up along the south-facing wall of my house. But they weren’t there, and they weren’t there, and suddenly they were two inches tall.

And I know I am exaggerating

again, but tomorrow they’ll have flowers on them.

Then there was the lawn full of robins.

A sister-in-law of mine who lives in Wisconsin announces the arrival of robins in her neighborhood as though she is receiving a visit from a dignitary. She told me already early in March that she had seen the red-bellied emissaries of spring. I was watching so I could declare I had been equally honored, but I wasn’t seeing any—until I drove by a certain lawn and found it dotted with the birds. Then, I started seeing them everywhere. I noticed a red-winged blackbird today, too—so now they’ll be everywhere as well.

So however we feel about Wednesday’s “gift” of snow, we can at least note we have taken care of one of the “snow on the robin’s back” in-

Four friends, talking about life and books

Well, I got involved with another book club. I don’t know why it took until senior year for these opportunities to drop in my lap as I believe they are a perfect combination — friends and reading, what more could I ask for?

This book club is smaller, just three of my other friends and I discussing short stories and talking about life. All of us are in different parts of our journey: one of us is a graduate with a full-time job; one is about to graduate but going off to grad school; one still has two semesters left, and then there’s me, who is about to graduate and go off into the big world and find out more about who I am.

One of the club members mentioned how he had written a piece for a campus magazine based on a quote he heard: “Friendship is meant to be an inconvenience.” As someone who has struggled with FOMO (the fear of missing out) and anxieties of how people perceive or like me, this struck a chord with me. How often have I refused to reach out to people even though I wanted to because I was scared to be seen as the person



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

who was annoying and bothersome? All the while encouraging others to reach out to me for anything at all. How often have I done something independently, not because I wanted to be alone, but because I didn’t want to bother someone and be an inconvenience in their schedule? All the while going out of my way and changing my schedule for others.

But if friendship is meant to be an inconvenience, then there are things I should improve upon. In my actions and my mentality, I should think of inviting people to share in my life rather than excluding them while asking to be invited into theirs. Right?

I know this will not come easy, but it causes me some reflection due to

the fact that in four months, I won’t have any friends. That’s not true, but moving 900 miles away will probably make it a little difficult to ask my friends to share in my life. I know I will make new friends and that it is good to experience new things, but change is difficult. I understand why people never move from the town they grew up in.

But this column isn’t about me being a Debbie Downer, that’s not why you pick up the Pioneer every week. Why you decide to read my column is beyond me, I’m just a college kid who likes to yap.

The best part about graduating is that I feel like I’m back in elementary school trying to figure out the answer to the question “What do you

want to be when you grow up?” And in a way, just like elementary school, the answer changes every time. As a kid it could’ve gone from doctor to fireman to astronaut to teacher. When I was in high school it was going from being an English teacher to being a psychologist to joining the army to becoming a nun.

It’s the same feeling now as I browse through LinkedIn, Indeed, job websites, and straight up Google. I could be a news anchor, a reporter, an internal communications person, a tutor. Or my personal favorite, an FBI Special Agent. I am currently halfway through that rigorous application, but how cool would it be to respond to the question, “What do you do for work?” with “Oh I can’t tell you, that’s confidential information,” all the while knowing I am FBI Special Agent Roessler, Badass.

My Determination: “It’s a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don’t keep your feet, there’s no knowing where you might be swept off to.”

— J.R.R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings

Why do prosecutors “Plea” deals?

Prosecutor’s Perspective
By Rachel Cornelius, Waseca County Attorney

Why do prosecutors “Plea” deals? This is a question we regularly get. Plea deals can be a hot-button topic because of what you see in the television news about plea deals in the metro area. But let me start by saying, we’re not the metro and some of the things you hear about in other counties don’t necessarily happen here. Deals look very different in Waseca County.

Many elements play a role when considering what a plea offer should be, primarily taking into account the evidence and victim input. However, we also look at the case as a whole—

the circumstances of the crime, witness statements and other considerations like a defendant’s chemical dependency, mental health, and criminal history. A large part of our time is spent talking to victims about the charges. While prosecutors make the ultimate decision about whether a case is pled out or to go to jury trial, we give great deference to victims. There are many times when victims do not want to proceed to trial, perhaps because of family relationships, trauma, embarrassment, time away from work, or not wanting to see the offender, just to take a few factors.

Plea bargains allow attorneys to negotiate outcomes to ensure there are



Cornelius

convictions and fair, just outcomes. While a plea does often entail a defendant getting a reduced sentence, it also ensures a conviction is entered. Once a conviction is entered, if a defendant commits future crimes, it can make future sentences more serious due to the defendant having additional criminal history points. Criminal history points and units accrue with each crime a person is convicted of. Many “first time” offenses are not going to see any

jail or prison, depending on the type of crime, so plea deals can be a way to make sure defendants are held accountable.

Judges always have the ability to not follow a plea agreement, therefore sentencing terms are considered “joint recommendations” to the court. However, the courts want to ensure fairness for both sides and determine whether the negotiations are appropriate; also, by accepting plea agreements, the Courts preserve court time and resources. More on sentencing in the next column.

Nothing in this article is intended to provide legal advice and does not constitute an attorney-client relationship.



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DEADLINES: Pioneer: Noon Monday
GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

ELI LUTGENS	Publisher
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JIM LUTGENS	Sports Editor/Dad
JON LUCCA	Ad Design
BEN REVERMANN	Staff Writer
TERESA ROSACKER	Advertising Sales
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SUBSCRIBE

HoldFast at Indian Island Winery Sat., March 22

Musical group HoldFast will be performing at the Indian Island Winery from 5:30-8:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 22. Waterville's own HoldFast play a variety of country, pop, bluegrass, folk, Indie and 80s.

Waseca Scouts door to door food drive collection March 22

Waseca Troop 85, 1085 and Pack 86 will be supporting the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center with the annual 'Scouting for Food' service project. On March 15 scouts will be putting notes at homes to notify residents. On Saturday March 22, put your donation on the front step with the note attached. Scouts will be around town to gather the donations. Electric monetary donations contact Beckpetsyinger@gmail.com.

Waseca Tennis Day at West Hills Tennis Center Owatonna, Saturday March 22

Waseca Tennis Day 2025 will be celebrated at the West Hills Tennis Center in Owatonna from 10 a.m. till noon on Saturday, March 22. Cost is free for adults and kids 9 and up, includes tennis drills, games and activities. Rackets provided.

Books and Brews at the Waseca Public Library on Saturday, March 22

There will be a Books and Brews event at the Boat House Grill and Bar at 4 p.m. Saturday, March 22. The Waseca Library has found the perfect combo for a book club: bookworm babble and beer. Stop by the library to pick up this month's book discussion selection, Sociopath by Patrice Gagne. Drinks and food not provided but can be purchased.

Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center all-you-can-eat breakfast at Sweet-Sommers VFW Sunday, March 23

The Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center is having an all-you-can-eat breakfast fundraiser at the VFW from 8 a.m. till noon on Sunday, March 23. Adults \$12 and children 6-13 \$7, children five and under free. Proceeds go to the Waseca Area Food Shelf and the March Food-Share campaign.

Whimsical Wandcrafting for Wacky Wizards at Janesville Library Monday, March 24

The magical librarian will be at the Janesville Public Library at 3:30 p.m. Monday March 24. To assist kids in their wizarding training. Kids will make custom wands and learn how to use them. For ages 8-12.

Storyland Crafts at Waldorf Library on Tuesday, March 25

Be at the Waldorf Public Library at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 25 for Storyland Crafts. Enjoy books about crayons and colors, then bring the stories to life with custom crafts This free event is geared for ages 0-5.

CERT offering free spring classes March 25

Offered to any Waseca County resident, CERT educates people about disaster preparedness. Sign up now for free spring classes, March 25 and 27, April 1, 3, 7, 10 and 15. Contact Waseca County Emergency Management Denise Wright at 507-835-0694.

Art exhibit features area students

By MELANIE PILTINGSRUD
Staff writer

The Waseca Art Center (WAC) held a reception for Mankato artist Michael Bolan and our talented area high school students on Thursday, March 13 from 5 – 7 p.m. Guests could sample the art of a chocolatier and other goodies in the Tea Room, as well as representational art on the walls and pedestals of the Harguth and Beckmann Galleries.

WAC president Mikhail Rostislavovich introduced the artists, expressing his gratitude in the knowledge that the high school students would carry the torch of community art into the next generation, and then introduced artist Bolan.

According to Bolan, he began his career drawing illustrations for newspaper advertisements in the 1970s. But Bolan ultimately decided he wanted more freedom in his craft. As a fine artist, Bolan had the creative license to make just the kinds of art that he was inspired to make: the abstract illusions for which he is known.

Bolan said his main sources of inspiration were the works of M. C. Escher and Victor Vasarely, both of whom represented "mind puzzles" that defied the laws of physics and could never exist in real life. "Without Escher, this work would never have been," Bolan emphasized.

Bolan said one of the main questions he is asked is how he creates such perfect, precise lines. He explained that he uses some of the same tools that architects use, such as a T-square. "This is all designed very carefully, very precise, and you have to have good eye and hand dexterity," said Bolan.

One of the last steps in Bolan's artistic process is choosing colors, which he selects to accommodate different tastes. "Cause I know a lot of people like different types of color schemes," he said. Bolan's choices range from monochromatic to multicolored. "People like diversity," he explained. "So do I, so I like to experiment with a lot of different colors."

Those colors include anything from Liquitex, Bolan's favorite brand of acrylics, which he paints onto hardboard.

Bolan said that he measures success neither financially nor in popularity. He asks himself instead whether the finished painting meets the quality and standards that he set for himself. "Out of a hundred, I'd say 97% of them did," said Bolan, "so that's success."

Bolan originally started creating his illusionist abstractions in the 1980s, but now that he's fully retired from creating art at the age of 79, he says his main job is finding good homes for his art, which is why he has lowered the prices on his artwork to as low as he can make them. He doesn't want the cost to be an obstacle for anyone who really wants one of his pieces. Some of his pieces were already sold before the reception came to a close for the evening.

Bolan's art is currently exhibited in the Harguth Gallery of the WAC from March 4 – April 18.

In the Beckman Gallery, high school students stood beside their artwork as parents and guests came to cheer them on and vote for their favorite entries.



Caitlin Roberts, center, with her younger sister and grandmother.



Above: area high school students pictured with artist Michael Bolan and Waseca Art Center president Mikhail Rostislavovich.

Pioneer photos by Melanie Piltingsrud

Caitlin Roberts, a Waseca resident who studies online and also teaches art classes at WAC, entered a blue and white acrylic landscape of a waterfall that she entitled "Escapism." "I like to test the waters a little bit," Roberts said with a smile. Like most artists, Roberts is critical of her own work: "Every time I look at it, I want to fix it up a little more."

Although Roberts' plans are not yet set in stone, she's thinking of becoming a Disney animator. "I'm building a portfolio," she said. Starting with community college in Owatonna, Roberts plans to study both animation and computer programming after high school, so that she is prepared for the digital domain where animation now resides. Following community college, Roberts is considering continuing her education at Gustavus Adolphus College. "They have a program where, if I want to intern at Disney, they can help me intern," she explained.

It's difficult to imagine how one more piece of artwork could be squeezed into the Beckmann Gallery; it is filled with the artwork of area high school students, and it is impressive. Those students include:

Blooming Prairie High School: Layla Coleman, Isabel Dickel, Mairead Holmes, Tessa Smith, Natalie Winzengurg

JWP High School: McKennah Ganiere, Jayden Jones, Addison Miller, Shane Witts

Le Sueur-Henderson High School: Mason Franta, Ashley Grapentine, Pheonix Machtemes, Madeline Skelley, Porter Simonette

Mankato East High School: Ella Barker, Mariah Betz, Makaio Bloom, RJ Chiet, Nora Sipe

NRHEG: Brady Koopal

Waseca High School: Melanie Kruger Eineke, Sophia Hillman, Jaya Kunkel, Esme Pearce, Arianna Theobald

Tri-City United: Madelyn Hollom, Megan Marek, Malayna Marinez, Yasmin Ruiz-Ruiz, Eva Tikalsky

Art by the high school students is also on display until April 18. Admission to see the exhibits is, as always, free. WAC is open Tues. - Sat. from 12 – 5 p.m.

The art center offers numerous art classes throughout the year. Class listings and other events can be found online at www.wasecaartcenter.org

Kris Markeson, Waseca's newest chief of police

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Although he was appointed as Waseca's Chief of Police by the city manager last July, Kris Markeson, 46, took on the full responsibilities of the role in November, when long-standing chief Penny Vought retired after 40 years on the force.

Markeson graduated from Waseca Junior Senior High School in 1996. His father worked for Steffan's Trucking out of Waseca, now Norseman Trucking Incorporated; both his parents are locals and are now retired. He's worked for the Waseca police department since 1999.

Of being a police officer, he says, "It's something I saw and wanted to do. I wanted to help people. Now, 26 years later, I'm still doing it." Marke-

son continued, "Luckily, even though I was named to the chief of police position in July, Penny Vought didn't retire until November. This gave me a four-month interim to learn the ins and outs of the job." He explained that, with 40 years of experience under her belt, Vought was an exceptional mentor. A member of the Waseca police department since 1984, she was the city's first female officer and became the first female chief of police in 2011.

"How it works," said Markeson, "Is we promote from within. Think of it like a ladder. I was the captain and Vought was the chief of police. She retired, and now I'm the chief of police, the guy who was number three has been bumped up to number two, which is captain." The second

in command is now Jared Chrz, 46, also a Waseca local.

In his spare time, Markeson likes to do woodworking. In his office is a very impressive wooden American flag with an accurate-looking enlarged badge of the Waseca PD. "I've been doing woodworking for the past 20 years," said Markeson.

Asked about the many pieces of equipment attached to his person, he was wearing a bulletproof vest, his gun with two extra clips, a tourniquet, a radio. He was wearing a body camera and showed how easy it is to activate it by simply pushing a button, but there was an interesting fact about his camera, "Even though

Chief continued on 4

WALDODRF CITY COUNCIL

Street repairs discussed

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Waldorf city council selected member Carrie Ferch, who volunteered for the role, as its "mayor pro tem," that is, as the person who would act as mayor in the absence of Rob Wilkening. Other elements on the council's March 10 agenda included a construction update and some requests from the city fire department.

Jim Kollar, public works director for Waseca County provided information about upcoming road construction projects in and near Waldorf. He reported bids will be opened March 25 for a stretch of County Road 3 spanning from its intersections with County Road 9 and County Road 4. Built in 1991, the road has dips, cracks, and other flaws which will be repaired. From County Road 4 south to School Street in Waldorf-a distance of nearly 1 mile-County Road 3 will be reconstructed: Kollar explained, "There's 14 inches of asphalt out there right now We'll take the top four inches off, grind up the remaining 10 inches of blacktop, turning it into an underlying gravel, which is our aggregate base for a top layer of concrete pavement. After that, an eight-inch concrete slab will be poured on top, complete with dowels and blacktop shoulders." The section of road will be closed during the work, with completion expected by the end of September.

Also due to take place this summer near Waldorf are seal coating projects on County Roads 74, and 64; County Road 4 from Waldorf to the west county line will also receive seal coating.

The exhaust fan project in the fire department area received a quote from Jensen's Plumbing and Heating of about \$20,300; this was the first quote to come in and was not voted on.

The Fire Department requested an estimated \$100,000 for 10 new air packs. The air packs allow firefighters to breathe safe air in smoky or polluted environments; they have a usable life about about 10 years and are OSHA approved, the ones currently being used have become outdated. This motion passed.

Some damaged playground equipment has been repaired; no further details were available. Mayor Wilkening told council members he would like to keep collecting plastic recyclables for local city benches if possible; there

Council continued on 4



From left: The newest Waseca Captain, Jared Chrz and the Chief of Police, Kris Markeson.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

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Waseca Chamber members gather for a business after hours hosted by Huey's Farm Seed owned by longtime Agricultural leader Jeff Huelsnitz.

Huey's Farm Seed hosts Business After Hours

WASECA, MN – The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce launched its first Business After Hours event of 2025 at Huey's Farm Seed, owned by longtime agricultural leader Jeff Huelsnitz. The event brought together local business professionals, Chamber members, and community leaders for an evening of networking, refreshments, and insight into Waseca's thriving agricultural industry.

Jeff Huelsnitz is no stranger to farming or the seed business, having dedicated over 40 years to the industry. While his expertise has been cultivated over decades, Huey's Farm Seed officially became a business in 2008. His family has been deeply involved in farming and seed sales for generations, playing an active role in shaping the agricultural landscape of Southern Minnesota. The Huelsnitz family also has a long-standing relationship with the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce, having hosted the Chamber's Farm & City Day Broadcast on their farm in the

1980s.

As Waseca's Premier Precision Planting & Pioneer Seed dealership, Huey's Farm Seed offers a wide range of solutions and services tailored for operations of all sizes. Their goal is to equip farmers with the knowledge and tools for success, ensuring that the latest technology and best practices are accessible to the local agricultural community.

Chamber President Mikhail Rostislavovich praised Huey's "This was the perfect host for our first Business After Hours event of 2025. Jeff Huelsnitz and his family have been pillars of the agricultural community for generations, and their deep connection with both farming and the Chamber is truly remarkable. This event showcased not only the strength of our local ag industry but also the cooperative spirit that makes Waseca's business community thrive. We're grateful for their hospitality and look forward to another great year of networking and business growth."

Guests at the event enjoyed warm hospitality from Jeff and his team, along with engaging conversations about innovation in seed technology and precision planting. The event also highlighted the strong connection between Waseca's agricultural roots and its business community, reinforcing the Chamber's commitment to supporting local enterprises.

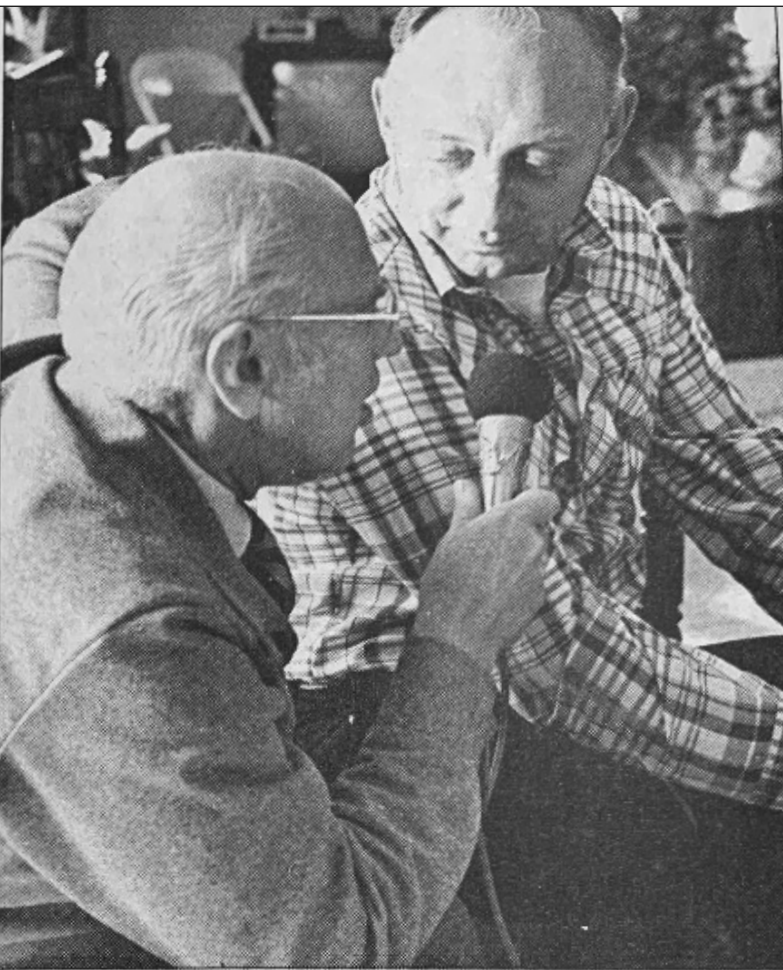
Owner Jeff Huelsnitz said with gratitude, "I feel incredibly fortunate to serve such a wonderful agribusiness community here in Waseca and Southern Minnesota. Agriculture is more than just a business—it's a way of life, and I'm proud to be part of an industry that supports and uplifts one another. It feels great to open up our newly renovated shop and welcome Chamber members in for this event."

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce thanks Huey's Farm Seed for hosting this successful kickoff to the 2025 Business After Hours season and for their continued dedication to Waseca's farming community.

Farm-City Day Broadcast

The annual Farm-City Day Broadcast was held Tuesday at the Dale and Shirley Huelsnitz farm, located four miles northwest of Waseca. It's estimated that 100 people visited the farm, including representatives of local implement dealerships, co-ops, elevators, banks, the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce, Waseca public schools, UMW, the fair board, Farm Bureau and Extension service.

Pictured below are the Huelsnitzes, who have three children, Jeff, 21, Laura, 18, and Ron, 13. At right, Dale speaks on the air with Frank Phillips of radio station KOWO.



County News photos by Cary Veehoff W



■ Chief

from Page 3

it's not recording, when I press the record button it retroactively records the last 30 seconds." He used a car crash example, "So if I'm sitting in my squad car and a car hits me and it's 15 seconds later, I can still get the last 30 seconds as proof when I hit the record button." He has two phones, his work phone and his personal, a taser which can shoot two zapping

barbs, it can also be used as a handheld taser. A retractable baton, handcuffs, rubber gloves, and a flashlight. When asked how he can run with all those items on his person, he compared it to a plumber, "Those guys get used to having large, heavy utility belts, this is just like that; all it takes is time."

He wanted to assure, "The Waseca police and fire departments are full of dedicated people, ready to help you on the worst day of your life. They are well trained and well equipped. Waseca is in good hands."

■ Council

from Page 3

are two collection bins at both the Waldorf Community Center and Papa Ollie's. An organization called NexTrex offers benches to civic organizations which collect 1,000 pounds of plastic bags and plastic

film.

Council members discussed the need to remove a tree located on Kathy Grinnell's property which was damaged during a city construction project; once the tree is removed, the stump will need to be ground. The water/sewer report for February informed council members there were 12 no pays and 8 partial payments for a total of \$2,863 not collected.



Eilee, Cameron and Allie Bergman attended the St. Patrick's Day Celebration at the Mill on Saturday, March 15, 2025. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann



Lilian Budahn, accompanied by Michael Budahn got her face painted at the Mill during the St. Patrick's Day Celebration at the Mill on Saturday, March 15, 2025. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

■ Irish

from Page 1

Lilly Quast, graduation year 2026, a junior at JWP, parents Catalina and Curt Quast; two brothers Colt and Jett, 13, and Indi, 8. Said Quast, "My great great grandmother Katherine 'Kitty' Cahill Jewison was one hundred percent Irish. Her family emigrated from Moyne in County Tipperary of Ireland in the 1840s." For honors, she's been on the A Honor Roll five times, Spotlight on Scholarship eight times, Academic All Conference six times, Academic Letterwinner two times. She's also won the Leadership Award, Out-

standing Academic Achievement, Gopher Conference Honor Band and the Winona State Honor Band. Her favorite subject in school is math, said Quast, "I would like to become an elementary school teacher, forming bonds and spending time with kids makes me happy." For her performance she read a self-written speech, quote, "Storytime has shaped not only my family, but the whole community together." She also played the Irish song 'Danny Boy' on her bass clarinet.

Stella Ziemke, graduation year

2027, a sophomore at Loyola Catholic School in Mankato. Her parents are Joe and Kristin Ziemke, brother Louis, 12, and Julia, 3. Her favorite subject in school is biology, she would like to pursue a job in the medical field. She plays volleyball in the fall and is in a summer volleyball league. Of being Irish she said, "On my mom's side, her maternal grandmother's maiden name was Duncan, and she was of Irish descent. On my dad's side, his maternal great grandmother was Irish, her maiden name being Smith." An entrepreneur who

started her own business in 2023 teaching a small group of students how to play piano, which has given her real world experience running a business. Spare time is spent playing piano, singing, drawing, thrifting, traveling, having Bible studies and going out with friends and family. She is also in competitive dance at Dance Express all year round. Her Grandma Vicki was crowned the very first Miss Irish Ross in 1975. For Stella's talent she sang and played a piano Irish lullaby, "Too-Ra-Loo-Ra-Loo-Ral."



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WCHS Unveils New Spring Exhibit: "HATS"

The Waseca County History Center is proud to present HATS, an immersive exhibit celebrating the history, culture, and personal stories woven into headwear. Featuring an exceptional collection from both the museum archives and several personal collections, this exhibit offers a fascinating look at the significance of hats throughout Waseca County's history.

Visitors will not only see a diverse display of hats-ranging from everyday work caps to elegant statement pieces-but also engage with interactive activities that bring these stories to life.

Step Inside the HATBOX

A special feature of the exhibit is HATBOX, a small, immersive space where guests can experience the legend of the mysterious Blue Hat. Within this reflective space, visitors can read anonymous stories, share their own, and connect with the thoughts of others who have stepped inside.

Fascinating Highlights from HATS

- ♦ Hats from Waseca's History - Explore headwear that has shaped the lives of Waseca County

residents, from practical farm caps to elegant Sunday bonnets. Each hat carries a unique story, offering a glimpse into the people and moments that defined our community.

- ♦ Hatpins: Beautiful and Deadly - These delicate yet surprisingly dangerous accessories were once a fashion staple-and a hidden weapon. Learn how women used intricately designed hatpins for both function and self-defense in an era when propriety often clashed with personal safety.
- ♦ Antique Hat Sale - Take a piece of history home with you! Browse a selection of unique antique hats available for purchase in our gift shop. Proceeds benefit the Waseca County History Center, supporting the preservation of local stories and artifacts.

Come visit! We invite you to step into history, explore the meaning behind these treasured pieces, and even leave your own mark on the collection.

For additional information about the exhibit or the Waseca County History Center, please contact director Amy Danielson at 507-835-7700 or execdirector@wasecacounty.history-center.org.

Waldorf Fire Department's St. Patrick's Day fundraiser

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Despite a biting wind and temperatures around 20 degrees, seating at the city community center stayed full during the Waldorf Fire Department's St. Patrick's Day fundraiser the morning of Sunday, March 16. By the end of the event, about 380 people had been served at the pancake feed: the menu included pancakes, sausage, ham, eggs, and milk or juice.

In her position taking money and giving out tickets, volunteer and city council member Carrie Ferch observed, "It's been going pretty well so far; I think once more people start waking up, we'll get the big crowds yet." Sparky, the fire fighting dog was also on hand. Inside the costume was fire department member Travis Beckstrand, who has now played the role twice: at Sunday's event and last August's burger feed.

Inside the kitchen, Caleb Amundson, Tyler Traynor and Cody Schnepf were busy flipping pancakes on a hot griddle. "As of 9:30," Traynor said, "We've cooked about 300 pancakes. By the time noon rolls around, we will have cooked probably a thousand." He assured his estimate is reliable, since he, Amundson and Schnepf have experience making pancakes.

Mike Sutlief was present with his wife Leann, "We live over in Otisco, I heard about it from my friend Patton. We also like to support the local community. The food was really good today, this was well worth the trip."

Missy and Lilly Sorbo were busy selling Girl Scout Cookies near the entrance. Although things were a bit slow early in the day, Missy was quick to assure, "Once church starts letting people go, usually that crowd brings us a rush. We'll see." Lilly has been in the Girl Scouts going on 8 years, her sash reflected her achievements. Missy said, "The Girl Scouts rank their girls differently than the Boy Scouts, so Lilly currently ranks as a Senior in Scouts." Both of them were satisfied with their breakfast and were happy they were present.

The next event to take place at the Waldorf Community Center will be the Waldorf Peppy Peppers 4-H Pancake Breakfast from 7 a.m. to noon on Sunday, April 6. The Waldorf Fire Department will have its annual burger feed August 22.



Sparky the fire-fighting dog was among the attractions during the firefighters' pancake breakfast at the Waldorf Community Center the morning of Sunday, March 16, 2025.



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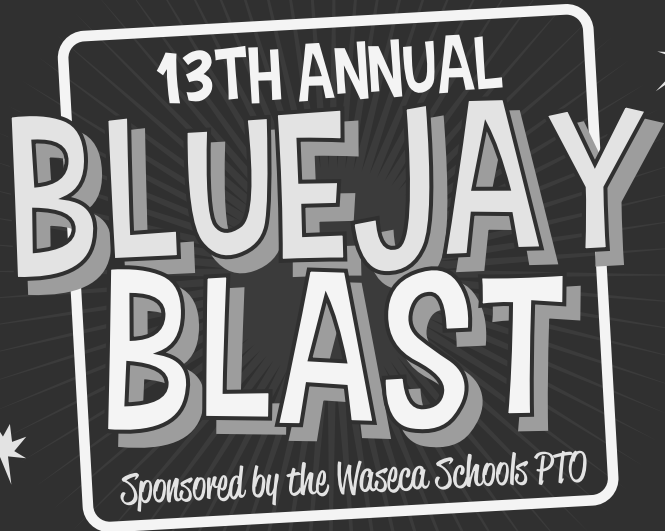


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The

Pastor's Column

Worth the wait

By Pastor Rick Wulf
Christ Community
Church, Waseca

I know I don't have to ask. But I will anyway. Have you ever had to wait for something? Again, I know, I don't have to ask, because the answer is, "yes." We've all had to wait on something. Even if it's as minor as a red light. Side note, can we do something about hat light on SR-13 and 22nd Avenue? That light can take forever to turn green. Ok, rant over.

Maybe it's something a little grander like waiting to find out if you got that job or accepted into that school or program. Maybe it's waiting on the hardest things, such as a test result from that biopsy, or your child to come back to faith. Maybe it's waiting on God to provide for you in a major area of life, such as a job or a career move. Maybe you have been trying to have a baby and month after month, the test comes back negative. To be completely honest, waiting on God is sometimes the hardest thing we have to do. So, what do we do when the waiting is hard?

They always say, never trust anyone who says, "in three easy steps..." so I won't be that guy. There are no three easy steps. But there are steps, and as we take them, we find ourselves closer to the answer to our waiting. I'll give you the punchline now, in case you don't read the whole article. It's Jesus. What is the benefit to following Jesus? There are hundreds of benefits and if you were to stop right here and begin to think of them all, you would be there awhile. But more important than all the benefits we can think of, the benefit to following

Jesus, is Jesus. That's right, it's simply Jesus.

So, let's flush this out just a little bit. How can we get closer to Jesus in our waiting? How can we take that one step closer when, maybe in your reality, the waiting is making it harder?

First, the best thing we can do is to realize that God always has a purpose, even in our waiting. That's right, even in our waiting, God is preparing something. And I know you need to hear this—it's probably you. God wants you to be ready for what He has for you, be it a job, baby, position, whatever. You may think you're ready, but God knows everything, even before it happens. And His purpose will always come to fruition. I love Job 42:2, "I know that You can do all things; no purpose of Yours can be thwarted."

Second, we need to trust His process, even in our waiting. We used to live in Pennsylvania and we bought an old house, circa 1897. The disclosure said the knob-and-tube wiring was in the walls, but not in use. Wrong! And the previous owners had an air conditioner in one of the rooms. But to make it work, they had

spliced the old knob-and-tube wires to new wire in the wall. That's right, just take the hot and the neutral and tape them up inside the wall. I'm no electrician, but that's not up to code. Once we realized it, we rewired it correctly right away. Here's the point. If we shortcut the process of God, we end up short circuiting the plan of God. As hard as it is, don't take the shortcuts of faith. Do the hard things and trust

God's purpose and His process. And He uses the hardships and waitings of this life to make us more mature (James 1:2-4).

Third, we need to claim God's promises. Take a moment right now and think of God's

promises that you claim when you feel overwhelmed. I'm sure you're saying something like, "I hope he doesn't ask me to name them right now." I am. Name them. What are the

promises of God that you go to when you feel out-of-control, when the waiting is getting too hard, when you are anxious about tomorrow? Maybe Philippians 4 comes to mind. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and petition, make your requests known to God. And the peace of God that passes understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." Or maybe you rely on Hebrews 13:5 "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you. Maybe it's some words in Psalm 23, "Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and your staff, they comfort me." Or maybe Psalm 139:7, 14 "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence? I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Your works are wonderful, I know that full well."

You see, God's promises are meant for us. Know them, claim them! Even though our waiting can be the hardest times, they can also be the richest times. Your period of waiting can actually be exactly what God wants to use to remind you that He has a purpose for you. That His purpose is good and the waiting that you are going through just might be the process He will use to bring that purpose to fruition. In the meantime, claim His promises over your life. God gave them to us to remind us that He is still our promise-keeper.

So, your wait may not be over. Maybe not by a long shot. But your wait to begin trusting in

God is over. Take the first step. Pray to God some simple words that say something like this: "Dear God, waiting is hard. But in my waiting, will You help me know You better? Will You help me seek You? Will You show me what Your purpose is? Will You help me to trust Your process and claim Your promises while I wait. In Jesus' Name, Amen.". Trust me, Jesus is worth the wait!



Volunteering in the kitchen for the Blooming Grove United Methodist fish fry on Friday, March 14, 2025, from left: Sherry Southworth, Marlis Mahler, Caroline Kanne, Michael Kanne, Sue Balzer, Kathy King, Tracy Spinler and Linda Danks.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Methodists 'unite' to operate fish fry Blooming Grove

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

About 100 pounds of walleye were served during the Blooming Grove United Methodist Church (BGUMC) fish fry the evening of Friday, March 14, where the cheerful mood was heightened by the unseasonably warm weather. The free-will offering meal was served with assistance from members of the Janesville United Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Methodist Church of Waterville.

The plenteous supply of walleye was made possible by the generous donations of donors who declined to be named. There were also scalloped

potatoes, buns, and green beans. The women of the church made and donated the desserts, mostly bars and cookies. Kathy King, pastor for not only the BGUMC, but also the congregations in Janesville and Waterville, said about the event, "I'm always amazed by how this community comes together. When Blooming Grove needs help, Janesville and Waterville step up. When they need help, Blooming Grove steps up to help them. All the people from these churches are very mission minded and able bodied. I'm very proud of them, this is how churches are supposed to work."

According to organizers, proceeds

from the fish fry will go toward paying off the church's 'accessibility for all' building project, which added an entryway, elevator, and small kitchen to their structure in 2020. Some stained glass windows were also moved from the former entryway to the new addition for continuity. The original building was moved to its current location at 180th Street Morristown (in the northeast corner of Waseca County) in 1951.

Joanne Wieske, who was making her way to the basement to eat said, "We live just down the road, we come here for this every year." Her husband placed their donation in one of the two tin buckets placed both

upstairs and down. Guests Andy and April Matthes brought their four boys. Said April, "We live on this side of Morristown and none of us have been here before." After the family had taken a few bites they all agreed, "Of all the fish dinners in the area, this one is the best so far." Their children nodded their heads in agreement, while at the same time eyeing the M&M bars and cookies placed just out of their reach while they ate dinner.

Blooming Grove United Methodist Church offers services every Sunday at 10:45 a.m. with Pastor Kathy King.

In Brief

Comedy Show at Starfire Event Center Friday, March 28

There will be a Comedy Show at the Starfire Event Center, doors open at 7 p.m. \$15 early bird ticket, \$20 standard ticket, \$30 VIP. VIP includes lounge, select drinks, appetizers and preferred seating.

Melissa Schulz playing at Papa Olie's March 29

Melissa Schulz will perform at

Papa Olie's in Waldorf from 7-10 p.m. on Saturday, March 29. She is a local Waseca musician, plays keyboard with drum tracks and performs pop, rock, and country covers from the 50s to today's hits.

Waseca County Pheasants Forever Annual Banquet at the Mill Sat., March 29

The Waseca County Pheasants Forever Annual Banquet will take place at the Mill at 4 p.m. Saturday, March 29. Purchase tickets online at:

<https://events.pheasantsforever.org/events/6e1aa6b4-1567-4e05-9a9e-209954104cf0>

dren 6-13 \$7 and 5 and under free. Proceeds go to Waseca Area Food Shelf and March FoodShare.

Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center having dinner fundraiser Sat., March 29

The Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center is having a turkey commercial dinner and bake sale fundraiser at the Waseca Legion from 5-7 p.m. on Saturday, March 29. Adults \$12, chil-

JWP Choir Concert Monday March 31

There will be a Janesville Waldorf Pemberton Choir Concert at the JWP Auditorium at 7:30 p.m., Monday, March 31.. Featuring the JWP 7th grade Choir, Junior Choir, Treble Choir, Bass Choir and the newly formed JWP Chamber Choir.

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* * * * *

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca
507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net)
Worship Sunday 10 a.m.
* * * * *

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

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH
111 4th St NW, Waseca
Father Glenn Ferichs
507-835-1222
Worship Sundays 10:00 a.m., Tues. and Wed. at 8:30 a.m. and Thurs. at 7 a.m.; Saturdays at 5 p.m.
* * * * *

REAL LIFE CHURCH
620 W Elm Ave, Waseca
507-607-8245
Sunday worship 10 a.m.
* * * * *

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS
1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca
507-835-4640
* * * * *

Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m.
* * * * *

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

CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY
900 14th Ave SE, Waseca
507-833-1082
Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m.
* * * * *

ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor
Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship
Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters
Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship
* * * * *

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

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

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

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

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

ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
* * * * *

Father Glenn Ferichs
Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass
Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m.
* * * * *

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

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

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

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

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

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

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
412 N. Main Street, Janesville
Pastor Jason Wolter
Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:30 a.m. Worship
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JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
401 N. West St., Janesville
Pastor Kathy King
Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship
* * * * *

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In Brief

Greeting Card Club at the Janesville Public Library on Tuesday, March 25

There will be a Greeting Card Club meeting at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, March 25 at the Janesville Public Library. Learn how to use stamps, embellishments, and coloring techniques to create beautiful handmade greeting cards. Geared for adults. Register at the library or at wasecalesueurlibraries.com/getregistered.

Author Event Allen Eskens at Waseca Public Library Tuesday, March 25

Bestselling author Allen Eskens will speak at the Waseca Public Library at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 25. Eskens will talk about his new thriller 'The Quiet Librarian' about Hana Babic, a quiet, middle-aged librarian in Minnesota who wants nothing more than to be left alone. Booklist called it, "an intense and emotional story about grief, loss, and the horrors of war."

Virtual Author Event Jennifer Weiner on Wednesday, March 26

Bestselling author Jennifer Weiner will chat about the signature emotional depth of her books at a virtual Waseca-LeSueur Regional Library System event at 6 pm on Wednesday, March 26th. Weiner will speak about her novels, Good In Bed, In Her Shoes, Big Summer, The Breakaway and many more. This event will be recorded and people who register will be emailed a link to the recording. Register at the library or at wasecalesueurlibraries.com/getregistered

Early Childhood Fair at Waseca Intermediate School Friday, March 28

There will be an Early Childhood Fair at the Waseca Intermediate School from 5-7 p.m. on Friday, March 28. Including baby animals, activities, crafts and freebies. Speak with preschool professionals, medical professionals and public safety officials. This is a free event.

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Janesville

1925

- Let us go back 25 or 30 years on the Railroads and see what progress has been made by them to assure the prosperity of our country. Thirty years ago the railroads were handling the different commodities of the farmers, the merchandise of the merchants and the passenger trains of the old style wooden coaches, with what is known as a "engine, or a small two- driver locomotive, a hauling capacity of about 400 tons. The railroads at this time were the only course of transportation, and with it my friends the country prospered. The increase of population and the industrial expansion make it necessary for the Railroads to expand. Today we have Locomotives of 9 to 10 times the hauling capacity of the "C" engine and the finest all steel modern passenger equipment.

- Declaring that the erican Legion stands for the proposed amendment to the Federal constitution in which wealth and labor will become subject to conscription in case of an emergency in another possible war, State Commander, E. L. Lindell thus affirmed the position of that organization in an address at the Legion club rooms Thursday evening. So far as we are aware this is the first authoritative statement from an official of the Legion relative to that proposition. The proposed amendment is embodied in a resolution already introduced into the national house of representatives and the national senate. But it has yet been acted upon and therefore has not been submitted to the several states for ratification.

- The Farm Bureau feels extremely grateful to the Minnesota Editorial socation for the splendid recognition accorded by the editors and the publicity director for the bureau, which gave a splendid opportunity to explain some of the main features of the work of the bureau and the cooperative organizations before the most influential group in the state.

1950

- One of the interesting findings of the 1950 Census of riculture, to be taken in ril, will reveal the change in the number of small farms in Waseca County. The 1943 farm census showed that one in 10 of all farms in the nation, or 594,561, was under 10 acres in size. This number is the largest since the 570,831 farms enumerated in the 1935 Census of riculture during the ack to the land" movement in the depression years. Between 1930 and 1935, there was an increase of 213,327 farms under 10 acres in size, but during the last five years of this decade the number of these farms declined by 64,429 or 11.2 percent.

- An elderly New Richland woman died Monday morning of exposure when she wandered out of her home in a serious condition while her daughter was next door calling for a doctor. Found about two blocks from her home at 6 a.m., Monday morning was Mrs. Frieda Pofahl, 75, victim of the cold. She had been suffering from hardening of the arteries.

- After sitting in the driver's seat of the Janesville gus chariot for over twenty years, Editor D. E. Bowe has concluded that it is time to let a new drive handle the reins. With this issue of the gus, Rex Clay of Jackson takes over as the new editor and publisher. Mr. Clay is a member of a newspaper family and his father before him owned and published country newspaper. In leaving the Janesville newspaper field Mr. Bowe desires to thank everyone in the community for the very fine treatment that he has received in Janesville since becoming the editor and publisher of the local publication.

1975

- Four hundred dollars worth of liquor and beer were found in the possession of a Kasota juvenile when his car was stopped early Sunday morning in Mankato. The liquor carried markings from Stosh's Bar, Janesville. Stan Dimmel, Stosh's owner, told the gus Monday that the package goods must have been stolen while he and his family were out to dinner Sunday evening.

- Rising equipment costs, plus the need for a new fire barn and one new fire truck has caused the City of Janesville to request additional monies from seven surrounding rural townships. a meeting a week ago Monday, attended by township representatives, members for the Janesville Fire Department and the City Council, Mayor Roy Hendricks outlined the problem. He told the group that yearly operating expenses for the department in 1974 amounted to \$19,817.87. Over 5,000, or 81.5 percent of these expenses were borne by the City of Janesville. Five townships together paid \$1,825 of this.

- Gary Cummins scored 16 points to lead the Trailer Court to a convincing 57-44 win over the Bowling ley . Gary Groebner scored 17 and Jerry Wolff 14 for the Bowling Alley. Duane Berndt and Dave Tonolli each scored 24 points to lead the High School to an impressive 65-46 victory over the Trailer Court on Sunday, March 2. Dick nold was high point man for the trailer court with 16 points.

2000

- Today was the day Tim Penny had planned to formally announce his candidacy for the U.S. Senate. But the former congressman discovered he does not have the passion required to make the race. On Sunday, he ulled the plug" on his candidacy. On Monday, he released a short statement to announce his withdrawal, citing personal reasons. t would have required a lot of sacrifice of family time," Penny said Sunday. t came down to choosing between politics and family. We have a good family life here.

- South Central Technical College (SCTC) hosted the firefighters' annual training this past Saturday and Sunday, March 4-5. The training is held each year in March, and this year SCTC welcomed 542 participants, from 139 different departments across three states. The training is a two-day event, where both classroom instruction and hands-on experience are gained. This year, there were approximately 38 classes to choose from. The Janesville Fire Department sent five participants to the training, including Fire Chief Todd Huxford. he training is definitely beneficial, and it is so great because it is right in our own backyard," said Huxford.

In Brief

"The Addams Family" spring high school musical April 3, 4, 5, 6

The Waseca Junior Senior High School musical "The Addams Family" will be presented at 7 p.m. the evenings of April 3, 4 and 5, and at 2 p.m. on April 6 in the high school performing arts center. Admission cost is \$10 for all ages.

Volunteer Breakfast at Farmamerica Friday, April 4

There will be a complimentary farm to fork breakfast from 9-10:30 a.m. on Friday, April 4 at Farmamerica. At 10:30 a.m. there will also be an AED/CPR Training with Miss Minnesota, Emily Schumacher.

Pinnacle Pro PPW Wrestling at the Mill Event Center April 5

There will be a Pinnacle Pro PPW Wrestling event at the Mill

starting at 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 5. \$20 ringside, \$15 adult general admission, \$10 kids 12 and under general admission.

Waldorf 4-H Pancake Breakfast Sun., April 6

The Waldorf Peppy Peppers 4-H Club will be having a pancake breakfast from 7 a.m. till noon on Sunday, April 6. On the menu will be pancakes, eggs, sausage, juice and coffee. This is open to the public. Free will donations accepted in support of 4-H.

Waseca Lions Pancake Breakfast at American Legion Sunday, April 6

There will be a pancake breakfast on behalf of the Waseca Lions at the legion from 7:30 a.m. till noon on Sunday, April 6. Adults \$10, kids 12 and under \$5. Bring your old eyeglasses and hearing aids. Proceeds go to Waseca Boy Scouts Scholarships and Lions Eye Bank.

Waseca

25 Years Ago

-At the pump – Prices for regular unleaded gas in Waseca Wednesday were \$1.55 at many pumps, just above the state average of \$1.53 per gallon. Predictions are for gas prices to reach \$2.00 per gallon by summer.

-The purchase of a firewall for the county computer network was proposed by Information Technology Coordinator Judy Hiller at the County Commissioner meeting last week. She said, "Getting this updated technology will bring us up to speed with other counties."

-Sheriff Tim Dann appeared before the County Board of Commissioners last week to discuss the hiring of an additional full-time employee in his department. He said a transport/deputy officer is clearly needed the preceding day the Sheriff's Department had done seven transports. The position had already been budgeted for and approved, but Dann was there to clarify the particulars of the position and delineate the ways in which the new person in the department would be utilized "in case board members had more questions.

50 Years Ago



-Orff system – FLUTOPHONES, XYLOPHONES, AND MET-TALLPHONES, are just three of the instruments that the third and fourth grade students enjoy playing in the elementary music program. The instruments are especially designed for children and based on the Orff concept that children should make music while they're learning it.



-BOYD FULLER, left, looked at the portrait of himself that won Wayne Jertson, right, the Award of Excellence.
-CINDY GROSCKREUTZ of Waseca posed with her third place trophy won in a statewide competition amongst the Distributive Education Clubs of America. Standing with her is her instructor at Waseca High School, Richard Lundberg.

75 Years Ago

-Mary Degnan, 13-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Degnan and eighth grade student at Sacred Heart, nosed out Marilyn Hanson to win first place in county's spelling contest. Marilyn, who attends district 48, tied Mary during the regular contest which consisted of a written and an oral test. They both scored 49 out of 50 points. After writing the second test, Mary won by a three point margin.

-Fern Kennedy, rural supervisor of the State Department of Education, and Miss Margaret Matson, county superintendent of schools, visited various schools of Waseca county Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Miss Kennedy was extremely interested in the general health of the school children and after examining the height and weight charts in each school, found a steady and proportionate gain in the weights.

-Waseca's beautiful, gleaming Ben Franklin variety store will have its grand opening Friday. Larry Malechow, 34, a Lakefield, Minn., is the owner of the store. He formerly operated a Ben Franklin store at Sibley, Iowa.

100 Years Ago

-The Waseca County Chapter of the Isaac Walton League met at the Eaco mill office Friday evening with about 50 members present. The report of the membership committee was turned in, and the results were indeed gratifying. There were 56 petitions for membership in the Isaac Walton League. In this number were persons who are very little interested in the outdoor sport, but where much interested in the preservation of all wild life.

-Attorney H.H. Sturner, who has been judge of the Municipal Court for the past two years, announces that he will resign as Municipal Judge and plans to run at the election next month for the office of City Attorney. This office has been vacant since the resignation of Atty. Child who is now County Attorney.

-Over eighty rural school teachers, lacking but a very few of being every teacher in Waseca county, were in Waseca Saturday to attend the regular annual teachers' meeting. The teachers came in response to a call issued by County Supt. of Schools, H. C. VanLoh. Besides the teachers, the Normal Training departments of the New Richland and Waseca schools accepted an invitation to be present. Every member of these two classes were present at the meeting.

New Richland

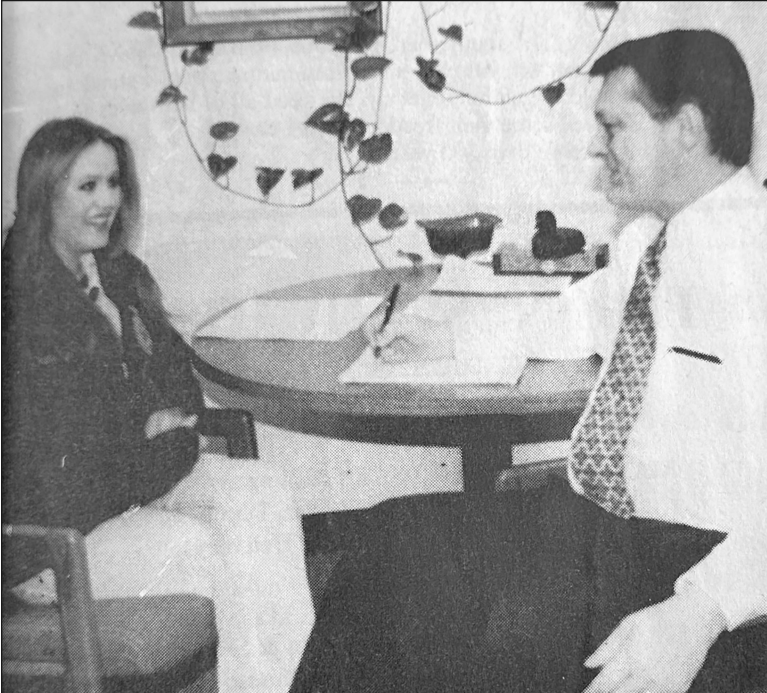
25 Years Back



- Taking advantage of some incredible weather for March in Minnesota. Last Thursday was the staff of Agro - Economics, 113 East Division Street, New Richland. Mark Bernard, owner of the business, is the fellow on the left. His assistants Greg Roesler with the lap-topPC and Bob Frisk. Soil testing and fertilizer application advice is provided to the area farmers by the three men. Temperatures over the 70's over the weekend and the first couple of days of the week have deceived everyone and everything into thinking it can't be March in Minnesota. It is predicted that it will change by the end of the week. The antique walking plow in front of the men is a symbol of how far agriculture has advanced over the years.



- A bunch of yellow crocuses was found by Lola Hagen on February 28 blossoming near her house in New Richland. She picked one of the little flowers and brought it into her house to enjoy. She left the rest to blossom outside in the sunshine. This is the only year Lola can recall in her nearly 85 years that flowers have bloomed so early in the season. High temperatures in the 70's have all of nature's creatures confused this year. Trees are budding, flowers are blooming and the birds are singing in the incredible weather.



- Lacey Fredrick, a member of the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva FFA chapter placed fifth in region VII job interview competition at Mankato Technical College, February 24. Her competition consisted of writing a letter application together with a resume, filling out an application for employment and being interviewed by a group of instructors on greenhouse assistant management. Here she is pictured in a practice interview with Principal Lee Obermiller.

- Byron Township residents contributed \$1,084.00 to their 1999 community fund. These solicitors: Sherry Pansuka, Mary Sack, Margaret Dobberstein, Joan Lobberger, Earl and Kathryn Parriott, Ellen Chicos. Charles Cowell and Jeff Jensen completed the drive in late 1999. Area Chairwoman Margret Dobberstein, Kathryn Parriott, Mary Sack, Elaine Tesch, Mary Jane Byron met after the drive to send the donations to the charities as designated by the donors.

- Kristen and Ron Stennes of New Richland announce the birth of their son, Andrew Jack, on Thursday, February 17, 2000 at 3:32 a.m. Grandparents are Pete and Jane Stennes, Stan and Nancy Honstad, all of New Richland and the late Jack Anderson. Great-grandparents are Paul and Blossom Stennes, Betty Olson, Anges McColey, Rose Honstad and George and Eunice Colmer.

Consolidated Communications' Community Fund Awards \$195,000 Grants awarded to 32 non-profit organizations in the Greater Mankato area

MANKATO, Minn. — March 12, 2025 — The Consolidated Communications Community Fund of the Mankato Area Foundation is awarding \$195,000 in grants to 32 local non-profit organizations across the Greater Mankato area. Consolidated's Community Fund focuses its support on local programs that meet critical community needs, such as hunger and homelessness, along with initiatives that provide opportunities for innovative education and learning.

Consolidated's 2025 Grants are being awarded to the following organizations: Redemption Project — virtues-based training for inmates, \$5,000; Waseca Le Sœur Library — Romp 100 Challenge, \$1,500; Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota — STEAM programming, \$10,000; Committee Against Domestic Abuse — direct assistance for victims, \$10,000; Connections Ministry — drop-in center programming, \$10,000; ECHO Food Shelf — dairy products for children, \$10,000; Feeding Our Communities Partners — Backpack and Power Pack Food Programs, \$10,000; Junior Achievement of Greater Mankato Area — Entrepreneurial JA Company Program, \$10,000; Minnesota State University, Mankato — scholarships, \$10,000; Partners for Housing — Emergency Shelter Program, \$10,000; South Central College — scholarships, \$10,000; VINE — PEARLS mental health initiative, \$10,000; Educare Foundation — Ed Waltman Mini-Grants, \$7,500; American Red Cross — disaster recovery services, \$5,000; Footnotes Trauma Foundation — care for veterans and abuse victims, \$5,000; Good Counsel — literacy tutoring, \$5,000; HACER — anti-bullying initiative, \$5,000; Jo-

nathan Zierdt Cancer Fund — Car-ing Box Program, \$5,000; Key City Bike — bikes for kids and adults, \$5,000; Lake Crystal Recreation Center — Fit Kids Program and senior lunch and learns, \$5,000; Life-Work Planning Center — Women in Transition Program, \$5,000; Loyola Catholic School — video production equipment, \$5,000; MRCI — community-based day service programming, \$5,000; MY Place — academic program, \$5,000; Open Door Health — school-based healthcare, \$5,000; Seeds of Hope — summer camp for foster kids, \$5,000; Lasting Imprint — congenital heart defect kits, \$4,000; St. Peter Food Shelf — upgrade of industrial floor scale, \$4,000; Living Earth Center — youth gardening initiative, \$3,000; Ruth's House — transitional housing for families, \$2,000; 5 Sparrows Foster Closet — basic needs for foster families, \$1,500; Twin Valley Council Scouting America — handbooks for new scouts, \$1,500.

"We are proud to support 32 non-profit organizations and their good work positively impacting our community and our region," said Jennifer Spaude, senior vice president of corporate communications. "Consolidated's Community Fund contributes to our legacy of building strong communities, connecting people in the greater Mankato area and enriching how they work and live."

Consolidated's Community Fund grants are awarded on an annual basis through a grant application process administered by the Mankato Area Foundation. Grant requests for the next fiscal year will open in early fall and are due Dec. 1, 2025. More information can be found at consolidated.com/communityfund.



From left Front row: Molly Erdman, Mikhail Rostislavovich, Penny Vought. Row 2: Jeanne Sexton, Missy Sexton, Katie Youngberg, Ann Staloch, Tara Bjerke. Row 3: Lynsea Bulfer, Hazel Moore, Diane Beckmann, Brad Milbrath (missing Mark Christensen and Bob Johnson).

Arts Council welcomes new board

WASECA, MN — The Waseca Arts Council is proud to announce its newly elected Board of Directors, the largest in the organization's recent history, signaling a renewed commitment to fostering artistic expression and community engagement. Under the leadership of President Mikhail Rostislavovich, the board includes a dynamic group of individuals dedicated to expanding the Council's impact. Joining him in leadership are Vice President Penny Vought, Secretary Molly Erdman, and co-Treasurers Lyndsea Bulfer and City Councilor Mark Christiansen, with Immediate Past President Missy Donner continuing to offer her guidance.

They are joined by board members from various backgrounds, including longtime supporters of the arts, business leaders, and community advocates such as Diane Beckmann, Jeanne Sexton, Tara Bjerke, Commissioner Brad Milbrath, Katie Youngberg, Hazel Moore, Ann Staloch, and Bob Johnson.

With a focus on sustainability and growth, the board will oversee several committees essential to the organization's mission. The Acquisitions, Accession, & Deaccession Committee will manage the Council's collection, while the Governance Committee ensures best practices and organizational integrity. The Marketing & Media Committee will focus on promoting the Council's events and initiatives, and the Volunteer Committee will engage community members in meaningful ways. Financial oversight will be a key focus of the Finance Committee, while the Education & Programming Committee works to expand artistic opportunities. Additionally, the Student Scholarship Committee will continue to support young artists in their creative pursuits.

"This exceptional board brings together a wealth of expertise and a shared passion for the arts," said President Mikhail Rostislavovich. "With their leadership, we are excited to build upon the Council's legacy, grow our programs, and strengthen our connection with the community."

The Waseca Arts Council remains committed to enriching the cultural scene through exhibitions, workshops, and educational initiatives. With a strong leadership team in place, the Council looks forward to a stimulating year of creativity, collaboration, and artistic growth.

For more information on upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, or ways to support the Waseca Arts Council, please visit www.wasecaartcenter.org.



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Back row from left: Mikhail Rostislavovich, Molly Erdman, Theresa Sunde, Kevin Walter. Front Row: Ed Frederick, Abby Clemons, Stacey Schroeder, Kristie Biehn, Marcy Buchele, Tiffany Lynch, Jodie Thompson and Amy Potter

Schroeder joins Waseca Chamber

Waseca, MN — March 11, 2025

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce is pleased to welcome Stacey Schroeder as its newest member. An independent hairstylist with 31 years of experience, Schroeder operates her business within Kroeger Concepts Salon in Waseca.

A longtime fixture in the Waseca community, Schroeder is known for providing comprehensive hair care services for the entire family. Her three decades of experience have established her as a trusted professional in the local beauty industry.

"We're thrilled to welcome Stacey to the Chamber," said Mikhail Rostislavovich, President of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce. "Her dedication to quality service and strong community ties make her a valuable addition to our organization."

When not behind the chair, Schroeder enjoys reading, writing, and spending quality time with her family, as well as exploring nature.

Her passion for the community extends beyond her profession, as she actively engages in local events and initiatives.

"Stacey's enthusiasm for Waseca and her commitment to building relationships truly embody what our Chamber stands for," said Kristie Biehn, Waseca Ambassador Chair. "We're excited to see how her involvement will strengthen our local business network."

"Joining the Chamber is a natural step for me," Schroeder said. "I've been part of this community for so many years, and I'm excited to connect with other local businesses and contribute to Waseca's continued growth."

For more information about Stacey Schroeder's hair care services, please contact her through Kroeger Concepts Salon at 507-835-2527.

For more information on the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce, call 507-835-3260 or email info@wasecachamber.com.

In Brief

Waseca Spring Shop Hop April 11 and 12

Waseca's special shops are sponsoring two days of special offers and activities on Friday and Saturday, April 11 and 12. Participating businesses are Suburban Furniture and Flooring, and Barefoot Lane at Suburban, 2200 N. State; Glitter & Grace, 1800 N. State; Past & Present, 1101 N. State; Homestead, 917 N. State; Waseca Floral, 810 N. State; C & A Designs, 208 N. State; The Speckled Hen, 123 N. State; Four Seasons Apparel, 124 N. State; Pic A Dilly, 106 N. State; Zinnias, 108 S. State.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Meriden two-day garage and soup sale April 11 and 12

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 2781 SW 92 Ave Meriden, is having a two-day indoor garage sale and homemade soup sale from 11 a.m. till 6 p.m. on Friday April 11, and from 8 a.m. till 1 p.m. on Saturday April 12. Lots of items and good food.

Spring Craft Show at the Starfire Event Center

Saturday, April 12

There will be a Spring Craft Show at the Starfire Event Center from 10 a.m. thru 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 12. For vendor inquiries call 507-461-1387, there will be a special appearance by the Easter Bunny.

Taste of the Farm at Waseca Fairgrounds on Tuesday, June 3

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

animals, farm equipment and other fun activities.

MNVAC Waseca Head Start Preschool 0-5 accepting applications for 2025-2026

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

CITY OF WASECA PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the City of Waseca **City Council** will consider **Ordinance No. 1121** at their meeting to be held at **7:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 1, 2025**, in the **COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF CITY HALL**, located at 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN.

Ordinance No. 1121 would amend Chapters 50.04 and 52.05 of City of Waseca Code of Ordinances in conjunction with changes to the Utilities Office Billing Policy.

A complete copy of Ordinance No. 1121 is available in the office of the City Clerk, Waseca City Hall, 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on March 13th and March 20th

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The amount of aggregate to be hauled and spread will be approximately 1,000 to 2,500 ton, more or less. Material will be hauled from pits located in Mankato and Warsaw MN. All hauling needs to be completed by June 30, 2025.

The board will review all quotes at the monthly board meeting on Wednesday April 2, 2025 at 6:00 pm. The board reserves the right to reject any or all quotes and to accept the offer that the board feels is in the best interest of the township.

All quotes must be received by the clerk by 5:00 pm on Monday March 31, 2025.

Send quotes to:

Alton Township
Deb Westphal, Clerk
1711 370th Ave
Janesville MN 56048
Phone: 507-461-3245

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642
March 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 Burger nite 5-7pm Hug a GI DAY	5 6pm BAR Bingo Seabee Birthday	6 7pm HALL BINGO	7 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	8
9 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am-Noon Your Host Waseca County Fairboard	10 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	11 Burger nite 5-7pm	12 6pm BAR Bingo	13 7pm HALL BINGO K9 VETERANS DAY	14 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	15 ST. PATRIC DAY BINGO 7pm Mash Burger Night 5-7pm
16	17	18 Burger nite 5-7pm	19 6pm BAR Bingo	20 7pm HALL BINGO	21 WALLEYE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm YOUR HOST	22
23 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am-Noon Your Host Neighborhood service cen-30	24	25 Burger nite 5-7pm Medal of Honor day	26 6pm BAR Bingo	27 7pm HALL BINGO	28 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	29 Vietnam War Veterans day
	31					

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‘Pure joy’

Bluejays defeat Belle Plaine for second straight year, 76-66; earn schools 13th trip to state

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

A decisive 76-66 win over Belle Plaine in the Section 2AA Championship game last week begs the question: Will anyone defeat the Bluejays boys' basketball team?

We'll find out this week at the state tournament.

"It's just a lot of pure joy," Waseca Head Coach Seth Anderson described the win. "It's pure joy when you win the section, because you can never take it for granted. It's a precious thing and a special thing and a state tournament is a memory they can't ever take away."

The Bluejays extended their streak of wins to 30 and section championship streak to two with a victory over the Tigers Thursday night at the Taylor Center in Mankato.

Without question, the Tigers refused to be put away in this game, however, they never led in the contest.

Four minutes in the Bluejays led 8-7, and four minutes later, a Deron Russell bucket put the Jays up 20-10. With six minutes left in the first half, another three by Russell extended the Jays' lead to 14.

Over the final five minutes of the first half, the Tigers clawed back with a 16-6 run. A jumper from Demarius Russell before the buzzer sent the Jays into halftime with a 38-32 lead.

After the break, the Jays quickly jumped out to their largest leads of the night, leading by as many as 21 points with six minutes remaining. A barrage of baskets saw the Jays lead cut to single digits in a matter of two minutes.

A timeout from the Jays stopped their cold streak as Deron Russell laid it in with the assist coming from brother Demarius Russell.

From that point on, the Bluejays made their free throws and kept pace as they put down the Tigers for the second straight year.

"Holy cow," coach Anderson said after the game. "It went from a twenty-one point lead to eight pretty fast there. Credit our guys. They just held on until the end. It wasn't pretty. We had some ugly turnovers, but we held on and it was enough."

"We just gotta stay composed," Senior Demarius Russell said of the moment. "We knew we were gonna go against adversity sooner or later. As long as we stay composed, do our thing, and listen to coach, we know we're gonna come out on top."

Asked the question of whether anyone will beat them this year, both Russell and Anderson gave the same response: "One game at a time."

Individually for the Bluejays versus Belle Plaine: Deron Russell 31 points, 2 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals; Isaac Feldkamp 12 points, 13 rebounds, 2 assists, 1 steal, 1 block; Demarius Russell 11 points, 6 rebounds, 9 assists, 4 steals; Carson Ohnstad 9 points, 6 rebounds, 2 assists, 2 steals; Ethan Hiller 9 points, 7 rebounds, 2 assists, 1 steal; Caden Danner 2 points; Cyrett Long 2 points, 1 rebound, 1 assist.

The Bluejays (30-0), seeded number 2, played Tuesday night against 7-seed Pequot Lakes (23-7). A season ago the Patriots ended the Bluejays' season in the consolation semifinals with a 51-48 victory.

The winner of Tuesday night's game plays at 6 p.m. Friday night at Williams Arena against the winner of 3-seed Breck (19-10) and 6-seed Montevideo (25-4). A year ago, Waseca lost to Breck 76-42 in the state quarterfinals. The loser of Tuesday night's game plays Wednesday night at either 6 p.m. or 8 p.m. at the Gangelhoff Center, Concordia University in St. Paul. On Saturday the 3rd place game will be played at 2 p.m. at Concordia. The State Championship game will be Saturday at 5 p.m. at Williams arena.

After last week's game, coach Anderson and senior Demarius Russell were asked some questions.

Anderson
Was this the most difficult game you guys have played all season?

"Yeah, for sure. Anytime you're in a section final against a good team, that's always the hardest game. There's just so much more pressure and higher stakes when you play a game like this, definitely making it the toughest game. You have to be able to handle adversity. You have to be able to handle pressure. I thought

our guys held on just enough to be able to get those things done tonight."

Coming into this season, what was the expectation? Is the pressure the same or different with higher expectations? What does it feel like to return to the state tournament this year and was that the expectation or goal coming in?

"You always feel pressure. If you don't feel pressure, you know, it's probably time to get out of coaching and that's kind of why coaches don't live to be 100 years old. There is a lot of stress in the job and there's just so much unknown all throughout the season. You have to be able to stay healthy. You have to have a few breaks go your way, and you have to be good. You have to be able to prepare for the moment...I couldn't be more proud. I thought our guys prepared great."

How do you keep the boys mentally strong going into a game like this?

"I think it's something that you talk about all year long. You're preparing for the moment and you know that you're going to hit adversity at some point, and you hit it throughout the season. You have to find different moments. And we've struggled with it. We haven't done everything correctly all the way through, but it's a learning process, and I thought our guys handled it well tonight."

What does it mean for you, for the team and the school? Does this ever lose any of its excitement?

"It never gets old. You never lose that heartbeat and stress and excitement when that final whistle blows and your team gets it done and the final score on the scoreboard has the Bluejays ahead one more time."

What do you guys have to do going forward to succeed?

"We have to continue to defend and rebound the basketball. Those are two big things. Offensively we've been pretty good most of the year. I think we can score, but we've got to continue to defend without fouling. Fouls really got us in trouble late in the game tonight."

Are you the favorite going into the state tournament?

"One game. We just play one game. We figure out who the first opponent is, and we try to beat them and we go from there."

Demarius Russell
How are you feeling about going back to your second state tournament this year, coming off tonight's victory?

"I just wanted to give thanks to my Lord and savior Jesus Christ. It's just a blessing. We come and we work day in and day out at practice. The goal is always to come back to the state tournament, and that's what we're doing right now. When we get there, we're gonna keep working and keep working and hope to get some wins up there."

What does it mean to you to represent Waseca at state? What are the expectations like going in?

"Expectations are we want to come in and we want to win. Last year we had a first-round loss and we don't want that this year. We want to come out and win. Show our state that we really want to come out and we want to win it all."

Is anybody going to beat you guys this year?

"We'll see. One game at a time, that's all we think about."



ON TOP OF THE WORLD - Waseca Captains Carson Ohnstad, Damarius Russell and Deron Russell hoist the Section 2AA Championship plaque. Below, Deron Russell (1), Ohnstad (5), coach Seth Anderson and Isaac Feldkamp (22). Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens



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Panthers humbled in state tournament

NRHEG girls drop final two games of season in Twin Cities

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

NRHEG's best season in nearly a decade came to an end last week after two losses in the Minnesota State Girls Basketball Tournament in the Twin Cities.

The Panthers lost in the opening round 84-50 to top seed, eventual state champions, undefeated Providence Academy.

In their second round they lost 79-54 to fourth seed Sauk Centre.

The game with Lions started well for the Panthers, which jumped out to 4-2 and 5-4 leads. An early timeout from the Lions, however, reset momentum.

The Panthers kept the game within single digits until about 8 minutes left in the first half when they fell down by 12. At halftime the Lions led the Panthers 46-21. In the half the Panthers had 19 turnovers and were outshot 42 field goals (by the Lions) to the Panthers 20 attempts.

Individually for the Panthers: Kylie Olson 21 points, 11 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal; Camryn VanMaldeghe 16 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist, 2 steals; Quinn VanMaldeghe 10 points, 10 rebounds, 3 assists, 2

steals, 2 blocks; Clara Buendorf 2 points, 1 rebound; Gabrielle Schlaak 1 point, 2 rebounds, 2 steals; Ezra Boerner 2 rebounds, 5 assists, 2 steals; Savannah Farr 1 rebound; Chloe Stork 1 assist;

Against Sauk Centre the Panthers came out firing and led at halftime 39-36, but did not play a competitive second half, getting outscored 43-15 in the period.

Individually for the Panthers: Camryn VanMaldeghe 29 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal; Olson 9 points, 10 rebounds, 2 assists; Quinn VanMaldeghe 6 points, 12 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal; Buendorf 4 points, 1 rebound, 1 assist, 1 steal; Schlaak 3 points, 1 rebound, 1 assist, 1 steal; Boerner 2 points, 3 rebounds; Alayna Groskreutz 1 point, 1 rebound; Farr 1 rebound; Stork 1 rebound, 2 assists, 1 steal.

"I'm very proud of this team," NRHEG head coach Onika Peterson said. "These kids have rallied and battled every single game."

The Panthers end the season with a 23-7 record and graduate no seniors and are likely to be the favorites to return to the state tournament next year.



NRHEG sophomore Kylie Olson led the Panthers in points, securing a double-double with 21 points and 11 rebounds Wednesday night at Williams Arena.



Freshman Ezra Boerner makes a pass between two Lions defenders during the 2025 state tournament.



Junior Camryn VanMaldeghe scores two of her 16 points in the Panthers' opening round at the state tournament.



The Panthers take a timeout. From left, assistant coach Kayley Camerer, Junior Chloe Stork, Quinn VanMaldeghe (4), coach Onika Peterson, and Camryn VanMadleghe.



NRHEG players and coaches stand as they are introduced prior to their opening round game with Providence Academy in the 2025 State Tournament at Williams Arena.



Panthers' junior Gabrielle Schlaak drives to the hoop over Lions defender Shannon Healy.



Junior Quinn VanMaldeghe scores two of her ten points over Lions defender Hope Counts.



Eighth-grader Alayna Groskreutz battles for the ball.
Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens



NRHEG sophomore Clara Buendorf takes a shot against Lion defender Hope Counts.



NRHEG reserve players check into the game, from left, Kenley Gehrke, Julieann Wobbrock and Alayna Groskreutz.



Eighth-grader Emilia Stadheim takes a jumper in the Panthers' state quarterfinal game.

Section Champions

March 4, 2025
Tuesday
Blue Earth (H)
W 101-27

March 6, 2024
Thursday
Central Public
W 77-52

Thursday, March 13, Class 2AA
Section 2 Championship
Belle Plaine (Mankato)
W 76-66

March 10, 2025
Monday
JWP (Mankato)
W 74-38

The road so far
Overall record
30 wins
0 losses



Rattling off four straight wins through the Class 2AA Section 2 playoff bracket, the Waseca Bluejays earned a trip to the 2025 State Tournament. The Bluejays defeated Medford, Central Public Schools, Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton and Belle Plaine, improving their record to 30-0. On Tuesday the Bluejays play Pequot Lakes in the State Quarterfinal. This year is Waseca's 13th appearance in the state boys' basketball tournament. They also went in 1918, 1919, 1948, 1974, 1975, 1987, 1988, 2002, 2016, 2019, 2021 and 2024. The Bluejays were state champions in 1918 and 2021, finishing second in 2019. They reached the section finals in 2020, when the Covid pandemic prompted cancellation of the state tournament.

This year's roster includes: EthanHiller, Deron Russell, Cyrett Long, Damarius Russell,Caden Danner, Carson Ohnstad, Logan Reger, William Mansfield, Owen Honstad, OwenRupe, Isaac Feldkamp, Amin Sharif, Caleb Wulf, Wyatt Hager, Riley Mitchell, Isaah Johnson, Max Howard and Brandyn Jascha.

Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens





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