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WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

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Ag Spectacular



Dave Dimmel, Vern Schueler, Ed Stock, and Ingrid Huelsnitz perform during Janesville’s “Hee Haw” spectacular.

Six years later...

Hee Haw returns after extended break

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

There was barely an empty seat at the Janesville Hee Haw shows from Friday, April 21, to Sunday, April 23.

Normally something that happens every three to four years, the show had taken a six-year break due to Covid. “We’re glad to be back!” declared emcee Ed Stock.

There were five shows, beginning at 7 p.m. Friday, followed by evening shows on Saturday and Sunday, and a pair of 2 p.m. shows over the week-

end.

The Janesville Hee Haw Show is a local spin-off of a television show of the same name which aired from 1969 to 1992. The show featured country music acts such as Buck Owens along with humorous skits about the residents of the fictional “Kornfield County.”

Most of the music featured was country hits from the past decades ranging from a Buck

Hee Haw continued on 3



Louise Lund and Ingrid Huelsnitz out for a drive.
Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

Waldorf plant sale set for May 13

The Waldorf Petal Pushers Garden Club will hold a plant sale Saturday, May 13 from 8 to 11 a.m. at the Waldorf Community Center. Annual and perennial flowers, tomatoes, succulents, house plants, etc., will be available.

Waldorf Ladies Spring Salad Luncheon May 9

All ladies of the community are invited to attend Ladies Spring Salad Luncheon on Tuesday May 9 at noon at First Lutheran Church of Waldorf. Speaker Julie Tesch will be sharing her “Faith Journey.”

Graduation Open house ads available

Celebrate this year’s graduates in the paper with a photo and open house announcement. Cost is \$20 for one week or \$30 for two weeks.

Please email news@waseca-countypioneer.com or call 837-6767

Music at the Museum May 7

The Waseca County Historic Museum is hosting a musical event featuring Mary DuShane and Nick Jordan from 3 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 7.

Sponsored by the former Bothy Folk Club of Mankato, the event will include a spicy range of roots music, bluesy old time, and jug band songs. The event is free and open to the public at 315 Second Ave NE in Waseca.

Waseca prom this Saturday

Grand March will be in the high school at 6 p.m. Buses will load at 7:15 to transport students to the Mill for dinner and dancing.

Jeff Yalden to speak on suicide prevention May 11 at Waseca PAC

Nationally known speaker Jeff Yalden will speak to Waseca high school students during the school day on May 11, and then again to the public at 7 p.m.

Margarita Mingle at Mill May 5

The third annual “Margarita Mingle” will be from 4 to 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 5.

*A word from
The Word*



Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

Hebrews 12:14



About 100 people attended the Waseca Chorale concert “Time in a Bottle,” performed in the Waseca Central auditorium on Sunday April 3. Directed by Deb Wantoch-Yess and John Hoehn, and with Susan Poepping as accompanist, the concert lasted about 90 minutes. The concert theme commemorated the fact that 2023 is the fiftieth year of the Waseca Chorale.

Chorale members are (Altos) Charleen Arnold, Toni Bauleke*, Sheryl Brisel, Karen Dahle, Mary Jo DeLaitch, Mallory Malacek, Rita Miller, Susan Poepping, Jodie Pollock, Mary Schultz, Jacque Storby, and Deb Vetter*. Basses are Mike Anthony, Gary Arnold*, Maynard Breck, Paul Byron, Doug Engstrom, Don Frankenberry, Sr, Matt Jirele, and Jon Stagman. Sopranos are Cathy Dey*, Aimee Hill, Saileen Hoehn, Janice Hoverstad, Michaela Kerner, Nancy Lehman*, Kelli Lenz, Susan Madson, Kathy Roycraft, Isabella Sorenson, Stacy Stenzel, Sara Whitesitt. Tenors are Rodney Born, John Hoehn, Al Judd*, Dowain Kerner, Andrew Miller*, Immanuel Mueller, and Michael Myers. (* Indicates board member.)

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Long way from home

Waseca Rotary hosts Moldovans

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

The Waseca Rotary Club had the rare opportunity to host a delegation of agricultural professionals from the European country of Moldova from April 21-28.

Moldova is a small country (population 2.6 million) south of Ukraine and north of Romania. It was part of Romania throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries before a pact was signed in 1939 to allow the Soviet Union to annex the region. It declared independence in 1991 and became its own country in 1992. The country’s economy is centered around agriculture.

The Rotary Club organization beat out hundreds of others who vied for the opportunity to host the six Moldovan delegates: Octavian Cernei, Sergiu Gherciu, Galina Petrachi, Corneli Diaconu, Nicolae Minciuna, and Lidia Sanduleac.

Minciuna, 37, started a small winery in Moldova in 2019. He studied in university to become a winemaker and has a Masters as a wine tourist. He is married with two kids and runs a small gastronomy business with his mother.

Minciuna operates six acres of vineyard: he owns 4.5 acres and rents another 1.5. “I make about 4,500 to 5,000 bottles of wine per year,” he explained. “We do local varieties as well as other common wines like white, rose, and red.”

Cernei is the administrator of Semichim Trade,



Six Moldovan delegates visited Waseca this past week to learn more about American agri-tourism. From left: Galina Betrachi, Nicolae Minciuna, Octavian Cernei, Sergiu Gherciu, Lidia Sanduleac, and Corneli Diaconu.

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

an agricultural distribution company that sells sunflower seeds, corn, vegetables, wheat, and cereal. “We also sell the entire spectrum of fungicides and insecticides, growth stimulators and stimulants.”

The company distributes nationwide throughout Moldova and offers agricultural services throughout the vegetation period.

Sergiu Gherciu is the State Secretary and part of Moldova’s Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry. Fellow colleague Galina Petrachi works as the country’s Head of Rural Development Policies and Programs Department and is part of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry.

Corneli Diaconu works for the Republic of Moldova’s customs service as an inspector. He is also

co-founder of Diaconu Mihail GT. “I started a small farm with my parents,” he explained. Diaconu farms about 1500 acres and grows wheat, sunflower seeds, and corn.

Lidia Sanduleac works as an executive director of the American Councils for International Education (ACIE) in Moldova. She is the facilitator for the group of Moldovan delegates. “ACIE facilitates exchange programs here in the United States for citizens for the Republic of Moldova and 90 countries around the world,” she explained.

According to her and Waseca Chamber Pres-

Agritourism continued on 11

Reese battles cancer, returns

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher

Nearly a decade after taking a leave of absence from the NRHEG baseball program, one the state’s all-time-winningest coaches, Jeff Reese, has returned to the program in an assistant role.

How did this happen?

To begin, we must travel back in time to 2013.



Reese

Jeff and Carol Reese were planning their retirement, ready to travel the world. God, however, had other plans.

“I always thought the top three things in your life are God, family and then baseball,” Jeff said. “Now, looking back, years ago, it was just the opposite [order].”

In June of 2013, Carol was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

“So we made a lot of trips, but it was to Rochester, and John Hopkins when nothing else could be done,” Reese continued. “That’s been about eight years [since Carol lost her battle with cancer in 2015].”

Reese said he and medical professionals did everything they could.

“Chemo every day, even on Saturday and Sunday,” Jeff continued. “I think that was part of my – you know, they say stress can really affect a guy.”

Jeff himself was diagnosed with cancer in 2019.

At a regular appointment looking at knee replacement surgery, a blood test revealed Lymphoma.

During his battle, Jeff has lost more than 80 pounds and spent the better part of the past six months in assisted living, fighting a host of problems.

“Rheumatoid arthritis, I’ll have that for my lifetime. Neuropathy in the feet. Afib. And Lymphoma. Cancer...” Reese said. “And I’m beating it all.”

Not that it’s easy.

“It’s been a struggle, but you get used to it,” said Reese “You have to. The big guy’s got a plan up there. Sometimes it makes me angry, but I’ve learned to accept it. And, you know, there’s a reason.”

At Jeff’s lowest moment, he says he weighed in at 160

Reese continued on 3



Compostings

by Al Batt

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Something to like

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I can read minds. Prove it. You're thinking I can't read minds.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Deep thoughts occur as I drive past his drive. I wore no jacket because I wanted spring to know I was on its side in its battle against winter. As I drove, I noticed the orange cones popping up here and there. The roadwork season is commencing. A driver must pay attention or suffer the cone-sequences.

As I fetched communication from the mailbox, a car swerved at the last moment and narrowly missed me. I have great neighbors.

I came to a 4-way stop. I'd easily found my place in the realm as I was the only car approaching the intersection. Bless our small towns! The day before, I came to a 4-way stop where there was at least one car at each stop sign. Who goes first? The first vehicle to arrive at the intersection. If two vehicles get there at the same time, the one on the left yields to the one on the right. That's what happened here. The fly in the ointment was the car behind the one that went followed right behind it. Two cars from one stop sign. The second driver was talking on a cellphone. So who goes first at a 4-way stop? Those who have an inflated sense of their importance or have a weak bladder.

I HAVEN'T BEEN EVERYWHERE, BUT I'M WILLING TO GO

I talked to a friend who told me he'd spent 45 days on a cruise. That's an impressive feat. I gave talks in Great Falls, Montana, and a man told me he was on a three-month-long bus tour. I took him at his word, but it's possible he embellished a bit. I recall an RV tour that followed the Lewis and Clark Expedition's journey from St. Louis to Astoria, Oregon, and I think that took 48 days. That's a substantial slice of time. I enjoyed the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and the C. M. Russell Museum in Great Falls. Charlie Russell (1864-1926) captured the art and soul of the American West in his paintings and sculptures. Russell said, "A pioneer destroys things and calls it civilization."

I'VE LEARNED

There is no home-field advantage greater than using your own bathroom.

No previous civilization was ever destroyed by lava lamps.

Lutefisk is just as afraid of you as you are of it.

If "Gilligan's Island" wasn't reality TV, why was it better than re-

ality TV?

IT'S NO GHOST TOWN

There is a ghost lake east of Hartland. In 1857, the Boardman brothers settled on the shores of Le Sueur Lake, which had northern pike, wild rice and migrant ducks. B.J. Boardman tried to cross the ice-covered lake with mules, but the ice was thin and the mules drowned. It was called Mule Lake after the incident and was drained in 1914. I've never seen nor heard mule apparitions there.

NATURE NOTES

Both male and female American white pelicans develop a flattened protuberance on the upper bill, like a horn, during the breeding season and shed at its conclusion. This appendage is called a nuptial tubercle.

Baltimore orioles enjoy grape jelly because it tastes similar to the dark fruits they typically eat. The birds pay no attention to brand names but don't feed them sugar-free jelly and use a small dish to hold the jelly, which lessens the chance of a bird becoming mired in the jelly.

A cardinal is territorial and instinctively attacks another cardinal in its breeding territory and will make an enemy of its own mirrored image in a window. A cardinal engages in beak-to-beak combat with itself. He becomes his own worst enemy. Since the birds in the window won't leave, the cardinal prolongs the fight. It's typically the male battling the glass with the female acting as an enabler, but she'll take a shot at her image too. Robins and cardinals are the most likely to battle with a Pella or a Marvin, but a diverse group of birds will attack windows. Covering the inside of the window enhances the reflected image. Drawing the blinds or pulling the curtains closed exacerbates the problem. Cover the outside glass with cardboard, paper, soap, painter's plastic drop cloth or plastic cling wrap. This makes Martha Stewart shudder but removes the reflection. It doesn't always eliminate shadowboxing as the bird may search for imaginary opponents in other windows or the outside mirrors of cars, which can be covered with plastic bags. The birds rarely do themselves great harm. Putting out a replica of an owl doesn't work.

If you missed "Birding With Batt" on the airwaves this week, you can hear it any time you like via the free KMSU radio streaming app. The app is available for Apple and Android devices, allowing you to livestream 89.7 the Maverick, find playlists and listen to shows on-demand.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Look for something to like in every person. Be kind.

Talking faith in the modern world

I think in this week's column, I want to talk a bit about faith in the modern world.

I attended John Conway's Bible Seminar (there's a separate story about that in this week's paper). Two big parts of the discussion there were the differences between the Rapture and the second coming of Jesus and how you get to heaven.

I've always struggled with the majority of Christian beliefs that faith and faith alone is the only way to heaven. And apparently, according to a video presented at the seminar, many Christians (a majority of them depending on which poll you look at) believe that good works can get you into heaven, even if you may not believe in God.

The scenario that played out in my head while reflecting on this dilemma was imagining if the person who found the cure to cancer someday turned out to be an atheist.

Cancer takes millions of lives. The person who finds the cure could save an uncountable number of people. That would be one of the greatest works a human could perform. And what if that cure for cancer saves other animals who can get cancer?

What most churches teach is that it doesn't matter. You must repent, confess your sins, and accept Jesus



Music to my Ears

by Michael Roy

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as your savior. Otherwise, no matter how much good you do, you're not going to heaven.

I also thought about a scenario where a convicted felon was on their deathbed and genuinely felt remorse for their crimes and wanted to accept Jesus before dying. Would such a person be allowed to go to heaven after accepting Jesus and repenting his or her wrongs?

Would the convicted felon who became a born-again Christian in their final moments be allowed into heaven before the person who cured cancer but never accepted God into their lives?

It is a very interesting moral dilemma that can be a bit extreme for some Christians. The problem is, it questions the very fabric of what most of us are taught, that we have to put our faith in the Lord. I think the other thing is maybe some people don't believe in the "good works"

path to heaven because if that's all it took to get to heaven, what's the point of going to church? What's the point of fearing God if all you need to do is be a good person and not believe in anything else? What's the point of religion if all that may matter in the end is that you were a good human being?

I don't think it's offensive to God to ask these questions. I think it's only natural to question your beliefs. I think that if you don't, you don't get to genuinely explore your faith. If you're afraid to ask questions, you don't get to explore why you believe what you believe. You also wouldn't explore the Bible as much to answer the questions crying out for an explanation. (And what are we told all the time? Read our Bibles.)

For example, at one point I considered myself an atheist. But then I realized that there are some things I just can't explain without religion.

There is a sense of community that comes from belonging to a group of like-minded people. The thing with atheism is that there's no common belief, no firm ground to set down your feet on, at least in my experience. You pretty much believe in nothing, that our time here is all we have. There's nothing to strive for other than whatever we want. But what do you do with your time? What's the purpose?

It seems like the modern world is trying to answer that question. Some people want so badly not to believe in God. They actively avoid thinking about the possibility that there is a mighty being somewhere in the cosmos watching over us. I wonder if it's because they feel like if they waiver from their atheistic beliefs and believe in a higher power, they've failed to be a good person for the sake of being a good person and they're only doing it because some deity is watching over us.

If you find you're still an atheist by the end of it, more power to you. But I don't think it hurts soul searching a little bit. There are born-again Christians for a reason. Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, and many other religions exist for a reason.



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

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No more trips!!

Well, I have taken my last trip. No longer will I be able to hop on a plane for a weekend getaway to another country or to the far reaches of the country. Some of you might say "Well Amelia, you can do that here in the United States!" Can I though? When will I ever have enough time in my schedule to hop a plane to New York or to Washington? When will I have the means to do it (that being probably the more dominant question)? Plane tickets in the States are expensive and most of the time not worth it in my opinion. Plus I don't have the time to drive so many hours during a weekend. But I will stop complaining and instead relate my experiences of my last and latest trip - to the northern coast of Spain in Bilbao and San Sebastian.

It was a fun time, of course, but I will say Bilbao was slightly boring. The only thing that we saw there was the Guggenheim museum. Bilbao is very industrial. But, what was cool was that the Guggenheim was built by the same guy who built the Weisman museum on the University of

Minnesota campus in Minneapolis. So it was like a little piece of home.

San Sebastian was fantastic, though. It is my new favorite place in all of Spain because it has all the things I love and all the things a person with a strong imagination dreams of - mountains, ocean, river, and beaches all combined into one adorable city.

What made it even better was our Airbnb. It was the cheapest Airbnb that looked decent, so we booked it not knowing that it would be in a former school building. Or that the room would be on the third floor and that sisters of the (religious) school would be living on the second floor. Or that the first floor would just be us having to walk through empty hallways of old, desolate classrooms. I should probably mention that they were in the process of moving to a new school so it wasn't that weird. But I still was convinced the place was haunted. The sisters were really nice, though. They gave us our keys and showed us that they had left plates full of muffins and fruit for our



Amelia Roessler and friends enjoy the last trip of their time studying abroad.

breakfast; they also taught us how to use the coffee maker. Just adorable.

Anyway, on the first day in San Sebastian we hiked up one of the mountains to the castle at the top. It was really enchanting not only because of the old castle (duh) but the view was absolutely incredible: I was in heaven. Then we spent some absolutely necessary time on the beach

and it was a lovely day. A great weekend, except now I have to study for finals, which hopefully will go well, and enjoy my last full weekend in Madrid before I have to say goodbye...

My Determination: "How does the never to be differ from what never was?" - Cormac McCarthy, The Road

John Conway's famous entryway

It's been an incredibly busy time. In lieu of giving a recap of my week of newswing, I will instead write about other topics.

Michael wrote in his column about Christianity, and John Conway's Bible seminar.

I enjoyed the column. I'm grateful Michael is confident enough to write about his faith and Christianity.

I have known John Conway since I was a little kid. My dad brought me over to his home when I was around 10 years old. I gratefully signed my name on his wall. For those who don't know, John's entry is filled with the signatures of everyone who has entered his home. It is quite a sight. That was the first of many trips. I remember driving by his house one evening after Dad had brought me out on some new adventure, probably to Loon Lake Park, which I called Moon Lake Park until I was 12.

I remember asking my father if we could stop to visit. He was happily surprised and said "Of course."

We were driving on John's road after all, and even at that age I loved people. Besides, not all adults were patient enough for a kid as talkative as me. Dean Spies was another person I was always asking my dad if we could stop to visit.

Anyway, my point was we stopped



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

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to visit John. He was patient and I was young in my faith and John spent literal hours, on many occasions, going through scripture, talking about the Word with my dad and me. I asked a lot of questions...

I remember being incredibly fascinated. As my siblings and I were growing up, Dad brought us to church, vacation bible school (something I really liked), Sunday school, and then confirmation. (The first book my father ever had me read was the children's bible.) At that age I thought church was boring—but John wasn't boring. Neither was vacation bible school.

I credit John, and my father (of course), for helping foster my faith as a youth. Prior to writing this I couldn't have told you how you get young people, kids included, interested in faith/Christianity. But the answer was staring me in the face. Just don't make it boring.

My faith journey is a long one, as it's been with me my entire life. Then

again, I'm quite young, so really, it's just beginning.

Whenever I'm faced with a difficult choice, anxiety, or really any obstacles, I lean on my faith. I pray about the situation, and it never fails to help.

I recall a bit Steve Harvey does where he talks about prayer. He claims God answers all prayers, but you've got to stay on faith street to receive them. God doesn't tell you when he's going to answer your prayer because it's somewhere down the line on faith street. And it's your job to stay on the road in order to receive your package.

In other news, I can't really keep up with the incredible volume of kind words, compliments and support we continue to receive at the paper. It's all of those words of affirmation and gratitude that keep me going when I start to struggle. That, and my faith. I chuckle as that thought comes to mind because on the couple occasions I felt this

year/job was too much, I prayed about it. Every time, the next day something happened that was simply unexplainable. Whatever the problem was, whatever the anxiety was, whatever the struggle, it was resolved.

Michael asked about faith and works. (I like to ask questions, so I've asked this question of many Christians during my faith journey.) My favorite answer, which still sticks with me, was given to me by Dean Spies. He showed me Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Live by that, and I think we'll all be okay. Dean's way of answering my questions was always through the Word. There was another verse, which I cannot recall, which included being slow to anger. Whichever verse/words/phrases speak to the reader, I imagine, are the ones which need to be focused on. That was the case in my life then, and now. The book of Galatians talks a lot of "do and do not." It is a good read.

It seems only fitting to conclude with a bible verse this week.

Proverbs 15:1 "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."



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

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Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika

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Important members of the food chain

The long, cold, harsh, snowy winter is finally history for another season. It's time to get out on the patio furniture and fire up the grill.

Along with a pleasant evening on the patio or deck come the bugs. I've always been a fan of those six-legged animals and spent hours collecting them in my elementary years. I had display cases of insects and could name them all. Without insects we wouldn't have life; they are essential in the food chain. There are some insects that I find undesirable and could definitely live without.

The mosquito is number one on my list. There are only two places in the world mosquito free; Iceland and Antarctica. Females with an adequate supply of food—blood—can live up to 5 months; harmless males, 7 days. Each year, mosquitoes cause over one million deaths worldwide via the malaria virus they carry. They also carry other types of sickness which infect humans. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in stagnant water; their eggs can wait dormant in dry ponds for years.

The mosquito is drawn to our breath and the carbon dioxide we exhale: pretty hard to quit breathing. They also like sweat and body odor. Perfume and cologne are some of their favorites. They love hot summer evenings when the humidity starts to fall.

We humans combat them by spraying, fogging, and zapping them, even though it can be very uncomfortable covering ourselves with repellent before working in the garden on a hot summer day. Waseca does a wonderful job spraying for them; regrettably due to our wet spring the trucks will have a lot to do. Get busy preparing for the nasty insect. I'm sure you'll swat a few.

Gnats, no-see-ums, are the size of a pinhead. When they hatch, they create black clouds of hatchlings. Like mosquitoes, they are also attracted to carbon dioxide, sweat, and body odors; and oh yes, they bite. No-see-ums have driven me off the lake when fishing, and indoors when working outside. Driving distances pulling the boat, I've driven through many clouds of hatching insects. These pests are a real chore to wash off the truck and boat. When crushed by a fast-moving vehicle, they leave stains on the paint; it takes elbow grease, determination and back pains to get them taken care of.

There are three flies I absolutely despise: black flies, deer flies, and horseflies. Whenever I find a spot out of the wind, black flies always find me and land on my ankles. When I feel the annoying pain of their bite, I end up itching and scratching until a small bead of blood forms. Insect repellent does work to keep them away.

Deer and horse flies are big. Only the females bite, but they are definitely out for blood. These flies prefer damp air and hot weather. They love weedy-wooded areas and long grass.

Hornets were a real problem at our lake cabin last summer. Dur-

ing a hot, dry summer, their numbers seem to increase exponentially. They are very aggressive and sting anything in their territory. I had to deal with them all summer long, ending up twice with exceptionally painful stings. Hornets build paper nests in tree cavities, old sheds, and under eaves. They love sugary things like a soda can or an empty cocktail glass. You'll always find them in numbers trying to get into your trash cans.

Spring is prime time for wood ticks. They lurk in leaves and grass waiting to climb onto a host. I've removed many of them from my own skin and from our dog with tweezers; I've found them on my body in places where no tick should ever go. Ticks also feed on blood and can be dangerous because they can carry Lyme disease. The smaller brown dog ticks are responsible for transmitting several diseases.

Lice live for a month and fleas up to 3 months; both types of insects can lay thousands of eggs. They seek warm bodies with hair or fur. Fleas prefer dogs and cats. Both lice and fleas can be treated with shampoos. Probably the only good thing about lice is the days away from school they sometimes provide; every kid wants to get out of school, right?

Ladybugs, orange and black, are friendly little bugs that eat aphids and garden pests. Asian lady beetles, larger than ladybugs, red in color with black spots, were released into the U.S. years ago to help control garden pests. The plan backfired. They take over the areas where ladybugs are found, multiply rapidly, and bite. The bug is now an invasive species found almost everywhere.

There are a lot of ants in the world and I know they are important in the food chain. Ants have superhuman strength, have two stomachs and can even swim. Still, there are several things I find undesirable about them.

Black ants come in many sizes. Colonies of them leave mounds of dirt that get in the way when mowing the lawn. They can chew tunnels through trees, wood and even the sides of houses. The battle against black ants is one against numbers; hundreds of them. Sprinkle a little diazinon on their homes and they will disappear.

Little brown ants are the guys wandering across the kitchen counter when the lights come on in the morning—hundreds of them marching in a line. Put a little liquid Taro on a piece of cardboard on the counter. You can watch them circle up, drink the poison droplets, and disappear in a couple of days.

There are 1,160 different kinds of insects in Minnesota; insects make up 90 percent of all life on our planet. Only a handful are undesirable; the rest are our friends.

Take notice that the females live longer and are usually the ones who bite. As hard and difficult I can be to live with, I'm sure glad my wife Lisa doesn't bite.

■ Hee Haw

from Page 1

Owens medley to Martina McBride's "Independence Day." The local "Jersey Boys" quartet featuring Johnson brothers Mike, Chris, and Grady with Josh Berndt sang a medley of "Sherry," "Walk Like a Man," "Bring It On Home To Me," and "In the Still of the Night."

Skits featured Janesville area residents including Arlene Pooley as "Sunshine the weather girl," Charlie Quast and Pat Borneke as "Hee Haw Pigs," and Bruce Mertens acting as the "Justus O'Peace." Some local references were made in the show, too, including Fury's Barbershop and some fictional happenings in Janesville broadcast through "KORN Radio."

The singers in the Hee Haw Show were, Brandon Johnson, Alicia Addler, Josh Stockman, Rachel McNamara, Josh Berndt, Doug Berndt, Jim Fury (who also played drums during his song "Be My Baby Tonight" by John Michael Montgomery), Amber Ness, Tammy Barnes, Paula Arndt, Crystal Gallagher, Irene Mulcahey, Bonnie Pfeifer, Carol Steinberg, Sue Stock, Sherry Trahms, Judy Winter, Brady Manthe, Lauren Fellows, Sheryl Williams, Mike Johnson, Chris Johnson, and Grady Johnson.

The band members were Jim Kozan on keyboards and harmonica, Gary Pfeifer on guitar, banjo, and mandolin, Howard Mock on bass guitar, Sheldon Brandt on steel guitar, Johnathan Moeller on lead guitar, Crista Bohlmann playing the fiddle, Zach Brown on drums, and Sheryl Williams on accordion.

Ed and Sue Stock were the emcees of the show, with Paula Arndt and Sheryl Williams as the Skit and Music Coordinators.



Amber Ness played the part of Misty in the Janesville Hee Haw show April 21-23. Behind her, from left, are Irene Mulcahey, Tammy-Seys Barnes, Alicia Adler, Sheryl Williams, and Paula Arndt.

The following actors took part in the skits: Vern Schueler as the Junior Samples, Doctor, and Talking World of Weather; Ingrid Huelsnitz as Little Lulu; Ed Stock as Grandpa Jones; Linda Ewert as Minnie Pearl; Louise Lund as Ida Lee; Amber Ness as Nurse Goodbody, Misty, and a student; Dave Dimmel as Hank Gordon and George; Lindsey Barbkecht as Trixie Dixie and a student; Wendy Dieker as Pixie Dixie and a student; Doug Berndt as Buck Owens; Gary Pfeifer as Roy Clark; Jim Fury as Charlie KORN, Archie, and a student; Jeff Huelsnitz as Hank, Orville, and a hillbilly; Brandon Johnson as Billy Bob, Hillbilly, and a Pig Assistant; Rich Winter as Scarecrow and Hillbilly; Bruce Mertens as Maynard, a Judge, Hillbilly, and a Pig Assistant; Arlene Pooley as Sunshine the Weather Girl; Tom Evans as the Deputy and Elrod; Julie Tesch as Wheezie, Ida Lee's Mom and Linda; Amber Williams, Alicia Addler, Sheila Seifert, Tammy Barnes, and



Hee Haw featured Janesville's own "Jersey Boys" Chris Johnson, Grady Johnson, Mike Johnson, Pioneer, and Josh Berndt. Pioneer photos by Michael Roy

Rachel McNamara as Hee Haw Honkeys; and Patrick Borneke and Charlie Quast as the pigs.

It was a great time and a long-overdue comeback for the Janesville area locals. Special thanks went out

to many people for making the show a success, including the Bulldog Backers, Arnoldt's Good Spirits, the JWP baseball team, Rhapsody Music of Mankato, and the Waseca Music Company.

■ Reese

from Page 1

pounds - down from 280.

A fall in his home in November led to an extended stay in assisted living, and later in senior independent living.

"I didn't want to get up," Jeff admits. "At my lowest spot, the FISH program from Trinity Church, Pastor Mary had them write get well cards. And she told the kids I used to be a baseball coach, and all the cards were like a stick guy, a baseball player, or somebody throwing a ball. God, that brought me up."

Jeff credits many people for his recovery, which led to his return to his home in April, which he and Carol built together, and where they raised three beautiful kids: Joy (Josh Drinkall) and children Lilly, Reese and Shay; Dusty (Amanda) and children Asher, Aiden, Brynna and Gunnar; and Jacey (Toni).

Among those Jeff extends his thanks to are Pastor Mary for her trips to visit and kind gestures, along with the nurses at Ecumen Past Stone and the Pillars, both in Mankato.

"They're all good people," Reese declared. "I had a couple nurses that I had to hug when I left. They came into my room on my first day. I heard them giggling first thing in the morning, about 6:30 a.m. and I heard, 'Come on, Jeff, we need to get you dressed and get you up for breakfast.' Oh, just leave me alone I told 'em. 'No, no, no.' So they made me. I said, I kind of hate you guys. But when I left, I had to give them a hug. They got me going. A lot of special

people there.

"Remember Edna Wenzel?" Jeff grinned. "I saw her there. She's looking good."

But once feeling better, Jeff told the nurses and staff: "I gotta go home."

And return home he did.

"The idea came down Highway 30," former player and current NRHEG baseball coach Mark Lee described. "Take a right onto Highway 13 and hang a left."

"During conditioning early this season, he [Jeff] called me up to say, 'Hey what's going on?' I kind of had a plan to call him up and say if you want to come help, you're welcome. But he beat me to it."

On that first day of practice, Jeff gave a modest introduction, which was followed by a not-so- modest description from Lee.

"I immodestly said how great a coach he was," Lee joked. "The best thing about it is, and the fun thing is that he was my coach. He knows how I like to play, and he knows how I like to coach from what he's seen from me in the last couple of years. So we're a pretty good fit, and he's fit in well. And our boys have taken to him real well. They listen to him and they talk to him. It's like the old days."

Coming off the best baseball season at NRHEG in more than a decade, it could already be argued, "There's a lot of things that went on in my four years under Reese that

seem like they haven't changed," Lee added.

Speaking of health, life, goals, and hobbies, Jeff stands firm.

"Philippians 4:13: I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

The Bible verse is printed on the front of a cross Jeff wears around his neck with baseball seams running across it.

"I've learned to agree with that guy," Jeff explained. "I mean, sometimes you're mad at him, but we're in it together... Baseball seams on the cross. I've learned, and I used to take the losses home with me. If we lose it still bothers me. But years ago, I'd take it home and it would be tough. Carol would know and leave me alone for a bad evening. But most of the time, there are good feelings, you know, because she's a devil's advocate. 'Why did you do that?' Because she knew the game. I found out later, she was probably the best recruiter I had, you know, she was cute, good looking, and she kept a book for me. So some years later, guys would come and tell me, 'You know she was why we came out for baseball.'"

"I still miss her... it does get easier."

As for Jeff's cancer, it's not curable, but it is treatable, and so far, according to Jeff, doctors are keeping it maintained.

"Stay positive," Jeff says. "That's the main thing. And I'm getting my strength back."

Oh, and, "Baseball, baseball, and baseball."

"I really think that having some hardship in your life, you learn to be determined," Jeff concluded. "You get all those characteristics from baseball discipline. You can turn that into your life. I sure had to do it with mine so far."

Reese's baseball story continued in 2017 when he accepted a position as head coach of Mankato Loyola. He coached there until 2022, moving into fourth place on the Minnesota high school coaches win list with 539 victories—all while battling through his cancer diagnosis and treatments. This past spring proved too much after Reese collapsed during a game. Helped by players and coaches, Reese toughed out the year, but decided his head coaching days were done.

But, like Reese says, baseball teaches determination.

"I love the game," he admits. "When I go home tonight, I'll crash, but in a couple days I'll feel better."

On this particular day, opening day of the Panther baseball season, Reese had undergone a chemo treatment.

"To me, that's pretty special dedication to show these kids," Coach Lee said.

"Like my wife said, you can always sleep when you're dead," Jeff joked.

"God, baseball and family keep me going."



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Crumbling building cause of concern

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

Ben Schroeder, a manager of UC Laboratory in downtown Janesville, shared concerns about a building in danger of collapsing on Main Street south of him at the Monday, April 24 council meeting.

Currently, parts of the roof have caved in, allowing rainwater to pool inside and potentially go into the city's sanitary sewer. "It's full of mold, dripping, and it reeks," he said. "There is also a gas meter, and I'm not sure if it's shut off or not."

According to Schroeder, he has an acquaintance who has attempted to look into these matters by communicating with city representatives: "He told me he's not getting the answers," he said.

During his time on the public forum, Schroeder shared photos of the front, back, inside, and roof of the structure. Schroeder wanted to know what the businesses could do to take care of the deteriorating building. "You couldn't tear it down without possibly having things going down with it," he pointed out.

City attorney Jason Moran had no doubt that the building could be condemned. He claimed the city looked at the situation in 2021. "In reality, the entire structure needs to come down," he said. "There's no saving it."

The problem is, as Schroeder explained, the building shares common walls with adjoining buildings. When the city originally searched for bids to tear it down in 2021, Wilcon of Mankato was the only bidder. At that time, project estimates were \$300,000. "Who knows what it will cost now?" Moran said.

Whatever the cost, he pointed out that someone will have to pay for it. He suggested that the city discuss the matter with the property owner and nearby businesses to come up with a cost-sharing solution. "City staff should renew their efforts to get a new quote," he added.

Schroeder also pointed out that he and his employees have no place to park. Janesville Chiropractic Center has given him cards saying that the spots out front are two-hour parking only; according to city administrator Clinton Rogers, it's really three-hour parking.

He suggested that the city-owned lot by Highway 14 Auto should be a "no overnight parking" lot. That way, parking in the lot would be first-come, first-served and his employees would have a chance to find a satisfactory parking spot. At this time, the lot is occupied by Highway 14 Auto's long line of cars waiting to be repaired. Mayor Andy Arnoldt suggested putting this issue on the agenda for the next meeting.

The city then discussed allowing residents to have ducks within its limits. Rogers said that one residence in the past was given permission by the council to have ducks in their backyard. A few other residents inquired about hav-

JANESVILLE CITY COUNCIL

ing ducks on their property.

"It's not in the city code," Rogers pointed out. "But they claimed we let someone else do it, and they were right."

When asked what his opinions were, Police Chief Dave Ulmen said that ducks wouldn't be much different from chickens, which are currently allowed in the city with a permit. However, county commissioner DeAnne Malterer pointed out that roosters aren't allowed in the city because they crow.

"And ducks quack," council member Andy Ahlman added.

"That may be another reason other cities don't allow ducks," Malterer pointed out.

Moran also brought up the "slippery slope" that could result if ducks were allowed. "Will you allow turkeys, then? Pheasants?"

With no one making a motion, Arnoldt said, "No motion, no ducks."

The council approved Rogers to look for a date to do a fall cleanup. Usually, the city of Janesville has a spring cleanup, but someone mentioned that other cities do theirs in the fall. Potential dates for a fall cleanup are September 16 and 30.

The council also gave a green light to the wastewater treatment agreement between Frechette Truck Wash and Arnoldt Power Washing which allows them to discharge water into the city's system. The agreement is effective until the end of 2024.

Reports Council member Jim Mulcahey said the park board is looking into updating the playground equipment at Veterans Memorial Park. Anticipated costs could be as high as \$50,000 or \$125,000. The park has a budget reserve of \$50,000 in this year's budget with \$63,000 in reserve.

The board is also looking into getting a pickleball or a basketball court. "That depends on how much money we spend on Veterans Memorial Park," Mulcahey said.

Council member Ivan Maas said that the Community Center Committee's town hall meeting Thursday, April 13 at JWP went well. Two things he got out of the thirty adults in attendance were, "If you're going to do it, do it right," and "Why are you doing it without a swimming pool?"

The committee will discuss these opinions at their next meeting.

The county opened up bids for the Teal Street project this summer. (Since the section of Teal Street receiving work is part of a county highway, the county has the responsibility of taking care of the road.) The overall bid accepted was higher than the engineer's estimate, but the city of Janesville's portion decreased by about \$2,400, according to Rogers.

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Food shelf open house

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

The Janesville Food Shelf held an open house on Thursday, April 20 to show the locals their space on the south side of Trinity Lutheran Church.

One of the things they showed off was a brand new refrigerator given to them by the Minneapolis-based nonprofit Foundations for Essential Needs. The food shelf received the refrigerator a few months ago; It allows them to store more items such as milk and produce. One third of the new refrigerator also acts as a freezer.

Because the new unit takes up so much space, one of the shelf's chest freezers is now located in the heating room next to the main food shelf area.

Janesville's Food Shelf is an outlier from other area food shelves; it's well-packed with food and toiletries. While some food shelves struggle to keep up with demand, Janesville is ready to serve anyone in need from those who



The Janesville Food Shelf received a brand new fridge from the Foundation for Essential Needs based out of Minneapolis. It will allow them to keep fresh produce cool.



only looking for some fresh vegetables to those who need to fill their pantry. Channel One Food Bank of Rochester is the organization's main supplier, providing non-perishables and even some fresh fruits and vegetables.

That being said, the organization gladly accepts donations and volunteer hours. Lack of volunteers is causing something of a strain. And although the organization tends to stay well sup-

plied, volunteers report that coffee is one of their popular items at the food shelf which is tough to keep in stock.

The Janesville Food Shelf realizes that some people may be uncomfortable using its services. "There's always a stigma when it comes to going to a food shelf, that you're poor and struggling," Kay Gottschalk said. "But there is no shame in asking for a hand. We're here to help."

School board examines budget

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

JWP's school board approved the district's budget assumptions report compiled by business manager Matt Moline on Monday, April 17.

Based on current numbers, the district anticipates enrollment for the 2023-24 budget year to be 670 students. This year's budget was set using a population of 665 students, which was up from 645 students at the beginning of the school year. Last year at this time, the school budgeted for 655 students, according to Moline.

Property tax revenue in the general fund is expected to be about \$1.84 million. The tax revenue includes long-term facilities maintenance, safe schools, achievements and integration revenue, a general operating referendum, and other various areas.

The debt service fund revenue is budgeted to match the 105 percent requirement of bond payments due, a slight increase for this year.

Some items that could still impact the budget include parking lot resurfacing, which is needed. Moline said that track resurfacing can be considered as well.

"We talked about it in the last meeting," he said. "It can be done,

but it doesn't need to be."

The playground on the east side of the school may also need to be re-leveled for safety reasons.

Board member Tim Oelke asked if there was any way to know how many Trinity Lutheran eighth-grade students plan to attend JWP starting in their ninth-grade year: Trinity Lutheran is only K-8, with almost all kids attending JWP from ninth to twelfth grade.

Moline and superintendent Jeremy Erler say there isn't any concrete way to know until summer. "We usually go by where their family lives and if they had any siblings that came over to JWP," Erler explained. "We can say that this year, it's projected to be lower than in the past."

Board member Kevin Born asked about additional considerations listed in the budget assumptions. These included hiring a paraprofessional for a high school study hall, seven additional paraprofessionals for elementary and middle schoolers (one for each grade), an elementary art teacher, and a behavior interventionist.

Moline referred to those as "wishlist items" and responded that they were not included in the evening's considerations. "Any hires we

JWP SCHOOL BOARD

are considering will come to the school board first. The vote is more about the student enrollment target we are shooting for."

After approving the target of 670 students, the board approved five policies with substantial changes and five more with non-substantial changes. One of these substantial changes concerned the unpaid meal charge.

Moline said that Taher Food Service, which handles the school's lunch program, had issues with notifying students and parents about meal charges for half the school year, creating imbalances which, in some cases, have led to student accounts reflecting hundreds of dollars in unpaid fees. "Obviously, parents won't want to cut a \$300 check," he said.

The board had sought bids to engage a different food service company, but only one vendor attended an informational session, and reported afterward that it was not interested in submitting a bid. Moline told board members that significant costs and demands are entailed with running an in-house food service,

including finding and keeping qualified employees and managing contracts with suppliers of items like bread and milk.

A much-anticipated omnibus bill on education is set for consideration by the legislature soon, according to Superintendent Erler.

One subject talked about was how to handle school discipline. The bill currently under consideration would not allow schools to use the removal of recess as a punishment for bad behavior. It also forbids suspending students in Kindergarten through grade 3.

Other topics to be potentially covered in the bill include regulation of student behavior, class sizes, recess restrictions, and updates on curriculum mandates.

The board approved the non-renewal of contracts for business teacher Katrina Rechtzigel and science teacher Jena Schoenrock. The state requires schools to give contract non-renewals to teachers who may not have full qualifications for their subject or need to update their teaching license. However, these teachers can reapply for the position if they desire to.

The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Lakeside Golf Club season begins

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

The weather has been challenging this spring. The first two weeks were promising with summer-like temperatures, allowing golfers at Waseca's Lakeside Golf Course to enjoy being outside.

"We had a good start to the season with the 80-degree weather," club manager Matt Hauge said.

But then the cold snap happened mid-April, and the whole state of Minnesota has been trying to recover ever since. "It's in true Minnesota fashion," Hauge joked.

Lakeside Golf Course has served the people of Waseca since its inception in 1922. The 18-hole, 71-par course has acted as both a quality golf course and a place to gather.

"We host about thirty events a year," Hauge explained. "We have a lot of golf tournaments, weddings, class reunions, banquets, and graduation parties here."

The course has grown tremen-

dously since the beginning. It averages around 19,000 rounds of golf per year and currently has about 310 members. Many of those members are in a men's or women's league which plays once a week.

As the golf course hit the century mark, Hauge hit a milestone of his own; he's been with the club for ten years. He started his career with Golden Valley's Country Club, then later worked his way up to becoming an assistant at Mankato's Country Golf Club, a private members-only course. He next became the golf pro and general manager for Belle Plaine's golf course, Valley View, seven years prior to starting in Waseca.

"I came to Waseca because it presented a better opportunity than where I was at previously," Hauge said. "I wanted to get back to more of a private — or semi-private — golf club."

Hauge is a certified Professional Golf Association pro, as is soon-to-

be assistant and bar manager Mike Gardner of Janesville. Gardner has worked on and off with Hauge for nearly ten years and is currently the head coach of JWP's high school golfers. Korey Edholm is the course's superintendent, responsible for running and maintaining the golf course.

Waseca's Lakeside Golf Course is unique in that it is semi-private. Most golf courses are either open to the public all season or are members-only like Mankato Country Golf Club.

"Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, you have to be a member if you live in Waseca or are fifteen miles outside of town," Hauge explained. "Everyone outside of the area can play all season long with a green fee."

Anytime before or after that time period is available to everyone with a green fee. "The driving range is also open to the public," Hauge added.

Others may not know that Lakeside Golf Course has a family-oriented pool that is open during the summer. "It's a nice thing to have here," Hauge acknowledged.

The weather is trying its best to warm up and cooperate. Thankfully, according to Hauge, this past winter didn't affect the greens. "The course came through the winter very well," he said.

When the weather does warm up for good, things will get busy at the golf course. As a PGA golf professional, Hauge likes to remind people that it's always a good idea to take a refresher course at the start of the season or to get in some practice.

"It's good for both newer and experienced golfers to work on the basics before the season starts," he said.

And for those who have never swung a golf club, "It's never too late to start playing golf."

Members of the 2023 Minnwest Junior Board are Ava Omtvedt, Eli Miller, Tricia Cox, Addison Wieseler, Tegan Flatau, Evelyn O'Brien, Isabelle Wilhelmi, Alison Mumme, and Grace Below.

The Minnwest Junior Board is open to all high school juniors starting in January. The Junior Board is provided funds by Minnwest Bank to do community service projects each year. Members of the 2023 board say they chose to hold the hygiene drive because, with prices increasing everywhere, they know it's becoming difficult for many people to afford the hygiene products they regularly need. They chose to partner with the

public library for distribution of the hygiene kits because it is a public place which is visited regularly by community members from all walks of life.

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OBITUARIES

Robert D. Kaiser

Robert Donald Kaiser, age 79, of Waseca passed away on April 23, 2023 at Foxdale Senior Living in Waseca surrounded by his family.

Born on December 11, 1943 in Waseca, he was the son of Donald and Ethel (Jeddeloh) Kaiser. He graduated from Waseca High School with the class of 1961. Following his education, he worked in construction. He helped build steel buildings and bridges for over twenty years. He later went on to work at Walmart and Owatonna Public Schools as a custodian before retiring due to his health. On October 4, 1969, he was joined in marriage to Judy Stephan at Faith United Methodist Church in Waseca.

In his free time, Robert enjoyed ice fishing, bear, and deer hunting. He enjoyed rooting for every Minnesota sports team, especially the Twins. He loved baseball and was inducted to the Waseca Baseball Hall of Fame. He would often spend time at Canterbury Park to see the horse races. He especially loved spending his time with his grandchildren. Whether it was a concert or a sporting event, he was always there for support. He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather who will be very missed.

Robert is survived by his wife of 52 years, Judy Kaiser of Waseca; children, Tami (Chris) Beman of Owatonna, Tom Kaiser (Heidi Witanen) of Waseca; grandsons, Tylor Beman, Justin Beman, Nathan Kaiser; brother, Mike Kaiser of Waseca; sisters, Judie (Rich)



Robert D. Kaiser

O'Brien of Sioux Falls, SD, Janet (Mitch) Clow of Elbow Lake; sister-in-law, Sheila Kaiser of Waseca; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, David Kaiser; nephew, Brian Kaiser; and grandson, Brandon Beman.

Bob's family would like to offer a special thank you to Foxdale Senior Living and St. Croix Hospice for their compassion and care.

Visitation was Thursday, April 27, 2023 at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. A Prayer Service will be at 6:00 PM at the funeral home. Interment Woodville Cemetery in Waseca. dsfuneral.com

Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service
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Firetrucks and construction

By TRISTAN JENSEN
Staff Writer

Fire Chief Jason Forshee, accompanied by Bernard Frederick and Lester Kroeger, gave a presentation to the board of commissioners during the regular meeting held Tuesday, April 18. The focus of the presentation was rural fire safety in Waseca County's townships, and how to balance those needs with high costs. The replacement of fire trucks was a big topic, as a new truck can cost \$800,000 to \$1.2 million, with a two-year build time after purchase. However, while steps can be taken to extend the life of presently owned trucks up to and beyond their estimated life of 30 years, eventually replacements are necessary.

Commissioner DeeAnn Malterer identified what she called a state-wide issue in that rural fire departments are not reimbursed for medical assistance calls: County administrator Michael Johnson interjected briefly about the rising costs of providing services in today's economy and inflation's impact on tax levies. Forshee assured the board that the department is always writing grants - as many as possible - to minimize impact on taxpayers without compromising safety. Kroeger added his belief that the public would benefit from a better understanding of how their taxes are used by the fire departments, which he believes would reduce

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

their concerns over the amount taxed.

County engineer Jim Kollar rounded out the meeting, raising discussion about contracts for two major projects. The first was for the Teal Street project in Janesville, for which the board had previously approved a cooperative construction agreement. Four bids were received; the contract was awarded to apparent low bidder WW Blacktopping, Inc. with a bid of \$191,000,000, about 8.75% over the engineer's estimate. The second contract was for removal of the existing fueling station at the county fairgrounds following its replacement having been replaced by a facility at a different site last year. Four bids were solicited, but only one response was received. Pump and Meter Service, Inc. was therefore awarded the contract with a bid of \$66,500. The 2023 budget includes \$65,000 for the project. The bid does include disposal of contaminated soil and the import of replacement fill, both of which may or may not be necessary depending on what's found once the project begins. If little to no contaminated soil is found, the project may stay within the budgeted amount. The work is to be completed on or before June 17 of this year, so as not to interfere with the county fair.

Introducing Marvin Root

Part two of five, family history continued

By COLBY ROOT
Contributing writer

On July 17, 1944, Torpedoman Third Class Marvin “Hans” Root walked up the driveway to the Root farm off of Hound Street north of New Richland. Dressed in his Navy whites, he surprised his mom and dad, Esther and Burchard Root, along with his eight brothers and sisters still on the home farm. No one there had heard from him for almost two years; all had begun to wonder what had happened. Had his ship been destroyed by a Japanese torpedo? Had it run into a sea mine and gone down in some far-flung reaches of the Pacific? His rare letters home had stopped coming since before he had even been assigned a ship. Was he dead? The family had even placed inquiries about him with the Red Cross.

Father Burchard may have wondered whether the sage advice he had given his two oldest had been a mistake. He had told them to join the Navy, where they would always have a bed and a square meal. To a man who had struggled to feed twelve children during the Great Depression, the advice made sense, but the motive for his advice came from even deeper down. He had heard the stories of what WWI trench warfare had been like, and probably couldn't help reasoning that his boys would have stronger chances at survival in the Navy. Perhaps Marvin's reemergence at the farm in 1944 was taken as a sign that Burchard's fatherly advice had been sound after all.

While he had been away, Marvin had been a torpedo man on the USS Sperry, a submarine tender that spent the better part of 1942 and 1943 stealthily navigating the South Pacific evading the Japanese. A Fulton-class submarine tender, the USS Sperry serviced submarines in exotic but dangerous places, everywhere from Midway and Brisbane Australia to Pearl Harbor and New Caledonia. In a five-month period at Midway, the USS Sperry serviced and refurbished 140 submarines. As a torpedo man, Marvin was responsible for munitions, including transferring torpedoes to submarines. To his impressed sister Barbara, he described the boat as being half a mile long and twenty stories deep. She said about him coming home on leave: “He was way down in [the ship], so when he came home he wasn't tanned, even though he'd been near the equator.”

Marvin “Hans” Root was the second-oldest boy of the Root siblings, but he had been the first to enlist because his older brother, Vern, had a

hernia. Since Vern required surgery before he could join, Marvin was on his own, which was fine. He was scrappy and could handle himself. He enjoyed a good dust-up. While stationed on the USS Sperry, he earned the nickname “Tiger” because of his boxing prowess and aggressive fighting in ship-board conflicts, known as smokers. The name would follow him through life beyond a military career that would last 24 years and six months, spanning WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. Marvin would later serve on the USS Sullivan and the USS English.

After his 30-day furlough, Marvin “Hans” “Tiger” Root would return to the South Pacific for the final push of the war, leaving his whereabouts again unknown to everyone back home. Family legend has it he ran into his older brother, Vern, who was by then serving on the destroyer USS Thomas E Fraser (probably while in Oahu). He would not, however, run into younger brother, Bill Root, who came of age and joined up in early 1945: Bill's task was laying down metal netting to prevent submarine attacks against the California coast.

Bill's decision to sign up meant that, by the time the war drew to its 1945 close, three Root brothers were serving in the Pacific.

Like most of what happened to the Root boys during their time in the military, Marvin's history is shrouded in the fog of time, buried in the aging recollections of relatives, hard-to-find military records, and repressed and forgotten accounts of what would and maybe never could be spoken of. In late 1945 and early 1946, the Navy would honorably discharge all three of the Root boys.

After the war, Marvin bought a dump truck and started a gravel hauling business. He did this for six months before his wanderlust overpowered him. He sold the truck and reenlisted. His history in the Korean war becomes vague in the memory of his surviving relatives, and without DD 214 forms (reports of separation from active duty) for that period, we do not know exactly which boat he was stationed on during the Korean conflict. Nona Smith, one of his surviving sisters, believes he was on the USS Sullivans while his surviving brother, David Root, believes it was the USS English. All agree he served on both boats during his more than 20 years of service after WWII. It is also known he participated in heavy action in Korea.

Based on the simple fact that Marvin's younger brother, Gene “Buzz”

Root, had joined the Marines and started fighting in Korea in 1952, it is likely Marvin was stationed aboard the USS English during the Korean War. This reasoning is based on what happened to the five Sullivan Brothers who died aboard the USS Juneau when it went down at Guadalcanal in 1942. Since that family tragedy, all branches of the military have worked to keep siblings from serving in the same theater of battle at the same time. That said, Marvin had been aboard the USS Sullivans in Korea, he might have been firing against the North Korean and Chinese forces directly opposing his brother's First Marine Division along the Imjin River. Probably too close for comfort for any of the branches of the US military.

Ironically, because Marvin may have yet been aboard the USS Sullivans at this time, a complete history of the ship is worth summarizing here. The USS Sullivans saw action so far north into North Korea, it was within seventy-five miles of Vladivostok, where it was protecting aircraft carriers. Soviet MiG-15 jets raced out to meet the carriers and forced the first jet dogfight over the ocean. While off the northeast coast of Korea, the USS Sullivans bombarded enemy supply lines, railroad lines, trains and railroad tunnels. On Christmas day 1952, the ship's crew fired on and destroyed a crucial railroad bridge.

It is more likely Marvin was aboard the USS English during the Korean war: This ship, too, has quite a story. In late 1950 and into 1951, the USS English supported the evacuation of the Marines at Hungnam, the extraction point sought by about 14,000 U.S. Marines after fighting their way out of the frozen Chosin Reservoir. During fighting in December 1952, U.S. forces had been surrounded by the Chinese, but broke free by mounting fierce legendary scrimmages. The support by gunboats and jets from aircraft carriers protected by Destroyers like the USS English was invaluable.

In all likelihood, Marvin was part of one of the most famous military retreats in world history. After Hungnam, the USS English accompanied two Thai Royal Navy Corsairs—the smallest ocean-going fighting vessel. The three boats moved shoreward to shell Communist positions at Chodri, Chongin, Kanson, Kosong, and Kangnung. As a torpedo man, Marvin was in charge of the ship's small arms, supporting ship battery, and being at the ready to torpedo Chinese, North Korean, and possibly Russian



Marvin 'Hans' Curtis Root
TMC, U.S. NAVY
WWII, KOREA, VIET NAM
1942-1945, 1946-1966

submarines.

A final note on the family's participation in the war in Korea: Dean Gehring, Marvin's cousin, was captured by the Chinese, but eventually released when his captors retreated. It is not inconceivable that Marvin and the USS English may have unwittingly helped Dean make his way out of the frozen mountains with their bombardment of Chinese positions.

With only incomplete records, Marvin's military career in the next war—Vietnam—is also somewhat obscured. It is very likely he served on the USS English or the USS Sullivans during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Where he was during Lebanon and Vietnam has yet to be divulged. What is known is he somehow achieved, lost, then re-achieved the rank of E-7. His younger brother, David, guffawed when he spoke about this seesaw ride. “He probably punched a commanding officer in the nose.” That was Marvin “Tiger” Root's style. He relished life and a good fight.

Marvin Curtis “Hans” “Tiger” Root was born Dec 11, 1923. He died May 25, 1989 and is buried in Saint Peter Cemetery near New Richland. May he rest in peace.

Part 3 next week.

Editorial Note: Orville “Ibb” Yess was married to Thelma. He also served in Korea

Editorial Note 2: The girls of the Root clan were no less patriotic than their brothers and bear mentioning here as their names may be scattered throughout the coming articles: Anita (Root) Jewison born 1922 who quit her job as a beautician to work at a factory making radio equipment for the military during WWII; Barbara (Root) Tolzmann, 1925 who was training to be a teacher at the time of WWII; Nona (Root) Smith, January 1929, who married David Smith a sailor in WWII, and whose son George was wounded in Vietnam; Lola “Odie” (Root) Schroeder Borchert December 1929; Thelma (Root) Yess 1934; Opal (Root) Hofius 1935, who married Charles Hofius, US Army Korea, Opal Hofius, her two sons also served in the military, Donnie Hofius and Chad Hofius.

More than one way to assess learning

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

Waseca Intermediate School (WIS) principal John Huttmeier began the regular April 20 Waseca school board meeting with the mission statement (or vision card) of WIS; that all students learn to create positive relationships, and to develop as independent learners. “We are a transitional school. We’re taking [students] from where things are not spoon-fed but more rote,” Huttmeier said, referring to how WIS assists students with the move from elementary to secondary levels. The WIS belief statements also include character building;

Huttmeier stated that it is important to give students the opportunity to develop personal responsibility and respectful behavior as they acquire the knowledge, skills, and character necessary to contribute

positively to society. “Our staff has a really good feel for understanding this is more than just teaching skills. It’s about teaching kids how to be members of Waseca. You have a role as a citizen.”

Huttmeier also addressed how learning is measured at the school; day-to-day observation and evidence in formative assessments in each classroom, standards-based grading to show the proficiency of learning targets, and the NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) used to assess whole-school progress in math and reading. “NWEA kind of prepares us to see how we’re going to do with MCA testing, which is how we’re evaluated by the state.” Board chair Julie Anderson asked Huttmeier about his thoughts on the standards-based grading system WIS adopted several years ago. Huttmeier replied, “We still have a lot of work

WASECA SCHOOL BOARD

to do to educate parents. I think parents are under the assumption that it can't be motivating if it's not an A, B, or C. I think we need to change our thought process there to say that standards-based grading gives parents the most specific information about where their kid is struggling versus if they're just an A or B.” He cautioned that the three/two/one system does not mean that if a child receives a three they are not successful. “This is an area that a parent could work with them in, or as the student progresses up, next year's teacher sees that they need more exposure to some certain concept. It's harder to do that when it's an A B C grading system. As a parent, it's easy to say

‘You’re missing five assignments and you’re at a C, and if you do those five assignments you’ll be at an A.’ It’s harder for a parent to say ‘You don’t know this learning target,’ so that’s the communication that we’ve got to get better at with parents.”

Other items addressed included Superintendent Eric Hudspeth's update on strategic plan development work and the preliminary budget update for next year. “We are planning on presenting to the finance committee and also to the full board in June that preliminary budget that is balanced and growing the fund balance minimally. We're not going to have a huge surplus because we want to still be able to provide the resources we have for students but heading into that range so our fund balance remains where it is.”

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WASECA COUNTY PIONEER FARM & AGRICULTURE SPECIAL

What to expect in the 2023 growing season

Optimism heading into year, Ukraine war continues to be a factor, more questions remain

By MARK BERNARD
Staff Writer

Coming off a successful cropping season left us with some optimism heading into the 2023 growing season. Like last year, prices remain generally strong but perhaps weaker than what many would like to see, especially those who haven't priced a major share of their crop yet. Also as we did last year, we'll get out our crystal ball and lucky rabbit's foot to gain some insight for what may be in store for the cropping year.

The soil moisture status last fall was somewhat worrisome as precipitation for September and October was sparse. Fortunately we had some heavier rains in late August that probably weren't all consumed by the maturing crop. Fall came to an abrupt halt in mid-November with 10.5" of snow for the month in New Richland. Snow cover was nearly constant most of the winter aside from a few days in late November. The frost depth was consequently very shallow with areas showing little indication they ever were truly frozen under the snow. Many who were moving snow with the tractor and bucket discovered this firsthand.

Our winter snowfall was well above normal. Some years this has more implications for wetlands, lakes, rivers and streams. Normal snowfall at the SROC for the 30 yr. period 1991 – 2020 is 52.3". New Richland, October – mid-April snowfall measured at 69.8". The Steele Co. reading is 76.3" and at the SROC, 71.8". It was the wettest meteorological winter (Dec. – Feb.) on record for liquid equivalent precipitation at the SROC. This was an odd winter in that over 2 inches of precipitation during that meteorological timeframe fell as rain. The snowfall was wetter to begin with than what we typically see. The rainfall soaked into the snow. When the frost came out in late March, it became a time-release super soaker. April precip hasn't been excessive to this point. Warm days with strong winds following Easter allowed some fieldwork to begin with fertilizer and ammonia applications being performed. Some small grains with the odd field of corn have already been planted in the area. There are even a few fields of soybeans in the ground.

April precipitation, while not excessive, could become an issue pushing planting dates back. I wish I could say rainfall, but it often snows in April and can even make a mess here in early May. The flashback pictures on my phone don't lie. It appears according to many longer-term forecasts that Mother Nature may have pushed the reset button after our brief taste of warm temperatures. Soil temperatures were well above the 50-degree average mark for several days, but average temps have cooled back down into the 40s at the 2-inch depth. Some may start to fret that our perfect spring is no longer. As several of the area sages have been quick to point out, last year produced what was for many the best crop of corn they'd ever had, planted in the second week of May.

What do the growing season temperatures and precipitation outlooks look like? Released on April 20, NOAA's 30-day outlook for May is calling for even odds of above or below normal temps. On the precipitation side, we're right on the border between leaning towards 33% - 40% increased odds of below normal precipitation and even chances of above or below normal precipitation. The May through July temperature outlook released April 20 calls for equal chances of

above or below normal temperatures and precipitation. Should this come to fruition, even though our soil moisture is in better shape than last year, it would still point to another growing season where we could be at the mercy of timely rains. Soil moisture deep in the profile is adequate but not excessive as tile lines that were running earlier have slowed significantly. 2022 was about ideal in terms of growing season precipitation timing and in most cases, enough to pull off a tremendous corn crop. We'll need a repeat of that along with the lack of extreme heat that was a hallmark of the 2022 growing season.

With parts of the western Corn Belt so dry, what about the Drought Monitor? SW MN remains under a moderate drought as of the April 18 report. SC MN was removed over the winter months with the recharge from snow melt and rain making a huge difference. The western part of Iowa, most of Nebraska, and Kansas are all likely to remain under drought for the foreseeable future. There are no indications that severe drought will extend eastward at this point. The US Seasonal Drought Outlook indicates the drought designation in SW MN will likely be removed. Western Iowa and Nebraska will remain under a drought but circumstances are likely to improve through July. Much of Nebraska is irrigated but the potential is still there to impact the dryland acres.

Once we get into May, it won't be surprising to see a warmup due to a change in the position of the polar and subtropical jet streams. The collision of the two jets should run right over MN and could trigger thunderstorms. It should however remain warmer for the remainder of the summer. What about the potential of a developing El Niño? NOAA's Climate Prediction Center claimed recently that there is a 62% chance of an El Niño developing between May and July. The odds increase in the second half of the year which would decrease the likelihood that 2023 spring planted crops would be affected by its development. Most weather pundits agree that generally means a wetter winter pattern across the southern US and a warmer, drier pattern in the northern US. As for the growing season in the Corn Belt, it increases the odds of seeing abundant precip in the form of convective thunderstorms and warm temperatures without having to endure lengthy heatwaves. Much of its impact would be dependent on timing of development and strength of the event. As yet, it hasn't happened so too soon to tell. Buy the rumor, sell the fact.

The avian flu crisis that crippled the poultry industry in the US last year is largely under control for now. To our south in Iowa, many laying hen flocks were decimated so the price and availability of eggs skyrocketed. As was the case in 2015, warmer temps slowed the outbreak aside from isolated cases. Many of the cases this year have been small, backyard poultry producers and breeders that don't factor into grocery store prices. Unfortunately, with the large producers most of us rely on for our eggs, turkeys and broilers, it took several months before replacement birds and flocks could become reestablished and prices began to normalize once again. So far so good this year with relatively isolated problems being in commercial production in the state of Pennsylvania. Fingers crossed, but we appear to be in the clear for now. That won't hurt to keep corn demand stronger.

Unlike last year, supplies of corn hybrids have improved in this area, in particular with some of the traited corn. Seed size and type (flats vs. rounds) continues to be an issue as some hybrids don't produce a large quantity of round seed in particular. Unlike last year at this time, the trend so far is towards more corn acres on both the state and national level. Fertilizer prices are down over last year, and in this area, good, early spring planting conditions should help tip the balance more towards planting corn. There is growing evidence that corn rootworms, in particular western corn rootworms, are developing resistance to Bt corn rootworm traits, especially under continuous corn. Options exist but the most foolproof one is still to rotate out of corn for a year.

Tar spot in corn has also become a concern although there have been far more concerns with tar spot in coffee shops and on social media than in area fields at this point. Given the hype, at times it seems like COVID, only for corn. As a result, some have been worked into an absolute tizzy over all the media coverage of this disease. Time to take a deep breath, exhale, and realize the sky is not falling. There are fungicide treatment options and while timing can be an issue, the disease and proper conditions for its development still need to be present before applications are likely to pay. SE MN has been the epicenter of tar spot infestations thus far. No surprise. Growing up there, stacking hay on a rack in the river bottom tributaries, the humidity could be unbearable. The only place worse on a muggy July afternoon was stacking bales in the haymow.

More Enlist Soybean seed is readily available. Weed control options appear to be improved this year as compared to last. Some are trying to cut corners on herbicide costs by using only postemergent products to control waterhemp. If recent history is any indication, this will be a short-lived strategy. Starting with Pursuit, we've burned out many post-emergent herbicides since then within a matter of a few years. There is already evidence that waterhemp has developed resistance to the growth regulators when they're used as a standalone treatment. The response: Well, I'll just quit planting soybeans and plant all corn then. See comments about rootworms developing resistance to Bt traits above.

Beef prices have rebounded nicely as supplies struggle to keep up with demand. After hanging on through lean times, the remaining beef producers are being rewarded. There are few livestock enterprises I know of with the dedication beef producers have. Just about the time it appears everything is coming up roses however, something new crops up. Winter survival of alfalfa could be one of them. On paper, winter survival should've been a slam dunk. We had nearly constant snow cover and winter temperatures tended to be warmer than normal. However, with the dry fall, a cutting that in some cases extended well into September and little regrowth following that cutting, there may well be some stands in trouble according to recent windshield surveys. Beef producers are resilient and resourceful. It's how they roll. Beef cattle don't need 175 RFV quality hay to survive. They'll do just fine on lesser quality forage if the situation dictates. Producers should assess the integrity of those stands soon, though, and make alternative plans should it be necessary. Hay supplies could be tighter



CROP REPORT - Soybeans enjoying late-July growing conditions.

than anticipated locally. Forewarned is forearmed.

The war in Ukraine continues to be a factor in the marketplace although it doesn't appear to have the shock value it first had. End users have found substitutes or are being supplied by other producing nations who have stepped up to the plate. Taking Ukraine or parts of it out of the global production equation has tightened supplies of some commodities. While some countries have been able to alleviate some of the supply disruption, they are still subject to production-related issues, particularly drought. Argentina's soybean crop was affected by drought, but Brazil's record production should offset much of that. Soybean prices have been weaker due to that, along with other factors. Flare-ups in the war are still sure to cause (at least) ripples in the market and could cause major upheaval if there are serious developments. Recently, countries in the EU including Hungary, Poland and Slovakia have blocked shipment of Ukrainian grain to their country as they claim it's increasing supplies and lowering prices to their farmers. Without grain movement west should Russia block the corridor, it could severely limit shipping options for Ukraine.

Despite the possible dry weather and continued global turmoil, we're set up for another profitable cropping season. 2023 may not be as kind as 2022, but if input costs are kept in check, there is still plenty of opportunity to lock in a profit. In the near term, time to relax and watch for planting windows to open. With Mother Nature dragging her feet, again, one will want to be ready when conditions dictate.



CERTIFIED - Mark Bernard, the author of this piece, has 40 years of experience as a crop adviser in Minnesota and North Dakota. He has been a Certified Professional Agronomist, his preferred title, for 30 years. Bernard also has 19 years of experience with *Pro Farmer* as a Tour Agromonist.

portunity to lock in a profit. In the near term, time to relax and watch for planting windows to open. With Mother Nature dragging her feet, again, one will want to be ready when conditions dictate.

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Front, from left: Justin Loehr, Liz Anderson, Ronda Mortensen, Ethan Horning, Gene Horning. Back, from left: John Clobes, Doug Tomlinson, John Hanson, Damon Nowak, Don Barnes, Dustin Horning, Jaden Kragh, Dave Iveland.

Photo by Jessica Lutgens

Lawn Pro celebrates 50 years in business

By JESSICA LUTGENS
Staff Writer

This year Lawn Pro, a lawn and tree care company located near Pemberton, celebrates 50 years of service in Southern Minnesota. The company was first started by its current owner and president, Gene Horning, in 1973.

“I started working with a guy at a local elevator,” Horning said when asked how he started the company. “He’d gone down to Chicago, and he said, ‘Hey, Gene, they’re putting fertilizer on lawns’ - this was way back in ‘73.”

At the time, lawn care was a fairly new industry. Seeing a need for the service in the area, Horning decided to start his own lawn care service with his partner. His training in those early days was mostly done on the job.

“It was fun - it was interesting,” Horning said. “We would get fertilizer at the local elevator and bag it up. We talked to a guy who would spray for Nicollet County, and he showed us what instruments, chemicals, and machinery to use. Then we just started spraying and fertilizing.”

When the business began, everything was done by hand, slowly evolving to the use of 300-foot hoses on trucks and then to the equipment the company uses now, which consists of riders to apply fertilizer. Mechanization of processes, according to Horning, is one of the biggest changes he’s seen in the years since he started Lawn Pro.

“We used to have to walk the whole lawn - it could be the size of a football field - and had to do it all by hand,” he said. “Now we have riding applicators and can cover all of this area in way less time. We can do lawns for not a lot more per 1,000 square feet than when we started just through innovation, volume, and mechanization.”

When it comes to owning his own business, Horning says he likes pretty much everything about it.

“Meeting new people, it’s different every day, and you’re working outside - those are all fun things,” he said.

The biggest challenge for Horning was learning the industry. In the beginning, he would go to tree shows and attend Minnesota Department of Agriculture meetings to get

licensed. Years ago, Horning was the only one who needed a license for application in order for up to six people to work beneath him. Now, anybody who applies fertilizer is required to have their own license.

As for the future of the business, Horning says the company is working on expanding, particularly into more tree care.

“We can treat any kind of tree problem, insect, or disease,” Horning said, listing tree ailments such as emerald ash borers, spruce needle cast, apple scab, and Japanese beetles. Many of these problems are treated with the help of Lawn Pro’s certified arborist. Horning also said that he has seen more interest in having trees treated.

“There’s always a new thing coming along - first it was Dutch elm,” he said. “Needle cast in spruce trees has been around forever, apple scab has been around for a long time; you’re constantly getting new problems.

“The latest is the emerald ash borer, and we can treat those effectively if we can get at them soon enough.”

Lawn Pro currently has two loca-

tions - its main office near Pemberton along with a branch in Rochester that was started in 1995. With the help of its roughly 13 employees, Lawn Pro provides services all over Southern Minnesota, from Hutchinson to Iowa and Windom to Wisconsin. Their licensed technicians attend yearly training, and the company is proud not only of the quality service it provides but also the years of experience its team members bring.

Services provided by Lawn Pro include its lawn care program, insect control, tree and shrub care, core aeration, seeding, and soil testing. Currently, new customers will receive a 10% discount, and the company provides free estimates.

“We’ve built our company on good quality and good service,” Horning said. “We have a good reputation and prefer to do a good job and let the work speak for itself. We work with the customer and tailor the program to what their wishes are.”

For more information or to request a free estimate, visit Lawn Pro’s website at lawnpromn.com or call toll-free at 1-800-722-2268.

Agriculture bills headed to committee

A bill funding the state’s agriculture department and related programs is on its way to conference committee following a vote on April 20, 2023 on the House floor.

The House passed the bill, HF2278, on a 70-58 vote. On April 13, the Senate passed its version of the agriculture funding bill, SF1955, on a bipartisan 58-7 vote.

“There are differences in these budgets, but it’s clear that legislators were listening to farmers when they drafted these bills,” said Minnesota Farmers Union (MFU) President Gary Wertish. “At our November convention, our members said lawmakers should focus on expanding local and regional meat processing, helping new and emerging farmers, expanding their investment in soil health, funding bio-fuels infrastructure, funding cooperative development grants and funding programs to shorten supply chains, help farmers develop new markets and respond to challenges like emerging animal diseases.”

MFU is particularly pleased to see language to establish a grain indemnity fund in both the Senate and House versions of the bill.

“We’ve been calling for the state to establish a grain indemnity fund since the Porter elevator went under in 2015 and we’re going to continue working to get this protection passed into law as the 2023 session enters its final weeks,” Wertish said. “Too many farm families have been hurt by elevator failures to not enact this safety net. We feel strongly about this issue, because our members and others who market grain are among the least protected in the nation. Thank you to Sen. Rob Kupec, DFL-Moorhead, and Rep. Ethan Cha, DFL-Woodbury, for leading this important legislation.”

In the conference committee, legislators from both chambers will work to resolve differences in the ag funding bills. After the conference committee negotiates a compromise agricultural funding bill, it will go back to both the House and Senate. If approved by members of both chambers, it will go to the governor’s desk for his signature.

As the Legislature enters its final month, MFU continues to work on its priorities, including:

Making health care affordable and accessible, including expanding MinnesotaCare through a public ‘buy-in’ option that will improve choices in rural Minnesota and lower costs through

competition. A provision to establish a public option and increase oversight of hospital mergers passed in the omnibus health and human services appropriations bill, SF2995, authored by Sen. Melissa Wiklund, DFL-Bloomington. The bill passed Wednesday on a 35-32 vote. MFU has also been working to establish a Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB) to rein in prescription drug costs.

Limiting corporate control and ensuring competitive markets by defending Minnesota’s Corporate Farm Law, strengthening capacity at the state Attorney General’s office to bring cases against companies who use their power to abuse farmers, consumers and workers, and passing Right to Repair. The state government budget bill, HF1830, that passed the House Tuesday on a 70-59 vote, contains funding for new antitrust attorneys and one-time funding to establish a multistate litigation fund. Rep. Ginny Kleborn, DFL-Plymouth, is the bill’s chief author.

Expanding local and regional processing. Bills providing scholarships to the meat processing training programs at Central Lakes and Ridgewater colleges, funding incentives for employee retention, establishing a meat processing navigator position at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and expanding support for processors seeking to startup or expand their business were included in the agriculture omnibus bills passed by both the House and Senate.

Creating climate resilience. Agriculture committee chairs Sen. Aric Putnam, DFL-St. Cloud, and Rep. Samantha Vang, DFL-Brooklyn Center, prioritized funding to promote soil health, promote alternative crop research at land-grant universities and establish a climate coordinator position to bring more federal conservation dollars to Minnesota.

The 2023 Minnesota legislative session began Jan. 3 and must end by May 22.

About Minnesota Farmers Union

Minnesota Farmers Union works to protect and enhance the economic interests and quality of life of family farmers and ranchers and rural communities. MFU is a nonprofit membership-based organization. Membership is open to everyone. Learn more and join at www.mfu.org and follow MFU on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



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WASECA COUNTY PIONEER FARM & AGRICULTURE SPECIAL

Shurson honored in 2012

Waseca County posthumous agriculture award

Christopher Shurson was honored posthumously in 2012 for his contributions to agriculture in Waseca County. Here is his story:

Mr. Christopher (Chris) Shurson (1889-1975) grew up on the family farm in rural New Richland. He was the owner and operator of an 80-acre farm in 1913 and by 1928 was able to farm the 160-acre home farm. He specialized in raising and milking purebred Holstein cattle and raising crops. He served the agricultural industry primarily through production agriculture and cooperative efforts the majority of his adult life.

Shurson was active in many farm and non-farm affiliated organizations. He was very active in the formation of the Waseca County Farm Bureau in 1918 and 1919. When the organization was chartered in 1919, he was one of the charter board members. He served as vice president in 1922-23 and was in charge of farmer groups around the county, which served to disseminate education and information on agriculture as well as serve as a social group for farm families. His concern for farmers and their beliefs by being on the Farm Bureau board allowed him to listen to farmers' concerns and bring them to the attention of lawmakers. Much of what he did helped pave the way for future generations to be able to be financially viable in the agriculture industry in Waseca County.

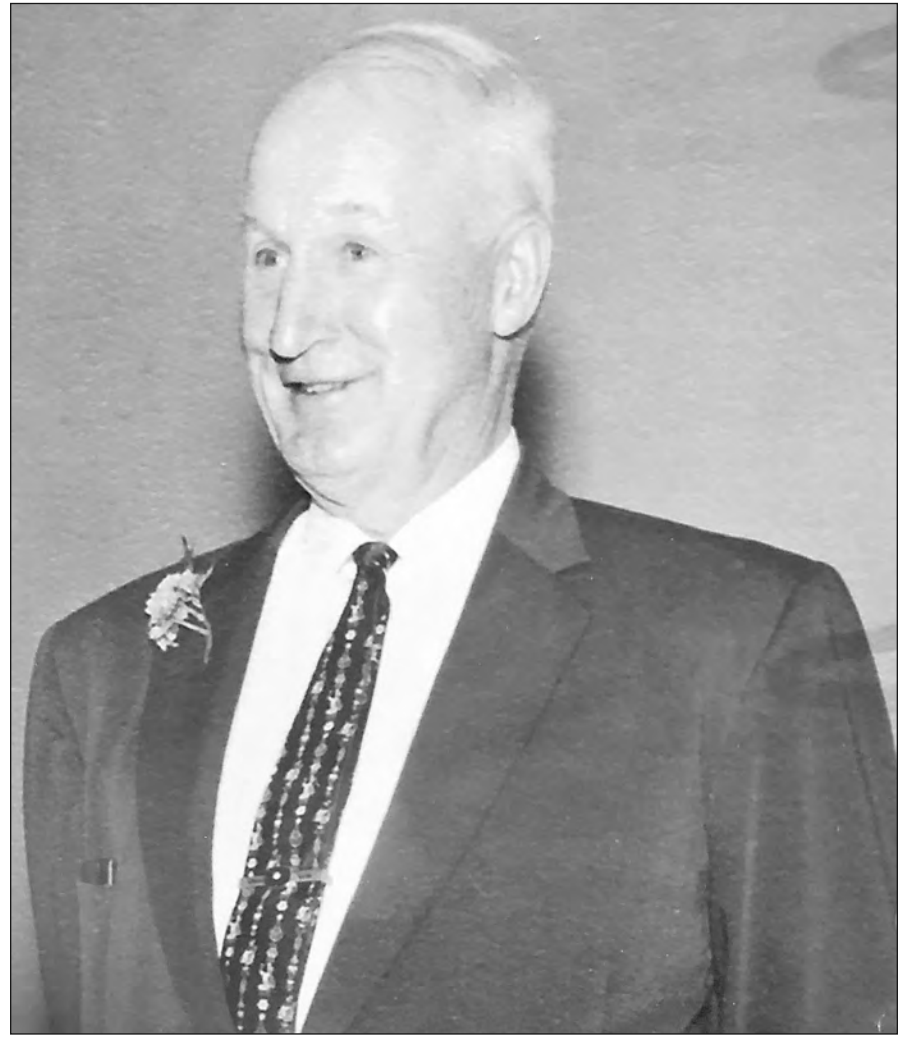
He was president of the New Richland Creamery from 1929-40. He served as a Land O'Lakes Board Member from District 8 from February 1937 to February 1962, holding the office of second vice president from 1953-1962. Becoming active in the rural electrification movement, he was elected vice president of a temporary organization in New Richland in 1935, which later became county wide. The Waseca and Steele County rural electrification organization consolidated in October 1936. In December 1936, he was appointed as a director to fill the vacancy of a director who had resigned. In 1937, he was elected to a three-year term. He continued to serve as director of that organization until 1961 when he sold his farm. His leadership in the organization of the Rural Electrification Association was very important in getting electricity to the farms. This had a large impact on the way the work was done on the farm and made it possible for farms to expand as well as lighten the physical load on those who farmed.

Other farmer-oriented organizations that received his leadership included the Waseca County Fair Board, the New Richland Livestock Shipping Assn. and the Progressive Farmers Club. He also served as vice president of the Livestock Breeders Association.

Shurson was also active in numerous non-agricultural organizations, including Trinity Lutheran Church when he was a trustee and deacon. He was president of Dairy Days in New Richland from 1923-1933. He also served as a member of the District 94 school board, participated in the Liberty Loan, YMCA, and Savings Stamps drives.

Shurson clearly set an example for those around him and those who followed him. He was active in many organizations both farm and non-farm affiliated. Being engaged in the community is what makes a community better. His efforts in the cooperative movement ensured that conveniences enjoyed by city folk could be expanded to rural areas. He understood pooling efforts would allow farmers to be more profitable in the county. Dairy farms would be able to sell their milk at a higher price, and they would be able to purchase the necessary inputs at a lower cost. Having lived through the Depression, his ability to network and reduce costs was for the greater good of all in Waseca County.

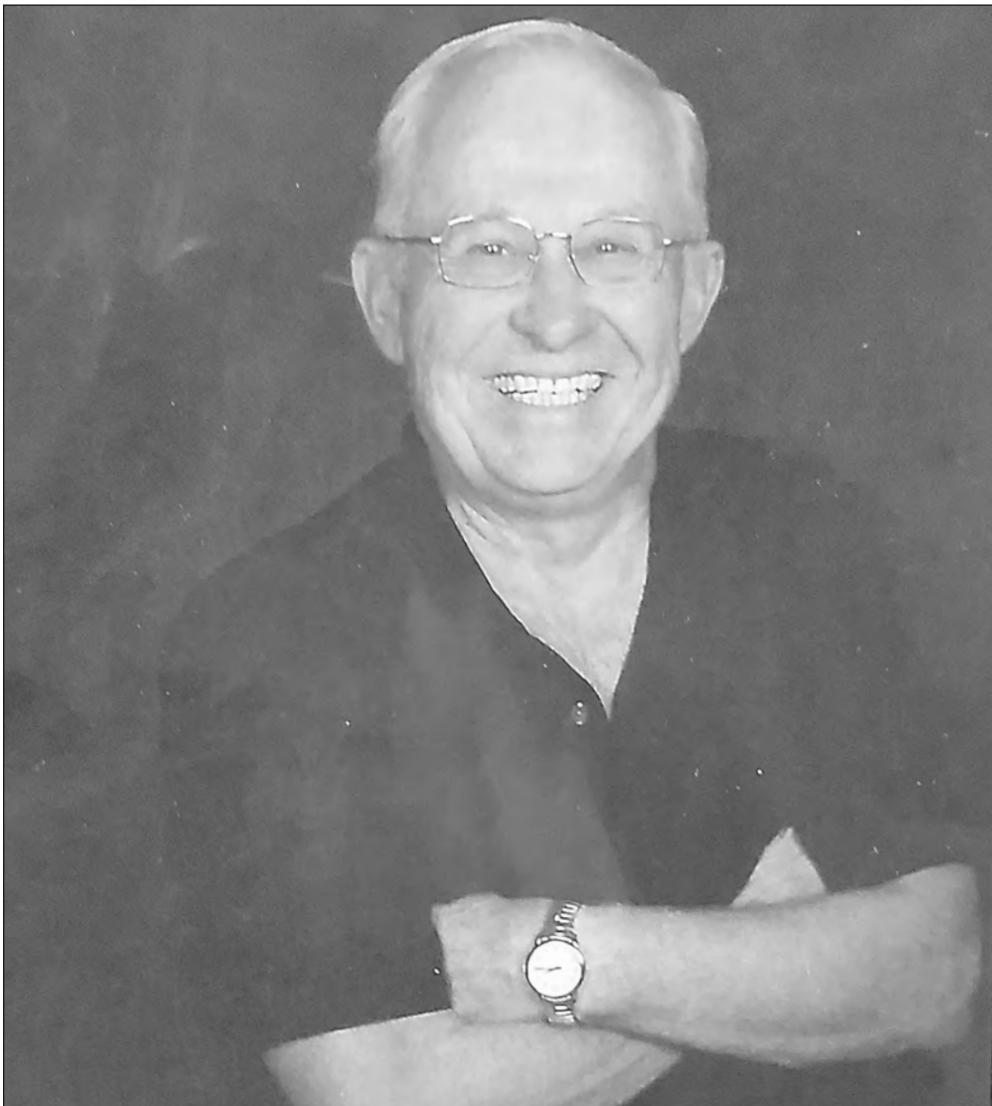
Because of his many contributions to agriculture and his leadership over a 45+-year period, he was a recipient of the Waseca County Distinguished Agricultural Leadership Award in 2012.



Christopher Shurson

Kroeger honored in 2019

Waseca County Senior Active Ag Leadership award



Lester Kroeger

In 2019 Lester Kroeger was honored with a Senior Active Ag Leadership award for his commitment to agriculture in Waseca County. Here is his story:

Lester grew up on the family farm located about 5 miles northeast of Waldorf, and began formally farming with his dad immediately after graduating high school. He became the lone manager of the three-generation farming operation in 1969, with the death of his father. His enterprise was initially and primarily a dairy farm, with Lester milking 30-40 head of cows. In 1974, Lester expanded into hogs. With his being a smaller, more diversified, 500-acre operation, Lester also searched out new higher income, alternative varieties and uses to traditional corn and soybeans. In 1976, he was one of three original producers of waxy corn, and, in 1978, was one of the original members of the Minnesota Waxy Corn Growers Association (later to become Sunopta). In 1983, Lester began production of clear hilum soybeans for tofu, which he continued until he retired. To further diversify crop income, he grew vegetables for Bird's Eye, primarily peas. On the livestock side of his operation, he was the first Grade A milk producer for the Plum Valley coop in 1972. Additionally he was an early adopter of the use of propionic acid for preserving high

moisture corn for feed; when his neighbor, Gerald Stencel, installed a home ethanol plant, Lester worked with utilizing the grain mash as a livestock feed source.

Lester served on the Plum Valley Creamery board of directors from 1974 - 1984, until the creamery closed, on the Waseca County Dairy Association Board for some 15 years, and on the Pork Producer Board for another 12 yrs.

In other ag related areas, as one of the founding members of Mn Waxy Corn Growers and early producer of clear hilum soybeans, he helped introduce these value-added crop varieties to the county. He and his wife, Jane, worked jointly with 4-H clubs and club activities for some 20 years, and have jointly overseen operation of the Malt Wagon at the Waseca County Fair for the past 12 years. Lester served on the University of Minnesota Extension Committee for 7 yrs in the 1990s. He and Jane were recognized as the Waseca County Farm Family of Year in 1994, and received the Waseca County Dairy Association Milk Pitcher Award in 2007.

In addition to these ag related activities, Lester has been involved with township government for most of his working career, serving on the Wilton Town Board for 45 yrs. With this responsibility, Lester has

served on the Rural Fire Board for 15 yrs, currently being its vice chair, and on the Waseca County Association of Townships, where he is secretary-treasurer. Beyond all of this, Lester has been a trustee of the Wilton Lutheran Church for some 43 years, and is currently a member of the Waseca County Water Planning Commission.

In summary, Lester Kroeger has effectively demonstrated how there is still a place for the smaller, more diversified type of farm and also helped to promote the development of the production of waxy corn and clear hilum soybeans in the area. The Kroegers' commitment to the smaller operation is being carried forward with their choice of renters for their farms as the Kroegers have moved into retirement. Lester has further demonstrated a strong commitment to community service and leadership in his roles with township and county level government. Lester and Jane have been leaders in the agricultural community with Lester's role on the Plum Valley Board of Directors, their involvement in their local church, and their work with Dairy and Pork Association boards, 4-H, and the Malt machine/wagon at the county fair.

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WASECA COUNTY

PIONEER

FARM & AGRICULTURE SPECIAL

Century farm award winners announced

The Minnesota State Fair and the Minnesota Farm Bureau recognize 89 Minnesota farms as 2023 Century Farms. Qualifying farms have been in continuous family ownership for at least 100 years and are 50 acres or more. Century Farm families receive a commemorative sign, as well as a certificate signed by Minnesota State Fair and Minnesota Farm Bureau presidents and Governor Tim Walz. Since the program began in 1976, more than 11,000 Minnesota farms have been recognized as Century Farms.

2023 Century Farm families are listed by county, then by the farm's city or township, family or farm names and year of original purchase:

Beltrami,
Kelliher, Helblad Farm - 1904
Northome, Smischney Farms - 1915

Big Stone
Beardsley, Erickson Farms - 1914
Ortonville, Wellendorf - 1918

Blue Earth
Good Thunder, Hollerich Farm - 1919
Vernon Center, Nobles Farm - 1888

Brown
Sleepy Eye, Schwartz Farm - 1900
Carlton
Sawyer, Olesiak Farm - 1915
Wright, Dahl Farm - 1916
Carver
Chaska, Kelzer Grimm Historical

Farm - 1872
Chippewa
Milan, TJ Thompson - 1898
Chisago
Taylors Falls, Bostrom Farm - 1911

Clay
Barnesville, Bruce Nelson – Martinus Flaten - 1897
Moorhead, Paul & Sherri Fossum - 1899

Clearwater
Clearbrook, Hansen Family Farm - 1917

Crow Wing
Deerwood, Bordwell Farm - 1911

Dodge
Kasson, Aarsvold Acres - 1923
Mantorville, LMC Farms - 1896

Faribault
Blue Earth, Olsen Farms - 1920
Kiester, Meyer-Tufte Farm - 1870

Freeborn
Albert Lea, Yost Farm - 1923
Alden, Orville and Carol Ohm - 1913

Oakland, Miller Farms - 1862
Oakland, The Miller Farm - 1920
Oakland, W. Miller Farm - 1920

Goodhue
Goodhue, McNamara Farm - 1861
Kenyon, Foss Farms - 1912
Hennepin
Rogers, Ende Family Farm - 1916
Houston
Spring Grove, Sylling Farm - 1891
Hubbard
Park Rapids, Lake View Farm -

1889

Kanabec
Sandstone, Wichner Farm - 1915
Kandiyohi
Spicer, Peterson Family Farm - 1920

Le Sueur
Waterville, Jeff Stangler Farm - 1871

Lincoln
Ivanhoe, Circle R Ranch, LLC - 1920
Tyler, James and Laurie Johansen - 1920

Lyon
Coon Creek Township, Bev's 80 - 1923
Marshall, Herman Schultz Farm - 1900
Minneota, Hammer - 1919
Mahnommen
Mahnommen, McCollum Farm - 1908

Marshall
Strathcona, Westlund Family Farm - 1913

Martin
Dunell, Stade Farm - 1922
East Chain Township, Olson Home Place - 1911
Odin, Stoebe Farm - 1903
McLeod
Glencoe, Darrell Busse - 1919
Hutchinson, Henke Farm - 1922

Meeker
Watkins, Kipf Farm - 1917
Mille Lacs
Milaca, Schreur Farm - 1922

Princeton, The Burke Farm - 1892
Mower
Adams, Jax Family Farm - 1906
Murray
Fulda, Koopmann Farm - 1898
Fulda, Meier Family Farm - 1923
Nicollet
Fairfax, George & Mary Peichel - 1914

Nobles
Brewster, Johnson Farm - 1915
Rushmore, Jacobs Family Farm - 1923
Rushmore, Reiter & Feeken Family - 1923
Wilmont, Sieve Bare Quarter - 1909

Pine
Braham, Downing Farm - 1923
Pine City, Johnson Farm - 1920
Polk
Euclid, Magsam - 1920
East Grand Forks, Huderle Farm - 1899

Fisher, Flaar Farm - 1896
McIntosh, Syverson Farm - 1921
Warren, Anton Pulkrabek Family Farm - 1922

Redwood
Revere, Sawyer Family Farm - 1923
Vesta, Barber - 1921
Vesta, Vernon Anderson Farm - 1922

Renville
Danube, The Peterson Farm - 1921
Hector, Dovenmuehle Farms - 1912

Rice
Faribault, The Prieve Family Farm - 1892

Rock
Luverne, Erdmann Farm - 1922
Sibley
Arlington, Gordon Berge Farm - 1918
Arlington, Gary & Debbie Weckwerth - 1905
Gibbon, Gruenhagen Family Farm - 1892
Gibbon, Niebuhr Family Farm - 1914

St. Louis
Eveleth, Peterson Farms - 1918
Hermantown, Busch Farm - 1921
Stearns
Kimball, Wicker Farm - 1916
Richmond, Hemmesch Farm - 1920
St. Cloud, The Gohman Farm - 1856

Steele
Ellendale, Johnson Family Farm - 1891
Ellendale, Johnson Family Farm - 1899

Stevens
Chokio, Twait Farm - 1920
Todd
Burtrum, Mark & Deb Sieben Farm - 1910

Traverse
Herman, Zimmerman Farm - 1911
Wabasha
Theilman, Drew & Rachel Wilson - 1920

Waseca
Minnesota Lake, Lake Sonnek Farm - 1921

Wright
Buffalo, Proud Descendants of John C. Aldrich - 1866
Howard Lake, Birkholz - 1899

Information on all Century Farms will be available at the Minnesota Farm Bureau exhibit during the 2023 Minnesota State Fair. A database of all Minnesota Century Farms is also available at fbmn.org.

The Minnesota State Fair is one of the largest and best-attended exhibitions in the world. Showcasing Minnesota's finest agriculture, art and industry, the Great Minnesota Get-Together is 12 Days of Fun Ending Labor Day. Follow along on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and TikTok @mnstatefair for year-round Minnesota State Fair updates. The 2023 Minnesota State Fair will run Aug. 24 through Labor Day, Sept. 4. Visit mnstatefair.org for more information.

About the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation: To ensure Minnesota's agricultural vitality, the Minnesota Farm Bureau amplifies its members' voices through engagement, grassroots advocacy and agricultural awareness. Learn more about their efforts as an advocate for their nearly 30,000 members and 78 county Farm Bureaus at fbmn.org.

Sesquicentennial farm families announced

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation (MFBF) is pleased to recognize 43 recipients of the Sesquicentennial Farm award for 2023.

To qualify, a family farm must be in continuous family ownership for at least 150 years, be 50 acres or larger, and currently be involved in agricultural production.

A commemorative certificate signed by Governor Tim Walz, Minnesota Department of Agriculture Commissioner Thom Petersen and MFBF President Dan Glessing will be awarded to qualifying families, along with an outdoor sign signifying Sesquicentennial Farm recognition.

Blue Earth
Lake Crystal – Willow Grove Farm Davis Family, 1873

Brown
New Ulm – Drexler Century Farm, 1869
New Ulm – Pfaender Family Farm, 1856
New Ulm – Larry L. & Marlys Zeig, 1869
Sleepy Eye – Carol Schumacher, 1869

Carver
Chaska – Kelzer Grimm Historical Farm, 1872

Chippewa
Milan – Riverview Farm, LLLP, 1869
Montevideo – Halvorson Family Farm, 1871

Chisago
Center City – Medin Farms, 1873
Lindstrom – David C. & Virginia K. Johnson, 1873

Dakota
Cannon Falls – Elmegea Farm,

1873

Dodge
Mantorville – Rich & Sue Olive, 1873

Faribault
Blue Earth – Reko Farm, 1864
Kiester – Donald Tufte, 1870
Fillmore
Peterson – Benson Family Farm, 1873

Freeborn
Oakland – Miller Farms, 1862
Goodhue
Goodhue – Forsell Farm, 1873
Goodhue – McNamara Farm, 1861
Kenyon – Wille Legacy Farm, 1866

Jackson
Windom – Garfield Paulson Farm, 1871

Kandiyohi
Willmar – Stan Carlson, 1873
Le Sueur
New Prague – Minar Century Farm, 1872
Waterville – Jeff Stangler Farm, 1871

Martin
Dunnell – Wilson Family Farm, 1870
Welcome – Rooney Run, 1866
McLeod
Hutchinson – Old Homestead Farms, 1870

Murray
Slayton – Engebretson Farms, 1873

Nicollet
Nicollet – David & Vicki Herman-son, 1873
St. Peter – Gary and Deborah Gintner, 1859

Nobles
Worthington – Dean & Carol Christopherson, 1871
Pope
Cyrus – Ervin J. Hagen Trust, 1872

Renville
Renville – Kurt and Amy Kramin, 1862

Rice
Northfield – Sommers Farm, 1872
Rock
Hills – Eugene Sandager, 1873
Luverne – Jason and Angela Chesley, 1873

Stearns
Richmond – Kron-Chirhart Family Farm, 1860
St. Cloud – Leroy & Lloyd Gohman/Gohman Farm, 1856
Todd
Browerville – Oak Crest Farm, 1873

Wabasha
Kellogg – Mahoney-Irish Farm, 1869

Waseca
New Richland – Proud Descendants of Daniel J. Linnihan, 1866
Wright
Buffalo – Proud Descendants of John C. Aldrich, 1866
Waverly – Goldview Farms-The Bakebergs, 1873

About the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation: To ensure Minnesota's agricultural vitality, the Minnesota Farm Bureau amplifies its members' voices through engagement, grassroots advocacy and agricultural awareness. Learn more about their efforts as an advocate for their nearly 30,000 members and 78 county Farm Bureaus at fbmn.org.

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WASECA COUNTY
PIONEER

FARM & AGRICULTURE SPECIAL

A long, active career in agriculture

Editor's note: In 2020 Denny Roesler was recognized with a Distinguished Farm Family award from the Waseca Chamber of Ag Business. During the 2022 Farm and City Luncheon, a binder showing the past winners going back ten years was on display. The following article is reprinted from that binder.

Denny Roesler, resident of Waseca County his entire life, has been directly involved in agriculture since 1967 when he graduated from the U of M with a major in animal husbandry and a minor in economics. At that time, he purchased his first farm, 160 acres. He began in partnership with his father, Ole, on machinery. Over the years he added acres by renting and purchasing until he was up to 600 acres. He raised corn and soybeans. He also started a farrow to finish hog operation and was marketing 7,500 pigs annually when he sold it to his herdsman, Garry Walstrom, in 1998.

Denny and his wife, Ginny, have four children, Karla (Grant) Wells, Mike (Becky) Roesler, Eric (Amy) Roesler, JoAnn (Miguel) Cintron and one AFS adopted daughter, Torunn

(Tim) Nelson, and ten wonderful grandchildren.

Denny is very active in Vista Covenant Church, rural New Richland, having served as chairman, building committee chairman, deacon board, CE board, and the Missions committee. (He organized and participated in several trips: two to Mexico, one to Nome, Alaska, and to Mt. Mission in VA). Denny also taught Sunday School for many years as well as first-year confirmation class. He was honored with the T. W. Anderson award in 1999 given to one lay person each year in the entire denomination for exemplary service to church and community. Recently, Denny and Ginny wintered in Mazatlán, Mexico and worked with the children's and dump ministry for five years (two months per year).

Denny helped organize the Waseca County Pork Producers and was their first president for ten years and also the first state director for eight years. He is a member of the Waseca Co. Corn Growers and Soybean associations. He worked hard to begin and

improve his hog operation as well as the humane treatment of his animals. He hosted tours from many groups going through his pig barns, such as the League of Women Voters from St. Paul, and a delegation from China visiting the Waseca experiment station. He even presented the care of his animals on a panel with an animal rights person debating him. Denny won when she said she would have to see his operation, but didn't want to kill all the bugs traveling down.

While being pork producers, they trained several "pop" students from U of M Waseca and two MAST students from Sweden and New Zealand. The Swede married a New Zealander and lives 0 minutes from the first. Denny and Ginny were able to visit them last year and see their "DAIRY" Operations. They hope they learned something.

Denny and Ginny were the first recipients for the Pork Partners in Excellence given by the Waseca County Pork Producers. He also was chosen to be on the Swine Honor Roll (MN Pork Produces) in 1971. He was the

youngest recipient at the time. This showcased outstanding swine production and their service to the community. He was honored to be recognized by the Future Farmers of America in 1987 by the New Richland Chapter. In 1975, he was selected as the Outstanding Young Farmer for Waseca County.

He was also on the Waseca County Extension committee for nine years and chairman for a term.

Athletics and Denny almost always go together. He helped organize the New Richland Reds baseball team and managed it for over 25 years. He also organized and managed church softball teams, both men and women. He probably was a teammate of yours if you played flag football, basketball, baseball, or softball from 1965 to at least the '90s. He loved his sports. Now you'll see him often out on the Riverview Golf Course or watching his grandkids as they participate. He felt very honored at one softball tournament as he, his two sons, and one grandson played on the Vista Covenant team.



Dennis Roesler



Ginny Roesler

Ginny Roesler honored by ag community

In 2017 Ginny Roesler was honored for her role in Waseca County with an Active Farmer award. Here is her story:

Ginny Roesler has been directly involved in agriculture since 1967 when she and Dennis were married. They raised corn and soybeans and had a farrow-to-finish hog operation. They are the proud parents of Karla, Mike, Eric and Jo Ann.

Ginny was one of the first ladies in the state to become active in swine production, pork promotion, lobbying, and commodity leadership at the state and national levels.

She started by helping organize the Waseca county Porkettes, gaining expertise in farrowing, and giving pre-

sentations to many others including UMW classes and the Iowa State Fair.

She was elected President of the Minnesota Pork Council Women (PCW) for 4 years before being selected to represent Minnesota as a director on the executive board for the national PCW for 5 years.

She was then selected to be the National PCW representative to the National Livestock and Meat Board for 5 years.

Ginny was next elected to the executive board of the Minnesota Pork Producers for 3 years. During this time she gave many talks on the value of pork to the national dietitian conferences, including Minneapolis, Chicago and Boston plus other events in

Minnesota, and she lobbied in Washington, DC, for the pork producers.

She also served on the advisory committee of the U of Minnesota Southern Experiment

Station for 3 years.

Awards received by Ginny include: Elanco Bell Ringer Award to the outstanding person for PCW leadership, Pork Producer Partner in Excellence Award, Waseca Farm Family of the Year Award, and Minnesota Women for Agricultural Leadership Award - District 9.

Ginny's service to non-agricultural organizations has been extraordinary. She has provided exceptionally strong leadership to the Covenant church at the local, district and conference

levels, including president of the District Covenant Women's Organization for 4 years. She was appointed to both the conference and denominational town and country commissions to help strengthen rural churches.

She has found time to be a Stephen's Minister, a Vista Covenant church parish nurse, a Waseca County nurse, and a member of the Le Sueur - Waseca Community Health Board. She was a volunteer RN-EMT for New Richland for 10 years and served on the New Richland Food Shelf Health Board for 6 years.

Today, 50 years later after starting in agriculture, Ginny continues to do all of the farm bookwork and pinch-hits for Denny from time to time.

Waldorf graduate was a community fixture

Editor's note: In 2019 Armin Tesch was recognized with a Distinguished Farm Family award from the Waseca Chamber of Ag Business. During the 2023 Farm and City Luncheon, a binder showing the past winners going back ten years was on display. The following article is reprinted.

Armin was born January 13, 1923 and died in November of 2019. He was a 1941 graduate of Waldorf High School. He and Darlene, his wife of 58 years, were married September 29, 1950. Armin farmed with his father following high school. The home farm is located just west of Waldorf. He and his wife, Darlene, raised their five children on the farm, eventually becoming grandparents to nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. The family farm continues today. With their son, Marty, Armin grew their 240-acre farm and dairy herd to more than 100 cows. The farm today is operated by Marty and is principally used

to raise corn and soybeans.

Armin and Darlene were 'fixtures' in the community, active in state and county level Farm Bureau activities. Armin served as county president. He was well known for his lifetime commitment to agriculture, the family farm, and the community. His reputation for the value he placed on honesty, care for others, and hard work earned the highest regard of his neighbors, his family, and their friends.

In addition to Farm Bureau, where he earned a life membership, Armin was recognized by the Waseca County Soil Conservation District for his leadership and successful application of soil conserving farming practices.

While he was known as a quiet man who did not seek recognition for himself, his consistency and careful use of words, never seeking trouble, often set him apart as a man to be trusted. He was active in his political party, even serving as co-

chair of the Minnesota First Congressional Convention. He was appointed by Governor Pawlenty to the board of the Minnesota Rural Finance Authority.

His philosophy was always 'do the work first.' He frequently said that it is important to keep out of the weeds, meaning working where it is most important, not on things that in the end will not matter.

Armin and Darlene were members of the First Lutheran Church of Waldorf (Missouri Synod). He served there in offices including elder, vice president of the church board and Sunday School teacher. As a team, he and Darlene were also involved in mission work, including recovery efforts following Hurricane Katrina. They also assisted with building a church in Sterling, Alaska.

Armin was selected for recognition as a Distinguished Agricultural Leader in Waseca County for many reasons. Some

would focus, for this kind of recognition, on production records in dairy and crop production. The community in which he resided believed in him as a competent and reliable friend. He was consistently admired as a family man and for his commitment to his family and their successes. Transferring the farm successfully from one generation to the next may be one of the most difficult challenges for many. But in this family's case, that transfer is evident, and something that we believe even Armin and Darlene's parents would have been proud of.

In the public arena, whenever Armin was in the room, the environment was elevated to the high standards he and Darlene fostered, even without their having said a word. Such is the power that distinguished Armin Tesch as a beloved and appreciated community leader.



Armin Tesch

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Byron Farm Store a fixture for 4 decades

In 2019 Frank Byron was honored posthumously for his role in Waseca County agriculture. Here is his story: Frank Byron was born in 1924 to Arthur and Marion Byron in Waseca. After graduating from Sacred Heart Catholic School in 1941, he attended St. John's University, Collegeville, MN but was called home to help run the farm. He married Marian Frederick in 1948. In 1949, they moved onto the Byron family farm in St. Mary's Township where they operated the farm and raised their three children (Barb, Nancy and Mark). In 1962, following his father's death, Frank transitioned to being the owner of the Byron Farm Store where he spent almost 40 years meeting the feed, seed and advice needs of area farmers.

Ownership in the Byron Farm Store occurred at a time when there were many evolving changes in ag-

riculture. Soybean production was relatively new. Small grain varieties were being rapidly improved. New cattle feeds were becoming popular. Commercial fertilizers were becoming a significant part of crop production. Not only did Byron sell these new varieties, feeds, and fertilizers to hundreds of Waseca area farmers, he also provided superb advice on variety selection, feed types, and fertilizer use. This advice optimized productivity and economic return for his customers. His store also provided excellent service including seed cleaning to remove weed seeds and foreign material and the application of liquid nitrogen. For many growers and customers, Byron was their well respected advisor --- in today's terminology, their consulting service or agricultural extension agent.

Byron was a long-time member of

the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA), which is Minnesota's officially designated seed certification authority to protect the genetic diversity and purity of crop varieties. He participated in that statewide effort for many years, and in 1982 received the prestigious "Minnesota Premier Seedsman Award." As a long-time member of the Minnesota Soybean Growers Association (MSGA), he was elected to the Research and Promotion Council and was a delegate to the American Soybean Association, where he was elected to the board of directors, attending meetings throughout the U.S. Locally, Byron was named to the board of directors of the Waseca Savings and Loan, member of the Waseca Lions Club, and on the St. Mary's Township Board. He was also a long-time member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, the Knights

of Columbus, and the fourth degree Knights of Columbus.

Frank Byron superbly served Waseca Co. for over 40 years by providing excellent agronomic service, leadership, wisdom, support, and true friendship to families in the community. He was known for his integrity and honesty. It has been said "Frank was willing to take on the burden of the farmer." He was known for his assistance guiding new farm families as they started their farming careers. Frank and Marian were noted for being kind, caring, and patient. The Byron Farm Store has contributed substantial agricultural and economic value to the community. But, Byron also brought a generous social and humanistic value to the hearts of many Waseca farm families and the Waseca community.



Frank Byron

■ Agritourism
from Page 1

ident Ann Fitch, the delegation's visit to Waseca was made possible by the Open World Program, which is sponsored by the Library of Congress and acts as an agency of the US Congress.

"It's unique because it brings citizens that don't need to speak English into the United States," Sanduleac added.

The group's plan is to stay ten days in the United States to learn more about the country's agriculture process and be prepared to share what they learn here with their colleagues and government back in Moldova. "We want to gain some experience on how to develop agritourism and how the local community is involved in development," Petrachi elaborated.

The Moldovans spent their first two days in the United States in Washington D.C. to explore the nation's capital. They then spent the

next seven days touring different agriculture businesses in Waseca and planned on spending the last day of their stay in the U.S. in the Twin Cities visiting the State Capitol, shopping at the Mall of America, and, if weather allowed, watching a Twins baseball game.

Waseca's Rotary Club held a welcoming celebration at the Half Pint Brewery north of town Sunday, April 23. While receiving the classic Minnesota welcome, visitors toured the brewery. The group also took a tour of the new Conagra plant Monday, April 24.

"We are visiting smaller farms," Fitch explained. "I'd be remiss if I didn't bring them to our local wineries."

As they bring back their knowledge to Moldova, delegation members will also be returning to a country deeply touched by the war between Ukraine and Russia. "We've been affected very badly," Gherciu explained.

Moldova received the most refugees from Ukraine per capita, according to Sanduleac, taking in about one million people who crossed the

border between the two countries to escape from war. "At this moment, there are about 100,000 people sheltered in refugee centers," she added.

It doesn't help that Moldova, like many other European countries, is being blackmailed by Russia, their most significant source of energy. The superpower is threatening to raise prices for supporting Ukraine. "It's bringing inflation to our country and all our economy," Gherciu said. "And because of our size, we're still in a position where we cannot be competitive in the market."

What's worse is that Moldova used Ukraine's port city of Odessa to export its goods to other countries; the war brought that to an end. "We exported our goods to Russia, Ukraine, and other former USSR countries like Azerbaijan," Gherciu elaborated.

The country did try using the Romanian port of Constanta, but because of the region it's in, other countries are already using the port to export their goods.

It's partially because of the war's effects on the country that the delegates are learning about the United

States' approach to agri-tourism. "We're hoping to bring some new experience back home after seeing how it's working here in the U.S.," Gherciu said. "We want to know how the small farmer brings their goods to the consumer here. We want to bring a business model back home with us."

It will not only be a great experience for the Moldovans to learn about how rural Minnesota's agriculture works, but it will be a chance for the United States to tighten ties with the country. As Fitch put it, "We'll have them for too short of a time."

"I'm so thankful that we as a community had the opportunity to host our new friends," she added. "I hope their home country realizes they sent them to learn about a lot of great things here."

The delegates shared their gratitude for the opportunity. "We want to express our gratitude to the U.S. Congress, to the local community of Waseca, the Rotary Club, and to everybody that will be sharing info with us this week," Gherciu said. "Oh, and definitely a thank you to our host families."



Scenes from various locations the Moldovan delegation visited during their seven-day stay in Waseca. Stops included Cedar Crate Farm, Barney's Drive in (for food) and many more. Photos by Waseca Rotary



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SWING AWAY — The Bulldogs’ Isabelle Rider takes a cut during their 14-7 loss to St. Clair-Mankato Loyola Monday, April 24. Eliah Oliver awaits at third base. Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

Fielding miscues plague JWP softball team in loss

By **MICHAEL ROY**
Staff Writer

The JWP softball team figured out how to get the bats going. Unfortunately, so did St. Clair-Mankato Loyola. The Spartans were coming off a 25-24 slugfest against Nicollet when they arrived in Janesville on Monday, April 24, and they matched JWP’s energy. The difference between the two teams was that the Bulldogs had many more errors on defense than the Spartans, resulting in a 14-7 loss. “We knew that it would be more of a high scoring game,” JWP coach Megan Christopher said. It all started when St. Clair-Loyola rallied for three runs in the first inning. JWP responded with two runs, the first by junior Lexie Dahlberg off a sacrifice fly and the second by sophomore Brielle Dessner. The Spartans tacked three more runs to make it 6-2 at

the top of the second inning. With great efforts by the Bulldog batters, it was 7-5 Spartans by the end of the fourth inning. But once again, St. Clair-Loyola took advantage of errors and miscues with solid line drives to score three runs in the fifth inning and four more in the seventh to put the game out of reach. “We just need to clean up our defense,” Coach Christopher explained. “We have the potential to beat any team we face if we can do that.” Sophomore Ellah Oliver got the farthest with a triple, while fellow sophomore Autumn Thissen had two doubles. Dessner earned two runs for the team. JWP softball is now 1-5 (1-3 in-conference). The team traveled to Maple River on Thursday, April 27 and hosted Nicollet the following Friday. They will play Medford at home on Monday, May 1.

Waseca tennis boys drop two in a row

Bluejays fall 7-0 to No. 2 rated Schaeffer Academy

By **JIM LUTGENS**
Sports Editor

The Waseca High School boys' tennis team, which started the season 4-0, was dealt a dose of reality at Rochester Tuesday as the Bluejays fell 7-0 to highly regarded Schaeffer Academy for their second loss of the season. Schaeffer Academy, rated No. 2 in the state in Class A, won six of seven matches in straight sets.

The lone Bluejay to stretch it to three was 8th-grader Henry Huttemier, who lost 6-3, 3-6, 6-4 for his first loss of the season.

Tyler Jellum was defeated 6-3, 6-0 at No. 1 singles, Dominic Grunzke fell 6-1, 6-0 at No. 2, and Otto Schoenroch went down 6-4, 6-2 at No. 4.

The Lions took the No. 1 doubles match 6-2, 6-2 over Jacari Jellum and Oliver Rohwer. Jenaro Delgado and Jan Schoen lost 6-0, 6-2 at No. 2, and Corbin Connors and Armaan Bhatti were beaten 6-1, 6-4 at No. 3.

Waseca's junior varsity won 9-1.

The Bluejays sustained their first loss of the season 4-3 Monday at New Prague.

Huttemier was Waseca's lone singles victor, winning 6-0, 6-1. Jacari Jellum and Rohwer swept 6-1, 7-5, while Delgado and Schoen rallied to win 4-6, 7-6 (3), 10-7. Connors and Bhatti fell 6-2, 6-2.

Tyler Jellum, Grunzke and Schoenrock lost in straight sets.

Waseca's JV won 7-1.

After a nonconference meet at Faribault on Thursday, the Bluejays host Rochester Lourdes Monday and New Ulm Tuesday.



OUTTA THERE — Waseca infielder Oliver O'Brien, left, applies the tag at second base during the Bluejays’ 5-4 loss to St. Peter Tuesday at Tink Larson Community Field. Pioneer photo by Michael Roy



SHOOTING STRIKES — Sebastian Teague fires a pitch for the Bluejays against St. Peter Tuesday afternoon. Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

St. Peter hands Bluejays first loss, but not by much

WHS baseball team runs record to 4-1

By **JIM LUTGENS**
Sports Editor

Don’t look now, but the Waseca High School baseball team is posting a decent record so far.

The Bluejays are 4-1 overall, 1-1 in the Big South Conference, after defeating Maple River 10-5 Monday at Mapleton and dropping their first game of the season 5-4 to St. Peter at Waseca on Tuesday.

“St. Peter was the best team we’ve played this year, and we just about beat them,” said WHS assistant coach Tink Larson.

The difference was defense. The Bluejays committed seven fielding miscues, five more than the Saints.

Waseca went with Sebastian Teague and Colton Ruedy on the mound and both pitched well. Teague started and worked four

innings, allowing three runs on three hits, with six strikeouts and no walks. He left with a 4-3 lead. Ruedy took the loss, pitching two score-

less innings before allowing two runs in the sixth. He walked one and fanned one and threw two wild pitches. “He didn’t have real good luck in that inning,” said Larson. “St. Peter had three hits in the inning, one an infield hit and one a bunt single.”

The Bluejays totaled five hits, two by Griffin Krautkremer and one each by Oliver O’Brien, Payton Garza and Teague. All four Waseca runs came in the second, when O’Brien had a two-run single and Teague drove in a run.

In what Coach Larson called a sloppy game, the Bluejays capitalized on seven Maple River errors in a nonconference victory.

Kendrick Volkman led a 10-hit attack, going 3-for-5 with three RBIs, three runs

and four stolen bases.

“He had a nice game at the plate with three solid hits,” said Larson.

Garza and Grant Cox both went 2-for-5 with an RBI. The other Waseca hits went to Max Neaves and Tyson Reger, who both doubled, and Teague.

Four pitchers saw action for Waseca. Reger started and got the win, improving to 3-0, giving up one hit and three walks while fanning eight. O’Brien, Keaton Rooker and Ruedy each threw an inning in relief.

“It was nice to be able to use four pitchers as we try to develop pitching depth as we get into the meat of our schedule,” said Larson.

The Bluejays host Fairmont in a Friday double-header at 4 p.m. at Tink Larson Community Field.

Softball Bluejays sweep twinbill

Waseca wins 10-0, 12-11

By **JIM LUTGENS**
Sports Editor

In terms of competitiveness, the games were at both ends of the spectrum as the Waseca High School softball team traveled to Worthington for a doubleheader Monday afternoon.

But the same team won both.

Waseca was victorious 10-0 in five innings and rallied to win 12-11 in an exciting seven-inning affair.

“These wins were truly a team effort,” said Bluejays coach Abby Bloomquist. “Every girl played a major role in making it happen.”

Hannah Thursday started and finished in the circle in game one and dominated, allowing no runs three hits, with five strikeouts and no walks through five innings.

Emma Williamson doubled, scored twice and drove in two runs. Riley Ruedy, McKyla Hasselquist and Grace Below each had a hit and scored. Ella Bartelt walked and drove in a run. Haylee Sommers walked three times, scored twice and drove in a run.

Thursdale was the winning pitcher in relief in game two, allowing seven runs on seven hits, with four strikeouts and no walks in three innings. Hasselquist started and pitched three innings, lgiving up four runs on four hits; she walked two and fanned three.

Hasselquist dealt the big blow offensively, belting a two-run home run to give the Bluejays an 11-10 lead in the sixth.

After Worthington tied it in the top of the seventh, Sommers reached and scored on a single by Ruedy.

Sommers finished 3-for-4 with two runs. Williamson was 3-for-4 with a run and an RBI. Thursdale, Hasselquist, Bartelt and Siri Kuhns had one hit apiece.

“We’re happy to walk away with two wins tonight,” said Bloomquist. “What I’m most excited about is that our bats finally came alive. In the second game in particular we were able to execute and come up big when it mattered most.”

After traveling to St. Peter Tuesday and hosting Fairmont Thursday, the Bluejays play Monday, May 1 at Rochester Lourdes, host Maple River Tuesday and entertain New Ulm Thursday, May 4.

Errors lead to losses for NRHEG softball team

By **JIM LUTGENS**
Sports Editor

You don’t have to analyze the scorebook a whole lot to figure out what derailed the NRHEG High School softball team Monday and Tuesday.

It was errors. Fielding miscues and mistakes on the base paths proved the difference in a 15-5, six-inning loss to Bethlehem Academy at Faribault on Monday. The next day, the Panthers committed eight fielding errors and lost 18-11 at WEM.

The Panthers saw their record fall to 2-3, 1-3 in the Gopher Conference.

The visitors kept it close for more than four innings Monday, but errors caught up to them and they surren-

dered nine runs through the final two frames.

A bright spot, according to NRHEG coach Wendy Schultz, was the Panthers' battery of Faith Nielsen and Addy Stadheim.

Neilsen allowed seven earned runs on 15 hits, with three walks and two strikeouts.

The Panthers totaled 10 hits and two walks while scoring four earned runs. They struck out four times.

Sidney Schultz was 3-for-3 with two RBIs and three stolen bases, Isabel Stadheim 3-for-5 with two stolen bases. Camryn



F.Nielsen



S.Schultz



A.Stadheim

VanMaldeghem was 2-for-4 while Hallie Schultz and Allison Howe added one hit each. Paige Nielsen walked and scored.

“We hit the ball pretty well,” said Coach Schultz. “Hopefully, we can learn from our mistakes.”

The Panthers had plenty of offense at Waterville, where they 13 hits.

“Hopefully, we can learn from our mistakes. — NRHEG coach Wendy Schultz

“Unfortunately, our defense was lacking,” said Schultz. “You aren’t going to win many games committing eight errors. Our bats kept us in the game.”

Defensively, Bree Ihrke made a great catch in left field, firing to second base for a double play.

WEM scored 16 runs in two innings, including nine in the bottom of the sixth.

“We’ll continue to work hard at practice and hopefully play better ball from here on out,” said Schultz.

VanMaldeghem had three hits.

Paige Nielsen, Hallie Schultz, Faith Nielsen and Sidney Schultz had two hits each, Isabel Stadheim and Howe one each. Paige Nielsen doubled and Faith Nielsen tripled.

Faith Nielsen pitched. She allowed seven earned runs on 14 hits, with one strikeout and two walks.

The Panthers hosted Blooming Prairie Thursday and play Monday, May 1 at Hayfield.

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STELLAR SHOWING — The Panthers’ Jaylin Raab, left, strides out on his way to second place in the 100-meter dash at Blooming Prairie Tuesday, April 25. At right, NRHEG’s Anika Ladlie competes in the high jump.



NRHEG track teams 2nd at BP

Tuttle, Nydegger again lead the way

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor
The NRHEG track and field teams competed against seven other schools in the Blooming Prairie Invitational Tuesday, April 25.

It was a good day for both squads, finishing in second place. Mankato Loyola won the boys' meet with 123 points. The Panthers had 100.

Will Tuttle continued his stellar spring, winning the 110-meter high hurdles in 15.8 seconds and taking the 300 intermediate hurdles in 42.18. He anchored the 4x100 relay that won in 46.04, joining Aidan Deyle, Sawyer Prigge and Jaylin Raab. Deyle, Prigge, Raab and Harbor Cromwell won the 4x400 in 3:40.93. Raab went 19-6.5 to win the long jump.

Taking second were Raab, 100; Prigge, high jump; and Parker Bunn, 300 hurdles.

Other places: Tuttle, 3rd, triple jump; Levin Kitzler, 3rd, 110 hurdles; Lucas Hanna, 4th, shot put; Cromwell, 4th, pole vault; Bunn, 5th, 110 hurdles; 4x200, 5th (Bunn, Kitzer, Cromwell, Cohen Riewer); 4x800, 5th (Sam Christensen, Riewer, Charlie Fuller, Jacob Karl). "It was a nice meet for the boys," said NRHEG coach Duey Ferber. "Our hurdlers were the stars tonight. Tuttle, Bunn and Kitzler all scored huge points. The 4x100 and 4x400 are putting up some good times. Jaylin continues to shine. We had another exciting finish in the 4x400. JWP took the girls' title with 117 points to the Panthers' 88.

NRHEG captured three firsts, two by Evelyn Nydegger, who won the

"It was a cold night, but we saw some awesome races and performances."

— NRHEG coach Duey Ferber

110 hurdles in 17.55 and the 300 intermediates in 49.41. Quinn VanMaldeghem won the 700 in 2:30.31.

Sierra Misgen, Holly Bartness, Chloe Riewer and Clara Buendorf teamed for second in the 4x200. Malonna Wilson was second in the shot put.

Others: Gabby Schlaak, 3rd, 110 hurdles and 4th, 300 hurdles; Anika Ladlie, 3rd, high jump; Nydegger, 2nd, triple jump; 4x400 relay, 3rd (Kiera Lenort, Nydegger, Misgen, Bartness); Lenort, 4th, 400; Kylie Olson, 4th, shot put; Buendorf, 5th, 400; 4x100, 5th (Strom, Bartness, Riewer, Schlaak); Riewer, 5th, long jump.

"It was a cold night, but we saw some awesome races and performances," said Coach Ferber. "Evelyn was spectacular per normal. Quinn is still recovering from being sick but ran very well. Placing second was a great feeling. We are going to need our best to upend JWP in the conference meet."

The Panthers compete Friday, April 28 at Blue Earth. They host the Panther Invitational Thursday,

NRHEG’s Olson tosses no-hitter

Panthers shut out WEM, 14-0

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor
NRHEG pitcher Sam Olson was nearly perfect against Waterville-Elysian-Morristown, tossing a no-hitter, allowing only two baserunners, one via error and another a walk in the final inning of a 14-0 win by the Panthers at home Tuesday night.

"They told me in the fourth inning, and I was just like, 'Don't jinx it!'" Olson said after the game. "I just threw the ball. I didn't really think about it. I just wanted to get strikes and get them out."

NRHEG coach Mark Lee said it was probably the most efficient ball game he's seen pitched. Olson needed only 61 pitches to retire the Buccaneers.

"I feel like I'm faster than most pitchers," Olson said. "They take their time and I just try to get throwing as fast as I can."

"I'm really proud of Sam," Lee added. "He's really worked hard this spring and it showed today and the last two days, including at the plate."

Timely two-out hitting put the Panthers ahead early. Six of their first seven runs came with two outs across the first two innings of work.

Olson reached in all three plate appearances, knocking in one, walking twice and scoring two runs. Also having a perfect day at the plate was Alden Dobberstein, who went 2-2 with a double, two walks, and three runs scored. Adding one hit apiece were Andrew Phillips, Daxter Lee, Jared Lee, and Jace Ihrke.

Monday night wasn't a textbook win by any means for the Panthers. But it was a win. And that's what they were looking for.

Dobberstein walked, advanced on two wild pitches and scored on a balk as the Panthers prevailed 3-2 at Martin Luther Monday.

Coach Lee called it a crazy game, which included a triple play pulled off by the Panthers. "I still don't know how that happened," said Lee.

"I just threw the ball. I didn't really think about it."
— Sam Olson

clinic in the top of the sixth inning. "It was a great read by Alden, great baserunning," said Lee.

Jackson Chrz started on the mound for NRHEG and was sharp, giving up two earned runs on four hits, with four walks and two strikeouts in 5 1/3 innings. Olson struck out four and did not allow a hit while earning the save. Two Martin Luther pitchers combined to allow four hits and two walks while striking out 10.

Chrz was the only Panther with more than one hit, going 2-for-3. Ethan Thompson and Jace Ihrke had one hit each.

Tuesday, April 18 was a great day for baseball. But not necessarily a great day to be an NRHEG Panther. The Panthers faced the state's No. 1 ranked Class A team, Randolph, and offense was tough to come by as they struck out looking eight times and lost 7-4.

"We need to work on fixing the little things," said Coach Lee. "Striking out looking less, and putting the ball in play."

Daxter Lee started on the mound for the Panthers and, despite not having his best stuff, kept the Rockets off balance most of the game. He went 5 1/3 innings, giving up four earned runs on five hits and two walks. He fanned five. Chrz finished up on the mound, surrendering one run.

The Panthers did not score until the top of the sixth.

Lee was the lone Panther with more than one hit, going 2-for-4 while scoring twice. Phillips tripled and scored. Dobberstein hit safely and walked twice.

Coltyn Newborg led Randolph with two hits. Evan Bennerotte was the winning pitcher.

The Panthers host Hayfield Monday and play Thursday, May 4 at JWP.



MEMORABLE MOMENT — NRHEG’s Sam Olson, left, is congratulated by Andrew Phillips after pitching a no-hitter against WEM Tuesday, April 25 at Jeff and Carol Reese Field in New Richland. Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens



NOT THIS TIME — Daxter Lee of NRHEG, right, is tagged out at home plate trying to score against WEM Tuesday, April 25 at Jeff and Carol Reese Field in New Richland.

JWP golf boys win at Blooming Prairie

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

In only their second meet of the season Tuesday, April 25, the JWP golfers showed that they were a top team, with the boys' golfers taking first with a score of 184 at Blooming Prairie.

The hometown Awesome Blossoms took second with 190, while Maple River's golfers took third with a 233.

Individually, juniors Logan Thell and Steven Dimmel tied for medalist honors with scores of 43 each. Carter Miller also had a great day, firing a 45. Jeffrey Simonson was fourth on the team with a 53, and Tyler Nelson scored 78.

Unlike the first girls' meet of the season, sophomore Hope Dimmel was able to finish her meet, taking fifth overall with a score of 57. Hayfield duo Carly Bronson and Chelsea Christopherson took the top two spots of 47 and 51 with Maple River's Rebecca Walters and Blooming Prairie's Caitlyn Stangl barely beating Dimmel with scores of 53 and 56.

Dimmel and the boys' team traveled to Waseca for the conference Tournament April 27. They returned home for a home meet against LCWM the following Friday.

Budach, Howe pace NRHEG golf teams

The NRHEG High School golf teams competed at Blooming Prairie Saturday, April 22.

The Panther girls finished first. Meela Budach was the medalist with a 47. Grace Wilkenson shot 56, Laine Krohn 62, Mallory Schlenger 64. Clara Stenzel carded a 66, Tayla Sandry 67.

For the boys, Nash Howe shot 50, Carter Schlaak 86. Jackson.

Baseball Bulldogs suffer season’s first setback

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

If a team had to break the JWP baseball team’s four-game winning streak to start the season, it was Kenyon-Wanamingo. The Knights have always had the best of the Bulldogs, defeating them in what is now their last four meetings, including a section game in 2021. This time, it was an 11-6 defeat on the road. The Knights started off right away when

batter Will VanEpps singled on a 3-2 count, scoring one run. Although both teams battled it out, according to JWP coach Cory Jewison, Kenyon-Wanamingo took the lead for good with four runs in the fourth inning. VanEpps was once again a culprit of the rally by the Knights, scoring a solo homer. Another single by the Knights’ Alex Lee on the first pitch of his at-bat led to an RBI, followed by Owen Craig taking a hit from a pitch to drive in another run and Colton

Sieberg walking, thus allowing another run. The fourth inning only shed light on a bigger issue on the day for JWP; they walked eight batters and gave up 14 hits. “It’s tough to win a game when you do that,” Jewison said. Apparently, VanEpps didn’t feel like he did a good enough job batting, as he pitched two and two-thirds innings to give the Knights a victory, allowing two runs on two hits and striking out five and walking one.

Gunnar Kennedy started the game for the Knights, surrendering four runs on five hits over four innings and striking out nine. Josh Bengtson took the loss for JWP. He surrendered four runs on four hits over one-third of an inning, walking one. Ian Barnes started the game going three innings, allowing four runs on six hits and striking out two. Junior Ty Melchior led the team in hitting, contributing two of seven total hits for JWP out of his four at-bats.

“We will learn from this game,” Jewison assured. “We’ll get ready for lots of baseball coming up in the next few weeks.” With the first loss of the season, the Bulldogs are now 4-1 (1-1 in-conference). They hosted Maple River Thursday, April 27 and traveled to Waterville-Elysian-Morristown the following Friday. They will host Madelia on Saturday and travel to Medford Monday.

Another week, another record

Westphal sets school mark in 3200 meters

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

At this rate, the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton track and field teams might break all the school records before this season ends. Not even a week after junior Ryan Kronbach broke the school record in the triple jump at home, seventh-grader MaKenzie Westphal broke the school record in the 3200 at Maple River on Tuesday, April 18, helping the girls’ team take first place with 163 points, beating out New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva who scored 132. “It was another beautiful day to be a track athlete,” JWP coach Sam Schruin said. “Even with the weather not being as cooperative in following that statement as it could have been, we had a lot of athletes finish in the top three once again.” With JWP and NRHEG’s girls taking the top two spots, the results for the other teams at the meet were as follows: Blue Earth Area in third with 102.5; Martin County West in fourth with 81.5; Maple River in fifth with 71.5; St. Clair/Immanuel Lutheran in sixth with 69.5; Minnesota Valley Lutheran in seventh with 50; and United South Central in eighth with 25. The hosting Maple River Eagles’ boys took the gold with ease, scoring 175.16. NRHEG’s boys were second with 114, with JWP taking third with 101.33. MVL was in fourth with 96, MCW fifth with 84, St. Clair sixth with 63.5, BEA in seventh with 54, and United South Central in eighth with five points. Despite breaking a school record in the 3200 with a time of 12:07.34, it still wasn’t enough for MaKenzie Westphal to take first place over St.



PASS IT ON — At left, JWP’s Tyson Johnson is handed off the baton from by Derek Gustafson in the 4x800-meter relay at Maple River Tuesday, April 18. At right, Ava Kraus takes the handoff from Faith Olson.



clair’s Valerie Quast, who took the gold with a time of 12:02.68. However, all four girls’ relay teams took first place, and Lilly Strauss also took the gold in the 100-meter dash and the long jump. Senior Madison Kunst earned another first for the team in the 400. Fellow senior Raquel Fischer, who helped the 4x200 team take the top spot, also earned a first in shot put while taking third in the discus throw. None of the boys took first place in Maple River. However, the 4x400 and 4x800 teams took second. Sophomore Isaac Gahlon also took second in the pole vault, with junior Ryan Kronbach taking second in the

triple jump and third in the high jump. Presley James earned second place in the triple jump as well. Third place finishers were Michael VanRavenhorst in the 400, Lauren White in the 800, Faith Olson in the 3200, and the boys’ 4x200 relay team. **Blooming Prairie Meet** The girls marked down win number six of seven at Blooming Prairie Tuesday, April 25. The first-place finish also marked the fifth consecutive team victory for the Lady Dawgs. The team had a score of 117, beating second-place New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva, by nearly 30 points. NRHEG settled for

the silver with 88, Loyola-Cleveland placed second with 76.5, Blooming Prairie took fourth with 63, edging out fifth-place Waterville-Elysian-Morristown, who had 62. Medford took sixth with 50.5, St. Clair/Immanuel Lutheran placed seventh with 46.5, and United South Central took last with 19.5. The JWP boys took third with 91.5 points, taking third to first-place Loyola-Cleveland with 123 and NRHEG with 100. They beat Blooming Prairie, who had 84.5, Medford with 59, St. Clair/Immanuel Lutheran with 34, and WEM with 31. Highlights: A few athletes collected first place at the meet. MaKenzie

Westphal placed first in the 400 with a time of 1:05.11, while freshman Kwynn Krause collected a first in the 3200 with a 13:32.63 run. Sophomore Claire Walz collected her first individual top mark of the season with a first-place finish in the triple jump. Boys’ athletes Isaac Gahlon and Ryan Kronbach collected firsts in the pole vault and triple jump. A rarity this season, only one relay team finished first in this meet: the girls’ 4x800. Second place finishers were the girls’ 4x100 relay, the boys’ 4x200 meter relay, Ryan Kronbach in the long jump, Alex Kleve in the 800, and Lilly Strauss in the 100 and 200 dashes. Third place finishers for the Bulldogs were Isaac Gahlon in the 100, Ryan Kronbach in the 200, Madison Kunst in the 400, Faith Olson in the 1600, Lauren White in the 3200, Lilly Strauss in the long jump, Aubrey Weedman in the shot put, and the boys’ 4x100 relay team. The JWP track teams will travel to Lakeville North Saturday, April 29 for a meet against many Twin Cities metro schools like Apple Valley, Bloomington, Belle Plaine, and Simley. They will be at Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial on Tuesday.

Record breaker

7th-grader takes down school mark set in 2001

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

Just as one Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton track athlete broke a school record two weeks ago, another broke another school record last Tuesday, April 18, at Maple River. Seventh-grader MaKenzie Westphal broke a school record in the 3200 with a time of 12:07.32, surpassing the former milestone of 12:08.01 set by Sara Blegen in 2001. Westphal made her varsity track and field debut this year and has already made strides as a runner. Having experience as a cross country runner (and a state participant last fall) surely helps, especially with breaking the 3200 record so early in the season.



JWP track athlete MaKenzie Westphal broke the school record in the 3200 with a time of 12:07.32 at Maple River April 18, surpassing the former milestone of 12:08.01 set by Sara Blegen in 2001.

JWP-Cromwell: an unlikely rivalry

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

Ahead of a last-minute home doubleheader scheduled for the Bulldogs’ baseball team against Cromwell-Wright’s Cardinals, JWP’s “Bulldog Activities” Facebook page posted a photo of a magazine of the JWP boys’ basketball team facing Cromwell at the state tournament in the 1996-97 season on Monday, April 17. The post asked for more information on the basketball game. JWP faced Cromwell-Wright (then known just as Cromwell) in the opening round of the 1996 state tournament. Although the Janesville Argus article by Dale Kugath published March 28, 1997, didn’t specify a date, he said it was on a Wednesday, meaning that the game likely took place on March 20. JWP was the Section 2A champion and had a 24-3 record, the best in school history, while Cromwell was the 7A champion. After a competitive game, the Bulldogs defeated Cromwell’s Cardinals 67-55. Cromwell had the tallest player participating in the

tournament, James Purcell, who was 6’11”. He ended up fouling three times within one quarter and being benched. JWP moved on to the second round of the state tournament where they lost to an undefeated Fertile-Beltrami team 58-52. Oddly enough, even though they were a Class A team at the time, the Bulldogs faced number one ranked Class AA team Eden Prairie in the consolation bracket. They lost to Eden Prairie 67-55, but held leads against them twice in the opening quarter according to Kugath’s article in the Argus. The 1996-7 season was a first appearance at the state tournament for both JWP and Cromwell. JWP returned the next season as a Class AA team, losing to number-one-ranked Caledonia in the opening round of the state tournament. JWP made one additional appearance at state in 2008. Cromwell-Wright didn’t return to the state tournament until 2019, where they lost in both the opening round and the first round of consolation.

WHS golf boys win; girls 7th at Shoreland

The Waseca High School golf teams were in action last week, with the boys hosting Blooming Prairie at Lakeside Golf Club and the girls playing at Shoreland CC in St. Peter. The boys won 182-190 for nine holes. Waseca scores: Cody Vagts

41, Zander Honstad 45, Seth Eaton 46, Ethan Adams 50, Hunter Anderson 52, and Preston Miller 54. The girls played 18 holes at Shoreland, where they finished seventh among eight schools with 412 strokes. Byron won with 366.

Bluejay scores: Avery Gaul 96, Megan Kanewischer 97, Emma Keith 109, Miranda Break 110, Lexi Kanewischer 114, and Mia Kanewischer 118. Both squads play Monday, May 1, the boys at New Ulm and the girls at Jackson.



GIVING SPIRIT — The Janesville Rotary Club made several donations in 1998. Above, Rotarian Tony Newman (right) presented JWP Superintendent Don Hainlen with a \$4,000 check.



Rotarian Gene Wiebusch (right) presented Rod Searle a \$500 check for Farmamerica.

Waseca college nearing closure

1923

-The American Legion, Post No. 281, Janesville, is back of the announced program in which a series of entertainments are to be given, the first of which ought to appeal to the public with especial force and significance. Its title is suggestive of the deep import it carries, "A Man Without a Country." Some there are in town who are familiar with the story. Naturally, there are many who are not familiar with it and have never read the thrilling tale. It is founded on fact and is historical in character.

-In the first baseball game of the season the high school team lost to Waseca by a score of 5 to 2. The game was an interesting one to see and very well played, considering the fact that it was the opening game of the season and but very little practice had been possible for either team. Only two errors were made, one by each team. Rudolph Johns was on the mound for the local team and performed very well in his first game. Walters for Waseca pitched a fine article of ball allowing only four hits and striking out nine. Both teams fielded well. Foley at second base for Janesville handled a number of difficult chances.

-Mrs. Ray Richards concluded a deal last week whereby she turned the Candy Kitchen business over to the purchaser, Mr. Clyde James, who comes to Janesville from Faribault. Mr. James took possession on Friday last. He has an announcement elsewhere in this issue to which attention is called. So soon as she is enabled to settle her business affairs, Mrs. Richards will return to her former home in Illinois.

1948

A three-act comedy, "Papa Says No!" Was presented by the senior class of the Janesville High School at the auditorium on Thursday evening, April 22, under the able direction of Grace Reid and Marie Dieckhaus. The play made a big hit with the audience and was reported to have been one of the best of its kind ever staged by a senior class in Janesville.

-Herewith will be found a continuation of the list of pledged contributions to the Village of Janesville, Minnesota, for use in connection with the Municipal Park to be located at Berndt's Point in Elysian. With the approach of good weather and the drying up of the location the time is at hand when work to bring about the completion of the project will be pressed to the limit and more money will be needed to carry on. For that reason all who have not paid their pledged for our dam project should do so without further delay. It takes money to make the horse go, so let the committee hear from you as soon as you can.

-During the week Ed Ketzbeck turned in an old iron Indian fish spear that he found on the shore of Lake Elysian a few years ago. The speak point is made of iron and has two notches for holding the fish after it was hit by the spear Ed says he found the spear which, by the way is now very rusty, under a couple of feet of sand.

1973

-Low bidder for construction of the Janesville Watershed Project is the Bergeron Construction Company of Owatonna. Bids were opened recently following the previous December bids which were rejected as being too high. Total construction costs including public road crossings were estimated at \$447,536.68. the low bid by Bergeron was \$527,055.30.

-“Agriculture and the residents of small towns will be the ones who will suffer if they close the technical school at Waseca.” So said Rep. Rod Searle in a telephone interview with the Argus Tuesday morning where he detailed the threat to the closing of Minnesota Technical College-Waseca. Searle was referring to the vote of the education sub-committees of the Senate finance committee which moved last Thursday to phase out the two-year technical college and to limit enrollment of the Crookston Technical College. “Phase out! The college hasn’t even been phased in yet!” Searle exclaimed. “The legislature decided we were going to have a college in Waseca six years ago and it is just getting started.”

1998

-Dave Jewison was recognized recently for his outstanding achievements. Jewison, a senior at Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School, received a \$500 National Honor Society scholarship. He is the son of Bill and MaryLou Jewison of Janesville. Jewison, one of 70 applicants, received the award during the state National Honor Society’s spring convention in Holdingford on Sunday-Monday, April 19-20. He was one of four students to win a scholarship.

-Time set aside for picking up garbage along Highway 83 in Waldorf taught seventh-graders the importance of community service and environmental awareness. On Friday, April 24, seventh-graders at Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Middle School trekked out to Highway 83 to do their part in ditch cleanup. The volunteer serviced tied into both National Service and Earth weeks.

Shoes, barbers, supplies

Waseca Herald, 1923

-Under the provisions of a bill passed at the recent session of the legislature, the Waseca County fair will received \$1,700 from the state to pay premiums this year. The bill was put through the house by Representatives Lewer of this city and Neuman of Traverse County, and Senator Zamboni helped put it through the senate. The money will be available right after the fair is held, as soon as the secretary sends in his report. In years gone by, Fair Associations were led to believe they would have a certain amount of state aid for premiums, but the money was not available until all Associations had reported and then there would be a shortage of several hundred dollars. Now they know exactly what they will get in state aid and can govern themselves accordingly.

-County Auditor Panzram appeared before the city council Tuesday evening to suggest the advisability of hiring a deputy assessor. With our present heavy indebtedness, he said, every dollar’s worth of property should be assessed and it was next to impossible for one man to do this work in the time allowed by law. Several taxpayers were overlooked last year, he said, and a deputy would make much more than his salary in helping to get all the taxable property on our tax books. The council discussed the matter but thought the assessor could handle the work this year, as there will be no real estate to assess.

-The Jung Baking Co. is now shipping its popular Sunburst bread and other goods by truck to Elysian, Madison Lake, Greenland, Marysburg, Eagle Lake, St. Clair, Pemberton, Waldorf, Matawan, and Alma City. D. C. Steele is in charge of the truck and makes daily trips. The new service is much appreciated by the towns visited.

Waseca Herald, 1948

-The city council Tuesday evening has businessmen and property owners near the city dump ask that city streets be given a real spring housecleaning and the city dump be cleaned up. G. M. Hammerstrom, chairman of the retail trade committee of the Chamber of Commerce, and 12 businessmen were present to ask that city streets be cleared. “Everyone respects a clean city and appreciates it,” Mr. Hammerstrom declared, “and the streets in the business section of the city are in need of a good cleaning.”

-A new shoe store will open its doors in Waseca on Saturday. Located in the Brozik building and owned by Guy Sampson of St. Cloud, the store will serve men, women and children. Mr. Sampson



YOU'RE OUT! — In 1973, Waseca Bluejays Head Coach Tink Larson learned the hard way that you don't yell at an umpire even if they make a questionable call. After protesting that the umpire was ruling too strongly during a game against Albert Lea, he was asked to leave.

operates shoe stores in St. Cloud, Brainerd and Windom and has had a long experience in the business.

-Six high schools of the DeSmet Conference competed for honors in a track meet here Saturday with St. Mary’s of Sleepy Eye taking first when it rolled up 37 points. Sacred Heart had the second high score when it accounted for 13 points and St. Ann of Wabasso and Mankato Loyola evened up for third with two points apiece.

Waseca Daily Journal, 1973

-Craig Huntington, owner of Huntington’s Barber Shop in Waseca, today announced that he had purchased the Viking Barbershop in Waseca from Bob Krienke. Craig said he would be joined by his brother in the Barbering business in Waseca and he would move his present equipment into the Viking barbershop, closing his present shop. The show will still be known as Huntington’s Barber Shop. Craig has been barbering here for the past 2 1/2 years taking over the business upon the death of his father, Jerry, who was a barber in Waseca for over 30 years.

-Another new business is slated to open in Waseca soon. The business will be opened in mid-May by Gloria and Allen Butler, a young couple from Brooklyn Center. The new business will be called “Waseca Office Supply” and will handle office, art, drafting and general school supplies. Office furniture will also be sold.

-The Bluejay baseball team ran its season’s record to 7-1 with an 8-6 win over Albert Lea Tuesday afternoon in a steady rain at Community Field. The Jays jumped on the Tigers’ starting and losing pitcher for four runs in the first inning, but then gave Albert Lea four back to leave the game tied at 4-4. The Bluejays came back with two in the bottom of the second to go ahead 6-4, but again gave the Tigers two in the top of the



YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS — When Gloria and Allen Butler moved from Brooklyn Center to Waseca around 1973, they started a new business, “Waseca Office Supply.”

fourth for a 6-6 tie. Waseca won the game in the bottom of the fifth with a pair of runs for the final 8-6 score.

Waseca County News. 1998

-Take a walk down Time Lane Road at Farmamaerica and the living history one is not likely to see is the tireless efforts of volunteers to help Minnesota’s Agricultural Interpretive Center through the years. Those efforts, though, were rewarded after the recently completed state legislature session and Gov. Arne Carlson’s approval of \$1.5 million in funding for Farmamerica from the state’s general fund bill.

-Diane Damerow, a Waseca County Extension educator, has recently returned from a six-month study leave. Damerow said that the study leave was different than others she has take in the past. She devoted

a majority of her time on gerontology, the study of aging, conducting several case studies on the effects of aging on people of a variety of ages. She also briefly studied elderly child-care for children. “I went on this study leave because gerontology is my background, and I focused on some things in depth that the people of Waseca County need to know,” Damerow said.

-The St. James softball team was a perfect example of how good pitching and defense win games. St. James’ three-sport standout Emily Anderson, with errorless support from her teammates, did not allow one Waseca baserunner to reach base as the Saints dealt Waseca a 1-0 setback at Waseca Thursday. It was the third 1-0 loss that the Jays have suffered in the last week.

“Matawan Chieftains” 4-H club in ‘47

1922

- Floyd Stearns has purchased a farm implement business in Albert Lea, handling the Deere line of machinery and has been in possession ever since last week Tuesday. The family will remain here until the close of school the first part of June. Mr. Stearns comes home every night and intends to continue to do so, as the nineteen mile drive is very quickly made over the excellent roads between here and Albert Lea and he finds it a very small hardship. Ellendale Eagle.
- Jack Brown, the road builder of Madison Lake who has had several local jobs, states that his firm has taken no new contracts this year on account of under bidding of the work. As soon as they have completed their present contract, they will quit their work.
- FOR SALE — A Ford touring car, also practically new manure spreader. Cash, or will take cattle, hogs, or colts in exchange.

1947

- The newly organized 4-H Club at Matawan chose the name “Matawan Chieftains” for their club name when they met at the school house last Thursday.
- Miss Florence Hultgren, who won the county spelling contest, together with her teacher, Miss Hazel McColley of Dist. 48, are to go to Minneapolis for the state contest.

They will attend the Spelling Bee banquet at the Radisson Hotel Friday evening following a tour of the Minneapolis Star-Journal plant in the afternoon. The spelling contest is to take place Saturday.

- While the job of washing down the business street was in progress, it brought a condition that few had realized. The fire hose is getting old. It needs replacing. A new village truck is just as badly needed. It is hard, perhaps, to understand that with only about nine hundred miles on its speedometer, the truck should be replaced. It is a Dodge truck sold to the village in 1922 by J. A. Christianson, then in the implement business. Naturally, the truck is now obsolete.
- A grass fire near the W. J. McAvoy home and evidently set by sparks from a passing locomotive, became so dangerous that the firemen were called and extinguished the blaze.

1972

- New managers of Fox Inn, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Olsen of Minneapolis moved to the Gutfleisch apartment over the New Richland public library this past week. The Olsens will move their mobile home to the Fox Inn property, shortly after June 1 and will be looking for property on which to park the home.
- Glen Dornfield, commander, department of Minnesota, American Legion performed the dedication of

the new American Legion clubrooms of Thomas L. Madden Post 587 at Waldorf. Commander Dornfield praised the Waldorf post for their community endeavor and activities. He remarked on the number of young Legionnaires, members of the Waldorf post, present.

- At a meeting of the Waseca County commissioners, a resolution was passed to allow Robert Deef, Waseca County civil defense director and John Sexton, architect to take whatever steps are necessary to obtain federal funding for the remodeling of the basement area of the county security building.
- The New Richland Cardinals took a double header this past week from the Janesville Bears as they downed them 9-3 and 9-1. The Cardinals started off the first inning, by gaining five runs on four hits. Krueger, the first man to face the offerings of Hoehn, the Janesville pitcher, rapped out a single.

1997

- Harvey Crumb of Matawan retired from the Byron Township Board supervisor position this year after serving for 47 years. It’s difficult for Harv and his wife, Irene, to believe that 47 years passed so swiftly. The couple agree, “time just flies.”
- The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva school board listened to plans the high school choir

has made for a trip to Florida. The choir will leave on buses for Florida June 1 and will spend four days at Walt Disney’s All Star Music and All Star Sports Resort. A pizza party at the hotel is planned for the first night. Vocal instructor Mark Rud has arranged for them to perform June 3 at the Good Samaritan Care Center and Retirement Villa nearby. On June 4 they will have the opportunity for a vocal clinic with Dr. David Brunner. They will have the opportunity to visit Epicott Center and other sites of interest.

- The Andrew Borgen Post #75 of the American Legion named Justin Stiernagle, New Richland Boys Stater this week. Justin is excited about attending Boys’ State at St. Olaf College, Northfield. He explained, “Boys’ State will be a great experience for me. It is an honor to be chosen. I will be able to improve my knowledge of city, county, and state governmental offices and duties.
- The Panther baseball team opened the Gopher Conference season with two wins last week. They squeezed out Alden-Conger 7-6 Thursday and defeated Waterville-Elysian-Morristown 12-2 in six innings Tuesday. NRHEG holds a 3-0 overall record and are 2-0 in conference.



The Pastor's Column

We all find Jesus in varying ways

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS
Many times throughout scripture we see contrasts and clarifications. Jesus speaks to one issue and immediately following speaks to the opposite issue. We often recall the teaching of Jesus regarding children in Matthew 19:
13 Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them.
14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these,"
15 When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.
We recall the teaching to not hinder the children from coming to Jesus. They are children, they need to know that God loves them, that He has a plan for them, and that He cares about their future. In these short verses we recognize that the children want to be around Jesus and know Him, He takes the time to bless them and sends them on their way.
And the very next verse we see a Rich Young Ruler approach Jesus as well, this time no one stopped him, he got access to Jesus and was able to ask questions and receive answers from Jesus. He approached with power, wealth, and pride.
16 Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"
17 "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments."
18 "Which ones?" the man inquired.
Jesus replied, "Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false tes-

timony, 19 honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"
20 "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"
21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."
Two very different stories, but very similar. We all come to Jesus in different ways, but we all have the same need. We want to be accepted, loved, and given hope. Why did Jesus give that to the children, but not the rich young man? Because the children came in humility, they came without pretense, they desired to know Jesus.
So often when we approach Jesus with expectation and demands, we end up going away sad.
22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.
23 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."
Unless we recognize our need for a Savior, our need for forgiveness, we are not ready to meet with Jesus. He asks us not to approach Him with what we think best, but rather ask Him to move on our behalf, molding us into the people He needs us to be. God is willing to offer us hope and a future, He desires to bless and encourage us, but will we step out of the way and let Him move?
Even if we have a load of care, Jesus still wants us to approach Him as little children and He will give us hope for this day and the future.

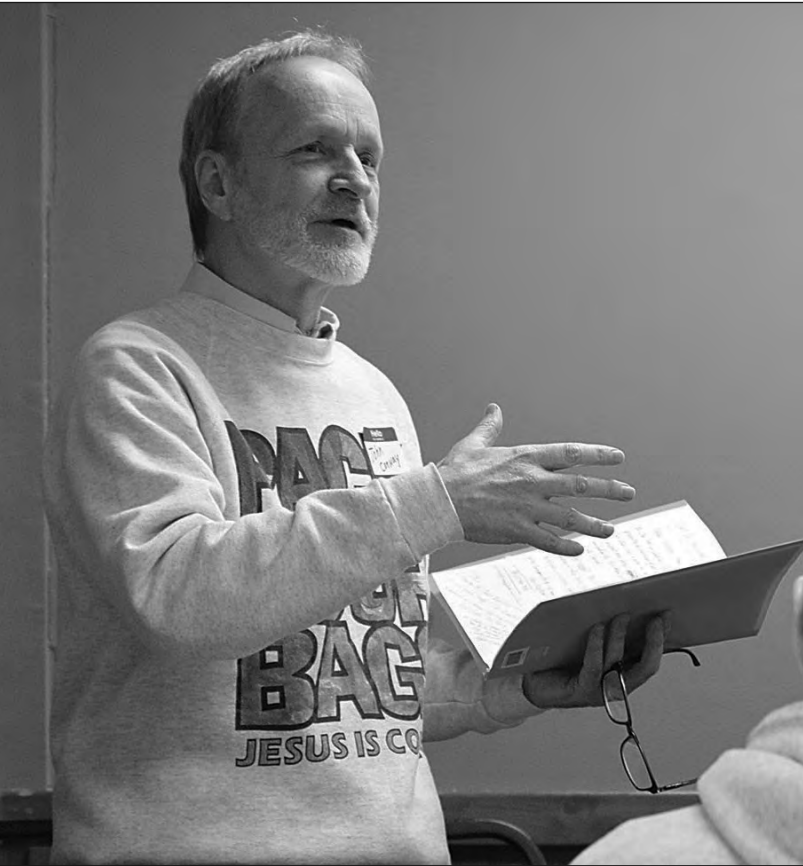
I don't know how to say goodbye

By SANTIAGO RAMIREZ OCAMPO
I left home when I was 16 years old. Since then, I have lived in 10 cities, approximately 20 houses, apartments, rooms, and a camper with my pregnant wife. I have since visited five different countries and have had to tell family, friends, and acquaintances goodbye and/or see you later hundreds of times. And here I am, not knowing how to say goodbye once again.
I am leaving a country that, if I may be honest, I never wanted to come to and where God made me fall in love with. Here He broke and brought to light my darkest secrets, fears, and sins; He let me see His love through those who loved me and showed me mercy even when I could not forgive myself. I don't know if, fortunately, or sadly, it also showed me that I was surrounded by wolves in sheep's clothing which, as soon as they learned the truth of who I am, stopped loving me, turned their backs on me, and found enough (factual) justifications to point fingers at me. It has been four years in the United States, three in Florida and one in Minnesota; no doubt, the time in Florida was very painful and essential. The time in Minnesota has been a gift in every way; God gave me and my wife a family that was unable to see me as the cheater man that I was, that

embraced us, healing our wounds, and encouraged us to walk forward. In Minnesota, we saw our daughter born. We lived our first spring, our first fall, and our first winter. We knew we were loved by people who didn't know how to hug, who received our hugs and returned a love we will never forget.
To the Pioneer: thank you. Writing is a dream that runs through my veins; I know I am nothing more than an empirical apprentice who believes in the opportunity he was given. I have no degree, yet I was allowed to write. You cannot imagine how my heart was filled with pride that day I received that first newspaper with a column written by me; I did not know what to do with the happiness I felt.
To the readers, I don't know how many there are to this day: thank you for lending me your eyes, and giving me a couple of minutes of your life, if that's the case.
There are memories and moments that I don't know how to express in words, but I treasure them in my heart. One day I wrote a tweet that said, Minnesota, you are everything I didn't know I needed. That tweet, for sure, is the summary of this past year.
Now there is nothing left to do but keep walking because, as the song I told you about one day says: "There is no path; you make the path as you walk."

Seminar addresses prophecy, rapture

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor
The Waseca Bible Church held its second-ever Bible prophecy seminar on Saturday, April 22 at the Waseca Pizza Ranch's party room. The group continued its discussion begun a couple months ago on the rapture and the end of the church age.
The Church Age is considered the time period which began with the first Pentecost (generally recognized as the fiftieth day after Easter Sunday) to the rapture. According to the Bible, the rapture will happen near the end times.
The group watched many videos from various speakers, including Brannon Howse of the Worldview Weekend Broadcast Network and Sugarland Bible Church pastor Andy Woods explaining the convergence of "end time" events that may suggest that the rapture is close. Topics brought up as examples of end-time events were the development of a one-world economy, a one-world government, global famine, plagues, wars, and the rise of false prophets.
The rapture, as described in Thessalonians 4:13-18, will begin when Jesus secretly comes into the air and brings His followers to Him and into heaven. According to Corinthians 15:51-54 and Thessalonians 4:14, those who have died will be resurrected and have a body "similar to Christ's glorified body." The event is described as "imminent," or about to happen at any time.
As the group discussed, the rapture is often confused with the second coming of Jesus. The second coming is when Jesus returns to the earth to set up His kingdom, bring judgment upon non-believers, and reward His followers, living and dead.
The difference is that according to scripture such as the book of Thessalonians, Jesus will remain hidden in the rapture and only bring His followers up to Heaven with him. In the second coming, which is referenced throughout the gospel as well as the book of Revelation, Jesus will come down to the Earth to make His judgment.
When the rapture will happen is much disputed. The "Great Tribulation," which was touched upon in the previous bible seminar, is considered a seven-year period in the end times. Some believe the rapture will happen before the "Great Tribulation"; other views include a rapture halfway into the tribulation, at the end of the tribulation, three-quarters of the way into it (this view is called "pre-wrath"), and a partial rapture (when only the most spiritual believers will be taken).
According to minister Jeff Kin-



John Conway
ley, many preachers do not teach about the rapture. "Some feel they aren't qualified to teach on prophecy," he said. "It also requires a lot of studying of the Bible to understand."
Often, the rapture is seen as controversial, sensational, or even frightening and offensive, even in Christian circles. Andy Woods shared an article from CNN concerning "rapture anxiety," where people panic about when the rapture is coming to the point of mental trauma. CNN's article was about a TikTok personality named April Ajoy, who considers herself "spiritual" but an "exvangelical" due to feeling like the rapture is a damaging belief of Christians.
John Conway, as well as the other ministers that the prophecy seminar attendants listened to via video, argued that the rapture should not be an anxiety-inducing event, but a comfort. "It should be something that excites us, not scares us," Conway said.
The group ended their seminar with a drawing to see who would win a book laying out the timeline of Biblical events. They enjoyed a buffet lunch between topics during the seminar.

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The Kanewischer family (featuring current Waseca High School sophomore Mia and senior Megan) were in charge of picking up garbage on the northern shores of Clear Lake for Waseca's Lakes and Parks cleanup Saturday, April 22.

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

75 volunteers help clean up

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

Around 75 volunteers were part of the twenty-third annual lakes and parks cleanup on Saturday, April 22. Among those helping were some members of Waseca High School's National Honor Society, Waseca's city council, and groups of family members and friends who chose to take part.

Volunteers gathered at the Maplewood Park shelter at around 9 a.m. to receive their assignments and enjoy a quick coffee, juice, and some donuts and rolls.

The efforts stretched a long way

from the shorelines of Clear Lake to areas between south Loon Lake and the railroad tracks. While the namesake event may suggest volunteers focused only on areas near lakes and parks, a significant portion of their efforts were along Highway 13/State Street between Kwik Trip and Walmart.

After the cleanup was done at around noon, Joan Mooney with the Waseca County Historical Society grilled some hot dogs for the volunteers.

The event was sponsored by the Waseca Lakes Association and the City of Waseca.



There will be over 40 cast members in this year's production of Mamma Mia! at Waseca High School. Front, from left: Cejay Pickett, Andrés Vásquez, Layla Keith, Addison Wieseler, Thyme Lang, Lindsey Kopetzki, Cece Huttemier, Elijah Miller, Korbin Schumacher, JD Delgado, and Nathanael Andrs. Middle row: Amber Hagen, Elliott Galle, Esme Pearce, Aubree Hansen, Quinn Dahle, Tricia Cox, Tegan Flatau, Katelyn Robeck, Sophie Farris, Ava Omtvedt, Cece Bjerke, Sarah Robbins, and Jayme Sandbeck. Back row: Elaina Andrs, Kylie Snow, Patrick Howe, Jackie Mathern, Avery Madsen, Isabelle Wilhelmi, Kloe Wadd, Arianna Krogseng, Sadie Schimming, Allen Kopetzki, and Timmi Volkmer. Not pictured: Collin Dettmer, Hailey Dettmer, Kiera Landrum, Sophie Chawra, Ashton Jenzen, Britney Ross, Will King, Cody Sieberg, Leah Scheffert, Gabriel Beltran, Mason Wadd, Morgan Lemke-Ritchie, Savanna Benson, and Zach Theobald.

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

Drama dept. to perform Mamma Mia!

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

If there's one word that could describe how the Waseca Drama Department feels about this year's musical production, Mamma Mia!, it would have to be excitement.

Everyone in the cast can't wait to get out on the stage in front of a crowd May 4-7 at the high school Performing Arts Center. They've already been working on the musical for almost a month and are putting together the finishing touches for the production in less than a week.

This year's musical has a mixture of veterans and newcomers and is led by second-year director Anna Pollock. Of the four cast members the Pioneer interviewed, senior Thyme Lang has been in theater production the longest.

"I don't remember getting much of a break between the one-act play and audition for 'Mamma Mia,'" Lang admitted. "But I was still very excited to jump into this musical."

Perhaps part of her eagerness is this year's production being the last one of her high school career. "There are definitely emotions there," she said. "I cried my eyes out last year, so I can only imagine what this year will be like."

It also helps that she will be playing a lead role, Tanya, this year.

Cejay Pickett, cast in the role of Pepper, participated in theater for the first time this winter for the one-act play How to Succeed in High School Without Really Trying. "That's when I got the bug."

Pickett felt great about where the group was in their rehearsals. "We have a great cast this year and a fantastic director," he said.

Newer cast members like junior Addison Wieseler and freshman Layla Keith matched Lang and Pickett's energy. Wieseler will play as Rosie and Keith as Ali.

Both of them joined because others who weren't in previous productions wanted to try it out.

"There were a lot of people last year that usually didn't go out for musicals that decided to be in it last year," Wieseler claimed. "I thought, well, maybe I should do it. And I really love Mamma Mia."

Keith got her first taste of what it's like in the Waseca Theater Department; she was part of the stage crew for the fall play Little Women. "They needed some extra help, so I



Cast members Sarah Robbins, Ava Omtvedt, Tegan Flatau, and Sophie Farris practice choreography for the song, "Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!"

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

volunteered," she said. That, along with more persuasion from her friend group, made her want to audition for Mamma Mia.

Seeing new faces like Wieseler and Keith make participation in the show much more entertaining for upperclassmen like Lang. "It's great getting to work with the newer kids on these productions," she said. "They realize how fun it is and they grow as actors."

With the musical comes a pit band. Lang said that the band knew the music already. "Now we just need to catch up with them," she joked.

All four actors commented that the process has been made that much greater thanks to Director Pollock's drive and love for theater.

"One thing that I've struggled with doing this is fitting it into my schedule," Lang said. "I am part of the track and field team, so making it to practice was difficult."

Keith was in the same boat. "I also am part of the track team, and she is so flexible about it," she added. "She's so organized and planned out, too."

"She doesn't want any sports stopping anyone from being part of Waseca theater," Lang said.

When asked about Pollock, Pickett said that the interview could have lasted all night talking about her skill as a leader. "It's great to have a director so involved and so understanding."

Everyone is excited to present the musical to the people of Waseca. "It's my favorite part of the process, bringing the music and the story to life," Pickett said. "People get to fit these characters. You get to see people shine like they never did before. And Mamma Mia is an amazing story; everyone in this entire production is going to give it their all."

"I can't put into words how excited I am to do this show," Wieseler summarized. "I can't wait to see the crowd out there. I was told we get a huge crowd at these musicals."

"It's going to be so much fun," Lang echoed. "I'm hoping that the kids coming up next year that are hesitant in doing the musical see this and join."



JD Delgado and Lindsey Kopetzki

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy



Lindsey Kopetzki and Layla Keith

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