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# WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 51 Vol. I \$2

Office at 103 South State Street Waseca

Friday, December 23, 2022

## ■ Letters to Santa - Inside



Jon Butler will serve as President of FM Bank, set to open in the former Wells Fargo building during the summer of 2023.

## FM Bank to relocate to Waseca

FM Bank the second oldest family owned community bank in Minnesota, has applied to move its bank charter from Granite Falls, MN to Waseca and open a new full-service bank location in downtown Waseca, pending regulatory approval. FM Bank, originally chartered in 1878, has a long-standing history and knowledge of agricultural financing. FM Bank will provide an alternative resource to farmers in the area, in addition to small businesses and consumers for loans and deposits.

The name FM Bank is a salute to their history which began as Farmers and Merchants State Bank of Clarkfield (MN), commonly referred to as FM. While the F in the name is intended to be seen as focusing on Agriculture (F as in Farmers) and the M as focusing on local community businesses (M as in Merchants), it can also be seen more broadly considering the many consumer products offered such as home loans and consumer accounts.

Jon Butler, who will lead the bank locally as president also has a long history in banking, agriculture, and the local community. He grew up on a crop farm in

FM continued on 12

## From the publisher

As the year draws to a close I would like to thank our hundreds of subscribers, thousands of readers and many, many advertisers for making our newspaper a reality in the year 2022. In recognition of Christmas and the New Year, and the large commitment of our staff, the Pioneer does not intend to print a newspaper the final week of 2022. The same will be true for 2023 and forward. The Pioneer office will also be closed Dec. 23, 26, 27 and 28 as we allow our staff family time. We will be open our regular hours beginning Dec. 29, 2022.

Merry Christmas, God Bless, and Happy New Year. May we all look forward to a positive and blessed year in 2023.

Kind regards  
Eli Lutgens  
Pioneer Publisher

## A word from The Word

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

James 1:17

## Beauty of the season

## ‘Home alone’

### Annual Waseca Choir concert

By TRISTAN JENSEN  
Staff Writer

The Waseca High School Choir held its annual winter concert, titled "A Home Alone Christmas" on Dec. 19 in the Performing Arts Center. Groups featured were the Concert Choir, Male and Female Sextets, Showtime, the State Street Singers, and the Select Choir. All of these groups are directed by Tim Delnay. Melissa Schulz served as piano accompanist. Alongside traditional favorites, many selections performed were from the 20th Century Fox films "Home Alone" and "Home Alone 2," with scores composed by John Williams. Delnay described these films as "especially magical" in their music, theme, and humor.

The Concert Choir, the smaller of the two robed choirs, began the night's performances with "Christmas Stars" by Cristi Cary Miller, featuring Layla Keith singing the descant: "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" arranged by Schmutte; "Christmas Star" from "Home Alone 2" by Bricusse and Williams; and "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" with Jingle Bell Rock" arranged by Mark Hayes.

The combined Male and Female Sextets then sang Langford's arrangement of "I'll Be Home for Christmas," before the all-female show choir Showtime took the stage. The ladies of Showtime performed "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)" with soloists Ashton Jenzen & Sophie Charwa, arranged by DeSpain, and a "Santa's on His Way" medley arranged by Greg Gilpin with choreography by Ashton Jenzen.

Waseca's co-ed show choir, the State Street Singers, performed next.



MIXED - "Fruitcake" is a new tradition choir director Tim Delnay brings to the State Street Singers' holiday set. Here, parts of the group demonstrate the baking process in song. Members of the State Street Singers are Aidan Androli, Nathaniel Andrs, Samantha Azure, Mallory Bruhn, Jenaro Delgado, Collin Dettmer, Hailey Dettmer, Ella Dufault, Tegan Flatau, Payton Garza, Sarah Haley, Aubree Hansen, Brayden Hoof, Cecelia Huttemier, Megan Kanewischer, Emma Keith, William King, Lindsey Kopetzki, Avery Madsen, Jackie Mathern, Elijah Miller, Evelyn O'Brien, Ava Omtvedt, Christian Rodriguez, Britney Ross, Norah Schimming, Korbin Schumacher, Ezra Skains, Trista Stinehart, Jacob Thompson, Noah Thompson, Andres Vasquez, Lucas Vasquez, and Kloe Wadd.



ALL BOYS- Jenaro Delgado, Elijah Miller, Christian Rodriguez, Jacob Thompson, Noah Thompson, and Lucas Vasquez, the members of the Male Sextet, show off their lightsabers at the close of their song "Star Wars (John Williams is the Man)."

Pioneer photos by Tristan Jensen

They began with "White Christmas" as performed by the Drifters, arranged by Audrey Snyder and featured in "Home Alone", with soloists Jenaro Delgado, Lindsey Kopetzki, and Lucas Vasquez.

Each of the Sextets then performed individual numbers. The Male and Female Sextets are the smallest ensembles of Waseca High School's choirs, and all twelve members of these groups are also part of the State Street Singers. The ladies started by singing the Jude Roldan arrangement of "Suo Gan," a song in Welsh from the Warner

Concert continued on 13



ALL GIRLS - The members of Showtime, Waseca's all-female show choir, strike a pose as they finish their set with choreography by Ashton Jenzen. Showtime is comprised of Sophie Chawra, Callie Dufault, Gaby Lopez, Ava Norland, Leah Schefert, Kylie Snow, Paige Swenson, and Molly Volovsek.

## 40 years for Tom

By MICHAEL ROY  
Editor

Very few people can say they've worked at the same place for 40 years.

University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center agronomist Tom Hoverstad can.

Hoverstad recently received a plaque recognizing his 40 years of service to the Southern Research and Outreach Center at the organization's annual staff appreciation luncheon Thursday, November 17. He is currently the oldest and longest-serving staff member at the SROC.

"I enjoy it," Hoverstad says. "Every year is a new learning opportunity. Every year in my 40 years, I see something I've never seen before."

fore."

Hoverstad's journey in agronomy started on his family's farm in Goodhue County near the small town of Dennison. After graduating from Kenyon High School in 1978, he attended the University of Minnesota where he studied agriculture.

"I was mostly interested in a career where I could be outdoors," Hoverstad claims. "I'm not an office guy."

Agronomy, the science of soil management and crop production, was the perfect fit for him. When he was in his senior year of college, an

Opportunity continued on 7



EXAMPLE - Tom Hoverstad shows how the U of M Southern Research and Outreach Center analyzes corn samples for moisture content and other important data. Photo by Michael Roy

## Decades of service Mayor Srp, Councilman Rose, retire

By ELI LUTGENS  
Publisher

The Waseca City Council held its final meeting of 2022, which was also the final meeting for outgoing mayor Roy Srp and city councilman Allan Rose. Between the pair, they have 56 years of service to the city, 31 for Srp and 26 for Rose.

Mayor Srp read Rose's plaque: "Congratulations on your retirement, Councilmember Allan Rose; after 26 years of service to the people of Waseca. Never underestimate the difference you made and the lives you touched."

Councilman Rose read Srp's plaque:

"Congratulations on your retirement Councilmember and Mayor R.D. Srp. After 31 years of service to the people of Waseca, your openness to the people, your caring ear, and hard work is going to be missed."

(There was a mixup with the years of service shown on the plaques. The correct number is reflected in this article.)

"Thank you to the citizens of Waseca," Mayor Srp said. "You have been very good to me. Thank you for all the blessings through the years. I will never forget the most interesting experiences I've had going

Service continued on 10



Waseca Mayor Roy Srp and Councilman Allan Rose pose with their retirement plaques.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

## WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

## 2023 levy approved, 2% increase

By TRISTAN JENSEN  
Staff Writer

The Waseca County Board of Commissioners approved a 2% tax levy increase for 2023 after contentious discussion. No members of the public were present for the public hearing.

After a motion to approve the levy, Commissioner Doug Christopherson countered that he'd like to see the levy increase under 2% as it has been the past two years. Those levy increases, as reported by county administrator Michael Johnson, were 1.92% and 1.95% and together represented less levy growth than any single year for a decade. Christopherson expressed his concern that Waseca County is known to have high tax rates compared to counties of similar size.

"I believe the budget put together by Johnson and the county is reasonable and efforts to keep taxes down have not had support in the back end," Commissioner Nelson argued. "The county is blamed unfairly because it sends the bill."

Nelson recommended tax payers look at their local school district and city tax rates.

"The 1.5% and 1% (levy increase) plans are viable options," Administrator Johnson admitted. "Yes, the effects would be felt."

Johnson said he would not present a budget option to the board which couldn't function. He said that based on current inflation, a 2% levy increase translates to a 5-6% cost savings.

Commissioners Christopherson and Brian Harguth offered no more discussion voting against the levy which was approved 3-2, with Commissioners DeeAnne Malterer, Nelson, and Krause in favor.

Prior to the vote, Administrator Johnson explained the process of creating the budget. For him, he said, it begins as early as April when he starts hearing requests from department heads. He has meetings with those heads and their departments about their needs as spring turns to summer and throughout those summer months. Minnesota State Statute requires the adoption of a preliminary levy by September 30 each year; the Waseca County Board of Commissioners set that preliminary levy at a 3% increase during their September 20 meeting using data collected by Johnson throughout the year. Once the preliminary levy is set, more detailed budgetary conversations take place and the board has numerous work sessions on the topic.

Johnson then presented the proposed budget and levy. The proposed 2023 final budget amount was \$33,217,987, with a levy amount of \$17,744,101 or a 2% increase. Johnson also described options which would reduce the levy increase to 1.5% and 1%, with the loss of funds translating into reduced budget for the building account for use on capital infrastructure improvements.

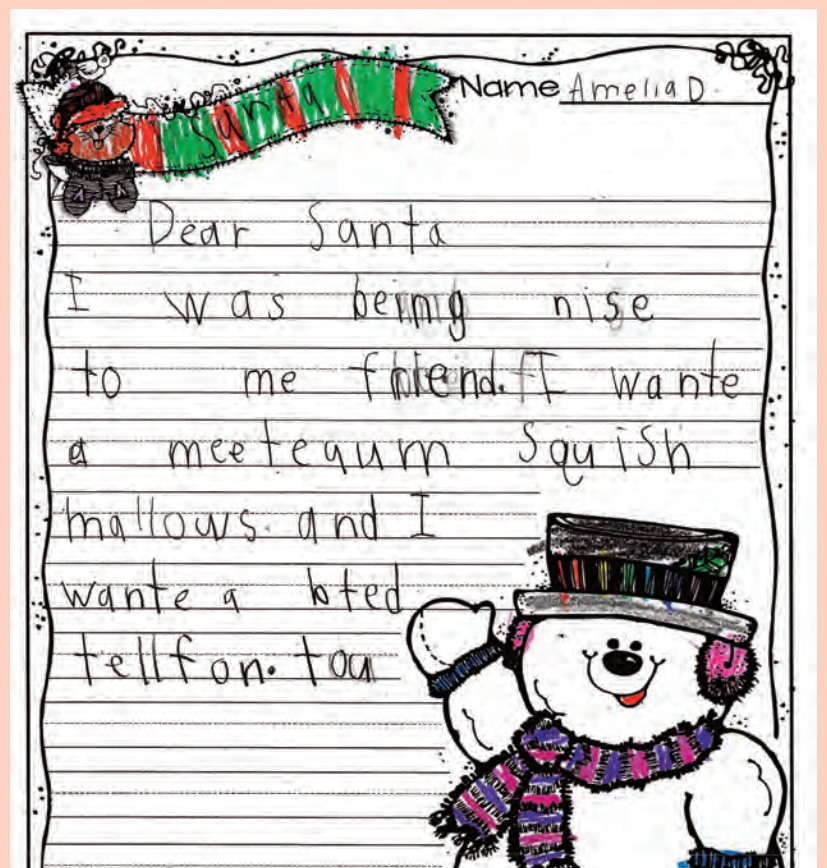
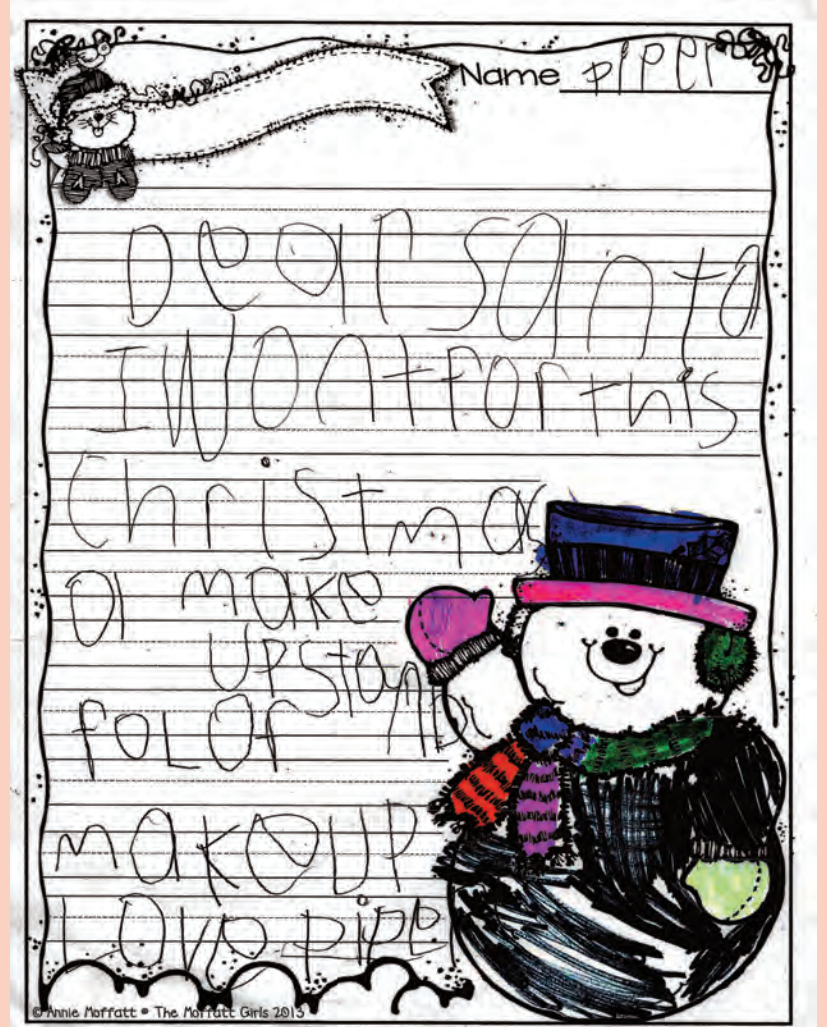
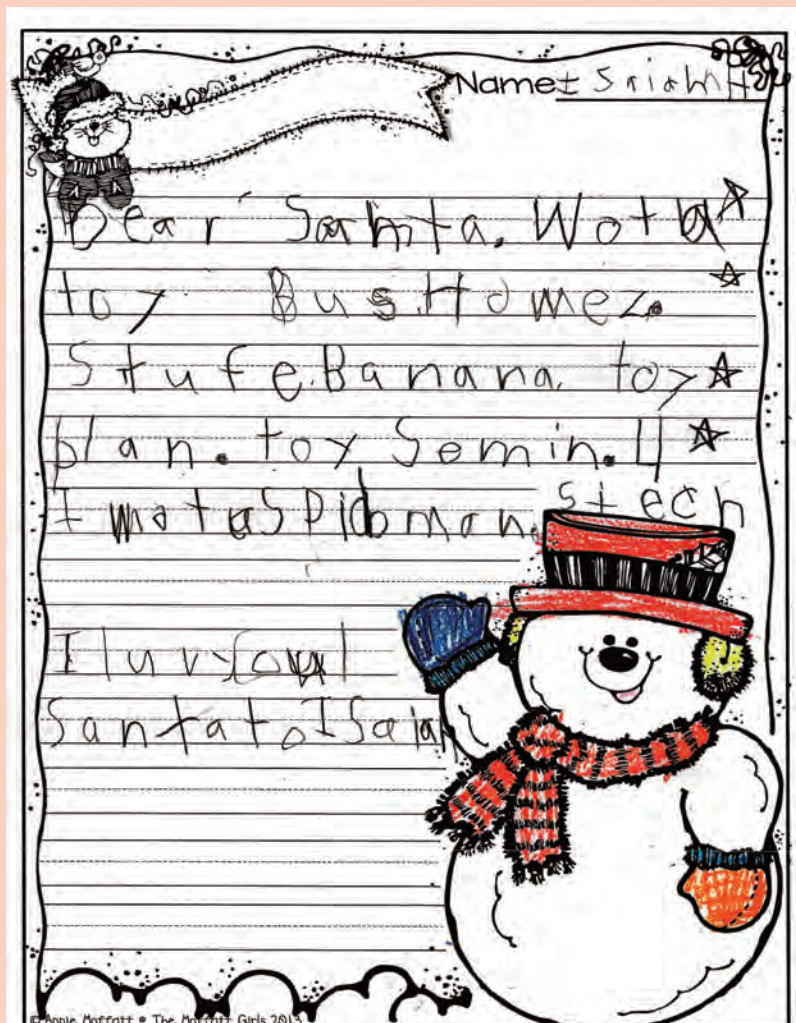
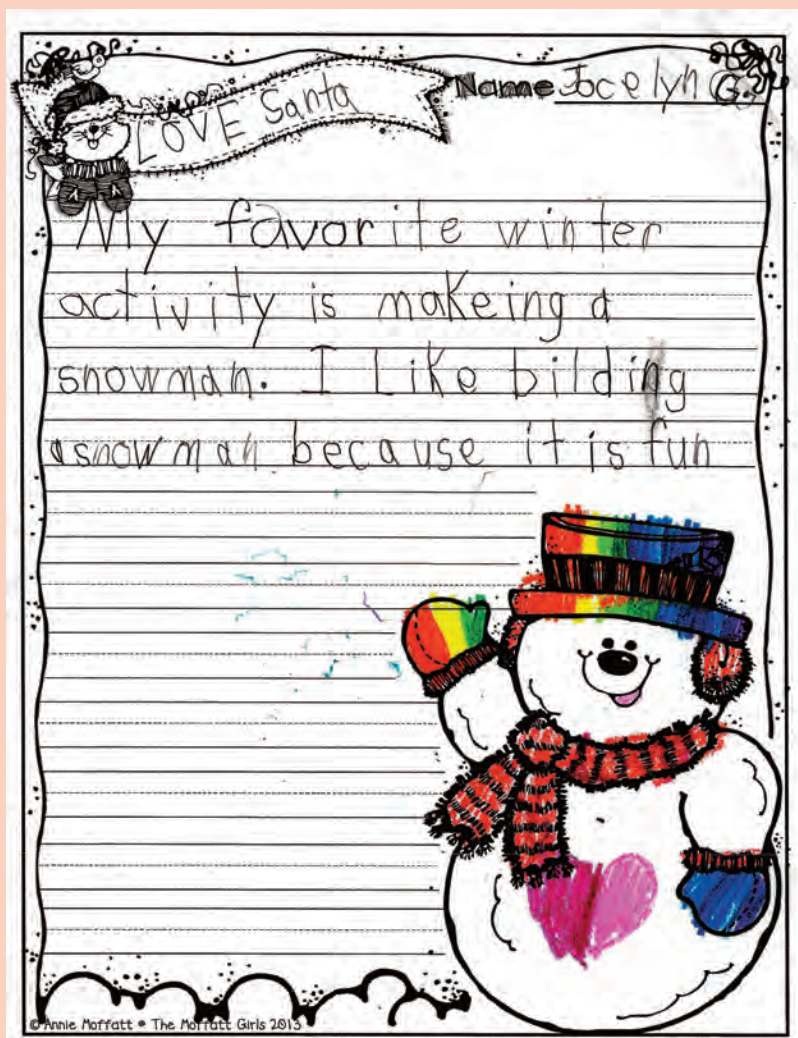
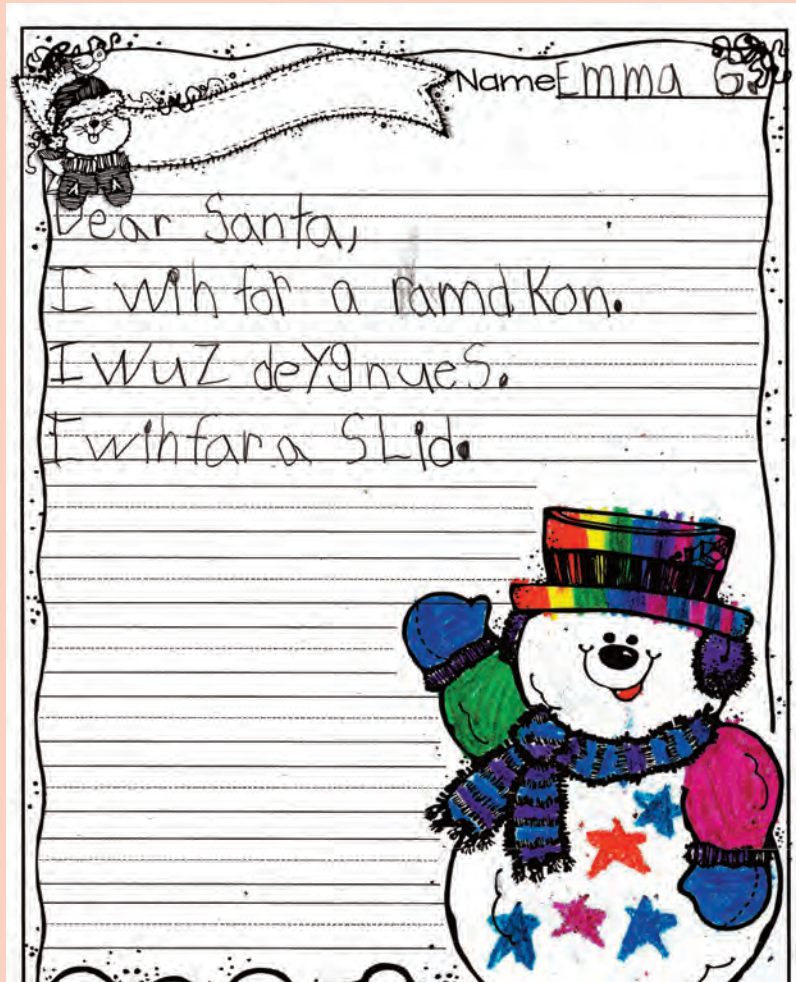
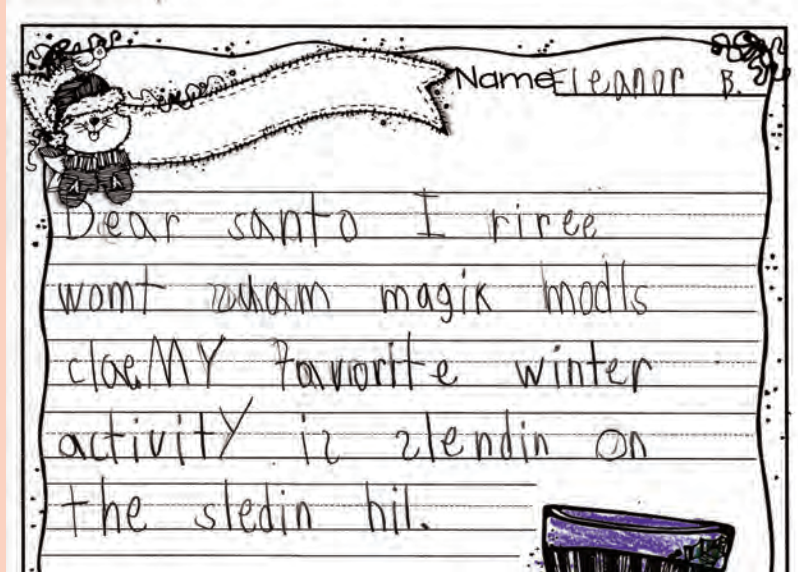
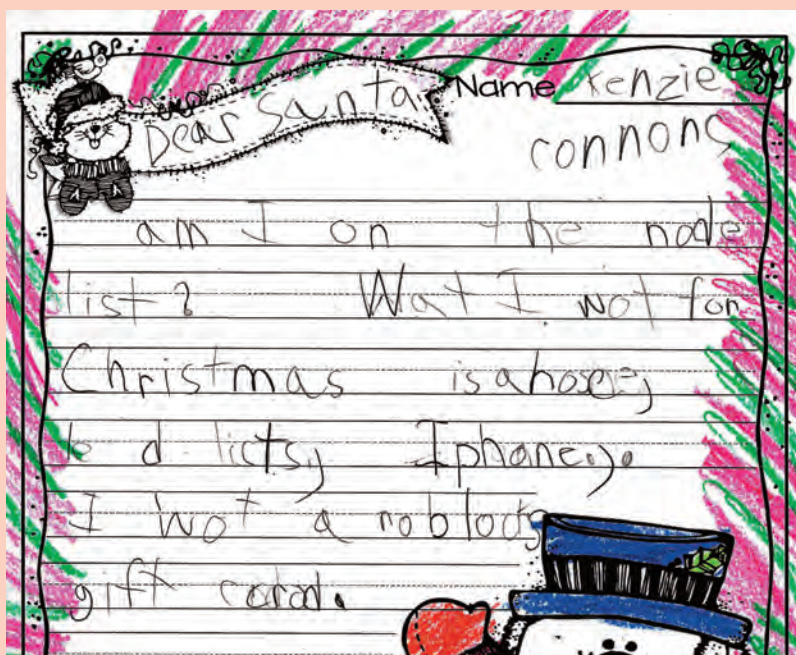
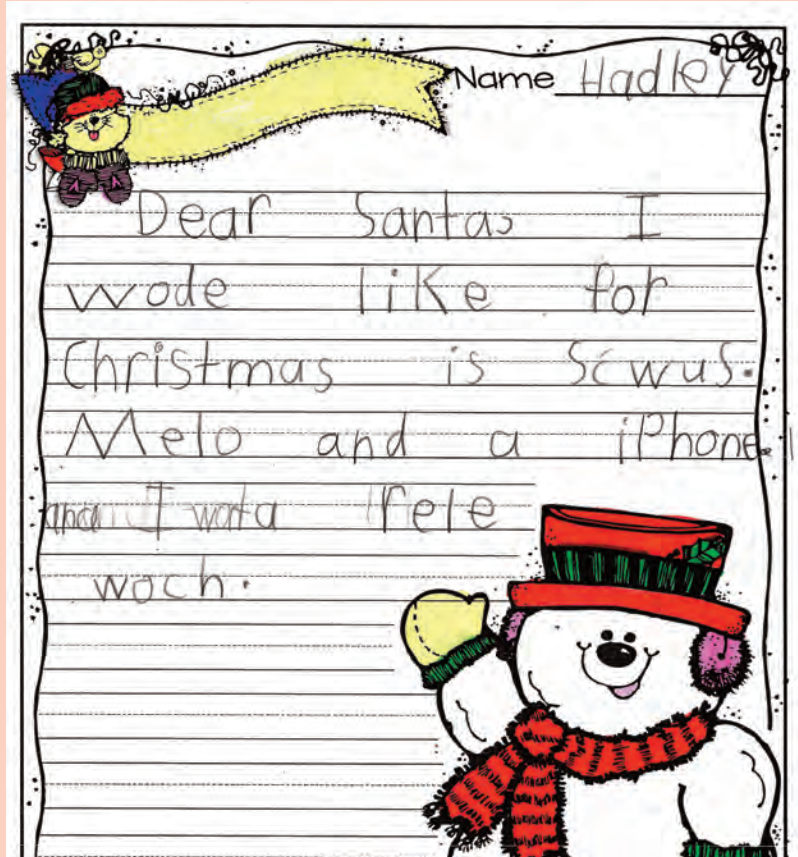
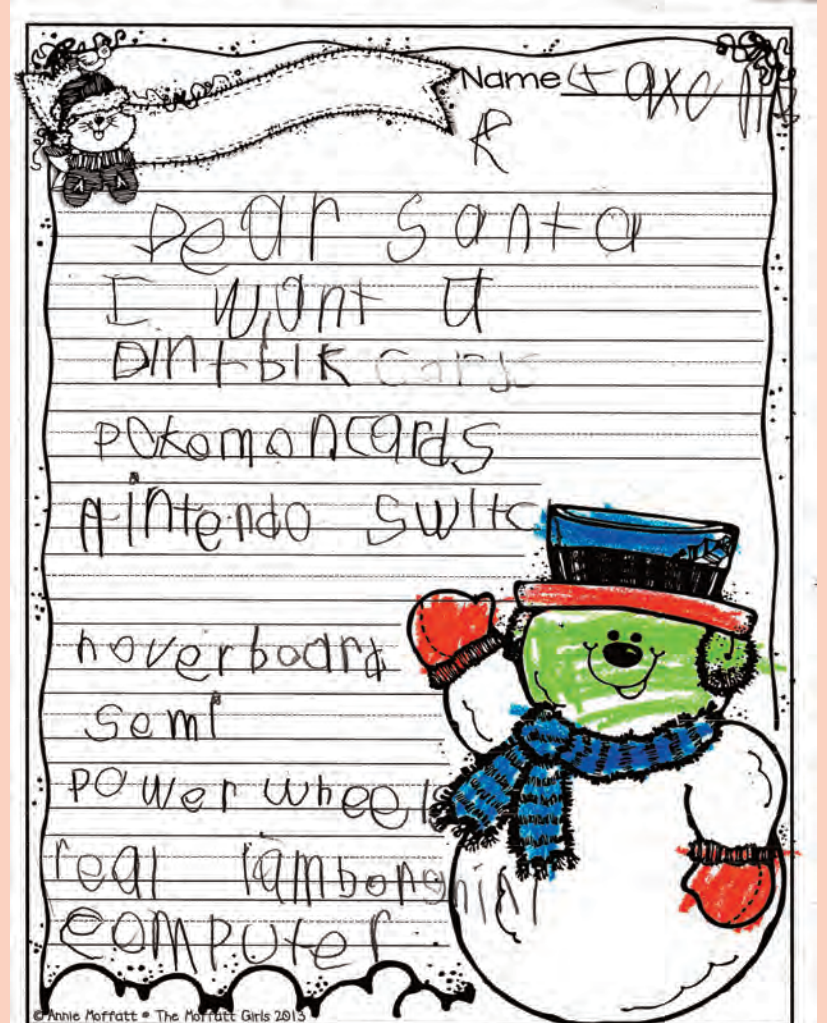
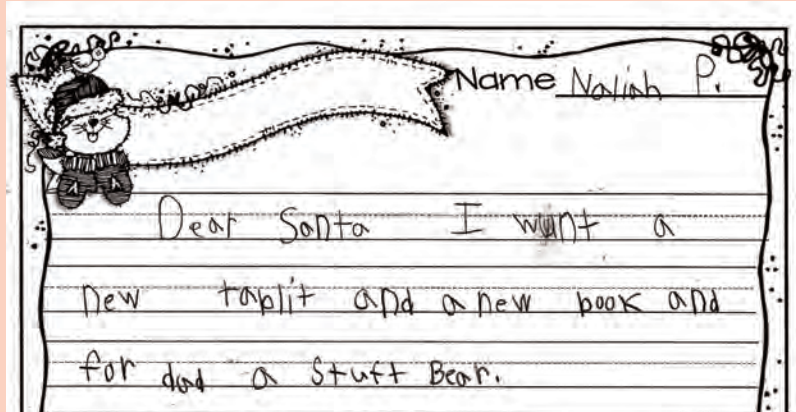
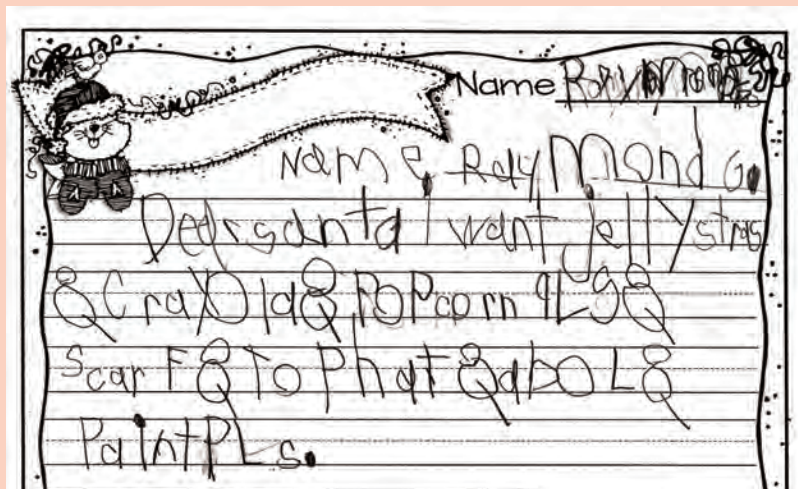
The tax rate paid by residents is based both on the levy amount and their property value. Both residential households and residential homesteads saw a median market value increase of 15% in Waseca County, while commercial and industrial properties saw a change in market value of 0%. Factoring for these values, the median residential

County continued on 10



# LETTERS TO SANTA

What do you want from Santa this year? What is your favorite winter time activity? First-grade students at Hartley Elementary school speak out in their letters to the Jolly Old Guy.



# LETTERS TO SANTA

What do you want from Santa this year? What is your favorite winter time activity? First-grade students at Hartley Elementary school speak out in their letters to the Jolly Old Guy.



Merky Christmas

Name Charley

Dear Santa, how is your reindeers? I'll leave you good cookies this year can i have a hoverboard and a rooktumbler and a rooksmashing kit. Love Charley

Name Jacob

to the NOE PI  
TO WOT For kis mis  
I wot a vr Ad  
a JEGOS HAW is  
rooDof GuD Oor  
bad LUV Jacob

Name Aislee

My favorite winter activity is going sleding with my frens alsoe haveing hot choklito. I like to go in my roing chare. I like to bird in the snow.

Name Aldrich

I wot you pat can you gime blow uppeol can I you hcr

Name Nick

Dear Santa  
I Aeta Neuprt Bie Ko and  
Ehes Nawa frwelant  
Htman 29Bgun HtB Bgun.  
Love Nick

Name ALYIAH

DEAR SAnTO,  
CAN I PLEZ AAVE A  
PA+MOCH? I NO VEH  
I HAVE A VOXVO  
GU D @UT BUT  
I LOVE YOU  
LOVE  
ALYIAH

Name Grace Lynn Brunner

Dear Santa I wat led lise.  
Haye Santa I Have ben good this year.  
Santa can I Have a iphone.  
Santa can I Have a scwsmela.  
Love you Santa.

Name Indira Hagle

Dear santa, Thack you for The presints last yea  
This yea can i ples have a Lol and ant staf, mrcrs, Brbes Drem hose?

Name Reagan vogler

Dear Santa,  
I will be 7 On the 17th. Can you make me a iphone 2 of them please. I would like a mystery presnt.

Name RENAI

Dear Santa,  
Wat chip of Cotes  
Do you like?  
Can I have a American girl doll  
Makeup Stand  
FAL OF  
makeup  
LOVE  
Renai



# LETTERS

Name Charli

My favorite winter activity is to go sledding. It is fun! I like to have a snow ball fight. It is fun. I like building snow man. I like to drink hot cocoa. I like to give Santa cookies.



Name Kylie

My favorite winter activity is sledding. I like drinking hot chocolate. I like snuggle by the fire place. I like playing with my friends. I like criss, snow cones and making cookies.



Name Leo

My favorite activity is snowball fight and drink hot cocoa and sled and build a snow fort and make snow cones.

Name Lydia

My favorite winter activity is hot chocolate. I like to play in the snow. I like to have fun in the snow.

Name Hadi/Alvi

My favorite winter activity is building snowman. I like to drink hot chocolate. I like to play in the snow.

Name Colton

My favorite winter activity is building a snowman because I like building with colt.

Name Kolton

My favorite winter activity is snow. I like to play in the snow. I like to have fun in the snow.

Name Gabby

My favorite winter activity is hot chocolate and building a snow man. I like sledding.



Name Piper

My favorite winter activity is going sledding.

Name Adan

My favorite winter activity is building a snowman. I like to play in the snow. I like to have fun in the snow.

Name Croix

My favorite winter activity is sledding. My favorite winter activity is building a snow fort.

Name Nordh

My favorite winter activity is ice skating. I also like to sled. I also like to build snow man.



Name Dayne

My favorite winter activity is sledding and hot chocolate. I like to play in the snow.

Name Dhriti

My favorite winter activity is drinking hot chocolate. I like to play in the snow.

Name Alana

My favorite winter activity is eating marshmallows in hot chocolate. I like to drink cocoa.

Name Neston

My favorite winter activity is playing in the snow. I like to sled in the snow.

Name Avon

My favorite winter activity is hot chocolate because it is hot. I like sledding.



NAME Drake

MY FAVORITE WINTER  
ACTIVITY IS MAKING  
A SNOW MAN. I LIKE  
TO MAKE A SNOW  
MAN IN THE SNOW.

Dear Santa, Zimprich  
christmas a turtle.  
And a Power Range Soot.  
Super Power.


 Name JOE NICHOLS

Dear Santa, I want  
 a sled.

Dear Santa | Wot rat  
MUNE.  
D D O Dog.

NAME

DUBLES STREET

BEAN SAHIA ILEF+UW

UPRESST KENIBETUPRESST

KENIBET HREFANIDRUS 200

EUKPRESSTPLANDUOTIFAN

FUOTUNRSEWME

ANDUOTUNRST

CORANDUOT

HREFBUS BKH

ED IUUVUSAN

AND IUUVMESE

SENKUMTO

YSA

Dear Santa, I want a Pokemon, a Jojo et a ndo  
Charmant et un I want  
a Spiderman la se et  
di cole

Dear Santa,

I'm on the naughty  
list. For Christmas  
I want a smartphone  
and a dog. I want  
a apple watch.


 Name: Oct 9 1981  
 COY  
 Dear Santa  
 I hope you have a good trip  
 COY

Dear Santa I wish I  
could get 2 gigs  
what cookies  
love xxxxxx


 Name Karbin

Dear Santa i am god.  
 I want you to make a village  
 u put all cat at swic. d  
 Mts. d. ad u fire ad u bone, na  
 to sleep.


 Name Wayna  
Spotts  
 Dear Santa IWO+maxup.  
 Santa IWO+afon.  
 Santa IWO+abunne.

Name Ryder  
Peltz  
My favorite winter  
activities is my christmas, Prt  
because we get to Play a  
famle game. of the famle gets  
to Play.

Handwritten Christmas cards on lined paper. The first card is addressed to "Santa Iwo + phone" and the second to "Santa I bunnyo". Both cards are signed "Dear Santa" and "Schmidt".

Name Rafael

Dear Santa, I have been a good boy. I want a baby Yoda bed. I want a baby Yoda pillow.

Name Taylor

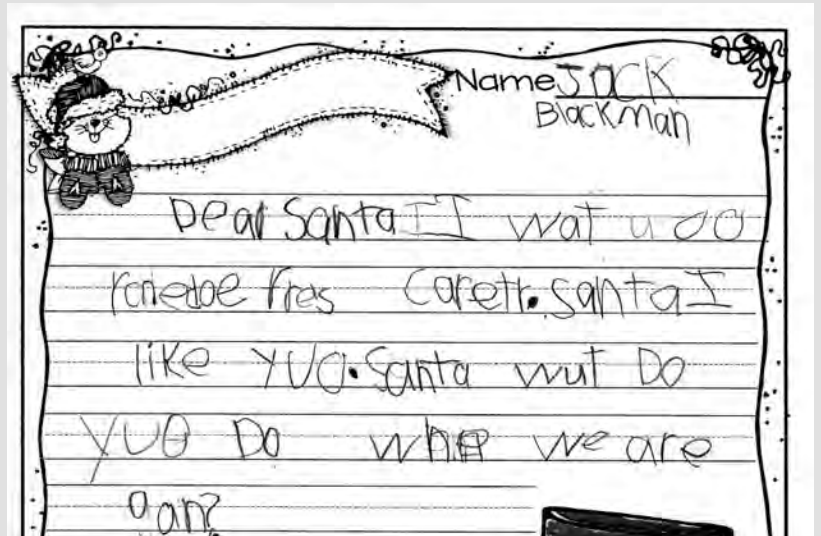
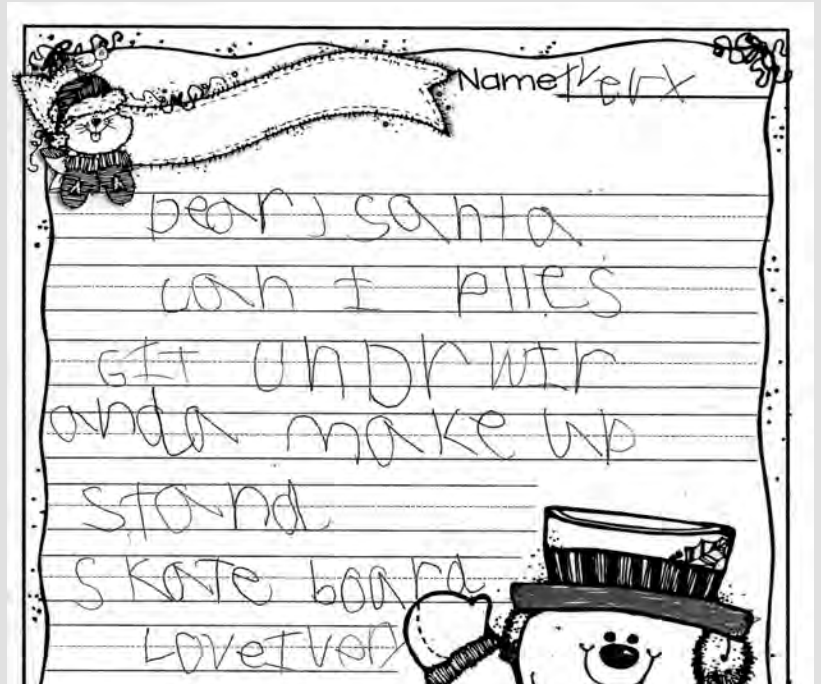
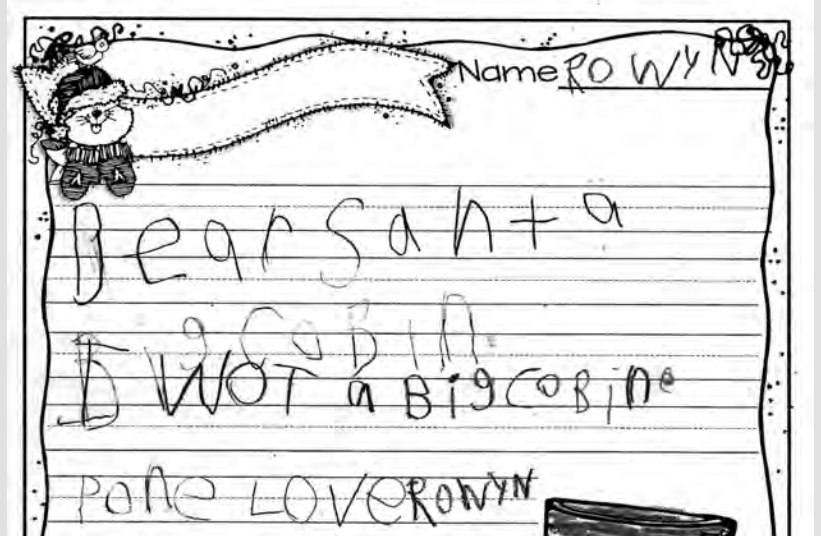
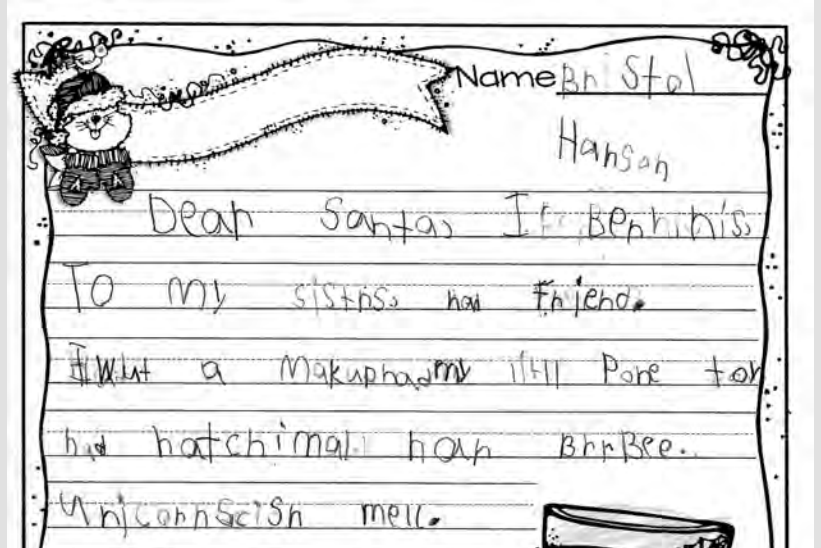
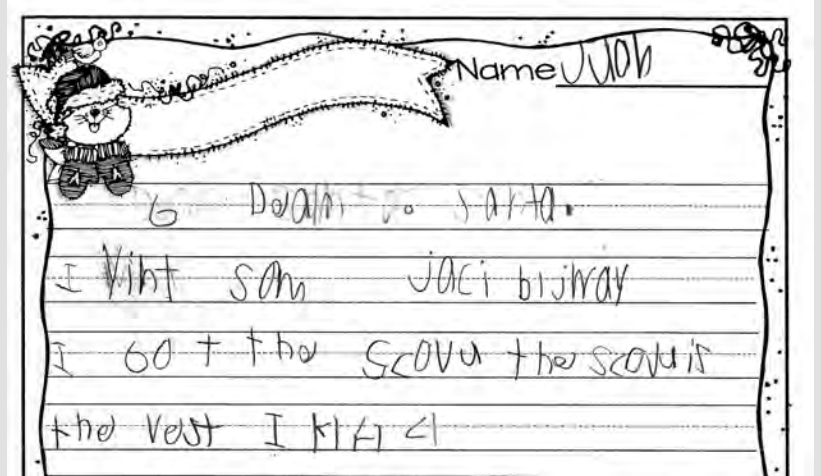
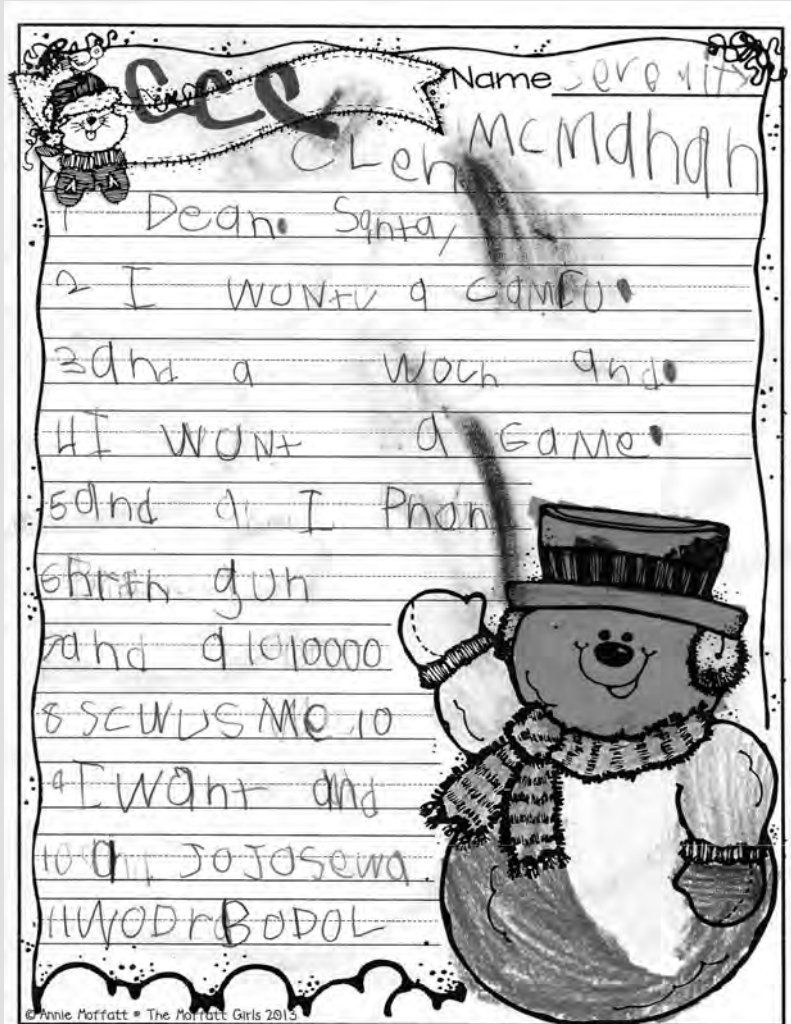
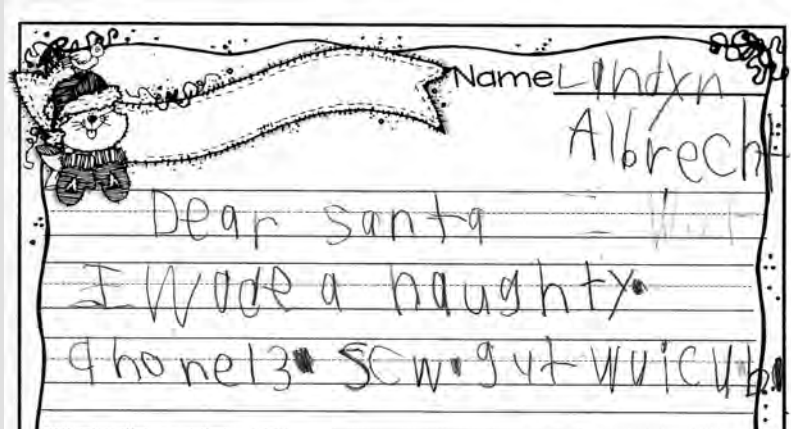
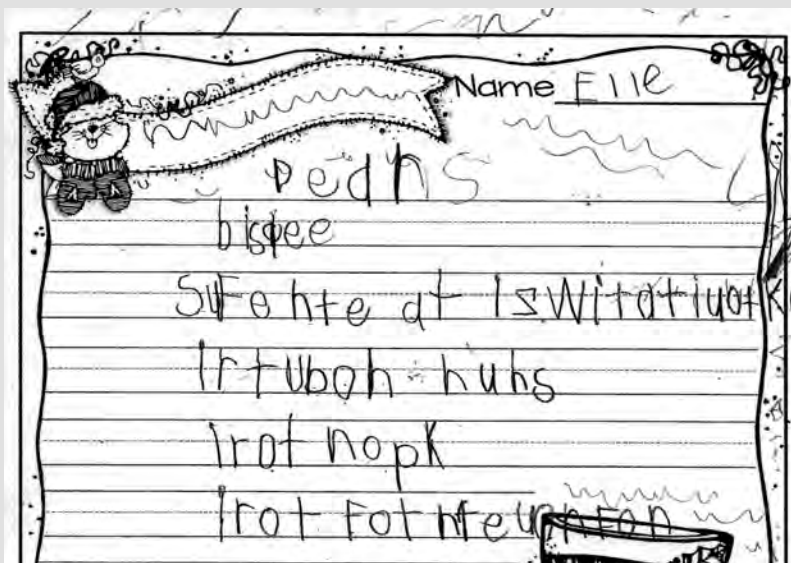
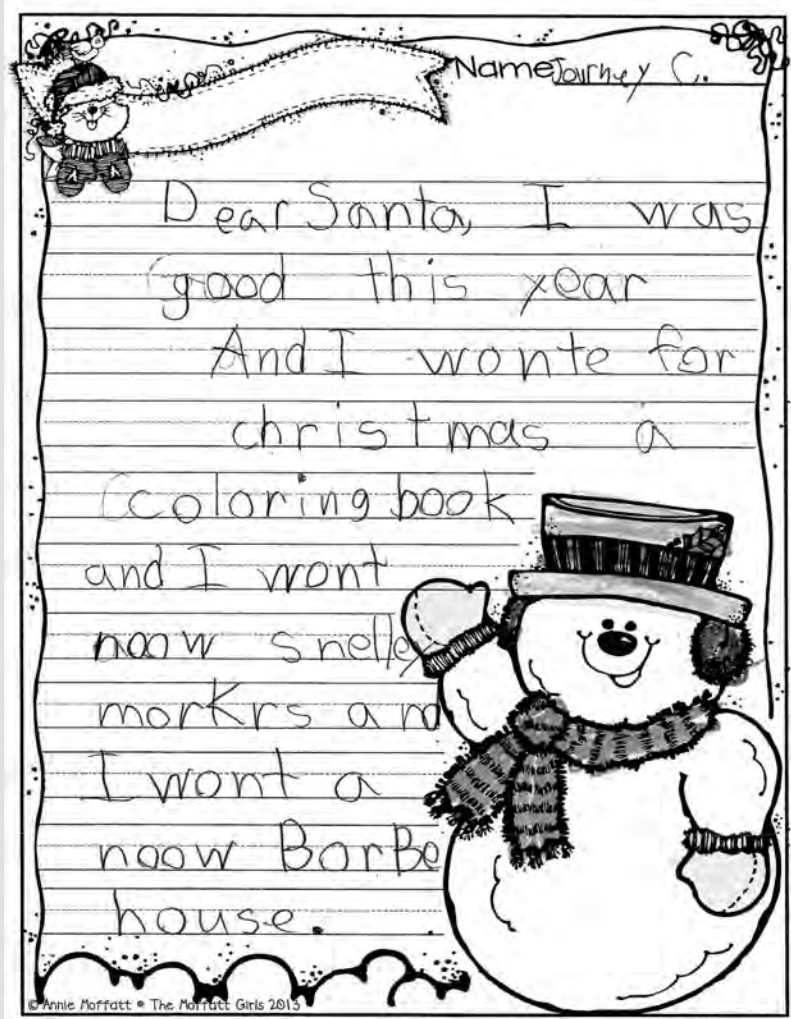
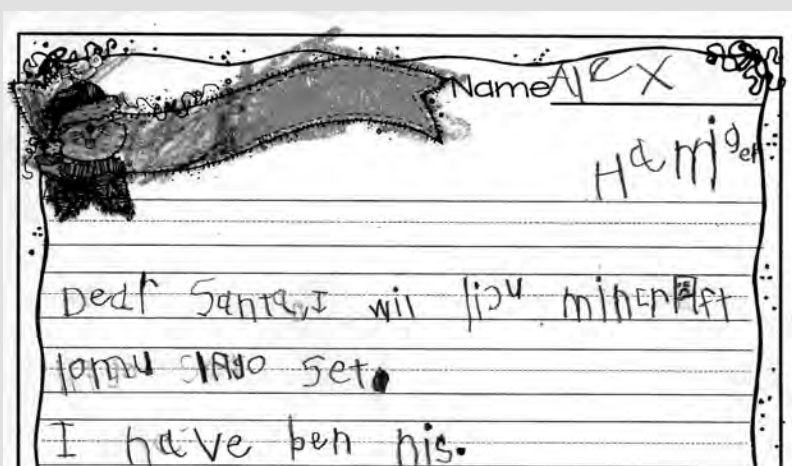
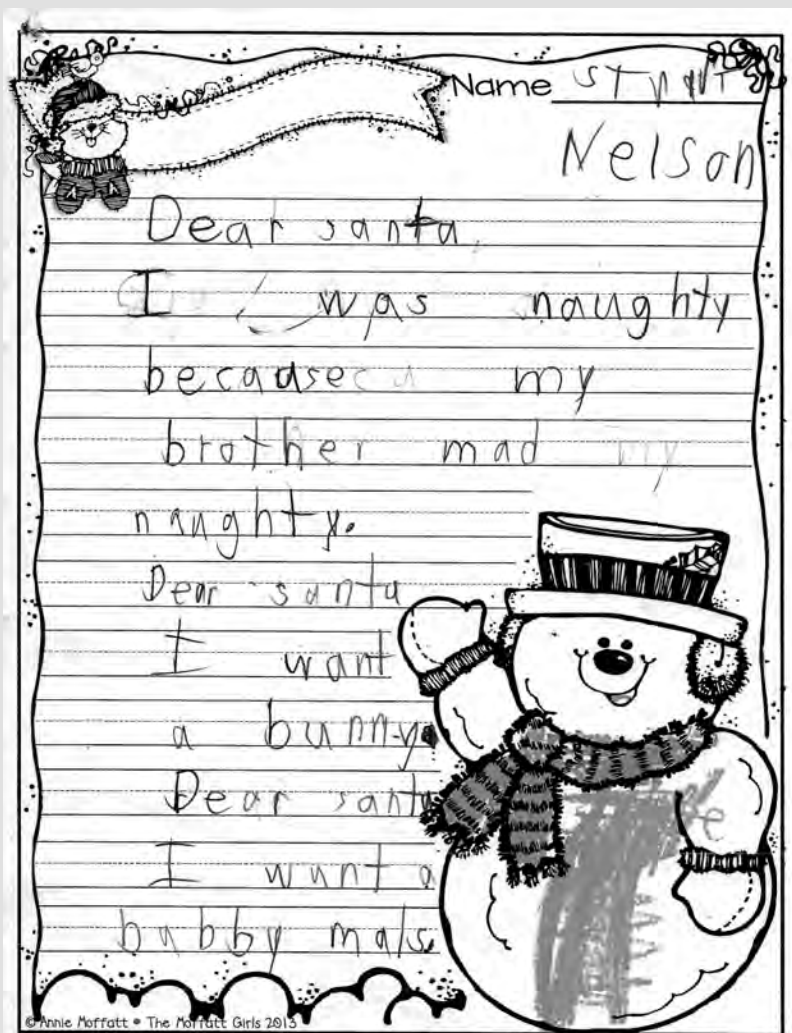
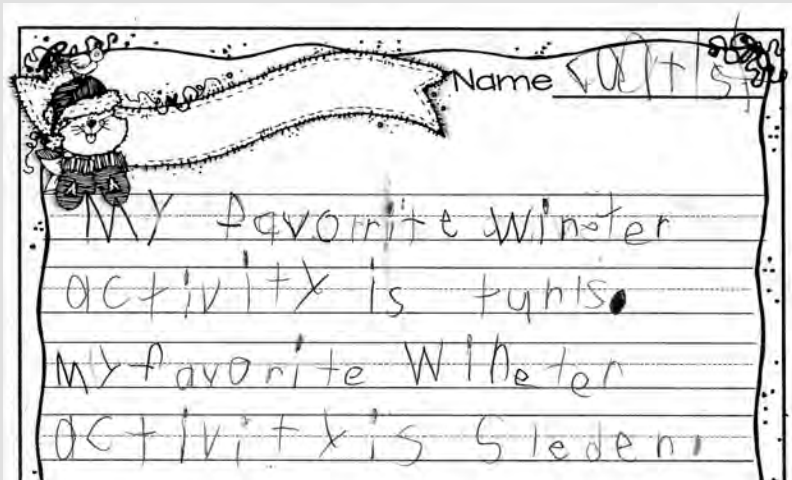
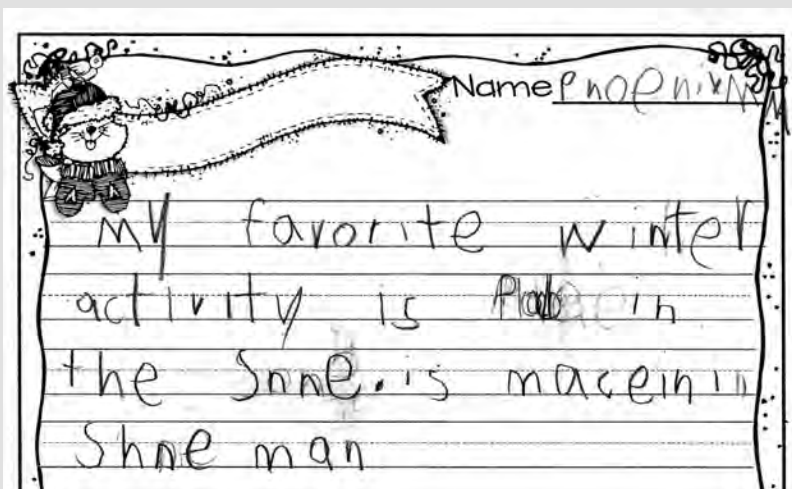
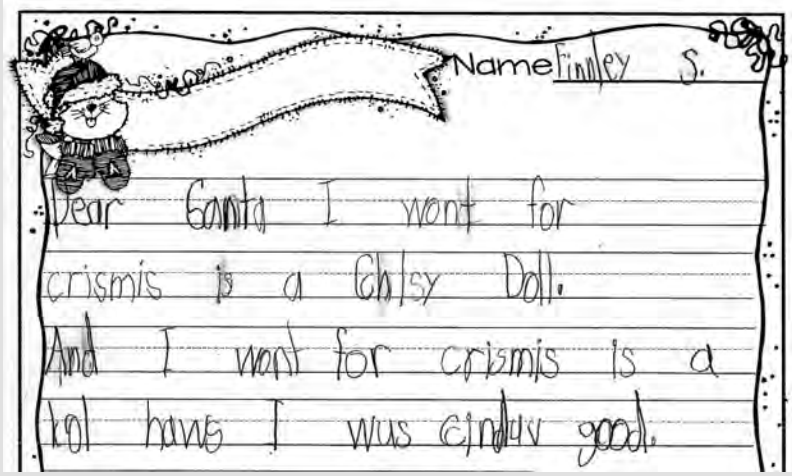
My favorite winter activity is  
bitten a snowman. It is fun.  
Bitten a with the blocks  
a home.  
I like  
gasp don the  
big with  
sleds.  
I like a home  
snow eat.





# LETTERS TO SANTA

What do you want from Santa this year? What is your favorite winter time activity? First-grade students at Hartley Elementary school speak out in their letters to the Jolly Old Guy.



Birth Announcement



Markus James Petsinger, 9 pounds 7 oz and 19 inches long, was born Monday, December 12 at the Mankato Hospital to Rebecca (Walechka) and Matthew R. Petsinger of Waseca. Maternal grandparents are Andy and Janet Walechka of Le-Center; paternal grandparents are Isabel Petsinger and the late Gerald Petsinger of the rural New Richland/Ellendale area. Markus is welcomed home by his siblings Matilyn (3), Mitchell (6) and Michael (8).

■ Opportunity  
from Page 1

opportunity opened up at the Southern Research and Outreach Center in Waseca. He was doing some research to finish his agronomy degree when he was made an offer to join as a researcher in agronomy plots.

“I graduated on a Thursday and started here on a Monday,” he remembers fondly.

Despite agronomy looking like a good fit for Hoverstad, he was unsure if that part of agriculture was his calling until he started. “When you go to school, you learn about the field,” he explains. “But once you start doing all the things you learn and get acquainted with what the day-to-day activities are, that’s when you decide, ‘This is for me.’”

Hoverstad’s typical day depends on the season. During mid-winter, when things are the most quiet, the SROC gets requests from the University of Minnesota faculty to use SROC facilities for research. “The first thing we do is make sure we have what we need, such as fertilizer and labor. Then we ask ourselves, ‘Can we get it done?’”

Naturally, winter is when Hoverstad and the SROC staff spend the most time preparing everything for the growing and harvesting seasons. “We get a lot of interaction with university faculty that want to have research here so that in the spring, everything’s ready to go,” he elaborates.

With the spring comes the planting season, which gets busy. “You have to get things done when the weather cooperates,” Hoverstad says. “It’s a lengthened season because some of our trials are started early. Others need to wait for the right conditions to plant.”

The SROC growing season lasts about two months. When they aren’t doing planting, the staff prepares areas for research.

In the summer, the SROC does two things all the time: applies treatment applications to the crops or takes measurements for research purposes. “Weed trials need herbicide, for example,” Hoverstad explains.

Fall is more outdoor work collecting all of the information and finding out how all the crops responded to the applied treatments and techniques. Near the end of fall and early winter, the SROC distributes its information while figuring out what to do in the next year.

In addition to helping with agronomy research, Hoverstad provides crop reports and weather updates to

local media outlets. “Every month, KAAL calls me and we do a radio piece about what’s going on,” Hoverstad elaborates. “We also create crop and weather updates that a lot of media sources put out. Occasionally when there’s a disaster such as drought or floods, we’ll send a report on that, too.”

Among the memories he’s acquired are close calls when he and other researchers are taking samples from the field before thunderstorms roll in. Fond memories are when he gets to talk to the local farmers.

“When a farmer tells me what I showed them over the years helped them, those are the things that make you feel good about what you’ve done,” he says.

What’s helped Hoverstad adapt with the times in the agriculture industry over his four-decade career? He says the personal computer helped him out. After the collecting process finished, he reminisced when the SROC had to send things through a phone line on campus to a mainframe computer. “We then bought the first PC that IBM came out with,” Hoverstad says. “I really dove into that and appreciated that we could do things on that machine.”

“Things have changed so much since then, we now have handheld computers,” he continues. “We used to have someone in the plot combine in the dust, cold and wind weighing samples and writing down the data. Now it’s all automated.”

The technological advancements make Hoverstad believe that there’s something for everyone in the agriculture industry, whether out in the field or in an office crunching numbers. “It’s always changing and advancing,” he says. “If you’re interested in electronics, it’s advancing there. Farmers will always need help with financing, too. There are plenty of opportunities in this industry and they will always be here.”

As the years go by, many people move on to other places. But not Hoverstad. Why did he stay in Waseca? “It’s a good place to raise a family,” he replies. “We really enjoy the community here. That’s been a big factor for us staying.”

Hoverstad adds that the SROC facility is important to the University of Minnesota. “Certainly the university’s biggest resource is the property we’re on. It’s the people that take care of it that are really the biggest asset they have. You have to take care of the land here, and it’s not the easiest land to farm. But if you’re willing to put in the effort, you can be productive here. And that’s what we do.”



Becky Borneke, of “In a Bind,” smiles at the camera as she plays for shoppers.

Starfire craft show  
sees 35 vendors

By **TRISTAN JENSEN**  
Staff Writer

There really was “something for everyone” at the Holiday Craft Sale hosted by Starfire Event Center in Waseca on Saturday, Dec. 17, 2022. More than 35 vendors filled all four major rooms in the event center peddling clothing, kitchen gadgets, knick knacks, sweets, therapeutics,

coffee, and more. For those who found themselves hungry, in addition to samples of the vendors’ wares, the hosts at Starfire provided food and drink for sale.

Entertainment for the day was provided by Melissa Shultz Music and Becky Borneke of In a Bind, playing a variety of Christmas and wintery tunes on keyboard. Borneke play-



Kathy Kronebusch and her husband selling homemade fudge and other treats.

Pioneer photos by Tristan Jensen

fully invited onlookers to sing with her – while many sang or hummed along in their own space as they circulated the many booths, she said no one seemed willing to take the mic. Too shy, she thought, but Borneke didn’t let that set her off her stride.

Door prizes were also offered, donated by several of the vendors. Winners announced by Starfire

Event Center were Shannon Marie Jones, Cathy Breitbarth, Alyssa Kupal, Jessica Anderson, Donald McVey, and Betty Schroeder. Anyone who responded “going” to the event posted by Starfire Event Center on Facebook was eligible to win.

JWP school board levy set for ‘23

By **MICHAEL ROY**  
Editor

The JWP School Board finalized its under levy options and certified the 2023 levy at its Monday, Dec. 19 meeting. The district’s referendum market value under levy option was set at \$200,000, while the net tax capacity under levy was set to \$25,386.

The referendum market value is a property tax levy which is applied to the properties of the tax base. In JWP’s case, the tax base is in Janesville, so the \$200,000 under levy option will be applied to all property owners. The net tax capacity is a property value used for calculating most school taxes.

District Business Manager Matt Moline explained that the \$25,386 figure was a community education item. “We don’t have a large program in that area and we do have a reserve fund,” he said. “We would have enough in the reserve where we don’t have to increase the levy.”

Moline prepared two examples of how the under levy options would affect property taxes. One property, assessed at \$150,000 in 2022, would see a seven percent increase in taxes, or \$39. Another property, which saw a significant increase in value, could receive as low as six percent in increase to its taxes.

The total numbers for the budget suggest a 0.86% increase in the actual levy. “Doing this is going to help taxpayers as much as we can while the school can still do the things it wants to do,” Moline claimed.

“We want to try and help decrease the amount that the taxpayers are paying again this year,” Board Member Laura Seys said. “Hopefully, this will help ease their pain a little bit.”

Student Council representative Zach Groh reported his organization intends to schedule Snow Week for mid-February and planned to offer an optional movie for the students to watch the final few hours of school on Thursday before winter break.

However, Superintendent Jeremy Erler told the board that there may be a possible snow day for that day due to the potential blizzard hitting the district. “We’ve already had a couple crazy weeks of weather,” he pointed out. “It looks like we’re not going to slow down this week.”

The waves of winter weather that have hit the area in December have not made decisions to close the school easy for Erler. “If there’s a horrible part of my job, that’s it,” he admitted. “It’s such a tough decision to make.”

JWP allots a few true snow days per year. If school has to close because of weather, the district has “flex

days” during which students can still do school work online. “I don’t know if we should do a flex day on Thursday,” he said. “I’m not sure how productive the students could be.”

To avoid using too many snow days at once, Erler thought about talking with the district union representatives about using a comp day in place of a true snow day. He also considered making days that the school will have to close due to weather staff development days.

Erler reported that enrollment numbers are down by eight students since the November meeting. “We had a few exchange students leave us, and other students transferred to better situations for them,” he explained. Another two students are expected to join the JWP district in January.

He also let the board know of two resignations. Jessica Keenan will step down as a co-head coach for track while Jeff Wagner will not be coaching football next season.

After approving a few policies and accepting \$9,411 in donations (with many thanks), Seys presented departing school board member Tim Johnson with a plaque for his 12

“We want to try and help decrease the amount that taxpayers are paying.”  
— Board member Laura Seys

years on the board.

“It’s been fun and an experience, that’s for sure,” Johnson said. “It’s not as bad as people seem to think it is. We’ve accomplished a lot over the past 12 years because we have a great staff. I’m excited to see where Jeremy and his team go from here. He’s got the right pieces.”

Kendra Hoehn, who was not present at the meeting, will also receive a joint plaque with her and her husband’s name on it. Dan Hoehn passed away in the middle of his term, and Kendra was voted in as a board member shortly after.

Joan Olson and Kevin Born will be taking the place of Hoehn and Johnson in January.

The meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

JWP baseball team eyes Florida

By **MICHAEL ROY**  
Editor

The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton School Board received a presentation on the baseball team’s spring break trip for 2024 at its meeting Monday, Dec. 19. Head Coach Cory Jewison, Assistant Coach Tyler Fellows, and varsity players Cole Blomstrom and Josh Bengtson spoke at the meeting on the team’s behalf.

The team plans a trip to Vero Beach, Florida to spend a few days at the Jackie Robinson Training Center to get the varsity kids some valuable life experience and a chance to play on a quality baseball field against other teams from across the country early in the season. The team will fly to Florida March 24, the Sunday after the state boys’ basketball tournament, and return either the Friday or Saturday before Easter.

“We thought that would be the best time to schedule it, between the end of the basketball tournament and when the spring sports season begins,” Coach Jewison explained. “We also have a five-day spring break scheduled for next school year, so the kids wouldn’t miss school if we did the trip then.”

Jewison broke down the numbers for the school board, claiming that the average cost for each person would be roughly \$149 per player and \$139 per coach.

When school board member Tim

Burke asked why Jewison and the team chose the Jackie Robinson Training Center, Jewison responded that almost everything the team needed from food to lodging was on-site. Tampa Bay’s facilities were also considered, but the convenience of the training center in Vero Beach won him over.

“There is 24/7 security on-site, which is nice,” he added. “Sometimes, kids can get into some trouble at hotels. With the training center, they have an enforced curfew.”

The training facilities have a 6,500-seat stadium, four additional 90-foot fields, a half field for practice, plenty of batting cages, 32 practice pitching mounds, a weight room, and all the equipment needed to maintain the fields.

Players will be expected to sign a contract for the trip, complete homework ahead of time (if teachers allow it), maintain a C in every class, have at least an 85% attendance rate, and be on good behavior throughout the time away. Additionally, Jewison plans to have a meeting January 15, 2023 with all the players and parents to talk about the trip. Jewison wants commitments by players for the trip by February 3 and will set a deadline for September 30 for players who committed to the trip to decide not to go.

“That way, we have a month before the registration deadline for the

facilities,” Jewison said.

He concluded that this would be a great opportunity for the boys, pointing out local teams like Stewartville and Hayfield have done trips such as this in the past.

JWP varsity players Josh Bengtson and Cole Blomstrom then had the chance to speak. “I want to go to Florida because it’d be a great opportunity to play on a good field and face some competition,” Bengtson said.

“It would be a chance for some good team bonding,” Blomstrom added. “It’d help the baseball program and potentially encourage people to join in the future if they’re looking for an opportunity.”

Board member Tim Oelke asked Jewison how many kids would need to sign up to make the trip feasible. “We’d need a minimum of 12 to have a team to field,” he replied. “20 would be great.”

Kids on the baseball teams that wouldn’t want to go on the trip will have the option to stay behind and help the junior high teams prepare for their season. “It would be a great opportunity for them to teach those younger players while they are practicing.”

Oelke suggested that it may be more feasible for the baseball players to go on a trip every three years instead of the original plan of every other year. Assistant Coach Tyler Fellows then explained the rationale for every other year.

“Every other year, the state basketball tournament dates flip between the girls and boys. We work in our games for the regular season between that.”

After a few other questions about logistics, the school board held further discussion after the team left. Oelke suggested that Jewison should submit all of his stipulations for the trip formally so that Athletic Director Paul Brunner and Superintendent Jeremy Erler can take a look at them.

Additionally board member Laura Seys wanted some clarification on the grade requirements. Fellow member Sherri Daschner wanted to know whether the facility would have contracts to sign. “Would he have to sign those or would we?” She further questioned.

The district business manager Matt Moline also considered whether any Title IX issues would be something to look into.

After getting all their questions on the record, all six board members present approved of the baseball team’s spring break trip to Jackie Robinson Training Center in 2024.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Thank you, our readers, sponsors, and advertisers for making my life as a journalist possible. Here's to 2023.

MOMENTS IN TIME

**25 Years Ago – Waseca County News, December 23, 1997**

- At its 11 a.m. contemporary service, Grace Lutheran Church’s musicians fill the air with music worshipping God. The “band” is cramped into a corner and when the service is over, its equipment is stored near the altar, leaving little room for anything else. Meetings in stairwells and balconies, a leaky roof and tripping over things because of a lack of storage area are all problems the church currently face. The list goes on. The church recently released the results of an extensive seven-week building appeal that raised over \$778,000. That amount, in addition to the \$1 million bequested to the church by the late Andrew Breck and Alfreda Turnacliff, leave the church still about \$335,000 short of its \$2.1 million goal. On Monday night, the church board voted to present to the congregation a plan that would allow Grace Lutheran to borrow up to a maximum of \$300,000.

- The Waseca Arts Council, the Waseca County Historical Society and the First National Bank of Waseca have collaborated on a 1998 calendar featuring old photos of Waseca schools. Photos included in the book include the original Central High School before it was destroyed by fire in 1923, a 1910 George Washington Day pageant, the 1918 state champion Waseca basketball team, the current Central School building before an additions were added, the Oak Grove School, the 1945 Central marching band, the Sacred Heart Academy and church in about 1910, the School Patrol in the 1950s, the original South Side School, the high school faculty at the turn of the century and Wilton School students in 1951.

- At Tuesday night’s Waseca City Council meeting Thompson’s Boat House requested to have a full liquor license for 1998. Thompson’s currently has a license for beer sales, but wishes to have the full liquor license including Sunday sale. The owner of Thompson’s, Jim Blake, said he felt the restaurant was at a disadvantage from other businesses in the city because it did not have a full liquor license. All liquor and cigarette licenses were renewed by the Waseca City council on Tuesday including approval of Thompson’s request.

**50 Years Ago – Waseca’s Daily Journal, December 15, 1972**

- The UBA Lighthouse, a novelty shop, opened its doors Tuesday at 103 ½ South State Street. The shop specializes in herbs, spices, teas, candles, pottery, records and books. There will also be some antiques and handcraft items sold. Owners of the shop are David Fierke, Tom Parnoda, Greg Thompson, Robyn Wood and Gayle Siegel. The five partners in the shop reside in the Morristown area on a farm.

- A fire caused by spontaneous ignition brought firemen out last night. A call came from the Red Owl store at 6:19 last night. The fire department answered the call and found that rubbish was burning behind the store next to Herters. Fire Chief Slim Cunningham said that scraping from the paint booth at Herters had been dumped outside and it caused spontaneous ignition starting the fire. Cunningham said that fumes carried into the store and the department was then called. He said there was no damage from the fire.

- Eleven train cars were derailed at about 9:15 a.m. today and six of them were badly damaged as they hit the ditch six miles west of Waseca. Dave Born, who lives on the former Clifford Oestreich farm, was one of the witnesses to the derailment this morning. He told the JOURNAL “It was really something to see. I was watering the pigs and I saw the train coming and then I heard this clang, clang, clang and saw the snow flying up in the air. I knew something was wrong. I thought it was a track that was raising up and the clang was coming from hitting the next set of wheels, but it kept going for a while, and then the cars started hitting the ditch.”

**75 Years Ago – Waseca Herald, December 11, 1947**

- The Veterans of Foreign Wars at a meeting last week took action on the construction of a building for the V.F.W. Post and Auxiliary which will cost \$20,000, it is estimated. Members instructed the ways and means committee to follow through with their present plans to purchase property and erect a one story building 45 x 65 feet with a basement. The Committee in charge of the project is composed of Commanger Joseph H. Friedel; Robert Welch, senior vice commander; Robert Buchler, junior vice commander; Fred Hager, adjutant; L. J. Lewis, quartermaster, and Fred Miller, Charles Woyke, Ray Clayton, Edward Bollum, Ben Elton and Louis F. Kastner.

- The service station operated by Andy Sotebeer on East Elm avenue by the gas ball was robbed early Sunday and some \$15 in cash was taken as well as \$5 in merchandise. The robbery, Mr. Sotebeer stated, must have taken place between 1 a.m. and 7 a.m. He discovered the loss when he opened the station about 11:30 Sunday morning. The thief had broken a window pane to enter.

- He hasn’t been late to church in 53 years, but there are those who suspect that no one would know if he were, as he might set the clock to his own schedule. Because the custodian sometimes forgot it, William Pollard started back in 1889 to wind the clock in Olivet Methodist church each Sunday morning. After 58 years he still looks after his self-appointed chore. Fore 56 years he has been a trustee of the church, and most of that time its treasurer. Mr. Pollard is in his 80th year.

**100 Years Ago – The Waseca Journal, December 27, 1922**

- “It was the best banquet I ever attended in my life” was the way G. P. Madden expressed the banquet of the county officers held at the Waverly Hotel last Thursday evening. One thing which made the banquet more enjoyable to all of the county officials was that there was no speech making. The county officers run on the theory that a fellow can never enjoy a banquet if he feels that in the next minute he may be called on to give a speech and inasmuch as Waseca’s officials are long on work and short on oratory they left out the oratory.

- R. R. Brown, Janesville attorney, is Waseca county’s new Judge of Probate. This office was vacated by Judge Senn’s election to the District Judgeship and Mr. Brown received his appointment from Gov. Preus last Friday. Mr. Brown is very well known in the county, having run for county attorney in 1918 and now being chairman of the county Republican committee. He will take this office at once and will move to Waseca from Janesville at once.

- After the services at the Congregational church Sunday evening the three choirs that took part asked permission to sing at the Memorial hospital which was gladly granted them. The choirs assembled in the hall and sang several Christmas songs for the enjoyment of the people confined there. The choirs also sang at the Wamsley home for Leo Wamsley who is confined to his room by illness. The choir of the M. E. church also sang at the hospital Christmas morning.

‘23 City levy approved, 8% increase

**By ELI LUTGENS**  
Publisher/Editor

The snow plow has been fixed, residents with unpaid water bills have been sent letters, and the final tax levy was approved during the regular meeting of the Waldorf City Council, Monday, Dec. 12, 2023.

Noting that Mayor Rob Wilkening is in the Philippines for two months working and visiting his wife, and commenting that he chose to be gone during the “hot season,” council member Kevin Lines has been filling in for him. Lines suggested the council approve the preliminary tax levy, including an 8% increase from the previous year. “Other towns are a lot higher. We’re fortunate it doesn’t take as much money to run our city as it does for larger ones.”

The council approved the general and fire levies for 2023-24 in the amounts of (respectively) \$118,389 and \$31,492.

Approval was given to a number of miscellaneous items which constituted the majority of the evening’s agenda: November’s meeting minutes; certificate of final approval for street project; account balances; fire and retention payments; and a liquor license for off-sale and Sunday sales for Lonna Westphal-Klug at Papa Olie’s Bar and Grill.

In conjunction with the miscellaneous approvals of the council, some more serious matters and general updates were touched on.

Ron Fischer delivered the maintenance report and shared that the snow plow has been fixed. An extra cylinder has been purchased for \$1,000 in the event of a future failure. Council members nodded their heads in approval.

On a somber note, Xcel energy was contacted about putting in outlets on their poles in order to hang Christmas lights. Xcel informed the city that the poles they have are not to have anything hung on them because they are power poles with multiple lines running up them. The item was as “officially tabled” as anything at these meetings can be, until the summer when the city can discuss putting up different light poles capable of accommodating Christmas lights.

A new chlorine scale was installed at the water plant.

More than \$3,000 of water bills remain uncollected, which caused the longest discussion of the night. It was determined the best course of action was to send letters saying the past due balances must be paid by Dec. 22, 2022 or those costs will be sent to the Auditor to be assessed on their taxes. Several residents are applying for a program through Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) which will cover their past due balances. This program is available to anyone with a past due utility bill and is a carryover from a post-covid program. A letter from MVAC stating residents have been accepted for said program will also suffice and allow the late payers to avoid a tax assessment.

In the Water and Sewer report it was shared that arrangements for the new fluoride pumps are still in discussion.

A change order for 500 tons of pavement which was accidentally billed to Waseca County instead of the City of Waldorf during its summer street project was approved in the amount of about \$50,000. In the chaos of the hundreds of “pay tickets” received during the project, Lee Istvanovich of Short Elliot Hendrickson (SEH), the city’s contracted engineers, entered the incorrect date into the spreadsheet.

The final payment to Holtmeier Construction in the amount of \$145,359 was approved, which included the above change order.

The council approved another large payment, this time to SEH, for \$45,000 for construction costs from the summer street repair project. A letter, read aloud, shared the details which explained that

**WALDORF CITY COUNCIL**

the funds paid to SEH were coming from their state grant. The project, in the end, came in about \$37,000 under budget.

The Water and Sewer report was approved.

The Fire Department report was approved following the tabling of approval of fire department purchases. An audit from Clifton Larson Allen, which was completed and also approved at the night’s meeting, found that because the city owns the fire department, the city council needs to approve any purchases. This was the discussion which was tabled until the mayor returns from the Philippines.

Felt pads purchased for community center tables are missing, however, enough remain for all of the tables. Council members are unsure what happened to them. A brief discussion yielded no helpful information, but ultimately determined it was highly unlikely anyone had stolen them. More than likely, they were misplaced or already placed on said tables.

The second-longest discussion of the night centered around the rental fees for the community center. In the end the council determined that having fewer rental options is best. Interested persons can rent the front half, including the kitchen, or simply the entire community center. This was in place of the previous setup, which included five different rental options. A small internal investigation also showed that 4-H renters who did scrapbooking, left a “disgusting mess.” Half of their rental deposit was retained and the council was urged to instruct users to show more respect for the community space.

A “state of the city” address will be Feb. 6, 2023 followed by a public meeting to discuss redesignating a piece of property so that it is no longer considered an alley for Dave Bottin. Also to be discussed will be the option of allowing the construction of an apartment building and playground/picnic area on the city-owned football field.

A somewhat heated discussion took place regarding what to do about residents who complicate snow removal by leaving their cars parked on city streets. Rapid-fire suggestions were offered that cars should be towed, ticketed, or warned. A look into the city ordinance will occur before any action is taken.

Waste Management will no longer be providing “yellow bag” service beginning Feb. 1, 2023. The city has two options:

City contracted garbage services

Individual contracts for residents

Both options have different strengths and weaknesses. Waste Management will present the city with a proposal for a city contract, which would, likely, provide considerably cheaper garbage rates for Waldorf residents, but, it would also mean the city would have to administer the program, meaning residents pay for the service regardless of whether they want it or not. Some people would prefer that residents take care of their own garbage instead of adding another city service. Having residents seek out their own waste collection service, though, raised the possibility that some might not acquire any service. The topic was tabled until a proposal is received from Waste Management.

Deputy Mayor Lines announced the state department of transportation intends to resurface Highway 22 from Mapleton to Wells. He learned about this project the day of the meeting. No more specifics were shared. If the project happens, it would create more traffic on Highway 83 going by Waldorf.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

‘23 Levy approved

**By JESSICA LUTGENS**  
Staff Writer

The New Richland City Council presented outgoing mayor Gail Schmidt with a plaque and a gavel made by Council member Jason Casey during the council’s final meeting of the year on Monday, Dec. 12. Schmidt was thanked for her years of service to the city during her time as New Richland’s mayor.

A Truth in Taxation hearing was held at the beginning of the meeting, and the 2023 budget and tax levy were approved via Resolution 22-18. The 2023 tax levy was set at a 5.71% increase from 2022. One bases for the higher rate was the cost of a classification/compensation study completed in 2022 which updated the city’s outdated compensation plan; the results of the study will help recruit and retain qualified staff for the city. Also increasing city costs was replacement of an emergency warning siren, which will be paid in part by a grant, but which requires matching funds from the city. There were also increases in fees associated with various departments. Repairs and maintenance were needed across all departments because the city has had issues with aging equipment.

The full Truth in Taxation report, which includes the 2023 budget, can be found on the city website in the Dec. 12, 2022 council packet.

The fire department report, submitted in writing, showed that the New Richland Fire Department responded to three calls in November - two medical calls and one fire call that turned out to be a false alarm. The report was approved, along with Resolution 22-19 accepting a \$75,000 donation from the Fire Relief Association to be used for equipment for the department.

The police report stated that the NRPD responded to 89 calls for service in November, bringing the total number of calls for 2022 to 1,226 as of the end of November. The report was approved.

The Care Center report, submitted in writing, showed that the center had an average November census of 37/45, or 82.2%, as well as an average annual census of 38.5/45, or 85.5%. A grant applied for in October was not awarded to the center, and it was noted that the race for the grant was very competitive with over 200 community applications received and 24 selected. Even so, a Retention Committee has been established for the center through which improvements to the center’s community culture will be worked on.

Some ideas the center will focus on in 2023 include a recognition program for employees and a first annual community picnic. A recruitment party was mentioned, and the center will continue working on its staff referral structure, extending tasks to the Advisory Board to further develop the center’s community.

Infection Preventionist Kelly Thibodeau has been hired per a new requirement by the Minnesota DHS. Applications for ECPN (Equitable Cost-Sharing for Publicly-Owned Nursing Facilities), a program designed to provide improved reimbursement to facilities that are city, county, or hospital district owned, and an employee retention credit, compensation for having retained employees during the pandemic and taking part in the Paycheck



During the final meeting of the year for the New Richland City Council, Mayor Gail Schmidt was presented with a certificate of thanks for “dedication, commitment, and stewardship in leading the city as its mayor.” Council person Jason Casey presented the mayor with a hand-made gavel and block as a way of saying thank you for her leadership.

Protection Program from the Cares act, are being worked on. The care center report was approved.

The PeopleService report, submitted in writing, stated that operations at the wastewater treatment plant are running well. The report, along with contract fees regarding the city’s maximum annual maintenance/repair (non-capital) expenditure amount and monthly compensation, was approved.

The water and street report stated that 25 blue cards were issued to residents in November, resulting in five shutoffs due to lack of payment. The report was approved.

In the city administrator’s report, it was stated that work on a five-year capital plan for the city was finalized, City Administrator Martens met with Advance Waseca County Community Consultant, attended the Advance

Waseca County Executive Board meeting, and participated in the League of Minnesota Cities Staff and Board meeting hosted at the New Richland City Hall. It was noted that city hall will be closed Dec. 23 and Dec. 26 in observance of Christmas, and on the Jan. 2 legal holiday in observance of New Year’s Day.

Special recognition was given to Mayor Schmidt, with Martens noting, “I want to recognize and thank Mayor Gail Schmidt for her service to the community over the last two years. Her tenure was especially challenging leading the community and council through quite a turnover at the city administrator position. I wish you the best in your future endeavors!”

The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

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During the annual Sheriff's conference Monday, December 5, Waseca County Sheriff Brad Milbrath presented administration receptionist Kari Gehring with the Support Person of the Year Award. Gehring has worked as an executive assistant under three sheriffs during her 24 years at the office. She is noted as an invaluable worker who "keeps the entire office operational" and "a kind and gentle soul that greets everyone with a smile."



Joe Roeker, an investigator for the Waseca County Sheriff's Department, completed the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension's Investigative Certificate program, an extensive training that covers crime scene processing, predatory offender registrations and investigations, search warrant writing, financial crimes, and narcotics investigations. Roeker is pictured with Sheriff Brad Milbrath, who presented him with the award.

Janesville woman facing felony charges

By MICHAEL ROY  
Editor

Amanda Wheelock, 43, is facing felony charges for financial transaction card fraud after opening two credit card accounts in a man's name without his consent. She was charged with this crime on November 30, 2022, according to the criminal complaint.

Between July 29, 2021 and January 28, 2022, Wheelock opened credit card accounts to Credit One and Capital One. The transactions on those accounts were more than \$4,000, which in the state of Minnesota could result in up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$20,000.

The victim of the credit card fraud, who remained anonymous in the report, reported the fraud to the Janesville Police Department. He suspected that Wheelock, his mother, was the one who opened the accounts using his name and social security number.

The statement of probable cause says that about three to four weeks prior to visiting the police, he received a credit card bill from Credit One for an account he had not created. He then opened an Experian Application on his phone and found that another credit card had been opened under

his name with Capital One.

The victim then called both companies and discovered that Wheelock's email address had been provided on the applications. The last four numbers of the phone number used to open the accounts also matched Wheelock's cell phone number. The victim then made a report of fraud to both companies.

When the victim confronted his mother about the accounts, she denied making them. When asked to accompany him to the police department to make the report, she refused.

The male and Wheelock shared a post office box mailing address in Janesville up until the week before the statement of probable cause was filed. The report states Wheelock was always the one to pick up the mail. The report also noted that the man had not lived with Wheelock since graduating from high school, and that she never spoke to him about opening any credit card accounts in his name. He also claimed she had his social security card and when he had asked her for it, she told him she lost it.

Wheelock will make her first court appearance on January 3.

\$68.41, and a mid-sized commercial property will see a decrease of \$679.83. "A mountain of data goes into those few slides you just saw," Johnson explained, and said those with questions about that data could contact him at michael.johnson@co.waseca.mn.us for further information.

Salary negotiations for 2023

By TRISTAN JENSEN  
Staff Writer

Sheriff Elect Jay Dulas was appointed as Interim Sheriff for December 30 to January 3 during the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners held at 5:30 p.m. December 20, 2022. Waseca County found itself in what County Administrator Michael Johnson described as an "interesting statutory position." State laws require counties to employ an active sheriff at all times. Sheriff Milbrath's retirement becomes official December 30. In such cases, the most commonly appointed interim is the chief deputy to the sheriff. However, Waseca County's Chief Deputy has tendered his resignation effective December 30. County staff recommended Dulas serve as interim until his own swearing in on January 3, and the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to accept the recommendation. Tammy Spooner, Director of Waseca County Property and Election Services, administered Dulas' oath.

The board also passed a resolution to send a Letter of Commitment for local match with the grant application submitted by Bevcomm for the Border-to-Border Broadband Grant. Bevcomm CEO Bill Eckles spoke to the board during a work session held November 22 about his company's plans for this grant. Bevcomm hopes to use grant money to fund infrastructure improvements that will bring high-speed broadband internet to a minimum of 200 homes in Waseca County currently classified by the Federal Communications Commission as "underserved" or "unserved." The estimated total cost of the project is \$2,268,000, 50% to be funded by grant money, 25% to be funded by local match, and 25% plus any overruns to be funded by Bevcomm. The county's Letter of Commitment

agrees that, in the case that Bevcomm receives the Border-to-Border Broadband grant, Waseca County will provide \$567,000 toward the project. The county's portion need not be paid until the project is completed, which is estimated to be in 2025. It will be entirely funded by American Rescue Plan Act money which the county has already set aside for broadband infrastructure, and thus will have no impact on tax levies. Johnson reported that Bevcomm intends to build out as much as possible from this infrastructure project, providing direct connection to every consenting home possible at no cost to the homeowner if done during the initial installation. Direct connections of this type installed after the fact, Johnson said, can carry bills in the thousands.

The board approved a request from Spooner to do a special check run on December 29 to pay bills before the end of the fiscal year, a practice that she says has been beneficial the past few years. The annual lease renewal with MN Prairie County Alliance for space at 1000 West Elm Street was updated to remove the basement storage space, which MNPCA has never utilized, lowering the lease amount from \$231,096 to 209,347. The Board of Commissioners also resolved to enter into a contract with Anoka County for secure juvenile detention beds, of which there is a shortage in Minnesota. The contract guarantees Waseca County access to 547 days' worth of bed usage in Anoka County facilities at a savings rate of \$59/day compared to the rate without this contract. The contract currently extends through December of 2026 but can be exited with proper notice. The county's All Hazard Mitigation Plan, required by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, must be renewed in

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

2023: The board authorized participation in the planning process and execution of the agreement reached with the state for that renewal. These plans are funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency with 75% of funds allocated at the state level and 25% of funds, a minimum of \$9,250, allocated at the county level.

Salary issues rounded out the agenda, with three items to be approved. Wage increases for non-union county employees were set to follow the same standards set by the union contracts, which is the standard procedure for these employees in Waseca County.

Also to be approved were salaries for County Attorney Rachel Cornelius and for the Board of Commissioners. The established process for these salaries is for the labor committee to meet with the official to look at market data and generate a recommendation to bring before the Board of Commissioners for voting. The recommendation made for Cornelius' 2023 salary was \$137,500. Commissioner Doug Christopherson questioned the figure, stating that his calculations based on counties of similar population size showed a lower average. Johnson explained that the county uses a prescriptive model based on thirteen "benchmark counties" which generated the amount. Christopherson's broader method couldn't be guaranteed to account for variations in crime rates or support staff at the same level as the established model. Deja Weber, Assistant County Attorney, spoke up in support of Cornelius, who could not be present at the meeting. Cornelius

has a long tenure with Waseca County, Weber said, and has a "sterling reputation." She stressed the importance of retention, citing that many counties struggle with hiring and retention in their County Attorney departments since private practice is much more lucrative. Brought to a vote, the measure to set Cornelius' salary passed 4-1, with Christopherson voting against. The salary recommendation given for the Board of Commissioners according to the benchmark data was \$34,000, plus an additional \$2,000 for the Chair, with a \$100 per diem for time spent on official duties outside of regular meetings. Commissioner Blair Nelson moved to approve this rate, but the motion failed for lack of a second. Commissioner Brian Harguth then moved for the salary to be set at the median amount listed in their documentation, \$29,777, with an additional \$2,000 for the Chair and for the per diem to remain at \$95. Commissioner DeAnne Malterer seconded the motion. Christopherson stated that he does not feel underpaid at the board's current salary of \$25,848 and that he knew what the salary would be both times he's run for his position. Nelson weighed in on the opposite side of the issue, in favor of the original higher salary, pointing out that in the 12 years he's served on the board, commissioners have taken no increase five times and that he feels the effort put in by the board justified the amount in the county's current economic position. "I don't look at us as an average board," he explained, going on to discuss his involvement with multi-county initiatives. Harguth's motion passed 4-1, with Christopherson voting against. Following the vote, Christopherson stated that he would not accept the salary increase for himself.

■ Service

from Page 1

up and down the streets of Waseca.

"There are times that (this job) is more than a person thought they could handle. I can't give enough recognition to my wife. Coming home from council meetings, wondering why are we doing this? She reminded me, made me remember, why, I couldn't do this if she didn't support me throughout. The same is true for my kids and grandkids. I'm incredibly fortunate. And for all the people who have been up here and supported me, I'd love to thank each and everyone one of them by name, but I just couldn't. And to everyone who comes up here to represent the finest people in the United States, the residents of Waseca. Thank you."

Rose said he promised his wife he wouldn't cry. He broke that promise. "Fantastic constituents, an unbelievable 26 years," Rose trailed off. "There's no crying in baseball," Councilperson Stacey Schroeder joked. "That's right," Rose chuckled. "I have to thank all my constituents who voted for me through 7

elections. It's been quite a 26 years and I've enjoyed it all. I have a lot of things I can tell young council people coming aboard and I'll do that in private. What I can tell you is one thing. The best way to deal with constituents, happy or angry ones, whether they're calling to complain or something else is to go to their home. (Meet them in person). It works. It works every time."

The tears continued to flow. "It's getting harder now," Rose continued smiling through the tears. "I'm gonna write a letter and ask Carl to read it (at a later date). Thank you everyone."

The meeting drew to a close about an hour and half later, but not before every member of the city council expressed his or her gratitude for Mayor Srp and Councilman Rose.

"We are losing a lot of experience from you guys," Councilman Mark Christiansen said. "Thank you. And when you get bored, make sure you'll watch a few meetings and give us a hard time."

"It's been nice working with these two for the past eight years," Councilman Darren Arndt said. "Thank you for your expertise."

Mayor Srp pulled out his handkerchief just then and jokingly asked Rose if he needed it. "It's clean." Srp thanked Rose for serving as

"I'm going to miss this position. I'm going to miss having people come up to me and complain. Well they'll probably still complain. Representing the city of Wasca as mayor has been an honor. Thank you all for your support over the years." — Waseca Mayor Roy Srp

mayor pro-temp during his time with the railroad. Derailments could pull Srp from anything and "I had to go for those. I couldn't say I was the mayor, I have to go to a meeting."

The pair shared a smile over the shared memories.

"We got through it," Rose smiled.

"It has been an honor to serve with you these past few years," Councilman John Mansfield expressed. "You persevere and you keep going. I wish you the best in retirement. Even if it's in Arizona (Rose)."

"These past six years I've learned a lot," Councilman Jeremy Conrath added. "I'm going to miss both of you."

Rose promised Conrath, "Don't worry, I'll still be on your case." Although Mayor Srp forgot his an-

nual tradition of singing "Merry Christmas," at the close of the meeting, he did get the final word.

"I'm going to miss this position. I'm going to miss having people come up to me and complain. Well, they'll probably still complain. Representing the City of Wasca as mayor has been an honor. Thank you all for your support over the years."

*\*Editorial note - Mayor Srp requested media outlets in town not interview him, so this will likely be the only article referencing his career. He did make a note telling the Pioneer that sharing his journey and battle as an alcoholic was his story, at least a major part of it. Readers interested in reading said article can find it on the Pioneer's new website, expected in early January, 2023.*

Presentation



Board members of the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center accepted a \$31,577 donation from the Boxcar Bar raised from its annual Santa Anonymous auction. Accepting the check on Tuesday, Dec. 20, from left: Jim Britton, Gretchen Priebe, Bev Herfindahl, Todd Schmidt, and Rhonda Christianson.

In brief

Sheriff Milbrath Retirement Celebration at the Mill Dec. 30

On Friday, December 20 at 5:30 p.m. is a retirement celebration for Waseca County Sheriff Brad Milbrath at the Mill. Milbrath served with the Sheriff's Office for 34 years.

Allan Rose Retirement Party at American Legion Dec. 30

After serving 31 years of service to the Waseca City Council, Allan Rose is retiring. All are invited to join Rose in celebrating his retirement at the Waseca American Legion December 30 from 5-9 p.m.

Waseca Airport Naming Ceremony Dec. 27

On Tuesday, December 27, from noon to 2 p.m., there will be a naming ceremony for the Waseca Municipal Airport taking place in the FBO Hangar. The airport will be named the "Maynard Richard Stensrud Field."

■ County

from Page 1

household will see an increase of \$48.99, the median residential homestead will see an increase of



Before the second annual Janesville Christmas parade, there was a photo opportunity with Santa Claus at the Purple Goose. Helping organize and run the event were, clockwise from top left: Melissa Oachs, Holly Oliver, Brielle Bure, Santa Claus (Mark Spitzack), Ellah Oliver, and Aubrey Weedman.

## Second annual Christmas parade

**By MICHAEL ROY**  
Editor

Dozens of Janesville residents gathered to celebrate the town’s second Annual Holiday Parade at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 17. And just like last year, a family going through hard times saw the community come together for them.

The family of Aaron (Katie) Schlingmann were this year’s honorees for the parade. Schlingmann sadly passed away from a motorcycle accident a few months ago. “We wanted to honor them and help out any way we could,” said Holly Oliver, one of the event’s organizers.

The parade started last year as a way to honor five-year-old Janesville native Ethan Delaske, who at the time was battling stage four neuroblastoma, a rare form of cancer that affects the brain. His family hoped the parade will be a new Christmas tradition for the City of Janesville for years to come. It seems like their wish is coming true.

“We would like to do this every year for a family,” Melissa Oachs explained. “It’s difficult going through the first Christmas after losing a family member to a tragedy. We want to be able to give them the community support to make their Christmas a little brighter.”

At 4 p.m., there was a photo opportunity with Santa Claus for the little children at the Purple Goose. Boxes for donations to

the Schlingmann family and the Janesville Food Shelf were also made available.

Three Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton students and St. Ann Catholic Church members were also volunteers during the photo op: Brielle Bure, Ellah Oliver, and Aubrey Weedman. “They graciously volunteered time to help out with this event,” Holly Oliver said.

At 6 p.m., a line of vehicles gathered by the Main Street softball fields and made their way through downtown Janesville. “We had around 20 units for this year’s parade,” Oachs shared. “While it wasn’t as big of a parade as last year, we hope that we will continue to grow every year.”

Frigid temperatures didn’t stop families from seeing all the lights on display in the parade—the beautifully decorated units featured Bure Trucking, Autumn Acres, the Delaske Family, the Janesville Police and Fire Departments, and many others.

There are already plans to have a Christmas parade for 2023 and beyond. Both Oachs and Oliver are hopeful that the event will become bigger as time goes on.

“If anyone is interested in sponsoring, we would be more than happy to have them,” Oliver concluded. “We want to keep bringing Christmas cheer to Janesville and honoring families as long as we can.”

## Janesville craft and vendor show

**By MICHAEL ROY**  
Editor

Purple Goose in Janesville was the place to be once again for a winter craft and vendor show Saturday, December 10 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event was organized by Jenny James and Cindy Rutherford with the help of Purple Goose owner Judy Jacobs.

Vendors, crafters, and small business owners from Mankato to Waseca gathered to show off items from custom-made t-shirts to crystals and a mood reading.

Sister Songbird Creations, owned by sisters Lynette Spurgin and Lori Smith, was one of the crafters at the show. They had one of the biggest spots available in the Purple Goose banquet hall, and filled it with Christmas and winter-themed decor.

“We absolutely love Christmastime,” Smith claimed.

The sisters have been at it for a few years now. “We figured, ‘Why not do something we love together?’” Spurgin said.

Another popular vendor at the show was Mary’s Mittens, offering repurposed sweaters made into gloves. Mary has been in the mitten-making business for four years. “I thought, ‘Why waste a perfectly good sweater when you can make something else out of it?’” she explained. “That’s how I got started doing this. I use poly-fleece lining in my

mittens.”

She also goes out of her way to find Kashmir (also “cashmere”) sweaters to repurpose into mittens. “They are so soft,” she added.

Pippi Lane boutique out of Waseca was also at the craft and vendor show. Aside from their usual clothing, they also had balsamic vinegar and oil samples for people to try and buy.

“It’s a lot of fun going to these craft and vendor shows,” owner Kristin Fox said. “You get the chance to show what you have to offer to people who may not know your business or don’t come through town often.”

While the adults shopped around at the craft and vendor booths, there was an opportunity for children to get crafty and make Christmas-themed “easy beads.”

“We wanted the kids to have fun while their parents took time to check out all the vendors at the show,” Cindy Rutherford said. “The beads take about 10 to 20 minutes to make.”

There was a little something for everybody at the winter craft and vendor show. It was a nice reminder that in a small community, everyone has something to offer, whether it’s Pampered Chef items, books, or something to brighten up the Christmas spirit.

## Board approves levy with 2% increase

**By MELISSA DUNN**  
Staff Writer

At the December 15th regular school board meeting, district business manager Elizabeth Beery presented taxation information, issued annually between November 24th and December 30th as required by state law. During her presentation, Beery projected a slide illustrating Waseca’s historical levy amounts in dollars and percentages from the years 2007-2023, highlighting the 2.34% property tax levy decrease for the 2023-2024 school year. The school district’s revenues and expenditures budget for fiscal years 2022 and 2023 was posted on the Waseca Public School website back in November. Beery stated she will also

post the Truth in Taxation presentation there as well.

Superintendent Eric Hudspith reported that the administration was getting good feedback from staff regarding the professional development opportunities offered in the district. “We’ve been learning a lot,” Hudspith told the board. “When you have staff with such a variety of expertise, and such a variety of assignments, trying to develop professional development that is applicable to everybody is a challenge. Our team has been doing a fantastic job but we can always get better.” Hudspith also reiterated the importance of the vision cards each department and building administrator develops in accordance with the district’s strategic plan, and

**WASECA SCHOOL BOARD**

the use of student assessments to plan instruction. “We’re not just using it as a number to assess a student—you did well, you didn’t do well—but how do we use that to create instructional opportunities for kids?” He reminded the board of the upcoming strategic plan refresh process taking place after the start of the new year.

Other items addressed included Director of Teaching & Learning Brooke McGuire’s report on the district’s World’s Best Workforce strategic plan. The World’s Best Workforce (WBWF) was developed

in 2013 by the state of Minnesota to ensure that school districts and charter schools enhance student achievement through teaching and learning supports. School boards that govern districts and charter schools are required to develop comprehensive, long-term strategic plans that address the five WBWF goals: that all children are ready for school, all third-graders can read at grade level, all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed, all students are ready for career and college, and all students graduate from high school. McGuire showed the board a PowerPoint presentation illustrating how the district currently performs as compared to previous years.

### Waseca Area Foundation Awards



Waseca County 4-H received a grant for \$2,500 for programming enhancements during the Waseca Area Foundation’s awards program in November.

Amy Nelson, 4-H extension educator, was accompanied by high school students Joe and Isaac Feldcamp when she accepted the grant. The Feldcamp’s show rabbits, chickens, and other non-livestock through 4-H. “I’ve been to the state fair twice,” Joe Feldcamp said. “I would just like to say thank you to 4-H for providing opportunities for youth like me.” Isaac Feldcamp agreed and said 4-H has allotted him the opportunity to make a lot of friends.

More than 200 youth are enrolled in the local 4-H according to Nelson, who said 4-H prepares students to be public speakers, communicators, to lead our community into the future. These funds will be used to reach more youth not currently reached through 4-H programs.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens



Lutheran social services received a grant for \$2,000, for foster family programming events, during the Waseca Area Foundation’s annual awards banquet in November. Coordinator Candy Picka, who accepted the grant, said last year they received funds to start this program which helps gather foster families together to build community connections. Last year the group did a large Christmas holiday gathering/dinner for local foster families. In May, for National Foster Care Month, the group put together a carnival, including face painting, kids games, and a pizza party. More than 150 people attended. In August the group gathered current foster families and youth who have transitioned to independent living for a picnic in the park. These funds help gather these families together. “We are really building community connection,” Coordinator Picka said. “These funds help gather these families together. It’s great seeing these connections. This money helped start that. It’s great to be able to do that.”

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens



On behalf of NRHEG’s Distributive Education Club of America club, Lisa Weegman accepted a grant for the DECA club in the amount of \$500 during the annual Waseca Area Foundation awards program in November. NRHEG’s DECA club was started this year and includes 14 excited students. The students participate in events, including a state wide convention in November. The club helps produce/foster emerging leaders in business, entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, and management. A district competition will be in January, followed by state in March, and hopefully internationals in April. This grant helped fund this club to get its start.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens



Jessica Rollins accepted a grant for \$3,000 on behalf of Farmamerica for “ag career exploration,” during the Waseca Area Foundations annual awards banquet in November. Each spring more than 500 students grades 7-9 from schools throughout Waseca County attend a career exhibit day at Farmamerica. Students rotate throughout six different learning stations, all centered around agriculture. Prior to the trip students partake in a career survey to “get interests flowing.”

“No matter what their interests are, whatever they may be, there is a connection to agriculture,” executive director Jessica Rollins said. “It’s important for students to get their first touch point at the junior high level... Students might get that first taste and think, “maybe I should stay in the community I grew up in.” The funding from this grant allows this program to be free for the 500 plus students attending. The bussing to and from the program is also covered through scholarships, so students at Waseca, JWP, NRHEG, or Trinity in Janesville, don’t have to worry about that additional cost either. “It’s really cool to see this support,” Rollins concluded.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

Thank You

To the many donors in Waseca, Janesville, and New Richland who have given to your local foundation through gifts of cash, gifts of grain, estate gifts and/or memorials. Your gifts - large or small - all make a difference!

Waseca Area Foundation Board of Directors

WASECA AREA FOUNDATION  
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OBITUARIES

Mary Susan (Splett) Opsahl

Mary Susan (Splett) Opsahl, age 59 of Elysian, passed away at her home on Saturday, December 17, 2022.

Mary was born to Melvin and Kathleen (Biggins) Splett on October 21, 1963, in Faribault, MN. She went to Waterville-Elysian School and graduated in 1982. She was very active in her school years: participating in volleyball, basketball, softball, choir & band. As a result, she has many lasting memories & good friends yet today from high school. She went on to attend Mankato State University & graduated with a teaching degree. Mary spent her entire life in the education field. Teaching in Cleveland, Montgomery, & Waseca school districts living out her life's mission of influencing young adults, before retiring in 2022. Mary taught Driver's Education & spent summers teaching behind the wheel. Mary was on the Elysian City Council for 17 years.

Mary was a wonderful wife, mother, sister, friend and grandmother, who will be deeply missed by her family and friends. Mary loved her family deeply & was always there if anyone needed anything. She was the party planner and loved to host family get-togethers, especially 4th of July celebrations, everyone was always welcome. She was the glue that held the family together. Mary lived a full, busy life & loved spending time with her children. She enjoyed camping, tubing down the river, trout fishing, traveling, following the MN Vikings, and attending Winstock music festival annually. She LOVED her fresh tomatoes & enjoyed canning tomatoes & cucumbers.

Mary will be lovingly remembered by her husband of 30 years,



Mary S. Opsahl

Mark; her two children, Cody Opsahl (Julie Sathre) of Faribault, Kyle (Tori) Opsahl of Waseca; stepson, Matt Opsahl; grandchildren, Felicia & one on the way, due in June 2023; siblings, Tom (Becky) Splett of Elysian, Dan Splett of Elysian, Patty Schumacher of Mankato, Terry (Kim) Splett of Bolton Point, New South Wales, sister-in-law, Tessie Splett of Cleveland, Joe (Julie) Splett of Elysian, Kris (Daryl) Erdman of Elysian; and 25 nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, John and Jim Splett; sister, Barbara Splett; and father-in-law, Milford Opsahl.

Memorial service will be 3 p.m. on Monday, December 26, 2022 at the Waterville Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service. Visitation will take place two hours before the service at the funeral chapel on Monday. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.dennisfuneralhomes.com

Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service

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Robert Katterhagen

Robert Katterhagen, age 95, of Waseca, Minnesota, died Monday, December 19, 2022 at Mayo Clinic Health System in New Prague with his loving family by his side.

Robert Royce Katterhagen was born on November 9, 1927, in Browerville, Minnesota. He spent much of his childhood on the farm of his grandparents, Henry and Catherine Katterhagen. He attended St. Mary's Catholic School in Long Prairie, Minnesota.

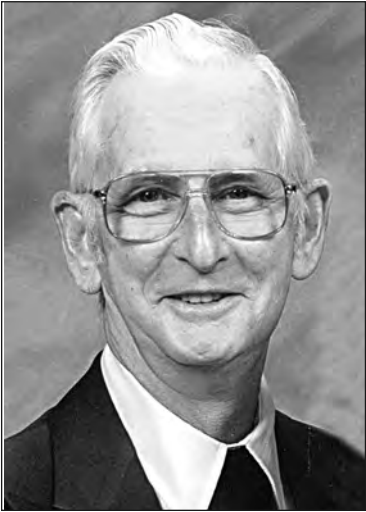
In June 1944, Robert began employment at Hart's Printing in Long Prairie, Minnesota. For 18 months, beginning in 1946, he served with the United States Army and was honorably discharged on September 13, 1947.

Robert returned to Long Prairie and resumed employment at Hart's Printing, where he met his future bride. Robert married Melba Doris Johnson on August 24, 1950, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Long Prairie, Minnesota.

Robert also resumed military service with the United States Army Reserves in September 1950. He was assigned to the 982nd Engineering Construction Battalion at Fort Leonard Wood, near Waynesville, Missouri. For 13 months, he served primarily as an Army Cook. Robert was a proud member of the American Legion.

In 1953, Robert began employment with Brown Printing Company in Waseca and so the Katterhagens moved to Janesville, Minnesota. The family later relocated to Waseca, where Robert has lived since 1954. In January of 1991, Robert retired from employment with Brown Printing Company. He had a career with 40 years of total service in the printing industry. Robert then joined the Waseca Wal-Mart staff in 1995, working part-time there for the next nine years.

Over the years, Robert enjoyed traveling to military reunions and with bus tours. In years past, he enjoyed fishing, snowmobiling, auto mechanics, woodworking, yard work, and feeding the birds. In recent years, he enjoyed listening to country music, watching western television programs, cheering for Minnesota sports teams, playing cards, and having



Robert Katterhagen

telephone calls and visits with family and friends. In earlier years, he also assisted Melba in performing volunteer service within the community.

Following Melba's diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, Robert cared for his wife in their home for several years. In January of 2008, when Melba became a resident of Lake Shore Inn Nursing Home in Waseca, Robert often visited her twice daily. In 2014, he moved from the family home to Latham Place Assisted Living Facility in Waseca. Melba passed away in 2014, at which time she and Robert had been married for 63 years. In October of 2021, Robert transitioned from Latham Place to Lake Shore Rehabilitation Center.

Robert is survived by two sons: Bob and his wife Sue Dudzik Katterhagen of Custer, Wisconsin; Mark and his wife Lois Halbur Katterhagen of Yankton, South Dakota. Robert has one grandson Kyle Katterhagen and one granddaughter Kate Katterhagen, both of Yankton, South Dakota. He is also survived by his brother Harold Zigan, sister Lucille and brother-in-law Virgil Jensen, and sister-in-law Maxine Johnson, all of Minnesota.

Robert was preceded in death by his mother Odelia Zigan; and his brothers Ray Junior and Henry Zigan; his sister Harriet Zigan, and his beloved wife, Melba Katterhagen.

Mass of Christian Burial will be 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 28, 2022 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery in Waseca. Visitation will be for one hour prior to the service at the church on Wednesday.

Ring the bell



On Tuesday, Dec. 20, State Representative John Petersburg presented Arik Matson and the Waseca Police Department bell ringers with a Salvation Army Emergency Services Champions Plaque for raising the most money. It is the first year the plaque has been presented.

The police department, along with the Waseca Fire Department and Waseca County Sheriff, raised \$3,861 in total. The inaugural Salvation Army Champion Waseca Police raised \$1,996, making them the clear winners.

Rotary Readers



Members of the Waseca Rotary Club visited with the students at the Waseca Family Education Center Tuesday, Dec. 13. Waseca Superintendent Eric Hudspeth and Jon Stagman from Pantheon Computers were the Rotary Readers.

Stagman read about what snowmen really do at night, while Hudspeth's story was about what happens when you bring a mouse to the movies.

FM

from Page 1

rural Blooming Prairie and is now an 18-year banking veteran, having been with FM Bank for 10 of them. Butler has been a resident of Waseca, his wife's hometown, for the last six years while he commuted to other FM Bank locations in Minnesota. He and his wife Lyric (Nelson) have two sons and enjoy local youth sporting

events as well as outdoor activities the community has to offer.

When asked about what makes FM Bank different, Butler commented "We've always taken pride in a few key service areas: our commitment to the communities we serve, our ability to make local decisions, and our understanding of agriculture and business. These values are what drive our consistency - In any business or agricultural environment with economic cycles, it's important to have a consistent bank that doesn't waver in the ups or downs. Besides having a con-

sistent, local touch, we offer a suite of products customers expect from larger banks - cash management, mobile banking, online banking with bill pay - but we offer these along with responsiveness and service of a smaller bank," said Butler.

The bank currently enjoys serving the communities and surrounding areas of Granite Falls, Clarkfield, Olivia, and Fergus Falls. They have done so for many years, and look forward to doing the same in Waseca. "And even though we'll be new to town, with the support of our other

bank locations, we'll have the ability to help finance very sizable projects and operations in this area," added Butler.

The bank will operate at the former Wells Fargo location at 220 East Elm Avenue, Waseca and anticipates opening the Summer of 2023 after an interior remodel of the building.

More information can be found about the bank by visiting [www.mybankfm.com](http://www.mybankfm.com)

Christmas program at Grace Lutheran



Faith Formation students at Grace Lutheran Church in Waseca presented a special Christmas program on Wednesday, Dec. 14 and Sunday, Dec. 18. The program included Christmas carols and pageant movies.



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NEW - Events featured for the first time at the second annual Christmas at the Mill included performances from the Los T's and the Waseca Choir, and a visit from "the Grinch."

# Christmas at the Mill

By MICHAEL ROY  
Editor

"It was really all about the kids." That's what Matt Petsinger said about "Christmas Time at the Mill" held Saturday, December 10.

The event was begun a year ago by American Family Insurance in Waseca as "Pictures with Santa." It grew into more of a day for children and their families to enjoy the spirit of Christmas.

"Really what we wanted for this event was to have a spot for the kids to come, enjoy the day, and not have it be expensive for the families," Petsinger shared. "That's why we changed the name to 'Christmas Time at the Mill.'"

There was plenty for the kids to do: take pictures with Santa and the Grinch, decorate cookies, take family photos with three different backgrounds, color, play giant "Connect Four" and "Jenga" games, visit bounce houses, and enjoy other games.

"Don't forget about Olaf!" Petsinger exclaimed. "We think that was a big draw this year. We were the only ones to get Olaf!"

In addition to all the fun games the children had to play, the Petsinger Agency continued a tradition it started last year—giving toys to all the children who had their pictures taken with Santa. About 270 kids showed up to the event, nearly quadruple the 70 that took part last year.

"We sadly did run out of toys," Petsinger admitted. "We had about 15 to 20 kids who didn't get a toy, and for that we apologize. Going from 70 last year to 270 was unexpected. It was a wonderful thing."

Lucia's Cocina was at the event providing food. Free hot chocolate and cookies were also available. For musical entertainment, the Waseca High School choir and TEAM Academy's Junior High band and choir performed classic Christmas carols and songs. Rock and roll locals Los Tequileros took the stage later in the evening. The Waseca County Neighborhood Services were also present at the event.

It was such a successful time that Petsinger can't wait to do it all again. "Los T wants to come back next year," he said. "We might change the time a little bit and do two separate events with more of a break between them. We'll have the kids' events for most of the day and have Los T perform in the afternoon."

Whatever plans are formed for the 2023 event, one thing will remain the same. "We want to keep it a great day for the family," Petsinger claimed. "The Mill is a great place for us to do this."

He then concluded. "Christmas is a time for giving. This event is an opportunity for us to give back to Waseca."

# Scouting from start to finish

By MICHAEL ROY  
Editor

Local communities throughout Waseca County are trying to keep scout programs alive. Janesville is trying to start a Girl Scouts troop again after many years of absence.

But one group has been staying strong for years. The Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Girl Scouts, led by Carrie Bruns and Rachel Cornelius, will see four seniors graduate in 2023. They are Jenae Androli, Jenessa Baumgarten, Hannah Bruns, and Kaitlin Rahn.

Cornelius has been serving as a troop leader since 2010 and was a Service Unit Manager - who guides all the troop leaders in the WEM area - from 2006 to 2019. "I grew up as a Girl Scout in San Diego," she said. "I was in a troop until we moved to Minnesota in the tenth grade and there weren't any Girl Scouts in my area for that age, so I was done."

Fellow co-leader Carrie Bruns was a Girl Scout as a child and now has three children in the WEM troop. "I have enjoyed watching the four senior troop members evolve from children into young adults," she remarked. "They've had so many experiences because of Girl Scouts. They have gotten to take fun trips and get involved in the community."

After serving for so many years in the WEM Girl Scouts, Cornelius will be stepping down as troop leader with the four seniors who will graduate. It's a bittersweet moment, since the girls have been with her and the troop since Kindergarten. "I am so proud of these girls for staying until their senior year," she said. "It's quite remarkable."

Androli, Baumgarten, Bruns, and Rahn earned their Bronze and Silver awards together. "They have grown up to be good leaders and independent thinkers," Cornelius remarked. "They have helped so many people in their Girl Scouts careers. We also have enjoyed other fun outdoor activities such as kayaking, canoeing, tubing, rock climbing, archery and more."

A recent fundraiser they did was at the Waseca Pizza Ranch November 28. "We were fundraising to get some funds for our Senior Girl Scout Trip," Cornelius explained.

The Girls Scouts also like to shop for a family in the WEM school district in need. "It's a tradition we have



The Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Girl Scouts' favorite activity is shopping for Christmas presents for a family in need.

done every year as Girl Scouts and it is one of our favorite events," Cornelius stated. "We use troop funds to cover the cost of the shopping for that family."

The scouts were also asked to do shopping for Santa Anonymous this year, according to Cornelius. "It was so much fun picking out special things for kids."

As the four seniors' time in the Scouts comes to an end, they reflected on their time in Girl Scouts.

"Mine is going on fun adventures and helping others in need," Hannah Bruns responded. "I have been in Girl Scouts since I was in kindergarten, and it just seemed right to continue through my senior year."

Jenae Androli likes going on trips. "We went to Chicago the summer of 6th grade," she reminisced. "I had a lot of fun trying new foods and seeing all of the tourist attractions. I stayed in Girl Scouts because most of my friends were also in it and I enjoyed all of the fun things we did together."

Rahn shares Androli's joy of doing the trips. "It's great being able to do that with people my age that I have essentially grown up with," she said. "We get to experience so many new things and meet new people we otherwise wouldn't have."

"I have stayed in Girl Scouts because we have the chance to give back to our community and the communities around us," Rahn continued. "We get to earn awards where we

make our own project for giving back to our community. We spend many hours planning and making them, finally delivering our project to people. Nothing brings me more joy than seeing the faces of people who are in need receive something we put together."

Jenessa Baumgarten likes the tradition of Christmas shopping for a family within the community. "I love being able to buy them their favorite toys and even a few essential items like warm winter hats and gloves," she said. "It truly reminds me what it means to be a Girl Scout who is willing to help those in need."

"I stayed in Girl Scouts because each year brings on new adventures and life lessons," she went on. "Throughout my years as a Girl Scout I have learned many necessary skills such as budgeting, time management, compassion, and many more. I believe these skills will help me adapt to any obstacles life throws at me."

The girls (and Cornelius) will go on a trip to Miami for the Senior Girl Scout Trip. "Due to COVID we weren't able to go on a trip the last few years," Cornelius claimed. "But the good news is it gave us time to fundraise and get enough money to go. We are planning some special sight-seeing things such as going on an airboat to see gators, snorkeling, and going to the southernmost point of the continental US."

As their time in the WEM Girl Scout troop ends, the four seniors had

advice to share for those thinking about joining. "I would tell younger girls to join and try it because there is something for everyone in it," Bruns said. "Besides, there is more to girl scouts than only selling cookies and going on camps."

"I would encourage younger girls to be in Girl Scouts because there are so many fun things to do at camps," Androli shared. "I've done horseback riding, kayaking, swimming, shooting guns, and rock climbing. It's a good way to hangout with friends."

"Go for it!" Baumgarten encouraged. "If you are thinking about joining Girl Scouts I strongly encourage you to give it a chance. This organization has helped me become a better leader and sister to the girls in my community. Without my involvement in Girl Scouts I don't think I would be the person that I am today."

"I would say to the little girls that want to be in it to just do it!" Rahn exclaimed. "It is so much fun growing up having fun meetings where you can make all kinds of crafts that coincide with your patch. When you get older you do less and less crafts but gain a new appreciation for giving back to people."

"I just want to thank our community for helping us fundraise for trips and activities," she added. "Also, thank you for allowing us to have a space to meet. We wouldn't be able to do it without you!"

## Concert

from Page 1

Bros film "Empire of the Sun," also composed by John Williams. The gentlemen then sang "Star Wars (John Williams is the Man)" as performed by the group Moosebutter, a medley of music from John Williams' most famous films with lyrics about the Star Wars franchise arranged by Slagowski.

The combined female voices of the Concert Choir and Select Choir then performed "O Holy Night," arranged by Adolphe Adam and featured in "Home Alone."

The Select Choir, Waseca's larger robed choir, filled out the remainder of the evening's program. They began with Rutter's arrangement of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" followed by "Exsultate Justi" by John Williams, the second piece of the evening to come from the Warner Brothers film "Empire of the Sun." In addition to piano accompaniment, "Exsultate Justi" featured Hannah LaCroix on flute and Waseca High School band director Devon Lawrence on drum. The Select Choir was then joined by an instrumental ensemble for their next three numbers:

"Somewhere in My Memory," "Star of Bethlehem," and "Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas," all by Bricecusse and Williams and from "Home Alone" and "Home Alone 2." As is

tradition, before the show could come to its close all Waseca Choir Alumni were invited to the stage for the performance of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus."

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**Waseca Band Boosters Chili Feed**

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**December 22, 2022**  
**5:00 pm - 7:00 pm**  
**Waseca High School Commons**

→ All you can eat chili or hotdog with fixings  
→ veggie side  
→ cookie

**\$10 adult, \$5 child/senior**  
Tickets available at the door

Stay for the boys basketball game and Alumni Pep Band at 7:15pm!

**Entertainment by the Waseca High School Jazz Combo!**

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SCOREBOARD

| Boys' Basketball                             |       |     |
|----------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Big South Conference<br>Big School Standings |       |     |
|                                              | Conf. | Ov. |
| New Ulm                                      | 3-0   | 4-0 |
| Worthington                                  | 1-0   | 3-1 |
| Marshall                                     | 0-0   | 2-0 |
| St. Peter                                    | 0-1   | 0-7 |

| Medium School Standings |       |     |
|-------------------------|-------|-----|
|                         | Conf. | Ov. |
| Blue Earth Area         | 2-0   | 5-0 |
| Jackson County Central  | 2-1   | 3-1 |
| Waseca                  | 0-0   | 4-0 |
| Fairmont                | 0-2   | 0-2 |

| Small School Standings |       |     |
|------------------------|-------|-----|
|                        | Conf. | Ov. |
| Pipestone              | 2-0   | 4-0 |
| Redwood Valley         | 1-2   | 4-2 |
| Luverne                | 1-2   | 4-3 |
| St. James Area         | 0-1   | 2-2 |
| Windom Area            | 0-3   | 1-4 |

| Gopher Conference West<br>Standings |       |     |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----|
|                                     | Conf. | Ov. |
| Maple River                         | 4-0   | 6-1 |
| JWP                                 | 2-1   | 3-2 |
| United South Central                | 2-1   | 2-3 |
| Medford                             | 2-2   | 2-4 |
| NRHEG                               | 0-3   | 0-6 |
| WEM                                 | 0-4   | 0-6 |

| Gopher Conference East<br>Standings |       |     |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----|
|                                     | Conf. | Ov. |
| Hayfield                            | 3-0   | 5-1 |
| Kenyon-Wanamingo                    | 2-1   | 6-1 |
| Randolph                            | 2-1   | 3-4 |
| Triton                              | 2-1   | 2-4 |
| Bethlehem Academy                   | 0-3   | 2-3 |
| Blooming Prairie                    | 0-3   | 0-5 |

| Girls' Basketball                            |       |     |
|----------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
| Big South Conference<br>Big School Standings |       |     |
|                                              | Conf. | Ov. |
| St. Peter                                    | 1-0   | 4-2 |
| Marshall                                     | 1-0   | 2-1 |
| New Ulm                                      | 1-1   | 4-2 |
| Worthington                                  | 0-1   | 1-5 |

| Medium School Standings |       |     |
|-------------------------|-------|-----|
|                         | Conf. | Ov. |
| Jackson County Central  | 2-1   | 4-1 |
| Waseca                  | 0-0   | 3-1 |
| Fairmont                | 0-1   | 1-1 |
| Blue Earth Area         | 0-2   | 1-4 |

| Small School Standings |       |     |
|------------------------|-------|-----|
|                        | Dist. | Ov. |
| Luverne                | 2-0   | 5-0 |
| Windom Area            | 2-1   | 5-1 |
| Pipestone              | 2-1   | 4-2 |
| St. James Area         | 0-1   | 3-1 |
| Redwood Valley         | 0-2   | 1-3 |

| Gopher Conference West<br>Standings |       |     |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----|
|                                     | Conf. | Ov. |
| Maple River                         | 4-0   | 4-1 |
| NRHEG                               | 3-0   | 5-0 |
| WEM                                 | 2-1   | 2-4 |
| JWP                                 | 1-2   | 1-4 |
| Medford                             | 1-3   | 2-4 |
| United South Central                | 0-0   | 2-2 |

| Gopher Conference East<br>Standings |       |     |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----|
|                                     | Conf. | Ov. |
| Hayfield                            | 2-0   | 6-1 |
| Blooming Prairie                    | 2-1   | 2-1 |
| Randolph                            | 1-2   | 4-2 |
| Kenyon-Wanamingo                    | 1-2   | 2-3 |
| Bethlehem Academy                   | 1-3   | 4-3 |
| Triton                              | 0-4   | 0-6 |

| Big South Conference<br>Boys' Hockey Standings |       |     |
|------------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
|                                                | Conf. | Ov. |
| New Ulm                                        | 6-0   | 7-0 |
| Minnesota River                                | 1-0   | 2-4 |
| Waseca                                         | 4-2   | 4-4 |
| Luverne                                        | 2-1   | 3-1 |
| Windom Area                                    | 2-1   | 3-3 |
| Marshall                                       | 1-3   | 2-5 |
| Worthington                                    | 1-3   | 1-3 |
| Fairmont                                       | 0-3   | 0-5 |
| Redwood Valley                                 | 0-4   | 0-5 |

| Big South Conference<br>Girls' Hockey Standings |       |     |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
|                                                 | Conf. | Ov. |
| Luverne                                         | 6-0   | 8-1 |
| New Ulm                                         | 4-1   | 5-5 |
| Minnesota River                                 | 3-2   | 6-5 |
| Waseca                                          | 3-3   | 4-4 |
| Windom Area                                     | 2-3   | 3-5 |
| Marshall                                        | 1-2   | 2-6 |
| Worthington/Fulda                               | 0-4   | 1-4 |
| Fairmont                                        | 0-4   | 1-5 |

| Big South East Conference<br>Wrestling Standings |       |     |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------|-----|
|                                                  | Conf. | Ov. |
| New Ulm                                          | 1-0   | 7-0 |
| Fairmont/Martin Co.                              | W1-0  | 1-0 |
| St. Peter                                        | 1-0   | 5-4 |
| Waseca                                           | 0-1   | 2-2 |
| Blue Earth Area                                  | 0-1   | 1-2 |
| St. James Area                                   | 0-1   | 0-2 |

# No hope at all

## WHS basketball boys blow out visitors from Minneapolis, 88-54

By MICHAEL ROY  
Staff Writer

The Waseca High School boys' basketball team set the bar higher on offensive production when it put up 88 points against Hope Academy of Minneapolis Tuesday, Dec. 20.

Although the 88-54 result may suggest the Bluejays had an easy night, it was anything but in the opening minutes of the first half. Laird Keeton, Damarius Russell, and Andrew Robran opened things up with a 6-2 score. But the visiting Lions rallied back and even held a brief 11-10 lead five minutes into the game.

"We had some trouble breaking the press and finishing the layups off consistently for much of the first half," Waseca coach Seth Anderson said. "We definitely have to find a way to score around the rim better when we get opportunities."

Whatever Anderson said to the players when he took a time out

when the Bluejays had a one-point lead did the trick. After the 19-18 score midway into the first half, the boys went on a 20-10 run to give them some breathing room. That 39-28 score turned into a 13-5 run to give the Bluejays a 51-33 halftime lead.

"We made a couple finishes and the momentum and confidence started to build once a few went in," Anderson said.

It was a much better second half for Waseca. Whereas the first half saw them miss layups and a majority of their shots, they were scoring at will for most of it. "We have a lot of guys who can score the ball on any given night," Anderson shared. "Laird Keeton was probably the one tonight who sparked some great runs by getting some steals and finishing off some layups."

The defense clamped down as well. "We really focus on taking on defense a lot so the players know

# Tough week

## WHS hockey boys humbled by New Ulm, edged in OT

By MICHAEL ROY  
Staff Writer

The Waseca Bluejays' boys' hockey team had a tough week with a 12-3 loss at New Ulm Tuesday, Dec. 13 and an overtime loss to La Crescent-Hokah at home the following Saturday. It's the first time this season they have had consecutive losses.

### New Ulm 12, Waseca 3

The Bluejays allowed the most goals in a single game this season. Waseca sophomore goaltender Carter Martens was faced 52 shots.

New Ulm took more shots in the first period than the Bluejays did all game. The Eagles took 21 shots in the initial period, scoring on eight of them. They took an additional 23 shots on net in the second and cashed in on four more. Waseca took 19 shots all game.

Senior Kyle Ahlschlager was the only one to get a goal in the first period. Brayden Hesch-Priem shot the team's second goal on a power play in the third period thanks to Ahlschlager's assistance. Ahlschlager scored the team's final goal less than eight minutes into the third period.

Despite Waseca's performance, Ahlschlager ended the day with three points with Hesch-Priem's goal earning him a point in the stat sheet. Martens ended the day with a .769 save percentage.



CHECK MATE — Waseca's Keaton Roeker (8) looks to check a LaCrescent-Hokah opponent. In the background is the Bluejays' Griffin Krautkremer (15).

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

### LaCrescent-Hokah 3, Waseca 2, OT

LaCrescent-Hokah came to town with a 6-2 record, and they provided a tough challenge for the Bluejays.

After a scoreless first period, Bluejays senior Griffin Krautkremer cashed in on a goal off the crossbar 15:36 into the second.

The Lancers caught Waseca flat-footed in the final period and scored in the first 19 seconds. But less than



TALL TALL TREES — Waseca's Noah Thompson, right, has his shot blocked by a Hope Academy defender Tuesday, Dec. 20 in Waseca. The Bluejays won, 88-54.

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

what they are doing," Anderson said. "Positioning is always a constant."

Individually: Damarius Russel, 25 points 8 assists, 3 steals; Keeton, 21 points, 5 steals, 3 assists; Carson Ohnstad, 10 points, 2 assists, a steal; Tauston Rupe, 7 points, an assist, and a steal; Deron Russell, 6 points, 3 steals, and 2 assists; Noah Thompson, 6 points and 2 assists; Andrew Robran, 6 points, a steal, and an assist; Tyson Reger, 3 points and an as-

sist; Jacob Thompson, 2 points; Addison Sampson, 2 points and 2 steals.

The boys will look forward to the Tri-City United Holiday Tournament December 29-30. Anderson wants the team to work on boxing out and rebounding better. "We will almost always be the smaller team," he said. "So, we need to find a way to get it done."

# Misgen garners gold in tourney

By ELI LUTGENS  
Publisher/Editor

For the first time since 2014, the NRHEG wrestling program has a champion at the Redwood River Riot – senior Makota Misgen.

"Makota deserves everything that is coming to him right now," NRHEG coach Shawn Larson said. "He is working very hard on and off the mat. It was impressive to see Makota step up in a big situation."

The Panthers, as a team, placed 26th out of 35 teams Saturday, Dec. 17 at Redwood Falls. They had two wrestlers



Misgen

place, with junior Annabelle Petsinger (120 pounds), taking third in the girls' division. Misgen was the champion at 285.

The Panthers only had a total of 20 matches wrestled, but competed very well.

"We were more aggressive, and more prepared to compete than we have been previously," Larson said. "We are definitely making improvements that people reading the stat lines might not see, but our coaches, team, and fans are certainly seeing."

Petsinger wrestled well on her way to third place. She was dominant in her wins, but faced a difficult setback in her semifinal match when she was put on her back after gaining a 10-point lead.

"It is unfortunate that Annabelle gave up the fall in that situation, but I admire her picking herself back up and getting the next best thing she could at that point," Larson added.

Misgen earned three pins and a 3-0 win in the finals.

Also wrestling for the Panthers were Parker Bunn, 132; Deven Parpart, 138; Harbor Cromwell, 160; Cole Hutchens, 195; and Jace Ihrke, 220.

Individually for the Panthers: 120 Petsinger def. Romsdahl, Eva (Saint James Area) {Fall 1:55}

120 Petsinger Annabelle def. Melendez, Arlene (Saint James Area) {Fall 2:15}

120 Petsinger def. Rangel, Isabelle (Sibley East) {Fall 0:22}

120 Gessler, Trista (Tri-City United) def. Petsinger {Fall 5:20}

132 Meyer, Ethan (Worthington) def. Bunn, Parker (NRHEG) {Fall 1:13}

132 Torres, Deontre (St. Peter) def. Bunn {10:5}

138 Martinez, Angel (Blue Earth Area) def. Parpart {Fall 2:57}

138 Fuhr, Lucas (Redwood Valley) def. Parpart {8:6}

138 Parpart def. Anderson, Logan (MAHACA) {Fall 0:56}

160 Cromwell def. Benda, Carter (Fulda-Murray Cty Central) {Default}

160 Condezo, Tate (Marshall) def. Cromwell {Fall 4:22}

160 Mendoza, Jathan (Sibley East) def. Cromwell {7-2}

195 Doherty, George (Le-Sueur-Henderson) def. Hutchens {Fall 0:21}

195 Drietz, Sawyer (Canby) def. Hutchens {Fall 2:30}

220 Rhodes, Camden (Edina) def. Ihrke {Fall 4:24}

220 Butler, Dizel (Maple River-USC) def. Ihrke {8-3}

285 Misgen def. Rhode, Brady (Dawson-Boyd - Lac Qui Parle -Montevideo United) {Decision 3-0}

285 Misgen def. Johnson, Marshel (New London-Spicer) {Fall 0:51}

285 Misgen def. Duff, Kolton (Tri-City United) {Fall 2:25}

285 Misgen def. Mugg, Tucker (Sartell-Saint Stephen) {Fall 3:37}

# Jacobson totals 30 as NRHEG girls win big

By ELI LUTGENS  
Publisher/Editor

It was Erin Jacobson's birthday, and she had a night worth celebrating.

Jacobson, an NRHEG High School senior, registered a career-high 30 points as the Panthers pounded Triton 82-40 at Dodge Center Friday, Dec. 16.

The Cobras managed only 15 second-half points as the Panthers continued to play excellent basketball, improving them to 4-0 overall and 2-0 in the Gopher Conference.

"The girls overall handled Triton's pressure defense well and we kept our composure," NRHEG coach Onika Peterson said. "Offensively, we attacked the basket well and hit some key threes."

Peterson said the biggest takeaway from the win was the girls were strong on the boards, earning a lot of second and third-chance opportunities.

Defensively, the girls still seek im-

provement.

"A couple of times tonight we lost kids in transition and they made a couple threes because of it," Peterson said. "We need to work on that going into next week."

Individually for the lady Panthers: Jacobson 30 points, 12 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal; Sidney Schultz 12 points, 3 rebounds, 8 assists, 2 steals; Faith Nielsen 12 points, 5 rebounds, 1 steal, 1 charge; Preslie Nielsen 8 points, 3 rebounds; Quinn VanMaldeghe 5 points, 3 rebounds, 2 steals; Hallie Schultz 4 points, 7 rebounds, 1 assist; Trinity Smith Vulcan 4 points, 2 rebounds; Gabby Schlaak 3 points; Chloe Stork 2 points, 1 rebound; Camryn VanMaldeghe 2 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal; Addy Stadheim 1



Jacobson



UP IN THE AIR — NRHEG's Hallie Schultz (11) wins the tip against a Triton opponent Friday, Dec. 16 at Dodge Center.

Photo by Judy Tweeten

rebound.

The Panthers hosted Jansville-Waldorf-Pemberton Tuesday, and host St. Clair Thursday, Dec. 22. The Panthers host their holiday tourna-

ment Dec. 27-28. On Friday, Jan. 6, the girls play the first half of a varsity doubleheader on the road at Maple River with the boys playing afterwards.

# NRHEG boys still looking for first win Panthers fall to Waseca, Triton

**By ELI LUTGENS**  
Publisher/Editor

The NRHEG high school boys' basketball played two home games last week, losing to Waseca 65-49 and Triton 86-70.

In both games, the Panthers showed noticeable improvements – in some areas.

The wheels fell off the bus against Triton Friday, Dec. 16. In the second half the Panthers engineered a 14-point lead more than halfway through the period. What happened? “We came out hot tonight, finally. Offensively, we played a heck of a game,” NRHEG coach Dan Schmidt said. “We were plagued with foul trouble in the second half, which led to far too many free throw attempts for Triton.”

Combined, the teams totaled nearly 40 fouls. Jaylin Raab, Lukas Loverink, William Tuttle and Sam Olson all fouled out for the Panthers.

Daxter Lee - who finished the night with a season-best 40 points, outscored the Cobras by himself as NRHEG went on a 20-10 run in the second half. Soon after, the Panthers reached seven team fouls. The Panthers were whistled for 15 fouls in the last nine minutes of play. Triton wound up going to the free-throw line 48 times, scoring 43 points in the final minutes of the game.

“It was a really good game through 35 minutes or so, but the fouls did us in at the end,” Schmidt said. “This really was our most complete game, and if they don't get to the line 48 times, we're looking at a completely different ballgame.”

Schmidt said undisciplined play (fouls) and poor free free-throw shooting have been the story of the season. “We're close to turning that corner with this squad,” he said. “We're all still learning from each other, and getting better every day. We just need to put it all together.”

Individually for the Panthers: Lee 40 points, 6 rebounds; Olson 7 points; Sawyer Prigge 6 points; Jackson Chrz 5 points, 9 rebounds; Tuttle 4 points, Raab 3 points; Alden Dobberstein 3 points; Loverink 2 points.

Hosting a very good Waseca team Tuesday night, the Panthers came out and got “punched in the mouth early” per coach Schmidt.

“Waseca jumped out to an early lead, and never really looked back,” Schmidt said. “As a team, we have to do a better job at taking that punch, or not letting it happen, and as a coaching staff, we need to make sure the boys are staying up if it does.”

The Jays scored 8 quick points on two wide open threes and a driving layup. The closest game would get, from that point was 10-5 after a Tuttle circus layup.

The Jays went on a 17-4 run from that point and took an 18-point advantage into the break.

In the second half, the Jays led by as many as 26 when they finally pulled their full-court press.

“We struggled getting in to our offense in the first half, and when we did get looks at the basket,” said Schmidt. “We missed a bunch of shots in the paint. Cold shooting and turnovers killed us. We mixed things up a little in the second half.”



**BIG NIGHT — NRHEG junior Daxter Lee (3) takes the ball to the basket as Triton's Jayce Leonardo defends. Lee scored 40 points as the Panthers fell 86-70 Friday, Dec. 16 in New Richland.**  
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

The Panthers tried a full court-press and a zone defense and actually outscored the Bluejays in the half.

Individually for the Panthers: Lee 15 points, 5 rebounds, 3 assists; Tuttle 8 points, 7 rebounds; Loverink 8 points, 4 rebounds; Prigge 6 points; Chrz 4 points; Olson 3 points and Raab 2 points.

The loudest cheers of the night came in the waning minutes as Dylan Ingvaldson came off the bench and hit a 3-pointer for his first varsity points.

On Tuesday night the Panthers traveled to Janesville before taking a week off. On Tuesday, Dec. 27 through Dec. 29 the Panthers play in

a holiday tournament at Bethany Lutheran College. The next scheduled game after the tournament is a Jan. 6 road matchup with Maple River with a notably late, 8 p.m. start time, following the NRHEG girls' game against Maple River.

# Reminiscing Janesville, Waterville wrestlers hold reunion of memorable 1982 season

**By MICHAEL ROY**  
Staff Writer

The WEM-JWP wrestling team had a special day to celebrate at Waterville Tuesday, Dec. 13. Between their duals against Blue Earth Area and Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial, the team had a reunion of both the Waterville-Elysian Buccaneers and Janesville Golden Bears teams from 1982.

The ceremony started after the conclusion of the dual between WEM-JWP and Blue Earth Area. The teams from Waterville-Elysian and Janesville shook hands, and coaches Buzz Cummins of the Bucs team and Mike Niemczyk for the Golden Bears shared a few moments from the season. After the short ceremony, the teams had a social in the WEM common area for a half an hour before the LCWM dual.

The 1981-82 season was memorable for both Janesville and Waterville-Elysian. Janesville won an early-season dual with the Bucs, taking the Gopher Conference championship. Both teams won their region and advanced to state, where Waterville-Elysian took the rematch. The Bucs went on to place second in the state.

On Dec. 13, WEM-JWP took a hard 51-30 loss to BEA to start the afternoon. Timmy Nagel at 106 pounds opened for BEA's Bucs with a win by fall over Parker James. However, WEM-JWP won two consecutive matches over the Bucs with a pin by Brady Murphy in 34 seconds and a dominant performance by state-ranked Carson Petry at 120 in 21 seconds. It was 12-6 Grizzlies.

But the Bucs weren't going down easy. They won the next four matches by fall, taking an 18-point lead. Two forfeits in favor of WEM-JWP helped them get back into striking distance. But three more

consecutive wins by fall for the Bucs eliminated any hopes for the Grizzlies.

Keegan Kuball at 220 won his matchup in 1:19. The dual ended with Max Davis at 285 losing to BEA's Zach Benson in a 7-2 decision.

Co-head coach Adam Roesler did claim that LCWM could be a section favorite. So a win for WEM-JWP would have been an upset. All they needed was a few key matches to go their way.

But the Grizzlies came up short, losing the dual 40-35.

James at 106 fell, but Murphy took a win by decision while Petry took a technical fall (17-0) in 3:20. LCWM swept five matches from the 126 to the 152 weight classes, with four of those wins being by fall and the Grizzlies' Gavin Krause at 152 giving up a 13-3 major decision.

WEM-JWP tried turning things around, winning the next five of six matches. Lucas Morsching at 160, Isaac Quast at 170, Jack Cahill at 195, and Keegan Kuball now wrestling in the 285 weight class took wins by fall, while Avery Fall won by a 5-3 decision.

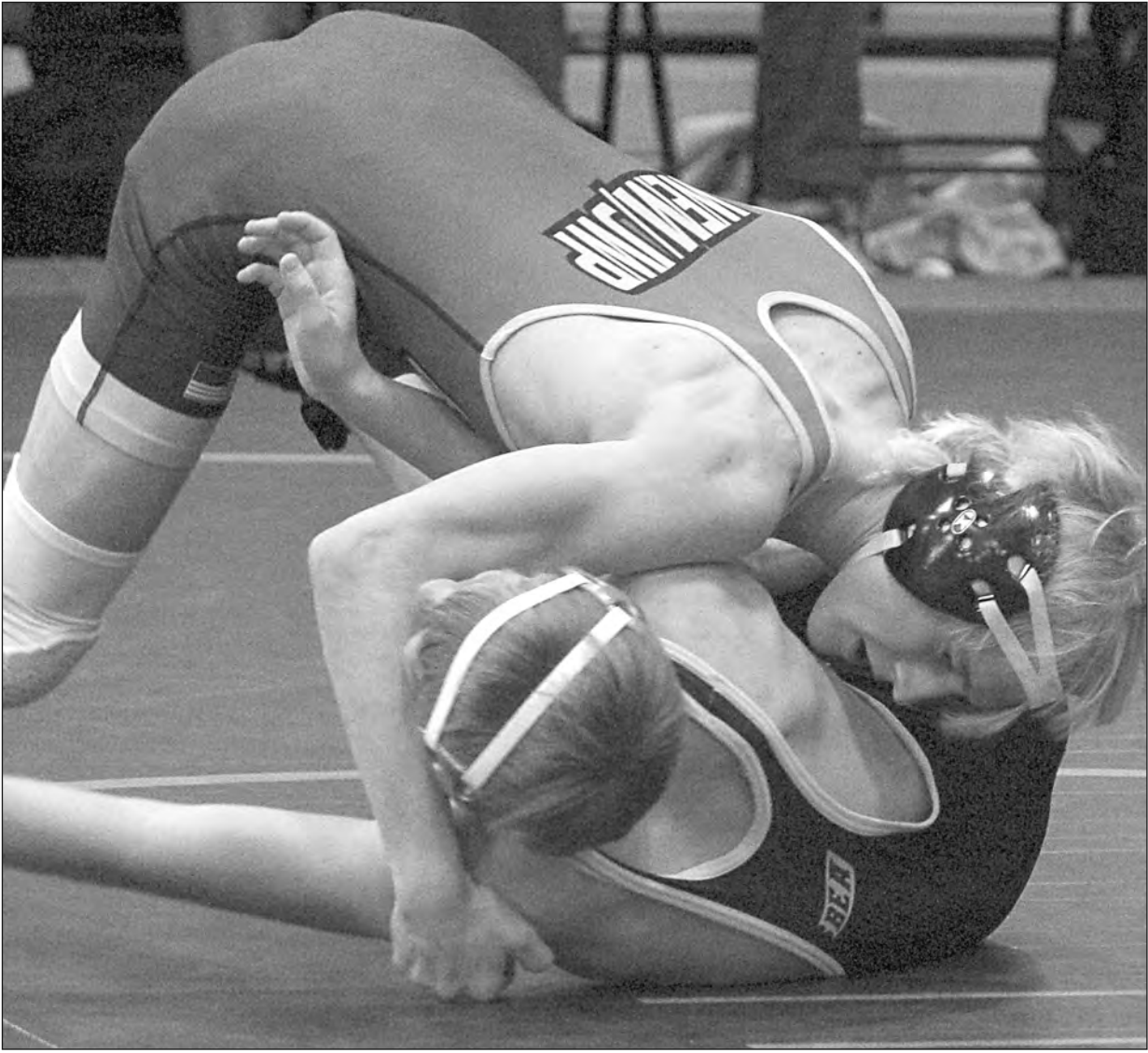
But the initial 28-point deficit before that 5-1 run was too much to overcome. LCWM's Nick Slater at 182 defeated Maddox Moreno to seal the victory despite WEM-JWP's rally.

## Glencoe-Silver Lake Invitational

The Grizzlies traveled to Glencoe-Silver Lake for an invitational Saturday, Dec. 16. The team faced the hometown GSL Panthers, Watertown-Mayer-Mayer Lutheran, and Blaine.

It was a tough day for WEM-JWP. They went 1-2 on the day.

Their victory was against Blaine,



**TURN HIM OVER — The Grizzlies' Carson Petry, top, tries to turn over Drake Engelby of Blue Earth Area.**  
Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

and it didn't look certain that the Grizzlies could pull it off. After James took a fall to Max Braddy at 106, Murphy at 113 took a win by fall to tie things up. Petry's matchup against Zackary Johnson was cut short when Johnson was disqualified.

From there, Blaine took the next four matches. Carson fell to Landen Lorch in 19 seconds, Zach Quast lost by technical fall, Blaine had a win by forfeit at 138, and Kelton Erler at 145 was disqualified.

Morsching at 152 took a win by fall. Keegan Lamont took the mat for the first time and fell to Jake Heggestad in 39 seconds. Quast took a win by fall in 1:05 before Cahill lost in the 182-pound class by 12-6 deci-

sion. After that, the Grizzlies went on an 18-point run starting with Maddox Moreno at 195 taking a win by forfeit. Avery Fall won by fall in 2:45, and Kuball at 285 had the dual-winning victory with a win by fall in 1:55.

The rest of the day wasn't that easy. Watertown-Mayer-Mayer Lutheran won the dual between them and WEM-JWP 67-9. Petry took a rare loss when Titan Friedrichs overpowered him and pinned him in 3:58. The only winners in the matches were Cahill at 195 by fall in 1:50 and Kuball at 285 taking a 7-0 decision victory.

Glencoe-Silver Lake/Lester Prairie team also took a win from WEM-

JWP 57-23. Things looked promising for the Grizzlies when Murphy pinned Glencoe's Jaden Rok in 51 seconds and Petry bounced back with a technical fall win in 1:50. However, Lester Prairie won seven of the following matches.

Cahill at 182 took a win by fall in 1:20 while Moreno got pinned. Kuball, who wrestled in the 220 weight class, took an uncommon loss after dueling with Aaron Higgins in a close battle, eventually losing by 12-10 decision. Max Davis took a victory by forfeit.

WEM-JWP will travel to Springfield for a dual against their team's tigers and Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City Thursday, December 22.

# Bulldog boys see record fall to 2-2

**By MICHAEL ROY**  
Staff Writer

It was a tough week for a JWP boys' basketball team flying high after starting the season 2-0. But losses to Lester Prairie and #2 ranked Hayfield brought them back to reality.

## Lester Prairie 61, JWP 51

After the JWP girls finished their game against Lester Prairie, it was their turn to take the court against them Tuesday, Dec. 17.

The JWP boys looked like they could upset the home team, having as much as a 12-point lead in the middle of the first half. But 18 fouls to Lester Prairie's 12 didn't help JWP keep much of a lead. By half-time, it was whittled down to five at 29-24.

It looked like the boys could keep the lead throughout the rest of the game when they came out of the gate scoring in the second half. However, the defense struggled mightily, and Lester Prairie outscored the Bulldogs 37-22 in the latter half.

"I think they were just able to knock down some shots in the second half, and we could not," JWPcoach Nick James stated. "We also gave up a few too many offensive rebounds and gave them extra opportunities."

The Bulldogs rode on the back of freshman Daulton Bauer's 24-point night.

"They were a big team," James added. "We just couldn't get many extra opportunities against them, especially in the second half."

Individually: Bauer, 24 points, 4 deflections, 2 steals; Cole Schlueter, 12 points, 5 defensive rebounds, 4 assists, 3 deflections, and a steal; Memphis James, 7 points, 6 deflections, 3 defensive rebounds, 4 steals; Ryan Kronbach, 4 points, 6 defensive rebounds, 3 deflections, assist; Ethan Born, 2 points, 6 defensive rebounds, a deflection, and an assist; Caleb Quast, 2 points, 4 defensive rebounds, 3 deflections, and an assist.

## Hayfield 56, JWP 42

The boys returned home Dec. 16 to face Hayfield, a team ranked number two in Class A. After losing to Cherry, the top-ranked team in Class A, the Vikings looked a little flat-footed stepping on the Bulldogs' court.

"I thought we performed very well against Hayfield," James shared. "For the most part, I was happy with our effort on both ends of the floor."

Prior to the game against JWP, Hayfield averaged 39 points allowed on defense per game. On the other hand, JWP scored an average of 64 points per game going into the game. The unstoppable force met the immovable object.

Hayfield showed they still had some of the talent that helped them become Class A state champions last season. It was one of JWP's better games defensively. But Hayfield was much tougher, and the Bulldogs could only churn 19 points in the first half.

"They are very good defensively," James said. "We were very short handed in this one missing one starter - Caleb Quast - and Cole Schlueter missing the second half with an injury. We also didn't have the best shooting and uncharacteristically struggled from the line."

Individually: Bauer, 15 points, 4 rebounds, 2 assists, a deflection, steal, and block; Memphis James, 10 points, 3 assists, 2 defensive rebounds; Ethan Born, 4 points, 3 defensive rebounds; Austin Quast, 2 points, 6 rebounds, 2 assists, 2 deflections, and a steal; Cole and Schlueter, 2 points.

Tathe boys evened their record at 2-2.

# JWP basketball girls fall 55-43 at unbeaten Lester Prairie

**By MICHAEL ROY**  
Staff Writer

The JWP girls' basketball team lost 55-43 at unbeaten Lester Prairie Tuesday, Dec. 13.

JWP looked to pull off an upset, but the

home-court advantage proved to be the difference.

It was a tossup night for the girls. While they turned in their best defensive performance of the season, they inversely scored the lowest

points on offense this season. The defensive battle resulted in a loss for JWP.

A potential bounce-back game against Cleveland scheduled for Dec. 15 was rescheduled for Jan. 31, 2023 due to the weather.

Because of that, a four-game road trip turned into five consecutive games away.

The girls had two difficult teams to face this week, at NRHEG Dec. 20 and at state-ranked Hayfield Dec. 22.



# The Pastor's Column

## Just a few days

**By PASTOR KEN ANDRS**

It is near the end. Christmas is just a few days away and the scramble to shop, wrap and decorate is nearly over. Soon the wrapping paper will be torn, the cookies munched, games played, and leftovers consumed. The anticipatory build up for the past few weeks will be deflated and we may wonder what happened.

What are we left with at the end of the day? What has been our focus? What will the children and grandchildren remember? Was this holiday just a few days off, or did we take time to build and share faith with those around us?

We have spent time these past few weeks working on our own anticipation and building a meaningful Christmas focusing on the coming of Christ. What about the next generation though? Have they taken time, have they slowed down and contemplated the truths of Christ? We may not have much time, but we can still build meaning into our celebrations this year and hopefully allow those we love to think about Christ.

As people come to the celebration welcome all with open arms, set aside any frustrations or grudges, and greet one another with the peace and love that Christ brings us. Take time to thank people for gathering by pointing people to Jesus' birth as the reason for the celebration. Give thanks for the meal and discuss the ways that Christ has moved and worked in your lives over the past year, if people don't feel like sharing about

their lives, share about the gifts Christ brings us.

Before opening presents, you can build some anticipation by reading the true story of Christmas in Luke 2:1-20. Pray and thank God for the gifts He brings us everyday through His son Jesus. As presents are opened, remain thankful, even for the oddest gifts. Reveal to others the grace and peace God has given you through faith.

Be patient with children and those struggling reveal to them the hope that God has for them every day of the year. A hope that can start today and goes into an eternity with Him is something we can point to as the gift we can carry with us every day. We get the chance to get excited about gifts we give and receive. We can share in the joy of a gift be it mundane as socks or exciting as the surprise of the unexpected and needed gift.

I would encourage you to be purposeful in everything you do. Take time to point out the ways we can find Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Reveal the Love that Christ has for us and share that with each other, even if you have heard the story many times before. This sharing of faith should be more than a chore and encouraging to all. We have the blessing of having Christmas on a Sunday this year, gather your family around and join in worship at church before your meal and opening presents.

First Congregational Church in Waseca has service at 6:30pm on Christmas Eve and 10am on Christmas Day.



# The Pastor's Column

## Christmas story

**By: Santiago Ramirez Ocampo**

F. LaGard Smith presents the story of Jesus' birth in his famous The daily Bible in an incredible way, interweaving the stories told by Matthew and Luke. While reading that portion of scripture under Smith's magnifying glass, I found what I would like to share with you on Christmas Eve.

In total, between the two gospels (Matthew and Luke in just their first two chapters), the Lord appears to Mary and Joseph six times, either by sending an angel (Luke 1:26-38), through an angel in a dream (Matt. 1:18-24; 2:13; 2:19), through the manifestation of the holy spirit in Elizabeth (Luke 1:41-43), or the manifestation of the holy spirit in Elizabeth (Luke 1: 41-43), or Simeon filled with the Holy Spirit as well (Luke 2:25-27); all this without mentioning the miraculous visit of the magi, and the surprise visit of the shepherds guided by the manifestation of the angel who announced to them the birth of the Savior.

God's plan to manifest Himself to the world was beautiful and humble, God Himself becoming a man. As if that were not enough, he came to a very simple home, through parents as human as us who surely did not understand anything of what was happening but decided to trust in the word of their God.

Let's take a quick look at this story in summary: An angel appears to Mary and tells her that she is pregnant even though she is a virgin and that this is the Lord's work, she accepts it and then goes to see her relative Elizabeth, and as soon as Mary has greeted Elizabeth, she says to her: Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! Why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? I go mad...

Then Joseph wants to leave her in secret to avoid defaming her because it is challenging to understand this mysterious pregnancy. Then he dreams of an angel who tells him everything is in order, that his virgin wife carries the Savior they have long awaited to trust in her womb. Joseph trusts, and then they must leave Nazareth because there is a kind of sense, and they go to Bethlehem, Joseph's city. While in Bethlehem, Jesus is born in a

manger! The creator of the universe in a manger, total madness.

Being in that manger with a beautiful baby who is supposed to be the Savior of the world (who is as beautiful and vulnerable as any baby), some shepherds arrive to meet the Savior because an angel appeared to them and told them the news. I do NOT UNDERSTAND ANYTHING here.

Then, as was the Jewish tradition, Mary and Joseph take him to the temple to circumcise him, fulfill the law, and give him the name the angel had told Joseph to give him. At that moment, a man (Simeon) begins to bless God because his eyes have seen the savior. Mary and Joseph do not believe it at this stage of the game and with all the manifestations (Luke 2:33).

Then some magi arrived from the East with gifts, guided by a star, saw Jesus with his mother, fall, and worship. And, as if that were not enough, Joseph again dreams of an angel who tells him that it is time to flee to Egypt (even farther than they are already from Nazareth) because the heartbreaking slaughter of babies by a jealous "king" is coming. We don't know how much later, Joseph dreams of an angel again who tells him it's time to return. Phew! I ran out of air; it sounds like a fictional story.

This story leaves a profound and powerful teaching: our God calls and reveals Himself progressively; life with God is a life of walking one step at a time, peace for a day, grace for a day, mercy for a day, food for a day because tomorrow He takes care of. God did not choose to show the whole picture of Jesus' birth and childhood to his parents on the first visit; in due time and place, he was showing them the what and the how.

I hope in the Lord that the remainder of the birth of our beloved God will lead us to remember that walking with Him is an adventure of renewable challenges in which we are invited to trust; he takes care of us in ways we do not understand, it remains our step of obedience that is not strictly limited to one moment, but to several, to a life in which He takes us one step at a time as a father takes his son when he learns to walk.

# Our three dogs keep us company

One day last year, my daughter got it in her head that her impending college graduation would leave me bereft, and I should consider adopting a puppy. This made sense to her as the two other dogs who currently own me are geriatric and the implications of three...departures from my life in a relatively short amount of time suggested to her that a new puppy would be a good thing for my heart. My daughter is brilliant. (I know this because her parents are, too.) So Wallace Madigan Dachshund came to live with us. He has a middle name, as do my other dogs. Middle names are handy things as any parent who screams their child's name while the child gleefully runs naked down the driveway knows. Or so I've heard.

The greatest sight to see after work when I open the front door is three wiggly butts at the top of the stairs. This is probably the only time those guys aren't looking up at me, and I wonder if they like that change of



## Always Looking Up

by Melissa Dunn

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perspective. If the weather is decent we go in the backyard to romp for a bit. I de-poop the yard with the \$35 scoop I bought last summer from Chewy while they sniff around and make more. People who aren't dog people think I'm crazy for spending that much, but I did a ton of research beforehand on the best tool for the job and this one really performs. I guarantee that a good poop scooper is worth the investment. We spend a lot of money on our dogs (the Waseca Vet Clinic can attest to that, but they truly have earned every single dollar we've given them), but dogs aren't books, and you don't get

to take them off the shelf and put them back at will. They look up to you every day, all the time. I tell all of them, but especially Shelby and Otto, that they are (and will be) loved and cared for all the rest of their days.

All three dogs keep my husband and me company in the evenings, typically sprawled in a heap on their bed in the middle of the dining room. Shelby and Otto are worn out from the youngster by now, and probably dreaming of the time before Wallace when life was simple and the floors were puddle-free (house training is not going well). Occasionally one of

the seniors will look to see if the little bother is still around, and then catch my eye as I'm working at the table. I'm used to Otto's perpetual blunt and gruff nature as he's also a dachshund (aka crabby German) but getting a guilt trip from a sweet springer spaniel's eyes is a new experience for me. So I willingly spend my free time on the floor by their bed, reassuring both of them of my devotion (and lint-rolling my clothes afterward. Those sticky rollers are the best invention for folks owned by dogs.) despite the new guy moving in. And, yep, my house is messy. Sometimes my workday is, too. But when I've got three pairs of soulful eyes looking at me, butts and tails going in sync because I am the best thing that's happened to them all day—I will take it every time. Things are always looking up when my hounds are happy.

# Most bittersweet part is saying goodbye

And just like that...it's over! As the Christmas Star ascends into the sky, it has come to pass that I have completed my sophomore fall semester at Saint Mary's. For the most part, I'm satisfied with how I did on my finals, but suddenly that doesn't matter anymore. I can't wait to be home and in just a few hours, that will be my reality!

The most bittersweet part of leaving Winona will of course be leaving my friends and life here for two whole weeks. I have the greatest support system I've ever had in my life—but I expect to muddle through without them, especially with my family around. The good thing about being a young adult is that I have an entire life separate from the household I grew up in, but returning to



## Looking in the Mirror

by Jonah Stafford

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my roots is still going home.

It seems like the second half of this week will have some interesting weather. Not that I was planning on going outside or leaving the house anyway, but it'll be a cozy few first few days back home for sure. I recently watched National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation with a friend as my inaugural holiday film of the season, but I could stand to watch at

least 5 more during the snowstorms.

What I most look forward to is having the luxury of time to myself. I have been much more busy than I really should be for the past few months, so it'll be good to defrost and calm down over winter break. That being said, if I get bored, I might work ahead on my next marketing project: a writing center poster. Somehow, we haven't crossed

the bridge of making one yet this year, but it's necessary advertising so I'm excited to get it underway. Besides that, I will be revising my logo design from a month ago, so it can be finalized and used on marketing materials for years to come.

As for Christmas gifts, I am done shopping for the most part, but I still have one more package on the way. Hopefully it'll be home for Christmas too! I anticipate a quiet Christmas back home, along with two other moderately quiet Christmases with each side of my extended families. Hopefully I'll be proven right because this will be a long overdue and well-deserved break for me. Until next time, Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!

# Attend the Church of your Choice!

|                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH</b><br>2200 4th St NE, Waseca<br>507-835-2235<br>Service times 9:30 a.m.<br>* * *                                            | <b>GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH</b><br>1221 8th St SE, Waseca<br>507-835-2213<br>Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m.<br>* * *                                                                                                                                           | Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m. 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark<br>* * *                                                                                                                                       | <b>TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>412 N. Main Street, Janesville<br>Pastor Brian Johnston<br>Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship<br>Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship, 9:15 Worship w/bible Class, 10:30 a.m. Worship<br>* * * |
| <b>4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH</b><br>605 4th St NE, Waseca<br>507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker)<br>Worship Sundays 10 a.m.<br>* * *                 | <b>CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY</b><br>900 14th Ave SE, Waseca<br>507-833-1082<br>Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m.<br>* * *                                                                                                        | <b>ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH</b><br>New Richland, Minnesota<br>Father Brian Mulligan<br>Saturday - 5 p.m. Mass<br>* * *                                                                                                                             | <b>JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b><br>401 N. West St., Janesville<br>Pastor Kathy King<br>Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship<br>* * *                                                                                        |
| <b>FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b><br>801 4th Ave NE, Waseca<br>507-835-3167<br>Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m.<br>* * *                                    | <b>ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>New Richland, Minnesota<br>Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor<br>Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship<br>Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters<br>Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship<br>* * *                  | <b>FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod</b><br>Waldorf, Minnesota<br>Rev. Michael Mathews, pastor<br>Sundays: Sunday School 9 a.m., Bible Study 9:20 a.m., Worship 10:30 a.m.<br>* * *                                                                      | <b>BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH</b><br>43089 180th St., Morristown<br>Pastor Kathy King<br>Sunday - 10:45 a.m. Worship<br>* * *                                                                                   |
| <b>CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>309 6th St NE, Waseca<br>507-835-9176<br>Worship Sundays 9 a.m., 10:15 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship<br>* * * | <b>ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>Otisco, Minnesota<br>Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor<br>Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study<br>Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship<br>* * *                                                                                     | <b>IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>Freedom Township<br>Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship<br>* * *                                                                                                                                                              | <b>ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH</b><br>307 W. 2nd St, Janesville<br>Father Brian Mulligan<br>10 a.m. - Mass<br>* * *                                                                                                             |
| <b>ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca<br>507-833-1703<br>Sundays 9:00 a.m.<br>* * *                                                 | <b>TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>New Richland, Minnesota<br>Pastor Mary Iverson<br>Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee<br>Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting<br>Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting<br>* * * | <b>ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC</b><br>Waldorf, Minnesota<br>Father Brian Mulligan<br>Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship<br>* * *                                                                                                                                      | <b>ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH</b><br>Alma City, Minnesota<br>Vacancy<br>Sunday = 1 p.m. Worship<br>* * *                                                                                                                   |
| <b>ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>314 4th Ave NE, Waseca<br>507-835-2647<br>Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m.<br>* * *                                          | <b>FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH</b><br>503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca<br>507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net)<br>Worship Sunday 10 a.m.<br>* * *                                                                                                         | <b>TRINITY LUTHERAN Wilton Township</b><br>Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor<br>Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship<br>* * *                                                                                                                                           | <b>TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>Smiths Mill, Minnesota<br>Vacancy<br>Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship<br>Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship<br>* * *                                                                      |
| <b>GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH</b><br>300 E Elm Ave, Waseca<br>507-835-1709<br>Worship Sunday 9 a.m.<br>* * *                                                 | <b>SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH</b><br>111 4th St NW, Waseca<br>507-835-1222<br>Worship Saturday 5:15 p.m., Sundays 8:00 and 10:00 a.m., weekdays 8:30 a.m. Tues., Wed. and Fri., 7:00 a.m. Thurs.<br>* * *                                                      | <b>THE CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS</b><br>Brad Donner, Branch President<br>Waseca, Minnesota<br>www.lds.org<br>Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School<br>Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18<br>* * * | <b>NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.</b>                                                                                       |



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WASECA, MINN. EST. 2008

**Huey's FARM SEEDS**

Jeff Huelsnitz - (507) 521-2589

**Joy... Peace... Prosperity...**

**PAST & PRESENT ANTIQUES and Gifts**

1101 STATE ST. N.  
WASECA, MN 56093

**Happy Holly Days**

**COMPEER FINANCIAL**

**844-426-6733**

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

*Wishing You and Yours the Happiest of Holidays*

May you and your family enjoy a joyous Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

**Patton, Hoversten & Berg**  
Waseca, MN

As we celebrate once again the birth of our Savior, Jesus, our hearts are grateful to you, our many customers, who have blessed us with the gift of being able to help you with all of your design and printing needs!

**PERSONALIZED PRINTING AND APPAREL**

Barb & Mark Baker

**Have A Joyous Holiday!**

**Jodie Thompson**  
REALTOR

507-317-7064  
jodiethompson.edinarealty.com  
jodiethompson@edinarealty.com

**Edina Realty**  
a Berkshire Hathaway affiliate

*From all of Us At Waseca Floral*  
*Rick, Sheila, Lenae, Kristan, Don & Jerry*

**Merry Christmas**

**WASECA FLORAL**

810 N. State Street  
507-835-3790 or 800-469-3790  
www.wasecafloral.com  
Hours: 8-6 M-F, 9-5 Sat  
Rick Morris Master Florist  
Lanae Feser Master Designer

**O Christmas Tree ... O Christmas Tree... How Lovely Folks Like You Can Be!**

Christmas is our favorite time of year because it gives us a special opportunity to connect with friends and acquaintances old and new — and to tell you how much we appreciate you.

Happy Holidays, everyone!

**For All Your Electrical Needs**  
**COLE'S ELECTRIC, INC.**

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**507-451-1387**  
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Email: coleselectric@coleselectric.com

**SEASON'S GREETINGS**

We hope your Christmas is filled with love, warmth and happiness. Your continuing patronage has made this Christmas a wonderful one for us.

**Byron Law Office**  
Waseca, MN

**Have A Spectacular Christmas!**

**Drs. Kora Amurud & John Gutfleisch**

**DRS. AKRE & CLARK**  
FAMILY EYE CARE  
FORMALLY WASECA OPTOMETRIC CENTER

**GREETINGS OF THE SEASON**

**Ameriprise Financial**

**Kevin W. Walter, CRPC®**  
Financial Advisor  
Waseca, MN 56093-2903  
**203 2nd St. NE • 507-835-7080**



**Very Merry Greetings**



**STOCK UP  
ON GOOD CHEER!**



*Beschnett Winery*

12650 340th Ave  
Waseca, Minnesota 56093  
beschnett@gmail.com

**Blessings**  
*of the season*

TROY  
STEVE  
ROGER  
DAVID  
SRT

WENNY  
TICK  
JOHN

WEATHER  
KADER  
JEN



*With Glad Tidings  
At Year's End*

...And many thanks for your kind and loyal support.  
Have a wonderful holiday!




**LOKEN**

**Excavation & Drainage Inc.**

3695 Hoffman Drive NW • Owatonna, MN

**507-451-2873**

[loken@gofast.am](mailto:loken@gofast.am)



**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
& HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**TO ALL OUR CUSTOMERS & FRIENDS!!**

**Krause  
Feeds &  
Supplies**

**Hope, MN**



*Joy of the Season!*

THE  
MILL  
AN EVENT CENTER

310 2nd Ave SW •461-1434 • WASECA

Warm Wishes This Holiday Season!

Waseca  
County  
History  
Center

A winter scene with snow-covered houses and trees. The text "Season's Greetings" is written in a decorative, cursive font at the top. Below it, the text "Tesch Service Center" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the address "321 W. Elm Ave. • Waseca" is written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font. The background shows a snowy landscape with several houses, including a large white one and two smaller red ones, all covered in snow. Bare trees and evergreens are also visible, and a red cardinal is perched on a wooden post in the foreground.

GREETINGS OF THE SEASON

JOY  
HOPE  
LOVE  
PEACE  
HEALTH  
HARMONY  
HAPPINESS

*John's Service*  
**GARAGE**

JOHN HUEBL, Owner  
711 South State Street • Waseca, MN 56093



# SEASON'S GREETINGS

**Matthew R. Petsinger Agency, LLC**  
**Waseca, MN**  
**507-835-2770**

**AMERICAN FAMILY INSURANCE**

American Family Mutual Insurance Company, S.I. & its Operating Companies,  
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*Dream Big...  
It's Christmas!*

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2200 N State St, Waseca • 507-835-3670

Merry  
Christmas  
& Happy  
New Year



Rep. John Petersburg  
Waseca, MN



*Trimmed  
With A  
Wish*

**MINNWEST  
BANK®** Waldorf  
507-239-2166

Have  
A Joyous  
Holiday!



**Shoney's**  
AUTO BODY LLC

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT THESE  
MANY YEARS!



**Oscar's**  
All American Food & Drinks

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Happy Holidays  
From our family  
to your family!



**El Molino**  
Mexican Restaurant

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219 E MAIN ST WATERVILLE 507-362-8102  
[www.elmolinowaseca.com](http://www.elmolinowaseca.com)

*Ring In The Joy!*

Sounds of silver bells fill the air  
and celebration is everywhere  
But we're so glad to be right here  
To wish you Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year!



**Southfork Seed**

Greetings of the Season

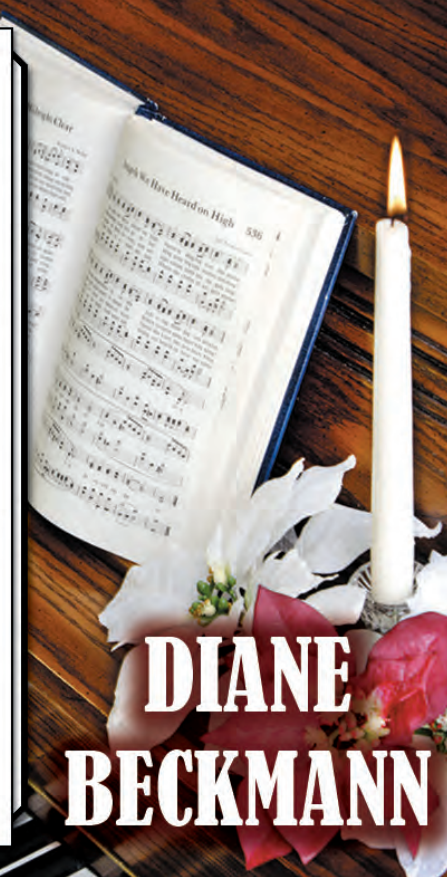


**McCarthy Waste Oil**  
WALDORF  
507-420-7429

**Yuletide  
Greetings**

May you and yours  
enjoy good cheer  
and fellowship  
through the  
Yuletide Season.

**MERRY  
CHRISTMAS  
and  
HAPPY  
NEW YEAR**



**DIANE  
BECKMANN**



WITH HIGH HOPES AT CHRISTMAS

**FARMERS**  
INSURANCE

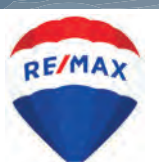
TIMOTHY LOONAN  
WASECA, MN 56093



**Merry Christmas**

to all from Blain Nelson at

101 South State Street • Waseca  
507-835-1466



*Merry Christmas*



FROM

**Jay's**  
AUTO SERVICE est. 2019

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