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Sports



Owners of Thyme on Main, Sarah Kay Hoffman, and Makayla Selvik

Heart and soul, blood, sweat and tears

By RACHEL LOVERINK
Staff writer

Waseca business owners Makayla Selvik and Sarah Kay Hoffman never take their thinking caps off. In fact, they are constantly finding ways to diversify their home away from home, Thyme on Main.

“The idea behind our business is that we want people to spend more ‘time’ on main,” Hoffman said. “In other words, this is a place for community members to come and enjoy, as they are, however and whenever desired. We love seeing the building packed with people.”

The business at 100 State Street North has had the benefit of Selvik and Hoffman’s hearts and souls. Along with those have come blood, sweat and tears for the sake of creating a versatile space that is unlike any other.

“When the opportunity to purchase it came along, we jumped quickly,” Hoffman said. “However, truth be told, we didn’t even have a clear vision for what our own bar/restaurant might look like.”

One thing they knew for sure though, every last inch of this “stunning” building deserved tender loving care. That way, its beautiful history could continue on for generations to come.

“We all have a story that needs to be heard,” Selvik said. “We feel the exact same way about this building: the connections it has brought us, the feeling of actually physically being right where we need to be—the contributions of the previous owners who have inspired so many around us. Also, the grand staircase that still brings a smile and a reminder to entering guests.”

Selvik added, “To keep this story going is incredible, to be a part of it ... indescribable.”

The first stop on the grand tour: The Bar.

“This is the main space, since it’s the one people most commonly see,” Hoffman said. “It’s our ‘storefront,’ and the place for unique cocktails, delicious appetizers, and food with a healthy dose of creativity. The Bar gets people in the doors to see how the building has transformed.”

Beyond The Bar, four other spaces are at guests’ disposal:

Thyme continued on 4

A word from The Word

Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience.

1 Peter 3:21

‘No’ to apartments

Waldorf residents express displeasure with proposal

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher

The City of Waldorf will not be pursuing a 32-unit apartment project. More than a fourth of the city’s residents, nearly 100, gathered for a 7 p.m. public hearing at the Waldorf Community Center Monday night to discuss the possibility of expanded housing, specifically, a 32-unit apartment project at the “old football field.”

Mayor Rob Wilkening opened the hearing, encouraged public comment, and did his best to dispel rumors

that the proposed project would draw “low income” tenants prone to illicit activity.

“We want to hear from you,” Wilkening reiterated numerous times. “We want your input and we really do appreciate you coming here.”

The meeting, intended to have an exploratory tone, was addressed by more than a dozen residents, some directly from a podium, and many speaking from their seats.

Howard Cordes, a former Waldorf councilman, lives across the street from the “old football field,” and was

the first to speak.

“Everyone here, all my neighbors, they moved here and stayed here because Waldorf is a quiet, friendly town. I don’t want it to build up. I want it to stay a quiet town... This 32-unit apartment complex would bring people from all over the place. They’re not going to be Waldorf friendly.”

Scott Kelling spoke next: “I actually came for the free apple cider,” Kelling joked. “I’m a little disappointed about that.”

Despite the intense tone of the



WELL ATTENDED - More than 50 residents attended a public hearing in Waldorf Monday evening to discuss expanded housing in the form of a 32-unit apartment complex to be constructed on the “old football field.”
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

meeting, the discussion was respectful.
“I agree with the previous speaker

Waldorf continued on 4

Snow Week



GIRLS - Candidates for Waseca Snow Week queen from left: Chloe Schumacher, Thyme Lang, Lindsey Kopetzki, Kloe Wadd, Ella Dufault and Sarah Robbins.

Snow week

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher

It’s snow week at Waseca High School from Feb. 10-17. Coronation and a pepfest will be on Thursday Feb. 16, at a time to be determined, in the Waseca Performing Arts Center (PAC), followed by pictures. A semi-formal snow dance for students will cap off Thursday evening from 8 to 10:30 p.m. in the high school commons.

Candidates for queen are: Ella Dufault, Lindsey Kopetzki, Thyme Lang, Sarah Robbins, Chloe Schumacher and Kloe Wadd. For king: Joseph Adamek, Ethan Davis, Leo Harguth, Alexander Honstad, Griffin Krautkramer, Korbin Schumacher.

The week is kicked off by a second annual talent show on Monday



BOYS - Candidates for Waseca Snow Week king, from left: Griffin Krautkramer, Ethan Davis, Leo Harguth, Korbin Schumacher, Joseph (Joey) Adamek, and Alexander (Xander) Honstad.

at 7 p.m. at the Waseca PAC. Dress up days are scheduled for students throughout the week beginning with Tuesday: “Hot vs. Cold,” followed by “Zoom,” and “Salad Dressing Day.”

Friday, students are encouraged to

show their school spirit and wear student colors and/or colors representing their dodgeball team in preparation for an afternoon pep rally and student dodgeball tournament. At 12:25 p.m. there will be an ice cream social for seniors, followed by

a “Geography Bee.”

Windows, doors, and signs throughout the school will be colorfully decorated by students for the week-long celebration.

NRHEG cheer to Nationals

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

“It’s great to see these athletes achieving success,” says Joni Churchill, one of four coaches for NRHEG’s competitive cheerleading team. “They’ve given their all, and it’s brought them recognition.”

The 15-member team won its third straight state championship on January 28, and will be taking part in a national competition in Orlando on Feb. 10. The state title, however, is not what opened the pathway for their trip to the Sunshine State. That happened last October during a qualifying event held in Minnetonka. Team members have been preparing ever since.

Along with practicing and perfecting their routine, the girls have been raising money to meet the expenses



The NRHEG Competition Cheer team consists of (front right) Grace Wilkenson and Eva Wayne; (center, from left) Madison Bogue, Addison Buenger, Autumn Baseman, Olivia Berg, Isabel Stadheim, and Brenna Sommer; (back, from left) Malonna Wilson, Orianna Degen, Ariel Anhalt, Payton Bunn, Julia Churchill, Kyera Eustice, Sierra Misgen.

Churchill explains it has been a work in progress since it was first devised by professional choreographers early last summer. Practices began around July 4 and were focused on intently throughout the summer. “It’s when we have the most access to the gym,” she points out. Also important to developing the needed teamwork and skill is a three-day “camp” held during

the summer in Wisconsin.

As practices and skills evolve, Churchill says, so does the routine. “We incorporate more—and more difficult—moves,” she says.

Competitions are held year-round, with some events acting as helpful

Nationals continued on 11

Gerds tapped as chief deputy

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher

Waseca County officer Doug Gerds has been hired to be chief deputy under Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas. The decision came last week, and was approved during the Tuesday morning meeting of the Waseca County Commissioners.

“Doug will be a great addition to the leadership team and I look forward to working with him,” Sheriff Dulas said in a statement.

Gerds’ great uncle Don Eustice served as Waseca County Sheriff until he was shot and killed in 1976 while conducting a welfare check.

Gerds grew up on a Waseca County farm and has been a deputy for the sheriff’s department for more than two decades. His first day in his new role will be Feb. 13.



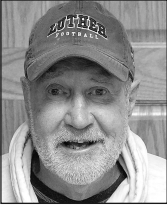
Identify Frosty and win \$1,750

It’s time again for the annual Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Identify Frosty event. This year’s event is the 26th installment of the annual contest.

Who is Frosty? Identify Frosty and win some cash! Prize money totaling \$1,750, is waiting to be won. FROSTY is a Waseca County resident chosen to be an ambassador for the Waseca Sleigh & Cutter Festival. Follow the clues and guess Frosty’s name.

Grand prize is \$350. If you are at the official unmasking at 9:30 p.m., on Friday, February 17, 2023, you will win an ad-

Frosty continued on 5



Bits and Pieces



by Dave Zika



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Always learning

A few hours in Denny Hoehn's ice fishing house along with Scott Beckman was a great learning experience. Using an underwater camera hooked up to a mounted television screen to watch the way the bluegills approach the hook revolutionized my technique. Bluegill fishing requires you to be totally focused. The little fish always seem to bite; the bigger bluegills can be very frustrating. The big gills can approach your bait, smell it, suck it in, and spit it out in a second. Most of the time you don't feel a thing on your rod: Jigging too much can actually scare them away. If your jig is spinning around, many times the gills won't bite. I learned if you tie a two-foot leader to your line and attach your jig to the leader, it won't spin. The leader greatly improved my bigger bluegill catch.

I've taken many fishing trips to catch North Dakota walleyes with my fishin' buddy Scott. Scott has a gift; he's always ready to go, organized, has done all of the research, and has planned food and menus. Whenever he begins a sentence with, "Dave, you know what I've learned?", I pay attention. We were fishing on a North Dakota lake and had our limit of beautiful walleyes swimming in the live well. As we were putting away equipment and preparing for our boat ride back to the landing, Scott said, "I'm going to try something I've just learned; bleed out the walleyes."

Scott took out a scissors and made a cut through the gill plate; all of our fish were dead when we loaded to go home. He put the walleyes on ice to keep them fresh. Scott does a great job of cleaning the catch with his electric knife, every fillet is a restaurant fish. My job is to wash the fillets, but after bleeding the walleyes, there wasn't much washing needed. Every fillet was clean, not a speck of blood. Now we bleed out every walleye we catch before we clean it. And I continue to pay sharp attention when Scott says, "Dave, you know what I've learned?"

I'd like to share a few things I've learned over the years.

Never ever let your driver's license expire! My license had expired by exactly one day: Mary at the bureau said, "Sorry, Dave, you'll have to retake your drivers test." I read over some things in the driver's ed manual and Lisa quizzed me nightly on the information. The written test was full of trick questions. Who remembers exactly how many feet away an oncoming vehicle should be when you dim your lights? Or how many feet do you stop before a crosswalk? I passed the test by a measly two points. When it came time for my driver's test, my football players wished me good luck saying, "Hope you don't get the old sarge, she's tough!" Guess who I had?

I was feeling good as the ordeal proceeded: I had sweet-talked Sarge during the whole test and everything seemed to be going well. Then it was time to put my car between the flags. Parallel parking is a real weakness in my driving skills.

I asked her how I was doing, she answered with, "So far, perfect."

The parking flags looked closer together than normal. I asked her if I made a reasonable attempt to park would she fail me? She responded with, "Make it a very reasonable attempt." I passed the test with a 93% and was back to being a legal driver.

Polly want a cracker? I've learned to never believe that. Several of my friends were gathered for a party and my friend had a beautiful parrot in a cage. Parrots can live for 50 years and have razor sharp, pressure-packed beaks. I was horsing around and reached into the cage to feed Polly, who grabbed not only the cracker, but also my index finger: She sliced it to the bone. The emergency room was my next stop; several stitches and a tetanus shot later, I was good as new. For weeks I took sarcastic comments from my friends and others: "Fed any parrots lately?"

Back in the day, students could bring homemade treats to school on their birthdays. Cookies were the most common choice. Somewhere along the way, I mentioned that I make a mean monster cookie. The students challenged me to a contest. Who knew? I came home and told my wife that she had to bake some monster cookies for my contest. That went over like a lead balloon.

Off to the grocery store I went to get the needed ingredients. Thankfully one of my football players was working and gladly helped me find all of the supplies. I was back home to bake in record time.

My wife did not make them, but she gave me step-by-step directions. That did not go in record time. As the buzzer went off on the first pan, I asked Lisa if it was time to flip them. Really?! She gave me a look of amazement at the question—and pointed out that we weren't making pancakes.

Needless to say, my class enjoyed the cookies. I learned that day that cookies are not flipped.

I've learned a couple of very helpful tips when doing a load of laundry.

Always check pockets or you may end up with several coins in the tub or a snowstorm of tiny kleenex or cough drop paper in your dryer.

Read the labels on your new clothing and wash appropriately. Things marked 100% cotton or wool can really shrink. You may end up with clothing that fits a Cabbage Patch doll.

Everyone will tell you that a dog is man's best friend. Our dog Sammy is at my tableside for every meal. I've learned that sharing spicy foods with her can really raise havoc with her digestive system. I've also learned that I spend the next twenty-four hours cleaning dog stains from the carpet.

Since I don't know everything yet, I guess that means you're never too old—or smart—to get a little smarter. Have a great day. Hopefully you, too, will become a bit wiser today—maybe even without having to clean the carpet.

Pigs will fly Feb. 19

Giant kites returning to Clear Lake

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"Everybody needs some level of play," says Sean Beaver of Great American Kites. "In our case, we take this 2,000-year-old toy and make it new again."

Beaver and his company will again be flying giant kites over Waseca's Clear Lake as part of the annual Sleigh and Cutter celebration. The event is scheduled for 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 19. A crew of only four people—including Beaver; his wife, Stephany; and his son Joe—will be bringing the company's "full collection" of "several hundred kites." They hope to be joined by kite enthusiasts from the region, including some who will have taken part in a kite show the previous day in Clear Lake, Iowa.

Among the hundreds of kites Beaver and his crew will be selecting from are 19 whales in various colors and sizes, a unicorn, a certain giant red dog, and, yes, a pig with wings. His largest kite, a multicolored "spinning mega-sock," is 3 stories tall and 150 feet long. Which units make it into the sky will depend on the weather and wind conditions. "Perfect" wind, according to Beaver, is anywhere between 8 and 25 mph.

Sleigh and Cutter organizer Ken Borgmann mentions that the decision to have the kite show again in 2023 rests on the highly positive experience in 2022. "We had essentially perfect weather," Borgmann recalls. "We had a big crowd out watching and enjoying the sights." Perhaps especially effective were the many comments that children seemed particularly engaged not only with the spectacle of many giant kites in the sky, but also with the excitement of watching the myriad different shapes and colors as they lifted off the ice. "It might be that adults enjoyed it, too," Borgmann commented lightly.

But whatever the weather on Feb. 19., Beaver expects the sky over Clear Lake to be filled with color, variety, novelty and exciting possibilities. "We're in the amazing memory business," he says. "We offer the sort of wide appeal that will help folks get their families off the couch, off their smartphones and videogames, and get them outside experiencing something truly 'uplifting.'"

Regular-sized kites will be given away as prizes during the presentation; some will also be for sale. Beaver's company, Great American Kites, is located in Polo, MO, and takes part in about 40 kite events each year across 8 states. The Iowa show will be the first of the year; his usual "season" begins in mid-March and continues through November. Most shows are presented on open, grassy fields or beaches, rather than frozen lakes. "But we like the open space and the highly visible location," Beaver says of Waseca's Clear Lake. "We had a great show there



SIGHT TO BEHOLD — A dozen or more large-scale kites, some measuring up to 140 feet long, flew over Clear Lake in Waseca last year as part of the city's annual Sleigh and Cutter Event.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bentley

Sleigh and cutter parade back to 'normal'

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

The seventy-fourth Waseca Sleigh and Cutter parade seems to have "recovered" from the Covid-19 pandemic. "This year it's back to being more like it was in the past," observes Ken Borgmann, who has been a member of the annual event's planning committee for nearly 30 years. "It feels normal again."

The parade begins at noon on Saturday, Feb. 18, departing from the county fairgrounds. Nearly all units are pulled by horses or other draft animals. They travel to and through downtown Waseca before returning to the starting point. Borgmann anticipates 30 or more participants this year: the vast majority are from the local area, but a few travel much further, including from Iowa and Duluth.

Borgmann comments that he feels privileged to be part of the 12-member team of organizers who bring together the events of the annual festival. He seems especially proud that the parade has not only weathered the challenges of the pandemic, but is now coming back strong.

"There's a renewed level of energy and enthusiasm," he says. "It feels

good again." Part of that renewal is the return of a hearty meal served to parade participants and volunteers, including the city staff who help put up traffic control signs, and police and sheriff department staff who help with safety protocols. "It's always been part of the way we do things," Borgmann says. "It was a feature of our parade that made people want to come—not only for the food, but for the fellowship and sense of community."

Borgmann says he began working with the festival for exactly that reason—the enrichment and opportunities it brings the community. The

Record year for poker run

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

The Waseca Sleigh and Cutter festivities continued with the ninth Annual Mike Filzen Poker Run Saturday, Feb. 4. It was a record year, with 70 runners participating and \$720 raised toward a student's medical scholarship funding their cancer research.

Filzen was an avid snowmobiler and was known for being involved in Waseca and being one of the biggest fans of all Bluejay sports teams, particularly his daughters'. After he died of cancer in 2012, the Sno Secas wanted to dedicate a poker run to his memory. The tradition has gone on ever since—snow or no snow.

A "poker run" calls for a group of people to visit at least five checkpoints using motorcycles, ATVs, boats, or other modes of transportation. Whoever acquires the best poker hand wins the "run."

As has always been tradition, the mode of transportation for this event was snowmobiles, with six runs starting at the Waseca American Legion and continuing in cities like New Richland, Elysian, and Waldorf. Beginning at the Legion, participants were handed cards to keep track of their run. The mode of picking the card, at least at the Legion, was darts. Wherever the dart landed was the starting card of the thrower.

For those who wanted to enjoy the



The Mike Filzen Poker Run started at the Waseca American Legion Saturday, Feb. 3. Participants threw darts to select poker cards for their starting hands.
Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

run but didn't own a snowmobile, a coach bus was a second option. When noon struck, both the bus and the snowmobilers took off south for the New Richland area.

Although the event's winner received some bragging rights, the real

prize was the student receiving the money raised for the medical scholarship. The poker run continues to be a great cause to support and a suitable way to honor a man who was known as one of the friendliest people in Waseca.

Medallion has been found



The Waseca Sleigh and Cutter medallion was found Saturday, Jan. 28, at Memorial Park. Members of the search party, alongside Sleigh and Cutter committee members are, from left: Jennifer Burt, Mark Lamont, Terra Lamont and Jolene Gunderman. Mark and Terra found the medallion on their third outing. The avid medallion hunters have come close a few times in the past, but this was their first time finding it. They spent about three hours searching.

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642

February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6pm BAR Bingo	2 HALL 7pm BINGO	3 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm Four Chaplains Day	4 PRIVATE EVENT
5	6	7 Burger nite 5- 7pm	8 6pm BAR Bingo	9 HALL 7pm BINGO	10 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	11 PRIVATE EVENT
12 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am-Noon Your Host Waseca Youth Sacred Heart	13 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	14 Burger nite 5-7pm VALENTINE'S DAY	15 6pm BAR Bingo	16 HALL 7pm BINGO	17 Waseca Sleigh & Cutter Festival DINNER & DANCE	17 Sleigh & Cutter PARADE
19 COAST GUARD RESERVE Birth- day	20 President's Day	21 Burger nite 5- 7pm	22 6pm BAR Bingo	23 HALL 7pm BINGO	24 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	25 GUN BINGO DUCKS UNLIMITED MEAL 5:30 pm BINGO 7:00 pm
26 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am-Noon Your Host Neighbor- hood Service Center	27	28 Burger nite 5- 7pm				

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

OBITUARIES

Katheryn Marie Weber

Katheryn “Katie” Marie Weber, age 74 of Waseca, died peacefully on the morning of Thursday, February 2, 2022 at the Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis.

Katie was born in Albert Lea on September 26, 1948 to parents Leon and Ann (Neighlander) Broadwell. She graduated from high school in Albert Lea before attending Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter where she studied nursing. On April 11, 1970 Katie married Marshall L. Weber in Albert Lea. She made many lasting friends while she worked as a church secretary for Waseca Christian Assembly, and also worked part-time for the Yellow Mushroom where she catered to the E.F. Johnson Company and Brown Printing. Over the years she enjoyed attending many church congregations. She enjoyed traveling with her husband and family, was a voracious reader, and liked cats, painting, drawing, and her bread recipe collection. She supported many charities. Those who knew Katie understood that she had struggles to overcome related to her health and disability, but she always remained confident and exhibited an innate willingness to see the positive all throughout her life. She was greatly loved and will be sorely missed.



Katheryn M. Weber

Katie is survived by two sons, Robert Weber of Waseca, and Nathan (Erica Forsythe) Weber of Waseca; two grandchildren, Sophie Be Weber and Archer Paul Weber of Waseca; and one sister of Houston, MN. She was preceded in death by both of her parents; and her husband in 2011.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. on Friday, February 10, 2023 at First Congregational Church in Waseca with Rev. Ken Andrs officiating. Visitation will be held for one hour before the service at the church on Friday. A private family interment will take place at Woodville Cemetery in the summer of 2023. Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca is handling the arrangements. dsfuneral.com

Lorenza M. Armstrong

Lorenza Marie (Rodriguez) Armstrong, age 81 of North Mankato, formerly of Waseca, died on the afternoon of Friday, February 3, 2023 at her home at Oak Terrace in North Mankato.

Born July 17, 1941, Lorenza was the oldest daughter of Romolo and Modesta (Contreras) Rodriguez. From a young age, Lorenza was a hard worker. At thirteen she helped out as a caregiver to the children of Gordy and Joan McCabe, where she was quickly recognized as an honorary sister and special member of the family. She was well admired by her peers and crowned the first Homecoming Queen of her alma mater Cleveland High School, involved in many clubs, and played the drums in the school band. When asked why she chose the instrument she said, “I liked to keep everyone on beat.” Her sense of rhythm transcended her appreciation of music and touched every aspect of her life. She kept a steady pulse for her patients throughout her nursing career, provided a strong cadence for the staff and residents of Janesville Nursing Home, and guided her family as a mother of six children and wife for 59 years. Lorenza had many talents as an accomplished dancer, crafter, cook, and baker. Her grandchildren looked forward to every holiday meal she prepared, especially her ham gravy and pies. She was the orchestrator of fun who seldom was seen without a smile on her face, and known for her charming laugh. It caught the ear of Wayne Armstrong one evening at the Kato Ballroom and led to their marriage April 20, 1963. As an avid supporter of every Minnesota sports team, Lorenza caught the game every week. When she wasn’t cheering on The Vikings, you could find her watching the



Lorenza Armstrong

country music programs on RFD-TV. Her family and friends miss their fearless drummer, but are comforted to know Lorenza is at peace and reunited with her loving husband and beloved son.

Lorenza is survived by her five children, Colette (William) Drager of Mankato, Darlette (Joel) Hoppe of Mankato, Jolette (Don) Byron of Waseca, Trent (Lisa) Armstrong of Waseca, and Marlette (Scott) Jones of Waseca; thirteen grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; eight brothers, Pete (Roxanne), Robert (Mimi), Jerry (Janet), Max, Joe, Leo, Mike, and Raymond and two sisters, Florence (Ken), and Elizabeth (Dale). She was preceded in death by both parents; one son, Troy Armstrong; one grandson, Alex Armstrong; two brothers, Louis and Lupe; and one sister, Carmen.

Funeral Mass was held at 11 a.m. Visitation was two hours prior on Tuesday, February 7, 2023 at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Waldorf. Father Brian Mulligan officiated. Interment followed at St. Joseph Community Cemetery. Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service is handling the arrangements. DSOfuneral.com

■ Thyme

from Page 1

The Event, The Office, The Studio and The Stay. Although the individual spaces cater to very different types of activity, they are all tied together with a cohesive aesthetic design.

“We began with our passions and past experiences, and let creativity run wild,” Hoffman said. “We created spaces based on that and kept the naming structure simple and basic, like everything else we strive for.”

Hoffman added, “Walking into this building and spending time here gives us both peace—before the purchase, during the purchase, and after the purchase. Being able to continue sharing that feeling with anybody who enters is the ultimate goal.”

Removing the clutter is key to their master plan not only for comfort’s sake, but so that creativity has no adversary. Also, from their years of experience, they have learned that “simpler is better; basic is beautiful.”

“Life is complicated enough, right,” Hoffman said. “We take this very seriously in our business world as well as our personal lives.

Their vision, “create from a place of simplicity,” is also implemented in the space designated for The Event. With a fireplace, a large TV, standing bar rails and a brightened up ambiance, this area is truly made for small events and any fun gathering for that matter.

“Once we really started to get dialed in on the spaces, how we saw them being used, how they could be loved, our feet hit the ground running,” Selvik said.

This outpouring of creativity also extends to The Office, a space that is specifically used for business purposes. Essentially, it fosters a great working environment for businesses to collaborate and grow.

“What we have learned during our first 1.5 years in business is that it’s a space needing far more love, far more often,” Hoffman said. “Instead of sporadic use, we are desiring collaboration with another female-run organization. We are currently searching for our right partner.”

Clearly, these two have lots up their sleeves. “We don’t look at the current situation as making history,” Selvik said. “We look at it as giving something to others; sharing our visions, talents, and passion with anybody who steps foot in the building.”

Any guest who books a room at The Stay will undoubtedly feel that love and devotion. The whole concept may seem a little out of left field, but they believe that opinion is truly in the eye of the beholder.

“We pushed through to create these charming Airbnb’s,” Hoffman said. “The Airbnb spaces (aka in The Stay) used to be apartments as well. There are three total; two of which have already come to life and a third which will be ready by March 1, 2023.

The three rooms are as follows:

- The Jones’: studio in size
- The Smith’s: 2 bedrooms
- The Miller’s (coming soon): 1 bedroom

“Even in The Stay, everything is named for simplicity and the décor echoes that simplicity,” Selvik said. “The Stay is also perfect for

photographers and small family/business gatherings.”

As the trailblazers for this Airbnb venture, they are just thrilled with its overwhelming success. Plus, it has allowed Makayla to unleash her full creativity that just seems to naturally flow from her fingertips.

“Most of our guests are from out of town, and this allows us to showcase not only the building, but Waseca in general; we give an entire guide to guests, featuring many places in Waseca,” Hoffman said.

Then, as far as The Studio goes, sometimes things have a way of working out better than previously hoped for. At least, that’s how they look at it.

“Makayla is a photographer, so initially this was built out so that she had her studio right in the building,” Hoffman said.

“But then, when the project was finished, it became this insanely beautiful space that could be used for photographers and also for special events.”

Hoffman added, “The Studio used to be one and two-bedroom apartments, so it’s fairly large. It contains a small kitchen and private bathroom, both of which are ideal for events. This space embodies all of: creativity, collaboration and community!”

In just one and a half years, an “insane” amount of collaborations have graced the walls of this establishment. From the Ladies Nights and date nights in The Bar, to the family gatherings, corporate meetings, holiday parties, Groom’s dinners, bridal showers and baby showers held in The Event, it’s safe to assume that Thyme of Main has become a town fixture.

“We support and lift other creators and business owners who desire elevating their own lives and businesses,” Hoffman said. “We work with other (mostly female) entrepreneurs every single day and understand the power that when they grow, we all grow.”

Furthermore, The Studio offers a perfect solution for wedding parties. Whether it be a photo-shoot or simply getting ready just hours before the wedding, this is the spot to reserve. Wedding showers and pop-ups work well here too.

“We make it a point to watch the faces of our guests as they walk through the door,” Hoffman said. “So, the way we wanted them to react and feel, we know actually happens! The best word I can use to describe it is typically, ‘awe.’ We constantly hear, ‘I had no idea that something like this existed in Waseca.’”

This warm and fuzzy feeling is contagious it seems. No matter the event, everything just seems to fall into place.

“The thing is, when the structure is already there – simple, historic, and stunning, the details are easy to fill in for anyone and everyone,” Hoffman said. “People will make huge balloon arches in both The Event and The Studio for baby showers, in whatever color fits their aesthetic. Then, when we had my cousin’s book launch in The Event, we used the blank black wiring wall hangings to post quotes from the book.”

For those who desire a little more custom design, they welcome that too. This building lends itself to “massive creativity,” and how fitting that its color palette includes Thyme green.

“Makayla and I both love its simplicity and color,” Hoffman said. “We also use a sprig of



In November, Makayla Selvik and Sarah Kay Hoffman earned the “Social Media Rising Star,” award from the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce.

Thyme in one of our signature drinks, The Sweet Lavender Mule.”

Hoffman added, “Makayla and I are vodka girls, so we began the fun cocktails from vodka mostly. We now serve fun cocktails with many different alcohol types. Some of our most popular drinks include the mules (vodka), Minnesota Buck (bourbon), Salted Caramel White Russian (vodka), Gin & Juice (gin), and of course our flights, including the ‘Rita Fight (tequila).

Food wise, The Bar offers simple, yet elevated options. And although their insurance policy does not permit the use of a deep fat fryer, that’s perfectly fine with them.

“We wanted something different,” Hoffman said. “We want people to feel welcome. We want them to know that whoever they are and wherever they come from, in that moment they are exactly where they should be.”

Inside, that notion is reinforced with massive neon white lights that read, “You are right where you need to be,” and “Come as you are.” So, sit back and relax; they have you covered.

“The world and everyday life can be hard, sad, filled with chaos, and more,” Hoffman said. “Thyme on Main is the escape.”

Now a solace for more people than they can count, this entire venture has exceeded their expectations and then some. From acquaintances to business partners, they have become best friends, and in that order too.

“When Sarah had reached out to me about a different property and my thoughts – it immediately ignited this flame of curiosity,” Selvik said. “What has been a dream come true is everything that has happened since she reached out to ask the question. A dream of finding a like-minded soul that is on the same path. A dream where we both exercise our talents and build confidence on our own as individuals, and as a team.”

Oh, and by the way, they are in the process of purchasing the building adjacent to Thyme on Main. 102 North State Street here they come!

Selvik concluded, “This is a vision that grew bigger than either one of us could have predicted. Our emotions on the first day were the same as they are now – proud, excited, scared, nervous, determined. However, now: we have added so much more to our lives. We have created this family; a family of employees, guests, new friends, and old friends. That is what makes those same emotions that much better.”

■ Waldorf

from Page 1

on some of his concerns,” Kelling continued. “I just moved here last June with my family, who is here tonight. My immediate family has lived here since 1886. They paid taxes and benefited greatly from services provided by the city. I returned after 35 years away to invest and put life into an old house— to reconnect with the community. It’s been joyful. We’re very pleased.”

In those 35 years, Kelling worked in the career field of public parks and recreation. “Taking the long view, I believe sacrificing the city’s only open space for an apartment unit is a very bad idea.

“The town doesn’t have many features to offer and none to spare,” Kelling continued. “We should maintain the public assets that we have. I feel like taking that space away is another step toward surrendering our kids’ future to the video screen.”

Charlie Barnes was the only Waldorf resident who, publicly, shared positive elements about the proposed construction.

“New families would make a big difference in supporting our business community,” Barnes pleaded. “I drew up a design for a restaurant on the corner, but we just don’t have enough here... Right now there’s nowhere for families to go.

“An apartment project is not a bad idea to boost our little town and let business survive and prosper and grow. Maybe we make new friends? Not all the people who come in are going to be enemies of the town.”

Barnes conceded that he would miss the open field if it were built over. “I don’t know the answer, but that’s my two cents.”

The Ewald family has lived in Waldorf for 136 years. A member of the family spoke.

“A big complex like this causes a culture shift. It’s gonna kill the culture we have here in Waldorf. “Let’s vote no.”

The fire chief spoke, as did several others about the logistics, or rather, the challenge a large new structure would pose for emergency services. He stated that more residents would mean more strain on local fire and ambulance resources. In addition, the football field serves as an emergency landing pad for Mayo Clinic in the event of an airlift. The long list of “cons” continued for about an hour, with one individual in the crowd adding an “amen” after nearly every point made.

“I think we’ve established we don’t want anything at the football field,” Mayor Wilkening summarized. “This is what we wanted, to hear from [the citizens of Waldorf].

“It’s up to the people,” Wilkening concluded. “I don’t run this town. We’re just trying to foster a wonderful community.”

Wilkening said after the meeting



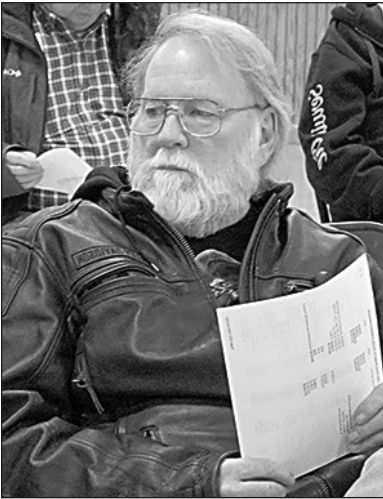
Scott Kelling, far right, chats with folks prior to addressing the Waldorf City Council regarding his concerns.

that he wants what the people of Waldorf want.

The council, namely the mayor, will look for further possible options to increase housing in Waldorf in a way Waldorf residents will be comfortable with. Wilkening didn’t provide a timeline, but several residents offered alternate suggestions, including constructing a smaller unit somewhere else in town or increasing the number of single- or double-family residences. Purchased homes, it was argued, represent a genuine “investment” in the community as opposed to tenants renting an apartment unit.

No official action was taken as this was an “exploratory” meeting to gauge interest.

“I’m really grateful so many people came to discuss the issues,” Councilperson Melissa Sorbo told the Pioneer. “We really value their input, especially in the early phases



Former Waldorf councilperson Howard Cordes

rather than afterwards when things might be too late.”

The public hearing concluded at 8:15 p.m.

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■ Frosty

from Page 1

ditional \$50. Unmasking is at the annual Sleigh & Cutter dinner and dance at the VFW Club 113 West Elm Avenue, Waseca, MN. First correct guess from Janesville, New Richland and Waseca wins \$150; and if you are at the unmasking you will win an additional \$50. Only five names will be drawn for \$100 – must be present. Five names win \$50 – attendance is not necessary.

Week 1 Clue
*2022 is now in the past,
And with that brings the new year
And the beginning of the 73rd Annual Sleigh and Cutter Festival,
Meaning the 2023 Frosty Contest is here.
Who will be the first ones,
To guess who is behind the mask?
The rules give you all you need to know,
So, no need to ask!
Week by week,
A new clue will emerge,
With information about their identity.
To help your thoughts and guesses converge.
As is tradition,
Frosty is well known,
And in Waseca
Their family has grown.*

Week 2
*Have you begun to rack your brain,
and put together a list?
Guessing the identity of Frosty
Is not something to be missed.
Raised in Waseca,
But leaving state for college,
Frosty returned to their home roots,
To share their wealth of knowledge.
Raising their children,
While building a career,
Frosty has made an impact
On those close and dear.
While not at work,
Frosty can be found,
Ice fishing in the winter,
In summer, camping on North Shore ground.*

Week 3
*To give you an age range,
And to add to what you have been told,
Frosty, born in the 70s,
On average, is not that old.
Graduating in the 90s,
From Waseca Senior High,
Frosty and their many siblings,
Kept their parents busy, that's no lie.
Much like their parents,*

*Waseca is where Frosty has stayed.
Not following in their footsteps,
But Frosty's work ethic, they laid.
Working in different seasons,
But their favorite job so far,
Has been coaching the littles,
Building an athletic star.*

Week 4
*This week brings with it,
Frosty clue number four.
With only five being released,
Next week means there is just one more.
Study the clues,
and review the facts,
Frosty's contribution to the community,
Their presence, young lives it impacts.
Described as approachable and encouraging
In 2000, the career they did embark,
Working alongside peers and faculty,
Helping many meet their mark.
23 years and running,
Frosty has worked in their role,
Moving up in the ranks,
Now Frosty is in control.*

Contest rules
1. Clues are published by the Waseca County Pioneer (waseca-countypioneer.com), the Waseca County News (wasecacountynews.com and Facebook); NRHEG Star Eagle; Janesville Journal, Waseca Chamber of Commerce; and KOWZ/KRUE radio.
2. One guess allowed each week.
3. Each entry must have name and complete address. Entries without complete information will not be entered.
4. Entrant must live in Waseca County and be over 18 years of age.
5. If there are multiple correct guesses, a drawing will be made to determine winner.
6. If there are no correct guesses, a drawing will be made from all entries received.
7. Entries must be received before 3:00 p.m. February 17, 2023.
8. Submit entries to:
A. WASECA: Submit entry at Waseca Music; 111 South State, Waseca, MN 56093; or via mail.
B. JANESVILLE: Mail or drop off at Waseca Music; mark your entry at Janesville.
C. NEW RICHLAND: Drop off at NRHEG STAR EAGLE; or mail to Waseca Music - mark your entry as New Richland.
Frosty sponsors: Culligan, Latham Place, iWealth, Brad Connors, Dominos, Mediacom, Lake Shore Inn, and Excel Energy. Please thank these sponsors for supporting the 26th Annual Frosty Contest!

Hockey night

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor
On Saturday, Feb. 4, the Waseca Hockey Association held its annual “Waseca Hockey Night” at El Tequila in downtown Waseca.
The fun started at 4 p.m. when El Tequila started offering food and drink specials. When 7 o’clock rolled around, local Tex-Mex band Los Tequileros provided musical entertainment. The bar portion of the restaurant was filled until the band finished at 10 p.m.
During one of their breaks at 8:30

p.m., there was a “Blueline” cash raffle with \$6,250 in money awarded. Tom Ackman of Rochester won the grand prize of \$2,500 with Jeremiah Miller of Waseca taking \$1,500, Rich Meyer of New Ulm taking \$750, and Gary Brockway of St. Charles taking home \$500.
In addition to the larger cash prizes, ten more people won \$100. They were Ralph Prehn, Jeff Brockway, Madi Johnson, Kurt Goldman, Debbie Simmons, Phil Olson, Donovan Schwichtenberg, Josh Ihlenfeld, Traci Schuch, and Christine Trcka.



Los Tequileros provided the musical entertainment for Waseca Hockey Night Saturday, Feb. 4. From left: Marty Buum, Mick Barrens, and Jerome Broughton. (Keyboardist Jim Kozan and drummer John Lucca are in the background.)
Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

Watershed plan under consideration

By TRISTAN JENSEN
Staff Writer
Haley Byron, Waseca County's water resource specialist, visited the board of county commissioners at their February 7 meeting. She presented a draft of the comprehensive watershed management plan for the Le Sueur River, which Waseca County is working jointly on with several other counties as part of the statewide “One Watershed, One Plan” initiative. The draft is in its review period until Feb. 18. Estimated costs for the plan over the first ten years come to \$29,602,100, which is about \$5,000 more than available funding. This means the body in charge of the implementation will need to compete for grant money to make up the difference. The plan calls for the wide majority of the money spent on the watershed to go to implementation of best practices, with smaller amounts devoted to further studies on the watershed and outreach initiatives. The full draft is available in the “Planning and Zoning” section of the Waseca County website. A public hearing on the plan will be held at 5 p.m. March 24 in Pemberton. County commissioners may lodge a formal comment on the

plan prior to its implementation, but have not yet done so. Byron told the commissioners that she is pleased with the plan and believed all issues important to Waseca County had been adequately addressed. Commissioner Dee Malterer, who chairs the board created for the management of the Le Sueur River watershed, also stated that she is prepared to move forward with the plan as it stands.
Byron brought two other matters before the board. First was a contract for watercraft inspection services in Waseca County with the company WaterGuard, which served Waseca County for the first time last year. Prior to that, the county hired inspectors directly. Byron stated WaterGuard was incredibly easy to work with for county staff, and that the inspectors she's had the opportunity to meet also seem pleased with their employer—which she considers important. The contract approved by the board covers the hiring and training of five inspectors who will work 600-800 hours over the course of the year at Clear, St. Olaf, and Reeds Lakes and has a maximum invoice amount of \$23,200. Last year, WaterGuard billed under their maximum contracted amount. Second, she

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
asked the board to formally cancel a cost-share contract which was approved last April with a landowner in Waseca County, as the landowner changed the parameters of the project. Reportedly, the processes necessary for the cost-share had become so cumbersome that the landowner chose to make changes to the project knowing the cost-share contract would be voided.
Contracts were awarded for three maintenance and improvement projects at county-owned or -managed property. Mohs Contracting of Owatonna will be doing work to replace eight windows from 1975 at the Courthouse Annex building; their bid for the contract was \$169,554. The lowest by far, this was still about \$35,000 over the estimate given about eighteen months ago by county engineers; Brian Tomford said in his presentation to the board that the increase is due to inflation. WW Blacktop, Inc. of Mankato will be carrying out pavement improvements at south side of the fairgrounds, near the buildings. Their bid was \$60,011.50,

about 30% under the estimates of county engineers; the project is scheduled to be completed well ahead of the 2023 County Fair. Twenty-three miles of county highway will be treated with seal coat this year, a number on par with previous years. The work will be done by Scott Construction, from Lake Delton, WI, who Jim Kollar says he has worked with before and had positive experiences. Their bid was \$468,065.57, which is nearly 15% under the estimates from county engineers. All three projects had allotments in the 2023 budget.
Judy Hiller of the county's records department received permission to purchase a new Land Records Assurance device, which is used in partnership with Dodge County for information sharing and backup. The machine is available at a discounted price of \$22,222.50 if purchased before March 31, which the board will allow to be paid from the compliance fund.
Kollar also received approval from the board to begin the process of using Eminent Domain, which al-

Meeting continued on 10

Empower each learner to thrive



Superintendent's Corner

by Eric Hudspith
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In Waseca Public Schools, our mission is to empower each learner to thrive in an ever changing world. As mission statements often do, this contains some broad language that provides flexibility to adapt to the current needs of any given year. Certainly, the needs of our learners have evolved over the last few years, as we've learned to support each other from a distance, how to come back together again, and how to return to the excitement of more predictable school year. However, I regularly have the opportunity to explain that mission statement a little more deeply. What does it mean to be empowered to thrive? Is it academic skills, social-emotional skills, kindness, technical skills, or some combination of all of these?
In my words, the most clear explanation of our mission is that students will have options when they leave Waseca Public Schools. And most importantly, that they have the skills

and information so that the choice is theirs which option to pursue. I recently attended a presentation and the speaker mentioned three “E’s” after graduation: enrolled, employed, or enlisted. We know our students will be taking part of one of these three activities after graduation. Our job is make sure that they have the necessary preK-12 education so that they can choose which one fits them best. Regardless of which option our graduates choose to pursue, if it is their choice and fits their goals in life, we have accomplished a large part of our mission as a school dis-

trict.
As a student moves through the younger grades, they are learning essential math, reading and content area skills that allow them to access information and explore their world. Then, in junior and senior high school, choices start to become offered that include courses that would lead towards a career pathway, some that just provide general exposure to multiple careers, college preparation or even college credit courses, and any number of electives that help our Blue Jays become well rounded young adults that can take advantage

of the many options before them. This comprehensive system of skill building and opportunity exploration provides the building blocks for students to able to make good choices in the future.
February is registration month at the high school, and students are choosing their classes for next year. While they do this with the support of parents and counselors, they'll be encouraged to think beyond the next academic year. What are your goals for after graduation? Which of the three “E’s” do you think you'll be considering? In order to thrive in this world, I believe that all individuals need to feel like they have some control and choice in their lives. Thus, at Waseca Public Schools, we work tirelessly to make sure our students have this control and choice, and whatever path they take, we hope our work has provided them “options for life.”

College credit for high school students

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer
When it comes to the path toward graduation and beyond, Waseca high school students have options. Dr. Jason Miller, WJSH principal and Dr. Brooke McGuire, Director of Teaching and Learning, presented those options to the school board at their workshop last Thursday evening. Miller explained to the board how high school students have three avenues to earning college credit: Advanced Placement (AP) courses, Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), or Concurrent Enrollment/College In the School (CE or CIS).
Miller explained that AP has become less workable recently because private colleges have been changing their acceptance rates of AP scores. He reported 43 students are currently enrolled in PSEO courses; this means the students are attending classes at various post-secondary institutions or online rather than in the

Waseca school building. In concurrent enrollment, WJSH teachers who meet certain qualifications are selected to teach college-level courses; students who take part receive credit simultaneously from the university in which the teacher is qualified and toward high school graduation. WJSH teacher John Hanson teaches a CIS political science course through the University of Minnesota.
“In outstate Minnesota, with declining enrollment, one of the things that I have become very passionate about is trying to find ways for our students to stay on-site as much as possible: one valuable way is through concurrent enrollment.” Miller described a student who was in the process of enrolling for a PSEO English class but was told that high school teacher Marc Engesether would be teaching CE English; the student immediately altered her plans so that she could stay at Waseca.
McGuire shared financial figures for comparison purposes; PSEO at the University of Minnesota is

WASECA SCHOOL BOARD
\$359.13 per credit while Concurrent Enrollment for the same institution is \$145. She highlighted that Riverland Community College and MSU Mankato charge the school by the course, with no limit to the number of students who enroll. “It’s much more cost advantageous for us to go that route,” she emphasized. “We can offer multiple sections of the same course for one price.” Hudspith added that “the bigger difference is our per-pupil revenue: when a student is taking PSEO courses, they are not part of our enrollment count for that part of the day and the state funding for that student goes to the college or the university. We end up paying for the credits and losing our revenue for that student. Concurrent enrollment students remain our students so we receive full funding for them.”

To be qualified to teach a CE course, a teacher must have a Master's degree in the subject that they teach. Waseca currently has CE partnerships with Riverland Community College, MSU Mankato, University of Minnesota, and South Central College. CE courses underway at the high school include algebra, statistics, physics, accounting, marketing, business law, language & literature, political science, medical terminology, basic nursing, health care core foundations, and exploring careers in education.
Another benefit of concurrent enrollment both Miller and McGuire emphasized is the ongoing support provided to students. “The students that do PSEO don’t necessarily get the support that they do at our site,” Miller said. “We had three seniors last year who failed their PSEO class in the second semester and they had two weeks back here to make up the credit in order to graduate. They did it, but it was tough.”



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STANDINGS

Boys' Basketball

Big South Conference Big Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
New Ulm	10-1	4-1	15-4
Worthington	8-1	3-1	14-3
Marshall	6-5	2-3	8-13
St. Peter	2-5	0-4	3-16

Big South Conference East Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
Blue Earth Area	6-3	4-2	11-6
Jackson Co. Cent.	5-6	2-3	8-7
Waseca	5-4	4-1	15-5
Fairmont	1-11	0-6	4-13

Big South Conference West Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
Windom Area	6-5	4-2	13-7
Pipestone Area	6-5	5-2	10-8
Luverne	6-6	5-2	10-9
Redwood Valley	5-6	4-4	9-11
St. James Area	0-11	0-8	4-14

Gopher Conference East Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
Hayfield	12-2	7-1	18-4
Kenyon-Wana.	11-3	5-2	16-6
Randolph	8-5	5-3	12-9
Bethlehem Acad.	6-7	4-4	10-7
Triton	5-7	1-6	7-13
Bloomington	3-10	1-7	7-13

Gopher Conference West Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
Maple River	13-0	8-0	20-2
United So. Cent.	10-4	6-2	14-7
JWP	6-7	5-3	9-9
NRHEG	2-11	2-6	2-19
WEM	2-12	2-6	3-15
Medford	2-12	1-7	2-18

Girls' Basketball

Big South Conference Big Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
St. Peter	8-1	4-1	14-5
Marshall	8-2	4-1	15-7
New Ulm	7-3	2-3	16-6
Worthington	0-10	0-5	4-16

Big South Conference East Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
Waseca	5-4	5-1	13-7
Fairmont	8-7	5-1	12-7
Jackson Co. Central	6-9	2-4	9-10
Blue Earth Area	0-9	0-6	4-14

Big South Conference West Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
Luverne	12-0	7-0	17-2
Pipestone Area	7-4	4-3	11-7
St. James Area	5-6	4-3	12-8
Windom Area	5-8	1-5	9-10
Redwood Valley	1-9	1-6	5-15

Gopher Conference East Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
Hayfield	12-1	9-0	19-3
Bloomington	8-5	5-4	9-9
Randolph	6-7	4-5	14-8
Kenyon-Wana.	6-8	3-6	10-10
Triton	5-9	4-5	8-14
Bethlehem Acad.	3-10	2-7	8-10

Gopher Conference West Standings			
	Conf.	Div.	Ov.
NRHEG	11-1	7-0	16-3
WEM	8-4	5-2	13-7
Maple River	8-5	4-3	11-9
JWP	3-8	1-6	10-12
Medford	1-13	1-7	2-18
United So. Cent.	0-0	0-0	3-8

Boys' Hockey

Big South Conference Standings			
	Conf.		Ov.
New Ulm	15-0		19-3
Luverne	10-3		15-6
Marshall	9-6		11-11
Minnesota River	7-5		10-11
Windom Area	7-5		8-12
Waseca	7-7		9-12
Fairmont	5-8		6-15
Worthington	2-12		3-15
Redwood Valley	0-16		0-10

Girls' Hockey

Big South Conference Standings			
	Conf.		Ov.
Luverne	14-0		19-6
New Ulm	11-2		16-8
Marshall	9-4		11-11
Minnesota River	8-5		12-10
Waseca	5-9		12-11
Windom Area	4-9		9-13
Fairmont	2-11		4-16
Worthington/Fulda	0-13		4-17

Wrestling

Big South Conference East Standings			
	Conf.		Ov.
St. Peter	5-0		19-4
Fairmont/MCW	4-1		11-2
New Ulm	3-2		15-7
Waseca	2-3		4-10
Blue Earth Area	1-4		5-16
St. James Area	0-5		7-11

Big South Conference West Standings			
	Conf.		Ov.
Jackson Co. Central	6-0		13-5
Marshall/Lakeview	5-1		14-4
Pipestone Area	3-3		7-8
Worthington	3-3		7-10
Windom/Mt. Lake	3-3		7-12
Redwood Valley	1-5		4-15
Luverne	0-6		7-11

Regular season ends 12-11 for hockey girls Jays play Saturday at Albert Lea

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

No matter the sport, it's always good to go into the playoffs with a winning streak to give the team some momentum.

The Waseca High School girls' hockey team was denied that with home losses to Minnesota River and Luverne. They will enter Albert Lea's hockey arena with a three-game losing streak.

Bulldogs 2, Bluejays 1

The Bluejays' problems on Thursday, Feb. 2 came from Minnesota River's freshman forward Macy Portner.

Portner scored the first goal of the game 5:33 into the second period. Junior forward Emma Keith replied for the Jays almost seven minutes later.

But the Bulldogs were relentless, outshooting Waseca 30-20 throughout the game. Portner found the net again late into the third, this time on a power play.

"Minnesota River plays a very similar defense as we do, designed to keep everything outside and away from the goaltender," Waseca coach Chas Benson explained. "They did a really good job taking away space while in our offensive zone, and their skaters blocked multiple shots. Going in we knew it was going to be a close, low scoring game."

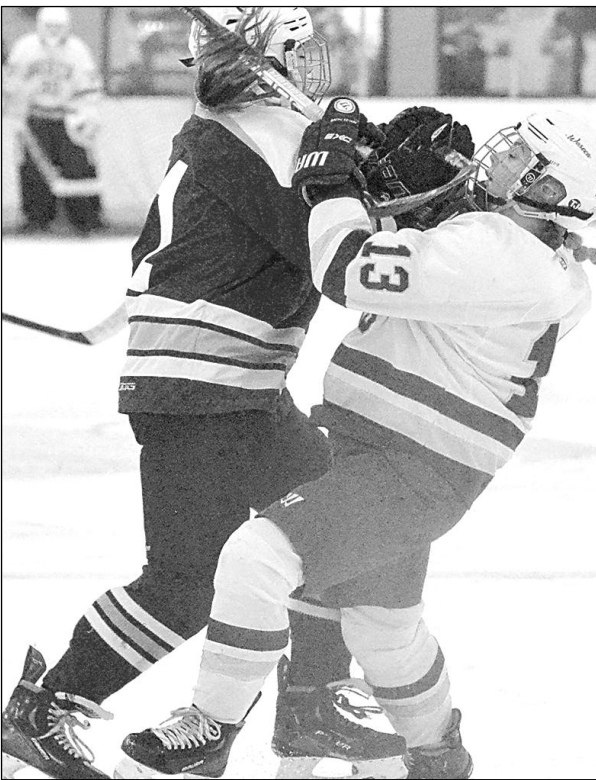
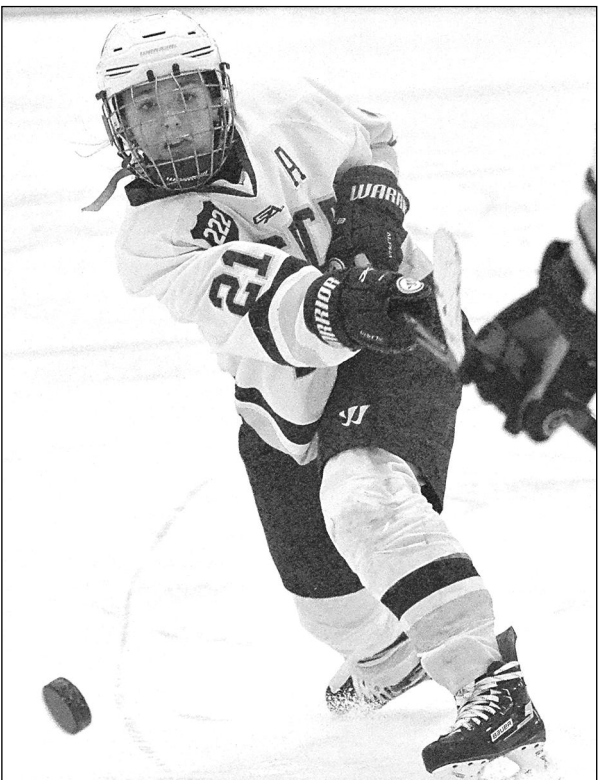
Eighth-grade goalie Ilamay Draheim ended the night blocking 28 of 30 shots.

Luverne 6, Waseca 1

Luverne wasted no time getting two scores on the board 2:30 into the first period. They were able to make it 3-0 less than eight minutes into it.

"In the first period we didn't have an answer for their top forwards," Benson said.

The Cardinals came out just as energetic in the second period with Kamryn Van Batavia scoring the fourth goal of the game just 58 seconds into it. Freshman forward Maddy Benson finally got Waseca



PLAYOFF TIME — The Waseca High School girls' hockey team will take a three-game skid into the section tournament Saturday at Albert Lea. Above left, the Bluejays' Emma Keith fires a shot. Above right, Ryley Bartz collides with an opponent.

Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens

on the board 13:45 into the middle period with the help of McKenna Mortenson. Van Batvia responded seven seconds later for her second goal of the game.

"After the first, I felt that the girls made good adjustments to limit their

scoring chances," Benson said. "Luverne is a tough team and was the conference favorite going into the year. They have a top line that is very skilled."

The girls ended the regular season 12-11 overall and 5-9 in-conference

Ohnstad leads Jays past BEA

WHS boys fall 68-62 to New Ulm

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Look up and down the box score for the Waseca High School boys' basketball team and it looks like a lot of people contributed in the Bluejays' victory over Blue Earth Area Friday, Feb. 3.

Or you might think Waseca just put it out of reach early.

The Bluejays, according to coach Seth Anderson, played their best ballgame of the season while blowing out BEA 69-35 in a Big South Conference game at Waseca.

"We shot the ball well and were fantastic defensively," said Waseca coach Seth Anderson. "Whoever won this game earned a spot in the final four of the conference tournament."

The Jays manufactured a 28-19 halftime lead and Anderson was able to play a lot of reserves in the second half.

For a change, Damarius Russell was not the Bluejays' leading scorer, but he finished with 18 points, 4 rebounds, 7 assists and 5 steals. Carson Ohnstad led all scorers with 23 points, adding 4 rebounds, 1 assist and 2 steals.

Others: Tyson Reger 7 points, 5 rebounds, 1 assist; Noah Thompson 4 points, 2 rebounds, 2 assists, 1 steal; Deron Russell 4 points, 5 rebounds, 1 steal; Zach Hulscher 3 points, 1 rebound, 4 assists, 2 steals; Jacob Thompson 1 rebound; Addison Sampson 2 points, 1 rebound, 1 steal; Jacari Jellum 2 points, 2 rebounds, 1 steal; Alexander Honstad 2 points, 1 rebound, 1 steal; Tauston Rupe 2



HEATED PLAY — Above, Waseca's Tyson Reger and Deron Russell surround a Blue Earth Area player. Below, Noah Thompson drives to the basket.

Pioneer photos by Michael Roy

points, 4 rebounds, 2 assists; Andrew Robran 2 points, 2 rebounds.

The Jays hosted a tough New Ulm team and lost 68-62 at home Tuesday after leading 33-32 at halftime.

"We played well tonight, but not quite well enough to beat a really good New Ulm team," said Coach Anderson. "They had some big rebound put-back baskets to put us away down the stretch."

Damarius Russell totaled 17 points, 5 rebounds and 7 assists. Ohnstad 15 points, 1 rebound and four steals. Others: Deron Russell 5P, 3R, 2A, 2S; Keeton 7P 5 R, 1A, 1S; Noah Thompson 3P, 5R, 3S; Hulscher 10P 3R; Reger 5P, 4R, 2A, 3S; Robran 5R.

The Bluejays play Friday, Feb. 10 at St. James, host Sibley East Feb. 14 and play Marshall at home Feb. 17.



Azure's 37 pace Lady Jays

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Waseca High School girls' basketball team found itself facing some genuine adversity at Jackson County Central Saturday, Feb. 4.

Kloe Wadd, the Bluejays' leading scorer and rebounder, was whistled for fouls early and often, which limited her to 14 minutes in the game.

Sam Azure answered the call.

Azure, a 5-foot-7-inch senior, put up a career-high 37 points as the Bluejays won 56-47.

"She was phenomenal on Saturday afternoon in a game we needed to have a chance to win our Big South pod," said Waseca coach Joan Conway.

Azure's 37 points put her in a tie for third-most all-time in Waseca girls' basketball history. Wadd scored 37 points earlier this season.

On Saturday, though, she spent

much time on the bench watching as the Bluejays built a 26-19 halftime lead.

Azure finished with 37 points, 2 rebounds, 2 assists and 4 steals. Wadd totaled 8 points, 8 rebounds and a steal. Others: Megan Kanewischer 5 points, 7 rebounds, 1 assist; Avery Madsen 3 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist; Mia Kanewischer 2 points, 5 rebounds, 5 assists, 1 blocked shot; Callie Dufault 1 point, 4 rebounds, 4 assists, 1 steal; Addie Wiesler 3 rebounds, 2 assists, 1 steal.

Rylie Cother scored 27 for JCC, Maci Farmer 14. Three others scored 2 points each.

Waseca shot 39 percent overall on field goals, 4-for-19 on threes and 12-for-18 on free throws to JCC's 33 percent, 3-for-17 and 10-for-14. The Bluejays, outrebounded 41-37, committed 12 turnovers to JCC's 17.

The WHS girls started fast and never looked back at Blue Earth Area Feb. 3, leading 30-14 at halftime on their way to a 55-37 triumph.

Individually: Wadd 22P, 13 R, 1A, 3S, 2B; Azure 16P, 3R, 3A, 1 S; Madsen 9P, 7R, 1A, 1S, 2B; Krautkremer 3P, 1R, 2A, 2S; Wiesler 3P, 1R, 2A, 1S; Megan Kanewischer 1P, 3R, 3A, 3S; Lexi Kanewischer 1B; Callie Dufault 1R, 1A; Ella Dufault 1R; Grace Guritz 1R.

Chloe Groe led BEA with 11 points and Sophie Kiester scored 10.

The Bluejays outscored the Bucs 32-8 in the paint and outrebounded them 34-28. Waseca had 13 turnovers, BEA 23.

The WHS girls lost a home contest 53-44 to Fairmont Monday, Feb. 6. The Bluejays shot just 28 percent from the floor and were outrebound-



TWO POINTS — Sam Azure glides to the hoop for two of her 10 points against Fairmont.

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

ed 35-31. Waseca had eight turnovers, Fairmont 15.

Individually: Wadd 12P, 12R, 1B; Azure 10P, 3R, 1A; Megan Kanewischer 9P, 3R, 1A, 1S; Madsen 8P, 3R, 1A, 3S; Wiesler 4P, 3R, 1A, 3S; Mia Kanewischer 5R, 3A, 2S.

The Bluejays dropped a 61-57 decision at New Ulm Tuesday, Feb. 7. Wadd scored 19, Azure 15, Mia Kanewischer 11.

Waseca hosts St. James Friday, Feb. 10 and entertains Belle Plains Thursday, Feb. 16.

Wrestling continued on 7



BIG NIGHT — Competing for the Bluejays against Blue Earth Area are, Maddie Root, left, on the balance beam and Kara Doyle, going high in the air on her balance beam dismount.



Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens

WHS gymnasts sweep Blue Earth Area

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Waseca High School gymnastics team had a big night Thursday, Feb. 2, defeating Blue Earth Area at both the varsity and junior varsity level.

"What a great night for us!" said Waseca coach Kim Wendland.

The varsity won 128.2-127.0.

Layla Keith captured the all-around crown for the Bluejays, totaling 34.025 points. BEA's Addison Armstrong was second at 33.75.

Keith finished first on the uneven parallel bars at 7.875, third on the balance beam, 8.05; first on floor exercise, 9.25; and second in vault, 8.85.

Other Waseca all-around finishers: Lindy Caldwell, third, 31.45; Haydin Lynch, sixth, 24.7; Katelyn Weber, ninth, 22.475; Elli Hoban, 10th, 20.5; Nora Schimming, 11th, 15.25; and Kara Doyle, 13th, 7.725.

Waseca placewinners on vault: Lynch, fourth, 8.675; Caldwell, seventh, 8.375; Schimming, eighth, 8.2; Weber, ninth, 8.15; on uneven parallel bars: Lynch, fourth, 7.425; Caldwell, seventh, 6.95; Weber, ninth, 6.75; Hoban, 10th, 6.5; balance beam: Lynch, first, 8.6; Caldwell, fourth, 7.625; Doyle, sixth, 7.275; Hoban, ninth, 5.75; floor: Caldwell, third, 8.5; Hoban, fourth, 8.225; Weber, seventh, 7.575; Schimming, 10th, 7.325.

Waseca's JV placewinners on

"What a great meet for us!"
— WHS coach Kim Wendland

vault: Hoban, first, 8.45; Avery Carda, second, 8.3; Addison Zimmerman, fourth, 8.0; Doyle, sixth, 7.9; Maddie Root, seventh, 7.8; Angelica Lopez, seventh, 7.8; bars: Lopez, second, 6.6; Carda, third, 6.5; Doyle, sixth, 5.8; Zimmerman, 10th, 4.3; Miley Anderson, 12th, 3.8; Root, 13th, 3.7; Macy Anderson, 14th, 3.3; beam: Carda, first, 7.3; Anderson, second, 6.7; Root, second, 6.7; Weber, fourth, 6.5; Lopez, fifth, 5.3; Ines Sanchez, sixth, 6.2; Schimming, 10th, 5.1; Zimmerman, 11th, 4.7; floor: Lopez, second, 7.25; Root, third, 7.2; Carda, fourth, 7.0; Sanchez, sixth, 6.5; Zimmerman, eighth, 6.3; Anderson, 10th, 5.9.

The Bluejays faced St. Peter in a rescheduled meet Monday, Feb. 6. They compete in the Big South meet Friday, Feb. 10 at a time and site to be determined.

Hockey boys conclude challenging January

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

It was a tough January for the Waseca High School boys' hockey team. The Bluejays were 5-6 in the month, capping it off with a 2-1 loss to Minnesota River Tuesday, Jan. 31. The beginning of February was not much better when they lost on the road to Fairmont 3-7 the following Thursday.

Bulldogs 2, Waseca 1

Minnesota River had the Bluejays' worst the past couple of seasons. This time was no different.

In the first period, Griffin Krautkremer got the opening score with fellow senior Kyle Ahlschlager's help. However, it was the only time a goal went into net.

Waseca was outshot 40-19, with Bluejay goaltender Carter Martens stopping 38 for a .950 save percentage.

Fairmont 7, Bluejays 3

Waseca definitely had a chance against Fairmont, who they beat narrowly in their home opener 6-5 back in December.



PUCK HANDLING — The Bluejays' Griffen Krautkremer (15) maneuvers the puck in a recent home game.

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

What broke their backs were three goals allowed within a minute in the third period.

Sophomore forward Brayden Hoof scored the first goal of the game 1:26 into it, with Fairmont's Brock Lutterman responding with a power play goal. After a 1-1 start, junior Brayden Hesch-Priem gave the lead back to Waseca 2:21 into the second. Fairmont's Teveldal Jace and Lincoln Becker responded with goals to put the Cardinals in the lead. Becker's goal came off of the power play.

Hoof scored a shorthanded goal

1:07 into the third to get his second of the night. It was a quiet 10 minutes afterwards, with the score tied 3-3.

Then the three goals within a minute happened.

Nate Rakness scored the first of the trio off a power play. Forty seconds later, Kaiden Musser gave Fairmont a two-goal cushion. Connor Gronewald's third goal shortly thereafter put the game out of reach. Beau Becker's score for Fairmont late into the final period was insult to injury.

The Bluejays lost despite out-

shooting Fairmont 40-37.

Martens, who had a great night 48 hours prior to this game, struggled as he saved only 30 shots of 37 for a .811 save percentage.

The Bluejay boys' hockey team is currently 9-12 (7-7 in-conference) and fell to sixth place in the Big South.

They traveled to Rochester Lourdes Tuesday, Feb. 7 before returning home the following Thursday to host first-place New Ulm. Their last game of the regular season is against Marshall Feb. 17.

Another tough week for JWP basketball boys

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

It was a tough week for the JWP High School boys' basketball team. With United South Central sweeping the season series with a 62-49 win Tuesday, Jan. 31, the boys took another conference loss to Triton 59-49 the following Friday.

Rebels 62, Bulldogs 49

The first meeting between the two was a frustrating one for JWP. When they traveled to Wells, they got behind by 24 before losing 65-53.

This time, JWP coach Nick James said that it wasn't quite the same story. At least it wasn't as much of a hole that they dug against a good USC team.

"We started a little better," James explained. "It was a 14-10 start in favor of USC, but we did give up a

"We need to keep improving our execution and our effort every game"
— JWP coach Nick James

13-0 run at that time and still got ourselves in a hole."

This time, USC had a 36-17 lead. JWP outscored the Rebels 32-26 in the second half. But it was nowhere near enough to keep it a game.

According to James, what cost the team the game was a few too many turnovers and lack of accuracy on shots. "We didn't shoot the ball very well, 29 percent from 3, and 36 percent overall."

Freshman Daulton Bauer led the team in scoring with 21 on the night, while JWP's usual lead scorer

Memphis James was limited to 13. Other contributors were Caleb Quast with 6, Ryan Kronbach with 4, Landon Johnson with 3, and Ethan Born with 2.

Triton 59, Bulldogs 49

Triton hosted the Bulldogs for a conference showdown before the start of the weekend. The 5-12 Cobras struggled mightily. Despite that, however, they were only 4-6 in conference, and most of those losses were by a score.

Whether the Bulldogs let the

Cobras' record fool them or they were just unprepared, it didn't matter. They couldn't find the net, and Triton had an easy victory.

For the first time this season, the boys have a losing record, which is 8-9 (5-7 in conference). It won't be much easier as they will continue going through the Gopher Conference gauntlet and face some tough out-of-conference opponents.

The took on a hungry Waterville-Elysian-Morristown team on the road Tuesday, Feb. 7. They will be back home Thursday against a tough Waseca team (weather willing), and will host Randolph Friday.

"We need to keep improving our execution and our effort every game," James concluded. "We are in the middle of the conference schedule, and every game is going to be a battle for us."

Grizzlies drop dual to Medford, take 4th in Faschnat Memorial

Petry, Cahill, Kuball place 3rd

By MICHAEL ROY
Staff Writer

Medford has always been a tough team to face, especially for WEM-JWP.

They proved once again that they were the team to beat in the Gopher Conference Thursday, Feb. 2 as they silenced the Grizzlies with a 49-15 victory. After the defeat, the wrestlers took fourth place out of nine teams when they hosted the Mike Fasnacht Memorial Tournament the following Saturday.

Medford 49, WEM-JWP 15

The only wrestlers successful in their quest to victory were Brady Murphy, Isaac Quast, Avery Fall, and Keegan Kuball. Kuball at 285 pounds was the only Grizzly to get a win by fall (1:57). Murphy at 106, Quast at 160, and Fall at 195 had to work three full periods to earn their wins by decision. Murphy won 4-2, Quast 7-3, and Fall 9-5.

In all the losses, only Kelton Erler at 138 and Lucas Morsching at 145 staved off the Tigers earning a full six points in their matches. Both, however, technically fell. Erler doing so in 3:38. (18-1) and Morsching doing so in 2:11 (15-0).

Two losses by forfeit were the icing on the cake for a long night in Medford for WEM-JWP.

Mike Fasnacht Memorial

The 14th Annual Mike Fasnacht Memorial Tournament took place at Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton this past Saturday, Feb. 4.

Since 2009, the WEM-JWP wrestling team has hosted the tournament in honor of Army 1st Lieutenant Mike Fasnacht, a former Janesville wrestler who gave his life for his country in Iraq in 2005.

Traditionally, many teams from across the state participate in the meet. Plenty of them are teams that WEM-JWP wouldn't normally face such as Simley, a Class AA team, and St. Michael-Albertville, a Class AAA team.

Simley took the top spot in the tournament with an impressive 250 points. Chatfield narrowly took second with 126.5, while Dover-Eyota settled for third with 125.

Medford, who defeated WEM-JWP handily two nights before, tied with them for fourth place with 86 points, with St. Michael-Albertville and Triton tied for sixth with 54 points, St. Clair-Loyola eighth with 44, and Wabasha-Kellogg taking last with 18 points.

Carson Petry at 120, Jack Cahill at 182, and Keegan Kuball at 285 took third place and placed highest among WEM-JWP wrestlers.

106: Brady Murphy had to settle for fifth place. He defeated Triton's Theo Kispert by fall before losing by 11-3 major decision to Chatfield's Javier Berg. St. Michael-Albertville's Joe Scully pinned him in 5:04 in the consolation semifinal. Murphy's day ended on a good note as he took out his frustration on Simley's Charli Raymond with a 33-second fall.

120: Carson Petry, who was missing in action for a couple of meets, got back into the ring and placed third. He started out his day well with a pin over Cody Dixon of St. Michael-Albertville (1:21). However, fellow top-ten wrestler Simon Kruse of St. Clair-

Loyola denied him the opportunity to chase the top spot, defeating him by major decision. Petry defeated Chris Cushman of Wabasha-Kellogg (Dec 9-4) and Ryan House of Chatfield (TF 4:42, 18-3) to take third.

138: Kelton Erler took fifth. Damon Bye of Eyota pinned him in 53 seconds. In the first round of consolation, however, he turned things around with a win over St. Michael-Albertville's Peyton Preston (Fall 1:15) before losing to Medford's Evan Schweisthal by 16-0 tech fall in the consolation semifinals. He took 5th with a pin to Triton's Guadalupe Martinez in 1:53.

145: Lucas Morsching took fifth after wrestling 5 matches. He took losses to Simley's Derrick Dohman (MD 12-1), Chatfield's Carson Rowland (Fall 1:49), Triton's Austan Adreon (Fall 3:44) and Dover-Eyota's Talen Rabe (Fall 4:54) before finally getting a win over St. Michael-Albertville's Evan Wicklund (5-0 decision)

152: Patrick Adams took sixth. Jack Dornack of Chatfield pinned him in one minute. After receiving a bye, Adams lost to St. Clair-Loyola's Chase Bad (Fall 1:22) and was pinned by Triton's Cole Kodada in 1:53.

160: Isaac Quast's day was like Morsching's, taking fifth and going 1-4 on the day. He was pinned by Thad Evans of Chatfield in 38 and Gavin Gust of Dover-Eyota in 2:39. The then lost by technical fall to Simley's Bristol Short (3:40, 20-3) before getting pinned again by Triton's Owen Garness in 1:26. He won his final match against Chatfield's Bill Kester by medical forfeit.

182: Jack Cahill placed third and scored the most points out of any Grizzly on the day with 16. After defeated William Halbakken of Dover-Eyota in 2:52, he fell to Simley's Travis Smith in 1:47. He recovered by pinning St. Michael-Albertville's Max O'Sullivan and Medford's Dylan Heiderscheidt, who defeated him two days ago, to take 3rd place.

195: Avery Fall took fourth place on the day. He lost by 9-3 decision to St. Michael-Albertville's Andrew Vogelphohl-Martinez before winning by medical forfeit over Dover-Eyota's Aidan Gasper. He was pinned in 26 seconds by Jacob Schimek of St. Clair-Loyola before losing the 3rd place matchup against Simley's Lana Oduwaiye in 53 seconds.

285: It was a rare case where two wrestlers of the same team had to face each other. Keegan Kuball won his match over Triton's John Moening in 18 seconds before taking a rare loss by 6-4 decision to Dover-Eyota's Jackson Duellman. On the flip side, Max Davis fell to Medford's Mason DeGrood before receiving a bye.

When Kuball and Davis faced each other, Kuball won by 17-0 technical fall in 3:03. Kuball won his third-place match via 4-0 decision against Evan Becker of St. Michael-Albertville while Davis won a rematch against Medford's Mason Degrood in 1:39.

WEM-JWP hosted a quadrangular against NRHEG, Blue Earth, and Cannon Falls at Waterville-Elysian-Morristown High School Thursday, Feb. 9.

Wrestling from Page 6

13-8 and junior Carter Ellis is 12-20.

The Bluejays did not have a state tournament qualifier last sea-

son, but Rodriguez was a state entrant as a freshman, O'Brien, Garza and Delgado made it to state in 2020-21.

The Bluejays hosted a Thursday triangular with Lake City and Worthington. The section team tournament starts Feb. 16 with the high seed hosting.

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BIG WIN — The Bulldogs' Katelyn Olson shoots for two of her game-high 25 points in JWP's come-from-behind victory over Triton.
Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

Big win caps big week for JWP girls

By **MICHAEL ROY**
Staff Writer

"It was a team effort."
That was what JWP girls' basketball head coach Cory Jans had to say about the victorious three-game home stand this past week.

The Bulldogs earned an easy 79-44 victory against Nicollet Monday, Jan. 30, took a 49-36 defensive effort against Cleveland the following day, and completed a nine-point comeback a 73-71 thriller of a game against Triton Thursday.

Bulldogs 79, Raiders 44

There wasn't much to say about this game. The girls had their best offensive performance of the season with a 79-point night. "We had a great night at the basket," coach Jans said.

Freshman Katie Olson and sophomore Presley James split the leading offensive duties with 16 points each. Senior Faith Olson also had another double-digit night with 10 points.

Other contributors: Nevaeh Weimert with 8 points, Lilly Strauss with 7, Brielle Bure with 7, Hope Dimmel with 5, Caitlin Kleve with 4, and Claire Walz and Ali Olson with a pair each.

Bulldogs 49, Clippers 36

While one Clippers player - Kaylee Karels - found the basket for 19 points, the Bulldogs only allowed three other players to score the other 17. On the flip side, three players had double-digit nights: Katie Olson had 13, James had 11, and Ali Olson had 10. Walz contributed 5 and Weimert scored three.

Bulldogs 73, Cobras 71

Sometimes, when things aren't going your way, you've got to have a little faith. That's what JWP needed when they got behind 40-31 at halftime.

Most of the game was close. After JWP took a 23-20 lead in the middle of the first half, Triton capitalized on

every defensive mistake and turnover the Bulldogs gifted them, holding a brief double-digit lead.

"There were some mistakes we knew we had to clean up," Jans stated. "And we knew it."

In the second half, both teams came out swinging, with Faith Olson shooting three three-pointers to keep the Bulldogs in it. After a 52-52 tie, junior Lexie Dahlberg gave the girls the lead off a turnover turned into two points and a free throw shot following that. James then went on a six-point run to keep the Bulldogs in the lead by one score.

Katie Olson then took over on scoring. Two points. 69-67 JWP. Two points by Triton, 69-69. Another two-pointer, 71-69 Bulldogs. Triton replies again, 71-71.

What cost Triton the game was a last-second turnover. Olson scooped it up and gave the Bulldogs a two-point lead with 3.5 seconds left.

When a desperation three-point shot near half-court wasn't even close for the Cobras, the crowd went wild with euphoria.

"I felt like this was our best complete game," Jans said. "We needed it, too, with two of our girls fouling out in the second half."

Katie Olson had the best game of the season with 25 points. Faith Olson contributed 15, James with 14, Dahlberg 7, Strauss 6, and Weimert and Ali Olson with three each.

"We really try to emphasize that everyone on the team has a role, because it's true," Jans expressed. "I am so proud of these girls and the way we've dealt with adversity this season. We've done very well when we play aggressive as a team."

With the three wins, the girls are now 10-10 (3-7 in-conference). The Bulldogs travel to Randolph Friday.

Oh so close

Hayfield hands NRHEG basketball girls first conference loss, 58-56

By **ELI LUTGENS**
Publisher/Editor

The NRHEG girls' basketball team suffered its first conference loss to Hayfield in heartbreaking fashion Friday night, losing on the final basket of the game, a layup in the paint as time expired.

"The girls played their hearts out," NRHEG coach Onika Peterson said. "It came down to the final seconds, but Hayfield pulled it out. Hopefully, we can get a second chance at them in a couple weeks."

In what is likely a precursor to the conference championship game in a couple weeks, the Panthers fell 58-56 at home. The game, also a rematch of last year's conference championship game, which the NRHEG girls also lost, looked like it was going the Panthers way, well, right up until the end.

The teams traded leads 14 times, with the Vikings holding the largest lead of the night, 24-18, with two minutes left in the first half.

A determined Erin Jacobson made a post move to cut the lead to four. With a smile, Quinn VanMaldeghem banked in a three-pointer on the team's next possession. The lead was completely erased after Sidney Schultz grabbed a rebound, dribbled the court, and pulled up for three. The Panthers took a 27-25 edge at halftime.

Out of the break the Panthers jumped out to their largest lead of the night, 5 points, on a tough in-the-paint basket from VanMaldeghem, followed by an "and 1" transition bucket from Hallie Schultz.

The final 14 minutes can be described in three words: 1. Scrappy; 2. Playoff atmosphere.

"The girls played their hearts out."
— **NRHEG coach Onika Peterson**

Numerous Panthers were on the floor diving for rebounds, forcing jump balls, and going hard to the hoop. The lead changed six times in the second half, three in the final minute.

A corner three from Camryn VanMaldeghem tied the game at 48 with four minutes to play. Free throws from Faith Nielsen and a basket from Sidney Schultz put the Panthers ahead by four two minutes later. A three-pointer and a hard layup put the Vikings back up 53-52 with 1:37 remaining.

Sidney Schultz answered to put the Panthers ahead by one. Trailing 56-54, Sidney Schultz drove and found an open Jacobson in the paint to tie it with 30 seconds remaining.

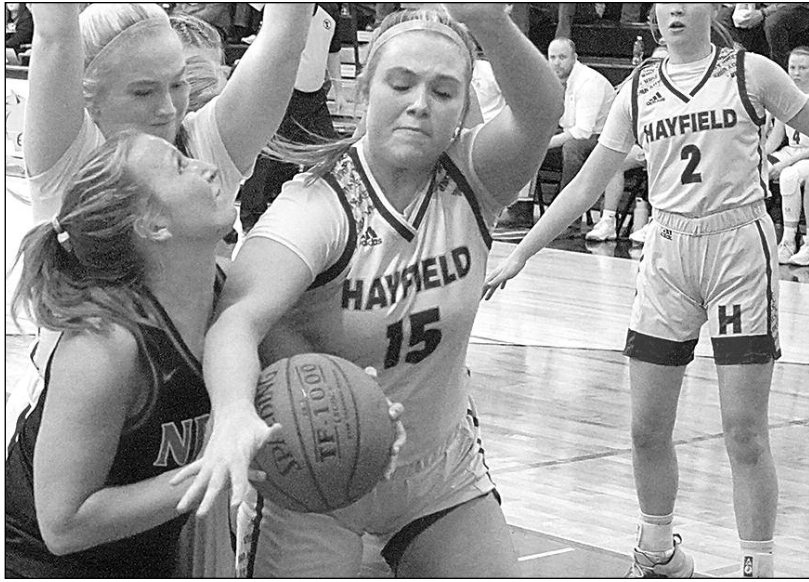
In their final possession, the Vikings dribbled the clock down before driving right, drawing the defense, and leaving a wide open player in the paint to sink the winning basket. The Panthers' record fell to 15-3 overall, 10-1 in the Gopher Conference.

Individually: Jacobson 17 points, 8 rebounds, 2 steals; Sidney Schultz 14 points, 5 rebounds, 1 steal, 4 assists; Quinn VanMaldeghem 7 points, 8 rebounds, 2 steals, 1 assist; Hallie Schultz 7 points, 5 rebounds, 1 assist; Nielsen 6 points; Camryn VanMaldeghem 5 points, 1 rebound.

The girls play travel to Blooming Prairie Friday and return home on Feb. 13 to face BEA.



HEARTBREAKER — The NRHEG girls' basketball team dropped a 58-56 heartbreaker to Hayfield Friday, Feb. 3 in New Richland. Clockwise from top left: Quinn VanMaldeghem races to the ball Ava Carney (0); Erin Jacobson is fouled by Emily Hansen (15); Faith Nielsen (2) skies over Natalie Beaver for a jump shot; Sidney Schultz (12) drives to the hoop; Hallie Schultz scores a fast-break basket ahead of defenders Beaver (25), Kristen Watson (3) and Josanne Tappel (14).
Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens



NRHEG wrestlers deal with adversity

By **JIM LUTGENS**
Sports Editor

The NRHEG wrestling team had a busy weekend, traveling to Mankato for a triangular Friday night and competing in two Saturday tournaments, the varsity at Maple River and Annabelle Petsinger at Pine Island.

The Panthers were defeated 55-24 by Mankato East in the opener Friday. Parker Bunn put NRHEG on the scoreboard with a fall at 126 pounds. After a forfeit win at 132, the Panthers dropped key falls at 138 and 145. East led 55-12 before the Panthers' Aden Berg and Makota Misgen closed it out with a fall and a forfeit at 220 and 285, respectively.

"We were outmatched in a few situations," said NRHEG coach Shaun Larson. "However, we found ways to fight for team points, and even score points that we have been missing in the past. Parker and Aden wrestled well in this dual."

The Panthers defeated Waseca 45-36.

Dakota Schlaak won by forfeit at 106 and Jacob Karl won by fall at

113. Bunn pinned his opponent in 1:35 at 126. Parpart prevailed by pin at 132. Aidan Schlaak took an overtime fall at 138 and Ryan Schlaak won by fall at 145. A forfeit to Reese Routh at 152 put the Panthers up 36-6.

Waseca won four straight with a pin by Oliver O'Brien at 160, forfeits to Christian Rodriguez at 171 and Carter Ellis at 182 and an overtime pin by Matthew Veroeven at 220.

The meet came down to the 285 bout, where Misgen scored a 4-1 decision over Jenaro Delgado.

"We were able to find matchups that worked in our favor," said Coach Larson. "Parker had one of his better showings this year, pinning both of his opponents. Makota won a tight match in a situation where the team match was on the line, and we definitely appreciate his effort. It was a fun match, as it usually is with Waseca. I thought we competed well on Friday."

Varsity wrestlers headed to Maple River Saturday, where the Panthers finished 13th among 16 schools. Misgen was the lone

NRHEG placewinner, taking the championship at 285.

"On Saturday, our team found itself in the toughest competition that we have seen so far in 2023," said Larson. "There were many good teams with very tough individuals. We did what we could at most weights, and like every tournament, we had a few individuals with bad days. Makota rebounded from his last tournament loss with three victories on his way to a championship. Makota believes in himself right now, and hopefully he can continue to show the team how they can give themselves a chance to win."

Petsinger also experienced success at Pine Island, pinning her opponents in 59, 16, 48 and 18 seconds on the way to taking the gold at 120.

"Annabelle was one of the most dominant girls in the tournament," said Larson. "Two of her falls were against state placewinners from last season. Annabelle's performance might be the most dominant performance I have seen this season. We are very happy for Annabelle and

her accomplishment."

The Panthers were in Blooming Prairie Monday, where they lost 49-28 to host Westfield and 65-12 to Faribault.

Aiden Schlaak, Harbor Cromwell, Wyatt Larson and Misgen wrestled their way to victory. Berg won by forfeit.

Winners against Faribault were Deven Parpart by forfeit and Misgen by fall.

"We are in a difficult place as a team right now," said Coach Larson. "We are not going to give up on the season, we are going to keep trying to get better, but right now we are not wrestling really well. Makota had another great night. Both of these teams are tough and I feel like we had moments where we were competitive. I am hoping that these wrestlers are going to keep working at getting better, even though the season is winding down. We are planning to make the most out of the last regular season matches this week, and compete with a little more intensity."

NRHEG boys drop two

By **JIM LUTGENS**
Sports Editor

The NRHEG boys' basketball team played a very competitive first half against Gopher Conference East leader Hayfield Friday, Feb. 5.

The second half was all home team.

The Panthers, who trailed just 29-26 at halftime, were outscored 36-14 by the Vikings in the second half and lost 65-40.

"We came out of the gate a little slow, but ended the first half on an 11-0 run to pull within three," said Panthers coach Dan Schmidt. "The second half, however, we just couldn't get in to our offense, and things fell apart."

Daxter Lee led the Panthers in scoring with 13 points. Will Tuttle totaled 8 points, Jackson Chrz 7 points and 6 rebounds, Lukas Loverink 4 points and 4 rebounds, Sawyer Prigge 3 points, Alden Dobberstein 3 points and Greyson Schaefer 2 points.

The Panthers dropped a 69-46 decision to Maple River at New Richland Monday, Jan. 30. It was similar to the Hayfield game. The Panthers were within 29-22 at half-

time.

"I don't think the game felt as much of a blowout as the score suggested," said Schmidt. "We battled them the first half, and even led a fair amount. One little run to end the half was the turning point at that time."

Schmidt said improvement was seen on both defense and offense.

"Our defensive effort was markedly better than what it has been, and it felt like our offense was much more patient and efficient than what we've been playing of late," he stated. "The second half was just a matter of the No. 5 team in the state flexing their muscle and showing why they're rated. Maple River is an extremely good team that plays awesome defense, and Hayden Niebuhr is a match-up nightmare for most any team."

Sam Olson scored 15 points on three 3-pointers to lead the Panthers. Lee scored 14, Prigge 6, Tuttle 4 points and 5 rebounds, Dobberstein 3 points, Loverink 2 points and Schaefer 2 points. Niebuhr led all scorers with 27.

The Panthers host Blooming Prairie Friday.

All state shoot

By TRISTAN JENSEN
Staff Writer

Waseca Archery Club played host to the Minnesota Archers Association (MAA) for two major archery events during the weekend of January 27 to 29. Saturday, Jan. 28 was the 2023 All-State Vegas Shoot, a qualifying competition for archers to participate in the Vegas Shoot which is known as the largest and most prestigious indoor archery tournament in the world, attracting more than 4,000 competitors globally. The second event, which archers could choose to participate in on Friday, Jan. 27 or Sunday, Jan. 29 was the MAA and National Field Archery Association's State Indoor Championship. The two events were also the first and second legs, respectively, of the 2023 Archer of the Year selection through the MAA. Both competitions were managed by Rob Knutson, vice-president of the MAA. Knutson said he was pleased with registration numbers, as well as the quality of archery seen throughout the weekend.

At Saturday's All-State Vegas Shoot, archers shot what's known as a "Vegas 330": Each competitor shot a 30-arrow round, divided into ten "ends" of three arrows, in which striking the X in the center of the bullseye counts as eleven points, for a possible maximum of 330. Archers are classified by age, equipment type, and gender. On this occasion categories were cubs (under 12), youth (12-14), young adult (15-17), adult (18-49), and senior (50 and over).

Among the cubs there were four archers, all in the freestyle category shot with a compound bow. In the youth category eleven archers competed, ten in freestyle and one in the recurve bow division. From the Waseca Archery Club, Zeb Sell shot in Cub Male Freestyle, Zoie Thompson

and Ellie Braaten shot in Young Adult Female Freestyle, and Gabriel Kietzer shot in Youth Adult Male Freestyle. Sell took home a gold medal with a score of 245 points, Thompson received silver in her category with 312 points, Braaten scored 275 points and Kietzer scored 276.

LeeAnna Burley, 16, from the Duluth area, won the Young Adult Female Freestyle division and was also named the highest-scoring shooter among the under-eighteen classes. She had already qualified to attend the Vegas Shoot during her morning round, referred to as a warmup by most archers present, and excelled further during the afternoon. Burley has been to the Vegas Shoot before, but is excited to go again as it's "always something different." Thompson, who is 15, is also going to Vegas again this year. Thompson was not available for comment, but her mother Stacy Thompson said the family is looking forward to the occasion. After receiving his medal, Sell said he was feeling good and looking forward to participating in the State Indoor the following day.

In the over-eighteen divisions, a total of \$1,500 was on the line in addition to medals. Because it was a "money shoot," the categories were divided only by age and equipment; not by gender. Eleven archers shot in the adult categories, eight in freestyle, three in bowhunter freestyle, and one in the recurve category. Representing the Waseca area, Matt Mader earned 294 points and a bronze medal in Adult Freestyle. Waseca's Rick Rugroden was also present for the shoot, but spent the day coaching and didn't take part in scored rounds.

Two tied scores occurred during the over-eighteen round. Tim Wilson, president of the MAA, and Timmy Huttell tied for second place in Senior



YOUTH COMPETITORS - From left: Maya Miller, Alyssa Dumke, LeeAna Burley, Aiden Schifsky, Caleb Anderson, Garrett Johnson, Jack Moorhouse, Ava Noehre, Orion Rathbun, Zoie Thompson, Dennis Anderson, Marla Rupar, Maggie Grutkoski, Josie Knutson, Zeb Sell, Faith Williams, Violet Sowinski, Paige Grutkoski

Freestyle with 311 points and agreed to split the prize money, receiving \$74 each. Timothy Lopez and Dayna Adams tied for third in Adult Freestyle with 309 points and elected to have a "shootoff," in which both archers simultaneously fire a single arrow and the higher score wins. Lopez won the shootoff, as well as the bronze medal and prize money.

At the 2023 State Indoor Championship, archers shot a sixty-arrow round split into twelve ends of five arrows with a maximum score of 300. "Inside X" and "outside X" tens, determined by whether the arrow is touching the lines, were tracked and used for tiebreakers. Because the split-day structure meant many of the archers would not be present at the end of rounds, no awards were announced. Instead, medals were held to be distributed after scores were officially posted. The under-eighteen categories were the same as at the State Vegas Shoot on Saturday, while the over-eighteen categories were further divided. Because no money was on the line, the men and women were scored separately. In addition, the senior categories became Senior (50-59), Silver Senior (60-69), and Master Senior (70 and over). A straightforward tournament, one parent told a nervous child as they prepared to shoot, "You know



ADULT COMPETITORS - Front row from left: Jim Huel, Hope Williams, Tim Lopez, and Mike Holem. Back: Matt Mader, Tom Johnson, Brent Denow, Jesse Given, Tim Wilson, Tim Gohla, Taylor Given

what the hardest part about today is? It's pulling the arrow out of the target."

Thirteen archers shot in Cub categories; three in female freestyle, one in male freestyle, five in male bowhunter freestyle, three in female bowhunter freestyle (which has stricter requirements for the bow's sights), and one in female barebow (where most sights and stabilizers are not allowed). In the Youth categories, there were also thirteen archers shooting. Three shot in youth male freestyle, four in youth female freestyle, three in youth female bowhunter freestyle, and three in youth male bowhunter freestyle. In Young Adult, there were fourteen archers competing. Seven shot in young adult female freestyle, five in young adult male freestyle, and two in

young adult female bowhunter freestyle. From the Waseca Archery Club, Zoie Thompson took gold in the Young Adult Female Freestyle division with 300 points and 58 inside Xs; Ellie Braaten shot in the same division and earned 282 points. Gabriel Kietzer shot in Young Adult Male Freestyle and earned 280 points; Aiden Walker won silver in Youth Male Freestyle with 277 points. Bridget Pestorous earned 244 points for a bronze medal in Youth Female Bowhunter Freestyle. Zeb Sell shot in Cub Male Freestyle with 297 points. Liah Adams won Cub Female Bowhunter Freestyle with 300 points; Emily Harguth received a silver medal in the same category for her score of 254 points. The entire Cub Male Bowhunter Freestyle category

was comprised of Waseca Archery Club members, with Ian Reese winning first place with 282 points, Ryan Harguth taking the silver medal with 265 points, and Carter Walker receiving bronze for his score of 257, followed by Bryan Danberry with 236 points and Silas Reese with 230 points.

Among the adults, eight competitors shot in the Adult Male Freestyle division, three in Adult Female Freestyle, five in Adult Male Bowhunter Freestyle, one in Adult Female Bowhunter Freestyle, and one in Adult Female Freestyle Limited Recurve for a total of eighteen archers. None were identified as Waseca-area archers.



Waseca 10u girls' hockey took second place in their tournament last weekend.

10u girls take second

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

It was another beautiful weekend to celebrate the great winter sport of hockey.

The Tracy Rae Jevning Classic took place from Friday to Sunday, Feb. 3-5. The classic is an eight-team 10U girls' hockey invitational tournament that takes place every year during the Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Festival. There were 12 games played throughout the weekend, including the championship, consolation championship, a 3rd place game, and a 7th place game.

The Waseca girls' team made it to the championship round, but met their match against Dodge County and lost 6-1.

The motto for the classic is a quote from Mahatma Gandhi: "You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

The first two games took place

Friday, Fairmont took a 2-0 victory over the Valkyries — a coop team from the Twin Cities schools of Eastview, Burnsville, and Apple Valley. Marshall and Dodge County played in the second game of the night, with the latter beating Marshall 3-1.

Waseca had an 8 a.m. start against Albert Lea on Saturday. That didn't slow them down at all, as they defeated the Tigers 7-1. Hastings defeated Austin in the next game 7-2.

In the championship bracket, Dodge County shut out Fairmont 3-0, with Waseca barely edging Hastings 3-2. In the consolation bracket, Marshall shut out the Valkyries 3-0 with Albert Lea taking a 6-1 loss to Big Nine Conference rival Austin.

In the seventh-place bracket, the Valkyries had the most lopsided game of the tournament, defeating Albert Lea 7-0. In the consolation

championship, Marshall defeated Austin 4-0. Hastings overtook Fairmont for 3rd place.

Things started off well for Waseca when they took the first goal of the game a few minutes into the first period. But Dodge County made sure that was the only score they got. Dodge County matched that goal in the first period and did a lot of damage in the second period. There was a mini scrum which resulted in a roughing penalty ending a Bluejay's afternoon and a minor penalty against Dodge County.

Despite the loss, Waseca's girls' hockey team can hold its head high for finishing second among some steep competition.

The Tracy Rae Jevning Classic ended the series of activities for the Waseca Sleigh and Cutter festival at the Waseca Community Arena.



Kyle Ahlschlager celebrated with his teammates after becoming the first Bluejay to net 100 career goals during an 8-0 victory against Redwood Valley Jan. 24. From left: Karson Lindsay, Jackson Tesch, Gave George, Eli Wetzal, Solomon Wilson, Griffin Krautkremer, Brayden Hoof, Keaton Roeker, Lucas Groll, Brayden Hesch-Priem, Preston Miller, Hunter Anderson, Armando Balderas, and Charles Cariveau.

Number 100

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

Kyle Ahlschlager recently cemented his place in Waseca boys' hockey history becoming the all-time points leader and first Bluejay to net 100 career goals. He reached the century mark Tuesday Jan. 24 against Redwood Valley. The second title came a week later against Fairmont.

"Hitting 100 goals was something I always wanted to do," Ahlschlager said. "It wasn't like a big sigh or relief or anything when I did it. I was just glad it happened. It's a cool thing to do something that's never been done in our town before."

Ahlschlager began his hockey career earlier than most even consider trying sports. He's been skating around and shooting pucks since he was three, and officially started his career as a hockey player as a member of St. Peter's "mite" team.

At the time, he attended elementary school in the neighboring town of Cleveland, where he also played for the football team. "Cleveland had a co-op with St. Peter for hockey," he elaborated.

In third grade, Ahlschlager and his family moved to Waseca, and his love for hockey grew. He often played alongside his brother Jarrett, who was also on the hockey team before graduating last year.

Ahlschlager's choice to be a hockey player was well considered. "My dad was in basketball, and he encouraged me and my brother to try every sport and then play what we liked," he explained. "I played both basketball and hockey to start. Within a couple years, I decided to drop basketball. I had more friends in hockey, and it was just more fun out there on the ice."

Since then, he's grown as a player and as a person. He joined the Waseca varsity hockey team during the 2019-20 season; he was the only freshman on the team.

"I didn't feel intimidated at all," Ahlschlager said. "That team had a great group of juniors and seniors that did well. They pushed me to do well my freshman year."

He added that they didn't give him advice. They showed it. "Their actions spoke to me more than their words," he said. "They were really good at pulling guys up when they're down. They made sure everyone knew they were good to be whoever they wanted to be around the team. They were always approachable."

When he wasn't representing Waseca as a Bluejay, Ahlschlager played in many summer leagues in the Twin Cities as a member of teams like Blue Army and Minnesota High Performance. He even joined a junior league team in Des Moines, IA for some experience there.

Out of his whole career — other than becoming Waseca's all-time points leader and getting 100 goals, of course — Ahlschlager's favorite memories are winning



Kyle Ahlschlager became Waseca's all-time points leader Feb. 2, 2023 during a game against Fairmont.

the district playoffs as a member of Waseca's "Squirt B" team (comprised of players ages nine and ten) and his first year as a varsity member of the Waseca boys' hockey team.

He's had a few players by his side, including forward Griffin Krautkremer and goalie Eli Wetzal. "They were a great group of guys to hang around with," he said. "Griffin was one of the first people I talked to when I got on the ice here. There were a few seniors who quit this year who were good guys, too, such as Max Neaves."

Ahlschlager even has a connection with senior Karson Lindsay of Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton, who decided to try out for the varsity team for the first and only time this season. "Karson and I were best friends from kindergarten to second grade when I was in Cleveland," he reminisced. "It was nice getting to play on the same team to end our high school career."

As the end to his high school hockey career nears, Ahlschlager shared some advice he'd give to any hockey player—from current varsity members to those just starting in the sport. "Hard work prevails. It's something they can't take away from you. Hunter Anderson, a current player on our team right now, dedicated himself to hockey this year. He's the most improved person on the team."

Despite his fantastic career in hockey, Ahlschlager is torn about what sport to play in college. "I'm not sure what I want to do yet," he admitted. "I might run in track, play football, or commit to hockey."

Whatever happens, he'll put 110 percent into it and go into it believing in himself. "If you work hard, you will see improvement no matter what in hockey, or any sport," he concluded. "If you put hard work and confidence together, you'll be just fine."

Freethrow Winners



On Jan. 8, the Waseca Knights of Columbus held a free throw competition for ages 9-14 at Waseca High School. The winners were, from left: Sam Feldkamp, Gavin Reger, Ethan Babcock, Luke Feldkamp, Keian Klinger *Not pictured Allison Mader



Always Looking Up by Melissa Dunn

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Time is something of a fickle friend

Wallace reached a milestone recently. He has graced the world with his presence for one year as of the third week in January. Not a lot is different at the manor with the change from puppyhood to “teenager”; Wallace still doesn’t know anything. The usual shenanigans still take place and the senior dogs remain unimpressed. Probably the only thing the Seniors appreciate about the little bother and his birthday is that it provides a third opportunity for doggy sundaes from Schwan’s.

Otto: Aw, jeez, is he STILL here? Haven’t we suffered long enough? And he’s laying on MY blanket. Probably going to stay there all day too, the little cretin.

Shelby: Hey, look! Mom’s going to the food thing...and she’s taking out those yummy cream things... and WE all get one!! Not just him. Hooray!

Otto: Yeah, well.... he probably already licked ‘em.

Otto, the senior of the seniors, has earned the privilege of being a grumpy old man. A dachshund’s life expectancy is between twelve and sixteen years (though there are quite a few that live good lives to age twenty and beyond), and he’s had fifteen and a half trips around the sun. Except for some missing teeth and a cataract in one eye, Otto’s in good shape. We almost lost him about eight years ago. From whatever stick or bone he was chewing on at the time, he got a sliver in the back of his mouth on the top (we were unaware of this at the time) and because of the anatomy of dachshund snouts, a sliver entering exactly where it did worked itself right behind his eye where it promptly caused enormous trouble. Dr. Scott Lang at the Waseca Vet Clinic described to us the procedure that needed to be done and told us that neither he nor either Dr. Tom Metzdorf or Dr. Jones-Lang had ever performed that surgery. He had only read about it. “But could you try?” I remember whispering. “If this was your dog, would you try?” Dr. Scott said he would do his very best, and we knew that he would. When we picked Otto up a day or two later, Sue the receptionist told us that all three vets took part in Otto’s surgery—one to assist Dr. Scott and the other to read aloud all the procedures from the veterinary medical books. It was quite an ordeal for us, and a learning experience for the Waseca Vet Clinic. Otto, on the other hand, seemed to

take it all in stride; he had an uneventful recovery and probably forgot all about the whole thing in a week. Not to be left out, Shelby had her own medical mystery this past summer and fall. She developed some sort of GI infection that prevented absorbing nutrients from her food. We watched in confusion and alarm as she wasted away for no reason that we could find. Once again, through methodical testing, the good doctors came through.

In the time I’ve lived here, the clinic has helped me nurture six cats and four dogs (not all at once. I might be crazy but I’m not insane). I am remiss if I give the impression that only dogs live at the manor. Both a marmalade tabby cat called Winston and Frank the painted turtle also reside here. Frank is a quiet fellow, and self-contained for apparent reasons so he has few interactions with his canine siblings. Winston does visit Frank once in a while, although I think that may have more to do with the tank sitting in a sunny spot than Winston having neighborly inclinations. As far as the dogs, Winston tolerates Shelby but he enjoys hanging around the dachshunds the best, probably because they are the same size. Otto is his napping buddy, and Wallace is his favorite playmate.

I’ve obviously been thinking about time this week, and age, and all the sentimentality that goes with them. Of course, my brilliant daughter is at the top of my list because she’s graduating from college this spring, and though I am so thankful and proud of the woman she has become that I could just pop, a tiny part of me wishes she still preferred spending time with her mom rather than her brilliant friends who are way cooler. My parents are in their mid-eighties and are still kicking. In fact, my mom routinely gets “carded” when she asks for the senior discount to be applied to her bill. She’ll pull out her driver’s license to show to the cashier/attendant/staff, and generally, some sort of hubbub occurs as managers are called over to explain. I recently celebrated my ‘Carter-era speed limit’ birthday but I don’t feel much different from when I was thirty. And Wallace certainly does not act more mature and settled, but I suppose that’s okay. Animals are only around for a shorter period of time than they deserve, and I’m going to just love them and soak up everything I can (and with Wallace, that’s literal).



The Pastor’s Column

Longing to be a part of something

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

We want to be a part of a team. We want to belong, to know that people value and rely upon us. We want to be needed and know that our actions add to a solution. Our human condition longs to be a part of something that matters.

From the beginning of our time on this earth, we have longed to be a part of a family, then a group of friends and by chance create our own belonging. This feeling of belonging was created by God in us. We desire to be in relationship with God and with His bride, the church.

1 Peter 2:9-10 reminds us of our position and place within God’s family.

9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

It is His work. He desires a relationship with us. He chose to be in a relationship with us. And we must respond to that relationship. He offers us a position, a people to call our own, and a place to belong.

We respond to the offer of relationship with worship. We call out God’s praises, both individually and corporately. We identify His work of mercy and we cannot help but respond with joy.

We are His people, set apart by Him for His work. He has brought us together through faith to be His church on earth. He has called us to be His people and respond to Him in worship.

This place of worship in community is where we belong. We belong in the community that brings God worship and praise. This community of imperfect people is transformed by God’s work into a people that will be His for all eternity.

We are His church, We are His people, this is where we belong. A community that worships and serves God together.

Author visits Hartley

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

Hartley Elementary School kicked off “I Love to Read” month with a visit from Minnesota author and illustrator David LaRochelle Wednesday, Feb. 1. Hartley’s theme for 2023’s “I Love to Read” month was “I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream to Read!”

There were four different time slots — one for each grade — during which LaRochelle gave 45-minute presentations.

The author’s visit was possible thanks to a \$1,800 grant from the Waseca Area Foundation via the John Priebe Education Fund. “We would not have been able to have LaRochelle here if it weren’t for that,” media specialist Gwen Krueger said. “This is a great opportunity for kids to learn how fun reading can be and what it’s like being an author and illustrator of their favorite books.”

LaRochelle, an award-winning children’s author, began his working life as a fourth-grade teacher at White Bear Lake. He was already considering career changes after graduating from St. Olaf College with an English degree in 1983. He was interested in being an illustrator of Hallmark cards, but remained a teacher until 1988, when he decided to try and be an author. That very year, his first book A Christmas Guest was published.

Since then, he has published over



On Feb. 1, David LaRochelle spoke to Hartley Elementary’s third-graders about the publishing process of his book “The Best Pet of All.”
Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

thirty books. While he did write one adult novel, he has pretty much stuck to writing young children’s books mainly for his love of telling stories through illustrations and punctuation. He says his favorite book ever, Moo, only has the word “moo” in it, but the drawings and emphasis of the word on every page tells the story.

Wednesday was not the first time LaRochelle visited Hartley Elementary; his first time seeing the little Bluejays was in 2016. “I remember the kids back then were so well-behaved,” he reminisced. “So far today, there hasn’t been any exception.”

His presentation for the third-graders started with an example of illustrating a story with numbers. When he drew out the numbers, he explained to the students that the story was about not giving your dog a book to read.

When the students were confused, LaRochelle used the numbers to draw his illustrations, which included the dog ripping up the book

after realizing it couldn’t read, causing its owner to become upset and let go of a kite he was flying, which caused a helicopter crash, Earth to collide with Saturn, and aliens to invade the world. The moral of the story: “If your dog wants to try and read your book, just say no,” LaRochelle told the students.

He then explained the rigorous stages of getting his story The Best Pet of All published.

“I received a letter from the editor within a month of when I sent my final draft; that was unheard of!” he told the students. “After making the suggested changes, I waited two and a half more years until I heard back from the editor again.” LaRochelle sent a friendly reminder to the editor with an illustration of the dragon — a main character in The Best Pet of All — after waiting six months.

The editor got back to him again, informing LaRochelle that they already had an illustrator in mind who couldn’t get to his book yet. At first,

LaRochelle admitted he didn’t like the first sketches from Hanaka Wakiyama, who ended up illustrating the book. The characters didn’t look the way he imagined. But after seeing the final product, he thought the illustrations were amazing.

He then pulled out manuscripts for stories that were rejected. All 198 of them. “I was about ready to quit; it seemed too hard,” he told the students. “But had I quit, I wouldn’t have gotten any stories published, let alone thirty.”

The one thing he wanted the students to take away from his presentation was that hard work pays off. “To do what you want isn’t easy,” he said. “You have to work at it, and sometimes you won’t be successful. But it’s worth it, especially when you’re an author.”

Krueger agreed. “This was also a way for kids to have fun during ‘I Love to Read Month,’” she added. “We want them excited for reading books, especially in February.”

■ Meeting

from Page 5

lows government bodies to purchase private properties for public use without the owners’ consent so long as a fair price is paid; the process will be used to gain an easement for a bridge replacement project taking place this year on County State Access Highway 5. The project requires

three easements on private properties; two property owners have agreed, but the third has been non-responsive. The project is receiving federal funds, so the plan cannot be formally made and approved until the county has the right of way to complete it, and doing so without easement on this property has been deemed impossible. After sixty days’ notice and multiple attempts to contact the landowner, the county is beginning court proceedings. The process is reportedly a quick one

once the landowner is served court papers, and Kollar says if the project is delayed at all it is more likely to be due to shipping materials than this.

At the recommendation of county administrator Michael Johnson, the board approved the creation of an official Land and Water Resources department under the umbrella of County Administration. Over 90% of the land in Waseca County is agricultural, and the board has recently had a heavy focus on drainage systems, so Johnson says that formalizing a

department makes sense despite the general efforts to consolidate and simplify departments within the county government. The department will be formed from existing staff with roles related to land and water management, so will have no fiscal impact. An organizational chart will be created dynamically as the employees in the department work together and find the best working strategies.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

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



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100 wins



Waseca senior Christian Rodriguez celebrated his 100th career win on the wrestling mat and officially committed to play football at Gustavus Adolphus College, all in the same week. Christian is pictured on signing day with his family: sisters Reese and Gabriela, and parents Debbie and Nathan Rodriguez.



Nationals from Page 1

indicators of how high—both literally and figuratively—the competition is climbing. NRHEG’s team took part in seven competitions this past season beginning in mid-October. Team performances are ranked on a variety of elements, most easily described as, the more demanding the moves and the better executed they are, the higher the score.

Churchill says one of the team’s greatest advantages is the coordination and strength they bring to stunts. “We have some very demanding elements in our routine,” she says. “The next level up in difficulty are moves used in division 1 college competitions.”

One of the greatest challenges, she says, is the level of pressure which rests on every performance. “We only have two minutes and thirty seconds to demonstrate our skill,” Churchill explains. “If we make a mistake or someone falls, we lose points, no matter how many times we’ve gotten it right in practice.”

“We don’t have another quarter or another match to redeem ourselves.”

Churchill says about 40 teams will be competing at the national contest. All groups will perform Friday morning; those whose scores are in the top half will compete again on Saturday. Half of

Saturday’s competitors, about 11, will advance to finals on Sunday.

Team members are (seniors) Wayne and Wilkenson, (juniors) Payton Bunn, Julia Churchill, Brenna Sommer, Isabel Stadheim and Malonna Wilson, (sophomore) Sierra Misgen, (freshmen) Madison Bogue and Kyera Eustice, and (eighth-graders) Ariel Anhalt, Autumn Baseman, Olivia Berg, Addison Buenger and Orianna Degen.

The competition will be live streamed beginning at 9:55 Minnesota time on Friday. Since up to six groups will be performing at a time, fans need to know that NRHEG will be in the AdventureHealth Arena South (Red). The link is <https://tv.varsity.com/events/7976363-2023-uca-national-high-school-cheerleading-championship>.

AGE 55+ WORKERS NEEDED

Part-time custodial work
At Straight River Rest Areas on I-35

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Look back at Waseca

Waseca Herald, 1923
-If Rev. And Mrs. R. P. Wasbotten had any doubt as to the esteem in which they are held by this community, that doubt vanished Thursday evening last when about 100 friends and neighbors from city and country surprised them on the twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage. The guests came unannounced to the new family home on Hartley Heights and were cordially welcomed by the hospitable minister and his family, who were taken completely by surprise. After greetings had been extended, the guests were given an opportunity to inspect the new home for cellar to garret.

-The jury in the Water Stavenau case, referred to in the last issue of the Herald, returned a verdict of guilty last Thursday evening. Their verdict was grand larceny in the second degree. The punishment may be a year or up to five years in the penitentiary. Savenau’s attorneys have asked for a stay of sentence pending an appeal for a new trial.

-A fire in Wesley Mahler’s chicken house in the east part of town last Sunday afternoon resulted in the loss of about 150 purebred chickens, valued by the owner at over \$300. He had the space under the rafters filled with straw, to absorb the moisture, and Sunday afternoon he placed an oil stove on the floor so that its heat would dry out the straw. After watching the stove work for a while he closed the door and windows. About two o’clock neighbors noticed smoke issuing from the house and called the fire department. When the door was opened it was found that the straw in the attic had taken fire and that the smoke and fumes had smothered the chickens, only two out of the entire flock being alive. The interior of the building was only

slightly damaged.

Waseca Journal, 1973
-Robert Fowler, Mankato, has accepted the position of Manager at the Big Swede Drive-in, north of Waseca on Highway 13. Fowler has been managing the drive-in for three weeks. He is filling the position left open by former manager Charles Bengston. Bengston managed the drive-in for eight months before accepting a position as the manager of Country Kitchen in Hutchinson.

-The University of Minnesota Technical College-Waseca may have a housing problem for students in the near future. What could be done to solve the problem before it occurs was discussed last night at a special meeting at UMW. Student numbers are coming along faster than projected, Dr. Ed Frederick said, as other college enrollments are going down. He said the enrollments at Waseca and Crookston are rising because they are “practical” colleges. Enrollment has been expanding at the college and projections for the next 10 years show more expansion going from 131 students in the fall of 1971 to an expected 1,000 in 1981.

Waseca County News, 1998
-After 64 years of going to school every day whether it was raining, snowing, or the sun was shining, Milt Clemons has decided to retire. He has not been attending class that long. Clemons and his wife, Winn, have been responsible for getting the students of the Waseca School District to and from school as safely as possible for the last 52 years. The Clemonses have sold their bus business to their son Mike and his wife Beth effective Jan. 1.

-There is a new industry coming to town but it is not going to employ any new Wasecans. The Federal Cor-



In 1998, Donnie Larson (left) and Leilani Maiden won a prize at the Waseca VFW’s fishing contest on Clear Lake.

rectional Institute (FCI) through its UNICOR program will start manufacturing shorts for the military beginning this summer. An 18,000 square foot manufacturing facility is still being built on the grounds. The construction began in June and is expected to be finished in early April. An accompanying 10,000 square foot warehouse built for UNICOR will be finished in mid-February.

-Originally from the Winnebago area, Don Robertson has moved from rural life to being a financial advisor. Robertson began full-time at American Express Financial Advisors, Inc. on Nov. 19. Robertson said American Express is known for its three independent subdivisions; the credit card company, travel services, and financial advising. All three of these areas are nationally recognized said Robertson. “We’re doing great nationwide.”

-The Waseca boys’ basketball win streak came crashing down with a thud last weekend. The Bluejays not only saw their six-game streak come to an end, but blew a golden opportunity to move to the top of the South Central Conference as well. Waseca missed 11 of 15 free throws in the final quarter and turned the ball over 34 times in falling to St. Peter for the second time this year at home. St. Peter’s two wins over the Jays are its lone two conference victories this season.

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PREVIEW DATE:
Thursday, February 16, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

John Deere 4240, JD 317 Skid Loader, Ford 871 Tractors, Attachments

‘78 JD 4240, Westendorff TA28 Hyd. Loader, Joystick, 84” Bucket, Pallet Forks, 18.4x38, 3 Hyd., 8sp. PS, 10,099 Hrs, Clean; JD 317 Skid Loader, 2062 Hrs, Radio, Cage Cab, Weights; JD 72” Material Bucket; (2) Sets of Pallet Forks, Universal Skid Loader Plate; Ford 871 Select-O-Speed, 3pt., 1 Hyd., Fenders, 13.6x28, Older Restoration; Parsons 377 Trencher, 4x4, 6’ With 2’ Extension, 6 Way 6’ Blade; Allied 8’ Snowblower, Double Auger, 3pt., Hyd. Spout, 540PTO; JD 509 Rotary Mower, 540PTO; 3pt. 50 Gal. Sprayer, Booms; 5’ Snowblower, Single Auger, 540PTO, 3pt.; Cosmo 3pt. Broadcast Spreader; 20’x8’ Flatbed On JD 8 Ton Running Gear

PAYMENT & PICK UP DATES:
Monday, February 20, From 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 21, From 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Gooseneck Flatbed & Dump Trailers, Enclosed Trailer, Flatbed Trailers

‘13 Big Tex 20’x8’ Gooseneck Trailer, 5’ Dove Tail, Tandem Axle, Ramps; ‘05 Racer By Carson Enclosed Trailer, 24’x100”, Tandem Axle, Rear Ramp, Side Door; Gooseneck Hydraulic Dump Trailer, 12’x7’, Tandem Axle, 14,000GVW; ‘17 H&H Tilt Bed Flatbed Trailer, 20’x82”, 3000lb Tandem Axle; Schuster Gooseneck Flatbed Trailer, 16’x8’, Tandem Axle; 11’x92” Steel Snowmobile/Utility Trailer, Tilt Bed; 42’ Semi Flatbed Trailer, Tandem Axle, Needs Work; 1976 Flatbed Trailer, 16’, Tandem Axle

2003 Chevy 2500, 2003 Motorhome, (2) Grain Trucks

‘03 Chevy 2500HD, Duramax 6.6L, 226,362 Miles, Ext. Cab; ‘03 Chevy Coachman 16’ Motorhome, 94,801 Miles, 6.0L Gas, Runs & Drives; ‘78 Ford F600 Grain Truck, Single Axle, 16’ Omaha Box & Hoist, 360 V8, 5x2; 70’s Chevy C50 Grain Truck, Single Axle, 15’ Box & Hoist, Automatic, V8 Gas; ‘02 Buick Rendezvous SUV, AWD, Parts Car

Welders, Band Saw, Hyd Press, Matco Tool Box, Pressure Washer, Power & Hand Tools

Panasonic Gunslinger 261 Mig/Stick Welder; All American Hot Water Presser Washer, 4GPM, 3000PSI; Matco 6’ Rolling Toolbox; Ellis Model 1800 Metal Band Saw; OTC Electric Over Hyd. Press; Makita Chop Saw; Craftsman 12” Band Saw; Torch Set With Cart; Schumacher Battery Charger; Snap-On & John Deere Wrench Sets; Large Amount Of Ratches, Sockets, Breaker Bars; Air Impact, Grinders, Chisels; Milwaukee & DeWalt Cordless Tools; Many New Log Chains & Binders; Schaeffer’s Lubricants; John Deere Filters & Parts; 10’ Wooden Work Bench With Metal Top & Vise; Keller 24’ Fiberglass Extension Ladder; Large Amount Of Shop Supplies and Shelving

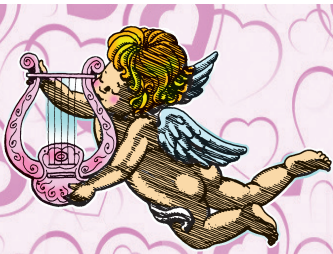
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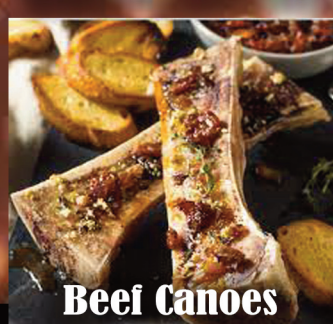
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