

OBITUARIES

David Arndt

David “Ozzie” Arndt, age 84 formerly of Waldorf, died on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at Laurel’s Peak in Mankato.

Born on September 22, 1941 in Waseca, Minnesota, he was the son of Elmer and Hazel (Taft) Arndt. He graduated from Waldorf-Pemberton High School in 1961. Ozzie was united in marriage to Judy Tesch on July 5, 1963 and together they were blessed with six children. Over the years Ozzie worked at several companies including Herter’s, E.F. Johnson Co., in addition to Birds Eye and Green Giant. He also worked for several area farmers. He also delivered papers for the Mankato Free Press. In his younger years, he enjoyed snowmobiling and tractor pulls. He especially loved relaxing in his gazebo overlooking his hobby farm and pond and spending time with his family and attending various activities. He was a long time member of First Lutheran Church in Waldorf.

He is survived by five children, Richard “Duke” (Jodie) Arndt of St. Clair, Steve (Cindy) Arndt of Mapleton, John Arndt of Nebraska, Paul Arndt of Janesville, and Susan (Mike Weiler) Cook of LeMars, IA; grandchildren, Bailey Arndt, Chelsea (Noah) Germs, Marissa (Evan) Masters, Lincoln (Jessi) Arndt, Blake (Logan) Arndt, Dylan (Kiera) Arndt, Taylor (Kyle) Cook, Mason (Maggie) Cook, Tanner (Jen) Cook, and Liberty Larson; great-grandchildren, Zoey, Kenzley, Grayson, Lane, Quinn, Isla, Gentry, Owen, Haddie, Myah,



David Arndt

Olivia, Kai, Jewel, Cal and three on the way. He is also survived by his sister, Delores Dierking of Medford; sisters-in-law, Irene Arndt of Gilbert, AZ, Karen Lang of Glencoe and Roxanne Tesch of Owatonna; and brother-in-law, Jerry Tesch of Le Sueur. He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Judy; son, Brian; grandson, Carter; brother, Darold Arndt; brothers-in-law, Don Dierking, Wayne Tesch, and Mark Tesch.

Visitation was held on Monday, March 2, 2026 from 4-7 PM at the Janesville Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service. Visitation continued on Tuesday, one hour before services at the church.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 11:00 AM at First Lutheran Church in Waldorf. Burial followed at First Lutheran Cemetery.

Jake Kaiser

Jake Alan Kaiser, age 45, of Janesville passed away on Saturday, February 28, 2026.

Born on August 7, 1980 in Mankato, Jake was the son of Alan and Mary Kaiser. He attended JWP High School, graduating with the class of 1999. Throughout his life, Jake worked various jobs and lent a helping hand wherever needed.

In March of 2008, Jake was united in marriage to Laura Schultz. Together they were blessed with two children, Chloe and Gavinn, who were the center of his world. Jake loved the outdoors, especially hunting and fishing, and found great joy in time spent in the woods or on the water. More than anything, he cherished time with his family. He especially enjoyed playing games with his children, nieces, and nephews.

Jake is survived by his children, Chloe and Gavinn Kaiser; parents, Alan and Mary Kaiser; sisters, Alana (Bill) Janssen, Devann (Mike) Klampe; nieces and nephews, Jessie Kelley, Kale Kelley, Paisley Janssen; and many other relatives.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents and other relatives.



Jake Kaiser

In honoring Jake’s memory, his family encourages everyone to reach out to those who may be struggling. A simple check-in, kind word, or listening ear can make a meaningful difference in someone’s life.

Mass of Christian Burial will be at 1:00 PM on Saturday, March 7, 2026 at St. Ann Catholic Church in Janesville. Visitation will be held three hours prior to the service at the church. Burial will be at St. Mary’s Catholic Cemetery in Waseca County.

Dsofuneral.com

Elaine Hanson

Elaine Marie Hansen of Waseca passed away on February 15, 2026, at home surrounded by family after a short battle with illness at the age of 87. She was born on January 7, 1939 to Walter and Marie Meinke. She grew up in Waterville, graduating from Waterville High School in 1957. She was a homemaker for the last 36 years, and also held various jobs throughout her life.

She was passionate about and actively involved with the Ladies’ Auxiliary of the Morristown American Legion Post.

She was preceded in death by her former husbands Robert (Bob) Janike and Ray Schaub. She is survived by her husband David Hansen and by her children Bruce (Pam), Carrie (Marc), and Bil, as well as step-children Jeff (Julie), Jodi (Tom) and Richard, along with numerous grandchildren and



Elaine Hanson

great-grandchildren.

Family and friends are invited to attend a funeral at Trinity Lutheran Church in Medford at 3 p.m. on March 7, 2026, with visitation an hour beforehand.

NRHEG Elementary Olympics focus on sportsmanship

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

The NRHEG Elementary Olympics have been a tradition since physical education teacher Bruce Wolfram began them in 1994.

Current phy ed teachers Beth Schoenrock and Wendy Schultz say they are pleased with this year’s version of the event, and feel a certain pride to have completed the observation—held every four years just like the international olympics—for the ninth time.

“It’s been part of our district’s elementary school experience for all the students over all that time,” points out Schoenrock, “the past 32 years.”

The events begin with an opening ceremony which does what it can to mirror the international event. Schoenrock constructed a “torch” complete with a tissue-paper flame and a concealed flashlight. When it was touched to a boxy “cauldron” at the front of the gym, a shower of glitter and confetti provided a “flame.”

During the Feb. 2 ceremony, students read an explanation of the symbolism in the olympic flag, as well as the motto and oath of athletes taking part in the competition. Classes of students are linked with various countries and process in carrying flags representing them—both a larger flag and then smaller, handmade ones each student has created. Countries selected include Austria, Canada, China, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the U.S.A.

During the two weeks of the international games, a large hallway display shows the medals won by athletes from each country. “Sometimes the kids really identify with

their country,” Schoenrock mentions. “They’ll pay attention to the games and keep track of the medals athletes are winning,” occasionally even to a point of questioning the correctness of the number of medals displayed in the hallway.

Individual classroom teachers may take instruction time to learn about the geography and culture of the countries or about elements of the olympic games. Fifth-graders were assigned to write an essay on the topic of sportsmanship; this year Jack Van Hall’s piece was selected to be read during the opening ceremony.

For two weeks, activities in phy ed classes center around olympic events.

Schultz, who teaches the upper elementary classes, takes some of her students to a curling course in Mapleton every year, and makes a point of scheduling the trip during the elementary olympics. In the school’s gyms, modified versions of chosen sports have students “skiing” using towels, or competing in “bobsled” races using baskets mounted on scooters. Sometimes first-place finishes are acknowledged within class groups, but Schoenrock says the focus is mostly on the levels of fitness, effort and sportsmanship the physical challenges call for.

An element important to her, she says, is “Learning how to win.”

Not figuring out how to finish first, she makes clear, but to recognize that everyone has used energy and dedication, so the difference between “winning” and “losing” can be a split second. “Sportsmanship is fundamental,” she says. “I want kids to realize ‘competition’ doesn’t mean people have to dislike each other; winning



The Elementary Olympics have been a tradition at NRHEG since 1994. An opening ceremony included a “torch” and a parade of participants representing various countries. During the two weeks of the international olympic games, physical education classes incorporated activities meant to simulate competitive events. Fifth-graders visited a curling center and learned more about the sport.

Pioneer photos by Deb Bently

doesn’t mean you should brag or think you’re better than someone else.”

Schoenrock and Schultz say they know the elementary olympics are popular with students. This year’s “closing ceremony” was a slide show with pictures and video from

the two weeks; rather than a school-wide assembly, each phy ed class watched the video and heard the declaration that the olympics were closed. One young student left the gym with tears in his eyes: “I don’t want the olympics to be over,” he explained.

Janesville library creates keepsakes

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Janesville Public Library held a “Trinket Dishes” class after school on Thursday, Feb. 26. There five young ladies 13 and older attended to create small, personally decorated dishes for holding small items.

Michelle Hollerman, the librarian leading the session offered the young crafters more than 100 decorative napkins. She instructed participants to cut out any element of the design they found appealing, working to keep the lines and edges of the shape as smooth as possible.

Participants also selected a plain white glass bowl; most were round, but a few were heart-shaped. Once cut out, the decorative piece of napkin was to be fastened down permanently at the bottom.

As the group worked, Hollerman picked up a napkin one of the girls had already cut, pulled it apart and explained, “These napkins are dou-



TRINKETS AND FUN - JWP students from left: Marin and Evelyn Demarais, Aubrey Leiferman, Emma Sexton, and Stella Myhr took part in the Janesville Public Library’s Trinket Dishes class on Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

ble layered, you’ll need to take that second layer off; otherwise when you glue it down in your bowl it’ll wrinkle.”

With bowl and decoration prepared, the group used craft-sized paint brushes and “Mod-Podge” glue to position the napkin design. Said Hollerman, “Once you get all the wrinkles out, make sure the napkin is smoothed down, but wait at least 20 minutes for the glue to dry before you put another coat on the top of it.

You want that second coat on top, otherwise the napkin won’t last long, and it can get dirty and fade in color and you want these to last forever.” Stella Myhr, who was focusing on lavender flowers and wreaths for her bowl said, “I have some stones at home that I collected, and I want to put them in this when I’m done.”

Emma Sexton said, “I don’t know what I want to use mine for yet, but I will look when I get home.” Aubrey Leiferman said, “I will just use mine

for some jewelry that I have.”

Evelyn Demarais was busy glueing pink hearts to her bowl, those pink hearts matched her shirt’s color exactly and she said, “I think I will use my finished project for either earrings or rings.” Marin Demarais hadn’t decided yet, but she had narrowed her choices down, “I will put either rings or stones in mine, and I decided I am going with a blue color for my bowl.”

H&J Fuel, Inc.
507-461-0604
On-Site Bulk Fuel Delivery
Waseca, Mn

STEVE JAMES EXCAVATING & M CONSTRUCTION
ELYSIAN, OWATONNA, WASECA & WATERVILLE
507-451-3080
SteveJamesExcavating.com

Offering Commercial & Residential Services

- Excavation
- Site Development
- Site Utilities
- Basement Digging
- Trucks & Hauling
- Landscape Supplies
- Rock, Sand, Gravel & Dirt
- Demolition
- Water & Waterline Repair
- Jetting, Camera & Locating
- Septic Services
- Snow Plowing

PH & B PATTON, HOVERSTEN & BERG, PA
A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION / ATTORNEYS AT LAW

www.phblawoffice.com

Waseca Office 215 Elm Ave E Waseca, MN 507-835-5240 888-835-5244	Janesville Office 216 N Main St Janesville, MN 507-234-5106 888-980-1210	Owatonna Office 150 W Park Sq Owatonna, MN 507-451-9000 866-451-9010	Faribault Office 415 2nd Ave NW Faribault, MN 507-332-7425
---	---	---	--

Your Trusted Local Law Offices for Over 50 Years

USED BOOKSTORE

507-455-3440
eatonsbooks@q.com
Mon-Fri 10-5 Sat 10-3:30
602 North Cedar Ave Owatonna MN 55060

RECYCLE YOUR BOOKS WITH US

GUARDIAN ENERGY

AMERICAN MADE, FARMER OWNED
www.guardianrng.com

ETHANOL



FOOD, WITH THANKS - The Waseca High School FFA offered a pancake and sausage breakfast the morning of Friday, Feb. 27, 2026. The free meal was an expression of thanks to local farmers, businesses, and individuals who help support the FFA in Waseca County. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Waseca FFA thank you breakfast honors FFA week

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

About 80 guests attended a free pancake and sausage breakfast at the high school in celebration of National FFA Week the morning of Friday, Feb. 27. The event was sponsored by the Waseca Future Farmers of America (FFA) Chapter in celebration of National FFA Week. About 15 FFA members served as volunteers, thanking community members

and businesses for supporting agricultural education, FFA members and their programs. All who supported the Waseca County FFA were encouraged to attend. Leading the team which organized the event was Ag teacher and FFA Advisor Robin Tidd. She said there are currently 28 students active in the FFA. “This is something we do to give back to the community, staff, parents and guardians and our precious alumni,” she said of the

event. Every table in the FFA classroom was occupied by farmers, agriculturalists and families all enjoying breakfast. Aaron Adams, whose company offers both custom manure pumping and professional welding said, “My daughter Liah is in the FFA school program. Thought we’d come in and check it out.” Sitting to his right was Ellie, a fifth grader who attends the Waseca Intermediate School (WIS). She said, “When I eventually

come to [the junior/senior high] school, I will be in the FFA. WIS kids can’t join until we’re in the seventh grade.” A table at the front of the room was loaded with new hats, gloves, shirts, coats, and coolers. Every once in a while, a raffle number would be called out and one lucky person had the chance to select a prize. Tidd expressed her gratitude to area organizations which helped with the event.

Kwik Trip provided milk and orange juice. Sausages were donated by Morgan’s Meat Market. A cash donation from the Corn and Soybean Growers association helped purchase supplies. She commented that the size of the crowd was quite satisfying: “Compared to the past two years I am really happy with the turnout today, many more people have shown up.”

■ Dunn

from Page 3

Along with his spontaneous acts of service, Dunn has put in a total of 17 years so far as a member of the Waseca school board. He served for nine years during the 1990s and was elected again when he chose to run in 2018. He is the current board chair.

“Being on the school board is an important job that doesn’t always attract a lot of candidates,” Dunn observes. “I’m glad I have the time and experience to serve my community in that role.”

Regarding the volunteer work he does, he goes on to say, “What I do, what I will do, what I have done—I’ll do those things anyway. “This reward is not something I sought after and not something I expected, but it’s nice to know that people have noticed. It’s like...icing on the cake.”

Recipients of the Don Eustice Community Service Award. (The first award was given by the Chamber Jaycees in 1974. The honor’s title was changed to include Sheriff Don Eustice after he was killed in the line of duty in September of 1976. The award was given yearly until 2019, when the Chamber made the decision to hold its awards banquet only every other year.)

- 1974-D.A. Rieck
- 1975-Paul Knutson
- 1976-Pete Madel
- 1977-Jim Donahue
- 1978-Oather Trolldahl
- 1979-Marie Eustice
- 1980-Mike Halverson
- 1981-Marvel Patton
- 1982-Don Zwach
- 1983-Jean Anderson
- 1984-Esther Eustice
- 1985-Ken Wendland
- 1986-Tom Yuzer
- 1987-Bernadette Gallagher
- 1988-Everett King
- 1989-James Corchran
- 1990-Marlene Rietfort
- 1991-Gene Driessen
- 1992-Dr. Craig Peterson
- 1993-Bill Hintz
- 1994-Bill Hoversten
- 1995-Wayne Jertson
- 1996-Bill Tuttle
- 1997-Virgil Christenson
- 1998-Chuck Noble
- 1999-Charlie Mathern
- 2000-Don Wynnemer
- 2001-Shelia Morris
- 2002-Jim Tippy
- 2003-Perry Berg
- 2004-Caryn Wendt
- 2005-Neil Fruechte
- 2006-Gloria Butler
- 2007-Dale Deraad
- 2008-Roberta Walker
- 2009-Bob Mickelson
- 2010-Larry Thompson
- 2011-Jerry Rutledge
- 2012-Peggy Hildebrandt
- 2013-Tim Wenzel
- 2014-Gyles Randall
- 2015-Trevor Kanewischer

Former postmaster reviewing options now that he’s retired

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

After more than 40 years with the U.S. Postal Service, lifelong New Richland area resident Randy Lewer retired on Dec. 31, 2025, finishing 20 years of service as the zip code’s postmaster.

The son of farmers Orlin and Ruth, Lewer still operates the small farm northeast of New Richland that has been in his family for more than a century alongside his son Daniel. Randy graduated from New Richland High School in 1976 and, in addition to his work on the farm, took on some part-time jobs.

In 1985, he saw an ad in the New Richland Star advertising an open position at the post office. When he responded to indicate his interest, the first step was to take a required test.

“And then you waited,” he recalls. After a wait that seemed rather long to the 28-year-old job seeker, he received a letter inviting him to an interview with the postmaster at the time, Tom Baynes.

“I still remember what he said when I was hired,” recalls Randy with a laugh. “Congratulations. You’ve just accepted a job that means you’ll work every Saturday for the rest of your life.”

In 1985, the staff of the New Richland post office consisted of the postmaster, two part-time clerks, and three route drivers.

Though nearly every detail of the job changed over the next four decades, when Randy retired in 2025 the staff list was almost identical—except that there are now only two route drivers. Significantly, though, there are no longer postmasters in Hartland, Geneva, Ellendale and Hope; the Postal Service has made the supervision of those facilities part of the New Richland postmaster’s job.

Always while continuing to farm, Randy remained a part-time clerk in New Richland until 2003, when he applied and was selected to be



New Richland area resident Randy Lewer retired on Dec. 31, 2025, after more than 40 years with the U.S. Postal Service.

postmaster in Hollandale. In 2005 he moved to the role in Mapleton. In 2006, when the postmaster position opened up in New Richland, he came back to where he started.

Across his 40 years with the postal service, Randy says he learned a wide variety of lessons, many of which might be surprising to people outside the industry.

For one, “It is not easy to deliver mail in the dark.”

He explains that, although his job description did not include being a delivery route driver, he was the postmaster. “And the postmaster is responsible for everything. So if someone else can’t get it done, then you might end up doing it in their place.”

He recalls a wide variety of “emergencies” which were also the postmaster’s problem. Back when sending money could not be accomplished using electronic means, he recalls people would often ask him repeatedly when he thought a piece of mail would arrive, and would sometimes vent their frustration on him when they perceived a check was arriving “late.”

He mentions one time when an upset patron declared that he and his entire staff deserved to be fired.

“You want to do your job well,” he says of the many ‘emergencies’ that occurred over time. “So I would do what I could.” He remembers the box of newly hatched chicks a local resident purchased in the spring that, due to an oversight in a sorting

office in the Twin Cities, was delivered to New Richmond, Wisconsin—two years in a row.

Both years, Randy drove up to the Twin Cities to retrieve them.

“Unexpected things sometimes happen when it comes to the mail,” he recalls. “The vast majority of the letters and the boxes are delivered without a hitch. But sometimes things get caught in a loop or go missing altogether.”

Over time, he says doing his job well included tasks most people would assume never happen, including delivering mail on Sunday or holidays.

Something else that might surprise a typical post office user is that, for the postmaster, being certain the mail is delivered is only one part of a much more complex set of tasks.

Bookkeeping, ordering stamps, ensuring items are scanned correctly, adapting operations when a member of the team is absent, all demand the postmaster’s attention. Since the position is paid on a salaried basis, extra time is not financially compensated for. Though his expected work hours were all during the week, Randy remembers being in the post office many, many Saturdays—and occasionally spent 14 hours there, regardless of what day of the week it was.

Despite the challenges, though, Randy says his recollections of his years as New Richland’s postmaster are almost entirely positive. He says he recognized the important role the post office fills: He was glad to be part of the services it provides and happy that he found ways to be helpful and supportive.

Now that he’s retired, he seems to be weighing his options.

“First, I’m catching up on some of that work I didn’t get done around the farm,” he says.

After that, he’s considering some hobbies he’s always found appealing but never had time for, including woodworking, metalworking, and a few he chooses not to name until he’s had a chance to try them out. “We’ll see if I have the resources and the talent to do them,” he explains.

One hobby he plans to continue and perhaps expand on is his love of singing. A member of the all-male “Just Friends” Christian singers for decades, he says being part of the group enriches his life while also bringing pleasure to others.

He also thinks he’d like to travel a bit—although almost entirely in Minnesota and Wisconsin. “There’s a lot to see not so far from home,” he comments.

Waseca Music
C O M P A N Y

YOUR LOCAL MUSIC STORE

Band Instruments • Repairs
Guitars • CD, DVD, & Vinyl

507-835-2980
111 South State Street

Rick's Appliance
ricksappliancewaseca.com

AMANA
Q Speed Queen

Sales & Service
507-461-9615

Hours
M-F..... 7:00 AM - 5:30 PM
Sat..... 7:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Sunday..... Closed

Whirlpool

Visit our new Showroom!
405 West Elm Ave, Waseca MN

DENNIS STEFFEL OMTVEDT
FUNERAL AND CREMATION SERVICE
109 3RD STREET NE, WASECA, MN 56093
WASECA • JANESVILLE • WATERVILLE

HIGH POINT LAND COMPANY

TROY STAFFORD CPA, MBA
507-259-3047
Troy@HighPointLandCompany.com
HIGHPOINTLANDCOMPANY.COM

JAMES BROS. CONSTRUCTION

507.267.4789
jamesbrosconstruction.com

Complete Septic Service and Installation • Excavation
Residential and Commercial Site Preparation and Utilities
Locally Owned and Operated since 1978

SUMMIT ON SECOND APARTMENTS

FOR RENTAL INFO CALL
507-201-3474

We are accepting applications for:

1 bedroom apartments
*Income guidelines apply
Vouchers accepted*

2 bedroom & 3 bedroom
Rent based on income

Professionally managed by:

BRUTGER
EQUITIES, INC.



The Pastor's Column

The race marked out for us

By PASTOR MIKE COGLAN

If you enjoyed the winter Olympics, I'd like to introduce you to another icy sport that begins this week. I'm a fan of the Iditarod Sled Dog Race that starts on Saturday in Anchorage, Alaska. The "Last Great Race on Earth" unites a diverse community of indigenous villages across a vast region and preserves shared history and heritage.

I have been fascinated with the Iditarod since serving on multiple mission projects across remote Alaska. The race honors a vital chapter in Alaska's history, particularly the 1925 diphtheria run, when dog sled teams delivered life-saving serum to Nome, saving more than a thousand lives. This legacy is part of the Iditarod's purpose. The race was founded in 1973 expressly to preserve sled dog culture and the historic Iditarod Trail, which was a critical route for mail, supplies, and gold.

The race is a test of endurance covering 1,000 miles of rugged, remote Alaskan terrain. Participants face subzero temperatures, blizzards, treacherous mountain passes, and long periods of darkness. This is certainly among the most physically and mentally demanding sporting events in the world.

It is not a made-for-TV sport. But it is a sport made for inspiring stories. Many of these stories are about faith. The trail is a journey through silence, darkness, fatigue, and beauty—where human strength reaches its limits and must rely on something deeper. In that way, the Iditarod mirrors the Christian walk of faith.

Mushers set out knowing the trail will test them. Storms will come. Sleep will be scarce. Progress will often feel slow. Yet they go anyway, trusting their preparation, their team, and the markers left by those who have gone before. So it is with faith. Jesus never promised an easy road; He promised His presence on the road. "In this world you will have trouble," He said, "but take

heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

The sled teams remind me of God's design for community. A musher knows and loves each of his or her dogs. The dogs know and love their musher. Each dog contributes strength, focus, and heart, and the team moves only as fast as its weakest member. In the same way, "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26). The Iditarod teaches humility—success depends on care, trust, and mutual reliance, not individual glory.

Mushers and dogs must pause and rest. There are three mandatory rest stops; one is for a full 24 hours and two more are 8 hours long. Dogs are examined for health by vets at 26 mandatory checkpoints in villages along the trail. In both our physical and spiritual lives, God invites us to stop and rest as well. Sabbath, sleep, and prayer are not signs of weakness but wisdom. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Mushers don't get a lot of attention from the media, and most of the effort is made in solitude. Long stretches of trail are traveled in darkness and silence. Faith often feels like this—obedience without applause, faithfulness without immediate reward. Yet Scripture reminds us that "your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you" (Matthew 6:4).

The Iditarod is a testament to endurance shaped by hope. The finish line exists even when it cannot be seen. For Christians, Christ is our finish line—the promise that suffering is not the final word, and that perseverance, empowered by grace, leads to life. Like the musher pressing forward through the cold, we run "with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus" (Hebrews 12:1–2).

Follow the race for free at www.iditarod.com, www.nomenugget.com and other Alaska news sources.

Waseca leaders share community updates on KOWZ Radio

Community members tuning in to KOWZ Radio recently heard an in-depth conversation with Waseca Area Chamber President Mikhail Rostislavovich and Waseca City Manager Carl Sonnenberg as they provided updates on several key development projects shaping the future of Waseca.

The discussion highlighted progress in housing, downtown improvements, public safety efforts, and new business investment, all signaling continued forward momentum for the community.

The much-anticipated Marketplace Commons development continues to move forward with strong local investor participation and widespread community support. Ground has been broken, and construction has gone vertically, with anticipated completion slated for late summer and move-ins expected late summer to early fall.

The 36-unit development will include 12 one-bedroom and 24 two-bedroom units. Rental rates are projected to range from \$891 to \$1,750, serving a broad range of residents. Amenities will include stainless steel appliances, in-unit washer and dryer, luxury vinyl plank flooring in living areas, generous balconies or patios, a community room, fitness room, outdoor patio with grilling station, and sufficient parking to allow up to two spaces per unit.

"We're excited about MarketPlace," said Rostislavovich. "It's forward momentum on housing that Waseca has needed for years, with quality units that will serve a broad range of residents."

Last spring, a building located at 113/115 South State Street partially collapsed. Thankfully, no one was injured. Emergency services evacuated nearby residents, coordinated with the Red Cross, and secured the area. Since that time, the City has worked closely with engineers and inspectors to stabilize the site and ensure public safety. While the private owner missed an initial repair deadline, work is underway and the City remains in active communication with contractors and stakeholders.



KOWZ UPDATES - L to R: City Manager Carl Sonnenberg, Cory Harguth of KOWZ Radio, and Waseca Chamber President Mikhail Rostislavovich.

"Public safety is our priority," Sonnenberg emphasized. "We've kept a close eye on the State Street site and continue to coordinate the stabilization and repair work with the owner and contractors."

City leadership continues to monitor progress closely to protect residents and maintain downtown vibrancy.

City Council minutes reflect ongoing conversations about downtown connectivity, particularly the former shortcut from State Street to 2nd Street via a downtown walkway. After years of use and structural deterioration, the walkway was dismantled in 2025.

Renovation is planned for 2026 under the approved budget and will include improved lighting, a new concrete walkway, decorative block walls, and exterior insulation and finishing System (EIFS) enhancements. "A vibrant downtown is a walkable downtown," said Rostislavovich. "We're working thoughtfully with staff and council to enhance our sidewalks and connections."

The Clearwater Preserve development, formerly known as Gaiter Lake, represents a significant long-term housing opportunity for Waseca. The proposed three-phase development includes a total of 67 units. Phase 1 features 17 single-family homes on lots exceeding 20,000 square feet.

Site grading, road development, and utility construction are scheduled to begin in spring 2026, with W. Lorentz Construction of Mankato

serving as the general contractor. The total base bid for infrastructure work is approximately \$1.6 million. Members of the city council are expected to discuss lot pricing and covenants in the near future. "Clearwater Preserve is a generational housing opportunity," Sonnenberg noted. "It's responsibly planned, has strong council support, and real momentum toward construction this spring."

The former Taco John's location in Waseca has been confirmed as the future home of a new Caribou Coffee shop projected to open during the second quarter of 2026.

Waseca Electric Utility has installed a new electric transformer to support the new business; the location will feature in-store seating and operate seven days a week with varying hours on the weekdays as compared to the weekends.

"Seeing a business come in that fills a need is what a community hopes for," Rostislavovich said. "Caribou will complement our other shops in Waseca." Throughout the radio conversation, both leaders emphasized that these efforts reflect a broader commitment to strategic growth, safety, and long-term vibrancy. "These projects are about quality housing, community safety, and thoughtful development, and we are seeing real progress on all fronts," Rostislavovich shared.

"From MarketPlace to Clearwater Preserve," Sonnenberg added, "we're not just planning, we're building a stronger Waseca."

■ Parade

from Page 1

tors.

"The parade itself was picturesque, with many spectators and participants commenting on the beauty of the snow with the horses. The good energy continued into lunch, with lots of laughter and conversation. During a short program, we thanked volunteers, introduced participating royalty and discussed a

common weekend for the event going forward. The parade participants decided the fourth weekend in February would best fit their schedules."

While it was a shame to lose so many participants, Roemhildt speaks with apparent pride when he says, "The parade has never been cancelled in its history." The possibility had been discussed late in the week as the winter weather advisory was announced, but members of the Sleigh and Cutter committee, some of the parade participants and Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas

made a group decision to move forward.

The annual Sleigh and Cutter festival begins with each new year and includes a wide variety of events including a pageant which crowns seven or more young ladies with various titles, among them "Miss Sleigh and Cutter." Two contests are featured during the festival: one asks area residents to identify a mystery local figure referred to as "Frosty" with cash awards up to \$1,750 for correct guesses. Another encourages local families to go searching together for the "Sleigh and Cutter

Medallion" to win \$1,750 in "Chamber Dollars," money which can be spent at area businesses.

Planning for the next year's events begins even before the current year's are complete. Roemhildt invites area residents to contribute their ideas and energy to the longstanding tradition.

"We have an excellent Festival committee, with the many duties of the Festival split among us. We would welcome anyone interested in joining us. We meet monthly year round. Interested parties can contact me at 507-995-9832."

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m. * * * * *	507-833-0017 Sunday worship 10 a.m. * * * * *	New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * * * *	12-18 * * * * *
4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m. * * * * *	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m. * * * * *	VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Brian Schanil Pastor Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark * * * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH 412 N. Main Street, Janesville Pastor Jason Wolter Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:30 a.m. Worship * * * * *
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m. * * * * *	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m. * * * * *	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father Glenn Ferichs Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m. * * * * *	JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship * * * * *
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship 10:15 a.m. Wednesday Eve Worship 6:30 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. * * * * *	FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Larry Sipe Sundays: Worship 8 a.m.; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class * * * * *	BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 43089 180th St., Morristown Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Summer worship hours, (10:45 a.m. Worship, winter) * * * * *
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m. * * * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship * * * * *	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship * * * * *	ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St. Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass * * * * *
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: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net) Worship Sunday 10 a.m. * * * * *	ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship * * * * *	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 Owen St., Janesville Pastor Sarah Krolak * * * * *
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m. * * * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting * * * * *	THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS Waseca, Minnesota Brad Donner, Branch President www.lds.org Sunday — 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * * * *
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca Father Glenn Ferichs 507-835-1222 Worship Sundays 10:00 a.m., Tues. and Wed. at 8:30 a.m. and Thurs. at 7 a.m.; Saturdays at 5 p.m. * * * * *	REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca		NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 404 30 120th St. Waseca Pastor Sarah Krolak 507-234-6463 Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship, Second sunday "Young at heart" Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation * * * * *

Get your news in the Pioneer

- news@wasecacountypioneer.com
- Call (507) 837-6767
- Stop in person 111 West Elm Ave

Tesch Service Center
Family-Owned Automotive Repair

- wheel alignments
- brake services
- suspension repairs
- towing & more!

Call us today!

321 Elm Ave W, Waseca, MN
Call Us! (507) 835-4610
teschservice@mediacombb.net

13 NORTH EXPRESS LUBE

NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED!

WAYNE NELSON
Owner/Operator
1201 North State St.
Waseca, MN 56093

Hours:
MON - FRI
8:30 AM - 6:00 PM
SAT
8:30 AM - 3:00 PM
507-833-7667

\$3 OFF
ANY SERVICE
WITH THIS COUPON

- Oil Change • Air Filter
- Cabin Air Filter • Fuel System Clean
- Serpentine Belt Replacement
- Transmission Fluid Change
- Power Steering Fluid Flush
- Check Engine Light Reset
- Antifreeze Test • Battery Test

Janesville

25 years ago



- Sarah Coy, daughter of Jeff and Doreen Coy of Pemberton, and Jason Meschke, son of Bob and Sandy Meschke of Fairmont, wish to announce their engagement. Sarah is a 1997 graduate of Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School. She is currently employed at Granada-Huntley-East Chain High School as a PSA. Jason is a 1996 graduate of Fairmont High School and a 1998 graduate of Bethany Lutheran College. He is currently employed at Hawkeye Foods of Fairmont. A Saturday, April 7, 2001, wedding is planned at Bethel Evangelic Free Church in Fairmont.

- The Janesville City Council accepted the resignation of City Planner and Economic Development Director Tana Nereson, at their meeting on Monday night. In her letter of resignation, Nereson thanked the city for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Janesville and said she is grateful for the fine learning experience she gained working here. Nereson has accepted the position of Community Development Planner for Region 9 Development Commission. Her last day with the city of Janesville is today. The council expressed their appreciation for the good work Nereson has done for the city and wished her success in her new endeavor.



- Janesville Cub Scout Pack 89 top popcorn sellers include (front row) from left: Jake Esse and Cole McDonough. Back row: Nathan Roberts, Joey Gehring and James Stafford, Jr.

50 years ago

- Mark E. Santo, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Santo of rural Janesville, enlisted in the Air Force's Delayed Enlistment Program and is slated to begin four years of active duty with the Air Force in June. At that time, Mark will attend six weeks of basic training at Lackland Military Training Center, San Antonio. Following basic he will receive training in the electronics career field. Mark, who will graduate from Janesville High School later this year, was recruited by Staff Sergeant James LuMaye, Air Force Representative in Mankato.

- The Minnesota Valley Hairdresser Association affiliate #9 met on Monday, February 2 at the Janesville Heritage House for their monthly meeting. Guest artist was Mr. Ken Bundi of Mankato. He gave three demonstration on how to style and cut men's hair. Also discussion was held on how to shape and trim men's beads, side burns and mustaches. Models were Doug Lau, Jerry Lau and Merle Erdman, all of Janesville.

75 years ago

- Staring next Monday, the 5c cup of coffee with be just a pleasant memory in Janesville. In a cooperative advertisement inserted in the Argus by local cafe owners, coffee and pop will hereafter cost 10 cents instead of the former price. According to the cafe owners, the continued rise in operating costs has forced the advance in price. The price of bulk coffee has risen to an all time high, and with the steady advance of other costs, local cafe operators have seen all the profit taken from the nickel cups. However, it is believed few people will object to the decision to raise the price of coffee when they realize that this is the first time that there has been a price advance.

- Werdin & Schmidt, local clothes, are in receipt of a beautiful metal plaque, sent them by the Ball-Band Rubber Co. as a gesture of their appreciation for the pleasant business dealings which have continued for half a century. The plaque is on display in the Werdin & Schmidt show window and is drawing much favorable comment from those who have already seen it.

100 years ago

- Johnny was in the habit of swearing mildly when anything did not please him. One day the minister heard him and said: "Jonny, don't you know you must not swear. It is naughty of you to do so. Why, every time I hear you swear a cold chill runs down my back." "That's nothing," said Johnny. "If you'd been at my house the other day when my dad caught is nose in the clothes wringer, you'd have froze to death." - Asbestos, a native fossil stone which may be split into threads, is endued with the property of remaining unconsumed by fire. Cloth was made of it by the time the Egyptians, and napkins by the Romans at the time of the philosopher Pliny, 74 A.D. The spinning of asbestos was known in Venice in the Sixteenth century.

- Mrs. Diana Watts, an English woman who is lecturing throughout the world to children and adults on better posture, electrified and audience in London recently by balancing herself with her left foot on a small globe, with her right foot horizontal and in a straight line with her left arm, which held a bow, while she shot two arrows without losing her equilibrium. Mrs. Watts has been teaching men golfers how to improve their stance by developing physical poise, which she says is not only the secret of dancing but of walking comfortably and having a clear mind.

Waseca

25 years ago

- A 33-year old Waseca man was seriously injured in a snowmobile accident Sunday night in Freeborn County. According to Freeborn County Sheriff's Office report, at 11:58 p.m. a snowmobile driven by Robin Eugene Ebnet was traveling on a snowmobile trail one mile north of Hartland when he approached a sharp curve in the trail. He didn't see the curve and drove off the trail ending up in a steep drainage ditch. He was airlifted to St. Marys Hospital-Mayo Health System where he was listed in fair condition with multiple injuries as of Wednesday.

- Erik and Stacey Larson of Waseca are proud to announce the birth of their son, Calvin Ray Larson, born February 2, 2001, in Owatonna. He weighed 6 pounds, 10 ounces and was 19' in length. Paternal grandparents are Donna and Harlan Larson of Waseca. Maternal grandparents are Don and Peggy Gleason of Waseca. Great grandparents are Pat Dunn of Waseca; Ray and Margie Gleason of Waseca; Agnes Larson of Waseca and Lois Johnson of Sleepy Eye. Calvin is welcomed home by his brother Colton, who is four, and his sister Carley, who is two.



- Five concert choir members: Ben Harguth (left), James Fett, Angie Fitzlaff, Lisa Ewert and Sarah Miller talked about burgers and fries and the fact that you have to eat anyway and why not help out the choir while you're at it?

50 years ago

- A native Wasecan, Deb Wendland, has been hired by the Journal as a correspondent during the 1976 legislative session in St. Paul. Her coverage begins today with a story on the legislative investigation of the state prison at Stillwater. Currently residing in Minneapolis, Deb is a senior in journalism at the University of Minnesota. Previously, she interned during the summers of 1973 and 1974 at the Journal. Besides providing in-depth interpretive reports on major issues before the legislature, Deb will also provide spot coverage on area legislators and late-breaking news stories throughout the session.



- Terry McClune, first grader, Joe Hayes, sixth grader, and Wayne McClune, sixth grader, do a little color experimentation with tempera paints under the direction of their new art teacher Brad Wing.

- Steven Dean Schoenfeld, 8 lbs., 4 oz., to Mr. and Mrs. Dean Schoenfeld, R.1, Waseca Area Memorial Hospital on Jan. 13. Paternal grandparents: Mr and Mrs. Lloyd Schoenfeld, R.1, Waseca. Maternal grandparents: Mr. and Mrs. Lester Flemming, R. 2, Janesville.

75 years ago

- The Waseca Concert association will present Dr. Frank W. Asper, known throughout America as the "Poet Organist", in a recital at 8:15 tonight (Thursday) at Central high school auditorium. Dr. Asper is one of the many eminent artists who owe much to radio for their popularity and it may be said to whom radio owes much for musical entertainment on the high plane of appreciation and enjoyment. For the past quarter century Dr. Asper has been organist at the Salt Lake City Mormon Tabernacle. During several years the great organ at the Tabernacle has been his weekly medium for reaching the national radio audience.

- Men need not read this-we want to talk to the women, privately, for a minute or two. Mere man will never understand a woman but he would like to. That is what prompts this article. At Luverne, Editor Al Macentosh last week reprinted a letter he had received from Gilmore G. Frayseth, manager of KMHL at Marshall. Much of the letter was devoted to the Godfrey radio program addressing women's groups on radio he says women generally bring up the question, "How does Godfrey get away with his off color remarks?" Frayseth continues, "They claim that they would be mortified and insulted if someone were to come into their homes with such talk. Yet, they seem to be quite familiar with the latest jokes. Apparently they think it's terrible...but they'd sure hate to miss his gags tomorrow. We'd like to hear from women readers of the Waseca Journal and Herald. What do you think about the Godfrey program? We have always frowned upon signed letters but in this instance we'd like to have the written comments signed or unsigned. That concession we believe, will bring more honest replies.

100 years ago

- A distilling plant which made "four-year old Bourbon whiskey" in two days was confiscated in St. Paul this week. It seems there is as much money to be made in counterfeiting popular brands of liquor as in counterfeiting "greenbacks" and there are lots of fellows ready to take the chance. And in each case, the counterfeiter eventually lands in jail.

- Al. Filber, who purchased the Wallschlaeger billiard hall about a year ago, disposed of his property last Saturday to R.T. Kelly and Leo Schones of Mankato, who took possession immediately. The new proprietors are young, enterprising men and will endeavor to maintain an up-to-date recreation parlor. Mr. Filber has not announced his future plans but it is thought that he will move his family back to their former home in Olmsted county.

- The State Theatre was crowded to its capacity by 7:30 Tuesday evening, for aside from the usual good pictures, Mr. Nelson had arranged for the first Charleston contest which has been held in this city. Those taking part in the contest were Dwell Deverell, Raymond McCleary, Clarence Wobschall and Lester Rasdall. The audience did the judging and the first prize was awarded to McCleary; second to Wobschall; third to Rasdall and Fourth to Deverell. Another contest is to be held in the near future and those desiring to take part are requested to leave their names at the theatre.

New Richland

25 years ago



- The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva Future Farmers of America Chapter is observing and celebrating National FFA week, February 17-24. Here the officers pose for the Star camera. They are from the left: Andy VanHal, treasurer: Tony Schlaak, president: Justin Lewer, historian: Chad Schroenrock, vice president: Derek Chiccos, secretary and David Kuglin, reporter.

- Tyler and Siri Peterson of New Brighton are the parents of a son born Thursday, February 8, 2001. Samuel Tyler, as the husky little fellow has been named, weighing 10 lbs. and 7 oz. He has one sister, Maia, 20 months old.

50 years ago



- Martin Reese, pictured here with his wife, Nina, at a party celebrating his 88 years of life at the New Richland City Hall, Sunday, February 29, has actually celebrated only 22 birthdays. But as his birthday cake, decorated with a family tree, stated 22 x 4 equals 88.

- Steele-Waseca Cooperative Electric has been awarded a low-interest loan of \$1 million by the Rural Electrification Administration, it was announced. The purpose of the loan is to finance service for 230 additional consumers, 29 miles of distribution line and other system improvements.

- Over 200 farmers and businessmen enjoyed the open house at the American Legion Clubrooms in Waldorf-Pemberton FFA during FFA week. Winners of the Crops Judging contest was Neil Roesler of Minnesota Lake. Willard Gerdts of Waldorf won the Dairy Judging contest. Margaret Engesser of New Richland won the "Guess the Weight of the Hog" contest, coming the closest to the correct weight of 252 ½ pounds with an estimate of 253 pounds.

- Gary Seath, son of Mr. andMrs. George Seath of Freeborn, has been accepted for admission to Mankato State University. A senior at Freeborn High School, Gary is planning on a science major.

75 years ago

- Mr. and Mrs. Oswald Greenwood, living west of New Richland, are rejoicing over the arrival of a son, Dennis Reed, born at the Waseca Memorial hospital Saturday, March 24 and weighing seven pounds, four ounces. Mr. and Mrs. Greenwood (Mary Bell) now have two children; the little sister is Cheryl.

- Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Dinneen, Keith and Sheila, drove to Bemedji Saturday to be present at the wedding of their son and brother, Richard J. Dinneen and Miss Mary Lou Collard, performed at high noon, Sunday.

WOODVILLE TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

ATTENTION WOODVILLE TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS
The annual Meeting will be March 10, 2026 at 7:30 PM at the Woodville Town Hall located at 200 3rd Avenue SW, Waseca, MN.
Topics to be discussed will be: Financial condition of the Township, Financial statements of the cemetery, Township and Waseca rural fire department, road reports, Tax levies, Annexation report, Donation to Waseca Community Ed Program and any other issues the residents wish to discuss in regards to township business.
Andrew Miller, Clerk
Woodville Township



SEASON FINALE — The Waseca High School girls' basketball team finished its season last Monday with a loss at Norwood-Young America in the opening round of the Section 2AA tournament. Senior Audrianna Willingham, left, scored four points while Ava Miller, right, led the team with 16.



Photos by Jim Lutgens

Season concludes for Lady Jays in section tournament

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Section 2AA tournament was an all too short one for the Waseca High School girls' basketball team. The Bluejays, seeded 14th, saw their season end last Monday with a 77-36 loss to Central of Norwood-Young America. The Bluejays conclude the season with a record of 5-22. The third-seeded Raiders improved to 19-3 and advanced to face sixth-seeded Belle Plaine in the section quarterfinals..

"The girls defended inside very well," said first-year Waseca head coach Brian Rupe. "Unfortunately, Central shot the ball incredible."

The Raiders were 8-for-14 from beyond the three-point line while building a 48-20 halftime advantage. They made 13 threes for the game.

"It is tough to get a lot of momentum going when they are shooting like that," said Rupe. "We fought hard all the way to the end, working to execute the plan we came in with. We did not play bad. Wust didn't shoot the ball great and they did. That's just how it works some

nights."

Individually for the Bluejays; Audrianna Willingham 4 points, 1 rebound, 2 steals; Ava Miller 16P, 1R, 3 assists, 1 steal; Belle Miller 3P, 1A, 1S; Reese Rodriguez 3P, 5R, 1S; Maren Schimming 4R, 7R, 1S; Libby Miller 1R, 1S; Hannah Sommers 2P, 2R, 3A; Alexa Welander 2P, 1S; Tyler Stagman 1S; Shakiyah Powell 2P, 6R, 1A, 2 blocks; Alvah Maas 2R.

The young Bluejays will graduate just two seniors in Willingham and Hannah Teague.

"Audrianna was a lot of fun to coach," said Rupe. "We will miss her offensive spark coming off the bench. She worked hard and understood the game really well, she saw the court very well and had a knack for finding the open player. Hannah was a great post player coming off the bench early in the season. Unfortunately, she dealt with some injuries just before the holiday break and was not able to come back. She still was at every practice and pushing her teammates from the sideline."



HOW SWEET IT IS — Waseca High School senior Matthew Veroeven exalts after winning the Class AA 285-pound state championship Saturday night at Grand Casino Arena in St. Paul.

Photo by Johnnie Phillips/Steele County Times

Veroeven takes gold

Bluejays' Barnett finishes 4th at state

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

It was obvious Waseca High School wrestlers Matthew Veroeven and Slade Barnett did not want to come home empty-handed from last week's state tournament at St. Paul.

They didn't. Not by anyone's standard. Veroeven reached the end of the rainbow. He found gold.

Veroeven, a WHS senior, captured the Class AA 285-pound state championship Saturday night under the bright lights of Grand Casino Arena, defeating to T.J. Fuller, a senior from Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton, by a fall at 2:35 of the second period. Veroeven finished the season with a record of 43-1. Fuller wound up 36-8.

How did it feel for Veroeven to stand atop the winner's podium?

"It felt like everything I worked for was actually worth," said Veroeven. "I worked a long time to get here."

A television interview awaited Veroeven, but he took some time first to give his mom a hug.

"My parents have done as much as they can for me," said Veroeven. "I am so thankful for them. My mom and dad have been my biggest supporters."

Veroeven said he has a couple college offers headed his way.

He began his march for the medal podium with a win by fall in 4:34 in the opening round Thursday over Nolan Field, a junior from Fergus Falls. Veroeven was victorious 11-8 in the quarterfinals over Kemper Ely of Peter later in the day.

It put Veroeven in the Friday semifinals against Lake

Crystal/Wellcome Memorial junior Mason Adams, where he had to work before grinding out a hard-fought 15-12 decision. Trailing 7-1 entering the final period, Veroeven rallied with takedowns and near falls before winning in overtime.

"It was a big scary at times," said Bluejays head coach Jake Janike. "When you're down 7-1 in the final period, it's a tough row to hoe to come back. Matthew really turned it on in the third period."

Some called it the best wrestling match they had ever seen.

How does Janike assess Veroeven?

"Determined," he said. "He's made tremendous leaps and bounds, just with his maturity and determination. He's been amazing."

In the opening round at Class AA 172 pounds, the Bluejays' Barnett, a senior sporting a 40-3 season record, scored a 21-5 technical fall over senior Tyson Louwagie of Marshall. The match ended after 4:15.

It advanced Barnett to the quarterfinals against senior Payton Herbst of Totino-Grace, where he absorbed an 11-3 decision. It put Barnett in the wrestlebacks against senior Isaac Henry of Cretin-Derham Hall, whom Barnett outpointed 13-6.

On Saturday, Barnett carved out a 3-2 decision over Landen Larson of Thief River Falls, matching him with semifinal loser Destan Skelly of Grand Rapids. Barnett won 4-3 to advance to the third-place bout against Scott County West senior Isaac Williams. Williams won 4-0, leaving Barnett in fourth place, one spot better than last season. Barnett finished this season with a record of 47-5.

WHS boys topple Giants at LeSueur

A strong start buoyed the Waseca High School boys' basketball team to an 82-62 victory at LeSueur-Henderson in the final game of the regular season last Thursday.

"We shot the ball really well to start the game," said Bluejays coach Seth Anderson, whose team was still missing top scorer Deron Russell with a bad ankle.

It didn't much matter, though, as the Jays assumed a 41-21 halftime advantage and were never really threatened.

Anderson said he was pleased with the Bluejays' balanced scoring as they put four guys into double figures. Cyrett Long led with 18 points. Ethan Hiller scored 14, Wyatt Hager and Brody Dufault 10 apiece.

Waseca totals: Hiller 14P, 8 rebounds, 8 assists, 2 steals; Long 18P, 1R, 4A; Hayden Stencil 1P; Hager 10P, 7R, 2A, 4S; Owen Honstad 8P, 2R, 2A, 1S; Logan Reger 3P, 1R, 1S; Dufault 10P, 3R, 4A, 1S; Owen Rupe 7P, 5R, 1A, 1S; Caleb Wulf 1P; Toby Jeske 9P, 7R,

"We shot the ball really well to start the game."

— WHS coach Seth Anderson

3A, 4S; Juluis Oviedo 1P, 2R.

Hunter Vinkemeier, the Giants' 6-foot-10 center, had a game-high 20 rebounds to go along with 20 points. Will Adams also scored 20.

Waseca improved to 19-7 while LeSueur-Henderson fell to 11-14.

The Bluejays, seeded third in Section 2AA, opened tournament play Tuesday against Sibley East. They host a quarterfinal game Thursday at 7. The semifinals are Monday, March 9 at 6 and 7:45 at Minnesota State-Mankato. The section championship and state tournament berth will be decided Wednesday, March 11 at 7:45 at Minnesota State. Belle Plaine is seeded No. 1, Glencoe-Silver Lake No. 2.



PLAY IN THE PAINT — Waseca's Cyrett Long, left, and Toby Jeske, right, take the ball to the basket during a recent home game.

Photos by Jim Lutgens





EASY WIN — The JWP boys' basketball team blew out visiting Tri-City United 89-35 at Janesville last Tuesday. Top left, Zander Terbeest eyes the hoop. Top right, Maddex Bauer looks to pass the basketball.



Bulldog boys dominate Tri-City United, 89-35

The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School boys' basketball team overwhelmed visiting Tri-City United 89-35 in the final game of the regular season last Tuesday at Janesville. The Bulldogs, with top scorer Gavin Bauer missing the game while resting an injury, were strong from the opening tip,

holding a 55-19 halftime advantage. The JWP boys improved their season record to 24-3. They were 13-2 in Gopher Conference play. Individual leaders vs. TCU: Daulton Bauer 22 points; Jeffrey Simonson 19 points; Gavin Weedman nine points; Tyson Krobach eight points Caleb Quast

seven points; Michael Walker six points; Parker Geariety five points; Zander Terbeest five points. "We finally shot the ball pretty well," said Bulldogs head coach Nick James. "It's been a few weeks! Hopefully, we can get back on track with that. I thought we had a lot of energy tonight, especially on

the defensive end, and pushing the basketball." The Bulldogs, seeded No. 1 in Section 2A, opened tournament play Tuesday against GHEC/ML/T or Cedar Mountain at Janesville.

JWP girls top TCU

The JWP girls' basketball team made it two in a row in Section 2AA tournament play with a 69-34 quarterfinal victory over Tri-City United at Janesville last Thursday. It was a rather sluggish start for the Bulldogs, who led 29-22 at half-time, but they pulled away in the second half.

JWP improved to 21-7. The 10th-seeded Titans finished 10-17. "I was proud of the girls' effort tonight," said JWP head coach Brandon Goebel. "We did not start exactly how we would have liked to, but they showed toughness and resilience tonight. We found a way to build a little lead before halftime. After half the girls responded exactly how I wanted them to, they came out from the start and played together and for each other. We had many girls step up tonight in big moments. Ashlynn Wolff was tasked with a difficult job guarding their 6-foot post and I could not be more proud of her. She maybe didn't score like she would have liked to, but she did everything else she needed to, to help us win this game." JWP individual totals: Katie Olson 14 points, 3 assists, 3 steals; Nevaeh Weimert 25P, 5R, 4A; Mikayla Wheelock 5P, 3A; Wolff 6P, 5R; Jacelynn Mulder 13P, 5R; Raylen Blasing 4R.

The Bulldogs, the No. 2 seed in Section 2AA, opened the section tournament with an 86-36 triumph over No. 15 seed LeSueur-Henderson Monday, Feb. 23 at Janesville.

The JWP girls turned in a solid showing, according to Coach Goebel, racing to a 45-16 halftime lead and never looking back. It was their 20th win of the season. Wolff led the team with 20 points and 11 rebounds.

JWP totals: Olson 17 points, 3



TO THE HOOP — JWP's Katie Olson drives to the basket while TCU's Carly Hartwig defends during last Thursday's Section 2AA quarterfinal game at Janesville.

rebounds, 4 steals; Weimert 8P, 6R, 6A; Kwynn Krause 13P, 6R; Wheelock 10P, 4R; Wolff 10P, 11R; Mulder 11P, 4R; Haylee Appel 7P. "This was a solid showing for the girls," said Goebel. "We came out for the most part and played with high energy and effort. It was good to get a playoff game under our belt

to get some of the nerves out of the way for the upcoming game. The girls understand we have to continue to work and control what we can control moving forward in order for us to have success. Again, I'm pretty happy with how we played. We have some things we needed to continue to work on, with one being we were

out of position on our help side/gaps on the defense of end, that needs to get better moving forward." The win advanced the Bulldogs to section semifinals Monday. The winners there play for the Section 2AA championship and state tournament berth Friday, March 6 at 7:45 at Minnesota State-Mankato.



STATE TOURNEY INTENSITY — WEM/JWP's Aiden Gruber, top, competes in the state wrestling tournament at Grand Casino Arena in St. Paul last week. Photo by Eli Lutgens

Grizzlies battle but do not place at state

The WEM/JWP wrestling teams took five individuals to last week's state tournament at Grand Casino Arena in St. Paul. The Grizzlies came home with no medals but some invaluable experience against the best Class A competition the state could offer. The state tournament was particularly tough for Grizzlies senior Brady Murphy, who took a 30-7 record into the state tournament but was forced to forfeit both his matches because of a knee injury. The 139-pounder was figured by many as a possible third or even first-place finisher. Instead, his season ended with no matches under the bright lights of Grand Casino Arena. The Grizzlies' Aiden Gruber, a junior wrestling at 152, fell by technical fall in the opening round, 16-1 to senior Hayden Holm of Goodhue, dropping him into the wrestlebacks against senior Kaden Felde of Oglivie. Felde prevailed by fall in 2:39. Gruber finished his season with a record of 12-11. WEM/JWP junior Trenton Huber, 189, lost by fall in 3:27 to West Central Area senior Ezekiel Seickert in the opening round,

putting him in the wrestlebacks against Jackson County Central's Carson Kolander, whom he defeated 7-4. That matched him with Gopher Conference rival Ryan Schlaak of NRHEG. Schlaak won by fall at the 2:52 mark, ending Huber's season with a 30-17 record. Grizzlies junior Kavan Sheehy lost an opening-round 22-5 technical fall at 215 to Chatfield senior Will Boelter in the first round. That put him in the wrestlebacks against Jacob Savig of Quad County, who pinned him in 2:25. Sheehy's season ended with a record of 28-18. On the girls' side, the Grizzlies' Kayle Langford, a senior, dropped her first match by 19-3 technical fall to Chloe Wehry, an undefeated junior from Sartell-Saint Stephen, putting her in the wrestlebacks against Samantha Dougherty of Centennial, where she won by fall in 57 seconds. That pitted Langford against Sam Hinman of Minneapolis Roosevelt, who won by fall at 2:53 of the second period. Langford, unseeded at the section level, finished the season 24-11.

Future Bluejay



After four games over the weekend, Joslyn Wiblin hit her 100th goal this season! Joslyn's 100th goal came as the fourth goal of the game, her second of the game, against Minnesota River at LeSueur on Sunday, Feb. 15. Waseca won the game against MN River 8-2. The Waseca 10UB girls' hockey team has a record of 28-2-1. In 33 games, they have outscored their opponents 268-35. Every single skater (non-goalie) has scored at least one goal this season. Final games are this week in the District 9 end-of-year tournament, where Waseca is seeded No. 1, going undefeated in district play. The team is coached by Layne Bluhm, Jordie Lewer, Eric Gleason and Kelvin Nelson.

Waseca boys' hockey squad enjoys record-breaking season

By **JOE HEDERVARE**
WHS Athletic Director

The 2025-26 season has become one of the most historic campaigns in Waseca Bluejays boys' hockey history, as multiple long-standing program records continue to fall. Fueled by a talented core of returning players and strong team chemistry, this year's Bluejays squad has rewritten the record books while positioning itself as one of the most accomplished teams the program has ever produced. Leading the offensive charge is Griffin Storey, who has already solidified his place as one of the most accomplished players in program history as just a junior. Storey has surpassed the 200 career point plateau, becoming the program's all-time leader in career scoring and assists, while continuing

to chase the school's career goals record currently held by Kyle Ahlschlager (107 goals, 2019-2023). This season alone, Storey recorded 75 points, establishing a new single-season scoring record, while adding 32 goals, ranking among the top goal-scoring seasons ever by a Bluejay. Otto Schoenrock has continued his rise up the record charts, ranking among the program's all-time leaders in both career scoring and career goals. He previously recorded one of the top single-season goal totals in school history with 31 goals, strengthening the Bluejays' offensive depth. Henry Huttemier has also etched his name into the record book this season, now standing among the program's all-time leaders in both career points and career goals. His consistency and leadership have provided bal-

ance throughout the lineup. The Gehring brothers have played key roles in the historic campaign. Jude Gehring has surpassed the 100-point career milestone and continues to climb the all-time goals list, becoming one of the most productive scorers in program history. Jayden Gehring has moved into the top tier of the program's all-time assist leaders, showcasing elite vision and playmaking ability. While the Bluejays' offense has drawn much of the spotlight, their success has been anchored by elite goaltending from Josiah Schmidtke and a defensive unit that has excelled throughout the season. Schmidtke ranks among the program's all-time leaders in wins (35), saves (1,300+), and shutouts (10). He also holds the lowest goals-against average in school history at 2.63 and ranks

second all-time in save percentage at .903 (minimum 10 games played). Just as impressive has been the performance of the entire defensive corps in front of him. Together, the Bluejays' defense has allowed the second-lowest goals against total in school history, a remarkable achievement considering what is widely regarded as the most difficult schedule in program history. The group's discipline, physical play, and ability to limit high-quality scoring chances have been critical to Waseca's success in close and high-pressure games. Schmidtke's steady presence in net, combined with the cohesion of the defensive unit, has given the Bluejays one of the most reliable defensive identities the program has ever seen and has been a defining factor in

the team's season. Together, this group has powered a season unlike any other for Waseca boys' hockey. Multiple all-time records in scoring, assists, and goaltending have been broken, reflecting not only individual excellence but also the collective strength of the team. The combination of veteran leadership, offensive depth, and defensive stability has made this year's squad a benchmark for future Bluejays teams. As postseason play concludes, the accomplishments of these players stand as a testament to their dedication and commitment to the program. The 2025-26 Waseca Bluejays will be remembered as a record-breaking team that has set a new standard for excellence in Bluejays boys' hockey history.

NRHEG girls reach section championship

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The NRHEG High School girls' basketball team is headed for another section final.

The Panthers advanced Saturday with a 79-41 semifinal decision over Lewiston-Altura at the Rochester Mayo Civic Center.

The Panthers, 26-3 overall and seeded No. 1 in the tournament, were again led by the VanMaldeghem twins, who combined to score 57 of NRHEG's points, 40 by Camryn and 17 from Quinn.

The Panthers led at halftime 34-19 despite not playing their best basketball early.

Also scoring were Gabrielle Schlaak nine, Ezra Boerner six, Clara Buendorf two, Emelia Stadheim and Alayna Groskreutz two each, and Chole Stork one.

"The girls took control of the Lewiston-Altura game and never looked back," said NRHEG head coach Onika Peterson.

The Panthers had a sluggish start in terms of shooting, missing too many close-in shots.

"But we went into halftime up by 15 and went on a run in the second half," said Peterson. "It was great to see how many kids hit the boards for rebounding, which is something we pride ourselves on. Having five kids with six or more boards is huge, with Quinn VanMaldeghem leading us with 18 rebounds, followed up by Ezra with 9, Chloe with 8, Gabby and Clara both with 6, and Camryn

"Having five kids with six or more boards is huge."
— NRHEG coach Onika Peterson

with 4. Camryn VanMaldeghem finished the night with 40 pts and we had kids step up and hit great shots throughout the night."

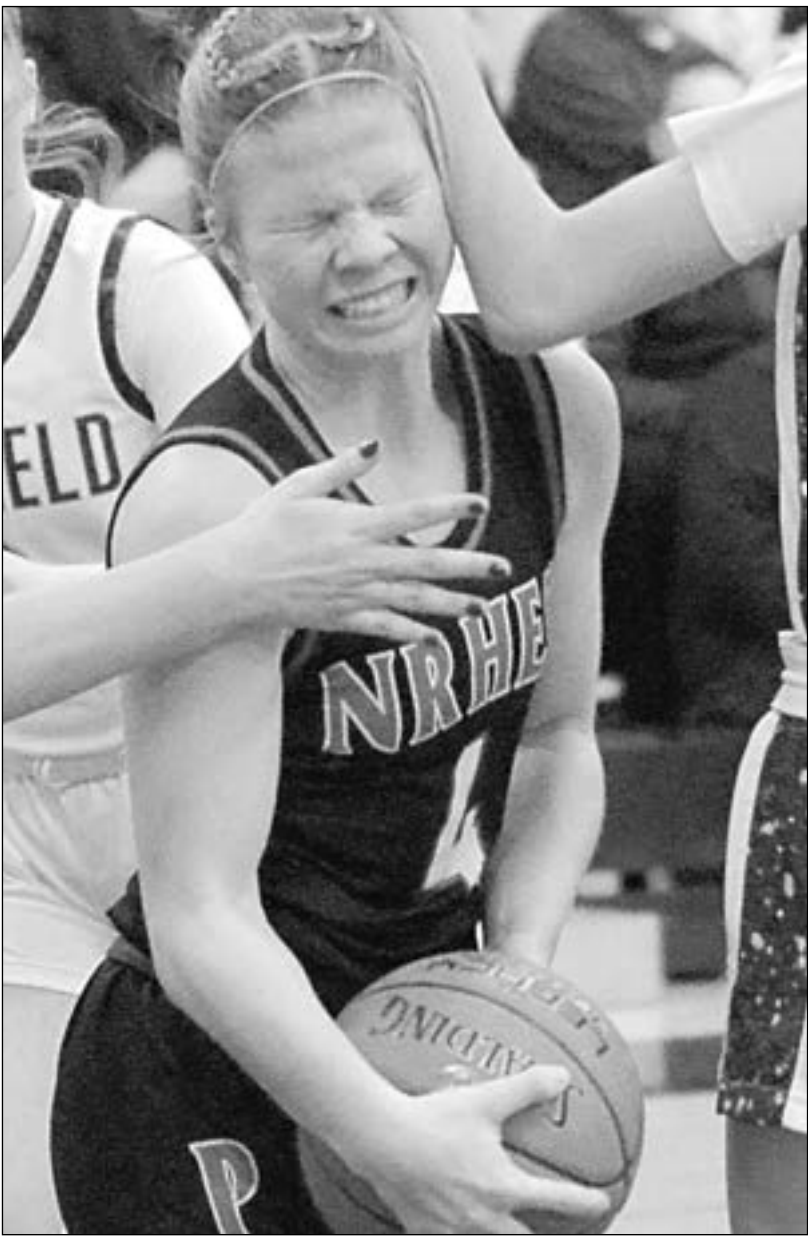
NRHEG individual totals: C.VanMaldeghem 40P, 4R, 7 seals; Q.VanMaldeghem 17P, 18R, 9S; Schlaak 9P, 6R, 4S; Boerner 6P, 9R, 4S; Buendorf 2P, 6R, 1S; Stadheim 2P, 2R; Savannah Farr 2R; Groskreutz 2P; Stork 1P, 8R; Groskreutz 2P.

Alyssa Hanson scored 12 to lead Lewiston-Altura.

The Panthers started their Section 1A tournament run with a 76-39 victory over eighth-seeded Houston Monday, Feb. 23 at Rochester. The NRHEG girls were on top 29-18 at halftime.

Camryn VanMaldeghem and Schlaak led the Panthers in scoring with 18 points, with Quinn VanMaldeghem and Buendorf right behind with 16 each.

NRHEG totals: Schlaak 18 points, 8 rebounds, 6 steals, 2 assists; Boerner 4P, 6R, 2S, 1A; Q.VanMaldeghem 16P, 8R, 4S, 6A; Buendorf 16P, 3S, 1A; C.VanMaldeghem 18P, 14R, 4S, 2A; 1 blocked shot; Farr 5R; Stork 2P,



WIN AND ADVANCE — NRHEG's Quinn VanMaldeghem, left, and Camryn VanMaldeghem scored 17 and 40 points, respectively, as the Panther girls' basketball team defeated Lewiston-Altura in the section semifinals Saturday. The win advanced the Panthers to tonight's section championship game at 5:30 at Rochester.

Photos by Jim Lutgens



Panthers' Ryan Schlaak finishes 4th in state tourney

Jacobson winds up one win away from podium

The Schlaak boys, Ryan and Owen, and Graham Jacobson ventured to last week's state wrestling tournament at St. Paul with hopes of bringing a medal or two.

They did not disappoint.

Ryan Schlaak claimed the Class A fourth-place medal at 189 pounds and Jacobson came within one win of a medal at 114 in the three-day event that concluded Saturday at Grand Casino Arena.

Ryan Schlaak, an NRHEG junior bringing a 33-2 record to state, outpointed Zachary Plank, a senior from Lewiston-Altura/Rushford Peterson, with a 21-13 major decision Thursday in the opening round at Class A 189. In the quarterfinals, Schlaak fell 5-0 to Minneota sophomore Randy Sorenson. The loss put him in the wrestlebacks against WEM/JWP's Trenton Huber, which saw Schlaak win a 19-3 technical fall. In his next wrestleback, Schlaak defeated Benson sophomore Adrian Young by fall in 3:40. It assured Schlaak of at least a fifth-place finish at state, and he reached the third-place bout with a 7-5 wrestleback decision of senior Ezekiel Sieckert of West Central Area-Ashby-Brando. It

earned Schlaak a rematch with Sorenson, in which Sorenson won by an 8-4 decision. Ryan ended the season with a 37-4 record.

Graham Jacobson, an eighth-grader won his first match by fall in 3:10 at Class A 114 over Henry Meyer, a sophomore from United South Central. Jacobson then lost a 17-1 technical fall to sophomore Liam Sommer of Kenyon-Wanamingo, dropping him to the wrestlebacks. There, Jacobson edged Rylan Moritz from Aitkin 4-3, putting him against Nolan Ouranda of Redwood Valley, who ended Jacobson's season with a 5-2 decision. Jacobson finished the year with a record of 30-15.

Owen Schlaak, a freshman from NRHEG wrestling at Class A 107, won by 19-4 technical fall over junior Brody Hopp of Luverne, ending the bout at the 3:24 mark. In the next round, he was upended 10-1 by 8th-grader Kiptyn Meiners of Caledonia-Houston, putting him in the wrestlebacks against Benjamin Schmid of Mille Lacs Lake, where Owen dropped a 12-4 major decision. Owen finished the season 36-9.



THIRD-PLACE BATTLE— NRHEG junior Ryan Schlaak, right, squares off with Randy Sorenson of Minneota in the Class A189-pound third-place match Saturday at Grand Casino Area in St. Paul. Schlaak finished in fourth place.

Photo by Johnnie Phillips/Steele County Times



HUSTLE — NRHEG's Brendan Schmidt, right, hits to floor to battle for a loose ball against Buffalo Lake-Hector-Stewart's Wyatt Milbrandt last Friday in New Richland. The 12th-seeded Panthers prevailed, 83-41.

Photo by Jim Lutgens

NRHEG boys win, advance in Section 2A tournament

The NRHEG High School boys' basketball team, seeded 12th in the Section 2A tournament, eliminated 21st-seeded Buffalo Lake-Hector-Stewart 83-41 last Friday in an opening-round game at New Richland.

It was a big night for the Panthers, who hosted a play-off game for the first time in eight years, and they came in less than full strength with A.J. Deen limited all week by a toe injury.

Not to worry.

The Panthers took a 36-26 halftime lead and pulled away in the second half, ending the Mustangs' season at 1-25. NRHEG improved to 10-16.

"All week long we emphasized how big this was to get a home game, and to be able to play well and advance," said Panthers coach Dan Schmidt.

Both teams started slowly before the Panthers settled in with a double-digit lead.

"BLHS did a good job chipping away, getting it to a two-point deficit, before we extended the lead back to 36-26 going in at the half," said Schmidt. "We came out in the second half extremely strong on defense, despite some silly fouls early that saw BLHS get in the bonus in the first 5-6 minutes. But we settled down and took control, only giving up 15 points in the second half. While the defense was digging in, our offense was clicking on all cylinders as we scored 47 points in the second half."

The Panthers had great balance offensively, with four guys in double figures. Brooks Gilliland led NRHEG with a double-double, knocking in 19 points to go along with 10 rebounds. Brock Holland had a great second half after starting slow, and had 13 points and 6 rebounds. Sean Lassahn added 11 points and 4 assists. Calvin Nissen had 10 points and 5 assists, and did a great job finding cutters going to the basket. Dom Olson had 8 points. Brendan Schmidt added 7 points along with 7 rebounds. Fynn Baumann played a dynamite second half on the defensive end against BLHS's top player, and tallied 7 points to go along with a couple steals. Levi Whiteside added 6 points, and Jackson McGannon rounded out the scoring with 2.

NRHEG individual totals: A.J. Deen 1R; Olson 8P, 1R, 1A; Nissen 10P, 3R, 5A, 2S; Gilliland 19P, 10R, 4A, 3S; Baumann 7P, 1R, 1A, 2S; B.Schmidt 7P, 7R, 2A, 1S; David Deen 1A; Holland 13P, 6R; McGannon 2P, 2R, 1B; Lassahn 11P, 4R, 4A, 2S; Whiteside 6P, 1S.

The win advanced the Panthers to Tuesday's round at fifth-seeded Nicollet.

"It'll be a tough matchup, but if we play with positive energy and played poised and without fear, anything can happen," said Coach Schmidt.

The winner Tuesday plays tonight at Sibley East against fourth-seeded Mayer Lutheran or No. 13 BOLD.

Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Feb. 28



MSHSL Wrestling State Tournament February 26-28, 2026



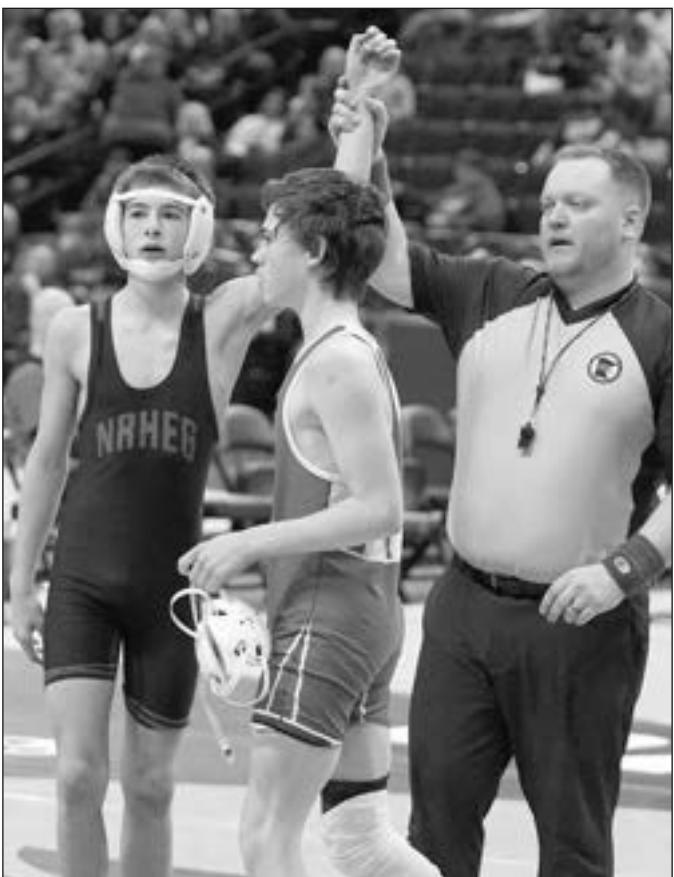
Kayle Langord



Ryan Schlaak



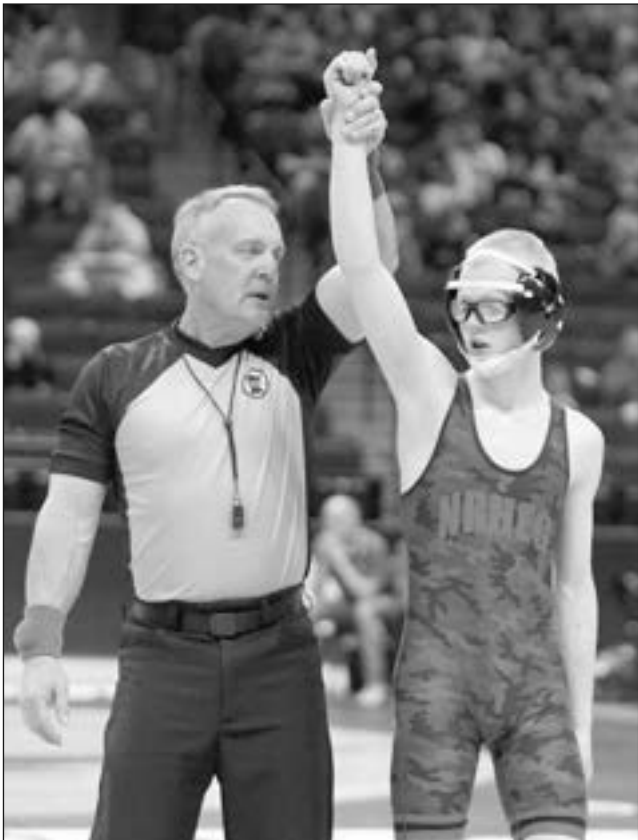
Kavan Sheehy



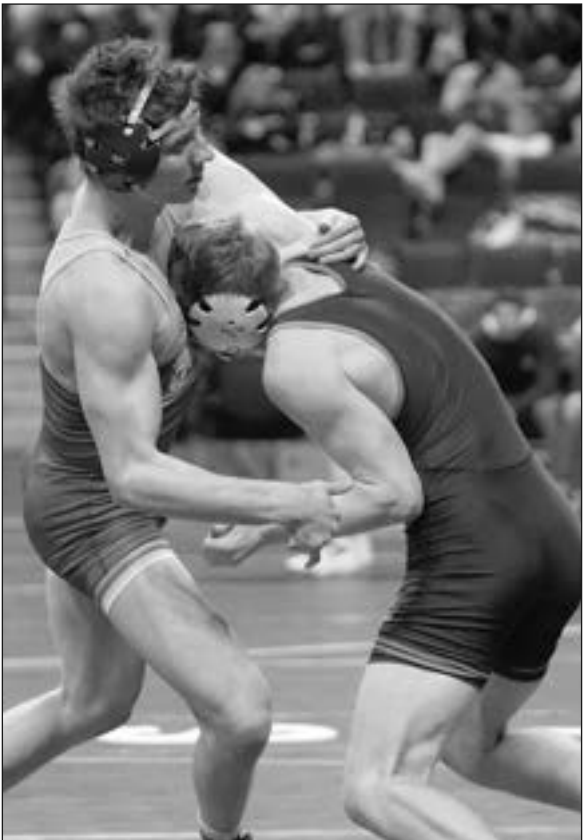
Owen Schlaak



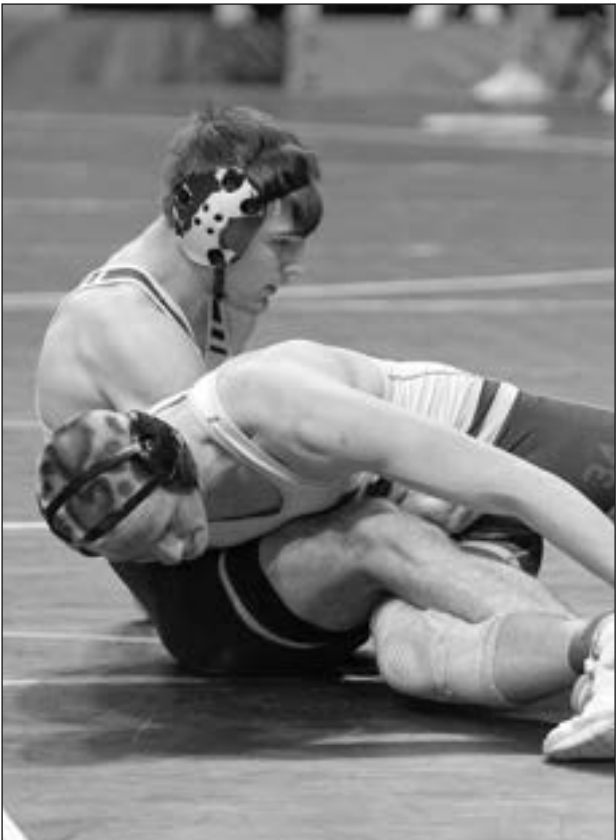
Trenton Huber



Grahm Jacobson



Slade Barnett



Aiden Gruber



The 2026 St. Patrick's Day parade grand marshal is TJ Anderson, pictured here, in the middle, with his family. TJ comes from the Eustice clan; he and his family reside near Walker but attend the Waseca celebration yearly. For many years he has been in the role of St. Patrick leading the parade, or helping his Aunt Paula and family with decorating and anything else needed to make the celebration great every year. He was also Saint Patrick with the 2025 grand marshal.

Irish American Club celebrates St. Patty's

The Irish American Club of Southern Minnesota will be celebrating their 58th Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration at the Mill in Waseca on Saturday, March 14.

The day starts with music at 10 a.m., followed by a 10:30 a.m. mass and a Parade of Clans over to the Mill at noon.

Lunch will be served from noon-2 p.m. and will include selections such as Mulligan Stew, Rueben egg rolls, corned beef and cabbage, hot dogs or burgers. From 12:30-2:30 p.m. will be Irish Rally at the Mill with the Irish Auction starting at 2:30 p.m.

From 4-5:30 p.m. will feature Irish Bingo and at 6 p.m. the Battle of the Clans will take place with the 7 p.m. Miss St. Patrick and Miss Irish Rose pageant. The Mill bar will remain open throughout the event and the Irish Music and entertainment provided by Becky Borneke and Muriah Miller Keith. Irish activities, crafts and treats will also be for sale. Music afterwards provided by Jim "DJ Kozy" Kozan.

Waseca Rotary Club offers "Pour Some Brunch on Me"

The Waseca Rotary Club turned up the volume and transported guests back to the glory days of big hair and power ballads at its recent sing-along brunch, "Pour Some Brunch on Me."

Held at the Starfire Restaurant, now used as a community event space, the 80s and 90s hair band-themed brunch brought together music lovers for a high-energy Saturday morning filled with iconic hits, delicious food, and plenty of crowd participation.

Guests paid \$31 to attend, with \$15 supporting the Rotary Club's local service projects and \$16 covering the brunch buffet. Many attendees also opted for bottomless mimosas for an additional \$15, while others enjoyed selections from the cash bar.

From the first song to the final encore, the room buzzed with excitement. Some guests confidently grabbed the microphone to belt out their favorite anthems, while others happily sang along from their seats. Highlights of the morning came when the entire crowd joined together in full voice, slightly off key but completely united, creating an atmosphere that was equal parts nostalgic and electric.

The Rotary Club expressed gratitude to Craig Simmons,

who once again donated his DJ equipment to make the event possible. His generosity helped create a seamless and spirited experience for everyone in attendance.

"This was our second sing-along brunch, and we were thrilled with both the turnout and the energy in the room," said Ann Staloch, Events Committee Chair. "Yes, it's a fundraiser, but we truly want to give people a fun, memorable experience in exchange for their support. By all accounts, it delivered. One of the best compliments is when people leave our event and keep the celebration going at other local bars and restaurants. It tells us they had such a great time, they didn't want it to stop." The Rotary Club looks forward to hosting additional themed sing-along brunches in the future, with ideas including Blue Collar Country, Taylor Swift, 2000's Pop, Yacht Rock, and more.

Next up, the club will host an "Adult Prom" on March 27 at the Starfire Event Center featuring a live band and an evening of music, dancing, and community fun.

Events like these continue to demonstrate that when service and celebration come together, the entire community benefits.

■ Dance from Page 3

Cutter events, the couple loans their sound equipment to announce information about

parade units along State Street. It was also revealed that Roger Frederick, who was present for the evening, had been a participant in the very first Sleigh and Cutter Parade 76 years ago; he was 10 years old at the time.

Deer Hunters South Central Board Meeting Feb. 24



The Minnesota Deer Hunters Association South Central Chapter held its board meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 24, at Sweet-Sommers VFW. Pictured from left: Treasurer Pam and her husband Pat Hammond, Vice President Chad Davis, and Region 12 director and Secretary Dr. Ruth Collins.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann



EXPRESSING ART - Grace Lutheran Church of Waseca held two Zentangle drawing classes, taught by Diane Harpster on Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2026. To the right, an example of the half-moon design used in the class.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Grace Lutheran's Zentangle attracts 40

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Two Zentangle classes the evening of Wednesday, Feb. 25 at Grace Lutheran Church of Waseca invited folks to use art as a path to calm reflection. Taught by certified Zentangle teacher Diane Harpster, classes drew nearly 40 artists who took advantage of the church's decision to provide the sessions free of charge and open to anyone interested.

Harpster observed that, as the Lenten season begins, churchgoers are invited to practice self-control and prayer. Practicing the Lenten holiday can be stressful and one way to relax, is to tangle.

Because of the short list of supplies that were needed for each class, it was requested that everyone register first so there was an idea of how many supplies were needed.

Those who showed up were handed baggies containing a pen, a pencil, a tortillon/blending stump and square of paper to draw on. Said Harpster, "Any fine point will do; all you really need is a piece of paper and something to draw with." According to an online source: "Zentangle art was created in 2003 by Rick Roberts and Maria Thomas as a meditative, structured drawing method accessible to everyone."

Harpster doesn't live in Waseca county, "I own a cabin up near Park Rapids. This is actually my first time in Waseca." She was using some references from the book, "One Zentangle a Day" by Beckah Krahula. Said Harpster, "There are eight steps for attaining peace through tangle, 1. Breathe. 2. Slow down, be still and listen for what happens next. 3. No mistakes in Zentangle, simply new opportunities. 4. Anything is possible, one stroke/mark at a time. 5. Be present in the moment, focusing on the mark you are making now. 5. You can do what you didn't know you could do. 6. Begin and end in gratitude and appreciation. 7. Everyone is an artist, God's beloved creation. We are created to create. Treat yourself and others as beloved ones of God. 8. No judgment or comparing-you are the only you there will ever be. Shine the light that only you can shine."

After a short explanation Harpster told participants, "The only way to know it is to do it, so let's get started." She instructed everyone to get comfortable, and while they were doing that she added, "Stretch your shoulders, relax." A few people around the room slid their shoes off under the tables, deep breaths were taken. She said a prayer of gratitude and told everyone to feel their paper,

"Get a feel for the texture of the paper, then place a dot in each corner." From there they were instructed to draw a line connecting the four dots, and so cheating a border. She told everyone, "This is not a race, everyone tangles at their own pace, so don't be afraid to take your time."

From inside the borders two more lines were drawn separating the space into three. Harpster added, "Pick one of the sections and begin drawing half moons along the lines. Then draw another half moon on top of that. Then draw another half moon on top of that until that section is full and you can't draw anymore."

There are hundreds of designs to choose from and many, many online videos presenting Zentangle with further instructions for anyone who would like to learn more.

First Waseca Hockey Association to qualify for a state tournament



The Waseca PeeWee hockey team had another successful weekend at the Minnesota Hockey PeeWee B South Regional in Litchfield this past weekend. Waseca defeated Sartell 5-2 in game 1 on Friday, lost to eventual Region champ Mankato 10-1, then defeated Windom 10-2 on Saturday, in the playback game. On Sunday, the PeeWees defeated Sartell a second time 7-4, and defeated District 9 tournament champion LaCrescent 5-1, in the True 2nd game. This is the first time ever a Waseca Hockey association team has qualified for a state tournament. The PeeWee B state tournament will be held at Lakeville Ames Ice Arena March 13-15. Front from left: Blake Neegaard and Blake Steinberg. Row two: Kamden Goettl, Nick Ferris, Korbin Collins, Easton Corchran and Ethan Jackson. Back: Coach Auston Larson, Drew Schmidtke, Jakub LaCanne, Easton Schlueter, Beckett Foels, Hudson Grunwald, Coach Griffen Wangen, Carson Osborne, Lucas Johnson, Drake Bubak and Jace Ulschmid.

LEGAL NOTICES

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF WASECA
DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
PROBATE COURT DIVISION
Court File No.: 81-PR-26-74
In Re: Estate of
AUGUST R. HEDTKE, JR.,
Decedent
ORDER AND NOTICE OF
HEARING FOR FORMAL
PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINT-
MENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE IN UNSUPERVISED
ADMINISTRATION AND
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
It is Ordered and Notice is hereby given that on the 20th day of March, 2026, at 1:15 p.m., a hearing will be held in the above named Court at Waseca, Waseca County, Minnesota, for the formal probate of an instrument purporting to be the will of the above named decedent, dated August 28, 2024, and for the appointment of Gregory C. Fell whose address is 2507 7th St NE, Waseca, MN 56093, as personal representative of the estate of the above named decedent, in an unsupervised probate, and that any objections thereto must be filed with the Court. That, if proper, and no objections are

filed, personal representative will be appointed to administer the estate, to collect all assets, pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, and sell real and personal property, and do all necessary acts for the estate. Upon completion of the probate, the representative shall file a final account for the allowance and shall distribute the estate to the persons thereunto entitled as ordered by the Court and close the estate.
Notice is further given that ALL CREDITORS having claims against said estate are required to present the same to said personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this notice or said claims

will be barred.
Dated: 01/28/2026
/s/ Carol M. Hanks
Judge of District Court
/s/ Shannon Asselin
Deputy Court Administrator

PATTON, HOVERSTEN & BERG,
P.A.
William L. Hoversten, #47478
215 E Elm Ave, PO Box 249
Waseca, MN 56093
507-835-5240
bill.hoversten@phblawoffice.com
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on February 26 and March 5, 2026

Wilton TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING,
ELECTION OF OFFICERS & BOARD OF CANVASS
MEETING, EARLY VOTING OPPORTUNITIES

Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Wilton Township, County of Waseca, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Election of Town Officers and Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2026. The Annual Meeting will commence at 4:00 PM to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law. In case of inclement weather, the meeting and election may be postponed until the third Tuesday in March.

The Election Polls will be open from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm at which time the voters will elect:
One Supervisor – term of three years
One Clerk – term of two years

There will be an early voting option provided at the town hall:
Saturday March 7th from 10 am to 12 pm &
Monday March 9th from 3 pm to 5 pm

The Annual Election, early voting and Meeting will be held at:
Wilton Town Hall
31353 Wilton River Rd
Waseca, MN 56093

PUBLIC NOTICE
Unclaimed personal property located at or from 1400 2nd Street SE, Waseca, MN 56093, Formerly addressed to Storage World, will be considered abandoned,

and to be sold, disposed of, or other, unless claimed by the verified owner(s) by March 29, 2026. Claimant verified owner(s) shall reimburse incurred handling and clerical costs associated to each,

their owned, personal property upon retrieval. Personal property claimant(s) reply to 1400Waseca@gmail.com, or: Waseca Police Department, 303 S. State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

This notice is in accordance of Minnesota Statute 345.75

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on February 26, March 5 and 12, 2026

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Fuel System Improvements Project
Waseca Municipal Airport – ACQ
City of Waseca, Minnesota

Notice is hereby given that Online Bids will be received by the City of Waseca until 2:00 p.m., Thursday, March 26, 2026, via [QuestCDN](#) for the furnishing of all labor and material for the construction of Fuel System Improvements at the Waseca Municipal Airport.

The bid opening will be conducted via Microsoft Teams, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud:

FUEL SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS Bid Opening
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026, AT 2:00 PM (CDT)

Major components of the Work include: Removal of two fueling dispensers, removal of one 6,000-gallon underground fuel tank, installation of a new fueling dispenser, electrical work, and restoration.

The Bidding Documents may be viewed for no cost at <http://www.sehinc.com> by selecting the Project Bid Information link at the bottom of the page and the View Plans option from the menu at the top of the selected project page.

Digital image copies of the Bidding Documents are available at <http://www.sehinc.com> for a fee of \$30. These documents may be downloaded by selecting this project from the “Project Bid Information” link and by entering eBidDoc™ Number 10030673 on the SEARCH PROJECTS page. For assistance and free membership registration, contact QuestCDN at 952.233.1632 or info@questcdn.com.

For this project, bids will **ONLY** be received electronically. Contractors submitting an electronic bid **will** be charged an additional \$42 at the time of bid submission via the online electronic bid service [QuestCDN.com](#). To access the electronic Bid Worksheet, download the project document and click the online bidding button at the top of the advertisement. Prospective bidders must be on the plan holders list through QuestCDN for bids to be accepted. Bids shall be completed according to the Bidding Documents prepared by SEH dated February 27, 2026.

Bid security in the amount of 5% of the Bid must accompany each Bid in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders.

A Contractor responding to these Bidding Documents must submit to the City a signed statement under oath by an owner or officer verifying compliance with each of the minimum criteria in Minnesota Statutes, section 16C.285, subdivision 3.

The City of Waseca reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, to waive irregularities and informalities therein, and to award the Contract in the best interests of the City of Waseca.

Nathan Willey, P.E.
Director of Engineering
City of Waseca, Minnesota

Got news?
507-837-6767

Johnson
APARTMENTS
507-456-9514
Operating in
Waseca, Steele,
Freeborn
Counties
johnsonrents.com

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642 March 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Burger nite 5-7pm	4 6pm BAR Bingo	5 7pm BINGO	6 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	7
8 Breakfast VFW 8:00am to noon Your Host SENIOR CENTER	9 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	10 Burger nite 5-7pm	11 6pm BAR Bingo	12 7pm BINGO	13 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	14
15	16	17 Burger nite 5-7pm	18 6pm BAR BINGO	19	20 5-7PM OR SOLD OUT Walleye Dinner Your Host Sheriff's Posse	21
22 Breakfast VFW 8 AM TON NOON Your Host County Veterans service office	23	24 BURGER NIGHT 5-7PM	25 6pm BAR BINGO	26	27	28
29	30	31 Burger nite 5-7pm				

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

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY



GUARDIAN ENERGY

AMERICAN MADE
FARMER OWNED

www.guardiannrg.com



PH & B

Your Trusted Local Law Offices for Over 50 Years

PATTON, HOVERSTEN & BERG, PA

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

www.phblawoffice.com



Waseca Music COMPANY

YOUR LOCAL MUSIC STORE

Band Instruments • Repairs
Guitars • CD, DVD, & Vinyl

507-835-2980

111 South State Street



DJ Daniel J. Johnson ACCOUNTING LLC

115 North State Street, Waseca
(507) 201-2484



WASECA FLORAL

810 N. State St. Waseca, MN 56093

(507) 835-3790

wasecafloral.com
rickmorris982@gmail.com



Rick's Appliance
ricksappliancewaseca.com

Sales & Service
507-461-9615

 
Special Services

405 West Elm Ave, Waseca MN



13 NORTH EXPRESS LUBE

NO APPOINTMENT NEEDED!

1201 North State St.
Waseca, MN 56093

507-833-7667



DAVE'S Body Shop
Waseca, Minnesota

715 S State St, Waseca, MN

(507) 835-8615



WASECA COUNTY PIONEER NEWS FOR LOCALS BY LOCALS

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

(507) 837-6767

NEWS@WASECACOUNTYPIONEER.COM



PERSONALIZED PRINTING & APPAREL

Bluejays Merch & Apparel Custom Printing & Design You Want it? We Make it!

Barb & Mark Buker

100 S. STATE ST - WASECA MN
PHONE: (507) 835-7565
INFO@PPRINTWASECA.COM



TGWET GREG WILMES EXTERIORS

GREGWILMESROOFING.NET

(507) 202-7070



DENNIS STEFFEL OMTVEDT

FUNERAL AND CREMATION SERVICE

109 3RD STREET NE
WASECA, MN 56093



Tesch Service

321 Elm Ave W, Waseca, MN

Call Us! (507) 835-4610

teschservice@mediacombb.net



Check out our Eco-friendly, artful, Paper & Bamboo or Walnut cases for the iPhone, Handmade in Waseca, MN!

since 2011

twigcase.com



SWEET - SOMMERS VFW POST 1642

113 E Elm Ave
Waseca, MN 56093

(507) 835-1811



PHEASANT CAFE
• SINCE 1942 •

Great Home Cooking
Catering • Full Breakfast Menu
Daily Lunch Specials

104 State Street
Waseca MN

835-1259



BATTENFELD LAWN CARE

ZACH BATTENFELD

507-521-0226

ZACHBATTENFELD@GMAIL.COM



JOHNSON APARTMENTS

507-456-9514

OPERATING IN
WASECA, STEELE,
& FREEBORN COUNTIES

JOHNSONRENTS.COM

Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Feb. 27, 28



Joan Meyr and Roger Frederick on the dance floor during the Sleigh and Cutter dinner and dance. Roger was 10 years old when he rode on one of the units in the very first Sleigh and Cutter parade 76 years ago.



Craig and Kathy Schuster took a break between dance numbers.



Brenda and Jim Byron enjoyed the music by Los T the evening of Feb. 27.



Local band Los T performed at the Sleigh and Cutter Dinner and Dance at the Waseca VFW on the evening of Feb. 27.



Judy and Lyle Kuhns took the dance floor in style.



The 2026 Mr. Waseca County Sleigh and cutter is Brent Bass, featured in the middle. A Facebook post reads, "Brent's mad basketball skills in talent and swagger in formal wear took him to the top!" Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann and Deb Bently

GEORGE'S
CARS.COM INC

(507) 267-3962
1381 State St. S
Waseca, MN

M-F.....8 AM - 5 PM
Sat-Sun..... Closed

Tesch
Service

321 Elm Ave W, Waseca, MN
Call Us! (507) 835-4610
teschservice@mediacombb.net

Prime Poly Solutions, LLC
Raise it. Don't Replace it!

BEFORE AFTER

Call Grant (641) 590-1293
for a Free Estimate!
Raise It, Don't Replace It!

16629 368 Ave., Waseca, MN • primepolysolutions.com

#1 in the World

RE/MAX

BLAIN NELSON
Owner/Realtor
(507) 837-9851
• call or text •
BlainNelson1@gmail.com

MLS

Each RE/MAX office is independently owned and operated.

NEED SEED?

TYLER HUBER
BECK'S HYBRID DEALER
(507) 461-3756
corncountryseedco@gmail.com
beckshybrids.com

THE SCORPION DEN
SELF DEFENSE & TRAINING

Robert Tackett
661-616-7026
101 State St South, Waseca MN
The RED Alley Door

DAVE'S
Body Shop
Waseca, Minnesota

Hours:
Sat-Sun
Closed
M-F
8 AM-5 PM

715 S State St,
Waseca, MN
(507) 835-8615

GUARDIAN ENERGY

AMERICAN MADE
FARMER OWNED

www.guardiannrg.com

thrivent

DIANE BECKMANN
LUTCF, FICF, FIC
Financial Associate
201 2nd St NE,
Waseca, MN 56093
(507) 835-9899

MINNWEST BANK

Commercial, agricultural and personal banking

102 South Main St
Waldorf, MN 56091
PH: (507) 239-2166
FX: (507) 239-2249

WALDORF

Member FDIC

iWealth
Your Dreams Become Our Goals
Planning • Investments • Insurance

(507) 835-9111
info@iWealth4me.com
213 15th Ave NE
Waseca, MN 56093

Securities offered through LPL Financial, Member FINRA/SIPC. Investment advice offered through iWealth Financial, LLC, a Registered Investment Advisor. iWealth Financial, LLC and iWealth are separate entities from LPL Financial.

KRAUSE
FEEDS & SUPPLIES

9352 SW 37th Ave,
Hope, MN, 56046

(507) 451-3043
kfshope@outlook.com