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WASECA
COUNTY
PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 23 Vol. V \$2

Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca

Thursday, June 4, 2026

■ Pages 10-11



Sports

Exchange Club
highway cleanup
Thursday, June 4

The Exchange Club of Waseca will be holding their highway cleanup at 5 p.m. on Thursday, June 4. This is a volunteer opportunity and those pitching in will meet at the Crystal Valley parking lot.

Tom Sexton 2026
Campaign Kick-Off
Friday, June 5

Minnesota House of Representatives member Tom Sexton, representing legislative district 19B, will be kicking off his 2026 campaign from 4:30 to 7 p.m. June 5 at The Mill Event Center in Waseca. The event will include a \$10 burger fry.

Take a Kid Fishing at
Clear Lake Park
Saturday, June 6

The Waseca Lakes Association is hosting a Take a Kid Fishing event at Clear Lake Park from 10 a.m. through noon. Fishing equipment, snacks and assistance provided, this event is free of charge. Children under 10 must be accompanied.

Johnny Frist and the
Heatseekers at Indian
Island Winery June 6

Johnny Frost and the Heatseekers will perform at the Indian Island Winery from 5:30-8:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 6. They perform seven decades of music.

Kinda Fonda Wonda
at Pleasant Grove
Pizza Farm June 7

Amanda White of the band Kinda Fonda Wonda will play Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm from 1-7 p.m. on Sunday, June 7. They play deep cuts by Patsy CLine, Barbara Mandrell and Johnny Cash.

Vacation Bible School
Immanuel Lutheran
Church June 8-12

There will be a vacation bible school for grades 3-8 from 8:30 a.m. through 1 p.m. on Monday, June 8 through Friday, June 12. Please register before May 24, call LuAnn Krienke at 521-1834 or Sally Marquardt at 461-3466. They are located at 30266 35th St. Janesville.

Blood Drive at
Waldorf Community
Center on June 9

There will be a blood drive at the Waldorf Community Center from 1-6 p.m. on Tuesday, June 9. They are located at 109 S Main Street.

Pottery Wheel for all
levels on Tuesdays
starting June 9

At the Waseca Art Center, Dustin Larson will be instructing how to use the pottery wheel for all skill levels from 5 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesdays from June 9 - July 28. Cost for all eight sessions including clay, kiln firing and glazes: \$210 Members / \$235 Non-members. Register on the WAC website: <https://www.wasecaartcenter.org>

A word from
The Word

In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.

Proverbs 16:9

NRHEG Class of 2026



GRADUATION - Above left, Olivia Johnson hugs her dad, Jeff, during parent appreciation. Above right, Christian Huntington Cully walks as Molly Johnson, behind, waves. Below, Camryn and Quinn VanMaldeghem sit behind the podium during commencement.



Class of '26 graduates 55

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

They stood together for the final time.

One by one, they walked out into the world.

The 55 members of the NRHEG class of 2026 graduated Sunday afternoon in a packed high school gymnasium in New Richland.

Principal Grant Berg got the show

rolling quickly as he said the day was not about anyone but the students standing on the stage.

Berg kept the introduction short and sweet. "Today is their (the graduates') day. Thank you."

Berg introduced the NRHEG choir which performed "Forever Young."

Class speakers Chloe Stork, Winter Pederson, and Kaitlyn Dobberstein, elected by their peers, addressed the

group's shared experiences in elementary grades, secondary school, and looking toward the future.

"I don't want to graduate," Stork began. "I know that's probably not what you want an 18-year-old who's supposed to be ready for the next chapter to say, but it's never really been about being ready. I'm just incredibly grateful to be able to say I had the best high school experience

possible, and it's because of the people who surrounded me along the way."

Stork talked about what it was like growing up in such a small town, in a class under 60 students; class trips and experiences that shaped who they are today.

"It's a unique gift to grow up in a

Graduates continued on 14



FREEDOM - The Waseca Exchange Club gathered on May 27 at the WHS to dedicate a "freedom shrine" display. The display is on a wall near the west entrance, across from the school's performing arts center. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Freedom Shrine dedicated at WJSHS

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Members of the Waseca Exchange Club gathered at the Waseca Junior Senior High School the evening of May 27 for two purposes. The first was to dedicate a "freedom shrine," a display of photograph quality reproductions of numerous documents pivotal to the founding and establishing of the United States. Among these are the

Mayflower Compact, Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, Emancipation Proclamation and the Gettysburg Address.

The display is on a wall across from an entry to the school's performing arts center; the ceremony was held in the hallway next to it. Representatives from the Steele County Honor Guard posted and later retired the colors.

The singing group "Just Friends"

provided a cappella music that included "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," the national anthem, and "God Bless America."

Waseca Exchange Club president Mikhail Rostislavovich emphasized the importance of the documents, and their role as an illustration and reminder of how precious, and even fragile, the freedoms given to United States citizens are. Just as our nation's founders faced difficulty and con-

troversy to establish those freedoms, said Rostislavovich, today's citizens must be mindful and alert in guarding and protecting them.

Rostislavovich went on to say students would benefit from the inspirational and the thought-provoking elements of the documents, stating he hoped they would take time to learn more about the cir-

Shrine continued on 4

Waseca
class of
2026 to
graduate
Sunday

Commencement
exercises begin
at 1:30 p.m.

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

The Waseca High School graduating class of 2026 takes the stage at the high school for commencement at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, June 1. This year's graduates number 135, down from last year's 154. There were 120 graduates in 2024, 142 graduates in 2023 and 121 in 2022.

Instead of naming valedictorians and salutatorians, Waseca confers "Latin Honors," the type of recognition often used at colleges. Students are recognized at levels such as Cum Laude ("with honor"), Magna Cum Laude ("with great honor") and Summa Cum Laude ("with highest honor") based on their grade point averages (GPAs). Under this system, all students in each grade range are recognized with no limits imposed by class rank or other systems of comparison.

At the ceremony, those with a GPA between 3.9 and 4 will be wearing white cords; those with a GPA between 3.75 and 3.89 will have blue and white cords; anyone with a GPA between 3.5 and 3.74 will have blue and gold cords. Plain gold cords will be around the shoulders of anyone with a GPA between 3.0 and 3.49.

Students who earned a 4.0 GPA are: Jolee Nicole Larson, Vivian Dorothy Mader, Corrick Justin Medina, Pearl Anne Moore, Sadie Ruth Schimming, and Andres Francisco Vasquez-Neigebauer

Musical selections to be performed by the Waseca High School band and choir include:

"Pomp and Circumstance" - Edward Elgar; "Omnia Sol" by Z. Randall Stroope; "Hlohono-lofatsa" arranged by Daniel Jackson; and "River of Life" by Steven Reineke.

This year's class officers are: Student Council President Layla Keith, School Board Representative Allen Kopetzki, Senior Class President Paige Dufault, and Senior Class Vice President Andy Vasquez.

Class speakers are: Dufault, Sadie Schimming, and Keith.

The senior class motto is "Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory." - Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss).

The class colors are Blue and Gold.

The class flower is a yellow rose.

Presenting diplomas this year are Superintendent Dr. Eric Hudspeth and Board of Education members Alyssa Bowers, Dave Dunn and Anne Harguth. High School Principal Justin Johnston will be reading the graduates' names as they receive their diplomas.

The 2026 escorts are John Hanson and Jake Nelson.

This year's graduates are pictured on Pages 5-9 of this week's Pioneer.



Compostings

by Al Batt

Try an aebleskiver

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING
You know what they say about getting older?

No, what?
I don't remember either.
DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I needed a good password. I always need one. I was trying to recall my maternal grandfather's third cousin's barber's nephew's step-daughter's hyphenated name from her second marriage. I couldn't remember it. Pity. It would have made a dandy password.

I met him in Colorado at a 60th wedding anniversary for people whom I didn't know. It's a long story. I could tell that the guy liked parties as long as he could maintain a position near the potato chips. His fingers tapped an impatient message on the table as he waited for the chip bowl to be refilled. He wore a "Pretty good. Not bad. I can't complain." T-shirt. I smiled and told him I liked his shirt and that I was a big fan of that song and the singer, John Prine. He said he didn't know who that was and that he got the shirt at a thrift shop. Then the potato chip reinforcements arrived.

AEBLESKIVER
Aebleskiver are spherical Danish pancake balls. The name means "apple slices" in Danish, although slices of apples aren't ingredients in present-day versions. They are delicious. Please try them if you've never had the pleasure of having your pancake roll off the table.

HOW THE LAKE GOT ITS NAME

I grew up along Mule Lake. The area had been settled by the Boardman brothers in 1857 and was called Le Sueur Lake. The lake was large then, and abundant in northern pike, wild rice and migrant ducks. The story goes that the Boardmans tried crossing the ice-covered lake with mules, but the ice was too thin, and a "fine span of mules" fell through and were drowned. Local folks called it Mule Lake after the incident. The lake was drained in 1914.

I'VE LEARNED
Science fiction has become non-fiction.
If it tastes just like chicken, it's probably chicken.

The tallest buildings in Minnesota are all in Minneapolis. The Wells Fargo Center stands 775 feet high. The Capella Tower is a foot taller at 776 feet. The IDS Center is the tallest, adding equipment and antennas to its top to retain the title.

I miss video stores. There was drama in the aisles as families ne-

gotiated (argued).

I know members of a family that had 22 children—all single births. I don't know if the parents had difficulty remembering all the names, but I know that I'd have had trouble counting them all.

I remember when excessive screen time was a giant wall of TVs in a retail store, meant to showcase the picture quality of various televisions.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

Did you ever knock on someone's door and then run away before they could answer? If so, UPS is hiring.

An alligator can live 50 years. There is a good chance that one will see you later.

Why is it spelled "camouflage" and not ?

What has 5 toes and is not your foot? My foot.

NATURE NOTES

A gray catbird with a stubby tail fed on grape jelly, then did a jazz riff, and meowed like a cat before eating more. Why did it have a stubby tail? The bird didn't want to talk about it, but I'm guessing it was a stress molt, during which it shed tail feathers to escape a predator. Feathers re-grow rapidly when they've been pulled out. Tails are important but not critical. Tail-less birds can fly, avoid danger and feed themselves, but might have trouble getting a table in an upscale restaurant. It's better than losing a tail in the winter. Catbirds aren't here then, but nobody wants a cold rear end.

In many turtles, warm temperatures during incubation create females and cold temperatures produce males. A friend, Gina Kemper, told me, "It's hot chicks and cool dudes."

Common mallard nest predators include skunks, raccoons, coyotes, foxes, weasels, mink, snakes and large bird species. A nest success rate of 15% is a rule of thumb for maintaining a mallard population. Delta Waterfowl found that 90% of egg destruction is due to predation; the rest is because of weather events. Approximately 7.5% of eggs leave the nesting site as live ducks. The survival rate of those drakes is around 70% and about 60% for hens after one year.

Habitat loss is the most significant cause of declining songbird populations. A U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service report found that cats are the top human-related cause of bird deaths, with collisions with buildings/glass a distant second.

MEETING ADJOURNED
Zig Ziglar said, "Don't judge me by my past. I don't live there anymore." Be kind.



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

We should all be as happy as kings

Though I did not capture them with a camera, a number of "pictures" from the last 7 to 10 days keep staying with me.

The first two descriptions I want to offer are alike, but different.

At a T-intersection of two gravel roads, I came to a stop and then made a right turn. My stop must have startled a kestrel from somewhere he was roosting, causing him to take flight. For a few heartlifting seconds, the bird was flying alongside my car just a couple feet away from the passenger side window.

I saw the bird there and it was as if time slowed down. It seemed I could see its muscles moving in its chest, keeping the wings in motion. I can still picture its sleek outline, the field and skyline behind it. Though a kestrel is not a particularly large bird, it is a predator—a sharp-eyed hunter that needs strong muscles and quick reflexes.

In those seconds the bird was in my line of sight, it seemed all that information was available to me in its profile

and its intent expression.

The next magnificent surprise I want to describe was a swallowtail butterfly. This time, I was leaving the Waseca Junior Senior High School by its west doors. Brick and glass behind me, concrete below me, asphalt up ahead—not a setting where one expects an encounter with nature.

Yet there it was, flying fast.

The moment did not have the noise and power of a Thunderbird flyover, but it had a grace and majesty that stays with me, again like a short film in my head. My peripheral vision took note of movement. I turned my head to see what it was.

And there, suddenly brilliant and beautiful only a foot or two in front of my face was a swallowtail butterfly: The elegant shape and distinctive yellow and black colors stopped me in my tracks, and caused me to whisper aloud, "What are you doing here, you magnificent creature?"

The butterfly was already past me when I finished. "Go grace someone's



MAGNIFICENT CREATURE - The elegant shape and distinctive yellow and black colors mean this butterfly is a swallowtail.

flower garden."

That "snapshot" moment may have been only one or two seconds long, but again, it is locked in my memory and makes me smile when I recall it.

The third moment of grandeur I wish to describe came at the end of one of our recent oppressive 90-something-degree days. Of course no Minnesotan needs to be told that, when the heat and humidity work together, we get storm clouds.

The official name for those is "cumulonimbus," a combination of Latin words meaning "heaped" or "piled," and "raincloud."

As it came toward evening on one of those hot days, white, glowing towers rose powerfully above us, seeming to reach to space. Though I know what those towers can become, it was impossible not to look at them with awe and appreciation—so shining white, so immense, and such a contrast to the sky

around them.

As the sun moved toward the horizon, they became shades of pink, purple and orange. I couldn't help thinking about the rising heat and energy which fed them and kept them looking fluffy and marshmallow-like...but with marshmallows hundreds of feet across.

Like the kestrel and swallowtail, all I have to do is think about this moment and the picture appears in my imagination. Even only the memories cause me to draw my breath in delight.

I hope my descriptions bring you pleasure, but even more, I hope you take the opportunity to appreciate moments like these when they present themselves to you. After all, as we were told in A Child's Garden of Verse, "The world is so full of a number of things, I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings."

Thoughts and more on graduation day

Graduation is one of my favorite events of the year. It pulls at my heartstrings. I enjoy the student speeches, the parent appreciation (NRHEG graduates leave the stage and present a flower to their parents during the ceremony), and the video montage. Graduation Sunday goes quickly for those of us in the audience, and even faster for the graduates (at least for me when I graduated). As someone with a job to do while I am there, it still goes lightning fast for me. I arrived at about 1:15 p.m. Sunday afternoon for the 2 p.m. start.

I found a spot to reserve for myself in the front row. (Really two spots.) This year the Stork family had part of the front row taken and Dan, the district activities director, arranged for me to sit next to him. I have known Dan since kindergarten/preschool. He was my gym teacher and athletic director at NRHEG my entire life. It brings me joy whenever I see him. During my academic years, I would stop and visit him in his office every so often during study hall. Despite his being very busy, he never, ever asked me to leave his office. Instead he would entertain my many questions about his life and job. (I think most of my teachers experienced the many questions I would ask.) From time to time, he put me to work helping with various tasks: stocking concessions for basketball games, folding programs, etc. I am grateful for the excellent relations I had with teachers at NRHEG. I imagine at a larger school, it would not be tolerated for a student to stop and visit the athletic director for no good reason during a study hall. Dan also had a small basketball hoop in his office that I would shoot at

This year's valedictorian and salutatorian were Chloe Stork and Wyatt Larson. Stork is Dan and Stacy's youngest daughter. Wyatt is the son of Shawn and Jody. Shawn was my sixth grade teacher and in some parts, my baseball coach from about seventh grade through my senior year. He is one of my favorite teachers and coaches of all time—at least partly because his class taught us cribbage, poker, and fantasy football. I have many fond memories



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

until one day it broke and was repaired in a way (tape) that it was "just for looks."

Thank you Dan, for the kind memories.

So there I was, two seats reserved. One in the front row and another on the end, so that I could photograph the graduates as they processed in.

With my seats claimed, I headed to another former teacher's room, Ms. Hutton, to find the graduates and take their photos. I went with the soon-to-be graduates to the commons area where I photographed a wide assortment of groups, including the entire class, honor students, military bound, and valedictorian and salutatorian. Oh, and boy scout. I asked if there were any other photos that should be taken and Wyatt Larson asked if I could take that one. "Of course," was my answer.

This year's valedictorian and salutatorian were Chloe Stork and Wyatt Larson. Stork is Dan and Stacy's youngest daughter. Wyatt is the son of Shawn and Jody. Shawn was my sixth grade teacher and in some parts, my baseball coach from about seventh grade through my senior year. He is one of my favorite teachers and coaches of all time—at least partly because his class taught us cribbage, poker, and fantasy football. I have many fond memories

from that year. The "trash can battle" Larson had with Aaron Seath; the glitter stain I caused on his floor during Christmas festivities; defeating Larson in chess (My record against him was 4-3-2. I believe I was the first student who had defeated him.); and how could I forget Larson scolding me for reading fiction books during his math class. One final thanks for Larson: he encouraged reading and gave me many books to read that year. I am an avid reader to this day. It was really cool to see Chloe and Wyatt earn these prestigious awards, and to see the happy, proud faces of their parents.

After I had taken the photos I needed in the commons, I returned to the gym. There, I chatted briefly with Principal Grant Berg and Superintendent Michael Meihak. I mentioned to Berg that, if he had a speech, I would like to have the text of it so I could use some quotes in my article.

"Eli, you should know by now," Berg said. "It's about the kids. I don't have a speech.

"All I have to say today is, 'It's about the kids.'"

After I sat down in my seat, I chatted with Dan as he gave me updates on all his offspring. I enjoyed hearing the updates. As I sat there, I hoped I wasn't detracting his attention from the day,

the moment, his last daughter's graduation. Oh, and I got to meet his grandson, Anna and Matt Jensen's first child. I played baseball with Matt for a few years. Watching him play baseball, I thought home runs were more common in high school sports in our area than they really are. He was an excellent player and even better teammate.

These thoughts and many others went through my mind as graduation started.

I snapped many photos during the ceremony and worried about the graduates I didn't have as many photos of as others. The speeches were good. We print them in the paper because I, as a former graduate, would love to go back and read the speeches from my graduation 10 years ago. Looking back, that day went by very quickly. The same can be said of Sunday, as before I knew it the graduates were walking outside as they closed this chapter of their lives.

I truly intended to write about the best baseball game of my life, which I witnessed Saturday when the Panthers held on to win 5-4 over Adams. But I may have to save it for next week.

Thank you to everyone who helped in the lives of the graduates from the class of 2026. Sometimes it might be hard to remember how much impact you may have on the life of a young person. I hope my many memories serve as a reminder of how powerful and lasting those small acts of kindness become.

"Behind my graduation cap lies an invaluable team of supporters. To my team, thank you for making this possible." - unknown.

Look! Want to meet the superheros?

Know what I've learned is better than vacation? Free vacation.

Last weekend, Jack and I went to spend the weekend at Gaylord Rockies Resort located in Aurora, near the Denver airport. It had everything: a waterpark, four restaurants, a spa, outdoor spaces like mini golf and basketball courts and lawns, and the best thing being superhero activities.

See, Gaylord Rockies is a big advertiser with the magazine I work for, Colorado Parent. So when the PR agent for Gaylord Rockies reached out to me to see if I'd be interested in writing a story or producing some editorial content in exchange for a free stay, I immediately hopped on board.

After some exchanges, our stay was booked. A free, two-night stay at the resort in a room with a mountain view (a big deal around here) and a king bed. On top of that, we got free parking, \$200 dining credit, a dinner reservation, and a reservation at their golf simulator suite. And of course, we got to do all the superhero things that kids could sign up and parents could pay for, as I was there to highlight the resort's "DC



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

Superhero Summer."

We got there on Friday in time to get in our room and head to dinner at one of their restaurants. After a tasty meal, we decided to use the free s'mores kit we'd been given (others could purchase) and head to the lawn outside where they had numerous decorative fires that also worked well for roasting marshmallows. It was fun to see all the little kids running around in the dark, chocolate and marshmallows in their hands or sticky on their happy faces.

On Saturday, we walked around and explored the resort and convention center, which is ginormous. As it turned out, there was a DEKA event going on in the convention center that we had no

idea about. Basically, DEKA is a fitness challenge similar to a Hyrox, where individuals or teams compete by completing a series of physical exercises and challenges while being timed. It looked hard, but also exhilarating. I can see myself doing it someday, and Jack even said he would be my partner. Plus, who doesn't want a cool medal?

Anyway, we walked around and then made it back toward the resort in time for our craft area time slot, where we received free superhero-themed bedazzling kits. Then we headed to the pool patio where they were doing face painting and temporary tattoos. We considered the line of children and then decided it wasn't worth it for us as two

adults to get temporary tattoos (although they would have been fun).

After exploring that, we headed to get our seats at the live action superhero show we had received tickets for as part of the complementary package. The show was...interesting, to say the least. It was Jack and I, and two families. So five children and six adults. Props to the performer, a woman who was a "superhero superfan" there to help kids solve riddles and learn things. At the end though, Batman came out to say hello, meet the kids, and sign certificates for being heroic. No offense, but Batman needed to work on his penmanship. But it was still cool to meet him and take home our certificates, which are now hanging proudly on the fridge.

Needless to say, it was a fun weekend where we got to stay and eat for free, while I videoed the experience and will write about it after. Seems a decent tradeoff.

My Determination: "It's not who I am underneath, but what I do that defines me." — Bruce Wayne/Batman, Batman Begins

WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

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OBITUARIES

David Kramer

David Michael Kramer of Washougal, WA passed away at home on May 18, 2026 surrounded by those closest to his heart. His short but intense battle with pancreatic cancer revealed his bravery and steadfast heart, he never stopped fighting to live to see his son grow up.

Born on October 19, 1979 in Waseca, MN, he was the cherished youngest son of Bob and Colleen Kramer. Growing up, David was known for his love of reading, sports and spirit of adventure. He attended school in Waseca and later moved to the Twin Cities to attend St. Thomas University. He built a career in IT as a Systems Director at Pharmacy Safeguard, which he took over in early 2025. His care for his customers was evident in every interaction.

To his parents, he was a devoted and loving son. Colleen and Bob travelled to the Pacific Northwest several times a year to spend time with Dave and Ronan. They had many adventures - travelling, exploring, cooking, baking, hiking. Being a father to Ronan was his life's greatest achievement, and he excelled in that role. Ronan was the center of his world. He and his ex-wife, Laurie, formed a close partnership as co-parents and always centered their son's needs and desires above all else. Ronan will always remember the walks he and his father took, the awesome dinners his dad prepared for him, and gaming together.

Beyond his family, Dave was a loyal, funny and caring friend. Whether he was cheering on the Minnesota Vikings, indulging in



David Kramer

his love of PC gaming with his online friends, or trading quips over fantasy football, his presence brought joy to those around him. His laughter was absolutely contagious. RIP Nemesix.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Francis and Elaine Gehring Kramer, and Gerald Donelan and four uncles. David is survived by his parents Robert (Bob) and Colleen Kramer, his brother Scott Kramer, his son Ronan Kramer, and his grandmother Gertrude Harguth Donelan, as well many beloved aunts, uncles and cousins.

Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at Sacred Heart Church in Waseca. Visitation will be held two hours prior to the service at the church. All who knew and loved Dave are welcome to attend and share their favorite memories.

Memorials in Dave's honor are preferred to his son Ronan's college fund.

Dsonfuneral.com



JUST FRIENDS - Above: The all-male gospel group Just Friends provided music during the dedication of a Freedom Shrine at the Waseca Junior Senior High School on May 27. Below: The Steele County Honor Guard posted the colors for the event.

Pioneer photos by Deb Bently

■ Shrine

from Page 1

circumstances which led to each of them being produced.

A second purpose for the ceremony was to acknowledge and thank Caryn Wendt, a member and leader in area Exchange Club activities since the 1990s. Wendt has been an advocate for a number of local freedom shrine displays in addition to serving in many roles in the region.

During her statement of gratitude, regional Exchange Club leader Katie Smith credited

Wendt with encouraging her to become a local leader—a beginning which led to a record of leadership that took Smith all the way to becoming one of the organization's national vice presidents and being inducted into its "Court of Honor." Smith also described traveling around the country with Wendt; the two became "Lena and Tina" to promote the 2001 National Exchange Club convention, which took place in Minneapolis.

Smith and Rostislavovich credited Wendt with showing true and faithful support of the Exchange Club's primary programs of service: Americanism, communityservice, youth programs, and the prevention of child abuse.



Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH
2200 4th St NE, Waseca
507-835-2235
Service times 9:30 a.m.

4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH
605 4th St NE, Waseca
507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker)
Worship Sundays 10 a.m.

FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
801 4th Ave NE, Waseca
507-835-3167
Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m.

CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH
309 6th St NE, Waseca
507-835-9176
Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School/Fellowship 10:15 a.m.
Wednesday Eve Worship 6:30 p.m.

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH
401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca
507-833-1703
Sundays 9:00 a.m.

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
314 4th Ave NE, Waseca
507-835-2647
Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca
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Worship Sunday 9 a.m.

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Father Glenn Ferichs
507-835-1222
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CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS
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Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m.

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
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ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship
Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters
Wednesday - 7 p.m., Worship

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

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

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

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

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

ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
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Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays
p.m. Mass
Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m.

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

ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC
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Father Brian Mulligan
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship

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Services 6 p.m. Saturday

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

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
412 N. Main Street, Janesville
Pastor Jason Wolter
Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:30 a.m. Worship

JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
401 N. West St., Janesville
Pastor Kathy King
Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship

BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
43089 180th St., Morristown
Pastor Kathy King
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ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH
307 W. 2nd St, Janesville
10 a.m. - Mass

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

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

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

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

NOTE: CHANGES IN CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER TO THE PIONEER.

■ Farm

from Page 3

markets. They can use the company website to order and pay for selected products and then have them delivered to their homes at no charge—although delivery is available mostly on a corridor between Waldorf and St. Peter, including Pemberton, Janesville, St. Clair, Mankato and St. Peter. It is also possible to place an order and pick it up on Fridays at the farm.

As is the case for all gardeners, Dan says various factors—especially weather and rainfall—greatly influence what vegetables are available and how plentiful each harvest is. He remembers excessive rainfall and hail which presented tremendous challenges during the 2024 growing season, causing him and Lara concerns about whether Cedar Crate could continue.

Despite the challenges, however, Dan believes businesses like his are on the increase. He can name 15 to 20 growers and natural food producers in the region. "We have a real economic impact," he observes, noting that Cedar Crate has as many as seven employees and fills an important niche in the

market.

Based on his own experiences and his knowledge of others in similar fields, Dan says he is glad to be on the steering committee for the Waseca Food Cooperative, a local initiative to open a non-traditional retail outlet in Waseca.

As summarized in a previous article in the Pioneer, leader of the initiative is Jim Boerboom, Waseca resident and former deputy commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Steering committee members have been meeting, discussing options, and investigating possibilities for about a year now. In the previous article, Boerboom mentioned visiting four cooperatives, and having completed a preliminary market assessment.

The food cooperative took a major step forward recently when it was recognized by the state as a legal entity, authorized to carry out essential transactions including opening bank accounts, collecting funds, purchasing equipment or real estate, and more.

"It will be exciting to see it all come together," says Dan. "The cooperative will be a real asset to the area, and to people who care about where their food comes from."

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2026

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Waseca High School Gymn, Waseca, MN

Class Motto:

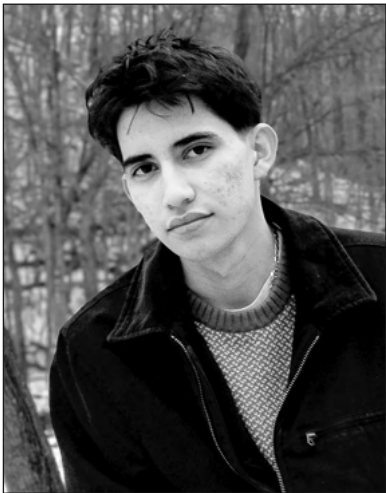
"Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory." - Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss)

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Eduardo
Alarcon-Ramirez



+Brooklyn Anderson



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Brianna Avalos



Hunter Barnes



+Slade Barnett



Andrew Bartelt



Brooke Bartelt



Madalyn Benson



+Natalie Berndt



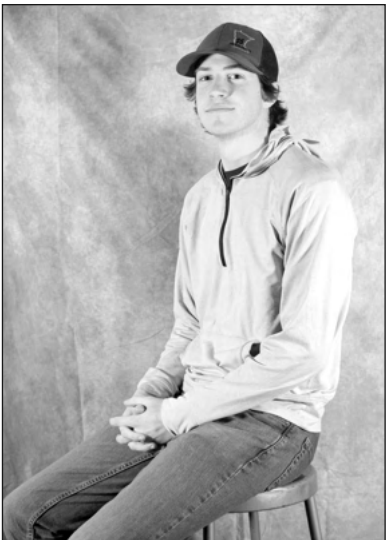
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Victoria Calderon



+Alexis Claybaugh



Teagan Collier



Madison Corder



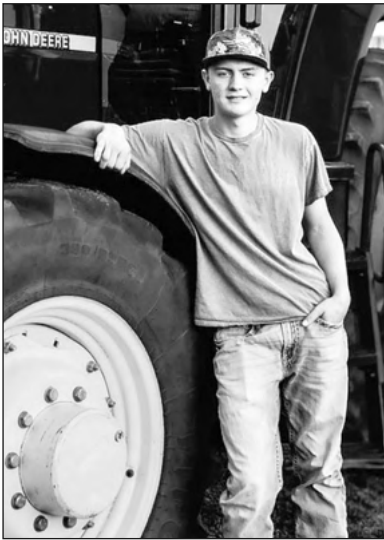
Jaida Curry



Kelsey Draeger



+Paige Dufault



Simon Eldeen



Kaden Elias



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Lily Frye



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Jenna Hudak



Stevie Hunt



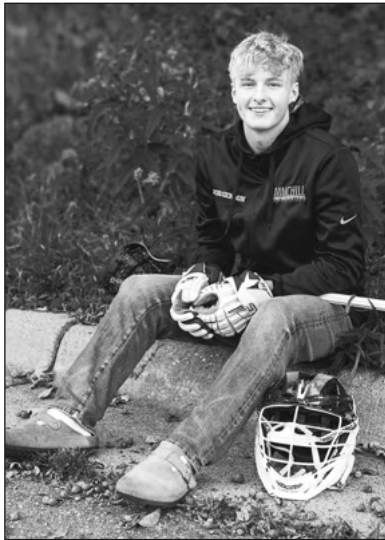
Trevin Jeddelloh



Emmalee Jes



Jordan Johnston



Anders Jorgenson



Nathan Kaiser



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+Haley Kahnke



Tailyn Kaput



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+Corrick Medina



Connor Miller



+Mia Mitchell



Boedy Mokoff



+Pearl Moore



Riley Mitchell



Korbin Mulcahey



+Remy Murphy



Madison Rasche



Logan Reger



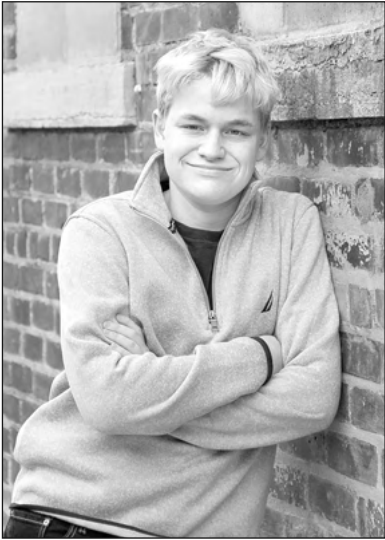
+Catherine Olson



Julius Oviedo



Deven Parpart



Kaden Peirce



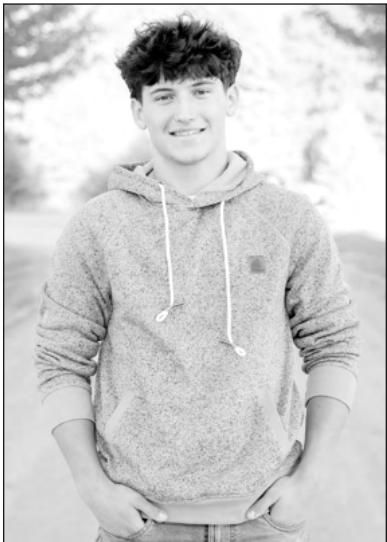
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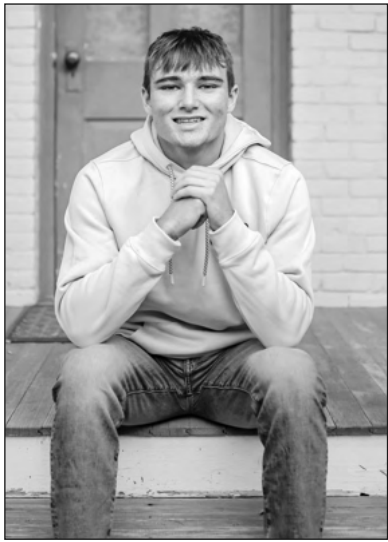
Jett Rohl



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Jacob Root



Bryghton Rugger



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Rosalyn Sanchez



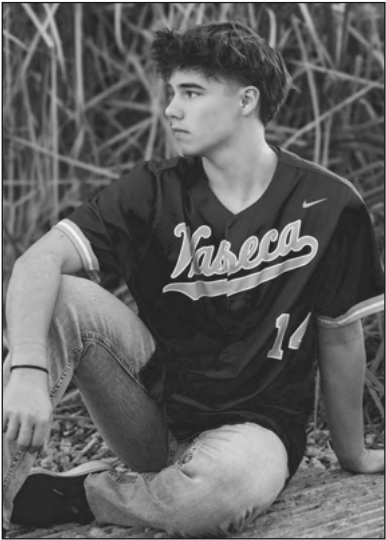
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Tourney run ends for baseball Bluejays

As disappointing as the start of the season was for the Waseca High School baseball team, the end may have made up for it.

The Bluejays, who won just two of their first 10 games, engineered a second-half surge that saw them finish 9-14 for the season and make a respectable showing in the Section 2AA tournament.

Both runs ended Saturday with a tough 12-5 loss to Tri-City United in a section elimination game at Waterville.

"We just about made it to Tuesday for another game, or more," said Bluejays assistant coach Tink Larson. "We had them until the bottom of the sixth."

That's when the bottom caved in for the Jays, who watched as the

Titans batted around the order while plating eight runs.

Adding to the Bluejays' frustration was the fact they left 15 baserunners stranded on the day.

Avery Wetzel was the lone Bluejay with a multi-hit game, going 2-for-3 with an RBI. Kaden Garza also drove in a run with a hit. Owen Honstad had two RBIs. Tyson Reger doubled and drove in a run. Kellen Klinger, Hayden Stencel, Kallen Glynn and Kamerin Ferch added one hit apiece.

Stencel started on the mound and pitched 2 2/3 innings, giving up two earned runs on four hits. Cash Lynch went the next 2 2/3 frames and took the loss; he allowed three earned runs on two hits. Reger also pitched in relief.

TCU, seeded the section, outthit eighth-seeded Waseca 10-8 and had one defensive error to Waseca's two.

"We were a pretty good team the second half of the season after struggling in the first half," said Larson. "It was fun to watch us play during the second half because our pitching and defense were both pretty good, so we kept most teams from scoring very many runs."

The Bluejays reached the TCU game with a 2-1 victory in the elimination round at fifth-seeded Sibley East Thursday.

"It was a very nice win for the Bluejays," said Larson.

Honstad started on the mound and was in control over six innings, surrendering one earned run on four hits, striking out five and walking

two. Reger struck out two in an inning of relief.

Klinger and Wetzel each had a hit and scored a run. Schaefer, Glynn and Riley Mitchell had one hit apiece.

Each team had two errors defensively.

"We didn't get a lot of hits, but we got two of our five hits in the fourth inning and took advantage of a couple defensive miscues by Sibley East to score two runs that inning," said Larson. "Kamerin Mitchell had a nice game defensively at short-stop. Owen Honstad went six strong innings on the mound."

The Bluejays, who opened section play with a 3-1 win over Minnesota Valley Lutheran, dropped into the elimination bracket after a 4-0

defeat at top-seeded Cannon Falls last Tuesday.

"It was a pretty good game," said Larson. "We played well, but had only one hit against an outstanding pitcher. Hayden Stencel pitched very well for us, too, as it was a 1-0 game until their final at-bat."

The Bluejays had runners on base in only two innings, on second and third, but both times had a chance to take the lead as it was still a 1-0 game.

The Bluejays graduate seniors Reger, Wetzel, Garza, Mitchell, Schaefer, Hunter Barnes and Julius Oviedo.

Braves get on track

Reger's return sparks wins over Austin, Cleveland

It was only a matter of time for the Waseca Braves.

The time was last Friday. And Sunday.

The Braves broke out of an early-season slump with a 15-5, seven-inning victory at Cleveland. It was the second straight win after an 0-3 start for Waseca's amateur baseball team.

"It ended up in a blowout, but it was a little hairy earlier in the game when the score was 6-5 and Cleveland had the bases loaded with no outs," said Braves coach Tink Larson.

But the Braves broke it open with a 14-hit attack led by Cody Huirias and Keato Roker. Huiras, a first-year Brave, went 3-for-4 with three RBIs and two runs. Roker 3-for-5 with two runs.

Jimmy Loonan drove in four runs while going 2-for-5. Tyson Reger was also 2-for-5. Adding one hit each were Kelvin Nelson, Payton Garza, Kyle Waugh and Ryan Hanson. Ben Schoenrock had an RBI.

Reger was the starting and winning pitcher, striking out 14 while allowing two earned runs through six innings. Hanson pitched an inning of scoreless relief.

The Braves, who had four fielding errors to the Spiders' three, stranded eight baserunners. Cleveland left 12 on base.

"It was nice to have Tyson Reger back on the mound for us," said Larson. "We had 14 hits, so that was nice to see."

The Braves staged a remarkable comeback at Austin Friday night, rallying from an 8-0 first-inning deficit to win 12-11.

"I remember games where we were down eight runs and came back to win, but I don't remember ever coming back to win when down eight runs in the first inning," said Larson.

All eight Austin runs were unearned in the first inning.

"After that our pitchers limited Austin to three runs on five hits," said Larson.

Austin also helped the Braves, giving up six unearned runs in the fourth on just one hit, a fly ball that was lost in the twilight sky. Austin had an error gave up seven walks in the inning.

Garza's two-run double in the ninth tied the score and he scored the winning run on a wild pitch.

Zach Hoehn, the fourth pitcher used by Waseca, picked up the win.

In his first game of the season for the Braves, Reger had a great outing at the plate, going 3-for-3 with a double and two runs. He also drew three walks.

Garza was 2-for-5 with with two doubles and three RBIs. Nelson, Waugh, Hoehn and Hanson had one hit each. Nelson drove in three runs, Hanson two.

The Braves survived seven fielding errors.

Waugh prevented Austin from scoring more runs with three great catches in center field.

The Braves' home opener is Sunday at 5 p.m. against Janesville. The Waseca VFW plays a doubleheader earlier in the day.

The Braves are at Lake Crystal June 10 and at Faribault June 12 before returning to Waseca's Larson Field to face Waterville June 14 at 2.

3 section crowns, 2 school records

WHS tracksters shine at section

The season's not quite finished yet for Tovin Grannis and several other Waseca High School track and field athletes.

There's a little matter called the state meet to take care of.

Grannis, a junior, had a highlight-filled Saturday in the Section 1AA meet at Faribault, finishing first in two events while anchoring a first-place relay. He clocked 38.86 seconds, setting a new school record while winning the 300-meter intermediate hurdles. He cleared 6 feet, 2 inches for first in the high jump.

But he wasn't done there.

In the final event of the evening, Sunny Mei, Malachi Noble, Brady Tloutan and Grannis combined to win the 4x400 with a time of 3:24.72.

The other Bluejay boy to qualify for state did so Thursday, when senior William Mansfield cleared 13-1 for second in the pole vault.

The top finish and only state-qualifying performance for the WHS girls was in the 4x800, where Stella Omtvedt, Ellie Kopischke, Ava VanDenHemel and Maren Schimming took second in 9:56.48. Only the first-place relay teams and those meeting a qualifying time advance to state.

Toby Jeske, a sophomore, missed state by one place in the discus, taking third at 141-1.

Other WHS places: Mei, fifth, 400, 51.78; Landon Rutt, fourth, 1600, 4:44.69; 4x100 relay, fifth,



SECTION ACTION — Above, the Bluejays' Tovin Grannis clears the high jump bar during Saturday's Section 1AA meet at Faribault. Grannis finished first in the event. Below, Toby Jeske competes in the discus.

43.62 (Jonah Worke, Jordan Johnston, Aiden Kath, Tloutan); Omtvedt, seventh, 800, 2:37.52; Owen Rupe, seventh, high jump, 5-8; Landon Madsen, seventh, discus, 133-1; Kopischke, eighth, 400, 1:03.79; Jett Rohl, eighth, 200, 23.15; 4x400, eighth, 4:27.10 (Omtvedt, Kopischke, Reese Rodriguez, Schimming); Rodriguez, ninth, 200, 27.39; 4x200, ninth, 1:35.86 (Jett Rohl, Sam Selthun, Jaxton Rohl, Edwin Aragon-Rivas).

The state meet is Thursday through Saturday at St. Michael-Albertville High School.

"The section meet went really well," said WHS coach David Abel. "We had some kids move to finals that were unexpected, so that was a nice surprise. Most everything went as expected. We were hoping the boys' 4x100 could run the (state-qualifying) standard, but we came up a little short. I feel for the seniors in that group, but we did run a season-best time, so that is something to be proud of. Overall, it was a



good section meet."

For some of the Bluejays, it was better than just good.

"As far as the state qualifiers go, we really had some fantastic performances," said Abel. "Tovin's 300 races were just spectacular. He really bought into the race strategy, and it paid off. Will didn't have his best day, but got the job done. I am confident he will have a good state

meet."

The girls' 4x800 was, according to Abel, the surprise of the day.

"Coach (Grant) Popp had said that he thought we had a chance to push for second. The girls ran their race and hit their target times and we got it done," said Abel. "It was so fun to watch. The boys' 4x400 relay team came in untested and also bought into what the coaching staff was

saying. Phenomenal race and super fast time. It was a great way to end the meet."

The Bluejays broke two school records in the meet, by Grannis in the 300 hurdles and the boys' 4x100 relay.

The state meet is June 4-6 at St. Michael-Albertville High School.

NRHEG reaches section title game

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

For Hall of Fame coach Jeff Reese, retired except for assisting with the NRHEG baseball team, it was a top-five game all time.

"Let the magic carpet ride continue," Reese said after the Panthers completed their run to the Section 1A finals with a thrilling 5-4 victory over Southland on Saturday at Austin's Riverland College.

"In 40 years, you see a lot," Reese said. "This one is in the top five."

The Panthers continued their playoff success, blanking Lewiston-Altura 6-0, setting up a memorable rematch with Southland, who defeated the Panthers 6-5 in the winner's bracket earlier in the week.

A pitcher's duel for most of the game set up the nail-biter.

The Panthers went up 2-0 in the second inning after they loaded the bases and scored via a single and sacrifice fly.

Pitcher Owen Wayne allowed only one hit and no runs in five innings of work, which did not come consecutively.

The Panthers played three in their half of the fifth, before pulling Wayne, who had 74 pitches and would be eligible to pitch in Tuesday's game due to the required rest days. Once a pitcher throws more than 75

pitches, they are required to rest for three 24-hour periods.

Brooks Gilliland threw two-plus innings in relief, allowing four runs.

After the first four batters reached in the seventh and two runs were scored via a double to the left field fence, NRHEG coach Marcus Fischer made the decision to re-enter the senior, Wayne, to try and save the Panthers season.

He did just that.

The first batter he saw hit a ground ball to third base, which was smothered; there was no play at first.

With the bases full and no outs, the next batter grounded to first baseman Brooks Gilliland, who made the play, throwing home for the force out.

The next batter lined out to the drawn-in-infield, to second baseman Calvin Nissen.

Fittingly, the final batter of the game grounded out to Wayne who tossed to fellow senior catcher Wyatt Larson for the final out.

Panther hits went to Wayne, Dakota Schlaak, A.J. Deen and Nissen. Brooke Gilliland drove in two runs, Dakota Schlaak one.

The final pitching line for Wayne was five innings, no runs, eight strikeouts and

three walks.

"We needed to win this game," Fischer said after the game. "I had it in the back of my mind the entire time that we might need to bring Owen back in to finish it. I knew he was the guy to put in."

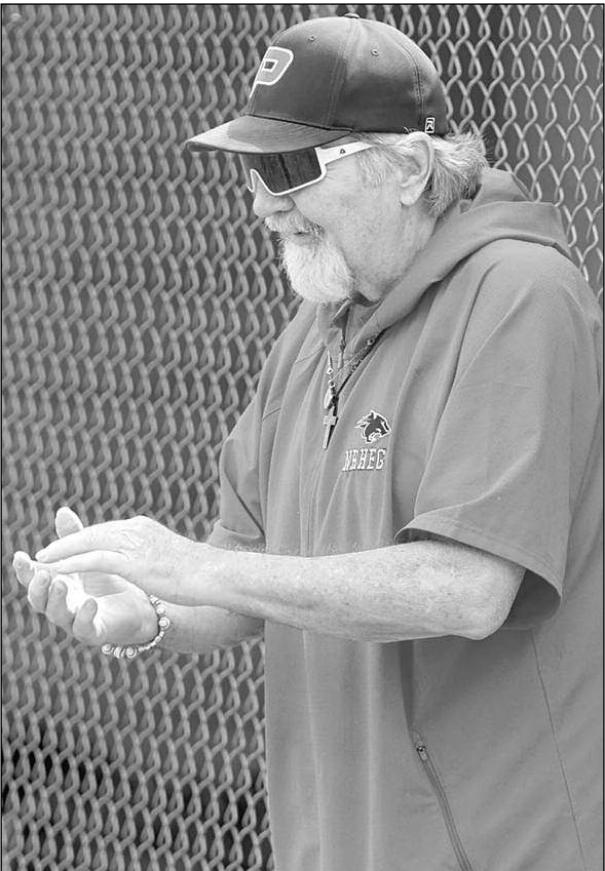
During the mound visit in the seventh, Brooks Gilliland told Coach Fischer to put Wayne back in the game.

"We gotta win," Brooks told us on the mound," Wayne said after the game. "I was all for it. I knew I was the guy for the job."

In the Panthers' previous game against No. 4 seed Lewiston-Altura, Mack Gilliland pitched six scoreless innings, fanning four and walking none. He also led the Panthers offensively with two hits, including a double. Sean Lassahn hit a home run in his return from a hamstring injury that sidelined him the previous game. Wayne, Wakota Schlaak, Brooks Gilliland and Brock Holland also hit safely.

The top-seeded Panthers would need to beat No. 2 seed JWP twice Tuesday in order to advance to state.

The state tournament is June 11, 12 and 15 at various locations, with championship games to be played at Target Field in Minneapolis.



HERE WE GO PANTHERS — NRHEG assistant coach Jeff Reese cheers on the Panthers during their section semifinal victory over Southland Saturday at Riverland Community College in Austin.

Photo by Eli Lutgens

For the Bulldogs, another great day

JWP/WEM advances 12 athletes to state track and field meet

The Section 2A meet went pretty much the way the whole season has gone for the JWP/WEM track and field teams.

For the Bulldogs, it was a very good day. Again.

The Bulldogs advanced people to state in seven events while the boys finished third and the girls fourth among 24 teams Saturday at JWP High School in Janesville.

"It's an incredible accomplishment," said JWP coach Sam Schruin. "Even more exciting, we are sending 12 athletes to the state meet!"

Gavin Atherton advanced to state in two events while taking gold in both, clocking 22.51 seconds in the 200-meter dash and 48.88 in the 400, good for a new section record.

Also reaching state was Grady Grohman, who finished second in the shot put at 50 feet, 11.5 inches.

The 4x400 relay also advanced, taking second but qualifying by state standard with a time of 3:32.9. It included Daulton Bauer, Wyatt Jans, Tyson Kronbach and Gavin Weedman.

The JWP/WEM girls advanced to state while winning three relays. Katelyn Olson, Ashlynn Wolff, Nevaeh Weimert and Addison clocked 49.71 in the 4x100. Olson, Wolff, Weimert and Rachel Mielke ran the 4x200 in 1:43.92. MaKaela Westphal, Weimert, Mielke and Wolff won the 4x400 in 4:00.65.

"It's an incredible accomplishment."
— JWP/WEM coach Sam Schruin

Mielke made state with a first-place finish in the 300, which she won in 46.57, and Condon advanced with a leap of 17-2 in the long jump, good for second place.

Placing but not advancing to state: 4x100 relay, third, 45.57 (James Morgan, Weedman, Kronbach, Ethan Einertson); Weedman, third, triple jump, 41-7 and sixth, long jump, 20-2.25; Alese Wolff, fourth, long jump, 16-8; Condon, fourth, triple jump, 34-9; Jans, fifth, 800, 2:07.03; Grohman, fifth, discus, 141-10; Trey Richards, sixth, pole vault, 12-4; Aiden Gruber, sixth, high jump, 5-10; Einertson, seventh, 200, 23.93; 4x800, seventh, 11:04.24 (Victoria Appel, Norah Welvaert, Alese Wolff, Kwynn Krause); Bauer, eighth, triple jump, 38-7; Jacelynn Mulder, eighth, 300 hurdles, 50.77; Ashlynn Wolff, eighth, high jump, 4-9; Sarah Bulman, ninth, pole vault, 8-2; Lydia Bjortmont, ninth, high jump, 4-9.

"Congratulations to Gavin Atherton, Daulton Bauer, Grady



STATE QUALIFIERS — JWP/WEM's Gavin Atherton, left, and Grady Grohman were among 12 Bulldogs to punch their ticket to state in Saturday's Section 2A meet at Janesville. Atherton advanced in two events and set a section record.



Grohman, Wyatt Jans, Tyson Kronbach, Gavin Weedman, Rachel Mielke, Katelyn Olson, Ashlynn Wolff, Nevaeh Weimert, Addison Condon, and MaKaela Westphal!" said Schruin. "The job isn't finished yet, and we can't wait to see what you accomplish at state. We are proud of all our athletes who competed today. Everyone worked

incredibly hard and performed exceptionally well. Despite the heat and wind, we had personal records broken and relay performances that surpassed previous WEM and/or JWP school records. The joint team record book continues to be rewritten this season! A special thank you to senior Kwynn Krause for an outstanding track and field career with

the Bulldogs. Your leadership, dedication, and success have left a lasting impact on our program. We are excited that you will continue your running career with the University of Wisconsin Superior Yellowjackets. We would also like to thank everyone who helped host our fifth and final home meet of the season. Your efforts made the event

run smoothly and successfully. A special shoutout goes to Mike Daschner and our custodial staff for keeping the facilities looking great. Jeremy Erler and Nicci Malecha were also instrumental in making the meet a success."

The state meet is Thursday through Saturday at St. Michael-Albertville High School.

Bulldogs battle to section title game

"That was so much fun," JWP sophomore pitcher Ayden Peterson said after the Bulldogs took down Southland 4-3 Saturday in the Section 1A baseball semifinals at Riverland Community College in Austin.

"We kept on battling," JWP coach Corey Jewison said after the game. "Our defense played exceptionally well. Ayden Peterson pitched a great game. Chase (Gerdt) came in and (closed it out) and threw strikes. None of our guys got rattled."

The Bulldogs jumped out early, scoring the first four runs of the game over five innings. One came in the second on a Blayne Wandrie single, scoring Seth Dahlberg; another in the third a Gavin Bauer fielder's choice plating Peterson; and two more in the fourth when Quast and Blake Bure scored.

Southland left two runs on the board courtesy of two excellent defensive assists by shortstop Jaxon



A BIG WIN FOR THE BULLDOGS— At left, members of the JWP baseball team gather after their 4-3 victory over Southland in the Section 1A semifinals Saturday at Austin. At right, Bulldogs catcher Seth Dahlberg prepares to put the tag on a Southland baserunner trying to score. It was one of two runs cut down at the plate for the Bulldogs, who also got a strong pitching performance from Ayden Peterson.



Photos by Eli Lutgens

"We've been working at it for a long time. It means a lot to be able to go out there and get the wins."

— JWP sophomore Ayden Peterson

Wolff in the third and left fielder Quast when he gunned down a runner in the fifth.

The Rebels stranded two runners

in the final frame. Peterson got the pitching win, going 4 2/3 innings, allowing three earned runs on five hits, with five strikeouts and three

walks. Gerdt threw 2 1/3 innings of scoreless relief, striking out two and giving up two hits.

The Bulldogs backed their pitchers with errorless defense.

The Bulldogs had five hits, two by Gerdt and one apiece from Quast, Dahlberg and Wandrie. Peterson walked twice and scored.

"It was such an exciting game," said Jewison. "These boys played so well. We had so many amazing defensive plays: Caleb Quast with an acrobatic catch in the outfield;

Caleb also threw a guy out at home. Blake Bure had a great backhand that had a last second bounce and he got the guy out. Jaxon Wolff made an incredible throw out at home. Blayne Wandrie had a very good backhand towards the end of the game. Our defense continues to prevail and our continuous effort of fighting the entire game."

"This is a lot of fun," said Peterson. "We've been working at it for a long time. Coach Cory has had us at morning hitting since seventh

grade. He and the entire coaching staff have been there for us. It means a lot to be able to go out here and get the wins."

Saturday's win advanced the second-seeded Bulldogs to the Section 1A championship played Tuesday, June 2. If they can win one of two games against top-seeded NRHEG, the Bulldogs advance to state.

The state tournament is June 11, 12 and 15 at various locations, with championship games to be played at Target Field in Minneapolis.

Season ends for NRHEG tracksters

The NRHEG High School track and field teams competed in the Section 2A meet at Janesville last Saturday.

Unfortunately for the Panthers, none of their entries advanced to state.

Kasey Jewison captured the top place for the NRHEG boys, finish-

ing seventh in the 3200-meter run with a personal-best time of 10:59.55. Senior Quen Meyering placed ninth in the 200 and 11th in the 100. Noah Weller threw a personal-best 127 feet, 7 inches to finish ninth in the discus. Gavin Lewison was 10th in the triple jump at 36-8.5. Wyatt Tuttle, Brendan

Schlaak, Lewison and Meyering teamed for 10th in the 4x200 relay.

Senior Gabby Schlaak led the NRHEG girls, finishing fifth in the 100 hurdles in 17.35 seconds and fifth in the high jump at 4-11. Julieann Wobbrock placed in both distance events, taking ninth in the 1600 in 5:54.05 and ninth in the

3200 in 13:40.65. Ellie Clark clocked a personal best 50.94 for 10th in the 300 hurdles.

It marked the end of the season for the Panthers.

"I am proud of the kids and their efforts this season," said NRHEG co-head coach Larry Nydegger.

Huttemier finishes fourth

Waseca's Henry Huttemier finished in fourth place at singles in the Section 1A individual tennis tournament.

Huttemier, a junior seeded No. 2, lost 6-4, 6-0 to senior Hudson

Zimmerman of Schaefer Academy last Tuesday at the Rochester Tennis Center.

In the other semifinal,

Rochester Lourdes' Evan Ritter, seeded No. 1, defeated fourth-seeded Everett Engler 6-0, 6-1.

Huttemier fell to Engler 3-6, 6-1, 6-3 in the third-place match.

Ritter defeated Zimmerman 6-4, 6-4 in the section finals. Zimmerman beat Engler 6-1, 7-5 in the true second place match.

Bluejays' Braiden Nelson advances in section golf

The Waseca High School boys' and girls' golf teams traveled to New Prague last week for the section individual tournament.

The Bluejays had one player, Braiden Nelson, make the cut for day two of the tournament. He shot 80 for 18 holes on Tuesday.

T.J. Corcoran, a sophomore, nar-

rowly missed the cut by just three strokes with an 83, one of his best rounds to date.

No WHS girls advanced, though there were some noteworthy performances despite sweltering heat on Wednesday.

Elli Hoban broke 100 for the first time in her career, missing the cut by

just three strokes with a 96. Maddie Root shot 110, Tyler Stagman 112, both great efforts according to coach Bill Dwinells.

"Overall, we had a very productive season with improvement at every level of the game and as a team," said Dwinells. "We feel very confident about building on these

things as we look forward to next year. We will be cheering Braiden Nelson on as he makes his attempt to make it to the state tournament."

The second round of section was Tuesday, June 4, after the Pioneer's printing deadline.

NRHEG golfers advance

NRHEG High School's Reid Sandry had a stellar round last Tuesday in the section golf tournament.

Sandry, who shot an 86 for 18 holes, was one of three Panthers to break 100. David Deen shot 93, Braxton Arnold 95. Rounding out the scoring for the Panthers were

Blake Olson, 101; Chuck Tufte, 105; and Shan Hansen, 111.

Sandry's showing advanced him to the second round of section play this week.

Advancing for the NRHEG girls were Alexis Olson and Hailey Skaska.

Janesville

25 years ago

- The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Junior High golf team remained perfect for the year by edging St. Clair 163 to 165 at Terrace View Golf Course in Mankato May 1. The Bulldogs have won both of their starts and are 3-0 overall. Dan Sprengeler led JWP and earned medalist honors for the meet by shooting a non-over-par 36. Kevin Pommier fired a 39 to finish in fourth place, while Lance Meyer and Cory Schroeder tied for fifth place with 44s. Tanner Barbknecht and Greg Holmes tied for eighth place by shooting 47s and John Hartfiel carded a 53 to place 13th.



- **Junior Girls, front row from left: Jenny Gillette, Tiffany Goodnough, Ann Ewald, Nikki Westphal, Courtney Morehead and Maria Schultz. Second row: Julla Ulmen, Lisa Finch, Terra Borchardt, Brenda Trahms and Jena Yentsch. Third row: Bridget Kester, Katie Linde, Katie Jorgenson, Brenda Hilles and Jody Ewert. Back row: Tenh Sylvars, Jenny Page, LeAnne Finch, Heather Schnepf and Keill Christianson.**

- Nick Zell has been awarded a \$1,000 Academic Scholarship for the 2001-2002 academic year at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Zell will graduate from Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School in June, 2001. He is the son of Lonny and Darla Zell of Janesville. Minnesota State University, Mankato offers 72 graduate programs, the largest number offered in the MnSCU system. In addition, MSU offers 101 undergraduate programs.

50 years ago

- A daughter, Traci Lynn was born to Mr. and Mrs. Michael Youngerberg, Route three, Janesville, on Friday, April 23, at St. Joseph's Hospital in Mankato. She joins a two-year-old sister, Kristin Lee. Maternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. William Schroeder, Route four, Mankato. The paternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Youngerberg, Route three, Janesville.

- Robert F. Dumbeck, son of Floyd Dumbeck, Janesville, has been elected mayor of Elgin, Texas. A Janesville High School graduate, Mr. Dumbeck is the owner of R.F.D. Instrument Company, Elgin. The firm manufactures pollution control equipment. Mr. Dumbeck is the brother of Mesdames Ferman Shaw, Faribault; Melvin Goltz, and Harlan Klankowski, Janesville.

- Sixth graders, under the able supervision of Gary VonHoltum, assisted at the Recycling Center last Saturday. Hustling the cans and bottles were Bob Coonrod, John Donahue, Jon Abraham, Ann Gessner and Doreen Mulcahey. We are looking forward to working with the Boy Scouts next Saturday. ONE HUNDRED ONLY gallon size plastic Hilex bottles are needed for the swimming area in the park. We would accept this amount only at the Recycling Center.

75 years ago

- On Friday evening at 8 o'clock the Janesville high school glee club and band, under the direction of Milton Grein, will entertain the public in a spring concert at the high school. Besides group numbers by the glee club and selections by the band there will also be vocal and instrumental solos. A small entrance fee will be charged and the proceeds will go for the support of these two musical groups for the purchase of new and additional music.

- Fisherman of Janesville and vicinity will be pleased to learn that a "goodly number" of fingerling northern pike were released into Lake Elysian last Sunday. Billie Schafer, spokesman for the Janesville Sportsmen's Club who was instrumental in obtaining these game fish for stocking, was reluctant to say just how many of the pike were released by men from the state Game and Fish Hatchery at St. Peter.

- Jo Stepan has come up with a novel idea which he hopes will enable hom to help less fortunate persons overseas. This Saturday, he is offering fifty cents trade in on any pair of old shoes if the person trading in the shoes buys a new pair. He will then fix up the old pairs and send them off to Europe to help shoe the bare-footed urchins and old people that are suffering for want of footwear. No matter how hot the weather this Saturday, the sidewalk in front of Joe's Shoe store will be cool because for the second year he will display a pair of shoes frozen into a cake of ice. Like last year the lucky person who guesses how long it will take the ice to melt will win a free pair of shoes.

100 years ago

- The backyard farmer is on the eye of his annual plunge into the pursuit of agriculture. He is ready to attach the soil with a new array of instruments and a plentiful supply of seeds and he regret the area of attack isn't larger. The latter end of April and the first half of May is the proud season for the backyard farmer. After that period he turns the job over to his wife. -Belle Plaine Herald.

- Tickets to a recent University of Minnesota social function are declared to have cost student-buyers \$15. So it seems that its not useful education but society prestige that costs Steele county parents so much to send their children to the university. Perhaps, with a view to the future, the board of regents or some authoritative body might find some way of forbidding so called "society events" that cost students more for a scant evening of pleasure than they will be able to make in a week after then have secure their sheepskins. -Owatonna Journal-Chronicle.

- Judge Haycraft was criticized some what when he sent Willard Jacks, the actor man, who stole some clothes from his fellow actors at Fairmount recently, to Still water for a term not to exceed ten years. Jacks claimed it his first offense and the sob sisters thought the judge was hard on him. Since that time the judge has investigated Jacks and found that he served time in Nevada a number of years ago for a similar offense. All the crying and pleading that Jacks did at the time he was sentenced was put on. -Truman Tribune.

Waseca

25 years ago



- These are the Waseca High School seniors who were honored as part of the 50th annual Student Honors Banquet sponsored by the Waseca Lions Club and Waseca High School. They are (front row, from left): Jessica Dehn, Abby Kelling, Heather Treat, Marie Mulcahey, Kristi Petersen, Nicole Benson, Jenny Yess, Wendy Schroeder, Kristi Schons and Josey Meurer. Back row: Amanda Ziemke, Karen Prechel, Josh Stenzel, Joe Stenzel, Andy Guse, Andy Johnson, Cassie Hoveisrud, Katie Miller, Nicole Frederick, Katherine Gulbrandson, Audra Ross, Jene'e Lanckmann, and Leah Hows.

- A second Casey's General Store was approved by a 6-1 vote by the Waseca City Council, with Al Rose the dissenting vote. Casey's plans to build on the corner of 6th Ave. SW and So. State St. An alley adjacent to the property was vacated by the city to expand the green space between the store and the property to the south. The building will be constructed of brick on three sides with a metal back. Asked why the city would allow another gas/convenience store in the south end of town, Mayor Tom Hagen said, "it is not the city's role to decide what makes economic sense."



- **Waseca High School Graduation Ceremony: Sunday, June 3, 2001 at 1:30 p.m. at the Waseca High School Gym. Class size is 175. Colors are Blue and Gold. Class motto: "The hardest years, the wildest years, the desperate and dividing years; These shall not be forgotten years." Honorary escorts are Chuck Ayres and Cheryl Hanson. Ceremony Music is "Leave You With a Smile" — Montimallow and "Your Heart Will Lead You Home" — Sherman. Speakers are Sarah Korb, Jeff Mosser and Britt Oraskovich. Class Officers are President Sarah Jewison, Vice President Jake Bjerke, Secretary/Treasurer Britt Oraskovich and Representative Nikki Benson. The top five students in alphabetical order are Crystal Bye, Sarah Korb, Katie Miller, Doug Nelson and Britt Oraskovich.**

50 years ago

- Two Wasecans were injured in two separate incidents Thursday night, one a car-pedestrian accident at the intersection of State Street and Elm Ave. and the second a bicycle accident at the intersection of 7th Ave. and 4th. St. SE. Involved in the car-pedestrian mishap was L.W. Fell, R. 2, Waseca. Bathke was taken by Seewald Ambulance to the Waseca Area Memorial Hospital where he was treated, then admitted for observation. This mishap occurred about 9:35 p.m. Fell was not injured. Also treated for injuries at the Waseca Area Memorial Hospital was Morgen Behsman, 15, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ted Matz, 411 7th Ave. and 4th. St. SE when he apparently lost control and fell off. He apparently cut his head, hurt his shoulder and sustained other bruises and cuts. He was taken by Seewald Ambulance to the Waseca Area Memorial Hospital and was treated, then released.

- Most of Waseca will be shutting down next Monday in observance of Memorial Day. No mail will be delivered, city and county offices will be closed, the library will not be open, and even the Journal will not be published. Publication will resume on Tuesday. However, that doesn't mean the town will be dead on Monday. The annual parade and program at the courthouse begins at 9 a.m. and this year, a special program, the dedication of Memorial Park will follow at 10 a.m. on the east edge of town.

- The First State Bank made it four in a row with a smashing 16-6 victory over Rose's Bar. The Bankers record now stands at 4-2. Taking a 7-0 lead after two innings behind the two home runs by Rich Grothberg, the Round Bank plugged for six more runs in the last two innings to win easily. Roger Supalla had a near perfect night going 3-4. Brad Ewest, Don Wobschall, Tuffy Christensen and Tom Goetz each added two hits apiece for the winners. First State meets Depot Liquor next Tuesday at 9:00 p.m. at the fairgrounds field.

75 years ago

- Friday, May 4, is Dollar Day in Waseca and most Waseca merchants have joined the parade of values presented on that day. The Dollar Day is sponsored by the Waseca Chamber of Commerce as an event in which the dollar will buy a great deal more than usual. This edition of the Herald contains many display ads calling attention to the bargains being offered on Dollar Day. Local merchants have cut prices to a level not seen for some time and shoppers are certain to be in a position to make substantial savings on items purchased Friday. The Herald urges all readers to check the ads closely and to take advantage of the money saving values offered by your hometown merchants. Dollar Day will convince shoppers that there is still live in the google old American "one buck."

- The Monday Study Club will hold the last meeting of the club year 1951-52 on Monday, May 7, at 2:30 p.m. at the home of Mrs. Fred Hager. The topic, "Ten Commandments for the Homemakers," will be given by Miss Adaline McMartin. The club is observing the 47th year of its organization and short history of club activities through the years will be given at the meeting. There will be the usual election of officers and a social hour.

100 years ago

- The probable origin of the term "Kitty" in a poker game is the old-fashioned "kist" from which we get our modern word "chest." A money box was a kist, so came the pool in a poker game to be called the kist, then the kit, and, finally, the kitty.

New Richland

25 years ago

- **Selected New Richland-Hartland-Elendale-Geneva 2001 Teacher of the year Elizabeth Knudson is happy to represent the district. She has served as an elementary instructor in the local district for 16 years. Beth will be competing with other teachers of the state for the honor of Minnesota Teacher of the Year, which will be announced in the fall.**

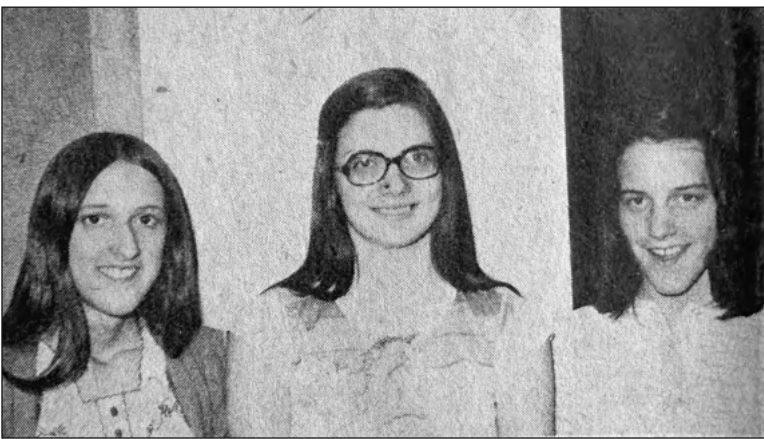
- Mollie Holmes of Waldorf was selected by Thomas Madden American Legion Post #587 Post Auxiliary as their 2001 Girls State candidate. Mollie is attending Minnesota State University-Mankato full-time under the Post Secondary enrollment options and planning a career in the medical field.

- Minnesota State University Mankato student Julie Fleming has been named as the recipient of two scholarships from the College of Education, Fleming of New Richland, was awarded the \$500 Jane Neubert scholarship, in addition to the \$250 Kiwanis-Munsun scholarship for the 2001-2002 school year.

- The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton girls softball defeated Medford 19-3 and Alden-Conger 10-0 in Wednesday and Thursday games last week.



50 years ago



- **These three members of the Waldorf-Pemberton High school band have been selected as participants in the Minnesota All-State Band, according to Jim Kopetzki, Waldorf-Pemberton band instructor. They are from the left: Linda Mensing, Kary Eichhorst and Noreen Pfeffer.**

- Mr. and Mrs. Walter Kent of rural New Richland announces the engagement of their daughter, Edna Jean to Kevin Burns of rural Janesville. An August 21st wedding is being planned.

- Coastguardman Daryle B. Rudolph was recently promoted to Chief Petty Officer at the Coast Guard Station, San Francisco, California. Chief Rudolph is a former resident of New Richland and is the son of Mr. and Mrs. H.J. Rudolph of Albert Lea.

75 years ago

- Miss Loraine Wenzel became the bride of Winston Evenson, Wednesday, June 27, at a ceremony performed at St. Peters Lutheran church at 2:30 in the afternoon. Rev., Wm. F. Lehmann read the double ring service. Mixed garden flowers decorated the altar.

- Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Miller (Mildred Proehl) of Hartland, are the proud parents of their third son, born in Waseca Memorial hospital Monday, June 25, weighing eight and a half pounds. The older Miller boys are Stuart and Eugene.

- You just can't expect to come off on top when your opponent has the ability or good fortune to get 11 runs on four hits, especially when you are able to get only four hits yourself and make them good for only one run. And that is exactly what happened last Friday evening at Manchester when the New Richland American Legion team met up with the Manchester team.

www.heartlandhealthcare.net

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Notice is hereby given that the Waseca County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing at 9:30am on Tuesday, June16, 2026, at the Waseca County East Annex (Commissioner’s Room), 300 N. State Street, Waseca, MN 56093 to consider the following items:

A. Request for a Conditional Use Permit to create a pond closer than the required 75ft setback.
Taylor J. R. Erickson and Benjamin P. Doyle request a Conditional Use Permit to create a pond on their common property line. The parcels (PID: 05.030.1110 and 05.030.1150) are in the A-1 Agricultural Protection Zoning district. The requested proposal is pursuant to the requirements of Section 4.13(A)(2)(e)2 of the Waseca County UDC.

The staff reports and Board Memorandum on these items will be available at the Waseca County Planning and Zoning Office, 300 N State St., Waseca during regular business hours 8-4:30, and will be on the county website www.wasecacounty.gov at the agenda tab by June 12, 2026. Oral comments will be accepted at the meeting. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all Waseca County services, programs and activities.

Tina G Wilson, Planning and Zoning Administrator

PUBLIC NOTICE
SUMMARY OF WASECA COUNTY UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
SECTION 6.22 SO SHORELAND OVERLAY DISTRICT ORDINANCE No. 165

The WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS adopted a newly revised Shoreland Overlay District ordinance at the May 5, 2026, County Commissioners meeting. The ordinance was based off the Minnesota Rules and Statutes and the Department of Natural Resources model Shoreland Overlay ordinance.

SECTION 6.23 FO FLOODPLAIN OVERLAY DISTRICT ORDINANCE NO. 168

The WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS adopted a newly revised floodplain ordinance at the May 19, 2026, County Commissioners meeting. The ordinance was based off the Minnesota DNR model floodplain ordinance, to satisfy the state and federal standards detailed in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103F; Minnesota Rules, parts 6120.5000 – 6120.6200; the rules and regulations of the National Flood Insurance Program in 44 CFR 59 to 78. The ordinance provides the general regulations for development in floodplains, as well as procedures guiding administrative responsibilities.

ARTICLE 7, ADMINISTRATION, FEES, VIOLATIONS AND ENFORCEMENT ORDINANCE NO. 167
Pertaining to SECTIONS 7.04, 7.05 and 7.06

The WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS adopted a newly revised Article 7, Administration, Fees, Violations and Enforcement Sections 7.04, 7.05 and 7.06 at the May 5, 2026, County Commissioners meeting. This ordinance is a part of the Waseca County Unified Development Code.

These ordinances are in effect as of the date of this publication

A copy of these ordinances in their entirety are available for inspection at **The Planning and Zoning Office, 300 North State Street – Door 3, Waseca, MN 56093, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00am to 4:30pm.**

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID

WASECA COUNTY RE-USE FACILITY

Contractor's sealed proposals for the construction of Waseca County Re-use Facility will be received by the Owner in accordance with the plans and specifications prepared by:

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SITE VISIT INFORMATION
Pre-Bid Meeting: Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 10:00 AM (CST)
Location: 31080 State Hwy 13, Waseca, MN 56093

BID DATE INFORMATION: WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2026

Bid Time: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 at 10:00 AM (CST)
Location: Online via QuestCDN vBid
Attn: Jim Kollar, Public Works Director
31080 State Hwy 13, Waseca, MN 56093

at which time they will be submitted electronically via QuestCDN - vBID. Bids will be received and evaluated, the awarded by will be announced on July 21, 2026 during the County Board meeting.

Bids will be received for the following Prevailing Wage project:
PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Expansion of County owned existing 1,150 s.f. wood framed storage facility with new 1,135 s.f. addition. Building is for storage and resale of donated items. Existing building currently has hazardous materials but is not classified as 'H' occupancy. New structure is wood framed with insulated walls, roof and prefinished metal exterior materials.

Each bid must be accompanied with a cashier's check, bid bond, U.S. Government Bonds (at par value) or certified check equal to five percent (5%) of the amount of the proposal. Security is payable to the Owner as a guarantee of prompt execution of the contract in accordance with the proposal and Contract documents, along with furnishing Payment and Performance Bonds of One Hundred percent (100%) of the bid amount acceptable to the Owner.

For a electronic bid submissions provide a scanned copy of your Security bond with your bid. Provide a original copy to the Bid Recipient within five (5) days of bid due date.

This Bidder shall be required to execute the Agreement and obtain the Performance Bond, Labor and Material, Payment Bond and Project Insurance within ten (10) calendar days from the date when Notice of Award is delivered to the Bidder.

Complete digital project bidding documents are available at <https://widseth.com>. Click "Bid Documents" in the top right corner of your screen or go to www.questcdn.com and enter the Quest project No. 10197520 on the website's Project Search page. Please contact QuestCDN.com at (952) 233-1632 or info@questcdn.com for assistance in free membership registration, downloading and working with this digital project information. You may download the digital plan documents electronically for \$25. An additional fee of \$45 will be charged to electronically bid the project. An optional paper set of project documents is also available from CES Imaging for a nonrefundable price of \$30 plus printing costs. If you choose a paper copy you will get all addenda as paper copies and will be charged for the printing costs. Please make your check payable to CES Imaging and send it to 1701 James Circle N, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430. Please contact CES Imaging Repro Dept at (763) 560-9098 or (800) 831-8587 for pricing and if you have any questions.

The successful bidder must be a "responsible contractor." The term "responsible contractor" means a contractor as defined in Minnesota Statutes Section 16C.285, subdivision 3. Any prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that does not meet the minimum criteria or fails to comply with the verification requirements is not a responsible contractor and is not eligible to be awarded a construction contract for the project or to perform work on the project. A prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that makes a false statement under oath verifying compliance with the minimum criteria will be ineligible to be awarded a construction contract on the project and the submission of a false statement may result in termination of a contract awarded to a prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that submits the false statement. A prime contractor shall include in its verification of compliance a list of all of its first-tier subcontractors that it intends to retain for work on the project. Before execution of a construction contract, a prime contractor shall submit a supplemental verification under oath confirming that all subcontractors and motor carriers that the prime contractor intends to use to perform project work have verified to the prime contractor, through a signed statement under oath by an owner or officer, that they meet the minimum criteria for a responsible contractor.

Bids may not be withdrawn within forty-five (45) days after the scheduled closing time for receiving bids without consent of the Owner. The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and rebid the project until a satisfactory bid is received.

By: Jim Kollar, Public Works Director
Waseca County



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■ Growth
from Page 3

possibility of real love. Confession brings healing and growth.

Jesus said in John 10:10 that He came to bring abundant life. In the Old Testament, God explained that His laws were given "so that we might always prosper and be kept alive." God's ways are not arbitrary restrictions; they are reality itself. Growth begins when we stop treating obedience as burdensome religion and start seeing it as the path of life.

Second, we grow by learning God's laws. Paul prayed in Philippians 1:9 for believers to grow in "knowledge and depth of insight." Knowledge comes through study, but insight comes through experience and relationships. None of us sees ourselves clearly. David admitted in Psalm 19, "Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults."

That is why growth requires community. Everybody wants community, but few are willing to take the risks necessary for it. Authentic Christian fellowship requires honesty, vulnerability, accountability, and grace. In healthy Christian community, everyone is a sinner, so no one is superior. Yet everyone is accountable because all of us have blind spots.

The early church described in Acts 2 modeled this kind of life together. Believers shared meals, prayed together, confessed struggles, and supported one another. Their fellowship was so compelling that people were drawn to Christ daily.

Real life change rarely happens in isolation. Worship services are important, but deep transformation usually occurs in smaller circles of trusted relationships where people know one another well enough to encourage and correct each other.

Third, we grow by discerning the will of God through discipline. Proverbs says, "Do not despise the Lord's discipline." God often uses pain to redirect our lives, correct our attitudes, and develop maturity. Discipline is not punishment; it is training.

Paul spoke of a "thorn in the flesh" that God refused to remove. Whatever the thorn was, it forced Paul to rely on God rather than himself. God told him, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."

Even disciplined people still need correction from outside

themselves. God often works through other people to expose our blind spots. People who want to grow take risks with trusted friends. They confess embarrassing sins and admit painful struggles. This is difficult because it threatens pride and exposes weakness, but healing cannot happen without honesty.

In seminary, I participated in support groups for hospital chaplains. One classmate failed badly during a difficult moment with grieving parents whose child had died. Overwhelmed by fear, he could not enter the room and eventually walked away. Later, he confessed his failure to the group. His peers did not excuse the behavior, but they supported him while helping him face the seriousness of what happened. Through that process he grew, and eventually became a hospice chaplain serving dying children.

Growth happens when people lovingly confront us with truth. I once experienced this personally when a group challenged my own emotional detachment. They noticed I could discuss painful childhood experiences without emotion. Someone asked how I would feel if my own children were treated the same way. Suddenly I felt overwhelming anger and grief. That moment exposed how much pain I had minimized and denied.

Receiving correction is difficult. It requires humility and trust. It begins by admitting problems honestly:

"I struggle with anger."
"I feel lonely."
"I battle lust."
"I'm depressed."
"I'm irresponsible."

The longer pain is ignored, the worse it becomes. But when struggles are confessed to trustworthy people, their power begins to weaken. James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

Confession also creates responsibility for the listener. When someone reveals failure or fear, they are placing enormous trust in your hands. A harsh or judgmental response can shut the door to healing. But grace, truth, and prayer can become instruments of restoration.

Opening our hearts to others may be one of the hardest things we ever do. It takes courage to admit weakness and risk rejection. Yet this vulnerability is often the doorway to freedom, healing, and spiritual growth. Without the power of God, few of us would choose this path. But through His grace, all of us can.



Celebrating 20 years in the district for WEA Members are (from left) Hartley teacher Erica Hoffmeister; JHHS special education teacher Anne Mitchell; JHHS math teacher and WEA president Eric Teders; JHHS special education teacher LuAnn Ross; and JHHS social studies teacher Brad Wendland. Not pictured: JHHS speech and language pathologist Heidi McCabe.



Hartley teacher Amy Krautkremer was honored for reaching the milestone of 25 years in education.



Allen Kopetzki received an award for being a student school board representative.



Friend of Education Katie Gonzales of State Farm Insurance, with JHHS PhyEd teacher Connolly Turek, who nominated her for the award and introduced her during the banquet.



Claire Duncan received a certificate of achievement for 10 years of dedicated service



Jake Nelson stands with Karen Anderson after receiving his award for Teacher of the Year.



Waseca school district superintendent Dr. Eric Hudspith with staff members retiring after 35 or more years: (From left) Hudspith; Kari Zafft, kindergarten teacher retiring after 37 years in the district and in education; Lori Miller, high school physical education teacher retiring after 33 years in district and 35 years in education; and Mike Buker, head building custodian at the Junior Senior High School retiring after 38 years in the district.



Ruth Hines received an award for Support Staff of the Year.



Hartley Elementary teachers Amanda Anenson, Katie Kasendof, Jackie Wolfe, and Alli Poppe with their retiring co-worker, kindergarten teacher Kari Zafft (at center).

■ Awards
from Page 3

she lives by principles taught to her by her own family and by her instructors across her school career. After mentioning a string of individual teachers for their contributions, Gonzalez said, "Waseca Public Schools helped shape who I am today," and for that reason along with many others, she prioritizes "giving back to the community."

Ruth Hines, who helps in the media centers of both the intermediate and high school, was named as the association's support staff of the year.

Graduating high school senior Allen Kopetzki was recognized for his service as a student representative to the school board from 2024 to 2026.

Retiring teachers Lori Miller and Kari Zafft were presented with hand-held bells. Miller has been a physical education teacher for 35 years, 33 of them in the Waseca district. Kindergarten teacher Zafft spent her entire 37-year career in Waseca. Also receiving a

bell was Mike Buker, head building custodian at the junior senior high school, who has been with the district for 38 years.

Also retiring from the district are Patricia Larkin (30 years), Dawn Barrie (29 years), Deb Nelson (23 years), Cindy Ruedy (17 years), Sharon Bonthun (8 years), Julia Deetz (5 years) and Bonnie Kyte (4 years).

Teachers John Hanson and Gwen Krueger were recognized for 35 years in the district; Jennifer Follstad-Popp and Amy Krautkremer for 25 years; Erica Hofmeister, Heidi McCabe, Anne

Mitchell, LuAnn Ross, Eric Teders and Brad Wendland were honored for being Education Association members in the district for 20 years. Anastasia Garza has been with the district for 15 years. Katie Kasendorf, Claire Duncan, Amanda Anenson, Seth Anderson, Brenda Nelson and Anthony Seid were recognized for being association members for 10 years; Stephanie Baima, Julia Deetz, Tanah Janike, Lizabeth Martinez-Ayala, Olivia Marth and Kiley Worke were recognized for five years as members.

■ Graduates
from Page 1

community like ours," Stork continued. "Many of us have known each other since the days of mismatched socks and boogers."

"Somewhere in the middle of all of that, we learned things that mattered... We learned the importance of kindness, integrity, and working hard even when nobody was watching. I carry the values I do today because of my experiences throughout high school, and I hope that many classmates can say the same."

Looking back now, we really were lucky," Stork concluded.

Pederson spoke next and reminded those in attendance that today is the final time the class of '26 will see each other together.

"Today is the day that we all close a very important chapter of our lives together," Pederson said. "As each of us walk across this stage today, we aren't just celebrating making it through high school and getting a diploma. We also celebrate our growth, our determination, and our resilience."

"I want everyone to embrace how powerful the present moment can be, instead of dwelling on the past or worrying about the future, because the present is the foundation for everything yet to come," Pederson concluded. "Thank you to everyone that believed in us and helped us get here today."

Kaitlyn Dobberstein spoke about the future.

"Some of us have known exactly what we want to do after high school, while others are still trying to figure it out," Dobberstein said. "I think the thing that makes the future both exciting and scary is that we truly don't

know what's coming next. We are entering a world full of change.

"The future is not just about jobs, success, or achievements," Dobberstein continued. "It's about learning to be kind when the world feels harsh, brave when life feels uncertain, and hopeful even when things don't go as planned."

"Our future will not look the same for all of us, and that's okay," she concluded. "Success is not defined by one single path because each of us will create our own stories. Congratulations to the class of 2026. The future is waiting for us."

Berg introduced the NRHEG band,

which played the traditional "last song together," a composition played sometime during the seniors' career, and one they selected as a favorite.

This year's choice was "(Risk) Everything for a Dream," arranged by Richard L. Saucedo.

Gabrielle Schlaak led the parent appreciation statement, after which graduates came down off the stage and delivered flowers to the parent figures in their lives.

Following the parent appreciation, a compilation of videos and photos from the class of '26 was shared.

Berg introduced salutatorian Wyatt Larson and valedictorian Chloe Stork.

Short biographies of both these honored students appear in this week's Star Eagle.

School board members Amy Ihrke and Kelly Delacruz, alongside superintendent Michael Meihak and Principal Berg, presented diplomas to the graduates.

When finished, Berg told graduates, "It's time," and asked the graduates to stand and move the tassels on their caps.

"You are now officially graduated," said Berg. "I want to congratulate all of the graduates and thank everyone for their attendance. I wish you all the best."

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