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LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY
No. 15 Vol. V \$2 Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca Thursday, April 9, 2026

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Champion

**Pre-orders for May 16
New Richland Garden
Club plant sale**

Pre-Sale orders for the Super-tunias, used by the New Richland Garden Club in the city garden on Hwy 30, are being taken now until Saturday, April 11. These are drought and heat tolerant with continuous bloom through Fall. Four colors are offered this year: pink, Silverberry white, fuschia, and Jazzberry (deep pink). Call Barb at 507-463-3306 to order or with questions. Available for pickup at the annual plant sale Saturday, May 16, at city hall.

**Painting Roulette at
Janesville Public
Library April 9**

Try your hand at this collaborative, interactive art event where you work on shared canvases, passing your work on to the next person every few minutes to create unique pieces in a creative, pressure-free environment at the Janesville Library at 4 p.m. on Thursday, April 9. For ages 13-18.

**Pokemon Terrariums
at New Richland
Public Library April 9**

Create a Pokemon Terrarium at the New Richland Public Library at 4 p.m. on Thursday, April 9. Free and for ages 8-12.

**Soil Water
Conservation District
(SWCD) Board
Meeting April 9**

The SWCD will be holding its monthly board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on April 9. The meetings will be held in the SWCD offices located at 300 N State St. - Door 4.

**Two for One at Indian
Island Winery on
Friday, April 10**

Two for One will perform at the Indian Island Winery from 6-8:30 p.m. on Friday, April 10. A musical duo playing all the favorites.

**St. Paul's Lutheran of
Meridan indoor
garage sale,
homemade soup
luncheon April 10, 11**

An indoor garage sale and soup luncheon will be at the St. Paul Lutheran Church of Meriden from 11 a.m. till 6 p.m. on Friday April 10 and from 8 a.m. till 1 p.m. on Saturday April 11.

**Volunteer Breakfast at
Farmamerica April 10**

There will be a Volunteer Breakfast at Farmamerica from 9 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, April 10. Come enjoy breakfast, chat with staff and fellow volunteers, and learn about the many volunteer opportunities at Farmamerica. This is a free event, but please register at <https://farmamerica.ticketspice.com/volunteer-breakfast>

**Comedy Show at
Starfire Event Center
Friday, April 10**

There will be a Comedy Show at the Starfire Event Center starting at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 10. Tickets in advance are \$20 at Chamber offices, or \$25 at the door.

**A word from
The Word**

*Do not worry
about tomorrow, for
tomorrow will worry
about itself.*

Matthew 6:34

Outstanding Selviks Waseca farmer recognized nationally

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Todd and Meghan Selvik don't quite believe it even yet.

Todd, who was named Waseca County's Outstanding Young Farmer in 2025, is now also among a group of four from across the country named one of the nation's outstanding young farmers.

Outstanding Farmers of America (OFA) is a national organization which works with Extension offices across the country. Based in Tulsa, Oklahoma, it claims more than 1,000 members. Todd and Meghan, along with three other couples, are the organization's "National Outstanding Young Farmers of 2026."

The title was conferred on Feb. 7 at the OFA's annual convention in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

The Selviks explain there is no state-level competition, but there is a rigorous nomination process for the Outstanding Young Farmer (OYFA) award. In fact, any farmers who meet the criteria—being under 40 years of age, having a record of

using progressive methods, and being known for contributions to their community—can be nominated, but not all advance.

In their case, they were nominated by South Central College professor Todd Stencel and encouraged to complete the application by area farmer Scott Hildebrandt, who was a winner of the OYFA "Class of 2002."

The first application was due in June. Later in the summer when they were notified they were among the 20 semifinalists, they were asked to complete an even more detailed form which asked for financial information, as well as descriptions of progressive processes or equipment used in their operation, a list of community service roles, and some of their personal challenges, priorities and goals, all summarized in a document no more than four pages in length.

"It's been a long time since we had to write a paper," jokes Meghan. The second application was due Oct. 31, right in among the de-

mands of harvest season, but "we got it completed and we sent it off," recalls Todd.

They were told finalists would be announced sometime around Nov. 31. When that date came and went with no news, the two say they shrugged their shoulders and decided they were not among the finalists—until news came in mid-December that they were. There had been a delay in the selection process; the Selviks were invited to be in Hershey, Penn., from Feb. 4 to 7.

Meghan, a special education teacher at Hartley Elementary in Waseca, had to request time off. Arrangements had to be made for the care of their three children, Sydney, Ethan, and Olivia, all still in elementary grades, during their absence. Though it required a flurry of adjustments, the two made arrangements to attend, eventually even making separate travel plans in order to be sure all their commit-

Selvik continued on 2



Meghan and Todd Selvik with their children Sydney, Ethan, and Olivia. Todd was selected as one of the nation's Outstanding Young Farmers during a February convention held in Hershey, Pennsylvania.



Joining the fun at the Easter Egg Hunt at Clear Lake Park on Saturday, April 4, 2026, were area royalty Miss South Central Teen Lexie Kiefer, Miss Waseca County Sleigh and Cutter Jasmin Kotek, Jen Burt, Molly Conway, Miss Sleigh and Cutter Teen Ariel Anhalt, and Miss Owatonna Maura Erickson.



Clear Lake Park was full of children and families on Saturday, April 4, 2026, with consecutive Easter Egg Hunts staged for children of different ages.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Land of 10,000 eggs Hundreds attend Clear Lake Park hunt

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Clear Lake Easter Egg Hunt took place over a chilly and windy Saturday, April 4. The thermometer indicated a temperature of 36 degrees, but if the cold bothered the little ones, they didn't show it as they ran, jumped, screamed and laughed while gathering up little plastic multicolored eggs scattered throughout the park.

Event organizers Molly Conway and Jen Burt were on hand supervising the activity. Said Conway, "We have around 10,000 eggs here today and lots of little children to help us clean them up. The kids are itching to get started but we're on a schedule, 11 a.m. is for kids ages 0 to 3, 11:10 is for kids 4 to 6 and 11:20 is for kids 7 to 10. We have empty totes scattered around the park for those parents who don't want to take the plastic eggs home, and don't worry, we can use them again."

The children were allowed to grab 10 eggs on their first run, then take a break for a few minutes so every child could get at least 10. Once everyone got their chance, the kids were allowed to

grab as many as they wanted. The majority of the eggs were filled with candy, but thanks to donations, some of the eggs had strips of paper in them naming specific prizes which could be picked up. At the baseball field were prizes including kites, basketball sets, painting sets, makeup kits, a pottery set, and more. Said Conway, "Thanks to donations from Keen Bank, Minnwest Bank, Katie Gonzales (State Farm), and the Sleigh and Cutter Festival, those children lucky enough to find the lucky eggs got prizes instead of candy." There was a line leading up to the baseball stands with parents lifting their kids up, prize paper in hand to claim their prizes.

Conway continued, "We want to say thanks to Jasmine Kotek; she's a teacher at Faribault Middle School. Her students helped to fill all of these eggs for today and she deserves credit because we couldn't have done it without her." Local celebrities Miss Sleigh and Cutter Teen, Ariel Anhalt and Miss South Central Teen, Lexie Kiefer were there wrapped in their winter gear, smiling and trying to stay warm.

Waseca Chamber honors 4-Seasons Athletics for five decades of business

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors celebrated 50 years of business for 4 Seasons Athletics on April 1st, recognizing the company's long-standing commitment to the Waseca community.

4 Seasons Athletics was founded in April 1976 by Tom and Cindy Piche, who opened the store with a vision of providing high-quality sporting goods at affordable prices for local athletes and families. From the very beginning, they made community involvement a priority, supporting local schools, teams, businesses, and organizations. Early on, they also recognized a need for custom apparel and expanded the

business to include screen printing and custom clothing, which quickly became a major part of their services.

Over the next 37 years, the business grew into a well-known local store offering sporting equipment, team uniforms, school apparel, custom screen printing and embroidery, letter jackets, and team gear. The store built long-standing relationships with area vendors and became known for supplying local school teams and community organizations. Through word-of-mouth, local advertising, and sponsorships of local

4-Seasons continued on 2



HALF CENTURY CLUB - The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors celebrated 50 years of business for 4-Seasons Athletics on April 1, 2026. Pictured, back row from left: Diane Beckmann, Tiffany Lynch, Kevin Walter, Bernie Gaytko, Tom Sankovitz, and Larry Johnson. Front: Ambassador Chair Katie Gonzales, Kristie Biehn, Travis, Heather and Tenley Blake, and Theresa Sunde.



Compostings

by Al Batt

Michigan Bluebird Society Spring Festival

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS’ CLUB MEETING
Grandpa, can you make the sound of a frog?

I could do that, but why?
Because Mom says when you croak, we’re going to Disney World.

DRIVING BY BRUCE’S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. It was 43°. At least it wasn’t 42°. It was so nice that another neighbor had stopped swearing at the weather report. I was driving down the highway, moving at the speed limit, yet traveling faster than most people in history had ever traveled.

I led tours to Costa Rica. We ate beans and rice for most meals. That’s not completely true. Sometimes we ate rice and beans. I washed it down with fruit. Pineapple gives every meal a shine.

I spoke at the Michigan Bluebird Society’s Spring Bluebird Festival in Ann Arbor recently. I met with a long-time friend from Ohio for breakfast at a Bob Evans restaurant. The eatery had a comfortable red-barn vibe and a value menu. We had no beans or rice. The food was great and the company was better.

I watched a man on a moving sidewalk in the Detroit airport hold hands with a woman walking on the stationary floor alongside the conveyor system. He took few steps while she took many on the shared journey. He exited the travelator in a sweet synchronization with her walk. They continued holding hands as they proceeded to the next walk. I don’t know the backstory, but I’ll bet it was a dandy.

I’VE LEARNED
Dick Van Dyke, the legendary actor and comedian, turned 100 on December 13. The beloved performer credits his remarkable longevity to his positive outlook and never getting angry.

The Yankees’ Aaron Judge became the first reigning MLB Most Valuable Player to strike out four times in an Opening Day game. I hope he maintained a positive attitude and avoided anger.

I talked early in my life. My first word was charcuterie, but nobody knew what that meant.

My Very Elegant Mother Just Sat Upon Nine Porcupines. That phrase was a classic mnemonic device used to remember the order of the planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto) from the Sun. The first letter of each word corresponded to the first letter of a planet. Then Pluto was demoted. Now it’s My Very Educated Mother

Just Served Us Noodles.

WalletHub compared the 50 states across 40 key indicators of stress that ranged from average hours worked per week to the personal bankruptcy rate to the share of adults getting adequate sleep. Louisiana, Kentucky and New Mexico are the most stressed. The least stressed states are South Dakota, Utah and Minnesota. Iowa is the 41st most stressed state. <https://wallethub.com/edu/most-stressful-states/32218>

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT
What do you call an elephant the circus no longer needs? Irrelephant.

I was proud of my cultural heritage until I found out that my great-grandfather was from Transylvania. Now I can’t even look at myself in the mirror.

I’m frightened by random letters.

UR?
Stop it!
IC.

NATURE NOTES
I saw oak and ironwood trees clinging to their dead, brown leaves. This retention of dead plant matter is called marcescence. The new spring growth eventually dislodges these dead leaves.

I watched a wild turkey tom strut around, trying to impress hens. He thought he was all that because he had a bourbon named after him. Wild Turkey is a brand of Kentucky straight bourbon whiskey produced in, oddly enough, Kentucky. The tom shook his fanned tail because he was a mover and a shaker. A wild turkey can run up to 25 mph and fly 55 mph. How smart is a turkey? It depends on who is giving the test. Their algebra skills are lacking.

I love hearing the chickadee call its name. That’s an onomatopoeic name. Other birds that do that include the killdeer, eastern phoebe, eastern wood-peewee, eastern whip-poor-will, Chuck-will’s-widow and northern bobwhite. An imagination like one used to name the constellations is helpful in hearing what words a bird is saying, even if it doesn’t know it’s speaking our language. The blue jay calls “jay” and some human ears insist a crow says “crow” instead of “caw.”

Rooster pheasants might be heard crowing throughout the day all year round, but mostly at dawn and dusk in spring and summer. A rapid beating of the wings often follows a rooster’s loud crow. Roosters tend to cackle when they fly. It seems to me they crow more frequently when the skies are clear, and there’s little or no wind.

MEETING ADJOURNED
Make life easier for others. Be kind.

‘You’re in the right place’

The weather on Saturday was chilly, and the cloud cover seemed especially thick.

Fortunately, my plans did not include much, or frankly any time outdoors, so I proceeded with the errands and destinations of the day, essentially ignoring the weather. After all, it was neither threatening nor inviting, and I had little motivation to pay it any attention.

It was with delighted surprise, then, when I noticed a short section of a long line of trees up ahead of me was being shined upon as though with a gigantic spotlight, suddenly looking a bit less like winter and a whole lot more like spring.

A quick glance skyward did not show any significant breaks in the cloud cover, yet one had clearly occurred. There, as though specially arranged to remind me that nothing about nature is ever truly “ordinary,” a section of maybe eight trees suddenly showed the tiny hint of green that appears



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

when leaves start to make their first appearance along the branches.

The beam of light did not seem to touch anywhere else. Other than the illumination, there was nothing to distinguish the chosen trees from the other 20 or more members of the line.

Yet the change the light brought caused me to draw in my breath with delight.

There were no other cars on the road at the time; if there was a message, it was for me alone.

During the 20 to 30 seconds the illumination—and my elevated perspective—continued, I speculated what the message might be.

Perhaps I was meant to realize “God is in the details.” That by having my attention focused on this small set of trees I was being encouraged to recognize that what I had dismissed as ordinary and uninteresting is instead part of a mural of wonders I had taken for granted only because the wonders are constant and are always developing.

Maybe the message was that I should slow down—that my usual status of dashing from place to place has me overlooking what’s right in front of my eyes.

It could be the light was the message. Even when the clouds seem thick and threatening, we

should be receptive to unexpected “enlightenment.”

Perhaps it was simple encouragement. “You’re in the right place, doing something worthwhile. Keep up the good work.”

Of course, it may also have been pure chance—I, and a beam of light from the heavens, simply happened to be in the same place for a few moments.

But that spontaneous, delighted intake of breath removed any element of chance. My spirit was lifted, my perspective was widened, my mood was made brighter, and that beam of light had me focused on the moment and the view around me. I remember looking quickly from side to side, confirming that nowhere else within sight were the trees being made green and vibrant. No circles of light were falling on the fields around me.

Whether there was a message or not, beauty imposed itself, and that was message enough.

Easter Olympics in sunny California

I was fortunate enough to spend the weekend in California to celebrate Easter with my boyfriend Jack’s family.

His family hails from northern California, in a small farming town about an hour and a half north of Sacramento. The town his mother grew up in, Willows, is just slightly smaller than Waseca, so it felt like home. Jack’s grandfather started and continues to run a large walnut farm. Their farm is probably the biggest farm I’ve had the pleasure of seeing.

They have a two-story office building alongside the road, and large buildings filled with shellers, and whatever else, nearby. Driving down the road to Jack’s grandma’s house, where we stayed, groves of walnut and almond trees lined the road and just kept going. It was really cool to see.

We flew into the Sacramento airport on Friday evening, and drove the way to the farm. Along the way, Jack’s mom pointed out things for me, the tourist who had never been to California before this trip. The mountain range to the left, the Sacramento River, and the Sutter Buttes on the right (which I learned is the smallest mountain range in North America



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

and often nicknamed the “world’s smallest mountain range”).

On Saturday, we woke up early to get to the most important thing — the golf tournament. Every Easter, Jack’s large family gets together for what is called the “Hank Open,” named after his grandma’s brother, who loved to golf there. I was told he even planted half of the trees on the course.

It had been years since I golfed, and while some rust stayed, it was fun to get the golf joints swinging again. Everyone in the family drew from a deck to see which hole they would start on, and which team they would be on. Jack and I got placed with one of his cousins and some cousins of his mom. It was a lot of fun, and while I did not play my best game of golf, it was super fun to get to know his family while being outside in the California sun. We didn’t win, but we played best ball,

and they used mine twice (meaning I was good twice!).

Golf was followed by a delicious lunch and then naptime. Dinner was in their town with Jack’s aunt and uncle and their kids, and then the after party was at a great-aunt and uncle’s house to join the rest of the crew — everyone from golf that morning was there, filling the large house with talk, laughter, and good dessert.

Sunday was Easter, so I was able to go to Easter mass for the first time in years. Usually my family is camping (they went to Whitewater State Park in Wisconsin this year) so we aren’t able to make it to church. The church was packed, but there was no piano, so two lovely ladies were singing the hymns for all to hear. After mass was brunch and appetizer making before we headed off to the main event of the weekend: the Herbie Games.

Herbie Games was named after Jack’s grandfather and involves an Olympic-style set of games where the whole family competes. You travel through five different sports: basketball, soccer, throwing a football through a tire, putting, and frisbee. Kids through grandparents take turns doing their best to score the most points. Needless to say, I did not do the best, but there is a rule where you can’t win your first year there, so next year I’m going to dominate for sure. At least I beat Jack’s score this year, so I came home with a win in my heart.

It was a lot of fun to compete and see the family interact and just enjoy being with each other. Turns out there are a lot of relatives who live in Colorado, which is pretty neat. Then, of course, was the egg hunt for the kiddos and dinner, where we all stuffed our bellies full of delicious foods and desserts.

And now back to Denver and the daily grind. I hope everyone had a great Easter weekend, hopefully spent with their families.

My Determination: “We are very busy bringing joy to children, we don’t have time...” — Rise of the Guardians

WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

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

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■ 4-Seasons

from Page 1

sports and events, the business became a staple in downtown Waseca’s small business community.

In August 2013, after 37 years in business, Tom and Cindy Piche sold 4 Seasons Athletics to lifelong

Waseca residents Jeremiah and Jaala Miller. The Millers continued the tradition of serving local schools, youth sports, and community organizations while modernizing the business by updating the website, expanding social media, and growing digital ordering and custom apparel services.

Today, 4 Seasons Athletics is owned and operated by Heather and Travis Blake, who purchased the business on April 1, 2025. The busi-

ness continues to operate as a sporting goods store, custom apparel and embroidery shop, and screen printing and promotional products provider. They produce a wide variety of custom items including hats, shirts, jackets, team uniforms, business apparel, and tackle twill and embroidery products. The business also retails Waseca-themed apparel and team gear, continuing its long tradition of serving schools, teams, busi-

nesses, clubs, and organizations throughout the area.

The Waseca Chamber Ambassadors are proud to celebrate 50 years of 4 Seasons Athletics and thank them for their continued investment and dedication to the Waseca community.

To learn more about 4 Seasons Athletics, find them at <https://www.4seasonsathletics.com/> or on Facebook or call 507-835-5267

■ Selvik

from Page 1

ments at home were met.

One of the first activities for OYF candidates, Todd describes, was a personal interview with OFA board members and other representatives. “It was really relaxed,” he says of the session. “Actually more of a conversation than an interview.” With ten candidate couples taking their turns, the process required most of the first day. “I was really glad I was scheduled early,” he says, mentioning that he was third among the ten, “It’s tough to talk about yourself.”

After that, finalists participated in convention activities, including farm tours, factory tours, educational sessions, and gatherings.

“We were kept together,” Meghan says of the finalists, “so we got to know each other and learn about each others’ operations.”

“They were a really impressive

group, and some neat people,” she recalls. “I feel like we really connected. We even still have a message group.”

Todd speculates that was the intent. “They want us all to build rapport,” he observes. “It helps build a sort of national community.”

Both remember being impressed by the diversity among the operations run by their fellow candidates, who were from the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming. The Wyoming operation, for example, included growing large amounts of vegetables in greenhouses.

“They were all family based and goal oriented,” Meghan says of the group. “They each had their own types of hurdles to overcome.” She admits to being so impressed, she couldn’t help wondering a few times how Todd and she ended up among them.

During the convention’s closing banquet, slide shows were shown to the full gathering describing the op-

erations run by and challenges of each of the candidates. The slide shows were made using photos supplied by the participants; candidates had watched them together earlier in the week.

Afterwards, the “Class of 2026” members were announced one by one, with the state they were from being among the first pieces of information mentioned.

“We were all set to sit in our seats and listen,” says Todd. “We didn’t expect to be chosen.”

Three other Class members had been announced when Meghan remembers hearing the words “from Minnesota.”

“I had to look at the screen to be sure,” she recalls. “I didn’t quite believe I had heard it correctly.”

But sure enough, she had, and Todd ended up behind the microphone. His comments, he recalls, “were completely spontaneous,” and included statements of thanks to his family and Meghan, as well as gratitude for the many blessings and opportunities which have been part

of his life as a farmer.

Todd says he is grateful for the recognition, excitement and future opportunities which come with being a member of the OFA Class of 2026, but overall the experience was “humbling. I’m one of a lot of people out here working hard, doing good things, and making contributions... We are extremely thankful for all of our family and friends. They have provided support over the years and they continue to provide help and guidance every day.” The whole experience was practically surreal, Meghan recalls, since the next day they returned home, picked up the children, and went back to their usual routine. A plaque arrived a few weeks later in the mail.

The next day, Todd was carrying through on his role as the president of the Minnesota Pork Board and Producers Association, heading up the organization’s annual convention, attended by about 1,500, in Mankato.



Jessica and Julie accepting donations during the memorial volleyball tournament.



Waseca Fusion-Losen (12U silver bracket, silver winners)

Tournament memorializes Jocelynn Passon

Submitted

Waseca Fusion JO Volleyball had a memorable weekend hosting our third annual Jocelynn Passon Memorial Tournament on Saturday, March 28 and Sunday, March 29 at the Waseca Intermediate School.

Jocelynn Passon, age 12, of Waseca, died on Friday, August 4, 2023 from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. Jocelynn, the daughter of Steve and Jessica (St John) Passon, was a girly girl who loved everything from fishing to fashion. She was a natural athlete and was good at everything she tried. Her love of volleyball took over after her first season of playing.

This was Waseca Fusion's first year adding the 12U division, and the entire tournament was a huge success. We welcomed a total of 14 teams from Waseca, St Charles, Adams, NRHEG, St Clair, Northfield, and Kasson.

The 14U competition took place March 28. We did have a few teams drop out because of the boys' state tournament, but it was still a great day! St Charles Heat took gold and Waseca Fusion-Hoehn took silver.

On March 29, our 12U division competed. In the gold bracket, Waseca Fusion-Wangen went undefeated to take gold and Southern Stars 12U took silver. In the silver bracket, KVBC 12-1 took gold and Waseca Fusion-Losen took silver.

Jocelynn's family attended the tournament and had a table display set up with in memory of Jocelynn. Jessica Passon, Jocelynn's mother, and Julie St Peter, Jocelynn's grandmother, volunteered their time working the tournament.

Funds raised from the event support scholarships for graduating seniors who competed with Waseca Fusion throughout their high school careers.



Waseca Fusion-Hoehn (14U silver winners)



Waseca Fusion-Wangen (12U gold bracket, gold winners)

Free Children's Painting Class at Waseca Art Center Saturday, April 11

Free Children's Hummingbird Painting Class at the Waseca Art Center from 10 a.m. through noon on Saturday, April 11. Taught by artist Peggy Paulson, pre-registration is required; sign up online at Waseca Art Center website.

Category 5 at Boxcar Bar on April 11

Category 5 will perform at the Boxcar Bar from 8:30 p.m.-12:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 11. They play all the favorites in a variety of music.

Pancake Breakfast at Waldorf Community Center April 12

The Waldorf Peppy Peppers 4-H Club is having their second annual pancake breakfast from 7 a.m. through noon on Sunday, April 12. This is open to the public with free-will donations accepted. Serving pancakes, eggs, sausage, juice and coffee.

Bridal Show at the Mill Event Center on Sunday, April 12

A Bridal Show at the Mill Event Center will begin at 11 a.m. on Sunday, April 12. Vendors will be present from all around the southern Minnesota area. Swag bags to the first 25 brides through the door.

St. John and Grace Lutheran Nashville Music Cafe April 12

There will be a youth group mission trip fundraiser care of St. John and Grace Lutheran Churches from 3-5 p.m. on Sunday, April 12. Cover charge \$10, \$5 for students, kids 5 and under free. Dessert and refreshments available. Grace Lutheran is located at 3rd and Elm in Waseca.

Local sixth-grader garners win at national archery event

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Young Waseca archer Wanli Chen, 11, took first place in his "cub" division at the U.S. "SuperBowl of Archery" in Las Vegas on March 28, winning a hefty medal and a \$1,000 scholarship toward his future college education.

Archery is something of a family tradition among the Chens. Parents Fei and Dong have four sons: Kevin, 23; Kyle, 22; Jack, 19, and Wanli. Both Kevin and Jack were also archers and members of the Waseca Archery Club, with Kevin having won some titles and now helping coach his youngest brother. Also offering guidance and training are club founder Rick Rugroden and youth coach Aaron Hanson.

Wanli says his fascination with archery began when he was five or so, watching his brothers as they practiced and competed. When he was old enough, at age 7, to join the archery club, he continued to consider the elements of form and technique. "I like it that it takes time to get better at it," he comments. "When it starts to happen, it's really satisfying to see those arrows hit the middle of the target."

Rugroden and Hanson explain that typical distance to the target in youth archery competitions is 10 yards; at Las Vegas it was 20 yards. Not only that, but taking part in an event which draws thousands of archers from all over the world, navigating large crowds and unfamiliar locations, and concentrating on form and marksmanship despite the many distractions were all elements which needed to be overcome to be successful.

Hanson says Wanli shows impressive focus as a young archer, practicing faithfully both on his own and during weekly team sessions. "He's super hard-working and willing to put in extra time," he says. "He asks good questions, and really picks up on input from his coaches, applying what they tell him to his own form and style."

Wanli attributes his consistency to his devotion to practice and his coaches' advice. He mentions he also likes to watch online videos of nationally successful professional archers and learn from what he sees of their style.

Success under pressure, he says, is achieved just



Wanli Chen, 11, took first place in the Cub Freestyle division at the nationally known Las Vegas Archery Shoot on March 27. Along with the title came a \$1,000 scholarship toward his future education.

the way he's been advised: "When you shoot a bad arrow, you don't think about it," he says. "You concentrate on the next arrow." The most important contributor to success, he declares, is skill which comes from practice and consistency. But now and then, "what feels like it was a bad arrow still goes the way you wanted it to."

As for the activity and distraction at Las Vegas, he says he didn't really notice it. "I was looking at the target," he says. He says he was also encouraged by the results of his first practice round in Las Vegas, where he managed a perfect 150 out of 150.

Regarding how he felt when he was announced as the winner of his division, his best answer is to give a triumphant gesture.

Another highlight for Wanli in Las Vegas was mingling with many of the nation's top archers, professionals who compete all over the country and win prizes of \$10,000 and more. He was able to get the signatures of many of his personal role models on a baseball cap he acquired at the event and wore throughout the competition. Pointing at

Chen continued on 6

WASECA SCHOOL BOARD

Board talks '26-27 levy, next meeting April 16

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

During the April 2 school board workshop held at Waseca Intermediate School (WIS), board members heard from several students and staff highlighting recent winter activities at the high school; students Sadie and Maren Schimming spoke about choir and girls' basketball respectively while high school band director Devon Lawrence, head gymnastics coach Kim Wendland, and boys' basketball coach Seth Anderson said a few words about each of their programs.

Superintendent Eric Hudspeth gave the results of the technology audit recently completed by an outside firm. Hudspeth said it was a good report in general, and included several suggestions for future system updates.

Business Manager Andrew Adams reported that he and Hudspeth were beginning work on the preliminary budget for school year 2026-2027.

The next meeting will be back at the Central Building on April 16.

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OBITUARIES

Shirley Ann Milbrett

Shirley Ann Milbrett, age 89, of Janesville passed away on Monday, March 30, 2026 at Whispering Creek in Janesville.

Born on May 2, 1936, in Madelia, Minnesota, Shirley was the daughter of Walter and Erna (Kietzer) Mrotz. She graduated from Janesville High School with the class of 1954. On June 7, 1955, she was united in marriage to Harold Lee Milbrett at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Together they built a life rooted in love, family, and hard work. They first made their home in Lewisville before moving in 1962 to their farm in rural Waseca. In the early 1990s, following Harold's retirement, they moved into Janesville.

Shirley devoted her life to caring for her family and home. A quiet and gentle person, she found her greatest joy in spending time with her family, friends, and especially her grandchildren, whom she loved dearly. She also enjoyed tending her yard and garden, and she was especially talented in cooking, baking, canning, and sewing. In her free time, she enjoyed playing solitaire and bridge, bowling, dancing to polka music, and expressing her creativity through oil painting. Shirley was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church, where she enjoyed quilting and participating in Ladies Aid. She also cherished the time she spent hunting and fishing with Harold.

She is survived by her children, Steven (Linda) Milbrett of Brice-



Shirley Milbrett

lyn, Mark (Patricia) Milbrett of Waseca, Shawn (Jay) Woychick of Penfield, NY, Keevin (Cindy) Milbrett of Albion, and Michele Milbrett of Duluth; sister, Joyce Thomas of Pensacola, FL; nineteen grandchildren, thirty-five great grandchildren, four great great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Harold Milbrett; son, Gerald Milbrett; grandson, Matthew Milbrett; parents, Walter and Erna Mrotz; siblings, Donald Mrotz and Doris Herrig; and daughters-in-law, Angelika Milbrett and Traci Neid-Milbrett.

Funeral service for Shirley were at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Visitation was held two hours prior to the service at the church. Burial was at St. John Trinity Lutheran Cemetery in Iosco Township, Waseca County.

Doris Beckmann

Doris Maxine Beckmann, age 100, of Waseca County, MN, passed away peacefully surrounded by love on March 29, 2026. She was born on June 12, 1925, in Waseca County, MN, to Clarence H. Fredrickson and Eva R. (Corner) Fredrickson. Doris lived a remarkable life spanning 100 years, 9 months, and 17 days, filled with devotion to family, faith, and simple joys.

On February 24, 1945, Doris was united in marriage to Herbert Manville Beckmann. Together they built a loving home and shared many cherished years until Herbert's passing on November 2, 2010.

Doris was blessed with five daughters: Charlene (David) Chevalier of Henderson, MN; Valerie (Randy) Giles of Graceville, MN; Kayla (Burchard) Root of New Richland, MN; Eileen (Clifford) Borchert of Waseca, MN; and Jolene Otterson of Albert Lea, MN.

Doris found joy in life's simple pleasures. She loved tending to flowers, cooking meals for her family, reading, watching westerns, and most of all, spending time with those she loved. Her home was always filled with warmth, laughter, and the comforting presence of family.

She is lovingly survived by her five daughters; 15 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren; and 4



Doris Beckmann

great-great-grandchildren, along with many extended family members and friends who will cherish her memory.

Doris was preceded in death by her parents, Clarence and Eva; her husband, Herbert; her siblings; and her son-in-law, Dean Otterson.

Doris will be remembered for her kindness, strength, and deep love for her family. Her legacy lives on through the generations she nurtured and the lives she touched. She will be dearly missed and forever held in the hearts of those who loved her.

In lieu of flowers, memorials will be donated to Royal Villa in New Richland, MN, where she lived for 22 years.

Patti Ann Tesch

Patti Ann Tesch of Waseca, MN passed away peacefully at her home, surrounded by her loving family on April 6, 2026.

The daughter of John and Mabel (Schwarz) Steck, she was born in Waseca, MN on October 7, 1963. She grew up in Waseca, where she attended Waseca schools and graduated in 1982. Following high school, she continued her education at Mankato Technical College, earning an associate's degree in accounting. She returned to college while building her career at Brown Printing, balancing work, studies, and caring for her family; earning her bachelor's degree from Southwest State College. She remained in her role through the transition to Quad Graphics, and when the business closed, she moved into a position as an IT Analyst with Wenger Corporation.

On August 4, 1984, she married her high school sweetheart, Curtis Tesch, at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca. The couple continued to

make their home in Waseca, where they built their life together and raised their family. Patti became a member of St. John Lutheran Church, where she shared her love of music by accompanying the Children's Choir and singing with the Senior Choir and the Glory Singers.

Patti loved nothing more than spending time with her family. She enjoyed fishing and the fish fries that followed; but when it came to ice fishing, she was more than happy to sit that one out. She had a deep love for the Christmas season, delighting in baking all kinds of treats that became family favorites year after year. She hosted memorable Christmas Eve gatherings and wrote holiday letters that captured the heart of her family's year with warmth and charm.

Alongside her husband, she cherished days on the golf course and at the bowling alley, turning each outing into a playful challenge to see who would come out on top. On their leisurely bike rides, they enjoyed cruising side by side; but once she got her e-bike, she delighted in

playfully zooming ahead, knowing he couldn't keep up. She also had a passion for puzzles, playing the piano, singing, and crocheting, creating countless handmade gifts for her family over the years.

Patti was a kind, gentle, and humble woman whose warmth touched everyone who knew her. Her love for life, family, and simple joys left a bright mark on everyone around her. She will live on in the hearts of all who knew her.

She will be lovingly remembered by her husband, Curtis; sons, Brian and Jason; brother, Douglas (Lynn) Steck, parents-in-law, Russell and Marie Tesch; sisters-in-law, Lisa (Bob) Nordman and Kathleen (Roger) Blake; her grand dog, Jordy; along with nieces, nephews, extended family, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

A funeral service will be held on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at St John Lutheran Church in Waseca, MN; Pastor Ashley Kuhlman will officiate. Patti's family will greet guests at a visitation held on Tues-



Patti Ann Tesch

day, April 14, 2026, from 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM at the State Street Chapel of the Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca, MN and one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial will be at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca, MN.



The Sons of the American Legion put on another all-you-can-eat fish fry on Friday, April 3, 2026. From left:Denny Hoehn, Andy Graupman, Randy Prange, Wes Ruedy, Bruce Tappe, Ed Hoehn, Roger Atwood and Doug Knoll, Sons of the Legion one and all! Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Legion fish fry goes swimmingly

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Waseca American Legion hosted an all you can eat fish fry the evening of Friday, April 3. The Sons of the American Legion, organizers of the event, were working together swimmingly and kept the fish flowing freely. Around 150 diners came through their doors, including some drawn over from the meat raffle on the tavern side of the building.

Members of the Sons of the American Legion explained they sponsor fish fry meals every Friday during Lent. Earlier in the day there was a celebration of life at the tavern side, so there were people coming and going all day. In fact, many found it

necessary to stand to the side in the hallway when entering the building so customers carrying their food and beverage purchases could pass by on their way out.

In the ballroom where the fish was being served, Tom Hindt was taking tickets and directing people where to go. He commented, "We've got a great team with the Sons of the Legion. I think it's safe to call them the A-team because when we need a job done, they can always be depended on." Hindt needed a moment to give tickets to people who had just walked in, he said his greeting and politely got them started before he continued, "The Sons do so much good work, they are just amazing."

Over at the kitchen counter, Roger Atwood was taking orders and handing people their food. Atwood said, "We got beer battered cod fish tonight, I think it's always the same."

He grabbed a basket and handed it to a woman who found her table. Hindt added, "We've had a really good turnout today, it's such a big help, all proceeds go to the Legion."



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April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6pm Bar Bingo	2 7pm BINGO	3 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	4
5	6	7 Burger Night 5-7 pm	8 6pm Bar Bingo	9 7pm BINGO	10 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	11
12 Breakfast VFW 8:00am to noon Your Host Sheriff's Posse	13 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	14 Burger Night 5-7 pm	15 6pm Bar Bingo	16 7pm BINGO	17 Walleye Dinner 5-7 pm	18
19	20	21 Burger Night 5-7 pm	22 6pm Bar Bingo	23 7pm BINGO	24 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	25
26 Breakfast VFW 8:00am to noon Waseca Care Givers	27	28 Burger Night 5-7 pm	29 6pm Bar Bingo	30 7pm BINGO		

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Spy School at Waldorf Public Library on Wednesday, April 15

Do you have what it takes to be a spy? Based on the Stuart Gibbs book series, you will test your spy abilities through a series of puzzles and obstacles at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 15. For ages 7-12.

Jigsaw Puzzle Derby at Waseca Public Library April 15

Assemble a team of up to 4 players to compete in a jigsaw puzzle competition at the Waseca Library at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, April 15. The first team to complete the puzzle wins a prize! Registration required.

Name Pennants at New Richland Public Library April 16

Learn simple crafting techniques for creating custom-made name pennants, perfect for decorating your room or locker the New Richland Library at 4 p.m. Thursday, April 16. For ages 13-18.

Mother-Daughter Book Club at Waseca Publice Library Thursday, April 16

Geared for girls in grades 3-6 and a significant adult female to be discussed at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 16.

Grace Lutheran Church Salad Luncheon April 17

The Grace Lutheran Church Women of the ELCA will be serving a salad luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, April 17. Cost is \$9. Menu includes salads, rolls, bars and coffee, with take-out meals available. Grace Lutheran is at 300 Elm Avenue East in Waseca.

Pillow Cleaning at Sacred Heart Parish, April 18

A professional pillow cleaning service will be available from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 18 at the Sacred Heart Church Parish Center in Waseca. Enter through the East door. Prices based on size of pillow: \$14.95 to \$17.95. Additional feathers or down available; new pillows available to buy.

CredibleMind offers free mental health resources

All area residents are eligible to use free online access to mental health resources available at MNPrairie’s “CredibleMind” website.

The site offers interactive, evidence-based ways to explore local and national mental well-being resources. Free and anonymous at www.mnprairie.crediblemind.com

Waldorf Veterans Memorial Fund Drive

Donations are requested to support the construction of the Waldorf Veterans Memorial. Checks written to WVMP Fund Drive can be mailed to WVMP Fund Drive; Judy Joecks, treasurer; P.O. Box 55; Waldorf, MN 56091. Questions can be directed to Charlie Barnes at (763) 286-2246.

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Starfire Event Center sale features array of vendors

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

A light snow was beginning to fall during the Spring Craft Show at the Starfire Event Center on Saturday, April 4. But inside there was a soft yellow glow from above and a warm atmosphere from more than 20 vendors greeting those in attendance.

Among those with booths were PermaLinx JBloom Designs offering permanent jewelry—a type of jewelry that is put on with permanence in mind. For example, there are certain bracelets that are locked on to do away with clasps and hooks, leaving the bracelet on permanently. MC Laser Hobby and Craft had laser cut creations in wood and other objects like mugs, home décor, door hangers and porch leaners. Grandma Sady’s Closet offered tasty treats like pretzels, salsa, jellies and much more. Prime Sauce Co. out of Mankato carried sauces and seasonings, dry rubs and hot sauces made by owners Michael and Karen Young.

Jenn Anderson out of Waseca has been doing trade shows with the L’Bri Pure and Natural line. She’s been selling makeup and washes for six years out of trade shows and online sales and said, “I think I’ve learned a lot over the years and love talking about it.” DJ Homecraft out of Owatonna can be found every Saturday at the Farmers Market in Owatonna.

Paur’s Pantry was interesting because the whole table was filled with chocolate and sea salt flavored balls. Nicole Paur operates out of Springfield, Minnesota and she’s been selling around for about a year. “I wanted to make things from



Johnny Frost and the Heatseekers, pictured here at a different venue, performed at the Indian Island Winery the evening of Saturday, April 4, 2026.

Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

scratch from home. I saw lots of sour dough out there and I wanted to make something different. I started out with salted caramel, then on to cream filling, then homemade caramels. After that it was cake pops for grad parties and for different events.” She pointed to sample bowls at the head of the table and insisted, “Please take a few, I’ve been giving these out since I started in November of 2025. I’ve sold in Springfield, Waseca, St. Peter, and Sleepy Eye.”

Mod Bath was also there, field marketing manager Kelli was ready, willing and able to share information about the company’s services. “Our goal is to inform homeowners to know they deserve the same care and service. We focus on delivering exceptional bathroom remodel experiences beyond the big city. Exceptional bathrooms built for every community, big city quality, small town service.”



Blake Ogram of Eden Prairie

‘On a Mission’ highlights women in space

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

To help close out Women’s History Month, the Waseca LeSueur Library system gave an online interview for the book, “On a Mission: The History of US Women Astronauts” with Smithsonian Curator Emerita Valerie Neal on Thursday, April 2. The interview was hosted by podcaster and librarian Brandon Adler.

Neal began with the observation, “I’m here today to talk about US women astronauts. I want to say in advance that women astronauts’ stories are less well known than men’s. I’m not meaning to be disrespectful to men at all. In fact, women astronauts are very insistent that they be known simply as ‘astronauts.’ Because they were never separate, they were always in the mix with men. The job was the same regardless if they were a man or a woman.”

Neal’s presentation provided information including: There were no women astronauts until 1978. Out of 287 astronauts, 61 have been women, with 6 additional women currently in training. The first time there were four women in space was in 2010, on the International Space Station.

Said Neal, “There were engineering schools that wouldn’t admit women because they thought the curriculum was too tough and they thought the women would drop out or get married or they would never become engineers. There were beliefs about women’s suitability about doing anything dangerous or risky. That women were to be protected and there was a gallantry in that, but it was also limiting.”

But as time progressed and technology advanced, more options for

women became available, continued Neal, “The space shuttle was important because it was a larger spacecraft that could accommodate more people onboard than the Mercury, Apollo and Gemini spacecraft that could only carry 1, 2 or 3 people, always men, and it was a tight capsule where people were in each other’s presence all the time. They sat shoulder to shoulder in the seats; they didn’t have much room outside the seats. They did everything together, they slept together, ate together, they went to the restroom together, there was no privacy at all in those capsules. So, no one could imagine a woman being in there with them.”

Besides her own book, Valerie



Neal

Neal also recommended “Nobody’s Girl” by Virginia Giuffrè, which she said she read because “I kept hearing about the Epstein stuff because it’s always in the news, so I thought I should be better informed.”

Valerie Neal is a space historian and former curator at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington DC. Before joining the Museum, she was a writer and editor for some 25 NASA publications on Space Shuttle and Space-lab missions, the Hubble Space Telescope and other Great Observatories, space science, and NASA History. She participated in underwater astronaut training in Alabama and mission support in Houston for four space shuttle missions. She has taught American Studies and writing courses at a number of universities. Valerie Neal holds Ph.D. and M.A. degrees in American Studies and a B.A. degree in English and History.

Johnny Frost and the Heatseekers rock Indian Island Winery

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Johnny Frost and the Heatseekers performed at the Indian Island Winery on Saturday, March 5. Armed with three guitars, one of them a bass guitar, and another man on drums, these four dudes were setting up their equipment, and one of them agreed to talk.

Paul Knutson, the guy with the long gray beard, was grabbing lights. He said, “It’s been a little over a year since we spoke to the Waseca County Pioneer.” He bent over to grab the lights, then he remembered he also needed the speaker set up, then continued. “Not a lot has changed for us this past year, the same members doing what we do has been the case. We have added a few songs, and we started attending car shows, and from that we’ve added some car songs to our catalog.” He was referring to Unique Auto in Waterville and the Hot Summer Nights celebrations. “We’ll also be playing at Barney’s in Waseca on July 4 of this year over the fireworks display on Clear Lake and we’re really looking forward to that.” They are also regular performers out at the Indian Island Winery.

A few of the car songs the guys have added are, “Hot Rod Lincoln,” “Hot Rod Man,” “Race with the Devil” and “No Particular Place to Go.” Online they describe themselves as: “We are a roots



Johnny Frost and the Heatseekers performed at the Indian Island Winery in the evening of Saturday, April 4, 2026.

rock/Rockabilly/blues band. We cover standards such as “Rock Around the Clock” to “Blue Suede Shoes” and yet have some originals with a classic feel.” With influences such as the Reverend Horton Heat, Johnny Cash, Elvis, Stray Cats, Mojo Nixon, Randy Houser, Jerrod Neiman and the Hill-billy Hellcats.

As a group they were all wearing button-up shirts—that 50s look was not only in how they were dressed, but also their hairstyles. That same look extended down into their polished guitars. Paul Knudson aka Johnny Frost said, “We get together about once a week to play and run through our stuff. We also do a music review, whoever finds something cool, a new song or something music related to discuss or that we can play, we’re always

on the lookout for new sound.”

The lead guitarist is Devon Quiram from Pemberton. Bass guitar is David Howard who is originally from Kentucky. Greg Reeves is on drums and lives in Minnesota Lake. Paul Knudson is on guitar and is the lead singer; he’s originally from International Falls. Up until 2012, the group called itself “Bad Habits,” but when the drummer from that band retired they took a year sabbatical before, in Knudson’s words, “The stars aligned and we found Greg after a year off and things started up again. Since I’m from way up north, that’s where we got the ‘frost’ part from in Johnny Frost and the Heatseekers.”

Area businesses working toward CEO program

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

After about a year of planning and conversation, area business leaders began publicizing a proposed plan to implement Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) programs for Waseca area high school students during meetings held on March 31.

CEO, it was explained, takes students into the community to meet with and learn from local business owners and leaders, make use of entrepreneurial skills, and, when ready, start and operate a real-life business, including participating in a “trade show” at the end of the school year. Optimal class size for CEO is about 20 students, all of whom must apply and be selected in order to take part.

Program guidance and support would come from Midland Institute for Entrepreneurship, an organization based in Effingham, Illinois, which has been in existence since 2008. Speaking for Midland during the midday and evening sessions on March 31 was Kristine Noble, a 1985 graduate of Waseca High School who went on to hold numerous community leadership roles, including being the executive director for the Sauk Valley, Illinois, chamber of commerce from 2014 to 2024.

Financial support for the program would come from area businesses and organizations. Costs include a one-time \$45,000 “chapter fee” paid to Midland for its curriculum and startup guidance. It was stated during the mid-day session that \$20,000 of the curriculum fee has already been raised.

Offering testimonials during the meetings were Austin Language Arts teacher Emily Hovland, who helps coordinate a CEO program for the district, and twelfth-grader Allie Musik, a CEO participant and student board member in Austin.

Hovland described the CEO program as “by far the best thing I have seen happen in my journey as an educator,” going on to say that participants acquire real-life skills while also building a network of connections within the community. She told of one student who began a lawn care business as part of CEO, then went on to partner with an area businessman, eventually earning more than \$50,000.

Hovland, whose own child was a CEO participant, commented on how much more engaged her son became thanks to the program. “He was actually telling us about his experiences, and describing some of the things he was learning,” she observed. “My son is an introvert, and that was a big change.

“As a parent, there’s nothing like seeing your kid grow.”

Musik said she had learned a great deal through CEO, having started a business named “Love Your Pup,” for which she designed and sewed clothing for pets. “I really loved doing it,” she said of her entrepreneurial venture, “and I gained a lot of skills.” One of them, she went on to say, was feeling confident enough to stand up in front of a room full of business leaders and share her impressions.

Local leaders speaking in sup-

Program continued on 6

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100th Point



Hadley Parpart, daughter of Jeremy and Michele Parpart and a member of the 10U Girls' Waseca Hockey Association, scored her 100th season point on Saturday, Feb. 28, in District 9 tournament play against Cannon River. In a weekend tournament at LeSueur, the Waseca Girls' Blue Jays defeated Minnesota River, Mankato, and Cannon River to become the recipients of the First Place District 9 trophy. The team ended their successful season with a 33-2-1 record. Team members include: Ellie Adams, Ambria Bonnifield, Mylee Bubak, Scarlett Gleason, Jocelyn Guritz, Alice Lewer, Maisy Madsen, Evelyn Nelson, Hadley Parpart, Louisa Rohe, and Joslyn Wiblin. Coaches included Layne Bluhm, Eric Gleason, Jordie Lewer, and Kelvin Nelson.



Wanli Chen on the winner's stand March 28 at the nationally renowned Las Vegas Archery Shoot. Wanli took first place in the Cub Freestyle Division, for archers up to 12 years old.

■ Chen from Page 3

the signatures, he can name many of their personal accomplishments, including that one of them designed the release mechanism which is on the bow he uses.

In addition to his March 26 win, Wanli took second place in his division at a South Dakota outdoor shoot in September and first at the Iowa Pro-Am Shoot in Des Moines in December. He and a number of members of the Waseca

youth team competed on March 8 at a Minnesota State Archers Association competition in Hugo.

Hanson says many people don't realize how many archery competitions take place: members of the Waseca Archery Club can choose among up to 50 "shoots" throughout the summer. Rugroden and Hanson want interested people to know the Waseca Archery Club has divisions for participants from age 7 to adult, with members able to choose their own level of commitment—from simply working to improve their own skills to those who wish to compete, even up to a professional level.

■ Program from Page 5

port of the CEO initiative included Amy Potter, executive director of the Waseca Area Foundation, and Kris Markeson, City of Waseca public safety director. Steering committee members for the local initiative include Potter, Markeson, and Shannon James Kuball of James Brothers Construction; Kara Deml, Sacred Heart School; Crystal Cariveau, Crystal C Photography; Briana Worke, Keen Bank; Brooke McGuire, Waseca Schools; and Dr. Jason Miller, Waseca Schools.

Along with significant learning opportunities for young entrepreneurs, Noble said during her presentation, the CEO program benefits communities by helping young people see the many opportunities available in their home towns. Noble mentioned that surveys of students in middle school show that young people frequently picture themselves building their futures "somewhere else" than where they grew up. Graduates of the CEO curriculum, on the other

hand, indicate a stronger inclination to return to their communities after attending post-secondary institutions.

To date, Noble said, Midland is guiding 75 CEO programs, most of which are in rural areas in the midwest and are shared collaboratively among two or more school districts.

Next steps toward implementing a Waseca Area CEO program, Noble said, include continued communication with businesses, schools, and community members.

A local board needs to be formed and schools need time to incorporate the program into their schedules, since high school students register in the spring for the next year's classes. Business operators also need time to study the CEO curriculum and determine what roles they would like to play in the educational elements. A set of bylaws must be drafted, and an advisor must be selected and hired.

A system for receiving and assessing student applications also needs to be in place.

In order to leave time for all these steps, Noble said, expected "launch" of the curriculum would be at the start of the 2027-28 school year.

Exchange Club receives district visit

The Exchange Club Lakes and Prairies District President, Dennis Kehoe of Cedar Falls, Iowa, along with District Vice President, Katie Smith of Owatonna, recently visited the Waseca Exchange Club to recognize and reinforce the exceptional work being done locally to serve the community and uphold the values of Exchange.

During their visit, both leaders emphasized the Waseca Club's outstanding performance across all pillars of service, including the prevention of child abuse, Americanism, youth programs, and community service. Kehoe highlighted a particularly notable achievement: Waseca is the first club in the nation to receive the National Prevention of Child Abuse Award two years in a row. Additionally, among more than 500 Exchange Clubs nationwide, Waseca is one of only ten clubs to earn the prestigious Big "E" Award this year, a recognition of excellence in programming, membership, and overall impact.

"The Waseca Exchange Club is a model for what Exchange should look like across the country," said Kehoe. "Their commitment is not limited to one area, they are fully engaged in every aspect of service we value, and they continue to raise the bar with both their results and their heart for the community."

Smith echoed that sentiment, noting the club's forward momentum and leadership within the dis-



From left: Exchange Club Board of Directors and District Leadership, Ann Staloch, Jeanne Sexton, District Vice President Katie Smith, Club President and District Director Mikhail Rostislavovich, District President Denis Kehoe, Jay Bulfer, Christy Easton, and Jen Loosen.

trict. "What stands out about Waseca is not just what they've accomplished, but where they're going," she said. "They are actively working to help charter a new club, which speaks volumes about their leadership and their desire to grow the mission of Exchange beyond their own community."

The Waseca Exchange Club's efforts extend far beyond recognition, driven by a deep commitment to service and the organization's motto of "Unity for Service." Under the leadership of Club President Mikhail Rostislavovich, the club continues to prioritize meaningful impact over accolades.

"We are honored by the recognition, but that has never been the goal," said Rostislavovich. "Our focus is, and always will be, on serving others, strengthening our community, and living out 'Unity for Service' in everything we do. The awards are simply a reflection of a group of people who care deeply and show up to do the work."

With continued momentum, a strong culture of service, and a commitment to growing the reach of Exchange, the Waseca Exchange Club remains a leading example of how local action can create lasting impact.

There is a King

By Pastor Mike Coglan

"Are you the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate.

"You have said so," Jesus replied. (Mark 15:2)

This verse was part of our morning text at church on Palm Sunday. It seemed timely to read following the national "No Kings" protest. This is the only recorded conversation that Jesus has with a political leader. Pilate asks Jesus if he is a king. Pilate is not asking Jesus a theological question. He is asking about authority. Is Jesus in any way a threat to the authority of Rome? Jesus answers ambiguously. Essentially, he says "I'm a King, but not one like you think."

Jesus is usually very direct, but here he is not. His answer is not a denial or an affirmation. He is different from other religious leaders. Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, would have clearly denied any interest in political power. Mohammed, the founder of Islam, would have clearly insisted that he is a political leader. But Jesus is not so clear about his political ambitions.

Consider the two extreme groups at the time of Christ: the Essenes, and the Zealots. The Essenes withdrew from society and wanted nothing to do with government and politics. The Zealots on the other hand, wanted to take control and liberate Israel from the Roman government. Jesus didn't fit into either group.

In Mark 12, Jesus was asked, "Should we pay taxes to Caesar?" Jesus took a coin, and asked, "Whose image is on the coin?" and they say, "Caesar's." Jesus said, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Again, he is a deliberately ambiguous. Jesus, and his followers would influence legal, social and political matters. But they did so in entirely new ways.

Prior to the time of Jesus, governments claimed absolute allegiance. All laws, beliefs, economics and traditions were given to the people to follow without question. The religious temples and the state supported each other. The governments operated in the name of the gods. The king was commonly considered to be a god. So, there was no idea of a limited state in which you had human rights, or conscience or freedom to protest.

Jesus was the first historical figure of any record to challenge this. He calls for a limited state. To paraphrase Jesus, "Caesar's image is on the coin. Give him the tax. But God's image is on you, so give your ultimate allegiance to God." Political engagement is good, so obey the laws. But God is above all government.

Totalitarian governments rule through fear. But Jesus said "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy

The Pastor's Column

both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28 When any government makes ultimate claims, Christians must resist. If God's law and human law contradict, God comes first. That was revolutionary.

This is what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. did during the civil rights movement. He went to jail for peacefully disobeying human laws in protest of racial segregation. Many Christians criticized him for this. These are some of his words from his famous Letter from Birmingham Jail:

"One may well ask: 'How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?' The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust."

A just law is a man-made code that squares with the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law of God.

"One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty."

Dr. King showed that Christian faith can be a powerful political influence. Jesus didn't tell us to withdraw from earthly citizenship. He didn't tell us to avoid politics, or even a career in politics. But he wanted us to find our ultimate hope in something much bigger.

The movement Jesus started resulted in sweeping and dramatic so-

ciopolitical changes that we now take for granted. It happened in reverse of every other revolution in history. Other revolutions happened by taking power and excluding or destroying enemies. Jesus began a revolution through loving and forgiving his enemies. In those first centuries of the Christian era, Rome was gradually turned upside-down by Christians who had deep inner peace and no political power. Instead of seeking power, they looked after the sick and the poor. They cared for widows and orphans. They visited prisons. They looked at the needs of the people around them in their city, and they poured themselves out. There were no liberals or conservatives. They were united in loving people, and they drew them in. And that changed society. They were all doing political change because they were changing the way power operated in the Roman Empire.

I pray that Christians would return to this humble posture and help to create a calmer and more constructive conversation around politics, economics and social arrangements. But I know in my heart that I find peace in knowing that there is a King. I will spend a lot more time in God's coming kingdom than in our current troubled country.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m. * * *	507-833-0017 Sunday worship 10 a.m. * * *	New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * *	12-18 * * *
4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m. * * *	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m. * * *	VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Brian Schanil Pastor Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH 412 N. Main Street, Janesville Pastor Jason Wolter Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:30 a.m. Worship * * *
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m. * * *	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m. * * *	ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father Glenn Ferichs Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m. * * *	JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship * * *
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship 10:15 a.m. Wednesday Eve Worship 6:30 p.m. * * *	CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY 900 14th Ave SE, Waseca 507-833-1082 Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m. * * *	FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Vacancy Pastor: Rev. Larry Sipe Sundays: Worship 8 a.m.; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class * * *	BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 43089 180th St., Morristown Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Summer worship hours, (10:45 a.m. Worship, winter) * * *
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m. * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship * * *	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship * * *	ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St, Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass * * *
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 314 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-2647 Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m. * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship * * *	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship * * *	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 Owen St., Janesville Pastor Sarah Krolak * * *
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net) Worship Sunday 10 a.m. * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting * * *	ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship * * *	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * *
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m. * * *	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 * * *	TRINITY LUTHERAN Wilton Township Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor Services 6 p.m. Saturday * * *	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 * * *
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca Father Glenn Ferichs 507-835-1222 Worship Sundays 10:00 a.m., Tues. and Wed. at 8:30 a.m. and Thurs. at 7 a.m.; Saturdays at 5 p.m. * * *	REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca * * *	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	NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.

Janesville

25 years ago

- Kent and Teresa Roberts of Janesville are happy to announce the birth of their daughter, Rachael Rose, born Friday, March 16, 2001, at Immanuel-St. Joseph's Hospital in Mankato. She weighed 6 pounds, 1 ounce and was 19 inches long at birth. She was welcomed home by two brothers, Zach, 13 and Nathan, 10; and one sister, Allison, 6. Maternal grandparents are Roger and Georgeanne Schulz of Morristown. Paternal grandmother is Verona Roberts of Mankato.

- William and Mary Kuchera of Janesville are proud to announce the engagement of their daughter, Amy, to Brett Hentges, son of Henry and Kathleen Hentges of New Prague. Amy is a 1994 graduate of Mankato State University. She is currently employed at Boulay, Heutmaner, Zibell and Co. PLLP in Edina. Brett is a 1993 graduate from New Prague High School and a 1998 graduate of Mankato State University. He is currently employed at McGladery and Pullen LLOP in Minneapolis.



- Army Reserve Pvt. Jeff Adams and Army Reserve Pfc. Peter Cowdin have graduated from the combat engineer advanced individual training (AIT) course at Fort Leonard Wood, Waynesville, Mo. Adams is the son of Ev and Judy Adams, and Cowdin is the son of Steve and Sue Cowdin, all of Janesville.

- The 50th Annual South Central and 25th Southwest Minnesota Regional Science and Engineering Fair (junior/senior high division) was held Saturday, March 3, at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Students receiving a purple ribbon will advance to the Minnesota Academy of Science Minnesota State Science Fair, Friday-Sunday, April 20-22 in Rochester. Students receiving ribbons and awards were: Elizabeth Peterson. -Project Ribbon: Blue; and Angie Winter-Project Ribbon: Blue.



- New members were inducted into the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton National Honor Society last week. Honor Society members pictured left to right: front row, Bridget Kester, JoAnna Krienke, Brian Finley, Jennifer Jewison, Renae Meyer and Ms. Darcy Reed. In back: Branan Krienke, Carrie Gardner, Julie Maas, Heather Schnepf, Sara Adams, Jon Conlon, Sarah Volkmann, Evan Holmes, Kristen Voges, Darlene Guse, Kenda Blasing, Katie Dobberstein, Jenny Proehl, Sara Prechel, Tasha Kalis, Bryan Monahan, Lacey Behrns, Marne Schuidt and Katie Jewison.

50 years ago

- March 5, ten members of the Janesville Mothers of Men in the Service gathered in the American Legion Club rooms for its regular monthly meeting. President Verona Brandmire, opened the meeting, the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was recited in unison; the secretary, treasurer and Sunshine reports were accepted as read. There being no business, the meeting adjourned and cards were played at two tables. Awarded the high score prize was Verona Brandmire, second high, Elizabeth Gomsrud, consolation, Margaret Miller and Mary Arnold the draw prize. Hostesses were Mary Arnold adn Elizabeth Blazing. The next meeting will be April 2, with Verona Brandmire and Eveline Clausen ont eh serving committee.

- Kelly Jo Oftedahl, 7 lbs., 3 ½ oz., to Mr. and Mrs. Duane Oftedahl, R. 1., Janesville at St. Joseph's Hospital, Mankato on Feb. 13. Paternal grandparents: Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Spangenberg, Mankato. Maternal grandparents: Mr. and Mrs. Gene Hansen, Litchfield.

- Megann Ann Arnold, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Arnold, received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism March 7, at Trinity Lutheran Church, following the 10:30 a.m. service with Rev. Dean tinger officiating. Sponsors were Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Ewert.

75 years ago

- Darlyne Miller was born in Janesville. She attended country school for six years and Janesville Public Schools for six years. Some of the activities she has participated in are: Gell Club, Hi-Lite, Cubettes, and G.A.A. Her favorite subject is Geometry. After graduation Darlyne plans to attend St. Joseph's school of nursing in Mankato. Darlyne's favorite sport is basketball and her hobby is collecting information on the Lakers. For entertainment she likes to listen to My Friend Erma, go to movies (especially musicals and comedies) and listen to music played by Harry James. She likes both classical and popular music.

- In seven years Minneapolis Tribune's Minnesota poll has interviewed more than 70,000 Minnesotans on more than 5,500 topics and has issued nearly 1,000 reports of its findings. Approximately one household in six has a television set, one of every three has one of more veterans of World War II, seven in ten drive a passenger automobile. Sixty-eight per cent of adult Minnesotans identify themselves as Protestant, 27 per cent as Catholic, two per cent as Jewish, three per cent as having other or no religious preferences. There are school age children in approximately 38 per cent of the state's households. One person in eight interviewed is a member of a labor union.

100 years ago

- "One day," said the old countryman from the hills, who was on trial for murder, "when my rheumatism was pestering me and my daughter eloped with good for nothin' scallawag, and my barn has just burned down and I lost both my mules, and my best old sow got the cholera and died, and I just heard they had forclosed the mortgage ad the sheriff was lookin' for me, I told my troubles to one of these here optimists and he said: "Cheer up, old top, the worst is yet to come." So I shot him."

- "I was afraid to eat because I always had stomach trouble afterward. Since taking Adlerika I can eat and feel fine." Mrs. A. Howard. One spoonful Adlerika removes GAS and often brings surprising relief to the stomach. Stops that full, bloated feeling. Removes old waste matter from intestines and makes you feel happy and hungry. Excellent for obstinate constipation.-Luedtke's Pharmacy.

- It is reported that over in Fargo the other evening the management of a local picture theatre threw a slide on the screen reading, "The husband of the woman who is here with another man is waiting outside, and the lights will be turned off for five minutes in order that this couple may leave by the side door and avoid trouble." When the lights were turned on, over half of the audience had left.-Moorhead News.

Waseca

25 years ago



- Scott Clevenger of Rita Musielewicz's third grade class made a project called "Using a Pulley" as part of the annual science fair held Friday at Sacred Heart Elementary School.

- Amy M. Holthus of Waseca received her Bachelor's degree with senior honors in Elementary Education (Gr. 1-6) from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

- Kristine K. Hup of Waseca and Jill M. Randall of Waseca have been named to the St. Olaf College Dean's list for the first semester of 2000-2001.



- These are the members of the Waseca ninth grade math league team that palced fourth in teh state meet held recently. They are (front row, from left:) Chris Miller, David Langland and Janelle Byer. Back row: David Harinen, Robert Kohnert, David Tollefson and Cody Dobberstein. Not pictured is Ben Rosenau.

50 years ago



- Third grade winners in the Sixth Annual Jaycee Dribble, Shoot and Lay Up Contest are front row left to right: Todd Mittelsteadt, Bob Hohrman, Larry Clayton, Mike Jellum, Brendan Gallagher and Tim Kanne. Second row left to right are: Jay Jellum, Dan Kieselhorst, Mike Bathke, Tom Zwach, Chris Bauleke, Rene Ross and Steve Lueschen.

- The Rev. and Mrs. Stanley Rosenau of R. 2, Waseca announce the engagement of their daughter, Cindy to Donald Anderson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Burton Anderson of 1204 7th St. SE, Waseca. Both Don and Cindy are 1975 graduates of Waseca High School. Don is presently attending Augustana College in Sioux Falls, S.D. Cindy is employed by Bethany Nursing Home in Sioux Falls. A May 29 wedding is planned.

- It was only a matter of a few hours between the delivery of the JOURNAL and the sale of Glen Schwieter's boat. Schwieters, 1217 2nd St. N.W., had a 1969 14-foot Lund fishing boat he wanted to sell, so he placed an ad in the JOURNAL and located a new owner for the boat by 8 p.m. of the first day the ad ran. Waseca's Daily Journal classified ads get quick results. So if you have something to buy, sell or rent, why not come down to the JOURNAL or give Julie a call today at 835-2220.

- Mr. and Mrs. Max Hopkins watched their son, Scott Allen graduate March 5 at the Great Lakes Naval Recruit Training Center. The Hopkins were accompanied by Doreen Lamont, Kim Elias and Mary Johnson also attended the ceremonies. The Hopkins also visited Mr. Hopkins sister, Mr. and Mrs. Vern Krabbe at Beecher, Ill. Scott and Doreen Lamont accompanied the Hopkins home Tuesday.

75 years ago

- Harry Wobschall, Kenny Wendland, and Dick Dahlager were treated to the best in basketball over the week end at the State Tournament in the University Field House. Richardson and Snyder of Gilbert put on a display of ball handling, seldom seen even in tournament play, to down Canby 69 to 52 and cinch the state title. Andy Snyder's 70-food one-handed heave of the ball for a basket without touching the rim, at the end of the third quarter, was the longest in the history of state high school basketball. Stew McPherson became so excited over the long shot that it caused him to stop broadcasting the game momentarily.

- Oscar (Roger) Bjelde Jr. Seaman Apprentice, U.S. Navy is home with his parents. Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Bjelde of Waseca, from Great Lakes, Ill. After a 14-day leave with his parents and friends, Oscar will report to the U.S. Naval Hospital Great Lakes, Ill. where he will attend Hospital Corpsman School. Oscar enlisted in the Navy through the Mankato Office on Dec. 27, 1950.

100 years ago

- The announcement that James M. Hanley has been nominated for governor of North Dakota on the fusion ticket brings joy to his many friends back in the old home town of Waseca. They are glad not only on his account but as well on account of his estimable wife, who was formerly Miss Irma Lewis of this city. Waseca people knew it was in "Jim" to succeed, so they have not been surprised at the honors he has won in his state. They are especially glad to learn of the latest recognition that has come to him. Here is wishing you an avalanche of votes, "Jim", on election day.

New Richland

25 years ago



- Olivia Christopherson enjoyed visiting with grandpa Darrol Sponberg at the St. Patrick's Day supper at the American Legion Clubrooms at New Richland. Olivia is the daughter of Doug and Karla Christopherson of rural New Richland.

- The annual Science and History Fairs were held at the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva Middle School, Thursday, March 15. Nine students earned medals on their history fair entries. They will enter competition at the Regional History Day at Minnesota State University, Thursday, April 5. Gold medal winners and their projects were Jasmine Brouwers "Women's Right's", and Gina Quiram and Kristine Sorenson - "Elizabeth Black-well". Earning silver medals were Tom Burshem - "The Story of Basketball"; Kelly Byron - "Families of the Oregon Trail"; and Matt Economy and MAtt Mangskau, "The History of Basketball". Bronze medals went to Alex Routh- "Snowmobiles"; and Erica Nelson - "Rosa Parks".



- Earning awards at the Panther Athletic Banquet, Monday, March 19 were these dedicated basketball players. They are from the left: front, Isaiah Lundburg, Brett Shultz, standing, Chad Buendorf, Rusty Routh, Dusty Reese and Justin Lewer.

50 years ago



- Mrs. Fred Phillips, Junior American Legion auxiliary leader at Hartland is pictured here as she accepted the awards won by the Hartland Juniors at the District spring convention from Mrs. Richard Bruno of Owatonna, first District Auxiliary President. The unit took the Adele Bergens trophy for the best all-around junior program in the First District, the Wilma Zoller Americanism trophy and the Handicraft Award.

- Howard P. Scherer has been named Waseca County Coordinator of FreedomFest '76, a celebration to be held Saturday, June 26at Metropolitan Stadium in Bloomington for all Minnesotans concerned with recovery from alcohol and drug dependency.

- The Hartland Area Jaycees Annual Pool Tournament was recently completed in March with prizes and trophies awarded to the winners. Ed Supalla became the pool champ with Rudy Phillips, second and Steve Schroeder, third.

75 years ago

- Sid Fossum who came here last November and established a Barber Shop in the old hotel building has sold his shop to J. W. Meyer of For-eston. The new owner is a single man and expects to take possession of the business next Monday.

- Weighing in at 9 lbs. 5 ½ ozs. LeAnn MArIe Herbst was born at the Naeve Hospital, Albert Lea at 3:55 pm Sunday, April 29. She is the first child in the family of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Herbst living southwest of town. Mrs. Herbst is a former society editor of The Star.

Correct trajectory

WHS softball team appears poised to improve

It looks like the Waseca High School softball team is on the right trajectory.

"I expect our team to continue to improve from last year," said WHS head coach Amanda Sommers, whose team finished 3-10 in the Big South and 6-15 overall a year ago. "We have a team goal set to have a better record than last season. We are working hard to continue to improve."

Sommers, entering her third year as the Bluejays' head coach, is again assisted by Abbe Hoehn. The Bluejays' best finish in recent years was 7-12 in 2023.

Returning letterwinners for 2026 include seniors Chloe Roemhildt (second base/outfield), Ellery Waldron (third base/pitcher), Hannah Teague (outfield/third

base), Lauren Grant (outfield) and Madison Roessler (catcher), sophomores Allison Mader (shortstop/outfield) and Hannah Rugger (pitcher/outfield), and freshmen Avery Barto (pitcher/shortstop) and Hannah Sommers (first base/pitcher).

The captains are Waldron, Grant and Roessler.

Hannah Sommers, daughter of Coach Sommers, displayed excellent power at the plate last year while being chosen all-conference. Barto received honorable mention.

The Panthers graduated all-conference honorable mention all-conference second base player Siri Kuhns, team MVP Lily Owens and outfielder Kenzie Sandborg.

"We have a strong balance of seniors and underclassmen who play

critical roles on this team," said Coach Sommers. "Our underclassmen are coming into this season with a ton of varsity experience and that is going to help us handle the high-pressure situations. We are working hard to keep a positive culture in our program and have a strong team bond."

The coach's biggest concern is the competition.

"We play a challenging conference schedule," said. "We need to work on limiting errors on defense, and having quality, smart at-bats to get as many runners on base as pos-



Sommers



SOFTBALL – The 2026 Waseca High School softball team includes, front from left, Sophia Hillsman, Chloe Roemhildt, Allison Mader, Madison Roessler, Lauren Grant and Anna Benson. Back: Brier Hayes, Hannah Rugger, Claire Roemhildt, Ellery Waldron, Hannah Sommers, Hannah Teague and Avery Barto..

Photo by Ben Revermann

sible in order to win games this season."

How can the Bluejays do that?

"Have fewer errors in each game, increase the number of hits while

decreasing strikeouts, and having strong quality at-bats increasing our base runners," said Coach Sommers. "We need to stay focused and give it our all in every game."

Sommers sees St. Peter and New Ulm as the preseason favorites in the Big South Conference and lists LeSueur-Henderson as the team to beat in Section 2AA.

WHS tennis boys look to build on 14-7 mark from '25

Guided by 24th-year head coach Kyle Collins, the Waseca High School boys' tennis team is no stranger to success.

Last year's Bluejays finished 13-4 overall and 4-0 while winning the Big South Conference Black Division championship before falling to Redwood Valley for the overall conference crown. They are 215-149 under Collins' guidance, including back-to-back 13-4 seasons.

This year's Bluejays are, according to Collins, in the same boat as the rest of the Big South Black teams, with every squad graduating and returning about the same number of players.

The Bluejays are led by junior captain Henry Huttemier, a four-year letterwinner. He has a 42-30 career record, playing mostly No. 2 singles last year while compiling a 14-7 season record.

The other returning lettermen are seniors Allen Kopetzki and Brighton Rugger, sophomore

Armaan Bhatti and freshman Keenan Collins. Kopetzki, 19-18 in his career, played No. 4 singles and No. 2 and 3 doubles last year, posting an 11-7 season record. Rugger is 6-6 for his career, going 4-6 last year while playing No. 3 doubles. Bhatti has a 36-17 career mark, including 15-4 last season while playing mostly No. 1 doubles. Keenan Collins, son of Coach Collins, has a 27-9 career record, including 15-4 last year while playing mostly No. 1 doubles.

The rest of the roster includes juniors Dawson Goodlander and Jacob Harguth, sophomore Joe Calhoun, freshmen Carson True, Nicholas Nelson, Jesse Wobschall and Conner Vosejпка, and seventh-graders Korbin Collins and Daniel Switzer.



Collins



BOYS' TENNIS – The 2026 Waseca High School boys' tennis team includes, front from left, Daniel Switzer, Nick Ferris, Dawson Goodlander, Jacob Harguth, Korbin Collins, Brighton Rugger, Jesse Wobschall and Joe Calhoun. Back: Henry Huttemier, Armaan Bhatti, Nolan McQuery, Keenan Collins, Allen Kopetzki, Carson True and Nick Nelson.

Photo by Ben Revermann

The Bluejays graduated No. 1 singles player Tyler Jellum, No. 2 doubles players Lucas McQuery and Tanner Hanson, No. 3 doubles player Brayden Hoof and Italian exchange student Tommaso Scognamiglio, who played No. 3 singles.

"We will be young and have to rely on our letterwinners for their experience and leadership in the close matches," said Coach Collins. "This will be a year of growth as many top teams in our section will have a lot of returning players."

A strength for the Bluejays, according to Collins, is that they should have four pretty solid singles players, all underclassmen.

"Our doubles teams will have many new faces," said Collins. "We have quite a few multi-sport athletes on our team, which should help us gain that competitive edge when the matches are on the line."

Early-season matches should give folks an idea of how the season will go.

"We need to be ready for each and every match," said Collins.

This will be the first year of on-court coaching for the boys' team, as it was introduced in the fall for the girls. This brings a new dimension as far as coaching and assisting the players during the matches. Coaches can give almost immediate feedback to a player or doubles team, rather than having to wait for the next changeover.

The Big South Black looks wide open with New Ulm, Fairmont, St. Peter, Worthington and Waseca fielding similar squads. St. James and Redwood Valley look like the

teams to beat in the Big South Gold.

The Bluejays will be in Section 1A with Winona Cotter, Rochester Lourdes, Lake City, Stewartville, Schaeffer Academy and Red Wing.

"Cotter and Lourdes will be the top two teams in our section," said Collins. "Both return a lot of high level varsity players and have quality teams."

Trish Mercier and Jacari Jellum assist Coach Collins.



BASEBALL – The 2026 Waseca High School baseball team is looking to improve on last spring's record. Team members include Riley Mitchell, Kaden Garza, Hayden Stencel, Avery Weszel, Jaiden Schaefer, Logan Reger, Julius Ovideo, Kamerin Ferch, Kallen Glynn, Owen Honstad, Cash Lynch, Troy Ryan, Ty Krautkremer, Kellen Klinger and Calvin Kahnke.

Photo by Ben Revermann

Baseball Bluejays seek progress

Progress.

That's what the Waseca High School baseball team is looking for this year.

The Bluejays won just two of 18 games last spring, a mark they're most certainly intent on improving.

Last year's Bluejays had a rough start, dropping their first 11 games before winning 5-2 at Worthington. Their other win was 12-8 at Triton, which defeated Waseca 9-2 in section play. The Jays were 1-9 in Big South Conference play.

The Bluejays graduated eight players from last year's team: Easton Danks, Lucas Groll, Brayden Hesch-Priem, Dave Hodgkins, Jameson Paulson, Colton Ruedy and Max Wirtz. Devon Parpart, who hit .327 as a junior last year, did not come out for the team. Jett Rohl went out for track.

This year's season-opening varsity roster includes seniors Kaden Garza, Riley Mitchell, Logan Reger and Jaiden Schafer, Avery Wetzel, Julius Ovideo and Hayden Stencel, juniors Kallen Glynn, Owen Honstad, Cash Lynch and Kamerin Ferch, and sophomores

Kellen Klinger, Calvin Kahnke and Ty Krautkremer.

Honstad batted .419 with four doubles last year and was the Bluejays' lone all-conference selection.

"Lots of juniors and sophomores from last year will be stepping into more serious roles on the team as seniors and juniors," said fifth-year WHS head coach Taylor Phelps. "Our success will be dependent on their ability to perform."

The Bluejays hit just .186 as a team last year. Defensively, they committed twice as many errors as their opponents.

According to Phelps, the 2026 Bluejays have several players capable of playing different positions.

"We have a log of players that can play lots of positions," said Phelps. "This will help move players around and get players in the right position for our team's success."

On what does that success depend?

Said Phelps, "Putting the ball in play and taking advantage of the opportunities presented to us by other teams."

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Expectations the same for WHS boys' track

The expectations remain the same for the Waseca High School boys' track and field team.

The Bluejays expect to be highly competitive.

"Our season goals are pretty consistent year in and year out," said 19th year head coach David Abel. "We expect to compete for the conference championship, qualify for True Team state and move as many athletes on to state as we can."

Several athletes moved on from the Bluejays last year via graduation, including state competitors Tauston Rupe and Jacob Hadley and school-record holder Damarius Russell, along with Isaac Feldkamp, Bennett Ludwig, Tristan Godwin and Carson Ohnstad.

Returning lettermen this spring are seniors Jordan Johnston (sprinter, 2005 state competitor), Brady Tloutan (springer), Will Mansfield (sprinter, state medalist in pole vault) and Malechi Noble (sprinter),

and juniors Owen Rupe (thrower), Jonah Worke (jumper, sprinter), Tovin Grannis (middle distance, jumper, 2025 state entrant) and Titan Rahe (sprinter).

The rest of the varsity roster includes senior Jett Rohl, juniors Brady McKenna, Sunny Mei, Xander Rivera and Amin Sharif, sophomores Filberto Caudillo, Aidan DeRaad, Sam Feldkamp, Toby Jeske, Ayden Kath, Tyler Loewen, Landan Madsen, Jordan Oviedo, Hayden Peterson, Carter Radcliff, Jaxton Rohl, Landon Rutt, Sam Selthun, Kenny Spies, Jose Viera and Ryan Yoder, and freshmen Gavin Farley, Saiveon Williamson, David Haley, Nick Harguth, Holten Howard, Dominik



Abel



VARSITY EXPERIENCE – Returning lettermen for Waseca High School boys' track and field include, front from left, Sunni Mei, Titan Rahe, Landon Rutt, Jonah Warke Jordan Johnston and Malachi Noble. Back: Tovin Grannis, Toby Jeske, Aydan Kath, Owen Rupe and Will Mansfield.

Photo by Ben Revermann

Mansfield, Jordan Niedecker, Riley Rosin, Griffen Schlueter, Tomas Vasquez, Kyle Welander, Jack Durisen and Evan Borwege.

Abel is assisted by Brad Wendland (throws, 19th year), Grant Popp (distance, eighth year) and Saiveon Williamson (sprints, third year).

Last year's Bluejays finished sixth in the Big South Conference meet and third at the Section 1AA meet.

"Our juniors and seniors are going

to need to have a good year for us this season, and we have good numbers in our sophomores and freshmen athletes that we will need to step up and fill some roles for us," said Abel, who lists Fairmont, Marshall and St. Peter as the top teams in the Big South.

In Section 1AA, he lists Winona, Stewartville, Byron and Northfield.

A strength for the Bluejays, according to Abel, is that they have 13 returning letterwinners and a

good mix of athletes.

"We have 40-plus guys out for track, which is a great number," said Abel. "We should be able to find some gems in the group to fill the needed areas on the team."

How is Abel looking to improve?

"We need to find some depth in the short sprints, long jump and the hurdles," said the coach. "We will need to improve in the long distances as well."

Time will tell for WHS track girls

All things considered, last season was a successful one for the Waseca High School girls' track and field team, which sent several individuals to state and returned home with some medals.

Can the Bluejays to it again? Probably. But only time will tell for sure.

Coach David Abel's crew is a little thin in numbers this year, which leaves Abel and his assistants a little concerned.

"We have a fair number of new athletes and first-year tracksters," said Abel. "We'll see what we can do."

Eight key individuals return from last year's Bluejay squad that finished fifth in the Big South Conference meet and seventh in Section 1AA.

The group includes sophomore Stella Omtvedt, freshmen Maren Schimming and eight-grader Ellie Kopischke, all middle distance runners who competed in last year's state meet. Also back are seniors Kelsey Draeger (distance) and



VARSITY EXPERIENCE – Returning letterwinners for Waseca High School girls' track and field include, from left, Allyson Holmseth, Vivian Mader, Kelsey Drager, Ava VanDenHemel, Addie Zimmerman, Maren Schimming, Stella Omtvedt, Reese Rodriguez and Ellie Kopischke.

Photo by Ben Revermann

Vivian Mader (hurdles), and sophomores Angelica Lopez (sprinter), Savannah Vagts (jumper) and Reese Rodriguez (long sprinter).

The rest of the varsity roster includes seniors Jenna Hudak and Lilly Sanchez, juniors Hannah Aboki, Lauren Holmseth, Jacey Jensen, Taylor Markenson and Violet Rohwer, sophomores Alyson Holmseth, Ava VanDenHemel and Addie Zimmerman, and freshmen Liz Aboki, Kina Grannis, Jenna Yoder and Quinn Yoder.

The Bluejays graduated a lot of

talent last year, including 2025 state medalists Brooklyn Flatau, Bella Wikan and Kalea Sartori and 2025 state entrant Callie Dufault, along with Sierra Krause, Cami Marquez, Nevaeh Sampson, Niyah Williams and Esme Pearce.

"Our season goals are pretty consistent year in and year out," said Abel who's assisted by Brad Wendland, Grant Popp and Saiveon Williamson. "We expect to compete for the conference championship, qualify for True Team state and move as many athletes on to state as

we can. Eleven returning letterwinners should anchor this group. We should be strong in the distances and have a nice group of hurdlers. We will need some girls to step and create the depth we will need to really score well as a team."

Abel's biggest concern is numbers, or lack thereof.

"We have only 25 girls out for track, which is low for us," he said. "We had some good athletes elect not to return to the team and some incoming ninth-grade former junior high track athletes decided not to

come out. It will be a challenge to fill all the events and still compete well. We need to find some athletes in the short and long sprint groups, improve in the triple jump, long jump, throws and find some pole vaulters."

Abel tabbed Fairmont, Marshall and Belle Plaine as the preseason favorites in the Big South, with Winona, Northfield, Stewartville, Byron and Tri-City United favored in Section 1AA.

WHS golf teams look for one thing: improvement

Head coach Bill Dwinells enters his second season as Waseca High School golf coach with a specific goal in mind: improvement.

"This season we expect to improve our golf game, see better scorecards, and be much more competitive in every event we play," said Dwinells. "As a coaching staff and as a team, we have made some changes to the way we approach the game of golf and are very optimistic about having a better season both individually and as a team results-wise this year based on that."

Last spring's Bluejays were around .500 in dual meets, with tournament averages of fifth to seventh with a couple third-place finishes.

This year's captains are Madison Rasche for the girls' team and Brody Dufault for the boys.

Rasche is the only returning senior for the girls.

Senior Dylan Hansen is joined by senior first-year golfers Wyatt Hager and Roman Siler.

Leading the toughest-to-replace list are multi-state-tournament qualifier Hunter Anderson and Reed

Anderson.

"Hunter was a great leader for our team over the last few years," said Dwinells. "Reed was truly an awesome presence and a great golfer who is missed by all his teammates for his energy and support of his teammates."

The Bluejays have consistently placed in the bottom third of the pack in competitions over the last five years.

They've also had several state qualifiers, including Hunter Anderson and Rasche, a feat that Dwinells calls, "Amazing."

But, unfortunately, the Bluejays have fell short of their ultimate aspiration of making it to state as a team. The strength of the 2026 squad, according to Dwinells, is determination on the part of his athletes.

"Our strengths are our players' determination to get better at the game of golf and to shoot lower scores, coupled with the amount of fun we have playing this wonderful game. A strength we hope to gain this year is better and more consistent master of the mental/emotional aspect of golf."



GOLF – Members of the 2026 Waseca High School golf teams include, front from left, Alexa Welander, Ashley Fliflet, Eli Hoban, Trenna Peterson, Maddie Root and Madison Rasche. Middle: Ethan Casterton, Mac Malouff, Owen Weiseler, Nolan Dufault, Dylan Hansen, Troone Corchoran, Karter Selvik, Avery Selvik, Michael Petracek and Colin Selvik. Back: Braiden Nelson, Wyatt Hager, Roman Siler and Brody Dufault.

The coach was optimistic when it comes to areas to improve.

"I would say our weakness is that we don't have a lot of seniors and established 'top' golfers this year," said Dwinells. "We are hoping that instead of being a weakness all year it can be turned into a positive by creating the opportunity for new team leaders and winning golf to emerge because of the open competition we basically have for multiple varsity spots.

The key to success for the

Bluejays?

"Eliminating three putts, staying in play off the tee, be dominating inside 100 yards, controlling the mental/emotional side of the game when we hit bad shots, and getting better at course management and strategy."

Favorites in the Big South Conference?

"I always think all of our teams as having the potential to be favorites in every sport," he said. "I definitely bleed Bluejay blue. I am focused on

getting our team better and improving our scores on the courses we play against. Golf is a unique game because while we play against other teams, we really are playing the course and ourselves. If we can master those two things, we will be the favorite every time. It doesn't matter what other team is on the course that day."

Maren Peterson and Randy Creasman assist Dwinells.

Schedules

2026 Waseca High School Track and Field

Thursday, March 19 Indoor at MN State Mankato 5:30
Tuesday, March 24 Indoor at MN State Mankato 5 p.m.
Tuesday, March 31 Indoor at MN State Mankato 5:30
Tuesday, April 14 Waseca Invitational 4:30
Monday, April 20 at Tri-City United 4 p.m.
Friday, April 24 Plainview/Elgin-Millville 4 p.m.
Tuesday, April 28 at St. Charles 4:30
Thursday, April 30 at Mankato East 4 p.m.
Tuesday, May 5 True Team at Byron 2 p.m.
Tuesday, May 12 Waseca Inv 4:30
Saturday, May 16 True Team at Eden Prairie, 4 p.m.
Tuesday, May 19 Big South at New Ulm, 4 p.m.
Thursday, May 28 Section prelims at Faribault 2 p.m.
Saturday, May 30 Section finals at Faribault 10 a.m.

2026 Waseca High School Softball

Thursday, April 2 at Blooming Prairie 4:30
Monday, April 13 vs. Sibley East, 5:30
Thursday, April 14 vs. Tri-City United, 5:30
Thursday, April 16 at St. Peter 5:30
Saturday, April 18 at Worthington 12 noon
Thursday, April 23 at St. Clair 4:30
Monday April 27 at Rochester Lourdes 4:30
Tuesday, April 28 at Belle Plaine 5:30
Thursday, April 30 vs. New Ulm 5:30
Saturday May 2 at Marshall DH 11 a.m./2 p.m.
Tuesday, May 5 at Tri-City United 5:30
Thursday, May 7 vs. St. Peter 5:30
Saturday, May 9 vs. Blue Earth Area, 12 noon
Tuesday, May 12 vs. Medford 5:30
Thursday, May 14 at Maple River 4:30
Saturday, May 16 vs. WEM, 12 noon
Tuesday, May 19 Section tournament, 5 p.m.
Thursday, May 21 Section tournament, 5 p.m.
Saturday, May 23 Section quarterfinals
Thursday, May 28 Section tournament

2026 Waseca High School Boys' Tennis

Thursday, April 2 vs. Red Wing, 4:30
Monday, April 13 at Faribault, 4:30
Thursday, April 16 at St James 4:30
Monday, April 20 at Lake City 4:30
Tuesday, April 21 at St. Peter 4:30
Thursday, April 23 vs. Winona Cotter 4:30
Tuesday, April 28 vs. Fairmont 4:30
Thursday, April 30 at Rochester Lourdes 4:30
Tuesday, May 5 at New Ulm 4:30
Thursday, May 7 vs. Stewartville 4:30
Thursday, May 14 Section quarterfinals
Tuesday, May 19 Section semifinals
Thursday, May 21 Section individual
Tuesday, May 26 Section individual

2026 Waseca High School Baseball

Thursday, April 2 vs. Blooming Prairie, 5:30
Monday, April 13 vs. Triton, 5:30
Thursday, April 14 at Tri-City United, 5:30
Thursday, April 16 vs. St. Peter 5:30
Tuesday, April 21 at Worthington 5:30
Thursday, April 23 at Fairmont 5:30
Tuesday, April 28 vs. Belle Plaine 5:30
Thursday, April 30 at New Ulm 5:30
Saturday, May 2 vs. Marshall DH 11 a.m./1 p.m.
Tuesday, May 5 vs. Tri-City United 5:30
Thursday, May 7 at St. Peter 5:30
Saturday, May 9 vs. Worthington, 12 noon
Monday, May 11 at LeSueur-Henderson 5 p.m.
Tuesday, May 19 vs. LCWM, 5:30
Thursday, May 21 Section tournament
Tuesday, May 26 Section tournament
Thursday, May 28 Section tournament
Saturday, May 30 Section tournament
Tuesday, June 2 Section tournament
Thursday, June 4 Section tournament

2026 Waseca High School Golf

Tuesday, April 14 Girls at Shoreland CC, 2 p.m.
Thursday, April 13 Girls vs. Belle Plaine, 4:30
Monday, April 20 Boys at Lakeside, 4 p.m.
Tuesday, April 21 Boys and girls at Lakeside 4:30
Thursday, April 23 at St. Peter 4:30
Monday, April 27 at Montgomery 4 p.m.
Tuesday, April 28 Boys at Shoreland 2 p.m.
Thursday, April 30 Boys vs. Belle Plaine 4:30
Friday, May 1 Boys at Interlachen 1 p.m.
Friday, May 1 Girls at Rose Lake 1 p.m.
Tuesday May 12 at Docatah Ridge, 10 a.m.
Thursday, May 14 at Tri-City United, 2 p.m.
Monday, May 18 at Prairie Ridge, 3:30
Wednesday, May 27 Girls section prelims at New Prague
Tuesday, June 2 Section finals at New Prague

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JWP track girls coming off dream season

If last year was a dream season for the JWP girls' track and field team, the Bulldogs don't want to wake up.

Last spring saw the Bulldogs earn the crowning jewel, the Minnesota Class A state championship. That on top of winning the Gopher Conference, Section 2A, Sub-Section 2A and Section 1A True Team titles.

How do they top that?

They just want it to continue.

"A strength is our culture," said head coach Sam Schruin. "As cliché as it may sound, it's more like a family where everyone feels welcome and is pushed to become their best self. Everyone is very driven and has a strong work ethic, willing to be coached and bring a positive attitude every day."

While the JWP girls will pair with WEM for the first time in track, they'll still be known as the Bulldogs.

The roster includes seniors Kwynn Krause, Neveah Weimert, Emma O'Brian, Alenka Jans and Addison Condon, junior Emma Huelsnitz, sophomores Ava Krause, Clare Groh, Anne Adams, Sarah Bulman, Kayleigh Donner, MaKenzie Westphal, Miley Anderson, Isabelle Bauer and Raelyn Eich, freshmen Ashlynn Wolff, MaKaela Westphal, Avery Bronk and Hailey Heinz, and 8th-graders Ryder Britton, Catherine Manthe, Norah Welvaert, Aubrey Anderson and Rachel Mielke.

Accomplishments by those girls:

Weimert: 200 all-conference, 4x100 state participant, 4x200 state participant; Wolff

Wolff: 800 all-conference, high jump all-conference, 4x400 all-conference, 4x800 state participant, 4x400 state participant, Academic All-Conference; Westphal: 4x400 all-conference, 4x200 all-conference, 4x800 state participant, Unsung Hero Team Award Winner, Academic All-Conference; Olson: 4x200 all-conference, long jump state participant, 4x100 state participant, 4x200m state participant, Academic All-State, Grogg Team Award Winner; Donner: 4x200 all-conference, Academic All-State; Westphal: 800 state champion, 4x400 all-conference, 4x800 state participant, Academic All-State, Unsung Hero Team Award Winner; Krause: 4x800 state participant, Academic All-State, Unsung Hero Team Award Winner.

Condon and Mielke competed for WEM

last year. Condon was all-conference in two events and participated in two more at state. Mielke was also all-conference and ran at state.

Key athletes lost to graduation were Aubrey Weedman, Ava Appel, Madeline Hoehn, Paige Walz, Onikia Herme, Lilly Strauss, Presley James, Brielle Bure, Ariana Aguilar and Autumn Thissen.

Schruin is assisted by John Kaplan, Liz Kvebak, Andrea Kronbach, Emily Olson, Mike Richards, Brandon Goebel and Cory Zimmerman. Volunteer coaches are Tim Johnson, Mike Cahill and Katie Cahill.

"We have a very knowledgeable group of individuals who are committed to the social, emotional, and physical growth of the athletes," said Schruin. "This year we have a

coach for every event group in track and field, which is a blessing to have such knowledgeable individuals helping these young athletes."

Schruin isn't talking dynasty - yet.

"Rome wasn't built in a day," he said. "We have the foundations of a successful program and every day we continue to be better than we were the previous day."

Schruin shared two quotes said almost every practice and that serve as kind of the Bulldogs' motto: "It's a beautiful day to be a track and field athlete. Whether you think you can or you can't you're right."

Schruin's expectations for the season are simple and also involve a quote this one of his own: "Today we'll do what others won't so tomorrow we can do what others can't."



VARSITY VETERAN – Senior Daulton Bauer is one of many returning lettermen for the JWP track and field teams.
File photo by Jim Lutgens

Bulldogs, Buccaneers combine on the track

Looking for Grizzlies on the track this spring? You won't find any. At least not in name.

For the first time, Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton and Waterville-Elysian-Morristown are pairing for track and field, though the squad will be known as the Bulldogs.

For JWP, the mind set is the same for the boys and girls. Why mess with success?

The JWP girls won the Class A state championship last year, but the boys had a good season in their own right, winning the Gopher Conference championship.

Graduated from that squad were Isaiah Berndt, Isaac Gahlon, Derek Gustavson, Alexander Kleve and Shane Witts.

The 2026 roster includes seniors Daulton Bauer, Charles Adams, Austin Holicky and Grady Grohman, juniors Gavin Weedman, Jason Wheelock, Aidan Rider, Dawson Slechts, Trey Richards, Wyatt Jans, Ethan Einertson and Gavin Atherton, sophomores Leighlan Harris, Quinn Anderson, Brennan Welvaert, Tyson Kronbach, Samuel Roth and Cole Bartz, freshmen Gavinn Kaiser, Christian Reyes, Logan Swalve, Teagan Mulder, Parker Smith, David Mielke and Wesley Heinz, 8th-graders Demian Reyes, Ryan Eder, Peyton Throne, Grayson Einertson and Nate Cotield and 7th-grader Crue Burke.

Weedman won the team's Most Improved award while making all-conference in the 800 and Academic All-State. Bauer was all-conference in the triple jump,

earning the team's Dawg Award while being named Academic All-State. Kronbach was all-conference in the 4x800 and Academic All-State.

Several of those boys were involved in breaking JWP school records.

Atherton, Jans and Grohman competed for WEM. Atherton and Jans were state qualifiers and Atherton was all-conference.

Fourth-year head coach Sam Schruin looks for continued improvement from his squad.

"Rome wasn't built in a day," he said. "We have the foundation of a successful program and every day we continue to get better than we were the previous day."

Schruin shared a couple quotes that are said almost every practice: "It's a beautiful day to be a track and field athlete," and "Whether you think you can or you can't you're right."

"I'm really proud of everyone and all the hard work they put in," said Schruin. "I'm really thankful for the support from the community, administration, school staff, coaches, etc. Everyone is a part of this program and is a part of the success of the team."

Schruin said he's blessed to have an outstanding group of assistant coaches.

As for expectations this season, Schruin summed it up with another quote: "Today we'll do what others won't so tomorrow we can do what others can't."

Simonson returns to lead JWP golfers

The preseason report by first-year Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton head golf coach Alex James is rather brief.

One name is attached, senior captain Jeffrey Simonson, who in recent years has been one of the top players in the Gopher Conference.

The Bulldogs advanced to state as a team in 2023 and 2024.

"This is a season for improvement and growth," reported Simonson. "A way for kids to fall in love with the game of golf without having to pay so much and additionally be outside and build new relationships."

Individual growth is the key to success.

"We want to see growth not only in the program, but in the golf community," said James. "This is a sport kids can take with them after high school and giving them the opportunity to grow and be better at that is great. Golf is more a mental sport than anything, and being able to teach kids different ways to handle adversity and overcome challenges will help them in things they wouldn't expect."

JWP Schedules

JWP High School Track and Field 2026	
Saturday, March 21 Girls Indoors at MSU-Mankato 9 a.m.	Thursday, March 26 Indoors at MSU-Mankato 5:30
Tuesday, March 31 at St. James 4 p.m.	Tuesday, April 7 True Team Section 4 p.m.
Thursday, April 9 JWP Invitational 4:30	Tuesday, April 21 at Blooming Prairie Inv. 4:15
Thursday, April 30 at TCU Inv. 4 p.m.	Tuesday, May 5 JWP Invitational 3:30
Saturday, May 9 at Blooming Prairie Inv. 10 a.m.	Tuesday, May 12 at Waseca Inv. 4:30
Thursday, May 21 Sub-sect. at St. James 4 p.m.	
JWP High School 2026 Baseball	
Friday, April 17 DH vs. Lyle at Austin 4:30	Monday, April 20 at NRHEG 4:30
Thursday, April 23 vs. Randolph 4:30	Thursday, April 30 vs. USC 4:30
Friday, May 1 vs. Alden-Conger 4:30	Monday, May 4 vs. GHEC 4:30
Thursday, May 7 vs. Bethlehem Academy 4:30	Friday, May 8 vs. St. Clair 4:30
Saturday, May 9 at Cleveland 11 a.m.	Tuesday, May 12 vs. Blooming Prairie 4:30
Thursday, May 14 at Hayfield 4:30	Friday, May 15 vs. New Ulm Cathedral 4:30
JWP High School 2026 Softball	
Tuesday, March 24 vs. Madelia 4:30	Tuesday, March 31 at St. Clair 4:30
Monday, April 2 at WEM. 4:30	Monday, April 20 vs. NRHEG 4:30
Thursday, April 23 at Randolph 4:30	Thursday, April 30 at USC 4:30
Monday, May 4 vs. GHEC 4:30	Tuesday, May 12 at Blooming Prairie 4:30
Thursday, May 14 vs. Hayfield 4:30	
JWP High School 2026 Golf	
Thursday, April 7 at Kenyon-Wanamingo, 4:30	Thursday, April 23 vs. NRHEG at PR 4:30
Thursday, May 7 Conf. at Mankato North Links 4:30	Tuesday, May 12 Conf. at Austin CC 4:30
Thursday, May 21 Conf. at Waseca, 1 p.m.	

Baseball Bulldogs ready to take next step

It's acceptable if you want to call last spring a rebuilding season for the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School baseball team.

But what about this year?

It's when the Bulldogs look to reap the rewards.

The Bulldogs had seven new starters last year and five of them are back, along with others who have varsity experience.

"These boys are ready to take the next step," said sixth-year JWP head coach Cory Jewison. "I am excited to see our current seniors be leaders on and off the field. I think our seniors are due for a very big year with all areas of the game. They have always been finding a way to

win games since they were younger. They will just need to do it one more time."

Returning lettermen for the Bulldogs are seniors Chase Gerdt (pitcher/catcher), Caleb Quast (outfielder) and Zander Terbeest (pitcher/first base), juniors Seth Dahlberg (pitcher/catcher), Parker Gearity (infield), Blayne Wandrie (first base/pitcher) and Yale Johnson (outfield/first base), and sophomores Jaxon Wolff (infield/outfield), Gavin Bauer (outfield) and Ayden Peterson (pitcher/outfield/infield).

From last year's team that finished 4-5 in the Gopher Conference and 8-12 overall, the Bulldogs graduated Lucas Morsching, Peyton O'Brien

and Max Davis.

"Lucas was a valuable leader and our utility infielder who could play anywhere in the field," said Jewison. "Peyton was a good gap hitter who did very well at first base. Max came in to relief pitch and finish games."

The Bulldogs' strengths, according to Jewison, are very good senior leadership, a very good four-year pitcher/outfielder in Gerdt, a three-year starter in Quast, and plenty of team speed.

Jewison said he'd prefer to have a little more experience at first base, shortstop and backup catcher.

"If the returning starters come back and finally put their defense

and offense together to be more consistent, we should do well," said Jewison. "We have a very good ace and other pitchers to help with the support. If they can all throw strikes and we can limit our walks, we could be successful."

At this point, Jewison said he can feel the enthusiasm surrounding the 2026 Bulldogs.

"This is an exciting year to see how much our players developed this offseason," said Jewison. If this team can continue developing and improve, the second half of the season should be fun. The boys just need to stay consistent and grind out the wins when the games are close."

Jewison, assisted by Tyler

Fellows and Trent Edberg, listed Blooming Prairie, Randolph and Hayfield as the teams to beat in the Gopher Conference.

"There may be surprises this year in our conference, so it could be an exciting season. I don't think there is one dominant team this year in the conference."

It's anybody's guess who will reign in Section 1A, which will include several Gopher Conference teams this year.

"There is no one strong team in our section this year," said Jewison. "I think it is going to be a grind, and whoever is playing the best at the end of the year will go deep in the season."

Big shoes to fill, but plenty of feet for JWP softball

Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton softball coach Brianne Eldred knows her squad as some big shoes to fill this spring.

She also knows that's almost always the case.

"Every year when seniors leave, coaches are sad," said Eldred. "We know how hard it is when seniors go that make the program better, but someone always stands up and becomes a leader."

The Bulldogs graduated three key players from last year's squad that finished 4-6 in the Gopher Conference and 8-13 overall: Brielle Dessner, Ellah Oliver and Autumn Thissen. Dessner was all-conference, all-section, all-state and all-state academic last year. Thissen

was all-conference, all-state honorable mention and all-state academic. Oliver, who posted an excellent batting average, was academic all-state.

Eldred enters her 15th year as a head coach and second at JWP. She's assisted by Jeff Simonson, Cole Barden, Jace Emory and Thissen.

Kayle Langford leads the list of returnees, which also includes Victoria Blomstrom, Lillian Ewert, Brielle James, Lily Quast, Ryleigh Donner, Hudson Miller, Raylen Blasing, Sophie Okins, Haylee Appel, Avery Carda, Claire Loeffler, Ella Lamont and Chloe Kaiser.

Eldred likes what she's seen in practice so

far.

"Watching them over these past few weeks, I have seen progress," she said. "There wasn't much regression from the end of the last season but a lot of growth. We have some big shoes to fill, but we should be about the same or slightly better than last year. That to me without a question, is growth without the girls who have been playing on varsity for years."

Eldred also likes the Bulldogs' cohesiveness shown so far.

"They actually want to be with each other," said Eldred. "They are pushing each other. We strive to have a team culture of helping each other. They have a partner whom they can count on and trust."

The Bulldogs, according to Eldred, need to work on communication in the field.

"They sure can talk off the field," said Eldred. "But just like most ladies teams, talking on the field is difficult."

The key to success for the 2026 Bulldogs is to put the ball in play, communicate and believe in themselves."

Eldred looks at United South Central as the favorite in the Gopher Conference.

Said Eldred in conclusion: "I'm excited to start another season with these awesome ladies. I am excited to talk more about life skills and how life works. There will be many lessons learned and a lot of growth."



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Not a lot of depth for softball Panthers

Schultz returns as head coach

To say the 2006 New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva softball team is operating with a skeleton crew would be a massive understatement.

Injuries, namely torn ACLs, and other factors have coach Wendy Schultz's Panthers with exactly nine varsity players at this time.

Schultz is quite familiar with NRHEG softball. She enters her 27th year of coaching, 28th if you count the Covid year when the Panthers practiced five times but never played a game. She has an impressive career win-loss record of 310-192.

The Panthers graduated one athlete off last year's squad that finished 4-6 in the Gopher Conference and 5-13 overall, second base player Aspyn Stenzel.

They lost senior standout Camryn VanMaldeghem to a torn ACL in the section championship basketball game. Schultz said she still attends practice and helps wherever she can. Junior Paige Johnson, an outfielder, did not go out for softball.

The Panthers return seniors Addy

“Our goal is to grow and improve all season long.”

— Coach Wendy Schultz

Stadheim, Chloe Stork and Kyera Eustice, junior shortstop Olivia Berg, junior Izley Boerner, and sophomores Brooklyn Summer and Ezra Boerner.

Izley Boerner started as a freshman and received honorable mention all-conference honorable mention, but tore her ACL in basketball and wasn't able to play softball last spring.

Schultz also looks for help from senior Quinn VanMaldeghem, junior Faith Phillips and freshman Emmy Stadheim. VanMaldeghem was a track and field standout who's out for softball for the first time, though she has always played Dome Ball



SOFTBALL PANTHERS — The 2026 NRHEG High School softball team. Front from left: manager Libbie Mullenbach, manager Ciara Stenzel, Izley Boerner, Olivia Berg, Faith Phillips, Brooklyn Sommer, Emmy Stadheim and manager Evelyn Schlaak. Back: Camryn VanMaldeghem, Kyera Eustice, Ezra Boerner, Quinn VanMaldeghem, Chloe Stork and Jovey Knudson.

Photo by Deb Bently

with the Panthers in the winter as well as summer softball.

"Our goal is to grow and improve all season long, building toward playing our best and most competitive softball at playoff time," said Schultz, who feels good not only about her team's overall speed, but

the fact her players are hard workers with great attitudes who make great teammates.

Areas to improve or work on?

"We'll have girls playing in different/multiple positions, so injuries are a factor," said Schultz. "We're looking to be more consistent at the

plate."

Schultz, assisted by Nate Jensen, picks United South Central and Randolph as favorites in the Gopher Conference.

This year, for the first time in Schultz's coaching career, the Panthers are moving to Section 1A

after being in Section 2AA the rest of the time.

Onika Peterson is the Panthers' statistician. Managers are Ciara Stenzel, Libbie Mullenbach and Evelyn Schlaak.



VARSITY VETERANS — Returnees for the 2026 NRHEG girls' track and field team are, above front from left, Payton Frye, Ella Jeno and Holly Bartness. Back: Sierra Fish, Julieann Wobbrock, Gabby Schlaak, Kylie Olson and Chloe Riewer. Not pictured: Clara Buendorf and Anika Ladlie. Returnees for the boys are, below front from left, Jacob Karl, Wyatt Tuttle, Nathan Hager, Colton Conroy and Noah Weller. Back: Lavon Jewison, Gavin Lewison, Charlie Fuller, Brendan Schmidt and Trevor Selover. Photos by Larry Nydegger



For NRHEG track teams, it's quality over quantity

It's definitely a quality-over-quantity season for the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva track and field teams.

The Panthers have a number of standout individuals, but they just don't have the numbers to compete for the team title in larger meets.

Co-head coaches Larry Nydegger and former Panther stalwart Kim Schlaak again guide this year's squad. Nydegger enters his 12th year coaching at NRHEG, Schlaak her fourth.

The NRHEG boys return letter-

“I believe our high jumping group is among the best in the section.”

— NRHEG co-coach Larry Nydegger

men Lavon Jewison, Gavin Lewison, Charlie Fuller, Brendan Schmidt, Trevor Selover, Jacob Karl, Wyatt Tuttle, Nathan Hager, Colton Conroy and Noah Weller.

For the girls, returning letterwinners are Sierra Fish, Julieann

Wobbrock, Gabby Schlaak, Kylie Olson, Chloe Riewer, Peyton Frye, Ella Jeno, Holly Bartness, Clara Buendorf and Anika Ladlie.

Key athletes returning include Jewison, the school record holder in the high jump; Karl, coming off a

strong cross country season; Wobbrock, coming off a state-qualifying cross country season; and Schlaak and Ladlie, both state qualifiers in the high jump last season.

Wobbrock and Karl earned all-conference honors in the 1600. Receiving honorable mention were Schlaak, Ladlie, Jewison, Schmidt and Selover.

"I expect we are going to have strong performances in the individual distance and field events," said Nydegger. "We are still looking for those sprinters to show up."

The key to success is, according to Nydegger, the same as usual.

"Staying healthy is always key to the success of a season," he said. "When we can get multiple point scorers in events, that will give us the best chance at being competitive within the conference. The younger and new team members will have to discover and excel in their roles to help the team be successful."

Nydegger and Schlaak are assisted by Eric Olson, Bailey Madden and Theresa Buendorf.

"I consider JWP as having the top

conference teams on both the boys' and girls' side," said Nydegger. "I think our girls and boys can finish in the top half of the conference this year. I believe our high jumping group is among the best in the section. Last year, Anika, Gabby and Lavon all cleared state qualifying standard for 2026. Jacob and Julieann are coming off very successful cross country seasons and should challenge for top conference times and perhaps even greater things."

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BASEBALL PANTHERS – The 2026 NRHEG High School baseball team. Front from left: manager Zeke Berg, manager Alex Schlaak, Aiden Routh, Dominic Olson, Sean Lassahn, Owen Wayne, Chase Johannsen, Ryan Schlaak, Brooks Gilliland, Shane Service, Owen Schlaak, Calvin Nissen and Tyler Piepho. Back: coach Marcus Fischer, Dakota Schlaak, Gus Bethke, Brock Holland and A.J. Deen. Back: Jacob Klaras, Mack Gilliland, Memphis Schlaak, Jordan Brouwers, Isaac Bauleke, Wyatt Larson, Bodie Newgaard, Levi Whiteside, Eli Hendrickson Andy Nelson, Wyatt Hendrickson and coach Kordell Schlaak.

Photo by Deb Bently

New leader takes the reins for NRHEG baseball team

Fischer moves up from assistant coaching position

The list of letterwinners lost to graduation for the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School baseball team is a lengthy one.

But the list of returnees is even longer.

It leaves first-year head coach Marcus Fischer cautiously optimistic about the Panthers prospects in the spring of 2026.

Fischer, a former NRHEG assistant coach, takes over for Shawn Larson, who resigned from coaching in order to watch his own children compete in athletics. Fischer is assisted by Kordell Schlaak and Hall of Fame coach Jeff Reese.

Fischer starts his career with a clean slate, 0-0, unless you count the one time he filled in for Larson last year. But that doesn't matter much.

"The kids make the wins and losses happen," said Fischer.

The Panthers graduated seven players from last year's team that finished 2-7 in the Gopher Conference and 6-14 overall. They included captain Alden Dobberstein, Golden Glove Award winner Carter Martens, and catcher Jace Ihrke, Aiden Schlaak, Brock Ziemke and Aaden Hanna.

Returning varsity athletes are seniors Jordan Brouwers (infield/pitcher) and Wyatt Larson (catcher/pitcher), juniors Brooks Gilliland (first base/pitcher), Ryan Schlaak (outfield/catcher/pitcher), A.J. Deen (outfield/first base), Dominic Olson (second base/outfield/pitcher) and Chase Johannsen (outfield/infield/pitcher), and sophomores Sean Lassahn (outfield/first base/pitcher), Calvin Nissen (infield/pitcher), Dakota Schlaak (outfield/pitcher) and Levi Whiteside (pitcher/infield).

Then lone captain so far is Wyatt Larson, with one or more to be added before the season opener.

The Panthers return all their pitchers from last season, and that's a good starting point, according to Fischer.

"We want to build a solid baseball team, build off the

"We have a solid, young team, with lots of varsity experience."

— Coach Marcus Fischer

success we were seeing last year," said Fischer. "We did not lose a pitcher, where that has been a challenge the past two seasons without many options in terms of experienced arms."

This year, Fischer is able to list pitching as a team strength.

"We have a solid, young team, with lots of varsity experience," said Fischer. "They're hard-working kids. We should be a solid, competitive team."

The keys to success for the Panthers?

"Stay humble, work hard, put the team before yourself, play as a team, stay humble and stay focused," said Fischer. "You always have a job to do no matter the position."

The Panthers move down this year from Section 2AA to Section 1A.

"We are joining a competitive section of good, sound baseball teams," said Fischer. "There were a lot of one-run games in the playoffs last year between these teams. We are excited to compete with great baseball teams."

Fischer lists Blooming Prairie, Hayfield and Randolph as the top teams in the Gopher Conference, with Lyle/Austin Pacelli and Hayfield picked as the top teams in Section 1A.



Fischer



TWO-WAY THREAT – Owen Wayne takes a cut during the 2025 season. The senior standout is a two-way weapon for the Panthers, both on the mound and at the plate.

File photo by Jim Lutgens



GOLF GIRLS — The 2026 NRHEG High School girls' golf team includes, front from left, Addison Bauleke, Mya Wilson and Alexis Olson. Back: Olivia Wilkenson and Hailey Staska.

Photo by Deb Bently

For love of the game

Panthers play golf because they're fond of the sport

When you look up and down the rosters of the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School golf teams, you probably won't find anyone seeking a school-record store or someday joining the pro tour. What you will find is a group of athletes who love the sport. And that suits Panthers head coach Brad Root just fine.

Root, entering an incredible 37th season as the NRHEG girls' head coach, returns everyone from last season, and is adding a few more this spring.

Returning as starters are Alexis Olson and Olivia Wilkenson. Joining the squad this year are Mya Wilson, Addison Bauleke and Hailey Staska.

Root's realistic expectations for the NRHEG girls are to finish as high as third in the conference and fifth in Section 2A.

What style of play can we expect from the Lady Panthers?

"We will be aggressive - offensively and defensively," said Root. "We expect to have a positive attitude in poor weather, and be big risk takers on our shots."

Root lists the girls' strengths as team chemistry and a great work ethic.

"The girls need to be mentally tough and focused this year," said Root. "We are counting on continued

improvement in all our girls."

The NRHEG boys' team, for which Root has been the coach for 16 years, also did not graduate any starters.

Returning are Shan Hanson, Tyler Kress, John Lynne, Reid Sandry, Braxton Arnold, Chase Hanson and Matthew Williams.

"The boys had a good season last year and got some good experience, so we are pretty well set on six varsity spots," said Root. "We will again have small numbers, so someone may emerge as a surprise."

Root feels good about the boys' athletic ability. His biggest concern runs higher.

"The varsity boys have pretty good golf skills," said Root. But we need to work on the mental side of the game and course management this year."

Root expects a strong showing from the boys in the conference tournament and sub-section.

"We hope we have some all-conference honors as well as advancement to the section tournament," he said. "We need to make sure they are prepared for whatever weather conditions exist, as well as dealing with situations on the course. As always, we want our student-athletes to enjoy the sport and have fun while at the same time representing our school well to play." Root is assisted by Kim Olson and Kara Wilkenson.

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RATE INCREASE NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR XCEL ENERGY MINNESOTA CUSTOMERS

Xcel Energy asked the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) to approve an increase in natural gas rates beginning Jan. 1, 2026. The requested increase is approximately 8.2% or \$63.4 million. On average, the proposed final rate change would increase the monthly bill for a typical residential natural gas customer by 8.7% or \$7.11.

The MPUC may either approve, deny, or modify the requested changes, including approving a lesser or greater increase than was requested for any customer class or classes of service.

The MPUC will likely make its decision on our rate request in the fourth quarter of 2026. If final rates are lower than interim (temporary) rates, we will refund customers the difference with interest. If final rates are higher than interim rates, we will not charge customers the difference.

If you move before a refund is issued and we cannot find you, your refund may be treated as abandoned property and sent to the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Unclaimed Property Unit. You can check for unclaimed property at www.missingmoney.com. To make sure we can send you any refund owed, please provide a forwarding address when you stop service.

Public Hearings

Administrative Law Judge Kimberly Middendorf will hold six in-person public hearings and two virtual public hearings so that customers have an opportunity to comment on our request. Any Xcel Energy customer or other person may attend or provide comments at the hearings. You are invited to comment on the adequacy and quality of Xcel Energy's service, the level of rates, or other related matters. You do not need to be represented by an attorney. The hearings will begin at their scheduled time and adjourn after everyone present has had an opportunity to comment or ask questions.

PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULE		
Date	Time	Location
Monday, April 27, 2026	1:30 p.m.	Washington County Heritage Center 1862 Greeley St. S. Stillwater, MN 55082
Tuesday, April 28, 2026	1:30 p.m.	Virtual WebEx (see access details below)
Tuesday, April 28, 2026	6:30 p.m.	Wyoming Area Library 26855 Forest Blvd. Wyoming, MN 55092
Wednesday, April 29, 2026	1:30 p.m.	Great River Regional Library Bremer Room 104 404 W St. Germain St. St. Cloud, MN 56301
Monday, May 4, 2026	6:30 p.m.	Winona State University Kryzsko Commons Purple Rooms 247 - 249 500 Huff St. Winona, MN 55987
Tuesday, May 5, 2026	1:30 p.m.	Ramsey County Library Community Program Room 2180 Hamline Ave. N. Roseville, MN 55113
Tuesday, May 5, 2026	6:30 p.m.	Virtual WebEx (see access details below)
Wednesday, May 6, 2026	6:00 p.m.	Robert Trail Library Robert Trail Large Meeting Room 14395 S. Robert Trail Rosemount, MN 55068

Bad weather? Find out if a hearing is canceled—
call (toll free) **855-731-6208** or **651-201-2213**
or visit **mn.gov/puc**.

Virtual Public Hearings

Public hearings have been scheduled as follows to be held via video conference.

April 28, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. and **May 5, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.**

Attend by Internet Connection (Audio and Video)

To join the virtual hearing using a computer, tablet, or smart phone, where you will have audio and video capability, go to: <https://minnesota.webex.com>. In the gray box where it says, “Enter Meeting Information” type the Event Number below for the public hearing date you are attending:

April 28, 2026 1:30 p.m.	May 5, 2026 6:30 p.m.
Event Number: 2490 656 2535 Event Password, if needed: XCEL28	Event Number: 2489 688 6927 Event Password, if needed: XCEL55

Directions for Appearing via WebEx.

- Log on 5 to 15 minutes before the hearing begins. You will be asked to join the hearing through a WebEx application or through a plug-in for your web browser.
- Enter the Event Number shown in the box above.
- Next, you will be asked to enter your name, your email address, and an event password (if required). After entering this information, click “Join Now” and you will be granted access to the virtual hearing.
- When you enter the hearing, your microphone will be muted. If you would like to ask a question or make a comment during the meeting, use the chat function to send a message to the meeting moderator, who will place you in the queue to comment. When it is your turn to comment, your name will be called and your line will be unmuted. You will then be able to ask questions or make a comment.

To Attend by Telephone (Audio Only)

If you do not have access to a computer, tablet, or smart phone, or if you would prefer to attend the hearing via audio only, you may join using any type of telephone. You do not need internet access to call into the hearing; however, you will only be able to hear (not see) the speakers. You will still be able to comment and ask questions.

Use the information in the box below to dial into the hearing. You will be asked to enter the access code for the hearing, as set forth below:

April 28, 2026 1:30 p.m.	May 5, 2026 6:30 p.m.
Phone: 1-855-282-6330 Access Code: 2490 656 2535 Event password: 923528 from phones	Phone: 1-855-282-6330 Access Code: 2489 688 6927 Event password: 923555 from phones

If you would like to ask a question or make a comment during the hearing, **press *3** on your telephone. You will then be placed into the queue to comment. When it is your turn to speak, the last few digits of your telephone number will be announced by the moderator and your line will be unmuted, allowing you to be heard.

Public Hearing and Process Information

Administrative Law Judge Kimberly Middendorf will preside over the public hearings and will provide the Commission with findings of fact, conclusions of law, and recommendations after the conclusion of the evidentiary hearing. The purpose of the public hearings is to receive public input on the proposed rate increase. At the public hearings, interested persons have the opportunity to: (1) ask questions of the utility and agency staff; and (2) offer verbal and written comments on the merits of the proposed rate increase. Members of the public may participate without needing to intervene as a party. Representation by legal counsel is permitted but not required.

Please note that the public hearings will end when all attendees have had the opportunity to comment and all other business has been concluded. You are encouraged to join the meeting at the scheduled start time to be placed in the queue to comment. Commenters will be called in the order they enter the queue. Please arrive at the beginning of the hearing to ensure you will have time to comment. Written comments may be submitted during the comment period before and after the public hearings. Follow the instructions below to provide written comment.

Please contact **Christine Pham** at **651-201-2249** or christine.pham@state.mn.us if you have questions on how to participate or have trouble accessing the public hearing using telephone or internet.

WRITTEN COMMENTS TO THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

You can still submit comments even if you do not attend a public hearing.

Comment Period

Comments will be accepted through **May 19, 2026**.

- Comments must be received by 4:30 p.m. on the close date.
- Comments received after the comment period closes may not be considered for the record.

How to Submit a Written Comment

Written comments can be submitted via: (1) the Commission's website; (2) electronic mail; (3) U.S. Mail; or (4) fax. To learn how to submit a comment in any of these ways, please visit **mn.gov/puc**, select “Get Involved” from the dropdown menu on the top of the page, then select “Public Comments and How to Participate.” This will take you to the Public Comment page where you will find a list of ways to comment. Be sure to reference MPUC Docket No. 25-356 in the subject line of your comment. If you do not have access to the internet, you may send or deliver your comment to:

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Ste. 350
St. Paul, MN 55101

Important: Comments can be reviewed by the public on the MPUC's website, except in limited circumstances consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. The MPUC does not edit or delete personally identifying information from comments received.

EVIDENTIARY HEARINGS

Formal evidentiary hearings on Xcel Energy's proposal will be held on **May 11 – 12, 2026**, starting at **9:30 a.m.** each day. The evidentiary hearings will be held at the Public Utilities Commission, 350 Metro Square Building, 121 Seventh Place East, St. Paul, Minnesota. Individuals who cannot attend in person may attend via WebEx, a video conferencing platform. Members of the public who wish to attend the hearing through **WebEx** may request an electronic invitation by contacting MPUC staff **Christine Pham** at **651-201-2249** or christine.pham@state.mn.us.

The purpose of the evidentiary hearing is to allow Xcel Energy, the Minnesota Department of Commerce — Division of Energy Resources, the Minnesota Office of Attorney General — Residential Utilities Division, and parties who have formally joined the contested case, to present testimony and to cross-examine each other's witnesses on the proposed rate increase.

TO LEARN MORE

Xcel Energy's current and proposed rate schedules are available at:

Xcel Energy
414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis MN 55401
Phone 612-330-5500
Web: xcelenergy.com/company/rates_and_regulations/filings

Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101
Phone: 651-539-1534
Web: <https://efiling.web.commerce.state.mn.us>. Under “eDockets” select “Search Documents” insert “25-356” in the Docket #s field, select Search, and the list of documents will appear on the next page.

If you have questions about the MPUC's review process or need assistance in submitting comments, contact the Commission's Consumer Affairs Office at:

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101
Phone: 651-296-0406 or 800-657-3782
Email: consumer.puc@state.mn.us

Anyone with hearing or speech disabilities may call through their preferred Telecommunications Relay. Please contact the MPUC staff **Christine Pham** at **651-201-2249** or christine.pham@state.mn.us as soon as possible if you need an interpreter or accommodation to attend a public hearing.

PROPOSED RATES				
Customer Class	Average Monthly Usage in Ccf (or therms)	Average Monthly Bill - Current Rates	Average Monthly Bill - Interim Rates	Average Monthly Bill - Proposed Rates
Residential	71	\$82	\$88	\$89
Small Commercial	189	\$199	\$211	\$221
Large Commercial	1,303	\$1,235	\$1,300	\$1,315
Small Demand	7,924	\$6,918	\$7,293	\$7,405
Large Demand	17,776	\$15,015	\$15,809	\$16,108
Small Interruptible	6,745	\$4,633	\$4,898	\$5,001
Med. Interruptible	46,220	\$27,353	\$28,555	\$30,196
Large Interruptible	617,483	\$350,615	\$364,315	\$379,449
Large Firm Transport**	75,708	\$19,432	\$22,455	\$24,088
Small Interruptible Transport**	6,745	\$1,729	\$1,998	\$2,097
Med. Interruptible Transport**	118,174	\$19,722	\$22,724	\$26,990
Large Interruptible Transport**	2,119,680	\$88,455	\$99,345	\$88,455

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Notice of Application Completeness and Public Information and Environmental Report Scoping Meetings
In the Matter of the Application for a Certificate of Need for the PowerOn Midwest 765 kV and 345 kV High-Voltage
Transmission Line Project | DOCKET NUMBER: E002, ET2, ET6675/CN-25-117

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) will hold public information and environmental report scoping meetings on the Certificate of Need Application filed by Great River Energy, ITC Midwest LLC, and Xcel Energy (collectively, Applicants) for the proposed PowerOn Midwest Project, a combination of new 345 kilovolt (kV) and 765 kV transmission lines proposed across southern Minnesota. The Commission has determined the Certificate of Need Application is complete, which begins the review process.

Meeting Location	Date	Time
The Caboose 1045 Craig Avenue, Tracy Minnesota 56175	Tuesday, April 21, 2026	10:00 a.m. (open house) 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
Hiawatha Lodge 201 4th Street NW, Pipestone Minnesota 56164	Tuesday, April 21, 2026	5:00 p.m. (open house) 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
Worthington Event Center 1447 Prairie Drive, Worthington Minnesota 56187	Wednesday, April 22, 2026	10:00 a.m. (open house) 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
Windom Community Center 1750 Cottonwood Lake Drive Windom, Minnesota 56101	Wednesday, April 22, 2026	5:00 p.m. (open house) 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
Knights of Columbus 920 East 10th Street Fairmont, Minnesota 56031	Thursday, April 23, 2026	10:00 a.m. (open house) 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
Golden Bubble 11575 State Highway 22 Wells, Minnesota 56097	Thursday, April 23, 2026	5:00 p.m. (open house) 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
Wedgewood Cove 2200 West 9th Street Albert Lea, Minnesota 56007	Tuesday, April 28, 2026	10:00 a.m. (open house) 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
DoubleTree by Hilton 1701 Fourth Street NW Austin, Minnesota 55912	Tuesday, April 28, 2026	5:00 p.m. (open house) 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
Events Sports Bar and Grill 401 8th Street SE Kasson, Minnesota 55944	Wednesday, April 29, 2026	10:00 a.m. (open house) 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (formal meeting)
Zumbrota VFW 25 East 1st Street Zumbrota, Minnesota 55992	Wednesday, April 29, 2026	5:00 p.m. (open house) 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (formal meeting)

If any reasonable accommodation is needed to enable you to fully participate in these meetings, please contact the Commission at 651-296-0406 or 1-800-657-3782 at least one week in advance of the meeting. To find out if a meeting is canceled due to bad weather or other circumstances call 1-855-731-6208 or visit mn.gov/puc.

Online (WebEx) Meeting

Date: Thursday, April 30, 2026 Time: 6:00 p.m.

Join by WebEx (Webinar) Link: tinyurl.com/PowerOnMidwest
Webinar Number: 2485 184 0502
Webinar Password: 6pPxdnXq2t8 (67793697 from phones)

Join by Phone: 1-855-282-6330 Toll Free **Access Code:** 248 518 40502

If you are attending the meeting by WebEx and would like to ask a question or make a comment during the designated portion of the meeting, use the chat function or raise-hand function to send a message to the meeting moderator. If you are attending the meeting by phone, press *3 on your phone. When it is your turn to speak, your line will be unmuted, and you will be able to ask questions and provide comments.

Additional information and instructions are available at:
mn.gov/puc/activities/meetings/webex

Meeting Information

The purpose of the meetings is to: (1) provide information about the proposed project and the state’s high-voltage transmission line certificate of need process; and (2) provide an opportunity to participate in developing the scope of the environmental report. This includes commenting on issues or concerns related to the proposed project and proposing system alternatives for consideration.

OPEN HOUSE

Doors will open one hour prior to each meeting. Attendees will have an opportunity to review maps and materials for the project and ask questions of state staff and the Applicant. **During this time, comments made by attendees will become a part of the record for Commission consideration only if the attendee submits the comment in writing.** Forms will be available for this purpose.

FORMAL MEETING

During the formal public meeting, state staff will make a presentation on the state’s certificate of need and environmental report processes, and the Applicants will provide a summary of the proposed project. After the presentations, attendees will have the opportunity to offer oral and written comments on the record. **The meetings will end when all present attendees have commented and all other business has been concluded, or the scheduled end time of the meeting, whichever occurs first.** The information presented will be the same at all meetings.

Written Comment Period

Written comments will be accepted through **May 20, 2026, by 4:30 p.m.** Please include the docket number (25-117) in all communications. Comments received after the close of the comment period may or may not be considered by the Commission.

Please focus your comments on information that will help answer the following questions:

- Are there other ways to meet the stated need for the project, for example, a different-sized transmission line, a different type of facility, or a different timing for the proposal?
- What potential human and environmental impacts or unique characteristics of the proposed project should be considered in the environmental report?
- Are there any methods to minimize, mitigate, or avoid potential impacts of the proposed project that should be considered in the environmental report?

Comments may be submitted:

Online: mn.gov/puc/consumers/public-comments
Email: consumer.puc@state.mn.us
U.S. Mail: Consumer Affairs Office, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101

Comments will be made available to the public via the Commission’s website except in limited circumstances consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. The Commission does not edit or delete personal identifying information from submissions.

Project Description

The PowerOn Midwest Project would involve constructing and operating new high-voltage electric transmission lines (765 kV and 345 kV) across southern Minnesota as part of a broader proposed 3,600-mile new and upgraded regional transmission network in the Midwest.

In Minnesota, the PowerOn Midwest Project would include the following components:

1. Approximately 271 miles of new single-circuit 765 kV high-voltage transmission lines proposed between:
 - South Dakota/Minnesota border → Lakefield Junction Substation (Jackson County) (approximately 92 miles)
 - Lakefield Junction Substation → Minnesota/Iowa border (approximately 18 miles)
 - Lakefield Junction Substation → Pleasant Valley Substation (Mower County) (approximately 130 miles)
 - Pleasant Valley Substation → North Rochester Substation (Goodhue County) (approximately 31 miles)
2. Approximately 31 miles of new 345 kV circuit between: Pleasant Valley Substation → North Rochester Substation, by replacing existing single-circuit structures with new double-circuit-capable structures.

3. A second 345 kV circuit (approximately 38 miles) added between: North Rochester Substation → Hampton Substation (Dakota County), using the existing double-circuit-capable structures.
4. Expansions and upgrades at Lakefield Junction, Pleasant Valley, North Rochester, and Hampton substations, including 345 kV transmission line connections between select existing and expanded substations.

At this time, the Applicants have not developed proposed routes for the public to consider and provide comments on. Applicants expect to file separate route permit applications with the Commission in the first quarter of 2027. The Commission will review these applications as separate proceedings under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216I and will hold meetings and hearings on the route permit applications, providing an opportunity for the public to comment at that time.

The project is part of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) Long Range Transmission Planning Tranche 2.1 projects, approved in July 2024 under the MISO Transmission Expansion Plan 2024 (MTEP24). MISO and the Applicants have identified a need for up to 10,000 megawatts of additional electrical transmission capacity in Minnesota.

As described in the Certificate of Need Application and the MTEP24, the project is intended to:

- Address projected electric reliability overloads and provide support for compliance with national electric reliability standards;
- Improve efficiency and stability in meeting current and future state and regional reliability needs;
- Provide transmission capacity to serve forecasted residential, commercial, and industrial demand, supporting Minnesota’s and the Midwest region’s long-term growth; and
- Support replacing aging or cost-inefficient generation with new generation resources, including carbon-free generation, while maintaining system reliability.

Review Process

The Commission must approve a certificate of need before the project can be constructed. The review process includes environmental review and public hearings.

Environmental Review. The Commission is tasked with preparing an environmental report as part of the certificate of need application review process. The environmental report must contain the information outlined in Minn. R. 7849.1500, which includes the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project as well as the evaluation of alternatives such as no-build, demand-side management, purchased power, different-sized facilities, upgrading existing facilities, generation instead of transmission, and renewable energy alternatives.

Public Hearings. After the environmental report is prepared, public hearings will be held throughout the proposed project area. The hearings will be presided over by an administrative law judge from the Court of Administrative Hearings. At the hearings, members of the public will have an opportunity to make an oral presentation, present evidence, and ask questions of the Applicants and state staff. Upon completion of the public hearing process, the Commission will make a final decision on whether to issue a certificate of need.

Additional Information

Minnesota Statutes and Rules. This project is being reviewed under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216B.243 and Minnesota Rules chapters 7829 and 7849. The statutes and rules are available for review at: revisor.mn.gov.

Review Process. Information on the certificate of need review process for large energy infrastructure facilities is available on the Commission’s website at: puc.eip.mn.gov/certificates-of-need.

Filing Requirements. Utilities, telecommunications carriers, official parties, and state agencies are required to file documents using the Commission’s electronic filing system (eFiling). All parties, participants, and interested persons are also encouraged to use eFiling: edockets.state.mn.us, select *Sign In/Register* and follow the prompts.

Full Case Record. See all documents filed in this matter via the Commission’s website at: edockets.state.mn.us, select *Search Documents*, enter the docket number (25-117), and select *Search*.

Subscribe to the Docket. To receive email notification when new documents are filed in this matter visit: edockets.state.mn.us, select *Subscriptions*.

Project Mailing List. Sign up to receive notices about project milestones and opportunities to participate or change your mailing preference. Email eservice.admin@state.mn.us or call 651-201-2246 with the docket number (25-117), your name, mailing address, and email address.

Project Website: puc.eip.mn.gov/web/project/25117

Contacts

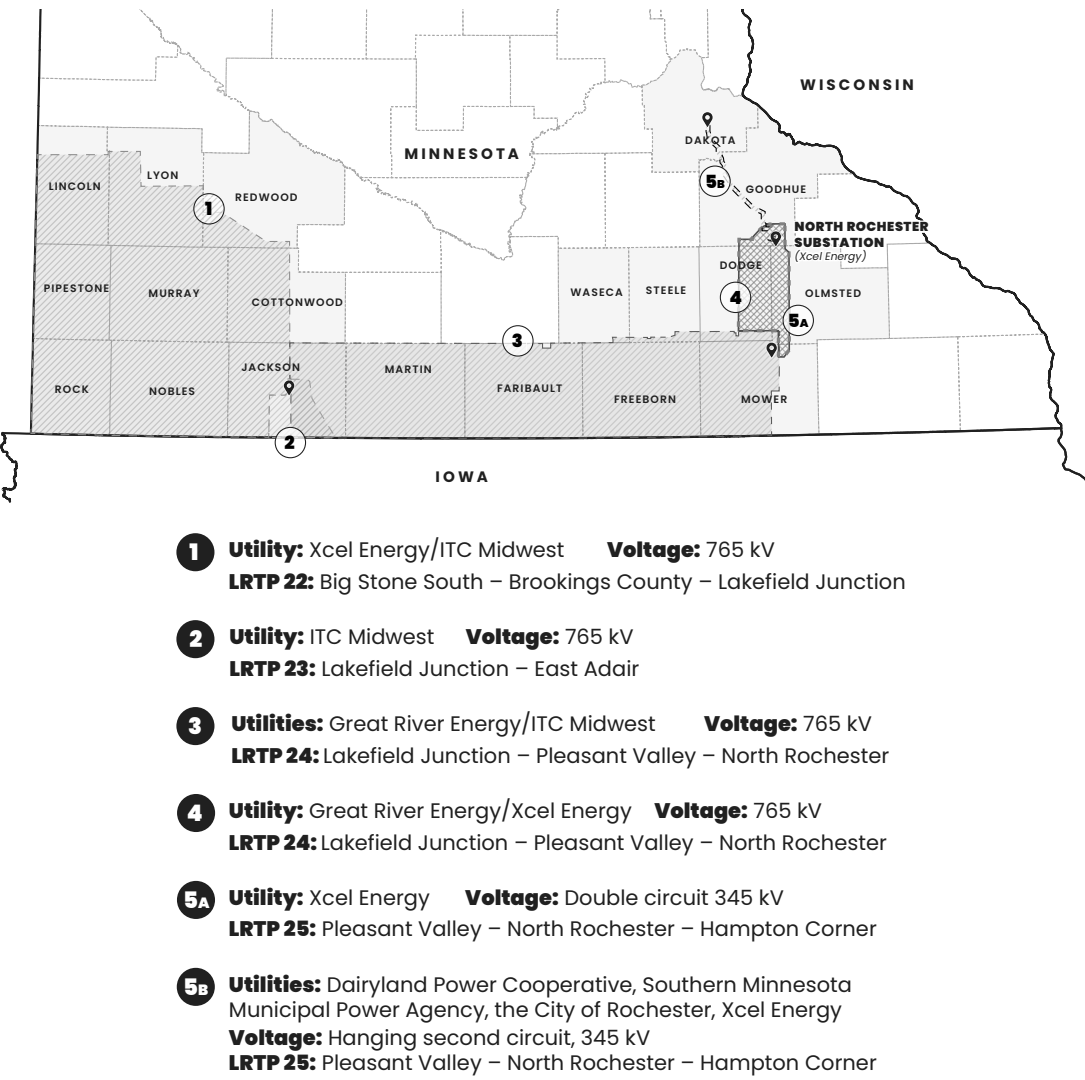
MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Scott Ek, scott.ek@state.mn.us or 651-539-1070
Lauren Agnew, lauren.agnew@state.mn.us or 651-201-2198
Tess Kothlow, tessa.kothlow@state.mn.us or 651-539-1069

APPLICANTS

Dan Leshner, Great River Energy, Connect@PowerOnMidwest.com or 888-283-4678

To request this document in another format such as large print or audio, call 651-296-0406 (voice). Persons with a hearing or speech impairment may call using their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service or email consumer.puc@state.mn.us for assistance.



LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage: Mortgagor: Bruce Hindt, a single man and Bobbie Medin, a single woman as joint tenants Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for United Wholesale Mortgage, its successors and assigns Dated: March 1, 2019 Recorded: March 4, 2019 Waseca County Recorder Document No. 317295 Assigned To: NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing Dated: March 10, 2023 Recorded: March 10, 2023	Waseca County Recorder Document No. A333093 Transaction Agent: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. Transaction Agent Mortgage Identification Number: 100032412190364668 Lender or Broker: United Wholesale Mortgage Residential Mortgage Servicer: Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing Mortgage Originator: United Wholesale Mortgage LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: The South Twenty (20) feet of Lots One (1) and Two (2) and the South Twenty feet of the West Half (W1/2) of Lot Three (3), Block Two (2), Wards Addition to the Village, now City, of Waseca, Minnesota, and the North Fifty (50) feet of Lots One (1) and Two (2) and the North Fifty (50) feet of the West Half (W1/2) of Lot Three (3), Block One (1), Lakeview Addition to the Village, now City, of Waseca, Minnesota, according to the Plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the County Recorder in and for Waseca County, Minnesota This is Abstract Property.	TAX PARCEL NO.: 17.427.0010 & 17.702.0110 ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 123 8th St Se Waseca, MN 56093 COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Waseca ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$148,566.00 AMOUNT DUE AND CLAIMED TO BE DUE AS OF DATE OF NOTICE: \$145,072.47 That prior to the commencement of this mortgage foreclosure proceeding Mortgagee/Assignee of Mortgagee complied with all notice requirements as required by statute; that no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part; PURSUANT to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be	sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows: DATE AND TIME OF SALE: June 4, 2026, 10:00 AM PLACE OF SALE: Sheriff's Main Office, 122 3rd Avenue NW, Waseca, MN to pay the debt then secured by said Mortgage, and taxes, if any, on said premises, and the costs and disbursements, including attorneys' fees allowed by law subject to redemption within 6 Months from the date of said sale by the mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns. DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: The date on or before which the mortgagor must vacate the property if the mortgage is not reinstated under Minnesota Statutes section 580.30 or the property redeemed under Minnesota Statutes section 580.23 is December 4, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: NONE THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW	FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED. Important Notice to Potential Bidders: Federal law administered by the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network ("FinCEN"), a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, requires certain residential real estate transactions to be reported to the federal government. If you are the winning bidder at auction, you may be required to provide identifying information about yourself and, if applicable, any entity or trust purchasing the property. This information is required by federal law and must be provided to complete the sale. Failure to provide required	information after the sale may delay or prevent issuance of the foreclosure deed. Dated: March 18, 2026 NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing By: HALLIDAY, WATKINS & MANN, P.C. Attorneys for: NewRez LLC d/b/a Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing 1333 Northland Drive, Suite 205 Mendota Heights, MN 55120 801-355-2886 651-228-1753 (fax) THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. MN25334. Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 and May 7, 2026
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State of Minnesota District Court Freeborn County Third District Court File Number: 24-JV-26-307 Case Type: CHIPS - Permanency Summons and Notice – Termination of Parental Rights Matter In the Matter of the Welfare of the Child(ren) of: Kristi Mary Smith, Mother and Jesse Allen Tollefson, Father	NOTICE TO: Jesse Allen Tollefson, Above-named parent(s) or legal custodian(s). • A Termination of Parental Rights Petition has been filed in the Juvenile Court alleging that parental rights of the above-named parent(s) or legal custodian(s) to the child(ren) named in the petition should be permanently severed. • This is your notice that this Termination of Parental Rights case is scheduled for a hearing before the Juvenile Court located at 411 South Broadway Albert Lea MN 56007,	on May 11, 2026 at 2:30 pm or as soon after as the case can be heard. Please contact court administration to get the hearing information. • YOU ARE ORDERED to appear before the Juvenile Court at the scheduled time and date.	• You have a right to be represented by counsel. • If you fail to appear at the hearing, the Court may still conduct the hearing and grant appropriate relief, including permanently severing the parental rights of the above-named	parent(s) or legal custodian(s) or taking permanent custody of the child(ren) named in the Petition. Dated: March 24, 2026 Rebecca S. Mittag Court Administrator	Freeborn County District Court 411 South Broadway Albert Lea MN 56007 507-668-6014 Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on April 2, 9 and 16, 2026
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PUBLIC NOTICE

AA Self Storage will sell at public auction the contents of delinquent units in Waseca on which payment is past due. The auction will be conducted online at storage treasures.com about April 20, 2026.

The content of these units is unknown. The names of persons renting the units are:
John and Rochelle Schoknecht
Lynn Lucas
Justina Edlund
Arnie Lien

PILLOW CLEANING
Same Day Service by Carlson's Pillow Cleaning

Cleaned • Deodorized • Sanitized • Fluffed

Sat, April 18th
8 am to 1 pm
at Sacred Heart
Parish Center
(use East door)

Funds used in support of
Sacred Heart School & Students,
Bethlehem Inn of Waseca,
Pregnancy Options in Faribault,
Habitat for Humanity
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Feather, Crushed Foam, & Microfiber pillows are cleaned, deodorized, sanitized, & new ticking (cover) put on

Custom Made New Feather & Down pillows available for sale!

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For information contact Pat
at 507-461-6095

GARAGE SALE

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MERIDEN

ANNUAL INDOOR GARAGE SALE

FRIDAY APRIL 10TH - 11 AM - 6 PM
SAT., APRIL 11TH - 8 AM - 1 PM
FIND SOMETHING FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!
SHOP & ENJOY LUNCH (AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE)

Get your news in the Pioneer

- news@wasecacountypioneer.com

**CITY OF WASECA
CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

NOTICE is hereby given that the **City of Waseca City Council** will hold a Public Hearing at **7:00 p.m., on Tuesday, April 21, 2026**, in the **COUNCIL CHAMBERS of CITY HALL** located at 508 South State Street in Waseca, Minnesota.

The purpose of the Public Hearings is to gather information regarding the following:

- **ORDINANCE NO. 1142:** Proposed vacation of drainage and utility easements adjacent to Lots 5, 6, and 7, Block 2, of Fox Meadows 2nd Addition.

Complete copies of the proposed ordinance are available in the office of the City Clerk located at 508 South State Street in Waseca, Minnesota.

Those interested in commenting may appear in person or by counsel or may submit written comments to the City of Waseca at 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

Upon request, accommodations will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Waseca services, programs, and activities.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on Thursday, April 9, 2026.

Information provided by Waseca County:

Important Information Regarding Assessment and Classification of Property

This may affect your property tax payments.

Notice is hereby given that the Board of Appeal and Equalization of the City of Waseca shall meet on **Monday, April 13th, from 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**, in the City Council Chamber, at Waseca City Hall, located at 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether taxable property in the jurisdiction has been properly valued and classified by the assessor, and also to determine whether corrections need to be made.

If you believe the value or classification of your property is incorrect, please contact your assessor's office to discuss your concerns. If you are still not satisfied with the valuation or classification after discussing it with your assessor, you may appear before the local board of appeal and equalization (LBAE). The board shall review the valuation, classification, or both if necessary, and shall correct if needed. Generally, an appearance before your local board of appeal and equalization is required by law before an appeal can be taken to your county board of appeal and equalization.

Waseca County Assessor can be reached at 507-835-0630

CITY OF WASECA

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Bids will be received electronically through **QuestCDN vBid Online Bidding ONLY**, until **10:00 A.M., CDT, Tuesday, April 28, 2026**, no paper bids will be accepted; at which time they will be publicly opened through the QuestCDN vBid process and read aloud online for the furnishing of all labor, materials, and all else necessary for the following:

WASECA PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING ROOF REPLACEMENT – City Project No. 2026-13

In general, Work consists of removal of the existing roofing systems on the Public Safety Building, along with the prefinished metal copings and fascia, roof area dividers, and roof drains. The project also includes installation of a new fully adhered EPDM roofing system with thermal barrier over the existing metal roof decking, new roof drains, new overflow roof drains, and new prefinished metal copings and fascia.

A **MANDATORY Pre-Bid Meeting** will be held on **Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 9:00 A.M., CDT** starting at the Waseca Public Safety Building, 303 South State Street Waseca, MN 56093. All Contractors wishing to submit a Bid on this Project must attend the Pre-Bid Meeting.

Complete digital Bidding Documents are available at www.questcdn.com. You may view the digital plan documents at no charge or download the digital plan documents for \$30 by inputting **Quest Project #10129777** 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 and vBid Online Bid Submittal. To submit an vBid online bid (which is required for this project) you must download the project bid document file from QuestCDN which will add you to the plan holders list and gain you access to vBid Online Bidding. The City will only receive bids from bidders who are on the approved Plan Holder's List. To be on the approved Plan Holder's List, bidders must acquire the plans as defined above. **Direct inquiries to Engineer's Project Manager Bruce Paulson at (612) 712-2108.**

Each bidder must submit with his bid a certified or a cashier's check upon some reputable bank of the State of Minnesota, payable to the City of Waseca, for at least **5 (five) percent** of the total amount of such bid, which check and the amount thereof, shall be forfeited to the City of Waseca, as liquidated damages if the bidder upon the letting of the contract to him, shall fail to enter into the contract so let. The bidder may submit a bidder's bond written through an insurance agency or cash in the same amount in lieu of a certified check. The successful bidder will be required to furnish contract performance and payment bonds, each in the full amount of the contract.

All bidders must be able to submit to the City a sworn statement demonstrating that it is a responsible contractor as defined by Minnesota Statutes, § 16C.285 and the failure to provide such a statement will render any bid non-responsive.

Bidders shall submit their bids electronically on the QuestCDN website. Bidders shall submit their bids in accordance with the procedure established by QuestCDN. Bidders shall submit their bids by the date and time set for opening Proposals. QuestCDN and the City will not accept Bids submitted past the date and time for the opening of bids. The Bidders shall submit the Bid Guarantee electronically by the date and time set for opening of Bids. Bidders shall file an original hard copy of the Bid Guaranty with the City within 48 hours after the date and time for the opening of Bids. The Owner reserves the right to retain the deposits of the 3 lowest Bidders for a period not to exceed 30 days after the date and time set for the Opening of Bids. No Bids may be withdrawn for a period of 30 days after the date and time set for the Opening of Bids. The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, to waive irregularities and informalities therein, and further reserves the right to award the Contract to the best interests of the Owner.

Carl Sonnenberg, City Manager
City of Waseca, Minnesota

Publish in Waseca County Pioneer: April 2, 2026, and April 9, 2026.

The Mill Beanbag League



Tier 1 champions Cody Hyatt and Nick Sillman.



Tier 1 runner-ups Theo Helms and Tristan Hoy.



Tier 2 champions Scott Prokopec and Dan Soller.



Tier 2 runner-ups Shelley and Travis Hyatt.



Tier 5 champions Audrey Williams and Alexis Barber.



Tier 3 runner-ups Jacob Harty and Noah Androli.



Tier 4 champions Tom Ross and Roy Peterson.



Tier 3 champions Titus Mokoff and Noah Patterson.



Tier 4 runner-ups Jerry Harguth and Alec Dwyer.

CORNHOLE - The Mill wrapped up their eighth Beanbag League on Monday, March 23. "From year 1 starting with 20 teams with an upper/lower division to now 60 teams with 5 tiers along with the airmail and cash bag drag, we have come a long way!"the Mill posted on Facebook. Pictured here are each tier's champion and runner up, with the exception of Tier 5's runner-ups Joe Hoehn and Tom Peterson, who are not pictured.

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Rick's Appliance
CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAY
SNACKS & GREAT DEALS! SATURDAY, APRIL 18th • 9 AM - 2 PM



Come join us at:
405 Elm Ave W.. Waseca, MN 56093





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Whirlpool **GE** **MAYTAG** **KitchenAid**

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