



■ **Inside:**

- **3** - Pheasant Cafe
- **3** - Windmill history
- **4** - Past & Present
- **5** - Cosmetologists
- **8-9** - History
- **10** - Best Thai
- **10** - Purple Goose
- **11** - Swim & Stories
- **16** - Model T Tour



LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 31 Vol. IV \$2 Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca Thursday, July 31, 2025

■ Page 16

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Office hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on weekdays, closed on Wednesdays.

Superhero Cape Workshop at Janesville Public Library July 31

Be ready to save the world in style! Learn how to use a sewing machine to make a superhero cape at 10 a.m. at the Janesville Public Library on Thursday, July 31. For ages 5-12. Registration required.

Virtual Author Event: Pria Anand Waseca-LeSueur Library System on July 31

Author Pria Anand will chat about her new book “The Mind Electric”: A Neurologist on the Strangeness and Wonder of Our Brains at a virtual Waseca-Le Sueur Regional Library System event at 1 pm on Thurs., July 31.

Katy Tessman at Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm Thurs., July 31

Singer-songwriter Katy Tessman will be performing at the Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm from 4-8 p.m. Thursday, July 31. A mother, author and young survivor of breast cancer, she aims to help people find strength, courage and optimism.

Flowers in Literature Exhibit at Waseca Public Library in August

Learn about the Language of Flowers, explore author gardens, and discover flowers in literature at this pop-up Waseca-Le Sueur Regional Library System exhibit. This interactive exhibit features handmade flowers, a flower seed library, and more! The exhibit runs during the month of August at Waseca Public Library during open hours. This exhibit is for all ages.

Yaunt 2 Rodeo cancer fundraiser Aug. 2

The Yaunt 2 Rodeo organization’s annual cancer fundraiser will be from noon until about 6 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 2 at the Yaunt 2 Ranch, located at the intersection of 200th Avenue and 180th Street.

Waseca Garden Club’s Summer Garden Tour Saturday, August 2

The Waseca Garden Club’s annual Summer Garden Tour will be from 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 2. There will be five stops with maps and refreshments starting at the Bailey-Lewer House at 401 2nd Ave. NE. This event is free of charge but donations are accepted.

A word from The Word

The Spirit of the Lord will come powerfully upon you, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed.

Psalms 27:4



RIDE THE WAVES - The Bayside Water Skiers, based in Albert Lea, hosted the regional water ski competition on Clear Lake in Waseca on the weekend of July 26 and 27. Photos by Deb Bently

Clear Lake hosts regional water ski competition Surprise, Waseca!

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

The Bayside Water Skiers organization, based in Albert Lea, had been planning to host the regional water ski competition for about the past year, according to tournament manager and Bayside member Brad Belcher.

Organizers found out less than 24 hours in advance that they would have to move it to an alternate location.

Belcher explains that thanks to recent rains, water levels had been rising in Fountain Lake, where the Bayside group gives water ski performances on Thursday evenings throughout the season, and where the tournament was scheduled to take place beginning around 8 a.m. on Friday, July 25. On Thursday morning, Belcher was contacted by the Freeborn County sheriff and warned water levels had become such that a “no wake” rule might have to be imposed. By Thursday at noon, he was told the tournament could not take place there.

By 3 p.m., he shared, he had spoken with the City of Waseca and with Waseca County sheriff Jay Dulas, and a transfer to the Waseca location was already underway.

Not that it was easy, but the way was smoothed a bit because Belcher is acquainted with Clear Lake thanks to being a season-long camper at Kiesler’s. Bayside skier Dan Kopschke lives in Waseca.

According to Belcher, had the Waseca location not worked out, the tournament might have needed to be moved to the home base of one of the

Surprise continued on 10

On to the next level Russell picks Washington State for football

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

According to Waseca High School football coach Brad Wendland, Damarius Russell has everything it takes to be a Division I athlete.

He’s proven that.

Russell, a 2025 graduate of WHS, will begin his Division I quest this fall for the football team at Washington State University.

Go ahead, pick your superlative: humble, hard-working, tenacious. All, according to his coaches, describe Russell, who got started in athletics at a very young age.

“It’s all I’ve known and focused on ever since I was little,” said Russell.

Russell continued on 6



A BRIGHT FUTURE - Waseca High School graduate Damarius Russell participated in track, football, and basketball during his high school career. Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens



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Compostings

by Al Batt

A century farm

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I was going to get a new car, but I decided not to.

You couldn't find the perfect car? I didn't need to. The check engine light on my current vehicle finally burned out.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. Minnesota is known for having crummy weather. That might be a fair or an unfair assessment. If you visit the warmer parts of this country, the residents there might wince when they mention the Gopher State's winter weather. Winter weather isn't a problem when it comes time for the county fairs to arrive at a gallop, and a family's diet plan involves sticks. Omnivores become carnivores who stroll past cows that are enjoying their favorite fair food—hay. A fair is a place for lollygagging and exhibiting gluttony. I walked by a ride on the midway that I found frightening, and it wasn't even operating.

I'VE LEARNED

To remember the five types of Pacific salmon (chinook or king, coho or silver, sockeye or red, pink or humpback, and chum or dog), use the "5 Finger Method." Associate each finger with a salmon type: thumb for chum, index finger for sockeye (poke in the eye), middle finger for king (the largest salmon), ring finger for silver (like a ring), and pinky for pink.

Sometimes it's worth going into a store just for the air conditioning.

Older people might develop health problems because they have eaten too much angel food birthday cake with melted candle wax on it.

When you decide to rest on your laurels, make sure they aren't poison ivy.

The world's largest American coot statue is in Ashby, Minnesota. Coots Unlimited is the local sportsmen's club with the objective to foster, encourage, promote, educate and develop an appreciation for conservation practices.

There is an easy way to tell if your house is haunted or not. It's not.

According to the Social Security Administration, the most popular baby names for 2024 were Liam for the eighth year in a row for boys, and Olivia for the sixth year in a row for girls. Emma was second for girls and Amelia third. Noah was the second most popular for boys, and Oliver third.

Spiders have eight eyes, making it difficult for a young spider to keep its eyes on its own paper in school. I was blown away when I saw my first wind turbine.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

What is the heaviest soup? Wonton.

What do you call an extremely fast alligator? An insta-gator!

The woman who stole the lamp from a home improvement store received a light sentence.

If there is one thing I can't deal with, it's a deck of cards that have been glued together.

Why aren't koalas bears? It's because they don't have the necessary koalafications.

During my physical exam, my doctor checked my eyesight by having me read the numbers on a chart on the wall. "One, two, three, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten," I read. When I asked for my diagnosis, the MD told me I lacked foresight.

THE NEWS FROM

HARTLAND HAROLD

There was a century farm celebration at the Darwyn and Donna Olson Farm. A good time was had by all. The two are delightful people, but Donna is far from 100 years old.

NATURE NOTES

There is plenty of insect pressure (mosquitoes, gnats, deer flies and stable flies) this year, but there is plenty of insect pleasure, too. Fireflies and monarch butterflies are headliners. A summer azure is a tiny powder blue butterfly that flies in June, July and August, much to my delight.

Tree swallows are staging on utility wires before beginning their fall migration in July and August, heading for Florida and Central America. They gather to reason together. I spotted two barred owls near one another. I suspect they were in cahoots. The owls have asymmetrical ears, with one higher than the other. Hearing from two different angles helps them pinpoint the location of prey.

There are chiggers in Minnesota. I taste just like chicken to them. Their bites get in all kinds of places on a body. Chiggers go boldly where no one has gone before. Chiggers are larval forms of a mite. They don't drink our blood or burrow into our skin, but they have a taste for dissolved body tissues. Putting fingernail polish or petroleum jelly on the bites doesn't help anyone except the manufacturers of those products. Chiggers like heat and humidity. Tall grass, moist areas around lakes or rivers, and wooded areas are likely to harbor chiggers. The bites of chiggers itch enough to keep a mind preoccupied. I take my mind off the itching with an intentional earworm, forcing a song to stick in my head. "It's a Small World" works well.

MEETING ADJOURNED

It's your right to be kind to everyone.



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

Take notice and keep thinking

This past week has been one of "extremes" for me.

Overnight into Thursday, my area seems to have gotten somewhere between four and six inches of rain, depending on whose rain gauge is regarded as the most reliable. I know I heard pounding rain on the roof through much of the night, and in the morning there was water across the gravel road a ways down from my house. This has happened before, since the road crosses through a relatively low area not far from the LeSueur River, but it doesn't happen often.

I couldn't help driving the couple of hundred feet to the edge of the overflowing water just to have a look. The water was probably six inches deep at its deepest, but was flowing quickly across the road, washing sand away and leaving a gravelly surface which gave the water the appearance of a miniature rapids.

While I was there, my heart went out to three killdeer who were wandering about in confusion and apparent distress.

All through this summer, I've been taking note of the birds. They often make their nests in tall grass next to the road. They have a daring way of dealing with predators. When a threat approaches, the bird will walk

out in the open, often making sounds of apparent distress. That call, which sounds somewhat like the words "kill deer" to a human, is piercing.

The defensive technique is that, once the predator has moved away from the nest by following the apparently injured and easy target, the bird suddenly recovers and flies away. All summer, the birds seem to have been trying that technique as my car approached, as though the vehicle were a predator. Hoping I was the worst danger their nests were faced with, it made me smile to see them.

But now they had been confounded by a force greater than any of us on the road. That had come to include the driver of a semi truck loaded with gravel which had arrived, unaware the place he was meant to deposit his load was no longer in condition to receive it. The driver came to a stop in the middle of the road, greeted me, then walked a short way out into the water. "My boots are supposed to be waterproof," he observed—and apparently they were, since he made no complaint. The water came over the top of his feet, but no higher. "I know they say not to drive through moving water," he said, "but backing a loaded semi rig a mile to the last intersection isn't an option."

During our brief conversation, the



WEATHERING CHANGE- This killdeer was confounded when overflowing waters covered its roadside nest.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

killdeer rushed about—now confused both by the presence of humans and the inexplicable disappearance of their nests. At one point, one of the birds walked into the deeper water along the side of the road; the bird appeared to be swimming, with its belly touching the water. I thought of their long-defended nests and wondered sadly whether they had washed away or were simply submerged.

As the week progressed, I thought of the birds persistently, and of nature's harsh realities.

The birds' tragedy contrasted with the essentially triumphant experience of the Bayside Waterski Club out of Albert Lea. They, too, were victims of a sort of "washout," with Fountain Lake so full of water a no wake rule had to be imposed. Human ingenuity—and technology based on some of those same laws of nature that made the flooding inevitable once the rain fell—allowed them to relo-

cate their elaborate large-scale event with less than 24 hours' notice.

I guess my moments watching the birds put me in the mood for reflection. I noticed and appreciated the rich greens of summer as I drove by stands of trees. As I moved about in the oppressive heat, I thought of the indigenous people who once experienced similar weather while dressed in leather clothing. I thought of them, too, sheltering during rainstorms in structures which could hold out only a certain amount of water.

It seemed there was a figurative valley for every hill I came upon.

I spoke with kind and giving individuals doing things they love. Those people were like shining lights, emanating goodwill and generosity. I learned of others in our communities whose deeds are like dark caves, too frightening even for the imagination to enter.

Bently continued on 11

A reporter's journey to the Pioneer

Four years ago, I had just finished my freshman year at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities. I had just been accepted into the Hubbard School of Journalism and was looking forward to beginning real journalism classes in the fall. I had also been accepted and invited to work with Eli Lutgens at the New Richland Star Eagle.

The way I came around to that was a conglomerate of things. First, I had applied to be a part of the internship program with the Minnesota Valley Action Council, where they were helping me to find an internship within Waseca while also helping me with things such as interviewing and preparing for a job. I had first asked to be a part of the Waseca County News, the only Waseca newspaper at the time. After some inquiries and questioning, my advisor decided the County News wasn't going to work out.

I had, however, been contacted by one of the Waseca High School English teachers at the time. She knew that I was going to school for journalism and forwarded Eli's contact information, as he had emailed her about looking for young reporters to help start a new newspaper in Waseca.

So I reached out. Lucky for me, Eli was interested.



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

As everything fell into place, it turned out I would not only be contributing to the Star Eagle, I would also be part of the team which got the Waseca County Pioneer up and running.

The rest is history. I started my journey in newspapers doing the same menial task Eli had done when he started out—"tear sheets." This is something most newspaper readers have no reason to concern themselves with: After each edition is printed, many copies of the paper are torn apart, and advertisers are sent the "sheets" (more generally referred to as "pages") as proof their advertisements appeared. It's a simple but important task which, with a little training, almost anyone could do. Fortunately, Eli saw enough promise in me to advance me to more and more of the tasks needed to run a newspaper. I learned billing, putting together photo pages, and writing my own stories.

As the Pioneer was growing to become more and more real, the first publication date looming, I got more involved with that. Helping get the new office ready, contacting area churches to put together the information about locations and service times, even running the newspaper's booth at the fair, a perfect place to call attention to our new publication.

I like to think there are little parts of me everywhere, intertwined within the Pioneer. I took the picture that is now the banner at the top of each front page, the one of a person fishing on Clear Lake. I painted the current office, the former Ward House Brewery. And now, I'm the person who assembles and designs the graphic appearance of the paper: Using a computer program, I put the stories and headlines in place, fitting the puzzle pieces together.

Every year of college, I expected something to come along which would pull me away from my work

with the Pioneer family and from my summer job in Waseca. But nothing was ever as good as this. And every year I found myself coming back, despite always saying I never intended to live in Waseca.

Here I am, four years later, grateful for every opportunity and every learning moment presented to me. As time went on, I learned more and more about the way the Pioneer works and took on more complex tasks, eventually working my way from reporter to editorial assistant and soon, editor.

Thank you to Eli for deciding to take a chance on a college freshman. And for continuing to offer chances to grow and learn. Thank you to Deb for all your kind words of wisdom and support, and for always putting a smile on my face. Thank you Ben for being a great reporter to work with.

And thank you, reader, for sticking with everything this paper and I have gone through. For deciding to continue to read my sometimes wild and crazy thoughts as a young 21-year-old journalist making it through life.

My Determination: "I have hated words and I have loved them, and I hope I have made them right." — Markus Zusak, The Book Thief

Reflecting on time's passing

Thank you to our readers, advertisers, employees and everyone who makes the Waseca County Pioneer possible. As we celebrate our third anniversary and begin our fourth year, I want to reflect, personally, on the time that's passed.

The first three years of the Pioneer have been a battle.

Over the first year and a half or so of the newspaper, I took only three personal days.

One was for my grandfather's celebration of life.

I took another after the death of my best friend.

And one, entire day, for sleep due to utter exhaustion.

I remember that day of sleep. I woke up, relieved myself, and went back to sleep. Woke up, ate something, went back to sleep. Woke up, relieved myself and went back to sleep. And Friday became Sunday.

Just like that, 2022 became 2025 and soon, 2026.

The road thus far has not gone entirely as I planned, but we're here and we're stronger than we were



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

three years ago.

Our newspaper team includes a star studded group.

Deb, our editor, I consider to be a second mother and one of the best editors in the state.

My dad, Jim, our sports editor, I consider to be the best in the state and one of my best friends and mentors.

Jon Lucca is the best graphic designer in Waseca County, incredibly reliable and most important to me, he's my friend.

Ben Revermann, our lead reporter, is a workhorse. A soldier through and through. I ask a great deal of him, and he responds willingly, promptly, and to the best of his ability.

Amelia Roessler, our newest [I hope it's safe to say] editor. She's been the best assistant I could have dreamed of or prayed for. Smart, talented, charming and incredibly driven, she will succeed at whatever she does with her life. I hope the Pioneer remains in her plans and we help fulfill some of her dreams.

Many other people help make the newspaper possible every week.

Teresa, who sells our ads and staffs the office, thank you for making thousands of phone calls and keeping the door open. (Teresa has a young child at home who sometimes keeps her away from the office. If you're ever wondering why the office is closed randomly from time to time,

she is home with a sick child.)

Dave Zika, our home-town columnist, is one of the best. Truly, I enjoy conversation with him more than I can express in words. He warms my heart and tingles my soul.

The local pastors, thank you for your weekly columns. That was something I wanted for a long time and was not possible until a driven local leader (not me) made it happen.

Rachael Jaeger and Michael Roy. I'm sorry your full time positions with the newspaper came to an end. I appreciate the contributions you both made and continue to make to small town journalism.

To my newspaper route driver, House of Print and the local USPS, thank you for printing and delivering the newspaper, rain or snow or ice, week in and week out.

To everyone else who has contributed to the paper in any way, you are too numerous to list, thank you.

And finally, to you, our readers and advertisers. Thank you for staying with us. Here's to many stories, issues and years to come.



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GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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AMELIA ROESSLER	Editorial Assistant

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Local man charged with sexual misconduct

Waseca businessman Jon Stagman, 51, has been charged with seven counts of felony level criminal sexual conduct involving a minor. Stagman has posted \$25,000 bail and has agreed to numerous conditions. Among them are GPS monitoring and no contact with people under the age of 18. Stagman must not possess any pornographic or sexually explicit material, may not leave Minnesota without written court approval, and must submit to random testing to ensure he is not using any mood-altering chemicals.



Stagman

Stagman is scheduled for an omnibus hearing, a session at which evidence is sometimes evaluated and the process is made smooth to proceed to a trial, on August 11. Third Judicial District chief judge Christine Long, who usually hears cases in Rice County, will preside. Waseca County District Court judge Carol Hanks and Rice County District Court judge Karie Anderson have both recused themselves from the case.

Felonies of the type Stagman is charged with each carry a maximum penalty of 30 years' incarceration and/or fines of up to \$40,000.

In 1997, Jon and Jill Stagman opened Pantheon Computers in Waseca. Jill Stagman is the current leader of the company, which offers internet technology and security services.

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Pheasant Cafe offers tradition, consistency

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Zach Battenfeld, owner of Waseca's Pheasant Cafe since 2020, recognizes that he owns an icon. Hanging on the wall in the cafe is the text of a short Waseca Herald newspaper article dated 1940. It tells how Joel Wallschlager was in the process of moving his home-based business to a downtown location where it would have "six booths, a counter, seven stools, and tables." Not only that, but it would be "completely equipped electrically" and therefore ready to serve "regular breakfasts, lunches, dinner and short orders."

The Pheasant Cafe, located at 104 South State Street, officially opens at 6 a.m. each morning. Battenfeld typically arrives around 4:30 a.m. "I get the coffee brewing. I put the cinnamon rolls in the oven, and just generally get ready for the day,"

At 5:30, he opens the doors for his first group of "regulars." Larry Halvorson is among that group which can be as large as eight people each morning or as small as five. Halvorson, retired from his career as a commercial insurance agent, says he and his companions are naturally early risers who spend up to 45 minutes each morning in conversation about "just about any topic." "Zach is a real nice guy," Halvorson says. "He works really hard; he opens the door for us at that hour when I can't think of any other business in town that would." Although most members of the 5:30 group stick to coffee and perhaps a roll, Halvorson says he knows the breakfasts are very good, since he and his wife sometimes come in a bit later in the morning for some food.

The Pheasant has six employees in addition to Battenfeld. "All of us can do pretty much anything that's called for," he observes. "In a small cafe like ours, you have to be pretty versatile."

A 2005 graduate of Waseca High School, Battenfeld tells of having worked as a teenager for Mark and Dean Worke, brothers who owned and operated the cafe together for 45 years. "That's something truly special," he observes.

He says he started as a dishwasher and then gradually took on other tasks. "I loved working there," he remembers. "I loved the atmosphere, I loved the connection with the customers."

"I guess I kind of always had the feeling I'd like to be the owner someday." He says he first raised the possibility to the brothers in 2017, "But they weren't quite ready to retire." He told them to get in touch when the time came, which they did about two years later.

Zach remembers he and his wife Carmen be-



AN ICON - Zach Battenfeld has been the owner and operator of the Pheasant Cafe since 2020. He also operates a lawn care and snowplow service.

came the owners on Jan. 1, 2020. They had roughly three months to get into the swing of things before the Covid pandemic shut everything down.

"That was tough," says Zach. "Really tough."

"But I told Carmen things would come back to the way they had been, and eventually they did."

As he describes the ways his life intertwines with the restaurant, it seems he is grateful to be where he is today.

He says when he looks out from the kitchen, his usual place during the hours of operation, he describes seeing the booths filled with customers

Pioneer photos by Deb Bently who are enjoying each other's company over the meals he has prepared and his staff has served.

"Seeing them there 'conversating' and spending time together, it makes me happy," he says. "It's a truly good feeling knowing I helped make those moments possible."

It is probably that sense of tradition, he observes, which has led him to keep operating the restaurant in the same way the previous owners did.

Tradition continued on 11

Windmill rehabilitation restores history

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

From the time she moved back to the farm where she spent her childhood, Cheryl Forrest felt as if something was missing.

Standing on the yard of the farm-site where she and husband Dan have lived for the past 11 years is an impressive 70-foot-tall windmill tower—the old-fashioned sort which used wind power to pump people's water. Like many all over rural Minnesota, it had stood for decades without a fan blade at its top.

On July 8, though, the tower became "whole" again. Not only was an 8-foot-diameter fan blade attached to the top, it was joined by a "tail," the flat extension which uses aerodynamics to keep the blade facing into

the wind.

On the tail is the message "Lee, Est. 1870."

Cheryl's great-grandfather was Aslak Knutson (A.K.) Lee, who was born in Norway and emigrated to the United States because no land was available back in his family's home "kommune" of Vinje. In 1870, he and his wife Betsy purchased land five miles north of modern-day Waseca along Highway 13 from Knute Engbretson, who had become the owner during pioneer days by the process of "homesteading."

At the time of A.K.'s purchase, Waseca had been a county for 13 years; its citizens had only recently voted to move the county seat from

Windmill continued on 6



BIG FAN - Property owners Dan and Cheryl Forrest with Mark Petersen of Breezy Mills, the Milford, IA, company which made the fan blade that was recently installed on the Forrests' Waseca County home place.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

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County seeks feedback on settlement funds

By AMELIA ROESSLER
Editorial Assistant

Waseca County Public Health is the chief strategist in handling more than \$1 million allocated to the county in the national opioid settlement.

"Most important is that we hear from the community on how they feel these funds should be allocated based on what they see, what they're experiencing, along with the providers in the area as well," said Andrea Kronbach, a coordinator in the public health department.

The Minnesota Attorney General's Office joined a \$26 billion multistate settlement agreement in July of 2021, bringing in more than \$300 million to Minnesota counties over the following 18 years. According to the attorney general's office, 75 percent of the funds will go to counties and cities and 25 percent to the state. Waseca County is scheduled to receive, over time, a total of \$1,070,373, to be used and rolled over for 13 or 14 years.

Kronbach has been with public health for two years and said she was tasked with helping manage the opioid settlement money beginning last summer. She said she began by sending out notice that a local advisory committee should be formed; she held some initial community meetings to gather input and share information about the opioid settlement. Now, there is an Opioid Settlement Advisory Council, currently consisting of 16 individuals from the community, to assist public health in advising the Waseca County Board of Commissioners on the disbursement of the settlement funds. The council's first meeting was at the end of May.

It was at that meeting the council agreed a survey would be the best way to capture the community's thoughts on how funds should be disbursed, Kronbach said. She added they are seeking input from anyone who lives, works, received services in, or sends their kids to school in Waseca County. The survey will remain open through early fall.

"The responses that we're getting so far, I'm pleased with," Kronbach said. But she added they always need more input.

At the county fair this month, public health had a booth with buckets labeled with different ways funding could be spent. Participants were asked to put a bead or beads to indicate their personal preferences.

The buckets were labeled "prevention and education," "harm reduction and treatment," "support and recovery," "law enforcement and policy," "community engagement" and "research and data," according to Kronbach.

County continued on 12

OBITUARIES

Curtis J. Karsten

Curtis Karsten of rural Waseca died on his birthday, July 18, 2025, after a trip to town, and a day full of fun and laughter with his family and friends.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on the family farm Saturday, August 2, 2025, at 4:00 PM. Friends may gather starting at 3:00 PM and are asked to bring a lawn chair for the service. A private burial will take place on the family plot at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca, MN, at a later date.

Curtis was born July 18, 1956, in Waseca, MN, the son of Willard C. and Helen (Hager) Karsten. Curtis attended and graduated from Owatonna High School in 1975. After high school, Curtis went right to work for the Owatonna Tool Company and retired from there in 2001. In retirement, he worked for Born Well Drilling, along with Dahle Farms - a job he really enjoyed. He formally retired in 2021.

Curtis was a life member of the Owatonna Eagles. His life interests include wood working, and trips 'up north' hunting and fishing. Curtis just liked to hang out with his family and friends.

Curtis is survived by his siblings: Charlie (Kris) Karsten,



Curtis Karsten

Dennis (Connie) Karsten, Wayne (Kim) Karsten and Lori (Doug) Smith. Additional survivors include his nieces and nephews: Jason (Dawn) Karsten, Brandon (Tabitha) Karsten, Trisha (Brad) Gauding, Natasha (Chris) Grunzke, Casey (Alex) Johnson, Cody (Brianna) Johnson and Tyler (Kaeley) Smith; step-nephew James (Sara) Doud; along with many friends and relatives.

He was preceded in death by his parents and great-nephew, Alex Karsten.

For more information or to leave a condolence message, go to www.megercare.com

Darcy J. Barnes

Darcy Jean Barnes, age 71, was called home to be with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on Wednesday, July 23, 2025 at her home surrounded by family. Darcy fought a long hard battle with metastatic kidney cancer.

Darcy was born on November 16, 1953 in Waseca, Minnesota to Joseph M. and Maureen A. (Connors) Collins. Darcy attended Sacred Heart School and graduated from Waseca High School in 1972. She went on to attend the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota.

Darcy married Keith W. Barnes on June 1, 1974 at Sacred Heart Church in Waseca. They lived in Ames, IA for several years while Keith was in college, later returning to Waseca where they raised their children, Sara and Joseph.

Darcy's faith, family, and friendships were central to her life. She was a lifelong member of Sacred Heart Church in Waseca and a devoted member of the Catholic Daughters of America. Over the years, she served as the Faith Formation Director at Sacred Heart and shared her musical talents by playing piano and organ during services.

As a child, Darcy was actively involved in 4-H and Girl Scouts, experiences that later led her to become a Girl Scout leader for her daughter's troop.

Darcy was a deeply creative person who enjoyed a wide variety of handicrafts, including cross-stitch, Hardanger embroidery, decorative painting, knitting, crocheting, and quilting. She was also a certified Bob Ross Instructor in all categories of the Bob Ross painting technique. She was an active member of the Waseca Stitchers-in-Time Quilt Guild, where she served on the retreat committee for many years. In addition to her artistic talents, Darcy was an excellent cook who made sure no one ever left hungry. Whether at family gatherings or the annual fishing camp, she always prepared "more than plenty" of food.



Darcy Barnes

Darcy's creativity also extended to her work life. She co-owned the Happy Hands Shoppe, a craft consignment store in Waseca, and later worked as a customer service representative at Viking Woodcraft.

She is survived by her husband, Keith; children, Sara and Joseph (Evelyn); siblings, Jody (Timothy) O'Connell, Timothy (Ruth) Collins, Thomas (Dina) Collins, Christopher Collins; grandchildren, Chloe, Dyllan Ward, Hunter, and Andrew; great grandchildren, Zoey and Alfred Dempski; in-laws, Larry (Sandy) Barnes; Glenna Tweedie, and Kay Barnes; aunts and uncles, Eugene (Sandy) Matz, Russell (Terri) Ingram, Millicie Szyzka; and many other relatives. She was preceded in death by her parents; brother, Michael; and other extended relation.

Visitation for Darcy was from 5 - 7 PM on Tuesday, July 29, 2025 at the State Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation continued one hour prior to the service at the church on Wednesday. Mass of Christian Burial was held on Wednesday, July 30, 2025 at 2:00 PM at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca. Rosary began at 12:30 PM at the church. Burial will immediately follow Mass at Calvary Cemetery in Waseca.

In lieu of flowers, memorials to the American Cancer Society are preferred.

Past & Present closing doors after 28 years

By AMELIA ROESSLER
Editorial Assistant

The main question posed lately to Sandi Prange, 67, owner of Past & Present Antiques & Gifts in Waseca is, "What are you looking forward to after retiring?"

"I want to go," is Prange's response.

After 28 years of running the store located on State Street in Waseca, Prange is saying goodbye to the historical building and the business she built.

"I just felt like I wanted to try a new avenue, visiting family down south. You really can't get away to do that when you're running full time, five days a week and then some," Prange said. With a son in Nashville, a son in Florida, and also three siblings in Florida, Prange is excited at the chance to finally go visit.

Prange plans to close Past & Present in November and said there is a possible buyer for the building who is willing to be flexible about how long it takes her to finish emptying the space. Her three part-time employees will also be retiring. Nancy Tollefson, who worked with Prange for 25 years from the beginning, brought joy to the store. Julie Praxle, who has been there almost 23 years and is still working with Prange, has boundless energy and does all of the staging and decorating, Prange said.

But for now, Prange is marking all her merchandise down by 20 percent, encouraging customers to keep an eye on Facebook, where she will post if the percentage gets higher. She is also taking time to reflect on the life of the store.

"My husband, he forced me into it," Prange laughed. "He wanted us to buy this and make it a guy's antique shop with car parts and stuff like that because it's an old auto repair shop. And I said, 'I can't do that.' I said, that is not in my heart. I have to do things that I like if I'm going to have a store."

But it really started with Prange's love of doing craft shows when she and her husband Randy owned the glass shop. Prange said she would bring her craft show displays in and set it up in the shop.

"We had a loft up there, so I called that the Gift Loft," Prange said. "I would have gals come down there and they'd go up to the gift loft and shop."

The Gift Loft eventually moved into the Past & Present store, which opened April 15 of 1997.

Prange remembers the second day she was open, she got the first shipment of Beanie Babies, which were all the rage at the time. She said they changed the way she did retail because of all the people who came in, buying out her whole stock until she had to limit purchases to one per person and even to only selling the toys on Saturdays.

"One time I was leaving late at night and there was a fish house tent set up right outside the door. Someone was waiting. It was midnight, and someone was waiting there. Another day, I came in on a Saturday and the line was all the way to the south of the building from the front door," Prange said.

She chuckled and said that Casey's would get upset with her because she didn't warn them she was doing it and everybody was over there getting coffee waiting for her to open. An article written during that earlier time mentioned the long lines prominently, and told how, when the UPS delivery man would tell people at Brown Printing about her shipment, they would "high-tail it over" to the store after work and get the Beanie Babies.



LABOR OF LOVE - Sandi Prange stands at the counter of her store Past & Present Antiques & Gifts, a store she's run for the past 28 years.

Pioneer photo by Amelia Roessler

"I wish I would've had a picture because it's hard to believe," Prange said.

Another thing she said was memorable were the open houses, especially the Christmas house walk. People opened their homes and let visitors walk through. Customers would then buy similar supplies and imitate a style of decoration they had liked. Prange said she feels blessed that in all of the open houses she had, which were always fun but exhausting for her, she was always healthy and they never had bad weather.

Even 9/11 had an impact on the store.

"After 9/11, I came in that day and the next few days we were so busy. One of my employees turned on the radio. She wanted to hear it and I said, 'Turn it off. Put on music, I think people are trying to get away.' If they don't want to be in front of their TV, they want to just get out of that," Prange said.

There were slow times too. Prange mentions 2008 to 2010 as having been slow at the store. She remembers the downturn in the economy even led to an increased number of returns as the downturn in the economy led to buyers' remorse.

"It was hard. But because this place was in my heart, I couldn't give it up then."

Prange said there were lots of times when things became overwhelming, making the idea of throwing in the towel seem inviting. In the beginning, store hours were 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the week and on Sundays. They are now 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. With these hours and being open most days of the week, Prange found it hard to get away and never wanted to close shop for a day and disappoint her clients.

She mentions how she placed a "Back at 11" sign on the door for the first time ever only a couple of months ago.

Because it wasn't always easy, Prange said she once asked God for help. A long time ago, she said she was leaving for work on a Sunday morning when her youngest was around 5 or 6 years old. She recalls asking herself why she was going to work on a Sunday, leaving her family behind and losing the chance to spend time with them.

"I pretty much said, 'God, you need to tell me why I should, if I should keep this place or not. You need to give me a loud signal because I'm so tired, I don't know if I could listen to a quiet sign.'"

And God gave her a sign.

That day, Prange said a woman from Owatonna came into the store. Her husband had died the week before; she had specifically selected Past & Present for her first outing. That same afternoon, a woman came in with her mother and daughter. She was going through a divorce and had said they needed to get out and get away from the house and have a good time, so they came to the store.

"That made me think, 'Okay God, now I know. I need to be here.'"

Prange said, and added, laughing, "I should have just asked him a few more times after that."

The decision to close still wasn't an easy one, with Prange saying there were a lot of tears and sleepless nights involved with the decision. Prange said she hopes the community appreciated the way she did business. With no training, she just did what she loved with some wonderful employees. Having had amazing experiences with all her friends who volunteer, antique dealers who rented space and the employees who worked for her for years, Prange is grateful for the time with the store.

Now that she has decided to finally close the doors, Prange said she's received a lot of comments from the community expressing their good wishes and saying they will miss her, miss the shop.

"They'll say, 'Where are we going to shop?' I'm like, 'Do you know how many shops are in town?'" Prange said. "But this one's different. I just wanted them to feel comfortable."

So what does Prange want to do now that she will be retired? She said she will likely volunteer and would like to join an athletic or workout club to take the time to do things for herself, time she has never had before.

"My entire family, in one way or another, has helped me out," Prange said. "They've been wanting me to retire for a long time."

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Exchange Club earns top honors

The Waseca Exchange Club has been recognized nationally and at a district level for its extraordinary service and impact throughout the 2024–2025 administrative year. With a long list of achievements, the Club continues to set the standard for excellence across the Exchange Club network.

During a recent recognition ceremony, Regional Vice President Katie Smith presented the Waseca Exchange Club with a host of awards, celebrating their growth, innovation, and dedication to community service.

The Waseca Exchange Club earned an impressive nine Awards at the National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky; most of them recognized the club’s exemplary performance in membership growth and retention, as well as its outstanding commitment to service within National Exchange. Among the most notable honors were the National Service Award, the Big “E” Award, a prestigious recognition achieved by meeting rigorous benchmarks in club growth, education, and efficiency, and the Distinguished Club President Award, presented to Mikhail Rostislavovich for his exceptional leadership. The Club also received the National C.A.R.E. Award (Child Abuse Reduction Effort) for the second consecutive year, marking the highest distinction a club can achieve, in recognition of their expanded efforts in child abuse prevention programming. Additionally, Mikhail was honored at the National Convention as a Nominee for National Exchange Club Member of the Year, a reflection of his outstanding service and impact at both the local and national level. “This club is on fire,” Smith said during her address. “Waseca continues to lead by example, whether it’s growing membership, honoring American ideals, or dramatically expanding child abuse prevention programming. You are making your mark not only in Waseca, but across the nation.”

Many of these awards were duplicated at the District level as well. For the second year in a row, Waseca was named the Best Club in the Lakes & Prairies District. The Waseca Club is a leading force for Service within the Exchange network and beyond.

Smith, who accepted several of these awards on Waseca’s behalf at the National Convention, described how often the Club’s name was called from the stage. “People across the country know who you are and what you’re doing,” she said. “You make Exchange proud.”

“Our community benefits when we lead with service,” said Club President Mikhail Rostislavovich. “These awards are a reflection of our members’ passion, dedication, and commitment to one another and to the people of Waseca. We’re just getting started.”

It was never just about the hair

Cosmetologists talk challenges, rewards

By **DEB BENTLY**
News Editor

Two of Waseca’s many hair stylists feel they’re speaking for the whole profession when they suggest it does no good to ask any of them when they’ll be finished with work.

Stacey Schroeder and Hilary Johnson work out of Kroeger’s Konzept salon near the Waseca Bomgaars, but both have worked in other locations in their respective 31 and 22 years as stylists. While the two acknowledge there are differences in the pace, workload and atmosphere of various salons, they say everyone with staying power in the field needs one indispensable personality trait.

Compassion.

“It’s never about the hair,” said Johnson during a recent conversation. “It’s about connecting.”

The two go on to share that, yes, in order to be licensed as a cosmetologist in the state of Minnesota, individuals must complete a rigorous training program, spending 1,550 hours—the equivalent of nearly 40 forty-hour work weeks—learning about health, safety, tools and techniques. Along with that, they must have the business savvy to attract and keep customers and manage their own finances: Nearly all stylists are actually independent contractors who must provide their own tools, equipment and supplies.

More importantly, however, “We become part of people’s lives,” says Schroeder. She offers the example of one long-term client. “I gave her her very first haircut when she was a child,” Schroeder relates. “We would talk and catch up when she would come in.

“The next thing I knew, she was asking me to be part of her wedding.” Not that Schroeder dressed up and walked down the aisle, but that she helped with hair and make-up for members of the wedding party. Schroeder names the bride, the bridesmaids, the flower girl, and even the mothers of the bride and groom.



COMPASSION - Stacey Schroeder, left, and Hilary Johnson have a total of more than 50 years of experience in the cosmetology business. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

“It’s about connecting.”
— Hilary Johnson

“It makes me feel really good that I was there for them on that special day,” she finishes.

That desire to “be there” for people, Schroeder and Johnson explain, is why their work days are so unpredictable.

“If someone asks when I’ll be finished,” says Johnson, “I might answer something like ‘My last appointment is at 4, so I should be done around 5—unless there are any problems, or someone comes in needing a last-minute haircut.’”

And yes, the two proclaim with a laugh, there is such a thing as an “emergency” haircut. They say it happens about once a month a man will walk into the shop near closing time on a Friday afternoon and ask for “a trim” since he’s scheduled to be in a wedding the next day.

Other “emergencies” they have encountered are when children have decided to try their hands at hairstyling, either on their own heads or a friend or sibling’s. Sometimes it’s not a child, but an adult whose efforts have gone awry—including, for example, in the use of a home hair coloring kit or a self-administered trim.

Not all the emergencies are negative ones, though.

“A surprise date. A job interview. Deciding they

want to look especially good for a person or an event.”

Different clients connect at different levels, the two go on. Some—a few, really—just want their hair cut without much conversation.

Others, especially those who come in regularly or who have lengthier processes like hair coloring or a manicure, seem to appreciate the conversation and connection at least as much as the services they’re paying for.

“We’re a safe space,” declares Schroeder. “People know we’ll give them the service they’re here for while they can just be themselves and share their stories, knowing they are being truly heard without being judged.

“We’re good listeners. We’re compassionate, and we want the best for you.”

Johnson mentions she has observed over time that a fair number of people who move away from the cosmetology profession go on to become nurses.

“No one who works in a salon was wired to work in a cubicle,” says Johnson. “We want to interact with people and help them get what they want.”

She mentions that it haunts her when she’s concerned a client was not happy with a haircut or style. “And when someone tells me it’s exactly what they wanted and it makes them feel pretty, that makes my day.”

“We want people to walk out of here feeling

Hair continued on 10

Dedication, work celebrated

Waseca SWCD’s Brummond, retires

By **BEN REVERMANN**
Staff writer

Longtime area resident Cheri Brummond held her retirement party and final day at work at the Waseca Soil and Water Conservation District’s (WSWCD) office on Friday, July 25. She has been a Waseca resident for over 40 years and has been working for Soil and Water since 2016.

Since she began her employment, she’s helped to start various projects, including the 2017 Coloring Book Program for Kindergarteners; from 2017 to 2025, 2,698 books have been distributed to all five schools in Waseca County for children in kindergarten and some first grade students. She’s put on presentations and helped set up displays at the Waseca County Fair, Farmamerica, the Southern Research and Outreach Center and more recently helped with the display for World Honeybee Day at the Hofmann Apiaries on behalf of WSWCD. In 2018 she implemented a new website to distribute more information and event calendars to make the WSWCD more accessible. From 2019 to 2025, nine 4-H members were given Conserva-

tion Ribbons for their fair projects that referenced conservation. In 2020, in part thanks to Brummond, the office began having a tree open house in February to finalize tree orders for the year, with distribution in April. In 2020 she put recognition of the Waseca County Dairy Princess on the WSWCD calendar and website.

Said Brummond, “Throughout the years the WSWCD funding has increased through more programs and more grants. Being the administrative assistant required working with the financial side of those grants for many projects being funded in Waseca County.”

Now that she’s retiring, Brummond says simply, “I have some major cleaning projects I can do now that I’ll have time. I also want to spend more time with family and grandkids.”

SWCD resource technician Cammi Nordmeyer attended Brummond’s retirement party in the east annex to the Waseca County Courthouse. On the table was a white frosted cake, sandwiches, chips and bottled water. Twelve long tables made room for many guests who



WRAPPING UP - Cheri Brummond was thrown a retirement party at the Waseca DMV building on Friday, July 25. She worked at the Waseca Soil and Water Conservation District Office since 2016. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

stopped by. Said Nordmeyer, “People were here right at 11:30 a.m., some even before that. There was a line outside, which is awesome because Cheri deserves the recognition and celebration. We planned for 75 to 100 people, but it’s obviously going to be more than that.

Moving into Brummond’s position as administrative assistant is Jade Peterson, who has already begun her training. Along with that, Nordmeyer observed, “Cheri has been wrapping

things up and we hope she’s been taking things a little easier.”

During the celebration, Brummond circulated among those in attendance. The cake started to disappear with each new guest. Morgan’s Meats provided the sandwiches and the cake was acquired from Nancy Jane’s Bakery in New Richland. Everyone at the celebration seemed to agree congratulations and thanks are in order for Cheri Brummond.

JWP SCHOOL BOARD

Cell phone policy finalized

By **RACHAEL JAEGER**
Staff Writer

Members of the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP) school board reviewed and approved the final reading of a new cell phone policy during their regular meeting on Monday, July 21. Board members also agreed that superintendent Jeremy Erler should purchase classroom cell phone holders for use during instructional time.

Board member Dave Olson posed questions regarding when staff members are permitted to use their cell phones, and about smart watches.

Responses were that the rules regarding electronic watches are the same as for cell phones. Regarding staff, Erler said teachers are expected to access their phones only during preparatory time, or to schedule a school-related appointment.

Board member Kevin Born reported that he had spoken with students who believe they will be able to get around the policy. “We thought we nailed it down last year, but that didn’t happen,” Born added. “So they think it’s just going to be another walk in the park.”

Board member Laura Seys mentioned she had spoken with graduates who are aware of the cell phone policy and believe it’s a good plan of action because of the addiction they’ve witnessed.

Board member Joanie Olson, who teaches in the NRHEG school district, said students in her classes have no problem following the policy and cell phones have been put away. The practice of parking phones for each class hour has been in place for the past two years, she said, and mentioned that she uses the presence or absence of a cell phone in the students’ assigned pockets as a way to take attendance.

The policy at JWP is to leave phones parked in a single location for the entire day, then retrieve them before leaving. Olson asked whether students would have enough time to do that before they needed to get to their buses; Erler confirmed they would.

“If they have an appointment that they have to leave for, or their Post Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) classes, their devices will be kept in the office,” Erler said. On the first day of the school year, he added, principal David Rysdam will talk to students in the high school auditorium to walk them through the cell phone policy so they understand the boundaries.

The school board also approved the district’s state-required long-term facility maintenance (LTFM) ten-year plan. All districts must keep track of major projects they expect to carry out across the upcoming decade and submit a report to the state.

JWP continued on 10



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Russell originally planned to attend SDSU for its football program, but changed to Washington State when the SDSU staff was hired there.

■ Russell
from Page 1

brother, Saiveon; we would play football with him every day, whether it was outside tackle football at the age of 5 or inside in the basement on the floor. He would train me and Deron whenever he could. I feel that's where we grew our competitiveness; we would have fights every day over games, and we wanted to beat each other so badly. He played Division I and had a successful career."

Russell has two older brothers, Isaiah Williamson, 28, and Saiveon Williamson, 24, who played at South Dakota State. He has two younger sisters, Kaliya Russell, 16, and Ki-ara Russell, 10, who's active in volleyball and basketball.

Damarius wants to be remembered as he will be: one of the best student athletes who attended Waseca High School. He also wants to be remembered as a good person who always pushes to be the best at whatever he does, and wants it more than anyone.

"I also want to be known as someone who always helped others and wanted them to succeed just as badly

"I want kids to know they can accomplish anything they put their minds to, but also be good people."

— Damarius Russell

as myself," he said. "I want kids to know they can accomplish anything they put their minds to, but also be good people."

Damarius originally planned to attend SDSU for its football program, but changed to Washington State when the SDSU coaching staff was hired there.

"I felt they care for me," he said. "And will help me get to the NFL."

Deron also received a scholarship offer from Washington State, but has yet to commit.

Damarius has always acknowledged the presence of God in his life.

"Without Him, nothing I do would be possible," he said. "He has led me down this path, and I will continue to credit Him."

Damarius credits Awana on Wednesdays for helping start his growth with God.

He also credits his coaches, Wendland in football, Seth Anderson in basketball and David Abel in track

and field.

"They support me in everything I do," he said. "They have helped shape me into the man I am today. They care for me, and I do love them all."

Where does Damarius get his athletic ability?

"I think I got a lot from my dad and his family," he said. "He was a really good basketball player. His family roots in sports are deep. He has always been an athlete and has a lot of passion for sports. I also feel that just my competitive nature has driven me to be mentally tough, because I hate losing and will do anything to win."

His athletic aspirations go far, all the way to the NFL.

"It's always been my dream to hear my name called [on draft day]," he said. "I want to be one of the best defensive backs in the NFL."

In 10 years, he hopes to find himself in the NFL, happy, and with a



Russell speculates his athletic ability comes from his family and his dad, a group of people whose roots in athletics and competition run deep.

family.

For Damarius, high school has gone very fast.

"My career flew by," he said. "I remember my freshman year getting my first varsity reps in basketball, football and track. One thing I always tell people is that you never have time. Always live every day to the fullest and try to get better every day, regardless of what you do."

"Damarius embodies everything that is necessary to be a Division I athlete," said Wendland. "He has tremendous talent combined with passion for the sport of football and an incredible commitment to succeed. He goes about his business in a first-class way. He does great in the classroom, is respectful to his teachers, gets along well with all of his classmates, goes out for multiple sports and has a positive impact on others

that he crosses paths with. He is a tremendous person who happens to be a very talented athlete."

Said Anderson, "Damarius is the best leader in the classroom and on the court that I have ever had in combination. When he was in my fourth-grade class, he always worked hard and did the right thing. When he was on my basketball or eighth-grade football team, he always worked hard and did the right thing. He had the ability to get everybody else going in the right direction and doing things the right way because he did. It will be very rare to see someone else who is great in all areas making Waseca schools and community a better place. I think he has a really good chance to have success at Washington State. He will put in the work and do everything the coaching staff asks of him. I can see him being named a

captain of their football team before he graduates. We will miss him dearly around here, but he showed all others who are still here how to do things the right way in representing Waseca."

"Damarius is a phenomenal athlete," said Abel. "One of the once-in-a-generation types. He's hard-working, humble and tenacious. He holds four school records, and could have had two more."

Yet for all he accomplished as a Bluejay - a state championship in track and field, second place in the state basketball tournament, a state tourney in football, two state tournaments in basketball - it's hard not to look toward the future rather than the past.

The best may be yet to come.

■ Windmill
from Page 3

Wilton to Waseca. With A.K. and Betsy was A.K.'s father, Knudt Aslaksen Lien (pronounced "lean"). A.K. is mentioned in "Child's History of Waseca County," where he is described as "an energetic, prosperous farmer." He and Betsy eventually raised 13 children.

Direct descendants of the family have owned and lived on the property ever since, although the amount of farmland associated with it has risen and fallen over time.

The only child of her parents Alvin and Dorathea Lee, Cheryl was born in 1947 and remembers well the times when both the farm and household depended on the windmill for their water. Initially, a wooden handle could be turned so that water from the wind-powered pump would be diverted to one of two cisterns: One supplied the barn for use by livestock or chores being accomplished there. The other filled a cistern located in the residence's basement.

The water would be at a temperature below 60 degrees Fahrenheit, de-

lightfully refreshing to drink on a hot day, and also cool enough to help preserve fresh milk in the dugout below the windmill.

Cheryl remembers the house had two hand pumps in the kitchen. One drew drinking water from the basement cistern filled by the windmill. The other drew rainwater which had been diverted from the house's gutters. Clear and clean-looking, the rainwater was used for washing clothes and other cleanup tasks. A ceramic-lined bucket in the kitchen was kept full of cool, freshly-drawn well water; it had a matching dipper which every member of the family drank from.

"It didn't meet the standards people would have today," she remembers, "but it worked very well as far as we were concerned." She says there was a similar bucket at the one-room school she attended during her elementary grades.

"We had to pump the water for everything by hand," remembers Cheryl. "If it needed to be warm, we heated water on the stove and mixed it in to bring the temperature up." Whether for a bath or washing dishes, she says that was the process.

As for the classic meaning of "indoor plumbing," a flush toilet was a

"It's finally whole. I'm glad we did this."
— Cheryl Forrest

bit longer in coming. Cheryl remembers using a three-seater outhouse up until she was 13 years old.

But for any inclined to feel sympathy regarding her rustic childhood, she observes "It was a lot of fun." Cheryl remembers being put at the wheel of a tractor at age 5. Her father, Alvin, who had always been in somewhat poor health, died in 1953. Her mother married Ray Sutter, who remained her partner for the next five decades, in 1954. The farm also kept a hired man who had his own living space in the house.

Through it all, the homestead housed pigs, dairy and beef cattle, horses, sheep, chickens, and dogs and cats. "There was work to be done," she observes. "So we did it."

Cheryl says she was called upon to feed animals, take care of assigned chores, and help her parents with any type of job, whether in the barn, garden or house.

"We were very poor," she recognizes in hindsight. "But everybody was, so there was no stigma about it. "When we needed money, we

hauled some corn to town and sold it."

She also remembers plenty of time for play. Conveniently, her second cousin Dennis Lee lived on the farm across the road. "We played nonstop," she recalls.

Cheryl says the windmill blade was removed some time in the late 1950s, when a newly installed electric water pump was one of the earliest steps toward modernizing the farm.

When the time came, Cheryl attended Waseca's Central High School, graduating in 1965. Dan, now her husband of 55 years, graduated from Sacred Heart High School the same year. The two got summer jobs in local businesses, Cheryl working for Herter's mailing catalogs; Dan at Brown Printing. They met in 1967 and married in 1970. Cheryl attended Gustavus; Dan went to St. John's. Both earned degrees as teachers and went on to get jobs at Twin Cities area schools.

They lived and raised their two children, Sean and Meghan, in a home in Burnsville. Times being what they were, Cheryl became a stay-at-home

mom while Dan continued working as a teacher. The years marched on; the children graduated high school in the early 1990s. Cheryl and Dan became grandparents. Dorathea and Ray continued to live on the home place, gradually experiencing declining health. Soon after Ray's death in 2010, Dorathea decided to move to a lower-maintenance setting in town, leaving the home place standing empty.

In 2014, circumstances invited Cheryl and Dan to move "home." Even before moving back, they had been giving the aging farmstead some tender loving care, remodeling both the barn and granary while there was still time before they reached the point of no return.

Each of those projects came at prices unimaginable to the lifestyle of her childhood years, but Cheryl says saving the buildings and giving the homestead a facelift were the right things to do.

In keeping with that philosophy, the couple had been thinking about rehabilitating the windmill tower for a year or more when they attended the KOWZ farm and home show this past April. Among the vendors was Breezy Mills, a Milford, Iowa, company which specializes in windmills.

As the couple discussed whether to

hire the company, Dan remembers making the joke that they should do it-as long as Cheryl was willing to go without birthday, anniversary or Christmas presents for the next decade or so.

Given the height of the tower, Breezy Mills recommended the company's largest standard blade size, eight feet in diameter. After agonizing a bit because of the transformations in the family surname over time, Cheryl decided to use the longest-standing version of the name, "Lee," and the year 1870 as the text on the tail.

The new aluminum blade is for show only, since it is not connected to any sort of mechanism. Aerodynamics turn it so it faces into the wind; Breezy Mills guarantees it to withstand winds up to 90 mph.

After standing "topless" since the 1950s, the tower had a blade again after a two-man crew went up on a mechanical lift and put it in place. The process took a few hours, although it also required renting a special lift because Breezy Mills' lift could not reach 70 feet.

Cheryl and Dan say it feels good to see the blade spinning up there. "It's finally whole," said Cheryl. "I'm glad we did this."

CenterPoint Energy awards safety grant to Waseca

CenterPoint Energy awarded a Community Safety Grant of \$2,500 to the City of Waseca to replace the automated external defibrillator (AED) at City Hall to improve the health and safety of the public and city employees.

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Government Affairs, at CenterPoint, presented the Community Safety Grant to Carl C. Sonnenberg, Waseca City Manager. In Minnesota this year, CenterPoint awarded 35 grants, totaling more than \$85,000 to support safety equipment and projects. CenterPoint serves more than 930,000 customers in over 260 Minnesota communities. "Safety is our core value and drives every effort we take as a company for the customers and communities we're privileged to serve," said Brad Steber, Vice President, Minnesota Gas at CenterPoint Energy. "Through our Community Safety Grant Program, we're proud to support the work our emergency responders, local officials and many others do to help support health and safety across our Minnesota communities."

CenterPoint awards program grants up to \$2,500 to local government agencies working to fill funding gaps for safety materials and projects. This year, CenterPoint Energy's Community Safety Grant program awarded more than 90 grants totaling nearly \$230,000 in Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Texas to fund safety-related equipment and projects in local communities. Since launching the program in 2003, CenterPoint has awarded approximately \$3.5 million in grants to support more than 1,700 efforts. Grants have enabled communities to fund various projects including public AEDs, water rescue materials, personal protective equipment for first responders, traffic control signs, utility locate devices and extraction tools to rescue people after vehicle collisions.



CONGRATS - Waseca City Manager Carl Sonnenberg, right, accepts a Community Safety Grant from CenterPoint Energy.

The Space Force at Half Pint Brewing Company August 2
Musical guest The Space Force will be performing at Half Pint Brewing Company from 5-8 p.m. Saturday, August 2.

Dueling Pianos at Indian Island Winery on Saturday, August 2
Dueling Pianos will be at the Indian Island Winery at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, August 2. An epic night of music, laughter and unforgettable entertainment. This high-energy interactive show is always a hit, and the venue is outdoors for an evening under the stars.

Beaded Suncatcher Workshop at Janesville Public Library Mon., Aug. 4
Create a beaded suncatcher using assorted beads, crystals, and metal decor at Janesville Public Library at 3 p.m. on Monday, August 4. For ages 13-18.

The Crown Jewels Concert at Trowbridge Park behind Waseca Library Mon., Aug. 4
Join The Crown Jewels, a Queen tribute band, at their outdoor concert at 7 p.m. Monday, August 4 at Trowbridge Park in Waseca. From start to finish, the show is incredible with something for everyone, from the hardcore Queen fan to the casual listener.

Virtual Author Event: Jay Falk at Waseca Le Sueur Library System Tuesday, August 5
Delve into the fascinating world of birds at a virtual Waseca-Le Sueur Regional Library System event at 1 p.m. Tuesday, August 5. The Bird Book: The Stories, Science, and History of Birds and Dr. Jay Falk’s presentation will explore: The natural history of birds, including their evolution and anatomy as well as their behavior and diversity and more. This event will be recorded and people who register will be emailed a link to the recording.

Magna-Tile Villages at Waldorf Public Library Tues., Aug. 5
The mayor needs a village up and running as soon as possible! Create design plans and speed build with an amazing assortment of Magna-Tile sets at the Waldorf Public Library at 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 5. Geared for ages 7-12.

Jigsaw Puzzle Derby at Janesville Public Library Tues., Aug. 5
Assemble a team of up to 4 players to compete in a jigsaw puzzle competition at Janesville Public Library on August 5th.

Briefs continued on 13



NEW DISPLAY- From left, Waseca Tourism Chamber members:Christy Easton, media subcommittee member Jon Lucca, Kelley Boeddeker, Eli Lutgens, Chamber President Mikhail Rostislavovich, and Executive Director Robin Dulas.

New cards highlight Waseca businesses

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Discover Waseca Tourism are releasing a brand-new set of rack cards now available in 100 locations across Waseca. These colorful, easy-to-navigate cards showcase the best of the community and are designed to guide both visitors and residents to Waseca’s top destinations.

The set includes four themed rack cards, each color-coded for easy reference: Restaurants & Bars (orange), Boutiques, Antiques, & Shops (red), Parks, Trails, & Activities (green), and Civic Organizations & Churches (blue).

Each card features a categorized list of local destinations, contact information, and a coordinated map on the reverse side to help users locate each place with ease. Whether you’re a first-time visitor or a lifelong resident rediscovering hidden gems, these guides offer an engaging way to explore everything Waseca has to offer.

“These rack cards are more than just a visitor tool, they’re a celebration of the unique spirit of Waseca,”

said Mikhail Rostislavovich, President of Waseca Tourism. “Whether you’re craving a local burger, planning your next park stroll, shopping for a gift, or looking to connect with a local church or civic group, these guides put it all right at your fingertips. They make it easy to appreciate the full experience of our beautiful, vibrant town.”

The cards are being distributed to hotels, retail counters, public buildings, realtors, and other high-traffic locations throughout the area. They’re also available at the

Chamber office and local events while supplies last. Tourism is an advocate for all businesses in Waseca, membership is not required.

Waseca Tourism is funded by the lodging tax and works independently from the Chamber’s membership-based model to promote the region and enhance economic vitality for the entire community.

For more information, visit www.discoverwaseca.com or stop by the Waseca Area Chamber & Tourism office.

Waseca Art Council launches 50th anniversary celebration

The Waseca Art Council has been waiting to announce its 9th annual Great Fall Get Together, taking place on Saturday, October 25, 2025, from 6–9 PM at the Starfire Event Center’s Black & White Room (204 2nd Ave SW, Waseca). This year’s event promises to be the most exciting yet, as it officially kicks off the Art Center’s 50th Anniversary celebration and introduces a vital new building maintenance campaign.

“This won’t be just a party, it’s the beginning of a bold chapter for the Art Center,” said Molly Erdman, Art’s Council Secretary. “We’re using this milestone to focus our fundraising on essential building needs, including addressing our decaying tuckpoint.”

In honor of the community’s steadfast support, the Council will unveil its Brick Donation Wall at the event. Supporters will have the opportunity to become a literal part of the Center’s foundation, with donor names inscribed on individual bricks. “Our donors are the cornerstone of this organization,” said Monica Priebe, the event Chair. “This wall is our tribute to them.”

Returning for a second year, the Starfire’s Black and White Room provides a striking backdrop for the event, which will showcase a black and gold



CELEBRATING ART - Left to right, Ann Johannsen, Monica Priebe, Molly Erdman, Tara Bjerke, Christy Easton, Mikhail Rostislavovich, and Penny Vought.

theme in honor of the golden anniversary.

“We’re excited to see how the gold accents shine against the dramatic venue,” said Ann Johannsen, committee member.

Guests will enjoy an elegant evening filled with live music by Crista Bohlmann, joined by special guest Jeremy on cello, adding a rich, intimate soundscape to the night. Attendees can indulge in a spread of appetizers, desserts, and a full bar, while participating in both live and silent auctions featuring a variety of unique items. The evening will also feature games, door prizes, and other surprises, making this a truly festive and unforgettable celebration. This year, the event is being

elevated to match the energy of their 50th year.

The Great Fall Get Together is the Art Center’s largest fundraising event of the year, and organizers are grateful for the continued support of local sponsors. “Year after year, we have seen this event grow in sponsorship support, event participants, and donations. Appreciation and care of the arts is not lost in rural America. This area is rich with talent and desire for the arts,” said Waseca Arts Council President Mikhail Rostislavovich. “This is not an event to be missed.”

Tickets and sponsorship information please call the Waseca Art Center, 507-835-1707

School Board

NRHEG

NRHEG district all set for 2025-’26

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

During the NRHEG school board’s regular meeting the evening of July 21, superintendent Michael Meihak summarized matters which are being put in place prior to the beginning of the school year.

Board members approved a state required long-term facilities maintenance plan, a summary of anticipated repairs and construction expected over the next 10 years. Meihak mentioned that, since many major upgrades and improvements had occurred last year, the plan is currently fairly brief.

Also approved was the \$24,000 cost to have a state-required audit of the district’s finances carried out be the auditing firm Abdo.

The position of teaching and learning coordinator (TLC) has been filled by changing some teacher schedules in order to free up a few hours each day for physical education instructor Onika Peterson. Peterson will now spend part of her day in the classroom and part performing district-wide tasks having to do with choosing and acquiring textbooks and teaching materials, managing and administering state-required testing, and supporting teacher progress toward meeting to renew their teaching licenses every five years.

Jason Touppence had been the district’s TLC for the past two years, but resigned this past spring because his family was relocating, making his commute impractical.

Meihak reported another position, an elementary school “reading interventionist,” was in the process of being filled after recent interviews. An interventionist works closely with either individuals or small groups of students to help them bring their skills in a subject area up to a level regarded necessary for the grade they are in.

Along with staff, Meihak mentioned he and administrative assistant Sarah Wacholz had been reviewing student enrollment. He reported that numbers as of July 21 indicate more students are “transferring in” to the district than are “enrolling out.” His reference is to decisions made by students and their parents whether to attend the district where their residence is located, or to attend elsewhere.

At this time, the district anticipates 763 students will be attending this fall.

Future Farmers of America (FFA) advisor Dan Sorum summarized a request for an extended field trip. Thirteen students and two chaperones will be attending the FFA national convention in Carmel, Indiana, from Oct. 28 to Nov. 1. Sorum described the convention as “a whole different world” for students which widens their perspective about the FFA organization and what it means to be a leader.



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Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika



Basket added to the fishing hall of fame

As I look out at Lake Tetonka from our little cabin in Waterville, it's interesting to realize I am looking at one relatively small part of a much larger picture. Tetonka is one of many lakes in the Cannon River watershed. The Cannon River has its origin in Shieldsville: a tiny creek grows as it flows, forming Gorman, Vollney, and Sabre lakes above Tetonka. Then on to Morris-town after forming Lake Sakatah. It goes on to flow through Cannon Lake, then under the 35 N Inter-state bridge and through Faribault, Northfield, and Cannon Falls. It empties into the mighty Mississippi River near Red Wing. The Cannon River provides great fish-ing opportunities in its lakes and several dams as it makes its jour-ne-y. The lakes provide fantastic recreational opportunities. Lake ca-bins, pontoons pulling screaming youngsters on tubes, jet skis, water skiers, and kayaks provide summer pastimes for many enjoying the great outdoors.

Unfortunately, many ditches and creeks empty into the Cannon above Tetonka. With all of the rain this season, there has been tremen-dous runoff from the farm fields above Tetonka. Throw in 90-de-gree hot, muggy days and you have the recipe for weed growth and a lake filled with green algae.

Opening day for Walleyes this year was a disaster. On that much-anticipated evening, I couldn't even cast my line in to catch some of Minnesota's state fish. Boats had a difficult time getting to their boat lifts. Weeds everywhere, the lake was choked. Tetonka has a diverse number of different weed types, unfortunately including undesir-able mill foil and curly leaf pond weed.

This year for the first time ever, I decided to have the weeds near my property sprayed by a profes-sional service. My neighbors jumped on board! Lake owners need a DNR permit to spray the weeds; Brad King and wife Elaine took care of all of the details before they sprayed. Within a week the process had cleared the weeds and I was catching beautiful bull blue-gills off the end of the dock. The spraying team did a wonderful job of being environmentally safe for the lake water and ecosystem, and getting our weed problem under control.

I've owned a wire basket to hold fish for many years. The basket has a plastic float on the top to keep the wire basket from sinking to the

bottom. The basket was tied to my side when I was part of a group fishing crappies at dark many, many years ago in front of Barney's drive Inn on Clear Lake. The bas-ket has floated on my dock pole for the past 12 years holding great numbers of fish for a fish fry.

A friend told me he was ready for a tasty meal of fresh sunfish. I went down to the dock to catch a meal of nice-sized sunfish fillets and to my delight, sunnies were biting. I put a batch in the good old floating fish basket; I'd clean them after lunch. When the time came, down to the basket I went and lifted it out of the water. Surprise, the basket was weightless—not to mention fishless: the bottom of the basket had rusted out and the sun-fish were back in the lake. I can't force myself to throw the old bas-ket away. I have to be creative and figure a way to enshrine it in my fishing hall of fame.

My son Marc and grandchildren Ryan and Nathan had a good fish-ing opener for walleyes on Sabre Lake; they caught several nice spec-imens where the Cannon River enters the small 263-acre lake. A few weeks ago they returned to fish the lake and found the river mouth full of weeds and the entire lake painted with green algae. They'd come a ways from Mankato and decided to fish the boatless lake. In the middle of the lake they began catching big crappies. Ryan left his jig in the water and reached for a cold Dr. Pepper. In the wink of an eye, the pole was gone overboard to the bottom of the lake. Marc marked the spot on his GPS, they tied on big jigging Raps, and on the third pass Ryan hooked the pole. He was able to land the rod with a 12" Crappie still hooked on the jig.

We decided not to spend the Fourth of July at the lake cabin this year. The fourth was on a Friday and this meant fireworks and lake celebrations well after dark both Friday and Saturday nights. Too stressful for our wondering Sam-mie. She would have spent both nights hyperventilating and shiv-ering under the bed. She'd have to miss her traditional Fourth of July, Davis Market, hotdog treat.

We were rewarded with a post-fourth evening light show several nights last week. Hundreds of fireflies glowed and put on a fan-tastic display. In the backyard of the cabin, we were treated to a boomless show with flickering bright lights, surrounded by the sounds of silence.

with cancer. "He asked me how he should go about telling his wife and children," she recalls. She says she suggested that he begin by tel-ling his wife, who could advise him from there. "I just did my best," she says. "It was a moment I'll never forget."

Schroeder shares the somewhat surprising news that she finds it re-warding to style the hair of people whose bodies are being prepared for their funeral.

"It's a real honor to be able to do that for them," says Schroeder, meaning both the deceased and his or her family members. "I feel like I've done something truly impor-tant when people say something like 'You made Grandma look like herself.'"

"It's an event people might re-member for the rest of their lives, and it feels good to know I helped make it better in some way."

Hidden gem
Janesville's
Purple Goose
Smokehouse
and Saloon

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Doug and Shelly Yotter became owners of the Purple Goose Smokehouse and Saloon, located at 228 North Main Street in Janesville, in 2023. Since acquiring it, among other things, they have changed the establishment's name: the Janesville restaurant was formerly called Purple Goose Eat-ery and Saloon.

Although the light-up sign out front doesn't show the name change yet, Doug held his hands far apart and said, "I have a list this long of things that need changing around here." Then he pinched two fingers together till they were almost touching and said, "This is how much I've been able to get to."

The restaurant's new menu will be shared in a few weeks. According to the Yotters, the biggest change will be the smoked brisket, pork butts, ribs and smoked chicken. Doug says he also has a spe-cial recipe chicken and wild rice soup which has bacon and Italian sausage and, "About a half cup of Italian seasoning" with a flavor all its own. "We also have the hungry man dinner every Fri-day, and the broasted chicken buffet on Wednes-day." Doug does the work back in the kitchen and



The Purple Goose Smokehouse and Saloon has a new name, the sign just hasn't changed. Owned by Doug and Shelly Yotter since 2023, the goose's nickname is the "Hidden Gem of Janesville."

Shelly handles the bar and the ordering up front, "Ours is a perfect marriage," Doug proclaims, "but both of us agree our employees are our number one asset." The Yotters have between 10 and 15 people working with them, from bar-tenders, to wait staff, to cooks.

The couple purchased the restaurant from founder Judy Jacobs, who had opened the Purple Goose in 2002. According to Doug, Jacobs retired and is now living "up north."

The Purple Goose has a bar in front and the res-taurant in back, but that's only half the building. The other half is a community room for special occasions and big events. "We get weddings in here and from the school we have pizza parties." He tells of one time when "there must've been 50 kids running around." He pointed to the bar in the community room and said, "This whole bar had pizzas down to the end; the kids were so well be-haved I was amazed."

Speaking of the community room and other fea-

tures at the restaurant, including a popular game near the entry, Doug observes, "'I love that game. I leave a few quarters in there sometimes, so the kids can play it. We want kids in here when they're young so they get those memories and grow up thinking about the Purple Goose.'"

Back on the tangent of things he'd like to change, he comments it would be nice to add a sort of conveyor belt that would deliver pizzas down the line.

Doug has many ideas for ways he would like to see the spaces in the restaurant expanded, includ-ing developing a space for future shows and events. The community room was once the Janes-ville Legion meeting hall, and could have space for as many as 500 people. "But that" said Doug, "Like our baked potato bar, will just have to wait till we get to it."

With an ever changing menu and selection, the Purple Goose has earned its back-alley nickname, "Janesville's hidden gem."

Janesville's
Best Thai Cuisine

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The "Best Thai Cuisine" restaurant at 115 North Main Street in Janesville has been in op-eration only since June 20. Already, though, those who work there are deeply impressed by the public's attention and the positive support they've received.

The restaurant's website claims, "we serve fresh, flavorful dishes made with traditional recipes and bold spices," and goes on to say, "We're passionate about bringing the perfect balance of sweet, sour, salty, and spicy flavors to your plate."

Inside, everything still seems brand new. The menus have that newly-printed sheen, the floors look like no one has walked on them, the tables sparkle and shine. The owner of Best Thai Cui-sine, Jeremiah Gwa, wasn't there on Thursday, July 24, but his brother, Daniel Lisu, who works in the kitchen, was. Lisu stepped away from his tasks to talk for a few minutes.

He's had a lot of kitchen work experience, first in St. Paul at Mela Thai, then in Buffalo, Minn., at Grace Thai. Lisu acknowledges he has a rather long commute: "Right now, it's back and forth every day to St. Paul, but we finally

just found a house in town we can rent, and that will make everything a lot easier." That evening there were four tables full at 4:45 p.m., as he spoke another two groups of four walked in and took seats. There was another cook in the kitchen, but he wasn't overwhelmed just yet.

Lisu says he Gwa have had some pleasant revelations. "Pretty much so far we didn't think a lot of people would come here, but they have every day, and not just from Janesville. A lot of people have been driving over from Mankato" He said he found it impressive that, even with the many dining options available to the west, people were choosing to drive to Janesville.

"That's so great," he went on, saying it would be expected to take some time to build a cus-tomer base. "We were pretty surprised. On our grand opening we were out of some stock for three days; we had to close at 6:30 p.m. for a few nights and turn people away because we were out of food. " It was like that for the first three weeks. All of us had no time to eat lunch every day, it was that busy."

The Best Thai Cuisine's menu is available at www.bestthaimn.com. Otherwise, they are still the newest restaurant in Janesville and are open for business!



TRADITION AND FLAVOR - Daniel Lisu was busy working the kitchen at Janesville's new-est restaurant, Best Thai Cuisine, on Thurs-day, July 24. Photo by Ben Revermann

■ Hair

from Page 5

good about themselves," says Schroeder, emphasizing she be-lieves every stylist has that goal. "It's what we're all about."

Both Johnson and Schroeder admit there have been times they either cried, or struggled to keep from crying. They share the story of individuals undergoing chemo-therapy. "Their hair starts coming out in clumps," says Johnson sadly. "They really don't have any choice but to shave their heads. We're glad to help them, even though it's hard for us, too."

One heartbreaking moment Johnson recalls is a time when, during a haircut, a man shared with her that he had just been diagnosed

■ JWP

from Page 5

Having the plan, business manager Wendy Dieker explained, makes the district eligible for certain types of state funding. Money may not be used for new construction, but is dedicated to keeping buildings func-

tional and attractive. Among allowed expenses are painting walls, laying flooring, roofing, parking lot mainte-nance, athletic complex mainte-nance, physical safety and removing hazards. She said she and director of buildings and grounds Mike Dascher discussed incidental roof repairs or what might need to be done with the turf. She mentioned facility roofs

In other financial matters, Dieker informed school board members about ways new paid medical and

family leave laws affect district pay-roll.

The school board accepted and ap-proved the following donations: \$75 from Profinium Bank and the Min-nesota Future Farmers of America (FFA) foundation toward the FFA chapter; \$1,500 from the JWP FFA alumni and supporters for the FFA chapter; and \$56,000 from the Janes-ville State Bank and Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLB) for shade struc-tures over the playground.

School board members voted to rescind their agreement to pay \$8,000 for the services of the South Central workforce coordinator. Rys-dam and Erler both expressed con-fidence Andrea Grussendorf, the JWP college and career readiness co-ordinator, would be able to do the same work and save the district the \$8,000.

■ Surprise

from Page 1

other participating water ski organi-zations, either in Iowa or near the Twin Cities. Since many tournament participants had long ago booked ac-commodations in Albert Lea, mov-ing the show so far away would have been problematic.

Expected attendance for the tour-nament, a step on the route to na-tional-level competition, was more than 1,000 people, he explained.

Delaying was not an option either, he said, since national competition for single, pair, and small-group stunts is the first weekend in August and team-level nationals are the weekend after that. Three groups from the July 25 to 27 tournament

could earn the right to advance.

The quickly completed replace-ment plan had the registration table, viewing area and judges' platform lo-cated at Sportsman Park, along the north shore of Clear Lake. Vehicles—except for those needed for compet-itors—were parked at the county fairgrounds, with a shuttle carrying passengers back and forth between the two locations. Delivered to Waseca rather than the shore of Fountain Lake were portable rest-rooms, sound equipment, concession and souvenir sales, bleachers, spe-cialized docks, the ski jump and a portable base of operations. With them, of course, came the people, boats, vehicles and equipment needed for each type of competition, and many spectators.

Thursday's competitions were for small groups and specialized per-formance types; they began only an

hour later than originally scheduled at 9 a.m. and proceeded into the af-ternoon.

On Saturday, six water ski teams presented hour-long performances. On Sunday, five more teams did the same. Their presentations included highly difficult elements such as "pyramids" with skiers stacked to as many as four levels, barefoot skiing, jumps, "swivels" and much more.

Teams had four to six boats in the water at once, pulling skiers in from three large platform docks in turn. Safety crews floated nearby.

Belcher explained a team of judges was seated on a raised plat-form on shore, adding points to team scores based on the number of moves, the difficulty of the stunts, and the level of success they achieved.

He observed the Bayside Skiers had one of the smallest teams, with

55 members. Some groups included over 100. Not all were skiers, he continued: some manage equipment, some serve on the safety team, and some are part of the group which present an entertaining program on the shore, occupying spectators while the various water-based "acts" are carrying out preparations on the three docks.

Each hour-long performance, he added, was expected to have 14 acts. Belcher expressed gratitude to the city and county of Waseca, and to area residents for their patience with the unexpected commotion.

"It's not something I'd ever want to do again," he said of the high-speed relocation, "but I am really im-pressed we were able to do it this time."





Patrick Segler

Patrick Segler named Executive Vice President of Keen Bank

Keen Bank is pleased to announce the promotion of Patrick Segler being named Executive Vice President of Keen Bank. Segler will continue his commercial lending role and will also oversee the Owatonna market while working alongside President & CEO, Bernie Gaytko, on bank operations and management. “Pat’s strong history of leadership and banking makes him a key part of the Keen Bank management team,” said Bernie Gaytko, President & CEO of Keen Bank. “In his new role, Pat will oversee the lending and retail departments and will be our leader in the Owatonna market, where he will continue to build our brand and offer outstanding customer service in his hometown.” “I’m honored to step into the role of Executive Vice President and grateful for the support

and trust of our leadership team,” said Patrick Segler, Executive Vice President of Keen Bank. “I look forward to working alongside our talented colleagues to build on our momentum, drive strategic growth in our markets and continue delivering game changing service to our customers and partners.” Segler has more than 32 years of industry expertise in commercial, mortgage and retail banking. His experience over the years includes managing lending teams, underwriting teams and banks. He has a strong SBA background and an extensive credit background. Segler is a graduate of St. Cloud State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance and University of Wisconsin, Madison Graduate School of Banking. For more information visit keen.bank.

■ Tradition from Page 3

“People ask me why I don’t remodel,” he mentions, saying he particularly gets comments regarding the old-fashioned blue upholstery in the booths. “Well, there are grandparents out in those booths who have brought their grandchildren, and they’re able to say they ate here, on those benches, as a child.

“There’s a lot of nostalgia in a place like the Pheasant.”

He has made only a couple of additions to the menu, as well. “We’re serving what people have shown over time that they like to eat in a place like ours,” he comments. He mentions turkey commercials and burgers at lunchtime and hash browns, eggs, pancakes—and perhaps especially cinnamon rolls—for breakfast.

But alongside the nostalgia is another Minnesota staple: “hard work.”

“The Worke boys taught me a lot,” he mentions. “One thing I didn’t realize before 2020 was how much paperwork is involved with owning a business.”

So when the restaurant closes at 2 p.m. on its Monday-through-Saturday days of operation, Zach says he often heads to the office to take care of that side of the business. A vital task is making sure all the needed supplies are on hand each day.

The Pheasant also offers catering, providing food for a wide variety of gatherings large and small. “We’re often hired for funerals,” he mentions. “We are glad to help

people with those. One challenge is they’re often scheduled on rather short notice.”

At times like that, he says, he’s deeply grateful for members of his family who frequently help. His parents Brian and Kim and brother Noah frequently free up time to help with the many tasks involved with preparing, transporting and serving the food, not to mention cleaning up afterward.

“Those are times when it’s all hands on deck,” he comments. Though Carmen has a full-time job at Conagra as a financial analyst, she also gives freely of whatever time she can. The two also have a three-year-old son, Kashton, and are expecting a second child in November.

In addition to operating the cafe, Zach mentions he has Bettenfeld Lawn Service, a company with two employees besides himself which offers lawn mowing in the summer and snow clearing in the winter.

Scheduling is pretty straightforward in the summer, he comments—“unless there’s a breakdown or a problem with equipment,” and can be challenging in the winter after a snowfall, when all his clients are hoping to have their snow cleared as quickly as possible.

“That’s another time when it’s all hands on deck,” he says.

Still, whether the day is stressful or calm, Zach says “I’m glad to know I’m helping people, making their lives better in one way or another.

“Sure, it can be demanding, but with the help of my employees and my family, I’m up to it.

“I’ve never been afraid of hard work.”

Another Time Around Janesville’s songs in the park series continues

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

Dan Corbett and Jerry Derner with Mike Budach on sound make up the band ATA (Another Time Around). The two performed Thursday, July 24 at Veterans Memorial Park in Janesville as part of the community’s “Songs in the Park” celebration. This was the fourth installment of the eight-part series.

The weather was on the warm side at 83 degrees; there was a steady but light wind, with plenty of sunshine. The Janesville Farmers Market was still going strong; vendors kept under their awnings, tending to their wares while protected by shade. A scattering of lawn chairs was already set up by forward-thinking audience members wanting to claim premium locations.. Corbett spoke to those around as the band tuned up: “This is the first time I’ve been to Janesville, I just love this grandstand



ANOTHER TIME - Dan Corbett, Jerry Derner and Mike Budach on sound, make up ATA (Another Time Around), just one installment of the Janesville Veterans Memorial, Songs in the Park Series on Thursday, July 24, 2025. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

and how it’s elevated above the rest of the park.” He held his hand out in front of him to point where he meant. “Yeah, with this little shaded area to play in I think this is going to be really nice.” His band mates nodded their heads in agreement.

Budach, who does sound for ATA said, “I was a musician for years before I moved over to sound. In grade school I took piano lessons, I learned the guitar at 12 and spent over 40 years playing in a dozen bands or so, too many to even mention. We were supposed to play here last year but due to illness we couldn’t show. I like the setup here and how Janesville did this park.”

Bordering the park, on West Front Street next to the farmers market was the Wiste’s vendor stand selling hot dogs, bratwurst and burgers; smoke billowed out of the vent on the roof, sending the smell of food every-

where. Derner said, “With this heat, I’m not going to eat before the show, but I think when we’re done, I might go get a hot dog from that Wiste’s stand.” Corbett said, “I can’t eat beforehand, messes up my singing, but being in a band really does burn off the calories.” Band members explained they wanted to get set up early enough they didn’t have to worry about anything technical when the show began. Cars were beginning to pull up and park, half on the road and half on the grass. More chairs were being pulled out of trunks, drinks already in hand. ATA said they were ready to rock!

Next up for the Janesville Songs in the Park series is (Janesville Night Out), is AZBY on August 7 and Amy Manette Band on August 21, both starting at 5:30 p.m. All the performances in the series are free and open to the public.



STORYTIME FUN - With 40 participants and with year by year attendance increases, the Swim and Stories event by the Waseca Public Library at the water park on Saturday, July 26, 2025 is looking like it will stick around for a while. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann



SUMMER TRADITION - Brianna Bleeker led a group of 40 children in a song of Row Row Row Your Boat at the Swim and Stories at the Waseca Water Park event. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Strong attendance at Waseca library waterpark event

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Swim and Stories event, organized by the Waseca Public Library took place at the Waseca waterpark on Saturday, July 26. Forty cheering participants sat attentively on the grass in their bathing suits listening to librarian Brianna Bleeker read from her preselected books.

But it wasn’t only books; Bleeker also sang and acted out songs like “Row Row Row Your Boat” and “The Wheels on the Bus.” Children sang and clapped along enthusiastically.

Among the books Bleeker selected were “Swim, Swim, Sink” by Jenn Harney, a story about a duckling who, while following her siblings into the river, discovers she can’t swim, but only sink. Then there was “Ursula Upside Down” by Corey R. Tabor, about a catfish who forgets not only which way is up, but also down, left and right.

The event at the waterpark has become a summer tradition, according to Bleeker. “I really like doing this because it’s a fun little twist on my job as librarian. Obviously, I can’t do the Hokey Pokey in the water at the library.”

Attendance at the annual event had dwindled since the Covid pandemic, Bleeker mentions, and the event was at risk of being discontinued until a surge of interest in 2024. “Last year suddenly we had really high attendance, so we did it this year just to see and all these kids showed up and it’s great so we’ll continue it now.”

Among the activities was a guessing game about animals in the ocean, putting the answers in song to the tune of “The Wheels on the

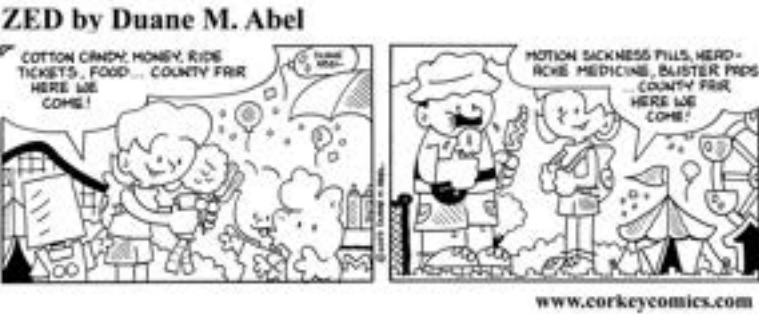


FUN IN THE SUN - The Swim and Stories event, provided by the Waseca Public Library was fun and sun for Waseca Children and their families. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Bus”: during “The crab in the ocean goes clack, clack clack” all the kids opened and closed their hands like crab claws.

The last activity they did after all the singing and reading was the “Hokey Pokey” dance while standing in the water, after that the kids were turned loose into the pool. Juniper, Monty and Alex went straight to the deep end, Juniper was even willing to prove she could touch bottom in the deep end by way of demonstration. Caden and Billy Joe were kind enough to splash the camera to get it wet, “Because” they reasoned, “You’re at a water park, now that your camera is wet you can take pictures underwater.” This claim was doubtful, but many thanks for the consideration were expressed.

The Waseca Public Library has every intention of hosting another Swim and Stories at Waseca Water Park next year. This event was held thanks to support from the Waseca Friends of the Library.



■ Bently from Page 2

I held my smooth-cheeked grandson in my arms as he fell asleep,

thinking of the many future adventures he represents, and couldn’t help picturing my 92-year-old mother-in-law, now on hospice and also asleep much of the time, gradually letting go of life.

There was nothing to be “done” about any of these observations, except to take notice and keep thinking.

What a rich tapestry we are threaded through, we humans, woven in and out, making contact with light and dark, bounty and loss. We can lift each other in big and small ways, sometimes thanks to planning and commitment, sometimes simply by chancing to be in the right place at the right time. I am

grateful for my faith that God is in control, because this week has reminded me each moment remakes us into something like a wind-blown seed released into the wind. We are loose and free and ready to grow in new ways, with no control over where we will land or how long we will stay there.

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The
Pastor's Column

Work to live, not live to work

**By FR GLENN FRERICHS
Sacred Heart**

I am sometimes reminded of the many two-week vacations that our family would take almost every year. The making of these fond memories consisted of packing up our 1972 Palomino popup camper, loading the family of five into our brown Ford pickup, and traveling west, usually to Colorado, Wyoming, or some other beautiful state. By the time my two siblings and I were nearing graduation from high school, parts of the camper were held together with fishing line, silicone caulking, and whatever else could be found to get the job done. It was simple, but it built memories. I think I also speak for my two siblings when I say that it wasn't just the camper that made these times so memorable; it was because we all worked together, each having a role in making sure that packing, meals, and everything else ran smoothly.

Sundays, vacations, and other times of rest are essential to a fulfilling life. Scripture tells us that God created the world in six days and then rested on the seventh. God then paused, looked at what he had made, and saw that it was good. Having been created in God's image, we reflect Him in many ways, including our need for rest, relaxation, and the enjoyment of each other's company. Unfortunately, our capitalistic society tends to suggest that a person's value is contingent upon how much we can accomplish or how much money we can earn. Keeping busy is sometimes considered the highest virtue. People sometimes begin to feel the effects of this when their own self-worth begins to diminish because they cannot do as much, rather than recognizing their value as a child of God.

In his book, "Leisure as the Foundation of Culture," Joseph Pieper argues that true culture does not arise from labor, but from leisure. We do not live to work; we work to live! Leisure is not mere idleness or rest. Rather, it is a state of contemplativeness that allows one to experience truth, beauty, and the divine that is all around us. It is through leisure that we begin to understand God and all that He has created more deeply. We begin to appreciate creation for the mysterious way that it reflects the Creator. In a world filled with the distractions of deadlines, quotas, technology, and social media, weekly days of rest and extended vacations can be invaluable for fostering individual health, family unity, and greater harmony.

In a world continually calling for our attention and our energy, we should ask ourselves: Am I living a balanced life? Do I experience life as a never-ending sprint or more as a marathon? Am I only able to see the needs right before me? Or am I able to take the time to look at the world around me? Would my spouse or friends say that I am living a balanced life? If I am retired or not able to get around well, do I recognize my worth as a child of God without being able to do as much as I used to do? Or am I inclined to feel self-worth only when I can fill a particular need?

Consider the parable that Jesus told his listeners, which many will hear at their Mass or service this Sunday. The rich man, who produced a bountiful harvest, placed all of his energy into replacing his barns with larger ones so that he could store grain for years to come. Yet, the night his life was demanded of him, everything was lost because he did not store up the kind of treasure that matters to God. Although we will never see a hearse pulling a U-Haul on the way to the cemetery, the passing of someone rich in the grace and peace of Christ is the finest pearl that one could ever ask for.

Portrait of a lady opens Aug. 12 at Historical Society

Were it not for her scrapbook, her half-lived life might have faded entirely from memory.

This August, the Waseca County Historical Society invites the public to step into the forgotten story of a woman who defied expectations—until the world turned away.

Portrait of a Lady, opening August 12 and running through October 23, shines a light on the life of Florence Rose Castor—an accomplished, university-educated woman from Waseca County whose promising career as a German teacher was cut short by wartime fear, personal injury, and the societal stigma surrounding women and mental health.

Institutionalized and later abandoned by her family, Florence's story was nearly lost to history. Until now. This original exhibit draws from Florence's personal scrapbook, family records, and newly uncovered artifacts to piece together a remarkable life interrupted.

Visitors will explore the broader social and political forces that shaped her fate—and the lives of countless others—through a rich blend of narrative, photography, and interactive elements. In addition to Florence's story, the exhibit includes a special section honoring the lives of other local women whose names and stories have been similarly overlooked.

Exhibit Highlights Include: Photographic Time Capsule: A stunning display of turn-of-the-century photographs including tintypes, cabinet cards, and cartes de visite. Victorian Photography Studio: A recreated 19th-century photo set, perfect for vintage-inspired selfies. Calling Card Station: Learn about the etiquette and symbolism of calling cards—and leave one of your own behind.

"Florence's life reminds us of how many women were quietly erased from the historical record because they didn't fit society's expectations," said Amy Danielson, Executive Director of WCHS. "Through this exhibit, we're not only telling her story—we're inviting our community to be part of restoring her voice."

Portrait of a Lady is more than an exhibit—it's an act of remembrance. Visitors will have the chance to consider the ways we preserve, erase, and reclaim memory over time.

Admission is free and open to the public during regular museum hours. Group tours are welcome. For more information, visit www.wasecacountyhistorycenter.org or contact the Waseca County Historical Society at 507-835-7700 or execdirector@wasecacountyhistorycenter.org.

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Janesville's Farmers Market offers fresh produce, more Gottschlalk Edibles

**By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer**

The Janesville area farmers' market takes place at Veterans Memorial Park every other Thursday from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Each market so far this year has seen an increase of people coming to sell their wares, and Thursday, July 24, was no different.

Music from trio Another Time Around was scheduled beginning at 5:30, but at 4:30, it was just the market. There were four stands with two more setting up. People were coming and going at a relaxed pace, the occasional slam of a car door accompanied the heat in the sunlit but quiet park. There were a few chairs scattered about, reserving places for concert goers. For vendors and the coming band, the Wiste's Meat Market vendor was selling hot dogs and bratwurst not far from the stage. Every person selling at the market was hot but positive and cheerful. Kay Gottschlalk was peeling onions, she dabbed sweat from her brow and said, "I've been selling for 25 years, mostly at the Waseca farmers' market." On her table were assorted vegetables: carrots, beets, zucchini, ground cherries, kohlrabi, cabbage and purple cabbage, sweet peppers, cucumbers, green and red peppers, broccoli, acorn, buttercup and butter-

nut squashes, string beans, green beans, fresh dill. This was her first time at the Janesville farmers' market this year, "I've been over in Waseca mostly."

Her asparagus was done in June, "It grew really well with all the rain. But with that rain there have also been issues with my bush beans and my onions." Her onions, the parts on the ground have been growing soft because the ground doesn't have a chance to dry. "But I have to say the rain has been working wonders for my cabbages and kohlrabi." During the Waseca County Fair she took a break from her vending to work her other job, "I also run a Pampered Chef booth at the fair so that took a week's worth of time."

She said there was a time when she would set up a stand at numerous markets all week long. "Tuesday and Friday were the Waterville farmer's market, Wednesday and Saturday were the Waseca markets and Thursday I did Janesville but that was years ago. I can't keep up with that pace anymore." She works the market by herself but her husband, Gary, helps out at home, "He tills and helps with the gardening and weeding, but the rest is me. Please note I cannot do this without him." She used to live in Janesville but now lives a few miles



GOTTSCHLALK FRESH - Kay Gottschlalk has been selling her garden wares at local farmer's markets for the past 25 years. Pictured is Gottschlalk selling at the Janesville Market on Thursday, July 24, 2025.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

out of town, "I had three gardens all over Janesville back then when I lived in town." Her stand doesn't have a name but when "Gottschlalk Edibles" was suggested, she said that sounded fine. Gottschalk says cus-

■ County

from Page 3

"It's not surprising to me that currently, prevention and education and support and recovery are kind of the higher areas that people are feeling need more funding," Kronbach said.

However, she acknowledges it is very early in the feedback gathering process. Kronbach said the advisory council consists of people from all sectors. From law enforcement, court and human services, fire and rescue to health-care clinics and school districts. She said even one of the school district superintendents is joining

the committee. But there is also room for more people on the council.

"What I would like to see more of, actually, is individuals of experience. So we do have a little bit of that representation, and/or people who have been affected by it within their family or close friends—but hearing from individuals with lived experiences," Kronbach said.

As for the community response, Kronbach said she thinks the community knows that opioid addiction has had profound negative effects, not just in Waseca County but statewide and worldwide.

"I get a sense they're pleased to know we have some funds to be able to hopefully do some work on the opioid epidemic," she said.

Kronbach added that the council and public health are working to expand upon efforts that are already happening and helping the great work that's already being done in the community, including mental health efforts.

The advisory council and public health will not be working alone and Kronbach said they will be using the John Hopkins Principles for the use of funds from the opioid litigation to guide their work. This includes principles such as spending the money to save lives, using evidence to guide spending, investing in youth prevention, focusing on racial equity and developing a fair and transparent process for deciding where to spend the funding.

"We're following some best

practices. And then also there've other counties, bigger counties, that have started this work ahead of us: There are some blueprints out there that we're also utilizing," Kronbach said.

The next advisory council meeting is at 11 a.m. on Aug. 4 in the public health office. Kronbach encourages community members to come if they wish.

Anyone wishing to join the advisory council can apply on the public health website or at <https://forms.office.com/g/t19LVbRY3c>. Everyone is encouraged to take the opioid settlement survey at <https://forms.office.com/g/mDc5gAhTBd> or on their website.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m. * * * * *	507-607-8245 Sunday worship 10 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 * * * * *
4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m. * * * * *	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.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. Summer worship hours, (10:45 a.m. Worship, winter) * * * * *
FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 Worship Sundays 9:30 a.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 * * * * *	ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St, Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass * * * * *
CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Worship Sundays traditional 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship; 10:45 a.m. contemporary service * * * * *	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 * * * * *	FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 Owen St., Janesville Pastor Sarah Krolak * * * * *
ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m. * * * * *	ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship * * * * *	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday — 9 a.m. Worship * * * * *	ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. * * * * *
ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 314 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-2647 Worship Sunday 9:00 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 * * * * *	TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Smiths Mill, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship * * * * *
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net) Worship Sunday 10 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 Sunday — 8 a.m. summer worship; 10:45 a.m. Worship starting Sept. 1 * * * * *	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 * * * * *
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m. * * * * *	VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * * * *	THE CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS Brad Donner, Branch President Waseca, Minnesota www.lds.org Sunday — 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18 * * * * *	NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.
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 * * * * *		

Janesville

1925

- One of the old “strong arm” games that refuses to die is the picture enlarging racket. It is worked by crews of men who systematically canvass whole communities at a time, representing, we will say, the Grafting Portrait Company. These are real high powered salesmen and about the only way to get rid of them is to drive them out with a club.

- Washington D.C., July 21 – According to the latest report of the Department of Agriculture on the farm situation, the farmers this year on the whole, have better crop prospects than in any year since 1919. The report declares that taken as a whole the main crops are promising fairly well, except for winter wheat in certain localities. It is said further that the present nice balance in both livestock and crop production “is a tribute to the readjustments made by the American farmer since the fall of 1921.”

- When William Clark makes his last trip over old Route Four, Saturday, August 1, he will have covered 160,862 miles past the mail boxes of his patrons. It has taken some time, a little over 20 years in fact, to cover this distance, but Mr. Clark admits that he’ll be a bit lonesome for the daily ride along the way when he retires on his pension in another week. Mr. Clark began his duties as rural carrier May 1, 1905. He will not be 65 years of age until the 21st of August, but with the annual vacation, his time will be up with the first of the coming month.

1950

- Maybe Iowa is famous for its tall corn but when it comes to REALLY tall corn, the Alma City community will take a back seat from no one. Tuesday afternoon, L. C. Mortensen, Jr., farmer living a half mile west of Alma City, came into the Argue office with a stalk of corn that measured a trifle over seven feet in height. Mr. Mortensen stated that he planted 404-A DeKalb in the 21 acres in this particular plot and some of the corn is just starting to ear-out. The stalk is now on display in the Argus office.

- Wrestlers you have been seeing all winter on television will be in Waseca in person for the Waseca County Fair. They will appear on a wrestling card Saturday evening, August 5. Bronko Nagurski, Otto Kuss, Joe Pazandak, Sterling Robson, Bobby Nelson and Stan Hyslajek are the wrestlers who will appear at the Waseca County Fair. Nagurski of International Falls, acclaimed one of the greatest wrestlers of all time, will face the 240-pound Otto Kuss of Pine City. Kuss boasts a string of 200 wins and only a few over a dozen losses.

- Never since opening day have the Janesville Red Sox been so near to the top spot of the South Le Sueur County League as they are today. Ever since the second game of the season the Red Sox have wanted to defeat the Morries of Morristown who have the Red Sox their worst beating of the season in that game by a score of 20 to 8. The Sox’s dreams came true when they made Morristown’s league-leading club look like anything but that when they paraded to their seventh consecutive win over the Morries Sunday afternoon at Morristown by an 8 to 3 score.

1975

- Hiring and reorganization were the order of the day for the District 830 School Board when they met for their July meeting last Wednesday and began planning for the 1975-76 school year. High on priority was the hiring of three teachers, one of which is already teaching half-time sixth grade at JHS, Elaine Schave. She will transfer to full-time elementary. Two new teachers were hired to replace Nancy Boettcher and Deidre Malden who resigned at the end of the year. Cindy Olson and Allan Tonn will both begin their teaching careers at JHS this fall.

- There will be more than street selling going on at Janesville’s annual Flea Market Saturday, August 9. Individuals, clubs, and merchants can win cash prizes by dressing for the occasion. A \$25 prize will go to the store, the club and the individuals who display the most original costumes and theme for the event. A Flea Market committee of Leon Schultz, Jerry Chapman, Audrey Wilson, and Rosie Bauer has set the theme for the street sale as a Preview of the BiCentennial.

2000

- Carolann Eggert knows first hand the value of the Janesville rescue team. if it weren’t for them ,she may not be alive. On the night of May 1st, Eggert awoke with severe chest pains. She was able to make the call to 911, and in her words, “they were here like a bang.” The volunteers quickly determined that Eggert’s heart was not getting enough blood. “They knew exactly what to do,” said Eggert. “They absolutely know their business; they were wonderful.”

- Janesville native, Courtney Adams, was crowned Miss Waseca County 2000 on Saturday, July 14. First runnerup was Christina Stewart from Waseca, and second runner-up was Amanda Tesch of Waldorf. Other contestants vying for the title were Nicole Werth, Courtney Judd, Stacy Lewer, Mariah Routh, and Jennifer Mackey.

- Shelly Schultz has loved her job as Waldorf Middle School Principal. That is what has made her decision to leave so difficult. But sometimes, the opportunity is just too good to turn down, and that has made all the difference. Schultz is leaving her job in Waldorf to accept the position of high school principal at Loyola High School in Mankato. Schultz was not necessarily looking for a new job. When a former parent of a student called her and told her about the opening, she deliberated long and hard before throwing her hat into the ring. She decided to “let go and let God,” a motto she tries to live by. When she received the offer, she took the time to call a few people, making sure Loyola was the place for her. And, with everything she saw and heard, she made the decision to accept.

- **Todd Huxford of the Janesville Fire Department and his daughter, Kelsi, posing with a Heartstart 2000 machine that helped save lives in Janesville in 2000.**

- The Waseca County Sheriff’s Office is urging people in the county to be on the lookout for possible scams in the area. There have been incidents of individuals possibly working together in a scamming operation in rural Waseca County in the past week. One incident involved a Hispanic male claiming he was from the “power company” and needed to know where the victim’s property line ran. The suspect led the victim away from the resident while other suspects entered the residence and took approximately \$2,000 to \$2,500 in cash along with several thousand dollars of certificates of deposits.



Waseca

25 years ago

- In mid-May Hickory Tech Corporation began a major telecommunications project in Waseca. A building was constructed near the Industrial Park in the south end of town as a permanent facility to house the company’s main switching equipment.

- At tonight’s Waseca City Council meeting, a resolution will be presented to authorize negotiations to purchase the depot building, former home of Depot Liquor on West Elm Avenue, and use it as Waseca’s Chamber/Tourist Center. After discussion at last week’s work session, Mayor John Clemons said the council was “pretty positive” about the idea.

- Connor meets Waseca supporters — Owatonna mayor Pete Connor, DFL candidate for the Minnesota House of Representatives, was the guest of honor at a reception at the Waseca home of Barb and Tim Penny recently. Connor is running for the seat held by Rep. Doug Reuter of Owatonna who is not seeking re-election. Connie Ruth, Republican candidate also from Owatonna is running against Connor for the seat.

- ELM Care Day Care, a facility providing day care for 59 children ranging in ages from infant to school-age, received a \$5,000 grant from Region Nine Child Care Resource & Referral, Inc. A need for new carpeting and playground equipment was the reason for the request.

- Dorthie from Norway meets quite a few cows, also some mosquitoes in Minnesota. “I think all is different here,” said Dorthie Imsgard, 18, from Norway. “People are more faster.” As an example, Dorthie said that just that morning they had picked up breakfast with coffee in a Styrofoam cup at McDonald’s.

- Waseca VFW coach, Tink Larson, is hoping fifth time is his lucky charm. Larson has his fifth VFW baseball team in 32 years within one win of a first-ever state tournament berth. Waseca teams have come up short in the previous four attempts.

50 years ago

- As you approach Ernest and Betty Lou Junkers’ house at 500 Elm Ave. East, you can’t help but smile. Flags, dolls of all sizes and shapes in all modes of clothing, pots with the words “love” and “smile” written on them, and a host of other paraphernalia all jump out to greet you. Betty Lou Junkers is a clown. Not a slap-happy carefree person who enjoys cracking jokes (although she does do this once in a while also) but a professional clown who works hard to make unhappy people happy. **Betty Lou Junkers holds one of her favorite clown costumes – a dress made of over 100 men’s neckties.**

- Most of the new laws passed by the 1975 Minnesota Legislature take effect Friday, including a handgun permit-to-carry law that marks the state’s first effort to control the use of pistols.

- Members of the Waseca Civil Air Patrol (C.A.P.) are entertaining cadets from the Netherlands this week. The nine cadets, ages 18 and 19, and their escort, Willem van Beek, a pilot from the Royal Dutch Navy, arrived in Waseca Monday afternoon.



Willem Van Beek, escort for the international Air Cadet Exchange from the Netherlands, watches a radio being put together at the E.F. Johnson Company. Cadets and their escort toured the industry Monday afternoon.

- Vince and Peter Driessen made a name for themselves in sailboat racing this past weekend as they placed third in a 10 state racing meet at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The Waseca team beat every Minnesota team and 100 other teams from a 10 state area.

75 years ago

-Catching almost any size of game fish on sporting tackle is grand sport, but catching a prize winning gamester is really something to brag about. And that’s just what Louis F. Kastner, 709 State Street, Waseca, has done with a Northern Pike caught June 15 in Lake Nipigon, Ontario, Canada. Mr. Kastner has just been notified that his 37 lb. 11 oz. Northern was judged the winner for the May-June period in Outdoorsman Magazine’s second annual Fisherman-of-the-month contest.

-Fertilizing Clear Lake with Vigoro or some similar chemical fertilizer to “bring back the good fishing” is the recommendation of Robert Page Lincoln, famed fisherman, writer and editor of Fur, Fish and Game magazine. While spending all of last Thursday with George Herter, he advocated this plan which has been working wonders in Alabama and other states.

- Delightfully cool weather continues with lows in the fifties being recorded during the last five days. High for the past six days was 90 on Thursday. There has been no precipitation.

100 years ago

- No agreement could be reached by the city council last evening for the letting of the contract for the construction of the two new sewer extensions in the north and south sides. As a result a motion was submitted to reject all the bids, which carried, and another motion carried to advertise for new bids on the three extensions as one unit.

- As a prize awarded them for having attained the rank of Eagle Scouts, three Waseca Scouts will leave today for the scene of the battles of the Indian Uprising of 1862.

- Threshing has started in Waseca county and the results are not what might be termed the best. According to several farmers who have been interviewed the grain crop can hardly be termed fair even. Both winter and spring wheat is running very poor.

- Deputy Sheriff Earl Grant and Policeman Halvorson and Connolley conducted a raid on the soft drink parlor and lunch room operated by L. A. Miller. They secured a bottle with a small amount of evidence on which they arrested Wm. Stolz and Sylvester Donovan.

- The state of Minnesota, at the end of two years’ trial of the rural credit system, holds 7,252 farm loans, of which 71 have been foreclosed, says the Minneapolis Journal, making the state owner of 13,817 acres of land.

- A pretty wedding ceremony will be performed before the grand stand on the evening of the last day of the Waseca County Fair this year, provided some couple sees fit to take up the offer of the fair association in this matter. At a meeting of the attractions committee last Wednesday evening a suggestion was approved offering a beautiful boudoir set, and possibly some other furniture, to the bride and groom who will be married at that time. Boys here’s your chance! All you need is a bride.

New Richland

25 years back

- **As youngsters these ladies, Glenda Bait of Hartland (left) and Myra Prizeman of West Malling, Kent County, England, began writing to each other as pen pals. When they first met in person it was instant friendship. Glenda has visited England twice, Myra has visited Minnesota twice and each intend to make future visits to each other. Glenda is holding Beef Eater, Yeoman of the Guard, the ancient soldiers that protected the king and queen in England. Paddington Bear on Myra’s lap is a character in a lot of children’s stories in England and is in comparison to the tales of Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy in this country.**

- The celebration of the first 100 years of the city of Ellendale’s existence began July 13 and will continue through next Sunday. The climax of the 11 days of the centennial observation will be a grand parade of more than 120 units at 1 pm, July 23. One of the most interesting displays of the celebration is a large mural attached to the side of the Ellendale Cafe across from the National Bank of Ellendale. The Ellendale Lions worked on the project.

- Sandy (Jacobson) Thostenson and John Chapek announce their engagement and forthcoming marriage. Parents of the couple are Helen Jacobson and the late George Jacobson, and Donald and Arlene Chapek. A private ceremony is planned for Saturday, July 22.



Near the end of the Junior Miss Program at NRHEG High School, Friday night the six contestants sang a special song to their parents, who were sitting in the audience. Pictured here are Naomi Tukua, Holly Waldhauser and Valerie Crumb. Valerie earned a \$100 scholarship for writing the Be Your Best Self essay. She played a piano solo in the talent division. Valerie’s parents are Brett and Lori Crumb of Hartland.

50 years back



Rich Westland, Steve Weydert and Dave Shurson, officers of the New Richland-Hartland High School Band are pictured here with their first place Class AAA trophy in marching and playing competition at Festag Days at Minnesota Lake, last week. At the right are members of the Wells-Easton Band with their third place trophy.



Shown with the first place winner in class 5 at the National Junior Polled Hereford Heifer show are (from left): Plaque donors Richard and Jeanine Yost, Ong, Neb.; National Junior Polled Hereford Council director Glen Werry Jr., Farmington, III.; North Dakota Polled Hereford Queen Lisa Johnston, Cando, N.D.; Jays brothers Lynn and Guy, and Jay Ewald, the top exhibitor.

- A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas McShane of New Richland at the Waseca Memorial Hospital, Wednesday, July 16. The husky little fellow weighed in at 10 lb. 4 oz. and has been named Daniel Gene. He has a brother Tommy who is 2 ½ years old. His grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Felske and Mr. and Mrs. Joseph McShane, all of Waseca. Herman Krueger of Waseca is his great grandfather.

75 years back

- A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Chicos, Jr., Wednesday, August 23, at the Neave Hospital, Albert Lea. The Chicos family lives near New Richland.

Waseca’s very own Zootopia

Public library hosted popular Disney movie themed event

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Waseca Public Library held an Adventures in Zootopia event for children ages four through eight. There were numerous activities for almost 30 youngsters on this rainy and overcast, yet muggy and humid Thursday, July 24.

Originally, Zootopia, a Disney animated film, was released in 2016. With a budget of \$150 million, the movie made over a billion dollars worldwide and was very popular. It featured a giant city which housed every animal on earth, except humans, all living together. Predators like lions and bears lived with rabbits and squirrels and so on. There were subzero temperatures, hot jungles, deserts, oceans and regular city environments. The event at the library

featured activities highlighting animals from the film and in librarian Brianna Bleeker’s words, “Kids are playing but we’re sneaking in some education without them knowing.” The Yak Challenge helped kids with their movement. The Scavenger Hunt helped kids with their observations. The Carrots in the Bucket Toss helped with hand eye coordination. The Obstacle Course helped with balance by asking children to walk backwards through cones set on the ground. The Popsicle Station helped kids with their creativity. Volunteers helped with each activity’s instruction.

But this wasn’t just Bleeker’s brainchild, “My co-worker, Jessi Zimmerman, from over in Le Sueur helped with the creation. Right now, until we get some statewide atten-



RUNNING WILD - Addison, Zayda and Clara were doing the scavenger part of the Adventures in Zootopia event at the Waseca Public Library on Thursday, July 24, 2025. Photo by Ben Revermann

tion, this activity is just for kids in Waseca and Le Sueur. Usually, the library events are passed around from library to library, so this one is special because it’s just for local kids.”

If the Zootopia event goes well—and it seemed to be—Bleeker and Zimmerman plan to try other, similar, events. “This increases traffic to the library and gives kids pleasant mem-

ories so when they grow old, they too will push the importance of the library. At least that’s what we hope for.



NEW STRUCTURE - The gazebo at Waldorf’s Veterans Memorial Park is almost complete.

Waldorf’s Veterans park sees upgrades

Veterans Memorial Park gazebo takes shape, nears finish

“There’s a lot going on at the Waldorf Veterans Memorial Park.” WVMP Director, Charlie Barnes said, “It’s not done yet, but we got the roof on this week, and our new park Gazebo is really taking shape. A Special Thanks to John Sickle, Randy Cramerer, Jim Magestki, Doug Meyer, Rob

Wilkening, Charlie Meyer, and others who have volunteered their time, equipment, and effort to help make this a reality.” Barnes continued: “We can use some expert help to shingle our gazebo roof now.” Simply put, we cannot do this without YOU.”

Garden walk set for August 2

The Waseca Garden Club’s annual garden walk is set for Saturday, August 2 from 1 to 5 p.m. Four privately maintained gardens and the vintage garden with its heirloom plantings located at the Bailey-Lewer House at 401 Second Avenue Northeast will be featured. There is no charge to take part in the walk, but donations are accepted. Anyone participating should start by reporting to the Bailey-Lewer House, where maps showing the other locations will be distributed. Refreshments will also be available.

The walk will take place rain or shine.

One of this year’s private gardens uses raised beds and cultivates many vegetables following the University of Minnesota

guidelines for soil care. Another has a pathway paved with antique bricks and dotted by leprechauns, planters and perennials. There are also a rose garden, a tiered garden, and one which is a living tribute with many hostas and perennials landscaped throughout the property.

Homeowners are always very willing to talk about their gardens and answer questions, so the garden walk is not only a chance to experience beauty, but to “borrow” some secrets as well. A fundamental goal of the walk is to create opportunities for gardeners to network.

The Waseca Garden Club has been hosting a yearly walk since 1987, with one year missed during the pandemic.

Relay for Life event Aug. 8 at Freeborn County Fairgrounds

Summer 2025 brings with it a bigger, more exciting Relay for Life with more family activities! The Relay for Life of Freeborn and Mower Counties will be held August 8th starting at 5pm at the Freeborn County Fairgrounds in Albert Lea, MN. All are welcome!

The event begins at 5pm with food and family fun activities including the kiddie train, hay wagon, face painting, family and kids games, bounce house. This year will include “throw a sponge at a community leader”: Mayor Rich Murray 5pm; City Manager Ian Rigg 5:30pm; School Board members Neal Skaar 7pm and Dave Klaat 7:30pm; County Commissioner Dawn Kaasa 8pm and Sheriff Ryan Schea

8:30pm.

Opening Ceremonies commence at 6pm beginning with The American Legion Color Guard and National Anthem sung by Diane Heaney. Retired Rev Robert Bailly will lead the prayer. Todd Utpadel is our honorary chair and the main speaker. The ceremonies will commence with the Survivor Walk. Attendees are asked to cheer on the survivors!

To commemorate the 40th anniversary of Relay for Life, we are inviting teams to walk 40 laps (10 miles). Team members can walk together. Sponsor sign up sheets will be available that night. Each team will be announced at the event when they complete their 40 laps.

Live music begins at 5-6pm with

Dunnell Lenart. From 7-8pm Holly Day takes the stage, followed by our main act Todd Utpadel from 8-9pm.

Other activities include police cars and the fire department safety house. More activities are being added!

As always the Relay for Life includes an amazing silent auction which starts at 5pm and ends at 9pm.

All attendees are encouraged to bring lighters to join in to light the luminaries at 9pm. While luminaries are being lit, all are encouraged to participate in the glow stick ceremony showing how cancer affects so many. A special addition will be made to the HOPE luminaries in the grandstand at 10pm.

Waseca Rotary Club



The Waseca Rotary Club is part of a global network of volunteers dedicated to making a positive impact. Led by Co-Presidents Cassie Meister and Katie Gonzales, we meet on the first and third Thursday at noon, focusing on fellowship, service projects, and community involvement. We're always looking to add new members who share our passion for service!

We proudly honor Gyles Randall for his remarkable 40 years of Rotary service. We have recently added a few new members over the past few months. We are always looking to find active members who share their time and talent across our community.

Amy Potter, our Past President, is a shining example as a visionary behind our newest project collaborating with Kari Wadd from FarmAmerica.

Introducing the Wellness Walk:

Launching next spring, the Wellness Walk at FarmAmerica will be a serene ½-acre space featuring gardens, walking paths, and a water feature. This project will provide a space for relaxation, learning, and community connection, embodying our commitment to “Service Above Self.”

Flower Crafts at New Richland Public Library Wed., Aug. 6

Get ready for summer gardens with flower crafts at New Richland Public Library at 10:15 a.m. Wednesday, August 6. Create a flower holder for delicate stems and beaded garden stakes. Geared for adults.

Waseca Art Center’s new exhibit Bob Nonnemacher opening Thursday, August 7

New artist Bob Nonnemacher will be featured at the Waseca Art Center from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, August 7. Online he defines himself: I am a professional Fine Artist dedicated to creating high quality aesthetic fine art for individual collectors as well as business clients for homes and offices.

AZBY at Janesville Veterans Memorial Park Thursday, Aug. 7

Musical group AZBY will play at the Janesville Veterans Memorial Park from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 7. This event is free to attend and is part of the Songs in the Park.

Community Salad Luncheon at St. Paul Lutheran Church Friday, Aug. 8

Musical group AZBY will play at the Janesville Veterans Memorial Park from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 7.

Crista and Muriah at Indian Island Winery Friday, August 8

Crista and Muriah will be performing at the Indian Island Winery from 6-8:30 p.m. Friday, August 8. They play a variety of hits.

Sweet Corn Feed at St. Paul Lutheran Church Sunday, August 10

A sweet corn feed at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church will begin at 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 10, at the church: 314 4th Ave. NE Waseca. On the menu, hamburgers, sweet corn, chips, bars and drinks. Free will donations accepted.

Emma Josephine and Ron & Steve at Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm Sunday, Aug. 10

Musician’s Emma Josephine and Ron & Steve will perform at Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm from 1-7 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 10. Enjoy some music with your pizza on the farm.

Detroit Tigers vs. MN Twins Lutheran Night at the Twins Thursday, August 14

The 32nd Annual Lutheran Night at the Twins will be leaving at 3:45 p.m. from behind Hy-Vee in Albert Lea on Thursday, Aug. 14. Cost is \$65 per person and is paid in advance. For reservations, call Bob or Genie Hanson at 507-373-8655 or Wayne or Bev Indrelie at 507-402-8228.

Hartland University’s Biker Bug Run Saturday, August 16

The Third Annual Hartland University Biker Bug Run will take place at noon, Saturday, Aug. 16, with kickstands up at 12:30 p.m. Registration is \$10 per person, all proceeds donated to American Bikers for Awareness and the training and education of Minnesota Young Rider Program. There will be six stops in total with a door prize at each location for closest bug to the bullseye.

Amy Manette Band at Janesville Veterans Memorial Park Thursday, August 21

Musical group AZBY will play at the Janesville Veterans Memorial Park from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 21. This event is free to attend and is part of the Songs in the Park Series.

‘Ask a Trooper’: buses driving on the shoulder

By SGT. TROY CHRISTIANSON OF THE MINNESOTA STATE PATROL

Question: I was driving in the metro area the other day and I witnessed a bus driving

on the shoulder. Is this allowed?

Answer: Transit buses and metro mobility buses are permitted to use the shoulder of a freeway or expressway. Buses can use the shoulder

only when main-line traffic speeds are less than 35 miles per hour. Bus drivers on the shoulder may not exceed the speed of main-line traffic by more than 15 miles per hour and may never exceed 35

miles per hour. Bus drivers on the shoulder must yield to merging, entering and exiting traffic and to other vehicles on the shoulder.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply

buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and of course, drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Trp. Troy Christianson – Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848, or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us.



BRANDED MODELS - Many Model Ts in the parade featured brands. Shown here is the Stroh's Bohemian Style Beer vehicle.



ROLL CALL - The Model Ts lined up at the Farmamerica lawn before parading the loop at 12:30 on July 24.



FUN RIDES - More than 220 Model Ts accompanied by about 600 people of all ages took part in an event organized by the Minnesota T-Totalers, a division of the Model T Club International, this past week. Drivers spent up to five days touring sites of interest within 65 miles of Owatonna, including visiting Farmamerica. Pioneer photos by Deb Bently and Amelia Roessler

Model T Tour visits Waseca’s Farmamerica

By **DEB BENTLY**
News Editor

Local drivers were likely surprised to find themselves mingling with dozens of Model T Ford vehicles on Waseca County roads on July 24. The Model T owners, on the other hand, had been planning on the drive for nearly two years.

Owatonna area resident Mark Cameron was the lead planner for the event. He explained the Model T Club International has more than 5,000 members spread all over the world. The organization holds an annual convention of sorts which focuses on allowing participants to do one of their favorite things: drive their vintage cars.

Toward that end, local groups can put together a proposal that includes about five days of activities to which participants can easily drive from a central location.

Cameron and other leaders of the 150-member Minnesota group, the “T-Totalers,” presented a proposal for consideration two years ago and were quickly accepted.

“We won because we had the best destinations,” he declared enthusiastically.

Cameron was pleased with the response from international membership. He says more than 220 Model Ts accompanied by about 600 people of all ages registered for the Minnesota event. Most were staying at the Hilton Doubletree in Owatonna. Except perhaps for a few driven by local members, all the Model Ts were brought to Minnesota on trailers from as far away as California, Florida, and locations in Canada.

Among the destinations during the five days of touring, the longest drive included Minneopa Park in Mankato. Since the group takes roundabout routes in order to avoid being an impediment to traffic, that day included about 130 miles of driving. Another day had taken them to Zumbrota where they parked their cars and walked through the city’s iconic covered bridge, which is only open to foot traffic.

On Thursday, the group spent the morning and lunch hour at Farmamerica. After that they headed to the Faribault Woolen Mills. The morning drive brought them on county roads angling southwest out of Owatonna, through Otisoc, then up to County Road 4, CR 9, and finally CR 2, which leads to Farmamerica.

“It was a pretty drive,” observed one participant who owns two Model Ts. “This is beautiful country.”

Another participant admitted Thursday morning’s rain had been a deterrent, since her Model T has no top. “We went back for the pickup,”

she said. Cameron mentioned others braved the rain, knowing the forecast predicted it would stop.

At Farmamerica, Model T owners parked their cars and toured the various sites. With their fascination for vehicles and vehicle restoration, many found the blacksmith shop and the vintage tractors of interest. In the meantime, many members of the public visited in order to see the nearly 200 versions of Model T vehicles parked in long lines on the grounds. As their scheduled time at the site wound down, vehicle owners treated visitors to a “pass and review,” a sort of parade around the grounds behind the interpretive center.

During a conversation with the Pioneer, Cameron revealed he owns five Model Ts. He went on to say nearly every club member owns at least two, and some own 10 or more. “There’s something truly special about Model Ts,” he commented.

“People ask me why I would want to drive such an old vehicle,” he said. “But really it’s a matter of how can you not drive one?”

He went on to say owners drive their cars often during the warmer months of the year. “Model Ts are especially good at finding ice cream shops,” he stated lightheartedly. With a top speed of 40 mph and with so many of them open to the air, he said one of their chief charms is that, “Unlike in a regular car, when you see something you might like to slow down for and look at a little bit more closely, you’re not already past it.”

“It’s a fantastic way to enjoy the day, appreciate nature, and share the company of your passengers.”

Cameron shared that the Ford company built 15 million Model T vehicles between 1908 and 1927. Over those years, he said Ford’s increasingly efficient use of production lines actually allowed the selling prices to drop.

Along with their own work finding and restoring Model T vehicles, Cameron claimed club members have a shared interest in helping others do the same. With so many made, he estimates that for every one that’s been restored, there are three to four vehicles parked in farm buildings and groves somewhere.

“There’s a tremendous support system for these vehicles,” he said. “If you know of one that’s out there possibly going to rust, contact us. We’ll either help you fix it, or help you find someone else who’ll do it.”

Anyone who wishes to contact the Minnesota T-Totalers, he said, should look at the organization’s Facebook page: T Totalers Model T Ford Club.

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- Fjords Leather Power Recliner

Shop Items

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- Traeger Pellet Smoker

- Craftsman Blue Metal Three Stacking Tool Chest

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City of Waseca, Minnesota
Annual Disclosure of Tax Increment Districts
For the Year Ended December 31, 2024

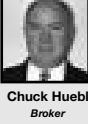
TIF District Name:	TIF 27 Fox Meadows
Current net tax capacity	\$17,289
Original net tax capacity	\$133
Captured net tax capacity	\$17,156
Principal and interest payments due in 2025	\$23,263
Tax increment received in 2024	\$24,159
Tax increment expended in 2024	\$23,101
Month and year of first tax increment receipt	7 / 2013
Date of required decertification	12/31/37
The total increased property taxes to be paid from outside the district if fiscal disparities Option A applies *	\$0

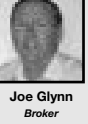
* The fiscal disparities property tax law provides that the growth in commercial-industrial property tax values is shared throughout the area. In a tax increment financing district, this value sharing can either result in a decrease in tax increment financing district revenue or a tax increase for other properties in the municipality depending on whether the tax increment financing district contributes its share of the growth. Amounts displayed here indicate that the district did not contribute its growth in commercial-industrial property tax values and represent the resulting increase in taxes on other properties in the City for taxes payable in 2024.

Additional information regarding each district may be obtained from-

Ms. Alicia Fischer, Finance Director
City of Waseca
508 South State Street
Waseca, MN 56093
(507) 835-9700

Waseca Realty
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507-835-8116
info@waseca-realty.com
www.waseca-realty.com

**Chuck Huebel**
Broker

**Joe Glynn**
Broker

**Kelle Roessler**
Moseley
Executive Assistant

**Jenny Goodlander**
Agent

**Traci Schuch**
Agent

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510 River Hills Waseca, MN
3 bed – 2 bath
\$399,900

Experience country living in this one-story home, just moments from the city limits. Kitchen has beautiful countertops, custom cabinetry, & modern amenities.

Enjoy the cozy family room with a gas fireplace; the three bedrooms feature ceiling fans. Fresh paint, new LVP flooring, storage cabinets, including a basement with bar and built-ins. Step outside, & take in the views of the wooded lot from the deck. Brand new Septic in 2023! Plus, an epoxy-finished garage floor and insulated garage that's ready to be heated.



Commercial Lot 616 S State St Waseca, MN
\$24,900

Own a commercial lot within city limits, zoned B3 – Business District; great potential for development. With an approximate building footprint area of 30' x 118', this site is ideal for business or mixed-use possibilities. • Zoned B3 – Flexible for many commercial uses • City utilities available • In-town location with easy access • Lot dimensions, setbacks, and allowable uses to be verified by buyer.

Note: Seller is a licensed real estate broker; the listing agent is related to the seller. Additional docs avail. in the associated documents section.



Restaurant & Bar 204 1st Ave Pemberton, MN
\$290,000

Wonderful business opportunity awaits. Well-established restaurant and bar in great location off state Hwy 83. Centrally located between many towns. 1 story building w/ 2 additions in 2016 & 2018. Metal roof, nice fenced in patio area with outside dining available and large parking area. Inside you will find it nicely updated with many amenities. 2 bar areas, many tables, stools and high tops. Large bathroom/ceramic tile. Sale includes building, land and inventory. Appliances to stay. Schedule your showing today on this lucrative property, it's a must see.



13198 290th Ave Waseca, MN
\$95,000

This historic brick building in the heart of Otisco was once home to the town's beloved grocery store. At 5,400 sq ft, this property is an opportunity for investors, renovators, or anyone dreaming of creating something truly one-of-a-kind. • Solid historic brick exterior full of character • Former grocery store – wide open commercial space • Includes 2 upstairs apartments in need of TLC – perfect for value-add investors • Original woodwork, tall ceilings, and large display windows • Plenty of space to create a live-work space, retail storefront, studio, or rental units • Located in quiet Otisco, a short drive from Waseca & New Richland. Bring your vision and restore this beautiful building to its full charm and functionality. Own some Otisco history! Property needs new septic system.

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642
AUGUST 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	2
3	4 COAST GUARD DAY	5	6 6pm BAR Bingo	7 7pm HALL BINGO PURPLE HEART DAY	8 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	9
10	11 7 pm Post & AUX Meeting	12	13 6pm BAR Bingo	14 7pm HALL BINGO NAVAJO CODE TALKERS	15 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	16 NATIONAL AIRBORNE DAY
17	18	19	20 6pm BAR Bingo	21 7pm HALL BINGO	22 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	23
24 ALL YOU CAN EAT PANCAKE BREAKFAST 8 AM - NOON YOUR HOSTS VFW	25	26	27 6pm BAR Bingo	28 7pm HALL BINGO	29 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	30
31						

HOURS OF OPERATION
SUN.– MON. CLOSED
TUE.– 1pm to 11pm Tue. Is Lady's nite 2 for one-Men Busch light \$2.50 from 4 to 6pm.
WED.– SAT.-1am to 12 pm
POST & AUX MEETING 7pm club open 6pm MEMBERS only. Mn. Gambling license number 00385

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Small town values

Local legal advocates represent, bring local advantages

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Though it may not seem like an obvious connection, the reasons to shop locally—supporting local businesses, strengthening the community by keeping money closer to home, and retaining the convenience of ready access—apparently apply to lawyers just as readily as they do retail shops and service businesses.

Representatives from three Waseca law firms, Byron Law Office, Kraus Law Offices and Patton, Hoversten and Berg (PHB) P.A. shared their insights regarding the value of working with a local law office.

The first reason they recommend choosing a local firm is quite straightforward. “You will get excellent representation,” observed Bill Hoversten, who has been a lawyer in Waseca since 1975, having originally worked with one-time county attorney William Patton and served, himself, as assistant county attorney in the 1970s. He is currently one of seven shareholders with PHB; the firm is located at 215 E. Elm Avenue. “Lawyers at all our local firms are knowledgeable and dedicated.” He went on to say there is no sense of competition among the providers since there is “plenty of work for everybody.”

In fact, said Molly Byron of

Byron Law Office, the businesses and the community benefit from having an array of options in numerous ways. For one, they will have the opportunity to seek out a personal connection. For another, different offices offer differing services. In her case, for example, she tends to spend the majority of her time working on estate planning and matters related to agriculture and real estate. A Waseca High School graduate, Byron joined the staff of the no-longer-existing Iversen law firm in 1997, when it became “Iversen and Byron.” She has been serving local clientele under her own name since 2002. Her one-lawyer office is located at 122 N. State Street. Having recently lost her long-term administrative assistant Bea O’Brien to cancer, she currently employs local college student Kyle Chen as an intern.

Tom Kraus of Kraus Law Offices mentioned another benefit. “There are at least two sides to every case,” he pointed out. “Both sides are going to need representation.” Kraus is also homegrown, having graduated from Waseca High School before attending the University of Minnesota and then Pepperdine University in California before returning to Waseca to join the practice of John McLoone in the 1980s. He has been located in his own building at the far

south end of Waseca’s Eighth Street Southeast for 23 years. Kraus is joined by his adult son, Michael, who works as a paralegal, and administrative assistant Mona Montenegro.

An obvious corollary to the word “local” is the idea of ready access.

“About four times a day,” commented Byron, “someone comes walking into my office and says something like ‘Can I just ask you a few questions?’”

“Lots of times, their concerns are something that need some form of legal action.”

The idea of access also ties in with one mentioned by Hoversten: personal acquaintance. “When the individual is part of the community, you get opportunities to interact with him or her,” he observed. “You can sort of size them up, and decide if they’re someone you would want representing you.”

All three lawyers mentioned small “maintenance” matters dealing with relatively routine legal issues such as business partnerships, family agreements having to do with mutually owned property, powers of attorney, wills, farm leases, and the like. “You have the convenience of being able to just stop by and get it taken care of,” said Hoversten.

Kraus, who, like PHB, takes criminal and family law cases as well as



DOWNTOWN LAW - Byron Law Office sits at 122 State St. N in downtown Waseca and is one of many law firms in town.

Pioneer photo by Amelia Roessler

“Keeping our practices vital and current is a form of service we work to perform for the community.”

— Bill Hoversten

handling lawsuits, pointed out every law office has increased abilities thanks to the now routine practice of holding court sessions remotely using electronic communication.

“It used to be I might have six hearings in one day, and they might be in different courtrooms around the region,” Kraus described. “That would be a lot of extra time for me and expense for my clients.”

“But now it’s possible to attend those six hearings without ever leaving my office.” Given that many hearings cover minor matters such as scheduling, Kraus sees the opportunity to take part remotely as “a real godsend.”

Kraus also mentioned that a local law office is more in touch with

local needs. In his case, he said, the local hispanic community benefits thanks to the contributions of bilingual office manager Montenegro. “Our Spanish-speaking community wants to be able to comply with legal expectations,” Kraus pointed out, “but coming from a different culture, they don’t understand those requirements.”

“We’re glad to be here to help with some of those difficulties.”

In addition to knowing the community, Byron points out local lawyers are on a first-name basis with many key players typically involved in legal transactions—from bankers and real estate agents to officials in the courthouse to participants in legal matters ranging from peace of-

ficers and court services workers all the way up to the clerk of court.

“We know who to talk with, and we know how to get in touch with them,” said Byron. “They know who we are, and we know what to expect from each other.”

“I’m not always using up time introducing myself,” observed Kraus.

Kraus mentioned the idea of access to local lawyers has been of particular interest to him lately, since he is looking toward retiring.

“What I would love,” he said, “is for a lawyer to take a look at my practice, learn what I do, and take up the reins.”

“I want to see my clients continue to receive the service and support my office has been providing.”

“Southern Minnesota is a good place to live,” stated Hoversten. “We want to attract as many young lawyers to the area as we can so they can discover that for themselves and decide to stick around.”

“Keeping our practices vital and current is a form of service we work to perform for the community.”



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