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WASECA

COUNTY

PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 10 Vol. III \$2

Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca

Friday, March 8, 2024

■ Page 4

Fire

Waseca primary election results

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

According to figures reported by the Waseca County Office of Property and Election Services, of 11,075 registered voters in the county, 1,723 voted, an overall turnout of 15 percent. The vast majority, 1,314, cast their ballots on the Republican side of the ticket.

Among Republican voters, 999 supported Donald Trump's candidacy; 293 supported Nikki Haley's. Other candidates on the ticket, including write-ins, received 10 votes all together.

The 404 people who voted as Democrats gave Joe Biden 316 votes; the next largest group were 37 who marked "uncommitted." Dean Phillips received 32 votes. Other candidates, including 6 write-ins, received a total of 12 votes all together.

Also an option on the 2024 ballot were members of the Legal Marijuana Now (LMN) Party. The 6 candidates listed in that column received 5 votes all together in Waseca County, one of which was a write-in.

Operation of Property and Election Services department head Tammy Spooner observes that turnout is typically lackluster for primary elections.

Fish or Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 pm March 8

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Friday until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 pm. March 8 features a choice of shrimp scampi or baked salmon. Cost is \$15.

All You Can Eat Breakfast 8 am March 10

Hosted by the Waseca County Ag Society Fairboard, breakfast will be held from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Waseca VFW. Attendees are asked to bring food donations for the Waseca Area Food Shelf.

S.A.L.'s Burger & Fish Fry 5:30 pm March 15

Waseca Jr. and Sr. High School Bands are hosting a Burger and Fish Fry fundraiser. Cost is \$10 a plate. The event begins at 5:30 at the Waseca American Legion, and there will be a live performance by the Waseca Jazz Bands during the fry, as well as meat raffles, and starting at 7:30 there will be karaoke in the lounge.

Fish or Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 pm March 15

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Fri-

Briefs continued on 2

A word from

The Word

For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge.

Proverbs 6:34

Flames roll through an area of dry grass toward Waseca County's Moonan Marsh wildlife refuge.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

County ablaze

2,000 acres burned across Waseca, Steele Counties

By DEB BENTLY, ELI LUTGENS

Nearly 2,000 acres of grassland in Waseca and Steele counties were burned Sunday, March 3, while firefighting agencies from around the state, including planes and helicopters dropping fire retardant material, fought against the high winds and dry conditions which had prompted the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to issue a "red flag" warning—meaning that the public should light no fires because of the high potential they would spread.

Firefighting efforts began before noon in an area northeast of Waseca near the county road known as the Snake Trail and continued until about 10 p.m., according to a release by the Waseca County Sheriff's office. By the time it was under control, the fire had spread from northeast of Waseca to Deerfield township in Steele County.

Two firefighters were treated and released; one homeowner was also injured. Numerous residents were asked to evacuate their homes. The

sheriff's office reports that no structures were damaged or destroyed.

According to information shared by Waseca Fire Department chief Jason Forshee during a press conference on Monday, roughly 60 workers from the DNR, Minnesota State Fire Marshal's Office, the Waseca County Sheriff's office and Waseca fire department followed up Monday morning to "assess the area" and "cool down any lingering hotspots." At the same press conference, DNR representative Jake Froyum stated that the cooler, damp day on Monday was helpful in decreasing the likelihood any smoldering spots would reignite, but that staff would be making day-by-day decisions regarding continuing efforts at "mopping up."

Law enforcement personnel from Waseca and Steele counties and firefighters from 11 local agencies, as well as planes from Brainerd and units from the state Fish and Wildlife Service all took part in efforts to control Sunday's fire, which encroached "within feet" of about 12 area homes. A small number of area farmers also

Firefighters retreat from an area which, moments before, had been free of smoke or flame.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

brought large-scale tilling equipment which helped protect homes and property by exposing bare earth over swaths of land 50 or more feet wide. According to Forshee, at the height of firefighting efforts more than 20 fire trucks were on site and up to 50 water-carrying vehicles referred to as "tankers."

The cause of the fire remains under investigation by the Minnesota State Fire Marshal's Office, the Waseca County Sheriff's Office, the Minnesota Department of Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Waseca Fire Department.

Blaze continued on 5

Firefighters describe grass fire experiences

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Waseca Fire Department member Ryan Bruegger was on the first truck dispatched to Sunday's massive grass fire. The initial call was for a "brush fire."

"But I knew immediately when I saw the smoke that one truck wasn't going to be enough," he recalls. Before he had even arrived, other agencies were being called in under the practice of "mutual aid," that is, to put it loosely, everybody helps everybody else.

As he saw how fast the fire was moving through the dry grass in the vicinity, he says he told dispatch to "just keep paging people."

Asked for a few words to describe his impressions, Bruegger says he was "very, very busy. A lot of things were happening at once." He describes flames reaching 20 feet tall and higher moving at a remarkable pace because of the brisk winds; some gusts were clocked as high as 50 mph. Circumstances were even more complicated when the wind would suddenly change direction.

When making decisions at a fire scene, Bruegger explains the first priority is to protect people; the second is to protect property, especially homes.

"I feel good that we accomplished that," he said.

"It was a fire I will never forget—the kind you see once in your career.

"With something that big, you'll never forget the heat and the wind."

"It was awe-inspiring how quickly it got out of control," observed firefighter Kevin Chindlund. "Since Sunday, I've spoken with guys who have been firefighters for 40 years and more who don't recall ever seeing a fire of that scope.

"Reflecting back on it, I feel very proud that I was able to help—I'm proud to be a firefighter and proud of first responders altogether."

Fellow firefighter Brian Voss expresses similar sentiments.

"It's unsettling to enter a situation where you know you have very little control.

"I'm not sure words can really describe it."

Though he's been a firefighter for 30 years, Voss classifies Friday's grassfire as the largest he's ever responded to: current estimates are that up to 1,700 acres

Fighters continued on 5

Keegan Kuball of WEM-JWP won his second straight state championship wrestling at 285 lbs in the Class A State Tournament in St. Paul, Saturday, March 2, 2024.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

Back-to-back

Kuball wins second straight championship, Petry places fourth, six county wrestlers compete at state

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

Waseca County schools sent six wrestlers representing Class A to compete in the Minnesota State High School League this past weekend, March 1-2.

Keegan Kuball of WEM-JWP won his second straight state championship at 285 lbs.

Carson Petry also of WEM-JWP medaled, taking fourth.

NRHEG had no place winner. George Roesler won two matches, but lost in the second round of the

Consolation bracket. Annabelle Petsinger, coming off a state championship a year ago, was hurt during her first round matchup and did not wrestle again. Ryan Schlaak of NRHEG lost both of his matches.

Avery Fall of WEM-JWP was also hurt in his first round matchup and did not wrestle again.

More coverage and photos of all the area wrestlers can be found on the sports Pages 8, 9 and a celebratory photo page on Page 12.



Compostings

by Al Batt

International catastrophes while on a slow moving train

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I left my job today. I couldn't work for my boss after what he said to me.

What did he say?
He said, "You're fired."

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I didn't see the groundhog on Feb. 2 and I missed seeing the Super Bowl. All I know is Taylor Swift kicked a field goal to win it. It's the neither season—neither winter nor spring. Spring is just around the corner, but it might not be the corner our mothers want us hanging around. The weather has been quirky. A muttering visitor was like cranky wind chimes as the wind howled about him. He suffered from paralyzing weather vagaries as our incredibly gentle winter temperature dropped 70 degrees in 36 hours and brought snow with it. I'd received a phone call from a wonderful couple who live in New Jersey that I'd met 30 years ago in Des Moines when we shared a ride. We didn't talk about the weather. It was a most pleasant interlude.

I talked to a fellow at church. He was wearing Hey Dude shoes. His wife said he got them because their grandson looked good wearing them. I got those shoes because I wanted to be as cool as a grandson. They're lightweight, the same weight as air. As far as making me look cool, they're not working. I heard from an old friend who lives near the Canadian border. I shared a room with him during a conference where I learned he was a world-class snorer sawing invisible logs in his sleep. I put bits of Kleenex in my ears, but the snoring shredded the paper. I wish I'd had those Hey Dudes then. I'd have stuck them in my ears.

Years ago, my wife and I took my mother and Aunt Ingeborg on a dinner train. The meal had seven courses and the train was slow-moving to give us time to eat. What international catastrophe could occur when a server drops a platter? The downfall of turkey, the overthrow of grease and the destruction of china. In this case, a platter of alcoholic drinks fell upon my mother and Ingeborg—two strict teetotalers. My mother laughed. Ingeborg huffed. Life moved to where my wife and I sat in the same seats at every one of our granddaughter Joey's college

basketball home games. A former teacher of ours and her friends arrive before us and save our seats, which aren't on the floor. They are up high. Their ours. They fit us and we've learned to appreciate those who gather with us—friends, family and fans. And Joey knew where to find us.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

The umbrella was going to be called a brella, but the inventor passed.

Is my cloak of invisibility working? Do I make myself clear? I'm doing lunges to stay in shape. That's a big step forward.

Mr. Rogers didn't adequately prepare me for the people in my neighborhood.

What do you call a broken can opener? A can't opener.

What word becomes shorter when you add two letters? Short.

The man fell down the wall because he couldn't see that well.

NATURE NOTES

March is named for the Roman god of war, Mars. March brings the vernal equinox and daylight saving time. Dec. 1 is the start of meteorological winter, which makes March 1 the beginning of meteorological spring. June 1 introduces summer and Sept. 1 brings fall. Blizzards were once common at the time of the March basketball tournaments. I hope March has gotten over that. No month has an exclusive on bad weather.

My wife has been feeding her Peeps habit. She prefers the Peeps candy confections made of a soft marshmallow rolled in colored sugar in either yellow, pink, blue, lavender or green and shaped like baby chickens. I don't eat them, but I'm fond of saying, "Oh, for Peeps' sake."

Me, I feed the birds. That joyful task brought two quotes to my mind. "If you can hear the birds singing, you're in the right place," by Benny Bellamacina and "I don't feed the birds because they need me; I feed the birds because I need them," by Kathi Hutton.

I watched a red-tailed hawk mantling prey. Mantling involves the hawk spreading its wings and covering its prey to hide it from the eyes of other animals. This hawk was giving a dirty look at several crows standing nearby as if they were jackals at a lion kill.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Spread kindness like wildflowers.

Appreciation for democracy enhanced

As I write this, I am sitting in the hallways of the Waseca County Courthouse outside the Office of Property and Election Services. People are bustling back and forth as election results arrive. Thanks to the voting machines, department head Tammy Spooner tells me, it could be less than half an hour from the time a set of votes is delivered in a distinctive, neon-green case to the time the secretary of state has record of the numbers.

But that's a best-case scenario.

For one thing, the cases are arriving pell-mell, sometimes five and six within a few minutes of each other. For another, there's no way to know when the next electronic glitch or human misinterpretation might occur.

Not that any mistakes are going to make their way into the results. The crew of eight counters are working meticulously to answer questions, double check details, and ensure accuracy. After all, they took an oath



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

promising to carry out their duties faithfully. It's being meticulous which requires the time.

Tammy Spooner has been very patient with me. I keep asking questions about details that probably seem obvious to her. There are 23 precincts in Waseca County. Two are within blocks of the courthouse—one at Sacred Heart and the other at St. John's Lutheran. The votes which will have to travel the longest distance will be coming from Waldorf.

According to law, there must be at least three election judges at each precinct; all are trained by Tammy's office. All are also paid, but by the city or township where the precinct

is located, rather than by the county.

Tammy informs me that, come this April, she will have been working with elections for 19 years. She mentions that, within days of being employed by the county, she attended a training session regarding the first "ballot counter," the machine voters feed their completed ballots into. Nowadays, those machines save the information to an electronic memory stick and a long run of "tape." It is thanks to those advances that results can be reported so quickly.

Also, since it's a primary election, the evening is fairly quiet compared to what Tammy anticipates in November—speaking casually she esti-

mates "it will be about 10 times more, but will feel like 100 times." She also shares stories told to her by others who took on the task of tallying election results before she came along.

"My predecessor tells me the office used to work all day, then count votes all night. When they finished, they would all go out together for breakfast. Then they would go home, shower, dress, and report back to work.

Let me just say, I am selfishly grateful those days are over. It's 10 p.m. now. All results are in; 16 of the 23 precincts have been processed. The folks at the heart of things estimate they will have the final counts by 11 p.m. at the latest.

That's certainly late enough for this reporter. But I'm not too tired to observe that I'm impressed with the thoroughness, care, and professionalism with which the votes are being handled. Yet again, my appreciation for democracy has been enhanced.

Little ants on a burned picnic basket

First-hand account of Sunday's fire, living on Snake Trail

As everyone and their mother already knows, there was a pretty big fire on Sunday. I know there are stories in other places of this paper on it, but I get to tell you first hand how the fire went down, as I was in the thick of it.

My parents live on Snake Trail, right near Moonan Marsh and Blowers Park. I had come down Sunday morning for spring break, to do Pioneer billing and pick up my sister so that we could travel north to my grandparents' house. I was in the middle of working midmorning when my sister came into the kitchen and noted how large and dark the clouds looked across the street to the west. The entire family walked down to the end of the driveway to observe the clouds of smoke. At that point, it wasn't anything too large and I went back to the house to finish my work. By the time I was done, my family had driven the razor down to the end of the driveway and parked it there, watching the progression of the smoke. I went down to join them, as we speculated how it started and watched as cars and soon after emergency vehicles made their way to our stretch of town.

As the smoke grew along with the amount of traffic, our little party at the end of our driveway grew as our cousin and his friends joined us, along with a neighbor or two. Stress levels for us were not yet high, as beer runs into the



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

shed were made and the judging of people's actions began. Why would someone stop there? Why on earth would you turn there when you clearly see the firetruck coming? Granted, we were also ogling the growing smoke and fire, but it was out of the way in our own driveway, not slowly driving by causing trouble for the emergency response people. But I get it, it was a Sunday with nothing better to do. As firetrucks would pass by, our party at the end of the driveway would pump our arms until the trucks would honk and we would cheer like middle schoolers on recess.

Such was our time for a while. At one point, we even ventured across the road and into the marsh to get a better view of the fire until it was too close and we turned to slowly flee back to the safety of the driveway across the street. It was exciting.

The fire trucks carrying the brave fireman and volunteers soon came closer and closer to us. As the flames inched closer to the street, the firemen started setting aflame the brush and grass nearest to the road, including every-

thing surrounding our mailbox. One of my cousin's friends jokingly asked the firefighter to check our mail, which he kindly did, raising a cheer from the rest of us.

In between all my father's received phone calls of "What's going on?" to which the responses were a varying degree of, "A fire," the fire across the street continually grew, and the smoke became increasingly surrounding to the point of low visibility. We had to turn our backs with every new gust of wind. It felt as if we were walking about in the wild-fires of California.

As the fire across the street seemed to be contained, the concern decreased until the "oh sh**" moment came when fire fighters turned and saw the fire had jumped the road and was spreading into the Moonan Marsh. That's when panic started, for us at least.

Despite not wanting to get in the way, everything was too interesting not to inch closer and closer and follow the fire along behind the firemen. As the fire spread closer and closer to the

north side of our property, our little party migrated and watched as the firetrucks spread water on the field driveway going back into the marsh. Unlike my sister, I was never concerned for our property or safety, but I felt bad for the houses further north and those who had to evacuate.

As the spread of the fire ventured north, so did we, riding up to a relative's pasture to watch from above. The flames leaped across the marsh and as firefighters raced to save what was left and put out what was there, workers in marsh masters ventured through the burnt marsh like little ants on a black picnic basket, clearing the obstacles.

By this time, the weather was getting colder and we had stayed too long atop the pasture, so we ventured back down to find we could not get back to my house as they were not letting anyone through (even though I had told them I lived there). But they were only trying to do their job, and I respect them for it.

I greatly respect and admire all of the firefighters and volunteers who came out on Sunday to help put out the fire and save the rest of us from destruction. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

My Determination: "It is good to care for the vulnerable, but not if it means risking your life. Sometimes you have to let nature take its course." — Eudoria, Enola Holmes



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DEADLINES: Pioneer: Noon Tuesday
GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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Contributing writers/photographers: Dave Zika, Al Batt, Pastor Ken Andrs

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■ Briefs

from Page 1

day until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 p.m. March 15 features walleye and shrimp. Cost is \$15.

Free Trees for Kids signup with March 15 Deadline

The Waseca County 4-H Ambassadors are acquiring free trees for children to plant on Earth Day, April 22. Parents are encouraged to sign up for trees at neighborhoodforest.org/parent-registration. Trees will be available for pickup on April 18

56th Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration March 16

The Irish-American Club of Southern Minnesota is hosting their 56th annual celebration, beginning with Irish music and mass at 10 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church. At 12 p.m. will be the Parade of Clans to The Mill Event Center, where from 12:30-2 there will be an Irish Rally, at 2 p.m. an Irish Auction, at 4 p.m. Irish Bingo, and at 7 p.m. the Miss St. Patrick and Miss Irish Rose Pageant. Immediately following the crowning a dance will begin and continue until 11 p.m. Lunch and Dinner will be available from Blake's Food Truck, and music for

the dance will be provided by John and Simon Hoehn.

Ham Bingo 7 p.m. March 16 at New Richland City Hall

The New Richland Commercial Club is hosting its annual Ham Bingo event 7 p.m. Saturday, March 16 at the City Hall Community Room. The cost is \$15 per card, which pays for 15 games plus a final "blackout" game. The prize for each game is an Easter Ham.

TEAM Academy Open House 5-6 p.m. March 19

Area families interested in learning more about TEAM Academy charter school can visit the facility, meet the teachers, and find out about the school's methods and philosophy. For further details call the school: (507) 833-8326.

Farm and City Luncheon 11:45 a.m. March 21

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting their annual Farm and City Luncheon, a chance for farmers and city-dwellers to connect with each other in appreciation and understanding, at The Mill Event Center March 21. Tickets are \$16.

Fish or Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 p.m. March 22

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Friday

until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$15.

Spring Craft Show 10 am to 3 p.m. March 23

Starfire Event Center is sponsoring a spring craft show from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 23. To reserve a vendor table or get more information, email starfireeventcenter@wasecamac.com.

Fish or Seafood Dinner at Waseca VFW 5 to 7:30 p.m. March 29

Waseca VFW Lenten Friday dinners will be offered each Friday until Holy Week. Fish, shrimp, and alternatives will be offered beginning at 5 and continuing either until sold out or until 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$15.

3 on 3 basketball tournament April 6

The inaugural 3 on 3 Blair Nelson memorial basketball tournament will be held April 6, 2024 at Waseca high school. Games begin at 9 a.m. Divisions for grades 4th-8th and a high school division. Max of 6 players per team. Three point and free contests and other fun events will also take place.

Hiring for the Southern Research Outreach Center

The University of Minnesota is

hiring for a Research Plot Technician at the SROC in Waseca. Full-time position with benefits. Applicants must have a high school diploma or equivalent with at least two years of study in horticulture, agronomy, or a related field and must have or obtain a pesticide applicator license. Full description and application available at www.umn.edu/jobs Job #359540.

Shepherd's Robe Free store Tuesdays from 1-3 and 5-7 p.m.

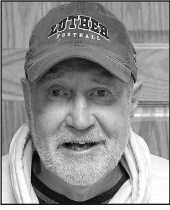
The Shepherd's Robe free store offers clothing, supplies, and much more for free to all interested parties. The store is located at Vista Covenant Church, 14679 275th Avenue, New Richland.

Waldorf Veterans Memorial Fund Drive

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

Waseca County Stagecoach History

Judy Joeks is compiling a history of stagecoach routes in Waseca County. She would appreciate hearing from anyone who has information regarding stagecoach trails or stops. (507) 317-1345.



Bits and Pieces

by Dave Zika



A big leap forward

Until now, 2020 was our most recent official leap year: Now 2024 has added another day to the month of February for a total of 29. With the addition of the extra day, our calendar year now becomes 366 days. Why have a leap year? It takes an extra day every four years to keep our calendar current with the earth's rotation around the sun. If we didn't have a leap year, farmers every few hundred years would find the calendar telling them to plant their crops in November, leading to, I must observe, remarkably poor harvests.

Babies born on leap day are called "leapers" or "leaplings." I personally prefer the second one, since it sounds more baby like. Al Rosen (baseball player), Dinah Shore and Jimmy Dorsey (entertainers), and Pope Paul III are all famous leaplings. If you are born on a Feb. 29, it doesn't affect your legal drinking or voting age. You become legal at 11:59 PM on Feb. 28!

I'm done listening to all of the weather records and temperatures broken this winter. It appears we have a new record weekly. There were 16 days above 50 from December through February. Many record daily high temperatures were declared and we received almost no snow. Why such a warm winter? Do we blame El Nino or the atmospheric "jet stream" for modifying our wind and atmospheric pressure to shape our non-winter? Was it global warming? Who knows, but this senior citizen can say it's been his best winter ever.

A prediction is something one thinks will happen. A prediction is still a guess and here are mine for the next few months.

#1. Today is Feb. 26: I'm making a call that ice will be off Clear and Loon Lakes officially by March 2. A new record, the old record on Clear Lake is March 14, 2016.

#2. We will see snow plows one more time this winter season. Traditionally there is always snow or sometimes a blizzard during the girls' or boys' basketball state tournaments.

#3. I'll observe my first group of

robins returning to Minnesota earlier than ever before and a group of young Canadian geese goslings earlier than ever before, some time in mid April.

#4. I'll have my boat out of storage the last week of March and get it water ready. That's something I usually do about the middle of April.

#5. The great old timer fishermen will tell you to fish crappies and sunfish in the warm shallow bays just at the time the lilacs begin to blossom. Mushroom hunters also tell you to hit the timber hunting when lilacs begin to blossom. I know I'll be fishing the bays and walking in the woods earlier than ever before.

#6. Here's a prediction and my biggest wish: April showers, many, many of them. With no snow pack, we really need water and moisture for farmers' fields, lakes and rivers, and of course showers for the flowers. Optimistically, I predict a wet April!

I recommend using a rainy April day to try baking my all-time favorites, a batch of "Delicious Cookies." The recipe:

Add: 1 c. butter – room temp, 1 c. vegetable oil, 1 c. brown sugar, 1 c. white sugar

Mix.

Add: 1 egg, 2 tsp. vanilla

Mix.

Add: 1 tsp. salt, 1 tsp. baking soda, 1 tsp. cream of tartar, 3 ½ cups flour

Mix.

Add: 1 c. old fashioned oatmeal, 1 c. Rice Krispies

Mix.

Stir in a bag of milk chocolate chips – I might even go heavier with the chips.

Heat the oven to 350 degrees – bake for 12 minutes.

I've also had them with butter-scotch chips.

I predict that when your family, friends or neighbors taste them, they will beg you for the recipe and thank you for the best cookie they've ever eaten.

A closing tip for a better cookie. Refrigerating your dough for an hour makes for an even better finished treat.

Special ingredient, love

The Willows in New Richland is under new ownership

Locally run, family owned tradition continues with Arnold family

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

The time was right.

Travis Blake, former owner of the Willows restaurant in New Richland, liked to joke that if he ever sold the place, he knew who he would offer it to first.

"I asked if he was really serious this time," Julie Arnold, the new owner of the Willows said. "When he said he was really going to sell it, I asked myself, 'If I'm not gonna buy it, then who?'"

"It's something to pass down to my son Chris, an opportunity for our family."

Arnold, 57, originally from Denver, Iowa, settled in New Richland in the late '90s; she and her then husband Mark O'Brien raised three children, all of whom graduated from NRHEG. In 2008, only a year after the Willows was established, she applied with owner Jim Blake for a job at the restaurant.



The Willows owner Julie Arnold, with her son Chris O'Brien, left, who serves as a cook.

"I've enjoyed the last 16 years getting to know all the different people," Arnold said. "If it weren't for the Willows, I wouldn't know them. I'm looking forward to the years ahead."

Arnold said former owner Travis Blake, who took over the business from his dad Jim Blake in 2016, plans to help through the transition in ownership, staying until the end of March when he plans to go full time with his own food-truck business.

"I think it would be different if I went out and said, 'I want to buy a restaurant in an unknown community,'" Arnold observed. "I'm serving the community. I'm looking forward to [...] the future."

Arnold first got her start in the food industry in the late '80s at McNamara's Pub and Grill in Faribault. She quickly rose from server to bartender to bar manager before leaving. She recalls holding nearly every job there is in the restaurant businesses, a career she says spans 25 years, broken apart only by her time as a stay-at-home mom.

Her children, Arnold stresses, are the most important element in her life.

The first person she consulted when deciding whether owning the restaurant would be desirable was her youngest son Chris and her husband John Arnold.

"I wanted John's support because this job has long hours," Arnold said.

"Chris, he's the full-time cook," Arnold said. "And I can teach him the rest of the businesses over the coming years... In five to ten years, he can take over."

Chris, a 2021 NRHEG graduate, has worked for the Willows since he was 14 years old. His brother



Nathan also helps out with various roles. "Nathan is our fix-it guy," Arnold said. "He's our maintenance man, always willing to help however he can."

Asked if she had any plans for change, Arnold said no.

"Nothing huge, nothing dramatic," she commented.

A new sign and logo as well as an updated back deck are the only things Arnold plans to do over the coming months.

"We're in the same boat as Travis. If it's not broken, don't fix it," Arnold explained. "I get told, 'Okay, whatever you do, don't get rid of this (menu item)... Because that's why I come here.'"

The Willows' hours will remain similar to what they were.

Sundays: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Mondays: Closed

Tuesday-Saturday: 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Bar hours subject to change.

Arnold said she hopes to put together some type of celebration in the coming months, nothing anytime soon, however. In the meantime she plans to continue enjoying her favorite aspect of the job, social interaction.

As a first-time business owner and one who built her skills from the ground up, she enjoys the opportunity to encourage members of the youthful community members who apply with her for their first-ever jobs.

"I tell them nobody's perfect. Mistakes are going to be made. It's nothing to be scared of. It might be a little scary at first... This too shall pass."

"The biggest hurdle is figuring out where everything is," Arnold added. "And I always remind everyone, I only live a mile up the road. I can be here in five minutes."



Devon Lawrence, Craig Brennan, and Miranda Merrill directed Band 'O Rama participants in their respective age groups with diverse musical talents: high schoolers, fifth and sixth graders, and seventh and eighth graders on Friday, March 2 at the Waseca High School.



Band 'O Rama booms with success

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Waseca students from fifth through twelfth grades showcased their marching band talents the evening of Friday, March 1, at the high school. An audience of all ages, grandparents, parents, teachers, friends and family filled the auditorium.

Putting together a music program which engages the students and the audience takes more coordination than is typical.

"All of us try to search out selections that not only are of high musical quality to the listener, but also high educational quality for the students," high school band director Devon Lawrence said. "We use this repertoire as a teaching tool to expand the knowledge of our students, as well as continue to refine the skills of every student."

In terms of technique, Lawrence added that he and the other band teachers base their selections on where they feel each band is at in terms of technique, difficulty, and what concepts are needing to be taught to bring students to the next

level. Lawrence also said he makes his choices with the intent of using varied styles, tempos, and emotions to be able to hit as many concepts as possible.

"It is such a joy to get to be a part of these students' musical journey and it is incredible to see the progress they make in such a short time," Lawrence said. "We are really lucky at Waseca to have students who work incredibly hard and are incredibly well rounded. Many of our students participate in multiple sports, arts activities, and other outside school groups, so I think their high level of drive and determination to be successful in all of these groups is truly inspiring."

Miranda Merrill, who has taught seventh- and eighth-graders for a year, shared that she enjoys making connections with students and inspiring them to grow.

"Every day rehearsals are new because there are new places to improve on in the music: We tackle each challenge in the music where it appears," she said. Stating that students' inclination to collaborate seems decreased

after the Covid pandemic, Merrill called it "a unique challenge" to help them redevelop those skills. But she keeps an optimistic outlook.

"The band room is the perfect place to learn about collaboration and teamwork," she added. "Everyone plays a part; No one is 'on the bench' during band. One student's success is a success for everyone. We all improve as we all get better as individuals."

Most of all, she said that her hope for her students is to find beauty and joy in life and to have fun—since that's what band is all about.

Throughout the evening, students played in different sections, beginning with band director Craig Brenden's fifth- and sixth-graders who played "Blades of Steel" by Larry Clark, "Ancient Hunters" by Sean O'Loughlin, "Inferno" by David Schaffer, and "Conundrum" by Robert Sheldon. Seventh-graders performed "Music for a Night Sky" by Jorge Vargas; eighth-graders presented "Arabian Dancers" by Roland Barrett. Lawrence's high-schoolers performed "Alchemy," "Existence Infinite," "Urban Dances," and "Seven."

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OBITUARIES

Gerald Gustafson

GERALD CLAYTON "GUS" GUSTAFSON, age 95 of Mankato, formerly of New Richland, died in the early morning of Friday, March 1, 2024 at Hillcrest Rehabilitation Center in Mankato.

Gus was born in New Ulm on September 14, 1928, to parents Herbert and Ida (Edlund) Gustafson. During the Korean War era he enlisted in the United States Air Force, soon commissioned, and began a career as a fighter pilot, specifically a River Rat. During the Vietnam Conflict he flew over 100 missions, was shot down twice and successfully evaded capture. After Vietnam he attended George Washington University where he ultimately earned a Master's Degree in International Affairs and went on to work at the Pentagon. He retired a decorated Colonel in the Air Force after nearly 30 years of service. In his retirement, Gus was a dedicated member of the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots Association and many other local Veterans Associations. He also enjoyed gardening and working on his hobby farm. He was the proud recipient of the Air Force Cross, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Purple Heart, the Air Force Air Medal, and many others.

He was married to JoAnn Tognstad on August 3, 1957, and they made their life and family together until they divorced in 1975. In December of 1981 Gus was remarried to Kathryn Ober. They later divorced but remained close friends.

Gus is survived by six children, Julie Mortensen of Mankato, Kristin (Randy) Hoffmann of Mankato, Pete (Jenny) Gustafson of Owatonna, Michael (Julie) Gustafson



Gerald Gustafson

of North Mankato, Casey (Jim) Gustafson of Anacortes, WA, and Janey Rakowski of Mankato; three step-children Sarah (Joe) Nafstad of Ann Arbor, MI, Sandy Stoddard of Forest Lake, and Jeremy (Kim) Stoddard of Madison, WI; 13 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; and countless other unofficially adopted family members. He was preceded in death by both of his parents; his first wife; two siblings, Lyle Gustafson, and Kelly Gilfry; and his grandchildren, Todd Michael Gustafson and Bryan Gerald Mortensen.

Funeral services were held at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at Trinity-Wilton Lutheran Church near Waseca. Visitation was held for one hour before the service at the church. Interment will take place at Fort Snelling National Cemetery at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 13th, 2024. Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca is handling the arrangements. dsfuneral.com

William Rausch

WILLIAM "BILL" RAUSCH, age 88, of Waseca, died Saturday, March 2, 2024, at Lakeshore Inn Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Waseca.

He was born July 18, 1935, in New Ulm. He was the son of William John and Della (Inhofer) Rausch. Bill graduated from Cathedral High School in New Ulm. Following high school, he enlisted in the United States Army, where he served his country for two years, working at the Pentagon in Washington, DC, as a decoder. Following his time in service, he returned to Minnesota where he attended St. John's University, Minnesota State University - Mankato, and Michigan State University where he earned his master's degree in education.

Bill began his life-long career for Waseca Public Schools where he taught 7th and 8th grade Earth Science. While working for WPS, he worked with a colleague, Erwin Olson, whose daughter Cookie, came in from college to attend the science fair in Waseca. Bill and Cookie formed a love that lasted their lifetime. They were married on August 7, 1965, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca. Together they went on to live their lives and raise their two daughters,

Kathy and Sandy. Bill and Cookie loved vacationing, taking summertime trips, going to their family cabin, boating, playing pool, cribbage, golf, camping, and any adventure pertaining to outside. One of Bill's passions was anything concerning natural history. Bill was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca, and the Knights of Columbus. Bill was a very nice, genuine, down-to-earth guy. He often surprised his family with his deadpan sense of humor and knowledge of unexpected facts on just about any topic. He will be dearly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Bill is survived by his wife, Cookie; two daughters, Kathy (Beth) Rausch of River Falls, WI, and Sandy Rausch of South St. Paul.

He is preceded in death by his parents.

Visitation will be held from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM, Saturday, March 9, 2024, at the Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service - State Street Chapel.

A memorial service will be held at the funeral home at 3:00 PM, to honor Bill's life. A reception will follow the service at the funeral home. Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service is handling the arrangements. dsfuneral.com

Breitbarth Memorial

Bockfest held at Waseca American Legion, Saturday

Wayne's impact felt strongly today

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

The Fermental Wine and Brew Club of Waseca hosted the Wayne Breitbarth Memorial Bockfest at the Waseca American Legion the evening of Saturday, March 2. Proceeds went to support the Invisible Wounds Project which provides access to quality therapy services, wellness activities and social connection for Minnesota's military members, first responders, frontline medical staff, corrections personnel, dispatchers, and their families who have mental health difficulties or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD); suicide awareness is also a focus of the program.

The event was \$25 for the general public or \$15 for first responders. Included was a meal, beer tasting from local brewers, beer poking, a silent auction and music. Last year's Bockfest was held at a private home; members of the first responder community took tickets, helped with food in the kitchen, and beer poking.

Kim Schroeder, a former Wasecan who lives in Zumbrota, is part of the Invisible Wounds Project. She lost her husband to suicide last April. Her husband, a police officer, struggled with PTSD and ended up in the hospital.

Schroeder said being a part of the organization gives her purpose and a reason to wake up in the morning. "It's good Invisible Wounds sees all the aspects," Schroeder said. "People don't realize how much all those areas are affected."

"A lot of the military will go into corrections, police, or first responder lines so there's a lot of overlap," added Michelle Koch, another committee member.

"My husband may have been a small-town cop but it's a hard, hard fight for a lot of people," Schroeder said later, growing tearful during her speech.

In August 2023, Breitbarth passed away suddenly from a cardiac defect, a congenital situation he had faced his whole life. Breitbarth was employed as a Waseca County sheriff's department dispatcher; he had built connections with members of the law enforcement community all around the southern part of the state. He was also a member of the Minnesota Police Dispatcher's Association.

"Breitbarth was a rock-solid dispatcher," Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas said. "He was very good at his work and very dependable."

"He was always professional with the cit-



Numerous community members from Waseca showed up at Wayne Breitbarth's Memorial Bockfest to relay memories and stories they had from knowing him on Saturday, March 2. A silent auction of donated items also went on during a lively wine and beer sampling from the Fermental Club in Waseca.

Pioneer photo by Rachael Jaeger

izens, no matter how busy he was," Dulas added. "To have a calm demeanor like he was able to have is very important. He was someone who could be counted on."

In 2020, during the Arik Matson shooting, Breitbarth was the only dispatcher on duty. "He handled that situation the best way anyone could handle it," observed Dulas.

Those attending the event remembered Breitbarth loved German culture and traveled to Berlin to compete in multiple triathlons. He had a strong appreciation for the Fermental Wine and Beer Club, a group he was a member of for seven years.

He had many other varied interests as well, including off-roading in his jeep, collecting and using cast iron, ice fishing, and joining his friends and family for social activities.

Breitbarth joined the Fermental Club about the same time as Paul Osdoba and David Wright and their wives.

"Wayne got into things like making maple syrup; he came out to my house and showed me how to tap trees just last spring," Wright said. "In general, he was very kind."

"I found out that Wayne was providing some help back to the Invisible Wounds Project," Osdoba said. "He'd given some presentations and was looking at doing a fun run with them."

But, Osdoba added, because of Breitbarth's untimely death, the project never saw its fruition.

Wright noted that Breitbarth became a runner



Kim Schroeder, a committee member from the Invisible Wounds Project, worked at a table with the organization's merchandise of sweatshirts, T-shirts, hats, and wristbands. Schroeder said that she strongly believes in supporting first responders, frontline medical staff, corrections, dispatch, and their families, relating to mental health, PTSD and suicide issues. after he found out about his heart issues, that's the reason he became passionate for others to be involved.

"It's kinda neat our club picked that up and we're doing that on his behalf," Osdoba said, commenting the Invisible Wounds organization is striving to build a stronger presence in southern Minnesota.

Wright, a mental health psychotherapist, recently became a provider within the organization's network. "I like doing it in Wayne's memory," Wright concluded.



The school social workers and the family service coordinators were present to express their appreciation of the donation to the Blaze representatives and thanked them. Pictured from left to right: Jim Packard-Waseca Intermediate School, Jenny Sandbeck-Waseca Jr/Sr High, Natalia Pitts-Alternate Learning Center, Justin Burleson-SVP/Chief Operating Officer Blaze Credit Union, Susan Olson-Waseca Blaze Branch Manager, Kris Lapides-Hartley Elementary, Cindy Kolander-WANSC Executive Director and Diane Roesler-Lead Teacher SW Metro Transition Program.



Pictured from left to right: the WANSC Board of Directors Rhonda Christenson, Vicki Neidt, Jim Britton, Gretchen Priebe, Executive Director Cindy Kolander, and Stephanie Johnson, Director Community Relations from Blaze Credit Union.



From left: SoWMetro Transition Program at the Central Building serves students from 18-22 years old who need to get their high school diploma: J'Anna Cindrich, Diane Roesler, Mason Haugum, Donna Trom, Hunter Bogue, Vada Nelson, Aiden Abukaff, Blaze staff, Kelsie Wenzel, Gabe LaCroix, Devon Petersen and Cindy Kolander, the Food Shelf Director.

Pioneer photos by Rachael Jaeger and retain a new job.

One staple of the WANSC Backpack program are students brought by Diane Roessler, lead teacher of the Southwest Metro Transition program. Her group of neurologically diverse high-schoolers aged 18 to 22 visits WANSC four days a week to organize and pack weekend lunches. The work they do not only benefits the program, but also provides progress toward earning their diplomas. Roessler says the tasks the students perform also help prepare them for future jobs.

"They look forward to being here," said Jim Britton, Organizer and board member. "They really, really do. They got smiles on their faces and just - totally enjoy it. It gives them a purpose to get up in the morning. They're so unbelievably polite."

work, and life;

The Bond Between Respite Program provides temporary pet care for families or individuals who are unable to keep their pets in the short term and keeps pets together with their human companions;

The Boys and Girls Clubs of the Northland's Mental Health Access Program provides club members with access to mental health services in the clubs and helps to ensure that no youth goes without the ability to get the help they need;

The Minnesota Warriors aim to better both physical and mental health as well as foster social connections within our veterans' community, and

Small Sums outfits individuals experiencing homelessness with the work gear, tools, training, and transportation they need to start

profit organizations that are doing innovative work in the community.

"Looking at some of our non-profit partners, we thought of the Waseca food shelf and their Backpack program," said Johnson. "We've seen the amazing growth the food shelf has had over the last few years."

Organizations which fight hunger were one of the seven types Blaze Credit Union included on its list of possible recipients. The other areas included:

Angel Foundation Emergency Financial Assistance Grants which provide support to adult cancer patients by relieving some of their immediate financial concerns;

BestPrep which provides business and financial literacy programs to students in grades 4-12, giving them valuable skills through hands-on experiences to inspire success through school,

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

The Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center (WANSC) Backpack program received a \$10,000 donation last week from the newly rebranded Blaze Credit Union. The Backpack program sends packets of food home with area children who might otherwise spend those days hungry.

Cindy Kolander, WANSC director, made clear the entire \$10,000 would be used in continuing the Backpack program, and not any other food shelf initiatives.

Stephanie Johnson, Blaze's director of community relations, explained two organizations—Hiway Credit Union and SPIRE Credit Union—merged together at the start of 2024 to become Blaze Credit Union. The organization chose to celebrate its new circumstance by providing gifts to non-



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Wildfire!



■ Fighters

from Page 1

were burned.

Voss mentions numerous circumstances which made the fire difficult to fight.

"First, the wind," he said. "It was scary knowing that, with one slight change in wind direction, you might suddenly no longer be in an area that was safe." He remembers seeing flames that might otherwise have been much taller being driven forward nearly parallel to the ground. Also, thanks to the speed and power of the winds, the fire was able to cross the Snake Trail and begin burning in the large, grassy expanse of Moonan Marsh. For Voss, at least, it was a dark moment.

"I felt like we had a good handle on it right until it jumped the road," he remembers. "As far as I was concerned, the entire game changed at that moment."

Chindlund remembers a moment in the backyard of a house when, seeing the flames coming his way, he thought to himself, "Wow, this is going to be intense."

"It really brought you face to face with the magnitude of the moment," he said. "But we're all trained, we're all prepared, and so at a certain point that training kicks in and we do what has to be done."

The rough terrain also provided numerous difficulties. Where the ground was too soft to support fire

trucks and tankers, firefighters had to do their work on foot while walking across uneven surfaces. "It was exhausting," Voss remembers, speculating that years from now, his stories will certainly mention the flames, but they are likely to center around "how tired I was at the end of the day."

Also a difficulty was the number of curiosity seekers. Voss recalls "hundreds of cars" along the Snake Trail, as well as some drivers who reacted angrily when asked to leave.

Like Bruegger, Voss says he was very grateful for the practice of mutual aid, and for the number of experienced, trained firefighters who joined the effort. "It felt like being part of a giant team," he recalls. "The folks who were there knew what to do, and they did it."

Chindlung may not soon forget the singed eyebrows and eyelashes he got while working in the field; he says what he will remember longest is the "sense of trust" he experienced regarding the people and equipment who worked together with a shared purpose.

Of the 10 or more hours he spent in the firefighting effort, he says simply, "It was an interesting day—a good day—because we were able to prevent a lot of catastrophes that could have happened."

All three firefighters express gratitude for goodwill and assistance offered by the community.

"You never forget the offers of help and support," observes Bruegger. "That means a lot more than people will ever know."



■ Blaze

from Page 1

ibault, Morristown, Waterville, Killenny, and Elysian as having responded to the fire. Firefighting support from the DNR included air support; further assistance came from the US Fish and Wildlife Services.

Also providing assistance were North Ambulance Service, Waseca

Fire Auxiliary, Waseca County Sheriff's Posse, Waseca County Emergency Management, Born Well Drilling, law enforcement agencies from the cities of Waseca and Janesville, the state highway patrol, and officers and dispatchers from the counties of Waseca, Steele, Rice and LeSueur.

Waseca County would like property owners who suffered damage to please contact the the Waseca Assessor's office: <https://www.waseca-county.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=3>



Photos by Eli Lutgens and Conner Blaukat

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Brilliant Bluejays

Brilliant Bluejays



Giselle

Kindergarten

Giselle is always in her own space and shows kindness to everyone she meets. She keeps her hands to herself and has a positive attitude. She is respectful to all teachers and staff at Hartley. Keep up the great work Giselle!



Gunner

1st Grade

Gunner is a Brilliant Bluejay at respecting others because he is kind and stays in his own space. Gunner does a nice job of listening to others and being a kind friend when needed. Keep up the good work Gunner!



Amelia

2nd Grade

Amelia is a Bluejay who follows all of the R4s. She is an amazing rolemodel and is kind to everyone. I can always count on Amelia to stay on task and complete her assignments. She shows respect to all of her peers and staff members in the building keeping that positive attitude.



Noah

3rd Grade

Noah is a Bluejay that shows respect for others in the classroom daily. He is kind in how he helps others with their learning. If someone is struggling he will take the time to help them understand.



Amill

First Grade

Amill has worked very hard to manage his emotions during specials. Amill comes to specials with a positive attitude, greets teachers nicely and tries his best even if the activities are not his favorite. We are very proud of you Amill. Great job!

Brilliant Bluejays



Finley

Kindergarten

Coming prepared everyday, ready to learn, being a hard worker, and a wonderful role model of staying on task while always doing her best is why Finley has earned the Brilliant Bluejay award for respecting yourself. We can always count on Finley to do what has been asked and will complete ALL tasks with pride. Congratulations Finley - Keep up the great work!



Charlotte

1st Grade

Charlotte is a Brilliant Bluejay because she comes to school ready to learn, is a hard worker, and enjoys learning new things. She participates in class, is willing to help others, and is a wonderful role model for her peers. Way to go, Charlotte! Keep showing the Bluejay Way!



Charli

2nd Grade

Charli comes to school ready to learn everyday and is a great role model. She stays on task, follows directions, participates in class, and always does her best work! Keep showing the Bluejay Way, Charli!



Kimora

3rd Grade

Kimora is a Brilliant Bluejay because she always makes sure she is able to do her best learning. She asks questions when she needs help and participates in the classroom learning everyday. Way to go Kimora! Keep showing the Bluejay Way!



Britanny

Kindergarten

Britanny is a Brilliant Bluejay because she is always calm and ready to learn! She stays on task, tries her best each day, and is so helpful to others.

Exhibit tells more stories than one
Barbie displays shown at Waseca Historical Society

By RACHAEL JAEGER
Staff Writer

Barbie has been a staple of American toys since its first release 65 years ago, on March 9, 1959. She has also been a cultural phenomenon with immeasurable influence.

To help demonstrate how the doll changed with the times—and the times with the doll—the Waseca County Historical Society (WCHS) has put together a display which invites people of all ages into a nostalgic world.

“Each person has their connections to Barbie,” said WCHS’s Amy Danielson, in charge of programs, exhibits and marketing.

As different women have visited the exhibit, Danielson asked them what Barbie meant to them and what stories they recall from their childhood.

Pauline Felenon, museum curator, said she hesitated to let her daughters play with Barbies because she didn’t want them feeling pressured to meet someone else’s standard of beauty.

One visitor said she wasn’t allowed to have a Barbie as a child because her mom didn’t approve of the stylized, even glamorized, physical proportions. As a girl, she instead got another doll which had a flatter anatomy than the typical Barbie. A second visitor said she loved that Barbie was a role model for women. Barbie could have a career, and not only be a mother or a wife.

“Most people have not been allowed to tell their stories,” Danielson added. “It’s a big thing, especially in Midwestern culture.

Depending on the family, a lot of children were told to “be seen and not heard,” Danielson said. She further noted that women especially while they’re growing up and even into their adult years hold onto that idea.

In the newest Barbie movie, Barbie is portrayed as being in both the imaginary and the real world; the character causes viewers to re-examine traditional and non-traditional female roles.

The most important lesson Danielson believes a woman should know is to recognize who she is without the approval of others.

“A lot of us [women] haven’t learned introspection,” Danielson said, “and it’s not taught



On the second day that the Barbie exhibit was open, Kendall Lang decided that an outing with Joan Schoreder, her grandma, to the Waseca Historical Society would be fun. Lang she has a collection of dolls at home that she likes to spend her time with.

Pioneer photo by Rachael Jaeger

in school.

“My biggest thing was when someone told me I couldn’t do something, I used to get really upset, then I learned to work through that over the course of years.”

Danielson offered some tips for what women of all ages can do to enhance their own journeys, especially after a setback.

“The first thing is to clear your channels,” Danielson said, suggesting some techniques to dispel overly strong emotions. One is to express personal feelings with all the needed anger and intensity—but to an empty room. “Even if it’s really angry and screaming, even if you punch a pillow. The whole purpose is to get it out.”

With strong emotions dispelled, the next step Danielson recommends is reassurance. “Remind yourself of where you are and what you’ve done.” Then, she added, with balance restored, the next step is to “ask yourself what

you want to do next or what you want out of life.

“(This exercise) moves you all the way through so you’re different at the end,” Danielson said, adding the process is what helps people move forward

For Danielson, putting together the Barbie exhibit has been a process of creating an immersive experience, thus not only showing people artifacts, but leading them to genuinely consider them.

“I like to see them react, and I like them to think more deeply,” Danielson said.

The Barbie Exhibit opened on February 27 and will run until April 16 at the Historical Society in Waseca. Admission is free; there is an opportunity to take pictures in a Barbie-themed photo booth. The Historical Society is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays to Fridays.

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Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters

Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship

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Otisco, Minnesota

Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor

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Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

New Richland, Minnesota

Pastor Mary Iverson

Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee

Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting

Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting

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New Richland, Minnesota

Pastor Pamela Jensen

Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship

LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH

New Richland, Minnesota

Pastor Dan Kordahl

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Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting

VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH

New Richland, Minnesota

Pastor Dan Kordahl

Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship

VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

New Richland, Minnesota

Brian Schanil Pastor

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Waldorf, Minnesota

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Freedom Township

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ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Pastor Ava Adams-Morris

Waldorf, Minnesota

Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC

Waldorf, Minnesota

Father Brian Mulligan

Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship

TRINITY LUTHERAN

Wilton Township

Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor

Sunday - 10:45 a.m. Worship

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Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship

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10 a.m. - Mass

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

300 Owen St., Janesville

Pastor Sarah Krolak

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Alma City, Minnesota

Pastor Robert Harting

Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Smiths Mill, Minnesota

Pastor Robert Harting

Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship

Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship

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The Pastor's Column
85 degrees and I was sweating

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

The sand was everywhere. I was wearing jeans and sitting around a campfire. It was 85 degrees and I was sweating. All I wanted to do was eat my dinner and go swimming, but they wouldn’t let me. They kept asking us questions.

One question mattered the most to my 8-year-old mind, and I don’t know why it mattered right then, but it struck home and made me think. The question was simple, but I had to take it seriously. It was the first time I was asked, “Have you ever asked Jesus to forgive you of your sins and be your Lord and Savior?”

A heady question for an 8-year-old, but a necessary one. This question was a challenge to ask me if I was being a follower of Jesus, but it forced me to examine my heart and actions. I had heard from a young age how to ask Jesus into your heart, but I could not remember clearly if I had truly done so.

That day with sand in my food, dirty hands, and feeling way to warm I made the decision to pursue Christ in all things. I asked Him to forgive me of my sins, to help me be a good follower, and become my Boss, Lord, and Savior. For some reason at 8-years-old I knew I wasn’t going to get to heaven by my own strength and needed Jesus to

pay the price of my sin.

Romans 10:9-10 stands out to me: 9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

With all the struggles of trying to figure out faith, it comes down to something very simple. The confession of the mouth and belief in your heart. The beginning of a lifetime of transformation by confessing Jesus as Lord. A movement of heart, soul, mind, and body from the pursuit of selfish desires to that of following Jesus.

This choice of confession is what begins our life of following Jesus. Choosing Him as Lord above all other things, believing that He died for the payment of our sins and rose again. Our life transformation starts with the choice to follow and never ends till we see Jesus face to face.

I remember the day I made the choice, others I know do not, but they make the same choice I do each day, to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior. The start was sandy and sweaty, but the journey has been worth it.

DJ

Daniel J. Johnson

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Janesville

100 Years Ago

- Armistice Day was duly observed in Janesville with appropriate ceremonies and a program of interest. Members of the local Legion were in evidence, Louie Christensen taking charge. Shortly after one o'clock the ex-service men gathered at the Odd Fellows Hall and marched in a body to the hall, preceded by the band. The exercises opened by community singing of America followed by a solo by Miss Mabel Nyquist, rendered in her usually charming manner. Mr. Harry Johnson of Mankato was then introduced and proceeded to deliver a very able and convincing address.

- Members of the Odd Fellows lodge in Janesville gathered in goodly numbers at the hall Monday evening for the purpose of participating in a social affair in conjunction with an entertainment in which an interesting and enjoyable program was given. Long tables richly laden and artistically decorated were in evidence, supper being served at seven o'clock. The committee of ladies having this in charge were especially fortunate in putting on one of the finest spreads ever set before a crowd of people.

75 Years Ago

- Waseca County Farm Bureau is sponsoring a safety poster contest this year which will be shown and judged on December 16, the date of the annual Farm Bureau meeting in the Community Building, Waseca. The contest is open to young people and they are urged to make a poster which refers to some method of saving manpower thru the prevention of accidents in the home, on the farm, and on the highway.

- The Janesville Community Club banquet held at the school auditorium last Thursday evening was, indeed, a mighty swell affair. The turnout was one of the largest for an occasion of this kind held in Janesville for some time, and those who partook of the fine turkey "feed" report that they had plenty to eat and enjoyed the banquet in a big way. Motion pictures of the Minnesota-Michigan football game were shown later in the evening to the amusement of all those present. The Community Club is to be commended in arranging one of the best banquets ever held in Janesville.

- The state game and fish commission got bawled up in two of their recent order forms which they sent to county auditor Art Brisbane concerning ice fishing in Le Sueur county. In order 1180 the commission closed only Emily, German, and Tetonka lakes from Dec. 1 to February 15. Order 1180 was dated Nov. 6. In an order dated a day later, but not received until a week later, seven more Le Sueur county lakes were closed.

50 Years Ago

- Remodeling began on the Steven Stanke home Monday for the second time in the past year. It was less than a year ago that the home was vandalized. Last Wednesday morning it was gutted by fire. The blaze, of undetermined origin, was discovered by Jim Schafer while he was making his meter round for the gas company. He spotted the fire at 8:50 a.m. When the blaze broke out, Mr. Stanke was at work in Waseca and his wife was working at the Village Diner. Their two children were with the babysitter.

- Twelve season wrestlers were among the 35 matmen who greeted coaches Mike Niemczyk and Gary VonHoltum on the opening night of practice here Monday. The lettermen include five seniors, four juniors, two sophomores, and a freshman. Niemczyk told the group that his top two priorities this season will be takedowns and pins. "Basically, that's all there is to wrestling," he said. "It's not very difficult strategy when you look at wrestling that way and that's what we're going to be doing this year...takedowns and pins."

25 Years Ago

- Purchasing property for parking lots was an item the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton School Board considered as a long-term goal. However, rather than waiting a year or two down the road, the board is exploring an earlier purchase because one of the properties is currently on the market. During a special meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 12, the board spoke with those homeowners whose property is being considered. "We want to work with community members and have a positive relationship as this goes on," said Superintendent Don Hainlen.

- With plans to begin construction in May, the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton School Board revised its current school calendar. During the Monday, Nov. 17 meeting, the school board approved the recommendation for early dismissal/early graduation. The revised calendar will take 13 days off the current calendar. School will be dismissed on Friday, May 15, with graduation on Sunday, May 17. Although the days have been reduced, additional time has been scheduled. The high school and elementary school will begin school at 8:15 a.m. and will be dismissed at 3:24 p.m. The middle school will also start at 8:15 a.m. and will be dismissed 3:18 p.m.

- The 1997 Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton boys' and girls' cross country teams both enjoyed winning years in 1997. Next fall will see big changes. The bulldogs girls, who will return every runner but one in 1998, were 37-25 this fall, including three first places in 10 meets. The Bulldog boys, coming off a 37-37 season, will lose six of their seven varsity runners. Head coach Gene Wiebusch has also announced his resignation, so JWP needs a new head coach and plenty of boys to keep the program alive. "The girls have a chance to enjoy an outstanding year. I feel they have state tournament potential if they train throughout the year," said Wiebusch. "I'm worried about the boys because the numbers are down. You have to find kids who want to run to enjoy success in this sport."

Waseca

Waseca Herald, 1923

-When you are awakened in the morning by the ice wagon rumbling by, do you ever stop to think how much time and labor was taken up in the work of keeping Waseca supplied with ice? Mr. W. C. Johnston, the local "Ice Man" estimated that it takes over a hundred men and 40 or 50 teams to cut, haul and pack the 12,000 tons of ice that he cuts annually. He supplies the C. & N. W. Railroad with ice and the 9,000 tons of ice he cuts for them combined with the 3,000 tons that are used in Waseca makes his business the next to the largest in Southern Minnesota. The cost of cutting this ice amounts to almost \$300 a day for the three weeks that they are hauling in the winter and there is always expense for delivery in the summer.

-The Waseca high school debate team upholding the affirmative side of the question: "Resolved that the Kansas type of Industrial Court of Adjudications Should Be Established in Minnesota," won a unanimous decision last night. The locals composed of Morgan Mundt, Alice Sheldon and Hazel Sheldon, debated better than they ever have before and the audience was with them from the start.

-The men who appeared in opposition to the condemnation of land for the sewer outlet have entered in a stipulation with the city and have withdrawn their opposition and agreed to the appointment of commissioners to assess the damages. The court then appointed the commissioners and gave the city the right to go ahead upon payment of the damages later.

-Janesville, Feb. 6 - The serenity of the village was somewhat broken Friday afternoon. When a stranger about the age of twenty-five years made his appearance, and proceeded to conduct himself in a boisterous manner. He entered the poolroom of L. M. Mildexter, where he offered to fight everyone in the building. He finally left there and started south on the state road, stopping at the Alton Township meeting house, four miles from here. He was found there by a searching party organized by Marshall Christ Grams about 9:30 that evening. It is quite evident there is something wrong with the man for no person, it is believed, would remain out in the cold for that length of time, if he were in his right mind.

Waseca Herald, 1948

-One of America's brilliant instrumental ensembles, the Blaisdell Trio of New York will appear at Central High School. The concert will be presented under the auspices of Waseca County Library and will be the second of the artist series to be presented this year. The Blaisdell Trio, whose performance has been eagerly awaited by local concert goers, is made up of Frances Blaisdell, flutist, Alexander Kouguell, cellist, and Thomas Richner, pianist. Their program will offer solo and duet numbers, as well as trio selections.

-Plans are no completed for the two-day institutes to be held at New Richland on Thursday, January 29, and at Waldorf on Friday, January 30. The Commercial club, New Richland is cooperating with the University Extension Division and the Waseca County Extension Service, and is putting on the noon lunch. In Waldorf the Waldorf Elevator and the Waldorf State Bank are cooperating in sponsoring the program and are serving lunch.

-Cadet John M. Patton, son of Mr. and Mrs. B. P. Patton, 717 East Elm Ave, Waseca, was designated a member of the General Honor Society at Kemper Military School in Boonville, MO recently. The designation and redesignation of members of four honor societies was held in the Kemper field house before the cadet battalion and visitors.

-The fine residence on the farm of the late Tom Linnihan west of New Richland was burned to the ground on Friday, January 16, between 1 and 2 p.m. the occupants, Mr. and Mrs. William Kent and family were able to save their household good and personal belongings in the lower floor. Losses were partly covered by insurance. The loss was caused by an overheated stove. The New Richland Fire Department was called to the farm which is located in Byron Township.

Waseca Journal, 1973

-New Richland Manor, New Richland's first trailer court, has been established just off Highway 13 north of the village. The trailer court has been open since July and presently houses four trailers which is just a beginning according to owners Vernon and Harold Thompson. The trailer court is 200 by 550 feet with 16 lots 85 by 45 feet. All lots have room for one parking space and a patio area.

-The Region Nine Development Commission met at the Blue Earth County Courthouse in Mankato recently and elected a new member to the board and appointed an executive director for the region. Waseca County representatives, Mayor Margaret Engesser of New Richland, Roy Lukken of Waseca, township board representative Eugene Power of Waseca County Commissioners caucused and elected Mrs. Engesser to the board of directors of the commission.

-Ground was broken in November for a new \$868,000 Learning Resource Center at the University of Minnesota Technical College - Waseca. The new resource center will be devoted primarily to the needs of the UMW student body, but the entire community may make sure of it as well. Jack Lindner will supervise the center. The center is designed to serve a campus of 400 students when it opens.

Waseca County News, 1998

-The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG) Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter wildlife judging team finished first at a regional contest in Mankato Jan. 17. The event consisted of identifying over 250 fish, mammals and insects, as well as a test on students' overall knowledge of game laws and wildlife habitat. By placing first in this competition, the students will advance to the state contest in Minneapolis at the state FFA convention. This is the 32nd consecutive year NRHEG has gone to state in this event under the guidance of team advisor Lee Mendenhall.

-It's not a good idea to fall behind the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva girls' basketball team. Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton watched NRHEG drill 12 of 18 free throws in the final quarter of a 46-36 Gopher Conference victory at Janesville Jan. 20. It was the 10th consecutive victory for the Panthers, after starting the year with a pair of defeats.

-Step into the Himalayan Mountains and Buddhist culture at the Waseca Art Center. An exhibit that has been displayed at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Indianapolis Institute of Art and the Cornucopia Art Center in Lanesboro has arrived in Waseca. Artist/collector Mhdlon Madcap has been collecting Himalayan art since 1969. Her interest in the Buddhist culture began when she studied with a yoga master. From then she began searching in antique stores for collectibles from the area. Her interest increased to the point where she and her then husband, David Gredzens, went to Tibet and India for three months in 1972.

New Richland

100 Years Back - 1924

• W.G. Laudert, F.H. Johnson, Geo. Schembers, Ole Anderson, Richard Strenge, H.S. Kingsley, J.S. Evans, O.S. Martinson, Wm. Shurson, M. Lea, Philip Luff, Abel Sampson and Melvin Peterson, all members of the local order of Odd Fellows, visited the I.O.O.F. lodge at Waseca Monday evening.

• Arthur Lechner and Henry Rietfort were busy the past week chopping down logs for Wm. Rudolph. The axe and saw sure did sing. Oh! Boy!

• A farewell party was given in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Blowers and family Saturday evening. Everyone present reported a very enjoyable time.

• Caleb Haug and John D. Wilkenson returned Wednesday from St. Paul, where they attended the two-day session of the Minnesota Cooperative Creameries' Ass'n, representing the Star creamery.

• While out wolf hunting last Tuesday with Fr. MacVeigh, O.S. Martinson, Herman Breise and Edd Weed found a large owl sitting on two small eggs in her nest on the river bank. This is unusually early and may be indicative of an early spring.

• Neighbors of John Schlaak, Wilton township, assisted in hauling material for a large barn from the Lamp;ert Lumber yards at Waldorf one day last week.

76 Years Back - 1948

• The big plate glass window in the front of the Nelson Bakery was cracked and broken in the wind of last Friday. This is the second time this has happened to this window.

• Mrs. Kate Dodge and daughter, Shirley, of Waseca were Sunday visitors of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Nelson. Mr. and Mrs. Ervin Engel and family of Matawan joined them in the afternoon and at supper.

• Mr. and Mrs. Merlin Krueger entertained Mrs. A.A. Kampen, Mr. and Mrs. Jermit Iverson and daughter, George Kampen of Waseca and Miss Lucille Baker of New Richland at supper Sunday.

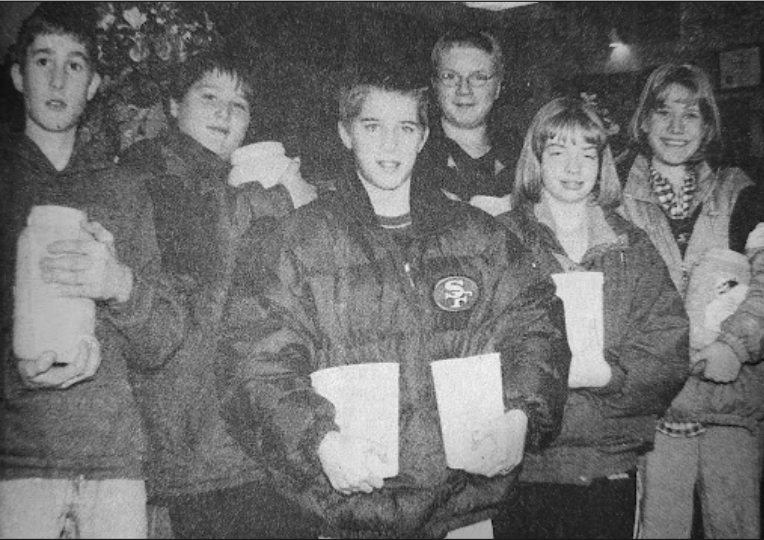
• The following playmates were entertained at a party Sunday afternoon in honor of Bernard Klinger's eighth birthday: Elroy Verplank, Jr., Reid and Tony Martinson, Arlan and Arden Kuehn and Neil Burtness.

• Mr. and Mrs. Ewald Zacharias and son, Lee, and Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Kriesel of Owatonna were Saturday evening visitors at the Orlin Lower home northeast of town.

• Wednesday evening Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Tesch, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Tesch, Mr. and Mrs. Eldo Beck, Mrs. Carl Tesch, Mrs. Louis Battey, Miss Irene Tesch, Armin Mueller and Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Marquardt and son gathered at the Wm. Tesch home for a social evening in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Boettcher and Helmuth of Bonduel, Wis., who are visiting relatives here.

• Monday the following assisted Mr. and Mrs. Helmer Grotsen and family move to their new home near Manchester: Mr. and Mrs. Morris Berg, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver Simonson, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Loken, Oscar Sandsmark, Carl Christenson, Henry and Alfred Smidt.

50 Years Back - 1974



These New Richland-Hartland high school eighth grade industrial art students are pictured with their latest project, upholstered toadstools. From left: Ricky Borchert, Richard Olson, Terry Baynes, Jeff Bartz, Al Smidt, Fendy Rieck, Randy Anderson, Jay Johnson, Dennis Warke, Al Bartness, Scott Schumacker, Jim Peterson and Brian Swenson and student teacher, Gary Hofmeister.

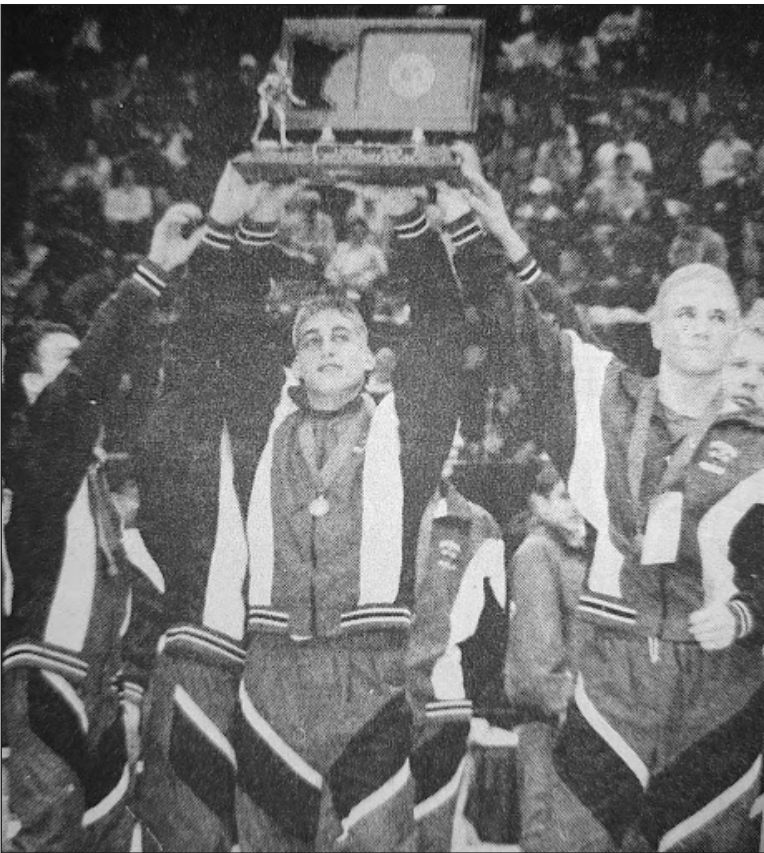
• Jon, Richard, Sherene and Janene Armstrong spent the weekend at the home of their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Russell Swenson.

• Saturday evening, Mr. and Mrs. Normal Maywald of Clarks Grove and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Maywald of Hartland were supper guests of Harry Hanson.

• Friday evening visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Cleo Lohberger were Mr. and Mrs. Walter Gerdts, Mr. and Mrs. Arno Gilster and Mrs. Marie Bleck.

• Saturday evening, Mr. and Mrs. Luverne Joecks and Tim helped Merrilee Bruegger celebrate her birthday at the Melvin Bruegger home.

25 Years Back - 1999



NRHEG wrestling squad, who held a 11-17-4 record going into the playoffs, proved records don't always tell the whole story when they wrestled their way to the championship duel in the Minnesota State Class A Team Tournament. They placed second, losing to No. 1 ranked Franzee 37-21.

NRHEG Seventh and eighth grade social studies students collected Pennies for Patients, and a total of \$894.38 collected will benefit the Leukemia Society of America. Holding coins, from left: Matt Groskreutz, Chris Kadlec, Zac Tracy, Lucas Madson, Heather Schultz and Laura Sletten.

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For 2nd straight year, Grizzlies' Kuball wins it all

Junior defends Class A 285-pound title; Petry finishes fourth at 127

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

After winning a state championship last year as a sophomore, this season was different for WEM-JWP High School wrestler Keegan Kuball.

He went from being the hunter to being the hunted, high on the radar of every opponent.

In the end, it didn't matter. The season wrapped up the same way, with Kuball capturing the state Class A 285-pound championship at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul Saturday night. He made school history by becoming WEM-JWP's first two-time state champion.

Kuball was not the only Grizzly to experience success at state as Carson Petry finished fourth at 127.

Avery Fall, the Grizzlies' other state entrant, sustained an injury early in his first bout at 189 and lost by injury default. He also had to forfeit in the wrestlebacks.

Things went a little more smoothly for Kuball, who pinned Jonathan Rose of Fosston-Bagley in 1:31 in the opening round. In the quarterfinals, he pinned Gavin Noyes of Canby at the 3:32 mark. Kuball's semifinal match against Dylan Smith of Oglivie was much closer, but Kuball prevailed 3-1.

Kuball faced senior Will Rustan of West Central Area/Ashby/Brandon-Evansville in the finals and, while most people expected a close match, it never materialized. Kuball controlled the action while winning 7-2, ending his season with another gold medal and a record of 42-4. Rustan finished 43-7.

Petry, a junior making his second state tournament appearance, took a tough loss in his opening match against Brayden Burmeister, getting pinned in the final period after leading 5-1. In the wrestlebacks, Petry prevailed 8-4 over Adam Devlaeminck of Minneota, then outpointed Masyen Hanson of Kenyon-Wanamingo 3-1. That pitted him against Owen Gruchow of West Central Area/Ashby/Brandon-Evansville, where Petry prevailed 11-9.

Petry's opponent in the third-place bout was familiar, Burmeister, and he lost an 8-0 major decision. Petry finished the season with a record of 34-6.

Fall, a senior, finished 24-8. Kuball and Petry earned all-state recognition.

The wrestlers were welcomed home Sunday at WEM High School, where activities director

Jeff Boran congratulated them and described each wrestler with one word, "tough" for Fall, "courage" for Petry, and "dominance" for Kuball.

"Three," said Boran, gesturing at Kuball. "You've got one more in you."

Boran added, "All the heart and sweat they put into this is admirable. We're thankful to have such a great support system."

Grizzlies co-head coach Skylar Petry, the older brother of Carson Petry, was the next to speak.

"Even though it didn't go his way, he has one more year to give it his all," said Coach Petry. "He has that energy that always spreads to the other guys. Seeing him wrestle as a coach and a brother, I'm super proud of him."

Coach Petry also spoke of the added pressure Kuball faced this season after winning it all last year.

"There's the expectation that a wrestler almost has to win the rest of their matches throughout their career," he said. "We had a tougher schedule this year, but it only prepared him more for the state tournament. 'For him to come out with the poise that he had is super impressive. I'm super proud of him. I hope he does well to enjoy this now and be hungry for one more next season.'"

Co-head Coach Adam Roesler was next.

"When you see everyone in the suite — the Petrys, the Kuballs, the Jameses, and the Falls — and everyone in the stands, and to see all the other wrestlers give up their Sunday to be here, we're very grateful. We have all these alumni and former coaches who come back and support us. It feels so good to see all of you. Thank you."

The state participants shared what they were grateful for.

"I'm grateful that I was able to stay healthy all season long and reach the state tournament," said Carson Petry. "I'm glad that Avery was seeded third in our section and placed second to make the state tournament. I'm also grateful that things turned out O.K. for us at the state tournament and that we got a champion again."

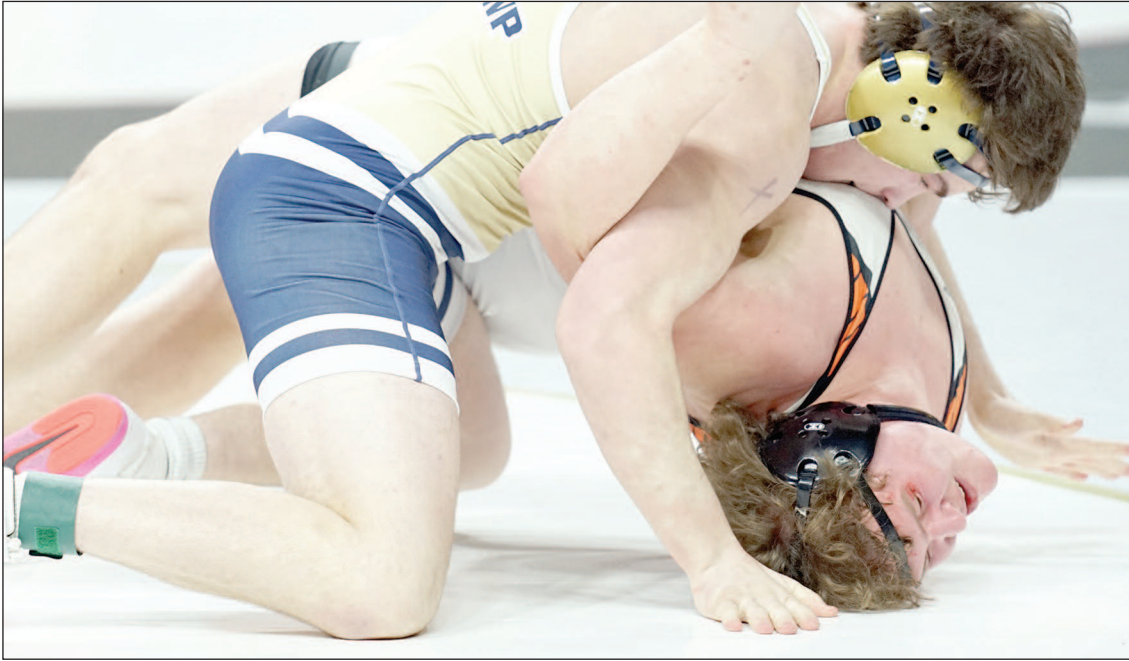
Said Kuball, "Thank you everyone that was able to make the state tournament. It really drives us to keep going. Thanks to my coaches for helping me prepare and get through the tournament. I do have one thing to say about Coach Brady [Ayers]. Before my first match, I felt a lot of pressure, and two minutes before, I was puking. He was able to get me back up and going."



A TRUE WARRIOR — Keegan Kuball, left, sports a bloody smile after winning the Class A 285-pound state wrestling championship at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul Saturday night, becoming the first WEM-JWP wrestler to win two state titles. The Grizzlies Carson Petry, right, finished fourth at 127. Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens



STATE TOURNEY ACTION — Above left, Keegan Kuball works for a pin against Dylan Smith of Oglivie during their semifinal match. At right, Carson Petry hangs onto his opponent. Below left, Kuball leaps into the arms of a coach after winning the state championship. Below right, Kuball controls Smith in the semifinals.



"During my semifinal match, I was probably the most nervous I'd ever been before a match. Coach Roesler and I walked along the hallway for 30 minutes, and he was able to talk to me and keep me calm. Again, thank you to everyone."

Said Fall: "So, I know I only got 17 seconds. It was a short time. But

I'll never forget those 17 seconds. I'm very thankful for it, just being out there. You all made it memorable and enjoyable. I can't say how thankful I am to my coaches and everyone in the stands. Even the other guys, when their season was over, they came in and practiced with us. We had over 20 guys in the room. Having them in

the room with us still makes the team feel like a family."

Fall pointed out that he was playing basketball two seasons ago.

"To find a passion and success in a sport that I didn't really know about three years ago, it's something that I'm thankful for," said Fall. "I can't even explain how thankful I am to have the opportu-

nity to put in the work I do. I've learned a lot more than wrestling in my experience within the sport. And one of those things is taking advantage of all the time you get. You don't know when it will get taken away from you."

Bluejays blast Blue Earth Area in sub-section opener

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Blue Earth Area Buccaneers came out firing in Tuesday's Section 2AA boys' basketball tournament game at Waseca.

The Bluejays, however, quashed any hope for an upset.

The Waseca crew drilled a total of 17-pointers on its way to a 92-53 triumph.

"We shot the ball very well from three," said Bluejays coach Seth Anderson. "I thought we passed expressly well and only had four turnovers."

Damarius Russell had another noteworthy night passing the ball with 16 assists, one shy of his single-game school record set earlier this season.

Early in the game, it appeared Blue Earth Area could be a challenge despite two losses to Waseca this season.

The Bucs led 20-14, but the

Bluejays went on a 22-2 run to take a commanding 44-26 lead at half-time.

The onslaught continued in the second half, allowing Anderson to clear the bench with about five minutes remaining.

Laird Keeton topped the scoring charts for the Bluejays with 17 points, including three three-pointers. He added three rebounds, two assists and two steals.

Damarius Russell, in addition to his 16 assists, finished with 14 points, two rebounds and three steals. He made four from three-point range.

Carson Ohnstad also sank four threes while totaling 14 points, four rebounds, five assists and three steals. Zach Hulscher made four threes while finishing with 14 points, one rebound, one assist and one blocked shot.

Others: Ethan Hiller 6P, 4R; Deron Russell 9P, 3R, 5A, 1S, 1B;

Cody Vagts 3P, 1R; Noah Thompson 1R; Jacob Thompson 4P, 2R, 1S; Logan Heyer 2P, 1R; Sebastian Teague 2P; Wyatt Hager 3R, 2A; Andrew Robran 7P, 9R, 2A; Geo VanEnglenburg 1R.

The Bluejays, 17-11 and seeded second, advanced to the sub-section semifinals Thursday, March 7 at Fairmont, where they faced third-seeded JWP, which defeated WEM 84-53 Tuesday.

The winner Thursday plays for the sub-section championship Monday, March 11 at 8 p.m. at Minnesota State-Mankato. The section title and state tournament berth will be decided Thursday, March 14 at 8 p.m. at Minnesota State.

LCWM is seeded atop the sub-section, followed by Waseca, JWP, Maple River, St. Clair, WEM, Blue Earth Area and NRHEG. Belle Plaine is the No. 1 seed in the north sub-section of Section 2AA.



FAST-BREAK BASKET — The Bluejays' Damarius Russell, goes in for a layup as Blue Earth Area's Maxton Loge defends in Tuesday night's sub-section tournament opener in Waseca. Russell finished with 14 points and 16 assists. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Panthers start slow, can't quite catch up to WEM

NRHEG girls 2nd in sub-section

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The old adage says it's very difficult to defeat a good team three times in one season.

It was reinforced Monday night. The NRHEG High School girls' basketball team, seeking its third victory over Waterville-Elysian-Morristown this season, was stifled by the Bucs 55-43 in the Section 2AA South Sub-section championship at Minnesota State-Mankato.

It was a difficult end to a fine season for the Panthers, who started slow and never did recover.

WEM led 10-1 before NRHEG hit its first field goal about five minutes into the game. It was 20-4 when NRHEG coach Onika Peterson called her second time out with 8:33 left in the first half, and it was 26-4 before the Panthers went on a run to pull within 31-17 at halftime.

"Unfortunately, we put ourselves into too big of a hole in the first five minutes of the game," said Coach Peterson. "They came out swinging, hitting two big threes from LaFrance, and Pelant attacked the basket and scored three in a row. We missed and forced up some shots. We were very quickly down by 12

and dominated the first half. I was impressed with the team's heart and grit. They came back fighting in the second half and cut the lead to six.

The Panthers remained within striking distance much of the second half, pulling within 49-43 with three minutes to play. But two NRHEG starters fouled out and the Bucs made their free throws down the stretch.

"We had them on their heels," said Peterson. "Unfortunately, fouls got in our way. Kudos to the WEM team. They had a great game. Good luck to them vs. Glencoe Silver Lake on Friday."

Individually for NRHEG vs. WEM: Faith Nielsen 15 points, 1 rebound, 1 assist; Quinn VanMaldeghem 6P, 9R, 5A, 3 steals; Izley Boerner 4P, 3R, Clara Buendorf 1P, 1R; Hallie Schultz 7P, 8R, 4A; Camryn VanMaldeghem 8P, 3R, 2S 1 blocked shot; Preslie Nielsen 2R, Kylie Olson 2P, 4R, 4A, 1S, 1B.

In their previous tournament game, the Panthers handled St. Clairt 62-38, leading 33-18 at half-time.

Individually: F.Nielsen 6P; Q.VanMaldeghem 4P; Schultz 9P;



HOPING FOR BETTER — NRHEG captains Faith Nielsen, Hallie Schultz and Preslie Nielsen check out the second-place plaque after Monday night's sub-section title game.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

C.VanMaldeghem 12P; Addy Stadheim 2P; P.Nielsen 19P; Olson 10P.

"We were able to get out to a quick start and we were able to carry it throughout the entire game," said Peterson. "Preslie came out huge in the first half, hitting four three-pointers. This was a big team win. We had a lot of kids stepping up tonight. We are extremely excited to get back to the sub-section championship game, and the fact that it is two Gopher Conference teams is pretty awesome."

The second-seeded Panthers fin-

ished with a record of 20-7. WEM improved to 18-7 and will face top-seeded Glencoe-Silver Lake Friday for the section championship and state tournament berth.

The Panthers will graduate seniors Schultz, Faith Nielsen, Preslie Nielsen and Hope Nielsen.

"Thank you to this phenomenal group of girls that I was so fortunate to be able to coach," said Peterson. "It was a great year! Thank you to our four seniors Hallie, Faith, Preslie, and Hope."

James scores 26 as JWP boys advance

Bulldogs earn rematch with Waseca

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The JWP High School boys' basketball team started a bit slowly in its sub-section tournament opener Tuesday night, trailing visiting WEM 28-23 with seven minutes to go in the first half.

It was all Bulldogs after that. JWP finished the first half on a 21-0 run, outscoring the Bucs 31-7 to start the second half on their way to an 83-54 victory at Janesville.

The win advanced the third-seeded Bulldogs to the Section 2AA South Sub-section semifinals against second-seeded Waseca at Fairmont. The winner there plays for the sub-section crown Monday, March 11 at Minnesota State Mankato. The Section 2AA title game is Thursday, March 14 at 8 p.m. at Minnesota State.

been sluggish, the Bulldogs wound up manhandling sixth-seeded W E M , outscoring the Bucs 60-24 in the paint, 38-10 in transition points and 26-12 in points off turnovers. They outrebounded WEM 38-26.

Memphis James had a big game with 26 points, eight rebounds, three assists and four steals.

Others: Daulton Bauer 12P, 3R, 4A; Gavin Bauer 14P, 3R, 1A, 2S, 3 blocked shots; Landon Johnson 7P, 1R, 5A; Caleb Quast 10P, 5R, 8A, 5S; Steven Dimmel 3P, 2R; Ryan Kronbach 4P, 3R, 1A, 1S; Austin Quast 4R, 2S; Cole Schlueter 8P, 5R.



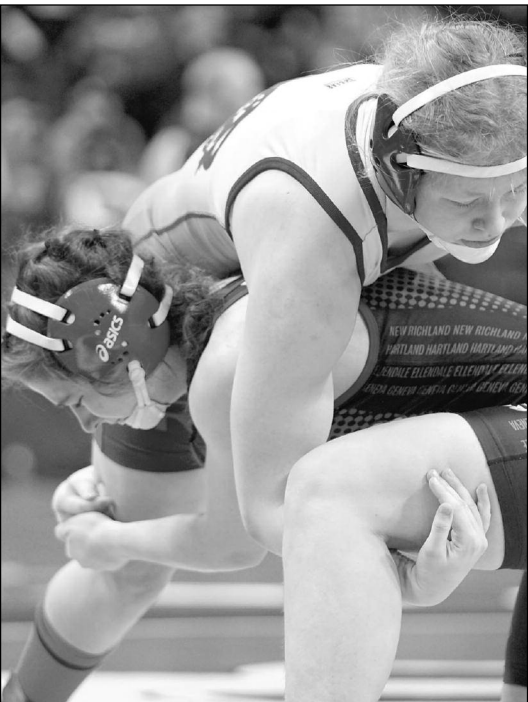
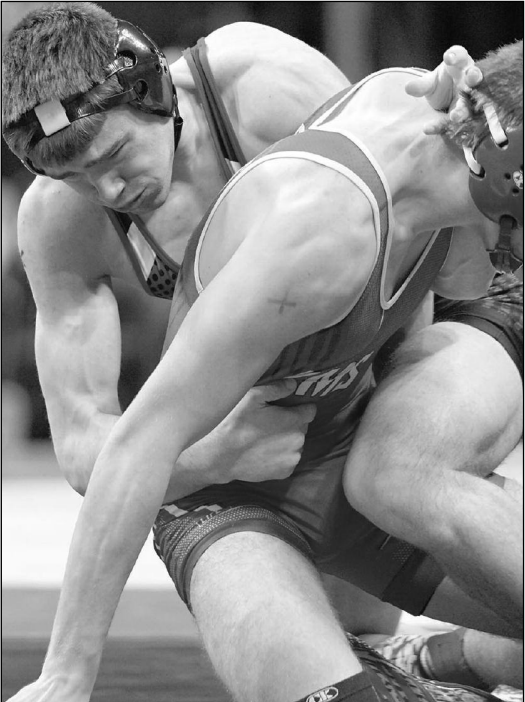
M. James

While their start may have

Most Valuable



Congratulations to sophomore Layla Keith, who was selected MVP for the 2023-24 Waseca High School gymnastics season. This honor is voted on by her teammates and the award is given by the Waseca Bluejays Booster Club. The gymnasts celebrated the season at its banquet Monday, March 4. "We have so many reasons to be proud this season!" said coach Kim Wendland. "Excited to see what next year brings!" The Bluejays will graduate seniors Macy Anderson, Lindy Caldwell, Haydn Lynch and Norah Schimming. "We will miss them so much but are so excited to see what adventures lie ahead!" said Wendland. Keith, Bella Wikan and Hannah Parks earned all-conference honors for the 2023-24 season.



XCEL ENERGY CENTER ACTION — NRHEG High School wrestlers in action at last week's state tournament at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul: Ryan Schlaak, George Roesler and Annabelle Petsinger.

Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens

Roesler almost reaches medals podium

NRHEG's Petsinger sustains injury; Schlaak drops two decisions

NRHEG entrants in the state high school wrestling tournament last weekend won some matches but did not bring home any medals from the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.

George Roesler, a senior, came the closest, finishing one win away from the medals podium at 172 pounds. He won his first match by fall, and reached the consolation semifinals with another fall before

absorbing a 5-0 decision. He finished the season with a record of 29-7.

Freshman Ryan Schlaak lost a pair of decisions, 11-2 and 7-3. He finished 22-16.

Senior Annabelle Petsinger, seeking a second straight girls' wrestling state championship, had an unfortunate end to her season, sustaining an injury in her opening bout that also

forced her to lose by default in the wrestlebacks. Petsinger, who will continue her career at Iowa Central Community College, finished 16-3.

"It was good to see George wrestling on day two, and it was a good first-time state tournament experience for Ryan Schlaak," said NRHEG coach Shawn Larson. "It was tough when George lost in the consolation round. He would have

medaled if he had won one more. Annabelle ran into some misfortune that she couldn't do anything about."

Larson thanked seniors Roesler and Petsinger for all the hard work they have put into the sport of wrestling.

"We wish them the best in their future endeavors," said Larson. "They've had outstanding high school wrestling careers."

Sub-section action



Waseca players in action during Tuesday night's sub-section tournament victory over Blue Earth Area are, from left, Andrew Robran, Deron Russell (with brother Damarius in the background) and Carson Ohnstad.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

LEGAL NOTICES

SUMMARY OF CITY OF WASECA FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE

The City of Waseca City Council adopted a newly revised floodplain ordinance at their regular meeting on February 20, 2024. The ordinance was based off the Minnesota DNR model floodplain ordinance, to satisfy the state and federal standards detailed in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 103F; Minnesota Rules, parts 6120.5000 – 6120.6200; the rules and regulations of the National Flood Insurance Program in 44 CFR 59 to 78. The ordinance provides the general regulations for development in floodplains, as well as procedures guiding administrative responsibilities.

A copy of the ordinance in its entirety is generally available for inspection Monday – Friday between 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM in the office of the City Clerk in City Hall located at 508 South State Street in Waseca, Minnesota.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer March 8, 2024

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
300 N. State Street, Waseca, MN 56093
Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 9:30 p.m.

Notice is hereby given that the Waseca County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing to consider revisions to the County’s Floodplain Overlay District Standards. This amendment to the floodplain regulations will guide the development in a manner that complies with State laws and the standards of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and will reference the effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS).

Information on this item will be available at the Waseca County Planning and Zoning Office, 300 N State St., Waseca during regular business hours 8-4:30, and will be on the county website www.wasecacounty.gov at the agenda tab. Oral comments will be accepted at the meeting. Upon request, accommodations will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all Waseca County services, programs and activities.

Maame Quarcoo, Sr. Land Use Planner.

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer March 8, 2024

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ALTON TOWNSHIP
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING
AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS
Notice is hereby given to the qualified voters of Alton Township, County of Waseca, State of Minnesota, that the Annual Election of Town Officers and Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 12th 2024. In case of inclement weather, the meeting and election may be postponed until the third Tuesday in March. The town board will also be holding the Board of Canvas on the Wednesday that follows the election at 6:00pm.

lowers the election at 6:00pm.

The Election Polls will be open from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm at which time the voters will elect:

- One Supervisor – Term of Three Years
- One Clerk – Term of Two Years

The Annual Meeting will commence at 4:00 pm to conduct all necessary business prescribed by law. On the agenda is setting levies for Road & Bridge, Revenue, and Fire Funds;

also, any other business relevant to township government. The Annual Election and Meeting will be held at:

Alton Town Hall
35849 30th St
Janesville MN 56048

Deb Westphal
Alton Town Clerk

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on March 1 and 8, 2024



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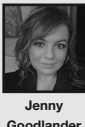
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LEGAL NOTICES

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
COUNTY OF LINCOLN
IN CIRCUIT COURT SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
In the Matter of the Adoption of AVA C. ANDERSON
Minor Child.
41 ADP. 24-6
NOTICE OF HEARING
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a hearing on Petition for Adoption of Child in the above captioned proceeding is scheduled before the Court, the Honorable Judge Jennifer Mammenga, presiding, at the Lincoln County Courthouse, located at 104 N. Main Street, Canton, South Dakota, 57013 for the 19th day of March, 2024, at the hour of 2:30 P.M., for a period of one hour.
DATED this 9th day of February, 2024.

STRANGE, FARRELL, JOHNSON & BREWERS, P.C.

Amber J. Eggert
Attorney for Petitioner
4420 South Technology Drive
Sioux Falls, SD 57106 (605)339-4500 Phone
amber@strangelaw.com
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer February 16, 23, and March 1, 8, 2024

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
COUNTY OF LINCOLN
IN CIRCUIT COURT SECOND JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
In the Matter of Termination of Parental Rights Over
AVA C. ANDERSON
Minor Child.
41 ADP. 24-5
NOTICE OF HEARING
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a hearing on Petition for Voluntary Termination of Parental Rights in the above-captioned proceeding is scheduled before the Court, the Honorable Judge Jennifer Mammenga, presiding, at the Lincoln County Courthouse, located at 104 N. Main Street, Canton, South Dakota, 57013 for the 19th day of March, 2024, at the hour of 2:30 P.M., for a period of one hour.
DATED this 9th day of February, 2024.

STRANGE, FARRELL, JOHNSON & BREWERS, P.C.

Amber J. Eggert
Attorney for Petitioner
4420 South Technology Drive
Sioux Falls, SD 57106 (605)339-4500 Phone
amber@strangelaw.com
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer February 16, 23, and March 1, 8, 2024

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10 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your HOST Waseca FAIRBOARD	11 7pm Post & AUX. Meeting	12 Burger nite 5-7pm	13 6pm BAR Bingo K-9 Veterans day	14 7pm HALL BINGO	15 WALLEVE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm Fraternal Order of Police YOUR HOST	16 ST. PATRICK'S DAY BINGO 7PM
17 ST. Patrick's day	18	19 Burger nite 5-7pm	20 6pm BAR Bingo	21 7pm HALL BINGO Rosie the Riveter Day	22 LENTEN MEAL MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	23
24 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your HOST Neighborhood Service Cen-	25 Medal of Honor day	26 Burger nite 5-7pm	27 6pm BAR Bingo	28 7pm HALL BINGO	29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm LENTEN MEAL	30
31						

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