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Christmas Time at the Mill 1 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7

Christmas Time at The Mill will provide fun and entertainment at no cost to participants from 1 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7. There will be crafts, Santa, cookie decorating, letter writing, face painting, games and more. Bryce Leppert and Band will perform from 8 to 11 p.m. Free hot dogs for the first 200 children.

“Lucia’s Lanterns” at County Historical Society 2 to 3:30 p.m. Dec. 7

A children’s lantern-making craft, culturally-based storytelling and a chance to stroll through a sparkling forest of decorated trees will be from 2 to 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Waseca County Historical Society. Display of a wide variety of trees based on different cultural traditions, woodworkers’ shop, and baking traditions from December 5 to February 3. Events are free and open to the public.

Waseca Senior Citizen Center Holiday Cookie Dazzle Sat., Dec. 7

The Waseca Senior Center will host the Holiday Cookie Dazzle 9 a.m. till noon on Saturday, Dec. 7. A plate of 12 cookies is \$8. There will also be breads and other treats available. Achieving dreams for disabilities. All funding goes towards children and adults with disabilities.

American Legion Christmas Cookie tray sale Saturday, Dec. 7

The Waseca American Legion Auxiliary will host a Christmas Cookie Tray fundraising sale from 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7. Funds support the auxiliary.

St. Paul Lutheran to host Christmas Bazaar Saturday, Dec. 7

St. Paul Lutheran Church will host their Christmas Bazaar from 10:30 a.m. till noon on Saturday, Dec. 7. \$10 per meal and will have hot beef sandwiches, sloppy joes, homemade pies and coffee. For sale will be crafts, baked goods, Christmas cookies, white elephants and a candy shop.

The Mill will host Christmas Time on Saturday, Dec. 7

It’s Christmas Time at The Mill and will be free all day from 1-7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7. There will be crafts, Santa, cookie decorating, letter writing, face painting, games and more. Bryce Leppert and Band will perform from 8-11 p.m. Free hotdogs for the first 200 kids.

Sacred Heart Church Mariachi Church Service and meal Saturday, Dec. 7

Sacred Heart Catholic Church will host live band Mariachi America from St. Paul from 6-8 p.m. on Dec. 7 for Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration. They will also perform during the church service at 5 p.m. There will be a meal provided by El Molino following church. This is free and open to the public.

*A word from
The Word*

Do not be anxious about anything; present your requests to God.

Philippians 4:6



Roger and Roberta Walker were volunteers greeting visitors for Farmamerica's Nov. 29, 2024 Turkey Trot and Dad's Belgian Waffle breakfast. Also greeting visitors were President Biden's two pardoned Minnesota-grown turkeys, Blossom and Peach.

Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

Turkeys, trotting and breakfast

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

About 250 people attended Farmamerica’s morning breakfast and “Turkey Trot” fun run on Friday, Nov. 29. The day offered three attractions: food, exercise, and celebrities.

Already before they entered Farmamerica’s main building, visitors lined up to have their pictures taken with the much-publicized celebrity turkeys Peach and Blossom, both of whom had been “pardoned” by President Joe Biden on Nov. 25. Raised

by Northfield area turkey farmer and president of the National Turkey Growers Association John Zimmerman, the two birds will now live out their days as part of Farmamerica’s educational programs.

Also a first this year, visitors could choose to dine at a breakfast that included sausages and Dad’s Belgian Waffles served from 9 a.m. till noon. Inside Farmamerica, Mason Wadd was manning the breakfast counter;

Turkey continued on 4



Despite the cold weather, Jean and Harper Jakunik still finished the Nov. 29, 2024 Turkey Trot at Farmamerica.

Waseca Chorale concert features variety, spirit

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

A near-capacity crowd of more than 300 gathered at Waseca’s Sacred Heart church for the Waseca Chorale’s holiday concert titled “Love Came Down at Christmas: The Story of That Very First Noel” held the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 1.

The 43 members of the Chorale began practicing the 15 complex songs included in the concert back in September; numbers were selected collaboratively by directors Deb Wantoch-Yess and John Hoehn.

Wantoch-Yess said of the group’s plan for the concert, that she wanted to see it serve as an opportunity for introspection and as a reminder of “what the season is all about,” as the Christmas season begins.

The lengthy standing ovation the group received upon finishing their finale, “Sing Noel, Sing Hallelujah” seemed to indicate that goal had been met.

Prior to intermission, the group performed a mixture of classical, traditional and contemporary Christmas songs. “Antiphonal Joy” had the members of the choir divided down two opposing aisles of the church, echoing and responding to each other right across most of the audience. “There’s Still My Joy,” by modern

songwriter and performer Melissa Manchester examined the wonder of the Christmas season shadowed by a recent personal loss. “It Must Have Been the Mistletoe” was a lighthearted look at new love found during the holidays.

“Ogo Ni Fun Oluwa!” featured percussion instruments, synchronized clapping and movement to a lively song in the Yoruba language which translates “Glory to God in the Highest.”

The title given to the concert is the same as that of a nine-number cantata which comprised the entire second half of the performance. The cantata incorporated narration provided by Waseca resident and concert emcee Bruce Boyce, with both traditional and original music. The narration encouraged audience members to regard the story that was about to unfold in song as though they had never heard it before, the better to be able to appreciate that the Christmas story is “almost too good to be true.”

The number “Who Would Have Dreamed” asked listeners regarding the Christ Child, “Who would have dreamed or ever foreseen that we could hold God in our hands?”

“You’re Still Lord” examined the mystery of an eternal god somehow visiting earth. Among the lyrics were



A near-capacity crowd of more than 300 gathered at Waseca’s Sacred Heart church for the Waseca Chorale’s holiday concert titled “Love Came Down at Christmas: The Story of That Very First Noel” held the afternoon of Sunday, Dec. 1.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

the phrases “Immortal and eternal, you are God and God alone. Yesterday, today, forevermore, even in a manger, you’re still Lord.”

After their rousing finish to “Sing Noel, Sing Hallelujah!” the directors, chorale members and accompanist Noah Wilson took numerous bows before the crowd made room for them to exit.

Chorale members are sopranos Sarah Berry, Aimee Hill, Janice Hovestrad, Julie Kramer, Dawn Leigh, Kelli Lenz, Susan Madson, Peggy Olson, Kathy Roycraft, Sallee Schumacher, Isabella Sorenson, Sarah Whitesitt, and Marilyn Wilkus. Alto singers are Toni Bauleke, Rhonda Christianson, Karen Dahle, Mary Jo DeLaitch, Nancy Lehman, Jan Macklay, Rita Miller, Mary Schutlz, Jodie Thompson, Deb Vetter, and Deb Wantoch-Yess. Tenors are Rodney Born, John Hoehn, Al Judd, Bill Kopischke, Ryan Leigh, Immanuel Mueller, Michael Myers, and Charles Priebe. Bass singers are Mike Anthony, Paul Byron, Doug Engstrom, Don Frankenberry, Carroll Galvin, Matt Jirele, Andrew Miller, Garrett Natysin, Tyler Paulson, Matt Seberson and Jon Stagman.

The Chorale expressed gratitude to Sacred Heart Catholic Church for providing the performance venue, Grace Lutheran Church for providing a practice hall and allowing the group to store its music, the Waseca High School music department for the loan

of materials, and the Waseca County Pioneer for assistance with publicity.

The afternoon’s performance was made possible in part by a grant from the E.F. Johnson Foundation. The Chorale is also a recipient of a grant awarded from the Waseca Area Foundation. The activity was made possible in part by a grant from the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council with funds appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature from its general fund.

The Waseca Chorale invites community members to put the group’s spring concert, “The Greatest Showmen,” on their calendars: 7 p.m. May 10, 2025, at the Waseca High School performing arts center.

Grinch costume leads to good-humored fun

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Deanne Valenzuela can’t count the number of times she’s been invited to steal a child’s Christmas presents.

But then, that’s what’s expected of her—at least when she’s dressed as the Grinch. A mother of elementary-age children and someone who appreciates a bit of fun, Valenzuela admits she finds it “priceless” to introduce some unexpected excitement and variety to someone’s day.

Valenzuela has owned a Grinch costume since 2006, when she was so excited at the prospect of dressing up and surprising her friends and co-workers that she offered to pay the seamstress double if she would finish it by the next morning.

At the time, the now-Waseca resident was living in California and working at a hospital. “I wanted to do something for the nurses and the staff because they had to work on Christmas,” Valenzuela remembers. “And I wanted to do something for the patients. Nobody wants to be in a hospital over a holiday.”

The next day, the Grinch arrived with homemade treats for the staff and coloring books, crayons and colored pencils for hospitalized children.

“Everything just fell into place that day,” she remembers. “Everybody had fun. It made a stressful environment more bearable.

“That’s why I like doing it.”

Valenzuela says many of the moments of fun have been completely spontaneous. She remembers being in a car driven by her husband Robert Tackett when they stopped at a gas station.

“Children nearby saw me and got all excited,” she describes. “We ended up taking some pictures right there.”

Another time someone spotted her and offered to buy her a beer if she



Deanne Valenzuela as the Grinch holding her daughter, Melina Tackett ,when she was an infant.

Contest offers \$100 prize for ‘best’ photo with the Grinch

Lucia’s Cocina and the Waseca County Pioneer are co-sponsoring a “Grinchy” photo contest. When area residents take pictures with the Grinch at spontaneous community appearances, they are invited to submit their favorites via email to news@wasecacountypioneer.com.

A committee consisting of staff members from both organizations will have a look at the pictures and choose a winner based on originality, clarity, appeal, personal touches and other factors: The prize will be a \$100 Visa gift card funded by Lucia’s Cocina. The card can be used for any type of purchase. To be considered, photos must be submitted by the end of the day on Dec. 13; the prize will be delivered by Dec. 19. The winning photo will be featured in the Dec. 20 edition of the Pioneer.



Compostings

by Al Batt

Bloviating in Arizona, stopping in Jerome

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING
I asked my 94-year-old mother if she needed anything from the grocery store. She said she did. And you were a dutiful son and did the shopping for her?
No, I gave her my list. There was no use in both of us going out into the nasty weather.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE
I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I've been ringing the bells for the Salvation Army regularly. People are so generous. I said "Happy Thanksgiving" and "Merry Christmas" to so many people that some said "You, too" before I had a chance to wish them anything. The temps were cold, but it was no problem. I put warm mashed potatoes in my pockets and that kept my body thawed.

I had been busily bloviating in Arizona and made a stop in Jerome, once a booming copper-mining town, where a fellow asked me what the five C's of Arizona were. I thought it'd be a good idea to lead by guessing copper. I added cattle, climate, cactus and alfalfa. Alfalfa because I wanted to get one A. Cactus and alfalfa were wrong. Cotton and citrus were the missing two, although both have fallen behind the production of alfalfa and lettuce.

I'VE LEARNED
Losing something can be the best way to find something else.
Will Rogers said, "There is no trick to being a humorist when you have the whole government working for you."
Warning signs give people idiotic ideas.
One of my shoes doesn't seem right.

THOUGHTS OF THANKSGIVING
It's not easy quitting cold turkey.
What smelled best at dinner were noses.
I heard no one say, "Please put the kale away; I can't stop eating the stuff."
Even bad lefse is good. Some people (me) claim it's a health food and should be covered by health insurance.
A veteran tiler enjoyed the trench toast.
I like Jell-O with a deep red flavor.
I walked through a cemetery and was thankful I could walk through a cemetery.
BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT
I'm friends with 25 letters of the

alphabet. I don't know Y.
Is a garbage truck a food truck to a raccoon?
Why is Susan so lazy?
There was a big sale at the LEGO store. People lined up for blocks.

NATURE NOTES
I put out peanuts in the shell for the blue jays, which weighed the peanuts by picking them up as if they were miniature barbells and, after some consideration, took the heaviest ones first because there was more food in them. My wife says blue jays are just a bit smarter than I am. She's not giving them enough credit. I imagine a blue jay looks at those peanuts and says to itself, "Wow! I'm rich."
A reader from Connecticut scatters peanuts around her yard and watches how quickly the blue jays find the goobers. Jays notice anything different in their world—that's how they survive.
A wild turkey hen preens on her deck. An adult turkey has 5,000 to 6,000 feathers and she appeared intent on sprucing up every feather her bill could reach. She sorts through her feathers as if she were counting them. You can tell a female turkey's poop from a male's. That's a handy skill to have and will astound your family when you share this bit of knowledge at next year's Thanksgiving meal. Take that Aunt Agatha, who claims to have once shaken hands with Ross Perot and reminds everyone of that at every opportunity. Male droppings are J-shaped; female droppings are spiral-shaped. The larger the diameter, the older the bird. Turkey beards start growing when poults are five months old and keep growing throughout their lives. They are permanent and not replaced during molts. The older the male, the longer the beard. Turkeys can lose their beards due to a vitamin deficiency or they could snap off from the weight of snow and ice that collects on beards. Beards can become frayed from being dragged on the ground. Some toms grow more than one beard. The National Turkey Wildlife Federation found a tom with 13 beards. The longest beard was on a turkey in Texas and was 22.5 inches long. That turkey played a guitar with the band ZZ Top. A less prominent version of a beard occurs in 10% to 20% of females.

MEETING ADJOURNED
"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."—Leo Buscaglia.

I never win at games of chance

I encountered two pieces of good luck this week which stick in my mind as I write this column.
One, I attended a "fine arts" show at the civic center in Mankato. I went, specifically, to see a friend, a talented artist with the first name Annie who had a booth there. The two of us had taken care of the fundamental elements of Thanksgiving day dinner together—the turkey, the ham, the mashed potatoes—and out of a sense of camaraderie, she mentioned that every vendor at the show had the chance to submit a name to receive a \$10 gift card for use at the show. If I was planning on coming, she offered, she would put my name on that list.

Out of an equal sense of camaraderie, I said I would be coming.
I brought a friend and the two of us headed over to Mankato. We found a parking spot and walked briskly through the cold to get inside; when we passed through the door into the civic center, it was as if we had been transported to a wonderful new place. The cold wind was gone. Live music could be heard playing over the loudspeakers. We were greeted at the door and provided with a map showing where the different types of artists—specifically artisans, authors, and musicians—were located.
We stepped into the showroom and were greeted by some truly beautiful products including pottery, fabric work, photography, glass sculptures, paintings, elegant lamps, and more. My friend and I were a bit like two children, each pulling the other over to see some new wonder.



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

When we found Annie, she asked whether I had acquired my gift card yet. That's when I returned to the front entry. There, it was confirmed my name was on the list and I was told to choose one of several envelopes tucked in among the branches of a small Christmas tree. I chose one directly in front of me and returned to Annie, who asked whether I was a "big winner." It was then she explained it was something of a game of chance—that the envelopes included gift certificates of at least \$10 in value and up to \$50.

As I opened the envelope I began commenting that I "never win" at games of chance, but inside were 5 certificates.
The first thing I did was purchase one of Annie's prints, a charming whimsical drawing of a giant tortoise. As my friend and I walked away to continue shopping, I went forth with new eyes: it was now my mission to select products which would expend my remaining \$30. The chance to buy things without spending money was quite a treat; it left me with a feeling of pleased satisfaction that remains with me now.
My other piece of luck was quite different, but perhaps even more rewarding.

I had agreed to cover a craft show that took place in Ellendale Saturday morning. With 38 vendors, it was a fairly large show, taking up the whole elementary school gym.
On the prowl for good pictures and trying to concentrate on finding local vendors, I moved from place to place and had a look at the magnificent variety of high-quality pieces being offered. I stopped to chat with a number of people and got some enjoyable photos.
As I came down the final aisle, I saw a young fellow—13 years old, it turned out—crocheting. It was clear he was very practiced; he barely looked at his hands while the project continued taking shape at high speed.
It is at moments like this one I am glad I work for the newspaper. My camera, notebook, and the title of "reporter" let me get away with a lot. I introduced myself, asked a few preliminary questions, then moved right inside the booth and sat down in a chair located between the young artisan and his mother.
My conversation with the two of them probably lasted about 15 minutes. During that time, the chair's rightful occupant returned, but declined to reclaim it.
Young Wyatt, I learned, has been

crocheting and knitting since he was 10 years old. He learned the crafts from his now-deceased grandmother, but if anything has accelerated his skills and productivity since her death.
He answered my questions about where he gets his yarn, what types of products are most difficult, and where he gets the ideas for his many projects. You see, on the table all around him was a remarkable variety of finished pieces. A child-sized pink sweater hung alongside some bags and other clothing. On the table were hats, mittens, scarves. Hanging on two small flocked trees were colorful crocheted spheres which, I was informed, covered spherical Christmas ornaments made from unbreakable material. Standing nearby was a brown cow, probably 10 to 12 inches tall.
Wyatt informed me he can usually figure out how to make an item simply by seeing a picture—no need for a pattern.
All the while we spoke, his fingers continued to fly and the project in his hands continued to grow.
When I asked him whether anyone at school makes fun of him for having crocheting and knitting as hobbies, he admitted a few people do. But he ignores them, he says, because answering them back would only cause them to continue. He mentioned that since the last day of school before Christmas break will include an afternoon of movies, he will probably sit and crochet while

Bently continued on 6

One week left before I'm free for an entire month

Ah, Thanksgiving. Because everyone was either enjoying sitting on the couch and playing games or recovering from a 5k they did not train for, the viral videos this year on social media turned the duality of human-kind into jokes about whether or not people married into a "turkey trot family."
You see, my family has always been a turkey trot family. We get up early, dress in a billion layers because it's usually freezing (this year it was actively snowing as we ran), get caffeinated, and head to the race—where we usually end up waiting in the car to stay warm while the dogs get anxious and ready to run.
This year was the first time in a couple years the whole family was able to cross the finish line, each at their own pace. With my grandpa's knee surgery and my mom's toe and knee surgery throughout the years, we've been a couple men down. But not this year, as we all strolled across the finish line, grabbed my



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

grandma's second place pie and went home to eat ourselves full.
The trend on social media was commentary from people who grew up in non-turkey-trot families to be either dreading taking part in the annual tradition or making fun of it. The videos are quite funny to watch. One girl made a video debating whether to join her new family running the turkey trot or start drinking mimosas. You can guess what she chose, or at least what she led her audience to believe she had chosen.
But because there is finally snow on the ground and it is past Thanks-

giving, I can now allow myself to listen to Christmas music and try to maintain at least some level of happiness as I head into finals and final projects. The Pentatonix Christmas album on shuffle will usually do it for me. I don't know what it is about a capella Christmas music, but it just hits the spot.
One thing about me though, since it's nearing Christmas, is that I am notoriously bad at telling people what I want. I know it frustrates some people in my family. It's just because usually if there is something that I really want, I'll just get it for

myself. Besides, I am almost always happy with whatever people get me. Sometimes they know better than I do what I want, so it works out when I open a gift and realize, "Oh yeah, I really did want this!" when I never even thought about asking for it.
This year is different, though. I actually have a real list. It's not very long, but it's still an improvement for those who wanted one, I guess. I don't know, it just feels weird asking for stuff when in reality, there's not a whole lot I actually want. Oh well, first-world problems.
Anyway, I shouldn't distract myself from school — by the time this gets in your hands, it'll only be one week of suffering left before I'm free for a whole month. How exciting.
My Determination: "Good night, Westley. Good work. Sleep well. I'll most likely kill you in the morning." - Dread Pirate Roberts, The Princess Bride

Three Thanksgivings and my birthday

As of Nov. 17, I have completed another trip around the sun; my twenty-seventh year is off to a very interesting start.
I feel like much of my writing in my twenty-sixth year was centered around loss.
Numerous times on my birthday I was reminded of the loss of Blair Nelson.
He came up in conversation again this evening between me and someone who is a stranger to Blair.
I don't like to rush anything in life. Relationships.
My morning.
Good conversation.
The only thing I really try to do quickly is write because when the words flow, they arrive swiftly.
I was blessed with many positive interactions with Blair; his impact on my life is felt today. He is a reminder, to me, to cherish memories and interactions with those we love. I'm really, really grateful I slowed down and enjoyed many, many moments shared with Blair. It helped that he would regularly tell me to slow down.
Again, I'm grateful for our shared games of catch.
I'm so incredibly glad every time he came into the office, if he didn't have a meeting, he would simply sit down, converse and not leave. He never appeared to be in a hurry. Unless he had one of those important county meetings to get to.
Blair and I share a birthday, along with Tink Larson. It feels special to have this day in common with two of the finest people I've known.
My birthday this year was spent surrounded by incredible friends. Our companionship was enjoyed late



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

into the evening. I am very, very blessed.
I thank the good Lord every day for this great life he has blessed me with. I'm far from perfect. I work too much. I make mistakes and neglect things I wish I wouldn't. I'd be lying if I said I haven't felt overwhelmed at times over the past few years.
I've been told God only ever gives you as much as you can handle in life.
On another note, certain elements of managing a newspaper become more enjoyable with time.
Setting up coverage for annual stories/events is much easier year to year. Working with sports coaches gets better and better. People are kinder and kinder, it seems, as we get to know each other. The same can be said for working with folks within the community. I'm again reminded how much I didn't know when I was younger and how much I still don't know in my youth.
Speaking of things I didn't know when I was younger, this past week I was treated to not one, not two, but three Thanksgiving dinners.
The first, on Wednesday, was a 'friendsgiving' in Rochester with some of my best friends. We played games and enjoyed good food and company.
On Thursday I was invited to Editor Deb's celebration. The house was

a certifiable zoo, but a good one. I was promised someone would cry, but aside from tears of laughter, none fell. Deb did an excellent job cooking. And I, well I did an excellent job eating. Oh, and I was handed a bread knife and asked to carve the bird. I mean the turkey. Same thing! Upon finishing dinner, which was full of lively conversation, I returned home where I napped for three hours.
In the evening I returned to work: What else was I to do home alone at 9 p.m. on Thanksgiving?
Last, but certainly not least, was my own family Thanksgiving at my mother's house on Sunday.
It was an intimate setting. In attendance were only my Great-Uncle Chuck and Aunt Dana, my mother, grandmother and—later in the day—my sister and niece. This allowed for extended conversation with my uncle and aunt that I can't usually join when the space is more crowded. Uncle Chuck told me of how he and Dana met.
Chuck was 38; she was 28. Chuck was about to leave "the Y" (he was attending a dance party) when Dana walked in. Right behind her came another boy. Shucks. His heart sank. But Chuck's cousin informed him, "the pair were not a couple."
Chuck described a scene where the two talked to each other across a room, separated by a table. He told

himself he would ask for her number after she returned from a trip to the bathroom. But alas, there was only one bathroom and Dana, (Chuck describes) simply ran out the door to go home to use her own restroom before he could stop her.
So, Chuck and his cousin considered driving around northern Iowa looking for her until, ultimately, a friend of Dana's found the number for her landline.
The first night they spoke on the phone, the conversation lasted four hours, the next night three, then two, then one and finally they went on a date. Dinner at a diner, followed by a play. The rest, they say, is history. Thirty-plus years of history.
Chuck also told me of his three months spent living in France and his weekend trip to Paris. He also provided me with updates on my two cousins, his children. One is engaged, the other recently married.
I've said before and I'll say again, I enjoy intimate conversations with one or two people at a time. Truly, those intimate, sincere interactions warm my soul.
Oh, how badly this writing has digressed! I almost didn't mention the part people care most about—the food!
For the first time in my life, my mother's turkey did not come out dry. I thought she had given up hope. I expected we had simply become 'ham' people. It was by far the best turkey I've enjoyed at Thanksgiving dinner. My favorite dishes were the cream corn and my mother's very cheesy, very buttery potatoes.
As my uncle Chuck insists, calories are not counted during holidays, birthdays or funerals.



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DEADLINES: Pioneer: Noon Monday
GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES
\$59 Per Year, Waseca County Residents
\$69 State of Minnesota • \$79 Outside Minnesota

Waseca County Pioneer (USPS permit #25304) is published weekly on Thursday, by Pioneer Publications Inc., 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca, MN, 56093. Entire contents copyright © 2024 PIONEER Publications, Inc. and respective authors. Opinions expressed in editorials or letters to the editor are those of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the Waseca County Pioneer or PIONEER Publications, Inc. Letters may be edited for content or length. Periodicals Postage at New Richland, MN. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Waseca County Pioneer, P.O. Box 578, Waseca, MN, 56093.

OBITUARIES

Theresa Gertrude Neigebauer

THERESA GERTRUDE NEIGEBAUER, age 80, of Waseca passed away on Thursday, November 28, 2024, at Benedictine Living Community in Owatonna.

Born on February 14, 1944, in Adrian, Theresa was the daughter of Peter and Anne (Reiners) Kramer. She attended St. Adrian Catholic School, graduating with the class of 1962. Theresa was united in marriage to Robert Neigebauer on November 22, 1969, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca. Theresa worked for Herters and JC Penny. She enjoyed bowling, gardening, sewing, raising chickens, and selling eggs.

Theresa is survived by her brother, Vernon Kramer of Adrian; brothers-in-law, Walter Neigebauer and Daryl (Janice) Neigebauer; sister-in-law, Norma Bonnie-Baffoe; nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her husband; parents; sisters, Mary Ann (Francis) McGannon, Veronica (Joseph) McGannon; brother, Herman Kramer sisters-in-law,



Theresa Neigebauer

Florence (Ervin) Schroeder and Rita (Eugene) Eisterhold; brother-in-law, Clarence (Diane) Neigebauer.

Mass of Christian Burial was 12:30 PM on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca with Fr. Glenn Frerichs as Celebrant. Visitation was held one hour prior to the service at the church. Interment followed at Woodville Cemetery.

Memorials are preferred to Woodville Cemetery. DSOFuneral.com

Kenneth Dale Roemhildt

KENNETH DALE ROEMHILDT, age 91, lifelong resident of Waseca, died on November 27, 2024, at Whispering Creek in Janesville, surrounded by family.

Born on January 18, 1933, in Waseca, he was the only child born to Ernest Edwin and Clara Elizabeth (Kaupa) Roemhildt. Ken was baptized as an infant and confirmed in his Lutheran faith as a youth, both at St. John Lutheran Church in Isosco Township, Waseca County. He began his education at a rural Waseca County country school in Isosco Township before graduating from Waseca Public Schools with the class of 1950. On September 12, 1959, Ken was united in marriage to Geraldine "Geri" Carlson at First Lutheran Church in Columbia Heights.

Ken was a lifelong farmer. From the time he was tall enough to reach the clutch, he was working alongside his dad raising crops and doing chores. Together with his dad, Ken owned and operated a retail fertilizer business for many years along with crop farming and raising a few cattle and hogs from time to time. In 2004, Ken and Geri moved into town, but he continued to stay active with the farm with his two sons.

After moving to town, Ken found a new appreciation for spending time at the Pheasant Café with the "Coffee Crew". He enjoyed working, fishing, playing cards, making stained glass, traveling to various farm tours around the world and working. Ken was a faithful member of St. Paul Lutheran Church where he served as an elder for many years.

Ken is survived by his children: Dan (Debbie) of Janesville, Jim



Kenneth Roemhildt

(Cathy) of Lakeville, Maria of Burlington, VT, and Bill (Stephanie) of Waseca; eight grandchildren: Brian (Mariah), Gregg (Marie), Lisa (Bryan Berggren), Ali, Taylor, Carter, Chloe, and Claire Roemhildt; five great grandchildren, Jackson, Griffin, Cole, Makenna and Bridget Roemhildt; other relatives and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents; wife; and granddaughter, Laura Roemhildt.

Visitation will be from 4:00 – 7:00 PM on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral Homes in Waseca. Visitation will continue for one hour prior to the service at the church on Thursday.

Funeral Service will be 11:00 AM on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca with Rev. Michael Grannis officiating. Interment will be in St. John – Trinity Lutheran Cemetery in Isosco Township, Waseca County.

The family extends deep gratitude to the dedicated staff at Mayo Clinic Waseca, Whispering Creek, and St. Croix Hospice.



Margaret Schwarz

Margaret Schwarz

MARGARET ESTHER SCHWARZ, age 90, of Waseca passed away on Tuesday, November 26, 2024 at Foxdale Senior Living.

Born on August 10, 1934 at her home on the farm in Minnesota Lake, Margaret was the daughter of Clarence and Meta (Kain) Lentz. She graduated from Minnesota Lake High School where she graduated with the class of 1952. On August 14, 1952, she was united in marriage to Adolph Schwarz at St. John Lutheran Church in Danville Township. Together, they raised two boys: Bob and Gene.

At the start of her career, Margaret was a waitress at the Busy Bee. She worked for EF Johnson for over thirty-four years then worked at Shady Oaks until her retirement. In her free time, she enjoyed gardening, road tripping all over the country, and collecting Avon bottles. Margaret was a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church where she taught Sunday school and sang in the choir.

Margaret is survived by her sons, Gene (Nancy Lee) Schwarz of Waseca, Bob Schwarz of Waseca; sister, Dorothy Kirckhof of New Ulm; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in

death by her husband, Adolph Schwarz; parents, Clarence and Meta Lentz; sister, Louisa Schwarz; and brother, Roger Lentz.

Visitation was held from 4 – 7 PM on Friday, November 29, 2024 at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation continued one hour prior to the service at the church on Saturday.

Funeral service were at 11:00 AM on Saturday, November 30, 2024 at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca. Interment followed at Woodville Cemetery.

David W. Papke

DAVID "FRED" WARREN PAPKE, age 75, of Waseca passed away on Sunday, December 1, 2024 at Lakeshore Rehabilitation Center.

Born on May 1, 1949 in Waseca, David was the son of Lester and Joan (Henthorne) Papke. He attended Waseca Central School and graduated with the class of 1967. He enlisted in the United States Army and served for two years until he was honorably discharged. He worked for the Will's Company until his retirement. David was united in

marriage to Dori Sonnek on May 7, 1988 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca. David was a member of the American Legion Post 228, member Memorial Day Association.

David was survived by his wife, Dori Papke of Waseca; son, Ryan Papke of Waseca; sister, Sandy (Randy) Peterson of Waseca and nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Gary Pratt; grandparents, Albert and Frieda Papke; and uncle, Myron "Packhorse" Papke.

In lieu of flowers, memorials

preferred.

Visitation will be from 4 – 6 PM on Monday, December 2, 2024 at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation will continue one hour prior to the service at the church on Tuesday.

Mass of Christian Burial was at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca with Fr. Glenn Frerichs officiating. Interment was at Woodville Cemetery. Dsofuneral.com



David Papke

Corey Youngberg

COREY JON YOUNGBERG, age 55, of Waseca passed away at his home on Tuesday, November 26, 2024 after a long battle with renal cell carcinoma.

Born on January 28, 1969, in Waseca, Corey was the son of Karl and Lucille (Schauer) Youngberg. He graduated from Waseca High School with the class of 1987. Corey furthered his education at various colleges and universities before graduating from Minnesota State University – Mankato with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Following his education he began working at Elm Homes. Corey was united in marriage to Katie Bendix in 1992 and had two children, Henry and Oliver. They were later divorced.

In 2003, he began working at the Freeborn County Detention Center as a corrections officer where he met Debra Nelson. They were united in

marriage on September 3, 2010, in Augusta, Georgia. On May 9, 2010, Corey enlisted into the United States Army in Georgia. His ability to learn, adapt, and integrate new material made him the subject matter expert in many fields. He was essential in training 138 soldiers; because he enlisted at the age of 41, many of these soldiers looked up to him and considered him a father figure. Corey was honorably discharged on May 8, 2018. Corey continued to work for Freeborn County until he retired in 2019 due to his health. During his working career, Corey enjoyed volunteering with the Waseca County Police Reserve.

In retirement, he enjoyed woodworking, pheasant hunting, and telling dad jokes. He was a jack of all trades and a problem solver. He cherished the time spent with his children and loved supporting their various activities. He was a member of Pheasants Forever for the past seven

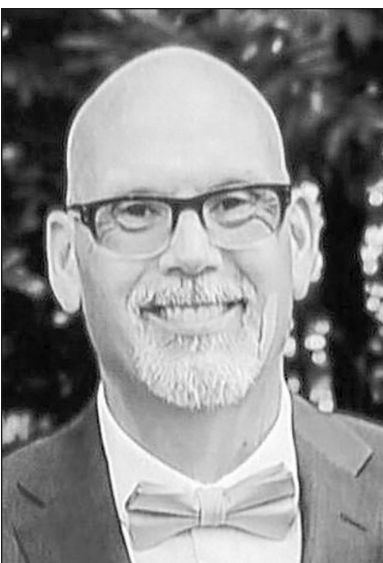
years.

Corey is survived by his wife, Debra Youngberg; children, Oliver (Kendra) Youngberg of Mankato, Henry Youngberg of Stevens Point, WI, Brianna Nelson of Bloomington; mother, Lucille Youngberg of Waseca; grandchildren, Rory and Khobi Peck; brother, Kent (Lisa) Youngberg of New Jersey; nieces and nephews; and his beloved dog, Louie.

He was preceded in death by his father, Karl Youngberg; grandparents, and cherished hunting dog, Panzer.

The family would like to thank the staff of Minneapolis Veterans Affairs and St. Croix Hospice for their comforting care and support.

Visitation will be from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM on Friday, December 6, 2024, at the State Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Sharing of Memories will begin at 12:00



Corey Youngberg

PM followed by a reception at the funeral home. Interment will be at the Minnesota State Veterans Cemetery in Preston at a later date. Dsofuneral.com

Turkey

from Page 1

of the day's event, he said simply "This is a fundraiser for FarmAmerica and some turkeys got pardoned." Stacy Schroeder, who was finishing up her Belgian waffle said, "It's important to be out here supporting our Ag partners. I believe in community participation." Roger and Roberta Walker were taking tickets at the door to the dining room

The Turkey Trot Fun Run went from 10 a.m. till noon. Brook Ling

brought her sons Dalton, 14, and Jackson, 11. While Brook was supervising the run from inside the FarmAmerica building, her sons were outside taking part in the turkey trot, a two-and-a-half-lap run around the grounds of the farm. Said Brook, "My oldest likes to run, but he's never run in this weather, I've been cheering him on." The temperature was 12 degrees with a brisk wind.

In order to receive their pardon, Blossom and Peach had spent a considerable amount of time in Washington D.C. prior to the ceremony with President Biden. When they weren't mingling with Washington politicians, Blossom and Peach got

to stay in the Willard Hotel in D.C. The two birds had arrived at FarmAmerica on Tuesday after a 16-and-a-half-hour drive, and were available from inside their outdoor enclosure for pictures all morning, no appointment necessary. The cage was donated by Bomgaars.

As President Biden got up to speak regarding the birds at the White House on Monday, Nov. 25, he joked as Peach gobbled, "Peach wants to speak a little bit here." He went on to report Peach weighs 41 pounds, he loves hot dish and tater tots, and his dream is to see the Northern Lights. He lives by the motto, "Keep calm and gobble on."

Blossom, however, loves to eat cheese curds and watch boxing. His dream is to visit every Minnesota lake. President Biden claimed Blossom "Lives by the motto, no foul play, just Minnesota nice."

Sponsors for the day's event include local businesses Bomgaars, Connors, Crystal Valley, Greenseam, State Farm, iWealth, Profinium, Northwinds Plumbing, Ferndale Market, Waseca Chamber of Commerce, Waseca Agency LLC., James Bros. Construction, Inc. All proceeds from the Nov. 29 event go toward FarmAmerica educational programs.

School

from Page 3

JWP Community Education. He explained recreational activities were arranged for children at the school; parents who had signed up could leave the children there and have an uninterrupted evening together.

"How did that turn out?" Seyes asked.

Garber responded parents appreciated it so strongly, they at least jokingly asked whether it could become a weekly event; she added it continues to be scheduled monthly.

"I want to take a moment and say I have thoroughly enjoyed all the learning I've had in this role over the past 4 1/2 months and look forward to many more," Garber said. School board members thanked her for presentation and for her time in com-

ing to their meeting.

During the meeting, various Future Farmers of America (FFA) students introduced themselves and described their roles and accomplishments in the chapter for the past year. The students shared that 64 members had joined this year. Also, the Minnesota Superior FFA chapter awarded the JWP school district its "gold" rank due to reaching certain achievements and standards. Winners of a chapter "Two Star Award," members of the JWP FFA were recognized during the national convention in Indianapolis earlier in November. Students recounted that their trip to the national event also included visiting a honeybee farm and a tour of Ozark Fisheries.

FFA participants also reported regarding summer projects including painting fences and assisting with the fall festivals at FarmAmerica. At the school, the students put in mulch at the school and weeded the flow-

erbeds. They also offered education programs to children in the School Age Care (SAC) program. They said it was a pleasure to help children learn something about a topic which was new to them.

On November 15, FFA students went to South Central Community College in Mankato for the Leadership Development Event (LDE), where they participated in a few competitions. Eric Daschner received third place in "employment skills." Sophie Coulsey placed first in Extemporaneous Speaking, and has become the first JWP FFA participant to advance to state.

"I just want to point out that out of the five judges, Sophie received a perfect score from one of them," Student Representative Eric Daschner said.

The JWP school board applauded Coulsey and wished her the best at state.

FFA students ended their presenta-

tion with a final note of a plan to restart Donkey Basketball in February 2025, compete, and involve older members of the community.

During the meeting, Superintendent Jeremy Erler reported enrollment was up four students from last month.

"So we do know that these numbers move around quite a bit," he stated. "We also understand that when we budget conservatively each year."

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The Realife Cooperative is home to 27 seniors who own "shares" in its operation. The facility is located in the 1200 block of Northeast Third Street in Waseca.

Realife Cooperative is independent, interactive

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"People don't know what we are," comments Realife Cooperative board member Nancy Bushlack. "I know they see our sign and get curious, because every once in a while, someone stops in to ask."

The Realife Cooperative building occupies about a half a block of land in the 1200 block of Third Street Northeast. Its one-level brick exterior provides something of a puzzle, curving around a 13-space parking lot but also sporting garage doors. "We are independent senior liv-

ing," declares housing director Caryn Wendt. "That's really the only way to describe us."

Inside Realife is a combination of features which begins with 22 living spaces that are not exactly apartments. Instead, they are "units" owned by their occupants by virtue of having purchased a share in the cooperative. The units come in a variety of floor plans and are in varying sizes with either one or two bedrooms.

Real continued on 6



Realife Community members enjoyed an early Thanksgiving meal followed by Bingo on Monday, Nov. 23, 2024.
Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

North Waseca Lutheran Lefse Sale; place order by Dec. 12

North Waseca Lutheran Church is selling bags holding 15 quarters of lefse for \$10 each. Orders must be placed by phone in advance; will be picked up using a "drive-through" system in front of the church from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14. To place order, call or text Greg Thomson at 612-619-3868 or Roy Srp at 507-521-1185 no later than Dec. 12.

Waseca Public Library will host Everything but the Kitchen Sink, Friday, Dec. 13

The Waseca Public Library will host Everything but the Kitchen Sink event from 1-5 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 13. Using unusual tools and supplies to create a collage or a mobile. This event is for ages 7-12.

St. Paul Drive-through Nativity Scene 5 to 7 p.m. Dec. 13 and 14

St. Paul Lutheran Church at 314 Fourth Avenue Northeast in Waseca will have a drive-through live nativity enactment from 5 to 7 p.m. on both Friday, Dec. 13, and Saturday, Dec. 14. There is no charge; visitors may either walk or drive past the scenes which portray the elements of the Christmas story.

Winter Wonderland Craft Sale at Starfire Event Center Dec. 14, 15

The Winter Wonderland Craft and Holiday sale will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Starfire Event Center, 206 Second Ave Southwest in Waseca, on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 14 and 15. This is the center's largest show of the year, with a wide array of vendors. Mr. and Mrs. Santa will greet visitors from 10 a.m. to noon and from 1 to 3 p.m.

W-E-M High school hosts Firefighter Floor Hockey Sat., Dec. 14

Waterville, Elysian, Morris-town and Kilkenny Fire Departments will be playing floor hockey at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 14 at the W-E-M High School. Suggested donation of \$5 per person or unwrapped toy. All proceeds will go Toys for Tots.

Farmamerica Santa Experience Dec. 14

There will be a Santa Experience from 4-7 p.m. at Farmamerica on Saturday, Dec. 14. Meet Santa and his farm animals, decorate cookies and much more.

Season-opening setback



The Waseca High School girls' basketball team dropped its 2024-25 season opener Nov. 22 at Blooming Prairie. Above left, the Bluejays' Gracie Morgan looks to in-bounds the ball. Above right, Morgan and Lexi Kanewischer can only watch as a Blooming Prairie opponent splits the defense. Below left, Callie Dufault drives to the basket. Below right, Reese Rodriguez defends.

Photos by Johnnie Phillips, Steele County Times

JANESVILLE CITY COUNCIL

Janesville reviews capital improvement plan updates

JANESVILLE JOURNAL - The Janesville City Council flew through several items, many of which had been addressed before and did not require much discussion, during its Tuesday, Nov. 12, meeting. The session lasted only slightly longer than 30 minutes.

The most significant item the council looked at was its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2025-2030. Reportedly, the plan had last been updated in 2017.

City Engineer Jason Femrite with Bolton and Menk explained the plan in detail. Only two major utility and street reconstruction projects are planned in this time frame. One is slated for 2027 with another in 2029.

The 2027 project will include Second Street between West and Main Streets and a block of Skookum Street between Second and Third. This project is currently estimated at over \$2.6 million. The 2029 project involves North Street between West and Craig and another portion of Skookum between South Street and the railroad tracks. This project is estimated at over \$2 million.

Femrite also shared the other two phases of the CIP plan: bituminous overlays and chip and seal coating. "The city staff has done a great job addressing the needs of street infrastructure," he said. "We usually have about 20 to 30 years of useful life from our roads before doing the overlay."

Several overlay projects are planned over the span of the CIP, starting with every road in the Northwoods subdivision in 2025.

In 2026, Nelson and Warren Streets will receive overlay work and (tentatively) parts of Front Street and the alleyway behind the businesses on the east side of Main Street.

Other overlay projects in the CIP plan include parts or all of Allyn Circle, Savanna Lane, North Street, Craig, Skookum,

Council continued on 6

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The Pastor's Column

Desire for close relationships

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS
I love cold weather. These past few weeks have been absolutely wonderful to me, I missed it last year. I got my leather winter coat out this week, my long sleeve shirts and sweaters are laid out for the winter ahead. My fireplace is warming the basement, and the blankets are never put away. It is cuddling season.
It is the human connection and relationship that we long for. It was good to see family at Thanksgiving and the preparations for Christmas are in full swing, we long for that relationship with others that we care for. Seeing them, catching up on our lives apart and with one another, sharing our hopes and dreams and not to mention eating all of our traditional food as well. These moments draw our hearts and lives closer together.
We have a desire for close relationship, the cold and cuddles might be an excuse, the holidays are another one. What we desire in close relationships is more than we can express without experiencing it. We desire true fellowship with one another.
The Apostle John was over 80 years old when he began to write his letters, gospel and revelation. He was transformed in His lifetime from a Son of Thunder to the Apostle of love. God changed His heart from fighter to lover of God and God's people. He wrote in his first epistle (1 John 1:1-4):
I What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have

seen with our eyes, what we have observed and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life— 2 that life was revealed, and we have seen it and we testify and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us— 3 what we have seen and heard we also declare to you, so that you may also have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.
He wrote of the shared experiences of faith, faithfulness, transformation of heart and life, the revelation of life and the community of faith established in Christ. He shared that all of the experiences of faith draw us to a point of fellowship with God and His church. Joyful fellowship is the result of shared Christ-focused community.
This world and our experiences in it may be cold and harsh, but the warmth of a Christ-focused community should bring us to the point of joyful fellowship. No matter what happens in life, a community that cares for and supports us through prayer and physical actions brings a sense of closeness that is hard to truly understand apart from experiencing it personally.
May this holiday season bring you closer to each other as you share the work of Christ in your life this past year, may you experience the joyful fellowship in Christ that He desires for you.

I am so happy you did a story on the old truck that is just off Hwy 13. I have been so interested in that truck. What a piece of history. A number of times, I considered going up to the house and asking about it. Now I do not have to. Thanks again; great paper.



Sharon Eckart

“Lucia’s Lanterns” at History Center Dec. 7

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor
Lantern-making, storytelling and a holiday-themed forest are part of a free special event at the Waseca County Historical Society set for 2 to 3:30 p.m. the afternoon of Saturday, Dec. 7, at the county history center, 315 Second Ave. Northeast, in Waseca.
Children will have a chance to make traditional lanterns; Tante

Noelle and Nana Lucia will appear in traditional holiday dress to tell culturally-specific stories, and all are invited to walk through the sparkling holiday-themed woods with interactive exhibits. The event is free and open to the public; donations are welcome.
More information is available on the History Center website or by calling 507-835-7700.

WCHS winter display opens December 5

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor
Waseca, MN – Celebrate the magic of the season with the Waseca County Historical Society’s enchanting winter exhibit and a festive holiday event. This year’s offerings are designed to delight all ages while exploring rich cultural traditions and interactive activities.
The winter exhibit opens Dec. 5 and remains available through Feb. 3 at the historical society’s history center at 315 Second Ave Northeast in Waseca. There is no admission charge.
The museum’s winter exhibit is entitled “Folklore in the Forest” and features a whimsical forest of holiday trees, each celebrating the unique traditions of Germany, Scandinavia, and Ireland. Irish charm shines through the “Cloonie Tree,” a wishing tree. Visitors can learn about the tradition of tying a clootie (a strip of cloth) to a tree

while making a heartfelt wish, a practice rooted in Irish folklore.
German traditions are brought to life with recipe cards for authentic holiday cookies - take one to try at home!
Scandinavian heritage is celebrated with beautiful handmade wheat decorations and folklore of the beloved “tomte,” a small bearded spirit said to watch over farms and homes. Don’t miss the photo opportunity with the life-sized “Nisse,” the cheerful Scandinavian house gnome. Our figure is perfect for capturing a holiday memory.
Along with the trees, enjoy a visit to our lovingly recreated woodworker’s shop, a nostalgic nod to the craftsmanship of our employee’s childhood past. Kids and families will also love our interactive “peek and find boxes,” wrapped like presents with corners unwrapped to reveal hidden treasures.

■ Real

from Page 5

The units are joined by a fifth of a mile of hallways which connect the occupants to their neighbors, to their rented garages, their designated storage rooms, and an array of spaces available for residents to gather for community activities, or to sign out to be used for gatherings of friends or family.
Among those shared spaces is a large community room complete with a kitchen, with tables and chairs to seat 30 people or more.
According to Bushlack, the space is used for voluntary gatherings including weekly Pfeffer and “hand and foot” card games, and for a monthly party to celebrate birthdays

and play a few rounds of bingo.
Also available to all is a quiet library space, a whirlpool bath area, two coin-free laundry spaces, a craft and exercise room, and a guest bedroom very similar in design to a typical hotel room. An elected board organizes activities, receives and handles concerns, and oversees the sign-out process for shared facilities. One project is a voluntary “morning check,” when a volunteer walks through the building confirming participants have put out their “I’m okay” cards.
“In some ways we’re like a big family,” stated Bushlack. “We look out for each other.”
Another advantage is that residents can travel without worrying about the security of their property.
Residents, who must be at least 62 to be eligible for membership, take care of their own needs and their own spaces, including shopping, cleaning,

and having the right to remodel, after showing their plans to the board. A monthly maintenance fee covers heat, water, electricity, and cable connections, as well as costs to maintain and manage the property as a whole.
What residents don’t take care of, Wendt and Bushlack point out, are tasks like mowing the lawn, shoveling snow, painting the exterior of the building or having the roof repaired. Those are tasks are overseen by Wendt, as the housing director, and paid out of the maintenance fees managed by Lifestyle Management, located in Owatonna, which also oversees the finances and operation of a number of similar cooperatives in the region.
According to documents the cooperative distributes, the Waseca building was constructed in 1989.
Board member and resident Karen Ferch has been living at Realife with

her husband Vern for the past three years after downsizing from a two-story home. For the two of them, she said, the cooperative provided an ideal way to scale down the responsibilities and complications of home maintenance.
“I sure don’t miss the stairs,” she commented. “I love having one level, having hallways to walk in, people to visit with. Everything is clean and well maintained, and the people are congenial and likable.”
Apparently Ferch is not alone in her assessment. Of the 22 units in the cooperative, one is available for the time being—although there are nine people on a waiting list who have first rights to decide whether the space meets their needs. Of the board members who met for the interview leading to this news piece, the typical wait for a suitable unit was between two and three years.

■ Council

from Page 5

West Street, Heidi Avenue, Hendricks Lane, Cedar Street, Ash Street, Linden Street, and South Street. Femrite expects these projects to cost between \$200,000 and \$250,000 annually.
For chip and seal, Femrite recommended that all streets outside of reconstruction and bituminous overlay projects be chip and seal coated on a five- to seven-year rotation. He figured these projects would cost about \$50,000 annually.
Council member Ivan Maas pointed out that E. Front Street, marked for some potential bituminous overlay work, is a county road (County Road 44). “Are we at the mercy of the county on this?” he asked.
Mayor Andy Arnoldt replied the project is “in negotiation” with the county. With that portion of Front

Street in rough condition, Arnoldt hopes the road will get turned back to the city in “better shape.”
“It can’t be turned into much worse shape,” Maas joked halfheartedly.
Council member Jim Mulcahey asked where most of the alleys in Janesville were in the plans. “We discussed this early in the year,” he said. “Is that being addressed?”
“We have two alleys that will be worked on in 2026,” Femrite responded. “One is behind Main Street businesses with the other on the east side of town.”
Mulcahey encouraged Femrite and the city staff to look into working on and upgrading more of the alleys in the future.
City Administrator Clinton Rogers claimed the city council and city staff should be proud of the CIP. “What we did 20 years ago...to still be marching through this is great,” he said. “I brag to other cities that in the last 23 years, we’ve had five mayors and 17 council members. All those groups kept going through this, and

that’s a good thing.”
The council approved paying the final pay estimate on the 2022 street and utility improvement project. Femrite confirmed the contractor completed all items needed to close out the projects. “They crossed their “T”s and dotted their “I”s,” he reported. The pay estimated was \$36,388.
The council also approved paying the \$3,200 annual fee to the South Central Minnesota Computer Consortium, which the Janesville Police Department is part of. This was already configured into the 2025 budget, making the vote something of a formality.
Jeremy Erler, member of the Janesville Fire Department, briefly visited with the council to recommend a \$200 increase to retirement benefits, from \$2,200 to \$2,400. The department hadn’t increased its retirement in two years; the change puts Janesville at about average with other area fire departments in its retirement payout. The council happily approved the increase with a 3-0-2

vote; Andy Ahlman and Sarah Johnson abstained since they are fire department members.
Council members then approved a \$2,000 donation from the Elysian American Legion to go toward the disc golf fund and completed its duty of canvassing the election results; 1,367 eligible voters, or 89% of Janesville voters, made their voices heard at the ballots this year. Lastly, council members approved the liability coverage and waiver of boiler coverage.
Rogers reported he is still looking to fill openings on several city boards and commissions. He also noted that since the “Safe Routes” construction was federally funded, the city couldn’t allow any motorized vehicles on the paths. He then shared that the city’s insurance rates decreased for 2025, which helped him take a “few percentage points” off the levy, currently at about a 13 percent increase. Rogers will keep looking for parts of the budget to cut.
The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

■ Bently

from Page 2

he watches them.
During Christmas break, he added, he will probably have to switch to knitting, since it is the somewhat slower craft and would keep him from using up his yarn as quickly.

Oh, and by the way, his grandmother and he also used to bake together. He was able to tell me the recipe for pumpkin pie from memory—although he says cookies are his favorite.
What I hope you can tell from all this is that my conversation with Wyatt also left me with a sense of pleased satisfaction, one every bit as uplifting and lasting as winning a \$50 jackpot. Here was someone willing to ignore stereotypes and neg-

ativity and simply keep moving forward with a positive activity which brings him pleasure and fulfillment.
I know he is not unique, of course, so young Wyatt not only brought me delight, he reinforced my faith in humankind. There’s something about finding one fundamentally good human being that leads us to think of others we have known.
So thank you, Annie, for the big win. And thank you, Wyatt, for the uplifting conversation. You have

gotten my 2024 Christmas season off to a fantastic start.
Deb’s point of grammar: A long dash, made by typing two hyphens next to each other, is a useful tool for emphasizing a statement or piece of information by setting it apart from the rest of the sentence. The long dash (—), the colon (;) and the semicolon (;) help a writer construct complex sentences which deliver their intended message smoothly.

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Janesville

1924

- “When I left Janesville, in company with my parents, a year ago last June, I promised to write a letter now and then to your paper. Time passed most rapidly as we crossed the states. Shortly after reaching Eugene, Ore., where we lived last winter, I entered my senior year in one of the largest high schools of that city, I was kept very busy from then on, with all of my school duties, clubs, and also being assistant librarian of the high school’s library. This year, I am rather at ease, as I am just resting and enjoying myself to the fullest extent.”

- Mr. P. E. Stinnott, the new proprietor of the Hotel Dunham, took possession of the place on Saturday and is now operating the business. As previously noted in these column he comes with the highest and best recommendations, both as to his standing as an alert live wire progressive citizen and as to his business ability and capacity. He informs us that he wishes to immediately become identified with the business interests of the town and to that end he will endeavor to bend his energies in all possible ways and through all legitimate means. He has already indicated his desires in this respect by meeting many of our citizens and forming their acquaintance.

- The attendance in the lower grades has been very good this year. In Miss Price’s room there has not been a single case of tardiness so far. If you were to visit Miss Johnston’s room you would find the children busy and interested in the construction of their Thanksgiving booklets. In Miss Comstock’s room the second grade is reading the Chery Tree Stories. The nature stories by Thornton W. Burgess that are being read to the pupils are very instructive.

1949

- At a special meeting of the Janesville Community Club this week, it was voted ot hold Janesville Gift Days, which were so popular a few years ago, again this fall. On the first four Thursday of December, at 3 p.m., free turkeys and other merchandise will be given away. A committee is working out the details and rules for the drawings, so be sure and ask your merchant about it as he will have all the information about the new Janesville Gift Days.

- The following letter was received by Billie Schafer, secretary of the Sportsmen’s Club, from Margureete R. Ridler, Director of the Social service Department. “We wish to thank all of the persons who participated in sending pheasants to our Glen Lake veterans. The event was looked forward to and enjoyed by all of the veterans at Glen Lake, and we want you to know how kind and generous it was of all the friends who helped to make this dinner possible, and how grateful our veterans were to be remembered again this year.”

- Stopping on glare ice without sand or chains required 169 feet for the average car going at 20 miles per hour, according to tests made by the National Safety Council’s committee on winter driving hazards. This is eight times as far as required on dry pavement. With chains on rear wheels the stopping distance on glare ice is cut to 88 feet and with sand it requires 86 feet, but this is still four times as far as required on dry pavement. Chains on all four wheels cut the distance to 63 feet.

1974

- The St. Clair girls’ basketball team won the District 6 title by edging Lake Crystal 36-34 and bombing Minnesota Lake 46-29. Their season record now stands at 10-3. In the championship game last Thursday against Minnesota Lake, St. Clair was led by Lori Laven who scored 20 points and snagged 17 rebounds. Mary Jean May contributed 17 points while Melanie Born and Sue Farm each pulled down 10 rebounds.

- When the Janesville Rotary Club holds their annual Clergy Night, they usually bring in a priest or minister to address the group. Last Thursday they tried something different. They invited Waseca’s John Conway, who admitted to being an unusual Clergy Night speaker. “This is like the sheep talking to the shepherds,” he said at the outset. “I’m sure no authority on religion. All I can tell you is what God has done for a one-handed alcoholic.” Conway, for 12 years, farmed between Janesville and Waseca. During that time he lost his right hand in a corn picker accident. For many years he was a heavy drinker, f ighter and general roust-about. Four years ago, something happened that changed Conway’s life. He had what he now describes as a “personal experience” with Christ.

- Wayne Gordon, 28, former manager of the GTA line elevator at Pen-nock, Minnesota, has been named manager of GTA’s Janesville mini-terminal, effective November 18. Allen Johnson, manager of GTA’s Janesville line elevator for the past 10 years has been transferred to work out of the GTA home office in St. Paul on auditing, inventory control and assisting in specialty problems. He will be working mainly in south-ern Minnesota and eastern South Dakota.

1999

- Will Lake Elysian dam still hold? It stretches all the way from Janesville to Elysian and covers about 2,000 acres. Its name is Lake Elysian. To put the size of this scenic but deceptively unobtrusive, lake into perspective – Loon Lake covers 120 acres and Clear Lake covers 652 acres. In other words, Lake Elysian is three times bigger than Clear Lake and 16 times bigger than Loon Lake. Lake Elysian may cover a big area, but it’s a very shallow lake. Shallow lakes make water con-scious watershed type conservation minded people nervous. Several such individuals fear losing awesome Lake Elysian to runoffs and drain-age, filling it up and lowering the water level.

- \$20.72. That is how much a budget analyst for the city of St. Paul estimated the annual cost of supporting a new Minnesota Twins outdoor ballpark for each St. Paul resident over the 14 years it would take to pay it off. However, in the Nov. 2 election, St. Paul voters rejected a half-percent increase in the city’s sales tax to help build a new baseball stadium for the Minnesota Twins. Waseca area legislators were not sur-prised by one vote. “The people of St. Paul sent a clear message that they are not willing to pay one third of the cost of a stadium,” said In-dependent Representative Doug Reuter of Owatonna.

Season of giving



The Waseca Area Food Shelf distributed 206 Thanksgiving Day baskets to eligible local households on Saturday, Nov. 23 and Monday, Nov. 25. Helping to distribute were: Gary Huckfeldt, Cindy Kolander, Niki Schaffer, Angela Motz, Vicki Neidt, Jim Britton, Lisa Mokoff, Julie Oslund, Gary Worke, Brad Milbrath, John and Lori Underwood, Linda Cone and Kathy Worke.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Waseca

25 Years Ago



-State Champs – Members of the Waterville-Elysian-Morristown (WEM) Buccaneer football team hoisted quarterback Corey Hackett on their shoulders after the team’s 34-0 victory over the West Central Area Knights. Hacket finished his high school career on a high note by throwing three touchdowns and for two more in the game.



-The nucleus of the Waseca Archery Club posed at the end of the new winter range located in the basement of the Daily Grind at 101 South State Street. Front row, Abby Neigebauer, Jese Rugroden, Neva Ru-groden, Steve Schauer, Larry White, Amy Schauer. Not pictured Ray Borglum.



-A November to remember – Doug Gerdts of Waseca thinks the No- vember weather was just great as he wears shorts in Minnesota on No- vember 18. What a difference a couple of weeks make.

50 Years Ago

-Sleigh ride – AILEEN STREITZ, takes her companion, J.J. Teskey for an imaginary sleigh ride in an old fashioned sleigh displayed in the Waseca County Historical Society. Aileen is dressed in an old fur coat complete with fur hat, while J.J. rides along in his velvet trimmed coat designed for little boys of yesteryear. Pictured in the background is a Christmas tree made from feathers. The clothes, sleigh and tree will all be on display when the annual Victorian Tea is held Sunday, Dec. 1 at the building.

-N. Richland tile business expands – CONSTRUCTION SHOULD BE completed by Feb. 1, 1975 at this new building in New Richland being con-structed by Concrete Materials, Inc., Medford. The structure will house the manufacturing area for the production of tile, a product used for drainage in fields. Purpose of the new building is to expand the business recently purchased from Kalke Block and Tile Co. of New Richland. Once the shop is completed, 12 to 15,000 tile will be produced each day. The plant is lo-cated near the intersection of Highway 30 west and Highway 13 north.

-Meeting Santa – SANTA WALKED THE streets this morning handing out Christmas candy to the shoppers and their children. Here Chris is telling Santa about the bike he hopes to get for Christmas.

75 Years Ago

-Waseca’s State Street took on a definite air of Christmas Monday as crews of the city light department strung Christmas street decorations for the annual “dressing up.” Colored bulbs in the street lamps were put in last Saturday.

-RUINED BRIUN IS SHOWN ABOVE, displayed by Kenneth Brase of Meriden. The bear was shot by Harvey Peterson of Owatonna; one of a party of hunters which included Brase and Paul and LaVerne Behsman, also of Meriden. The men were hunting near Grand Rapids, Minnesota when they bagged the bear which weighed over 200 pounds dressed out. The group also shot a deer.

100 Years Ago

-The city council granted the following permits at their regular meeting Tuesday evening; Al. Schrieber to hold a dance at the city hall on Dec. 9TH M. & St. L. Ry. To dig in Locust street to connect with drain on Webber street; J.L. Johnson to dig in street to connect his cellar with drain on Miller Ave. The purchasing agent was authorized to sell the fire alarm trip jack and to have furnace in the city hall basement repaired.

-“There are no other schools in any country so democratic or so efficient as the American schools,” declared V.G. Pickett, in his address on: “What’s Right With Our Schools,” at the program held in the new high school auditorium in observance of National Educational Week last Thursday evening.

-One of the first actions of the County Commissioners at their meeting Tuesday was the adoption of the play of Lake View Resort, owned by M.C. Brozik, on the north shore of Clear Lake. Mr. Brozik has platted the south end of the property on which the old slaughter house was located and will put the lots on the market.

New Richland

25 Years Back

- The Ellendale Council met on Thursday November 11, 1999. Roger Swearingen was present to go over maintenance projects completed in the past month and talk about projects to be completed. Some of the proj-ects discussed were getting signs around town replaced and fixed, and all the picnic tables in the park will be repaired and painted before spring.

- On October 9th the Ellendale High School Class of 1949 celebrated their 50th reunion with a dinner at Georges in Geneva. Approximately half of the class members were present. After a delicious dinner they had a very informal meeting. They discussed the “all class reunion” in the year 2000. Those classmates and spouses who attend the 50th reunion were: Ken and Iva Sletten; Garry Meixer; Vern Ahlers; Dwight and De-loris Karsjens; Marie and BUd Carroll; Gary and Angie Parsons; Roger and Carol Olson; Don and Donna Johnson; Cliff and Darlene Bartsch; Mike and Priscilla Gjerdahl; Lavern and Marilyn Loberg; Warren and Irenen Mickleson; Fern Wahlers and Ray and Jean Ahlstrom.

- Patting yourself on the back is standard procedure. Patting god on the back is not in fashion. But this is what Thanksgiving is all about. Get the connection, Thanksgiving? Perhaps it's too subtle. The idea is to give thanks to God for all his goodness and grace toward us as individuals, families, communities, and a nation. God “causes his sun to rise on the veil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous” (Mathew 5:45). This is common love, common grace.

37 Years Back

- Brad and JaNell Tufte of Geneva are proud new parents of a girl born to them March 3 at St. Olaf Hospital in Austin. She weighed 8 pounds abd has been named Jessica Leigh. Jessica is their first child. Grandpar-ents are Cliff and Verona Tufte of New Richland and Dani and George Ritz of EAgle River, AK. Great-Grandmothers are Myrtle Randall of Geneva and Grandma Uecker of Bricelyn.

- Naeve Health Care Association has announced they will award three \$500 scholarships to graduating high school seniors planning to pursue an education in the healthcare field.



- Wendy Phillips. Wendy Phillips, a junior at Lake Crystal High School and daughter of Carol Phillips and the late Patriet Phillips, will spend a year in Japan as an AFS student. Masaichi Hattori is the father of the family with whom she will reside in the city of Na-goya, the fourth largest city in Japan. In addition to the parents, there are three children in the family, one girl ages 12 and two boys, 11 and 9. Wendy will return home in mid-February 1988.

■ Grinch

from Page 1

would deliver an armload of pres-ents. Valenzuela has a video of her-self walking through a bar, stepping in time with the music being played in the background.

“I had to drink through a straw,” she laughs.

“The adults enjoy it as much as the children,” she observes, men-tioning people frequently ask her to hold their baby for a photo, or they tease their children that if they don’t behave, the Grinch will come and take their presents.

For the past few years, but not this year, Valenzuela has Grinch-ed it up during Waseca’s “Christmas at the Mill.” Staying in character, she played light-hearted tricks such as snatching Santa’s hat or loung-ing self-confidently on a couch. “The Grinch has to act like that,” she comments. “It’s what’s ex-pected.”

She will not be the Grinch at the Dec. 7 event this year, but is in-stead looking for other venues and “pop-up” moments when she might bring a smile to someone’s face. She has been contacting area health care facilities, schools and businesses about the possibility of arranging visits, and also plans to simply show up in various public locations.

When in character as the Grinch, Valenzuela tries not to speak, since the face on her mask is not made to move and, of course, no one ex-pects the person inside to be a fe-male. Furthermore, words are

seldom necessary. “People see the Grinch and the excitement just comes naturally.”

Based on her interactions, Valen-zuela notes children react a number of different ways depending on their willingness to accept make-believe. Babies might laugh or be frightened at the odd appearance of her character. Young children are willing to accept that the Grinch himself is standing in front of them: “Some kids still have that in-nocence about them,” she com-ments.

At a certain point, somewhere between the ages of 5 and 8, chil-dren become skeptical or even crit-ical. Valenzuela says that, since she prefers not to speak, it’s helpful to have someone, a “handler,” who can speak for her. Otherwise, inci-dents arise like one time when a group of children ganged up on the Grinch, asking “Why are you so mean?” and even following her when she tried to remove herself from the situation.

Adults, of course, enjoy the presence of the character and often play along for the sake of the chil-dren.

“Everyone walks away smiling,” Valenzuela observes. “It’s so up-lifting to know I have brought some fun to their day.”

Thanks to Valenzuela’s sense of light-hearted adventure, she sug-gests area residents shouldn’t be surprised if they come across the Grinch in some unexpected loca-tions throughout the month of De-cember.

“Keep your eyes open,” she says. “And when you see me, come over and say hi. Consider me a moving photo opportunity.”

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PUBLIC NOTICE

AA Self Storage will sell at public auction the contents of several storage units in Waseca on which payment is past due. The auction will be conducted online at storagetreasures.com beginning about December 16, 2024.

The contents of these units is unknown, but are believed to be miscellaneous household and personal items.

The names of persons renting the units are as follows:

Brandy Hott
Tyler Kiekenapp
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on December 5 and 12, 2024

■ 4-H
from Page 3

to be sure you take away some skills or nuggets of knowledge that have helped you grow.”

Nelson recently presented an annual “impact report” regarding the Waseca County 4-H program to the county board of commissioners. In that report, she shared that 796 young people had taken part in at least one 4-H sponsored program—a number which she said represents nearly one-fourth of all eligible children in the county.

This includes 289 children enrolled in 4-H, 169 of whom created projects or performed tasks where they could “showcase their learning.”

Just over 600 participated in the summertime Power of Produce (PoP) Club. This program finds local do-

nors to support giving a \$5 voucher to anyone 18 or younger who registers at the weekly Saturday morning farmers market in Waseca. The voucher can be used to purchase qualifying food products offered on site.

Another 193 were impacted by an Earth Day observance sponsored by the 4-H Ambassadors. Through that program, young people between the ages of 5 and 18 could receive a free tree.

Nelson also has worked out an arrangement with local schools. She prepares educational materials for young students who are offered the chance to stay after school and participate. Often somewhere around 30 “clover bud” participants, typically kindergarten through third grade, take part. Nelson is currently working her way through “dirt camp.” In one of the lessons, children used sugar cubes to consider the process through which rock becomes sand.

During the annual awards banquet

held in November, 130 participants—both adults and young people—were recognized for their services and accomplishments.

“People may have the impression that 4-H is for farm kids,” observes Nelson. “But that’s not the case. Whatever you want to learn about, whatever kind of project you want to take on, 4-H has a place for you.

“It’s not all about animals.”

For those who wish to do a project involving animals, she points out 4-H has some very flexible options, including “leasing” an animal. She offers the example of dairy cattle, and points out that 60 percent of the dairy cows taken to the state fair were “leased”—that is, the 4-H participant had reached a qualifying agreement with a dairy farmer to help with the care and handling of the cow.

The 4-H program also offers involvement for adult leaders, who are screened before they are accepted, and trained before they begin working with a club. Their role, Nelson emphasizes, is to take direction from the youth members and help facilitate the programs and projects they

select. Adult leaders have the chance to take part in educational opportunities offered through the University of Minnesota.

“We want our adult leaders to be passionate about learning,” says Nelson. “But we’re always working to be sure our youth participants know 4-H is their program. They need to care, and to know they’re the ones making things happen.

“For that, there needs to be trust built up that the adults will back them.”

Also among the news shared in Nelson’s end-of-year report was that 75 percent of youth who took part in Waseca County 4-H in 2023 retained their membership in 2024. Along with that, 69 new members joined.

During her presentation, county board members thanked Nelson for her dedication and energy as the county’s extension educator, but Nelson downplays her role.

“It’s the kids,” she says. “The 4-H program grows and thrives when they tell their friends how enjoyable or how meaningful 4-H is, and then suggest that they give it a try.”

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Olaf is rumored to show



The Grinch!!!





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Saturday, Dec. 7

Mass at 5:00 p.m.

Free & open to public

Music by Mariachi America from St. Paul, performing
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December 2024						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Burger nite 5-7pm	4 6pm BAR Bingo	5 7pm HALL BINGO <u>Somalia Campaign began (1992)</u>	6 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	7 <u>Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day</u>
8 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am – Noon Your Host BOYSCOUTS	9 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	10 Burger nite 5-7pm	11 6pm BAR Bingo	12 7pm HALL BINGO	13 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm <u>U.S. National Guard Birth-day</u>	14
15 Official End of War in Iraq (2011)	16	17 Burger nite 5-7pm	18 6pm BAR Bingo	19 7pm HALL BINGO	20 <u>WALLEYE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm Panama Campaign began (1989)</u>	21
22	23	24 CLOSED	25 CLOSED	26 7pm HALL BINGO	27 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	28
29	30	31 Burger nite 5-7pm NEW YEARS EVE BINGO 7 PM <u>Kosovo Campaign ended (2013)</u>				

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TUE.– WED.-3pm to 11pm Tue. Is Lady's nite 2 for one-Men Busch light \$2.50 from 4 to 6pm.
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STATE OF MINNESOTA
WASECA BLUE EARTH LE SUEUR JOINT COUNTY DRAINAGE AUTHORITY
ACTING AS THE DRAINAGE AUTHORITY FOR WASECA BLUE EARTH LE SUEUR JOINT DITCH 11

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Waseca Blue Earth Le Sueur Joint County Drainage Authority Board of Commissioners, acting as the public drainage authority under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 103E (“Joint County Drainage Authority”) for Waseca Blue Earth Le Sueur Joint Ditch 11 (“JD 11”), will hold a public hearing on 12-20-2024 at 10:00AM, or shortly thereafter as the agenda allows, in the Waseca County Commissioners Room of the East Annex, 300 N State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

At the public hearing, the Joint County Drainage Authority will consider a proposal by the Waseca County Highway Department to replace the existing 78.5’ timber slab span bridge (BR 81509 OLD) with 2-line configuration of 14’ x 12’ box culverts all with end sections (BR 81J26 NEW) at the CR55/380th Avenue crossing of the JD 11 drainage system between the Northwest Quarter (NW¼) of Section 4, Township 107 North, Range 24 West (Alton Township) and the Southwest Quarter (SW¼) of Section 33, Township 108 North, Range 24 West (Janesville Township), Waseca County, Minnesota. The public hearing will be held pursuant to both Minnesota Statutes, sections 103E.525 and 163.17. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 103E.525, approval of the box culvert capacity is being sought by the Director of the Division of Ecological and Water Resources in the Department of Natural Resources. The Waseca County Highway Department and its engineering consultants at Widseth, Inc. have filed a plan showing in detail the alteration or change to replace the existing bridge with box culverts, and a report of findings that the proposed alteration to the crossing will be a minor alteration or change to the JD 11 drainage system that will not affect the functioning or efficiency of the JD 11 drainage system. A copy of the plan and engineer’s report of findings is available for public inspection at the Office of the Waseca County Land & Water Resources Director, Chris Howard, at 900 3rd Street NE, Waseca, MN 56093 and is available for viewing during normal business hours, or by contacting Chris Howard at 507-835-0534 or via email at chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov.

All owners of property affected by the JD 11 drainage system are invited to attend public hearing. Written comments will be accepted by mail or email to the Waseca County Land & Water Resources Director, Chris Howard. Written comments may be mailed to Waseca County Land & Water Resources Director, 900 3rd Street NE, Waseca, MN 56093 or emailed to chris.howard@wasecacounty.gov. Any comments received by mail or email prior to the public hearing will be read into the record at the public hearing.

/s/ Michael Johnson, County Administrator
Waseca County, Minnesota

/s/ Robert Meyer, County Administrator
Blue Earth County, Minnesota

/s/ Dani Ongie, Auditor-Treasurer
Le Sueur County, Minnesota
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer
on November 28, December 5 and 12, 2024

Date: 11-21-2024

LEGAL NOTICES

Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State
Certificate of Assumed Name
Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333

The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable customers to be able to identify the true owner of a business.

ASSUMED NAME: Dwyer's Big Rig Service
PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS: 12539 336th Ave. Waseca, MN, 56093

APPLICANT(S):
Name: Alec J. Dwyer
Address: 12539 336th Ave. Waseca, MN, 56093

signed, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

SIGNED BY: Alec Dwyer

MAILING ADDRESS: None Provided

EMAIL FOR OFFICIAL NOTICES:
dwyersbigrigservice@gmail.com

Work Item 1514623100027
Original File Number 1514623100027

STATE OF MINNESOTA OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE
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Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on November 28 and December 5, 2024



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	Division of School Finance 400 NE Stinson Blvd. Minneapolis, MN 55413	District Revenues and Expenditures Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 and FY 2025					ED-00110-47
General Information: Minnesota Statutes 2023, section 123B.10, requires that every school board shall publish the subject data of this report.							
District Name:		Waseca Public Schools				District Number:	829
Fund	FY 2024 Beginning Fund Balances	FY 2024 Actual Revenues and Transfers In	FY 2024 Actual Expenditures and Transfers Out	June 30, 2024 Actual Fund Balances	FY 2025 Budget Revenues and Transfers In	FY 2025 Budget Expenditures and Transfers Out	June 30, 2025 Projected Fund Balances
General Fund/Restricted	\$ 2,346,324	\$ 4,670,896	\$ 3,977,467	\$ 3,039,753	\$ 4,801,396	\$ 4,107,698	\$ 3,733,451
General Fund/Other	\$ 5,933,519	\$ 22,286,947	\$ 22,029,125	\$ 6,191,341	\$ 22,463,474	\$ 23,253,290	\$ 5,401,525
Food Service Fund	\$ 730,263	\$ 1,561,310	\$ 1,451,150	\$ 840,423	\$ 1,551,466	\$ 1,547,727	\$ 844,162
Community Service Fund	\$ 1,019,084	\$ 1,292,233	\$ 1,062,148	\$ 1,249,169	\$ 1,242,249	\$ 1,220,569	\$ 1,270,849
Building Construction Fund	\$ 88,185	\$ 6,458	\$ 47,251	\$ 47,392	\$ 7,276	\$ 40,303	\$ 14,365
Debt Service Fund	\$ 670,269	\$ 2,981,490	\$ 2,909,125	\$ 742,634	\$ 3,011,899	\$ 2,909,100	\$ 845,433
Trust Fund	\$ 365,465	\$ 2,078	\$ -	\$ 367,543	\$ 11,253	\$ 19,325	\$ 359,471
Internal Service Fund	\$ 106,115			\$ 86,593			\$ 87,381
* OPEB Revocable Trust Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
OPEB Irrevocable Trust Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
OPEB Debt Service Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total - All Funds	\$ 11,259,224	\$ 32,801,412	\$ 31,476,266	\$ 12,564,848	\$ 33,089,013	\$ 33,098,012	\$ 12,556,637
Long-Term Debt			Current Statutory Operating Debt per Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.81				
Outstanding July 1, 2023	\$ 27,230,000		Amount of General Fund Deficit, if any, in excess of 2.5% of expenditures 06/30/2024			\$	-
Plus: New Issues	\$ -						
Less: Redeemed Issues	\$ 1,950,000		Cost per student - Average Daily Membership (ADM) 06/30/2024				
Outstanding June 30, 2024	\$ 25,280,000						
Short-Term Debt			Total Operating Expenditures			\$ 27,719,086.00	
Certificates of Indebtedness	\$ -		FY 2024 Total ADM Served + Tuitioned Out ADM + Adjusted Extended ADM			1,716.84	
Other Short-Term Indebtedness	\$ -		FY 2024 Operating Cost per ADM			\$ 16,145.41	
The complete budget may be inspected upon request to the superintendent.							
Comments:							



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Expect an exciting season for WHS boys' basketball

Russell brothers aiming for second straight section title

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Last year was a memorable one for the Waseca High School boys' basketball team, and a plethora of returning players makes the prospects bright for the 2024-25 season. Last year's Bluejays finished with an outstanding record of 20-12, which included a Section 2AA championship and state tournament berth. Seth Anderson has guided his teams to a 107-88 record in 11 seasons. Assistant coaches are Richard Guse, Austin Nagel and Brian Rupe.

Graduation off last year's squad were all-conference player Laird Keeton, starting center Andrew Robran, starting guard Zach Hulscher and Cody Vagts.

Looking for another great year are seniors Damarius Russell, Carson Ohnstad, Max Howard, Caden Danner, Deron Russell, Ethan Hiller and Jordan Johnston.

Newcomers hoping to contribute are senior Cameron Karstern, and juniors Cyrett Long, Wyatt Hager, William Mansfield and Caleb Wolf.

The Russell brothers may be been one of the state's top wide receiver tandems, and they're looking to do the same on the basketball court.

Coach Anderson is, in a word, optimistic.

"I think we always have high expectations every season," he said. "We always want to make sure that we are playing hard, together, and fundamentally sound. If we play well, we can hopefully play with anybody. I expect us to have some

"I think we always have high expectations every season."
— Coach Seth Anderson

good leadership with how many upperclassmen who have been around and seen what we want to try and do."

Anderson lists the Bluejays' strengths as great team speed, plenty of players who can score, guys who share the ball well and, of course, toughness.

The coach's biggest concern is height, which they hope to compensate for by playing at a fast pace.

"We will be a very small team," said Anderson. "So rebounding is always a challenge."

Defense and rebounding are keys to success.

"It's always exciting when you have a team returning who has a chance to do some fun things," said Anderson. "We will have some tough losses and some big wins due to a challenging schedule, but I want to see our team continue to get better with every game, like we did last season."

Anderson said Jackson, New Ulm, Worthington, Belle Plaine, Marshall, Fairmont and St. Peter to



Anderson

battle for the Big South championship, along with his Bluejays.

"There will be a lot of teams competing for it," said Anderson.

Waseca High School Boys' Basketball 2024-25

Opener - won 68-54 at Pine Island
Dec. 3 vs. St. Peter, 7:30
Dec. 6 at Tri-City United, 7:15
Dec. 7 at Minnesota Valley Lutheran, 1:30
Dec. 10 vs. Belle Plaine, 7:30
Dec. 13 at New Ulm, 7:30
Dec. 17 vs. LCWM, 7:30
Dec. 20 vs. Worthington, 7:30
Dec. 27 vs. Randolph at Rochester Lourdes, 1 p.m.
Dec. 28 at Rochester Lourdes Inv., TBD
Jan. 4 at Marshall, 2:30
Jan. 7 vs. St. Clair, 7:30
Jan. 13 vs. Glencoe-Silver Lake, 7:30
Jan. 14 vs. Sibley East, 7:30
Jan. 17 at St. Peter, 7:15
Jan. 21 vs. New Ulm, 7:30
Jan. 24 at Worthington, 7:15
Jan. 27 at Blue Earth Area, 7:30
Jan. 31 vs. Marshall, 7:30
Feb. 6 vs. Granada-Huntley-East Chain at Truman HS, 7:15
Feb. 8 at Jackson County Central, 1:30
Feb. 11 vs. Windom, 7:30
Feb. 14 at St. James Area, 7:15
Feb. 20 at NRHEG, 7:15
March 4 Section quarterfinals, TBD
March 10 Section semifinals at Minnesota State-Mankato, TBD
March 13 Section finals at Minnesota State-Mankato, TBD



REASONS TO SMILE — Damarius Russell (3) and Deron Russell (1) have plenty of reasons to smile, coming off a highly successful football season and hoping to lead the Bluejays to a second straight Section 2AA crown.
Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens



THEY DON'T PLAY, THEY COMPETE — The 2024-25 Waseca High School gymnastics team, from left: Hannah Parks, Enja Francois-Saint Cyr, Bella Wikan, Katelyn Weber, Brooklyn Flatau, Miley Anderson and Avery Carda.
Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Don't count anything out for WHS gymnastics in 2024-25

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

If there's one thing Waseca High School gymnastics coach Kim Wendland is concerned with, it's fill-out the lineup.

The Bluejays have plenty of athletes, including two state placewinners.

Returning for Waseca are seniors Bella Wikan and Brooklyn Flatau, juniors Enja Francois Saint Cyr, Layla Keith, sophomores Angelica Lopez, Hannah Parks and Katelyn Weber, and ninth-graders Miley Anderson and Avery Carda.

Coach Wendland said last season was one of solid individual perfor-

mances and successful meet outcomes. The team includes gymnasts from Waseca, NRHEG, WEM and JWP.

"They come together to form one big team competing at varsity and JV squads," said Wendland.

The varsity's high score last year was 135.024 and the JV's top score was 118.6.

"In my 10 years as a head coach, this is one of the strongest teams I have coached top to bottom," said Wendland. "We have a small team with a lot of depth, which enabled us to stay consistent with our team score averaging 132 points per meet. We had strong leadership from our

"In my 10 years as a head coach, (the 2023-24 team) is one of the strongest I have coached top to bottom."
— Coach Kim Wendland

captains, seniors Haydn Lynch, Lindy Caldwell and sophomore Layla Keith."

Last year's team worked hard during the season to implement new skills and set personal records on each event and the all-around.

"I am extremely proud of how these athletes handled injuries and

adversity, as well as setting new school records," said Wendland. "We had two gymnasts make it to the state meet, Layla Keith on floor and Bella Wikan on bars. Both ended up on the podium to earn state medals."

Keith finished sixth on floor with a 9.3375, and Wikan was fourth on



Wendland

floor with a 9.3125.

"What a fun way to cap off an amazing season," said Wendland.

So far though, Keith has been a no-show at practice, apparently quitting the team. The Bluejays also lost three other varsity veterans for various reasons, and graduated four seniors.

How will this season unfold? Stay tuned to find out. And don't count anything out.

Waseca High School Gymnastics 2024-25 Schedule

Dec. 5 at Byron, 6 p.m.
Dec. 7 at Mankato, 3 p.m.
Dec. 13 vs. Blue Earth Area, 6 p.m.
Dec. 17 vs. New Ulm, 6 p.m.
Dec. 19 at St. Peter, 6 p.m.
Jan. 4 at Fairmont Live Fit, 10 a.m.
Jan. 7 vs. Austin at Austin YMCA, 6:30 p.m.
Jan. 16 at St. James, 6 p.m.
Jan. 25 at Kasson-Mantorville Invitational, 11 a.m.
Jan. 28 vs. Fairmont, 6 p.m.
Feb. 7 Big South Championship, TBD
Feb. 13 Section finals at St. James, TBD

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Only one way to go for WHS wrestling squad

Bluejays expect improvement coming off 0-15 season

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

As 8th-year Waseca High School wrestling head coach Jake Janike sees it, there's only one way to go this season.

The Bluejays forfeited too many matches last year, which led to an 0-15 record.

"We had on average three to four open weights at most events," said Janike, who's assisted by Blain Nelson and Janike's brother, Ben. Jake is in his 13th season of coaching. Curt Yess is the junior high coach, along with Charlie Root.

A lot of returning wrestlers give the Bluejays hope for 2024-25.

Though weight classes are yet to be decided, vying for positions are Zander Rahe, Kole Nelson, Owen Sommers, Kaiya Stagemann, Hailey Proehl, Archer O'Brien, Keegan Glynn, Jackson Janike, Owen Arndt, Leonard Headline, Jacob Knutson, Oden Board, Luke Jeske, Devin Parpart, Jordan Neidecher, Jazelle Neal, Kyndi Glover, Oliver Staloch, Jack Kuhns, Sam Selthun, Jaden Schaffer, Sawyer Ellis, Peyton Sommers, Landon Madsen, Holton Howard, Mila Brammer, Slade Barnett, Logan Briton, Alex Bethke, Kelton Peirce, Ton Bethke, Braxton Nelson, Colton Madsen, Lucas Selthun, Michael Goodlander, Matthew Veroeven, James Quade, Aidan DeRaad, Ben Hagen, Tanner White, Hunter Harty and Hayden Peterson.

Veroeven, a junior and a former state entrant, is the Bluejays' captain.

The Bluejays return several key athletes. Knutson was 15-18 last year, Parpart 26-12, Barnett 28-7, Lucas Selthun 15-4, Veroeven 29-5, and Ben Hagen 5-2 when

"Their records show the dedication they have and how they are constantly trying to improve."

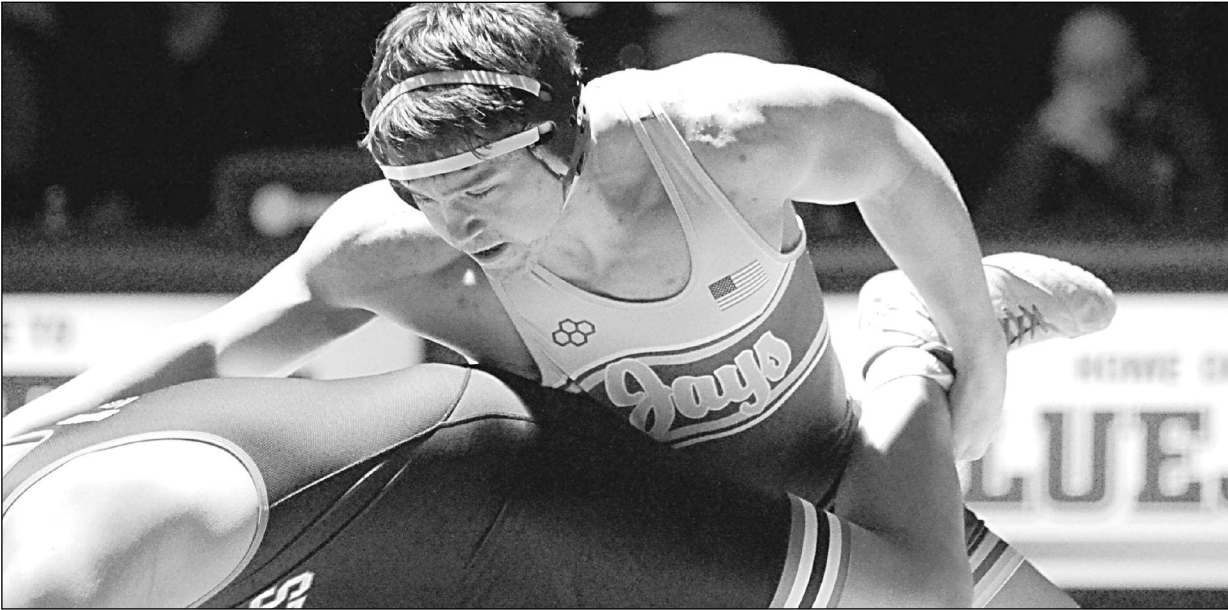
— Coach Jake Janike

he sustained a season-ending injury.

"These wrestlers had success from last season,," said Coach Janike. "Their records show the dedication they have and how they are constantly trying to improve. The others are others are wrestlers that had a good season last year but, just ran into quality competition last year in the section individual rounds."

Waseca High School 2024-25 Wrestling

Dec. 5 Triangular at Waseca, 5 p.m.
Dec. 7 at Blue Earth Area Invitational, 10 a.m.
Dec. 12 Quad at Tri-City United, 5 p.m.
Dec. 14 at Jackson County Central Invitational, 9:45 a.m.
Dec. 20 Quad at Lake City, 5 p.m.
Jan. 4 at Norwood-Young America Invitational, 9 a.m.
Jan. 11 Big South Conference at Jackson County Central, 10 a.m.
Jan. 16 Triangular at Waseca, 5 p.m.
Jan. 18 at Hutchinson Invitational, 10 a.m.
Jan. 23 Triangular at Waseca, 5 p.m.
Jan. 28 Triangular at Blue Earth Area, 6 p.m.
Feb. 4 Triangular at Waseca, 5 p.m.
Feb. 7 Big South Conference Championship, TBD
Feb. 15 Section team semifinals and finals at Rochester Mayo Civic Center, TBD
Feb. 21-22 Section individuals at Rochester Mayo Civic Center, TBD



READY TO MIX IT UP — Above, Waseca High School wrestling captain Matt Veroeven works for a takedown last season. Below, the coaching staff, from left: Curt Yess, Charlie Root, Jake Janike, Ben Janike and Blain "Half" Nelson. Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens



WHS girls aim to top last year's win total

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

There's at least one thing second-year Waseca High School girls' basketball coach Anthony Jackson expects for the 2024-25 season: improvement.

With a plethora of returning players, the Bluejays are looking to better last year's record of 7-20 overall and 4-7 in the Big South Conference.

Jackson, assisted by Ashlyn Rosenberg, enters his fifth year as a head coach, with a solid career record of 69-33.

Returning varsity athletes include senior Mia Kanewischer, 5-7 wing; senior Callie Dufault, 5-5 guard; senior Lexi Kanewischer, 5-6 wing; senior Lily Owens, 5-7 post; senior Avery Gaul, 5-7 post; senior Addie Kelm, 5-6 post; senior Gracie Morgan, 5-9 wing; junior Paige Dufault, 5-8 wing; and senior Katelyn McMurphy, 6-0, post.

Hoping to make an impact this season is senior wing Gabriella Lopez.

Key players lost from last season include Ella Krautkremer, whom Jackson said was an excellent defender; Addie Wiesler, one of the top scorers from last year; and Grace Guritz, a post player who became a presence down the stretch for the Bluejays last year.

"We expect to improve from last season," said Jackson. "We expect to play outstanding defense and improve our offensive efficiency."

Coach Jackson said the Bluejays' strengths is on defense.

"We are a very tough-minded defensive basketball team," he said.

In assessing things to improve, Coach Jackson said they are decreasing turnovers and shooting a higher percentage.

"If we can turn the ball over less during games and improve our



LADY JAYS — Members of the 2024-25 Waseca High School girls' basketball team. Front from left: Ava Miller, Belle Miller, Callie Dufault, Lexi Kanewischer and Maren Schimming; row two: head coach Anthony Jackson, Mia Kanewischer, Lily Owens, Reese Rodriguez, assistant coach Ashlyn Rosenberg, assistant coach Kenny Johnson; back: Gabriela Lopez, Hannah Sommers, Katlyn McMurphy, Gracie Morgan, Addison Kelm. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

shooting percentage, especially three-point shooting percentage, we will see natural improvement on the court," said Jackson. "We also need players to buy into their respective roles, as well as buy in to the roles of others on the roster."

Jackson feels Marshall and New Ulm are the teams to beat in the Big South. He favors Tri-City United in Section 2AA.

Waseca High School Girls' Basketball 2024-25
Nov. 22 at Blooming Prairie, lost
Nov. 26 vs. Minnesota Valley Lutheran, 7:30 p.m.
Nov. 30 at Faribault, 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 3 at St. Peter, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 6 vs. Tri-City United, 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 10 at Belle Plaine, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 13 vs. New Ulm, 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 17 at Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial, 7 p.m.
Dec. 20 at Worthington, 7:15 p.m.

"We expect to play outstanding defense and improve our offensive efficiency"

— Coach Anthony Jackson

Dec. 27 vs. Plainview-Elgin-Millville at Winona State University, 4 p.m.
Dec. 28 vs. Pine Island at Winona State University, 4 p.m.
Jan. 4 vs. Marshall, 2:30 p.m.
Jan. 7 vs. St. Clair, 6 p.m.
Jan. 9 at United South Central, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 10 at Fairmont, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 17 vs. NRHEG, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 21 at New Ulm, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24 vs. Worthington, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 27 vs. Blue Earth Area, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 28 vs. Medford, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 31 at Marshall, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 3 vs. Sibley East, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 7 vs. Jackson County Central, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10 vs. St. Peter, 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 11 at Windom, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 14 vs. St. James Area, 7:30
Feb. 18 Big South Championship, TBA
Feb. 24 Section tournament, TBA
Feb. 27 Section quarterfinals, TBA
March 3 Section semifinals at Minnesota State-Mankato, TBA
March 7 Section finals at Minnesota State-Mankato, TBA



Jackson

VARSITY VETERAN



Griffin Storey (22), son of Bluejays head coach Chris Storey, is one of several varsity veterans returning for the WHS boys' hockey team. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

The 2024-25 Waseca High School roster:

Carter Martens, Avery Selvik, Henry Huttemier, Dawson Garutz, Otto Schoenrock, Easton Danks, Cash Lynch, Jayden Gehring, Hunter Anderson, Max Bodenweiser, Lucas Groll, Beckett Srp, Griffin Storey, Jackson Tesch, Jackson Dahl, Josiah Schmidtke, Brayden Hesch-Priem, Jude Gehring and Troy Jensen.

The Bluejays are coached by Chris Storey.

Waseca High School 2024-25 Boys' Hockey Schedule
Nov. 30 vs. Redwood Valley, won 18-0
Dec. 3 at Mound-Westonka, 7 p.m.

Dec. 5 at Fairmont, 7 p.m.
Dec. 7 at Luverne, 3:45 p.m.
Dec. 12 at Windom, 7 p.m.
Dec. 14 vs. Marshall, 12 noon
Dec. 17 vs. New Ulm, 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 21 vs. LaCrescent-Hokah, 1 p.m.
Dec. 27 at Thief River Falls, 7 p.m.
Dec. 28 at Crookston, 12 noon
Jan. 3 vs. Worthington, 7 p.m.
Jan. 7 at Red Wing, 7 p.m.
Jan. 9 vs. Minnesota River, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 11 at Worthington, 3 p.m.
Jan. 14 at New Prague, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 16 at Rochester Lourdes, 7 p.m.
Jan. 18 vs. Luverne, 3 p.m.
Jan. 21 at Dodge County, 7 p.m.
Jan. 24 vs. Windom, 7 p.m.
Jan. 28 at Redwood Valley, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 4 at Minnesota River, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 6 vs. Fairmont, 7 p.m.
Feb. 8 at Blake, 3 p.m.
Feb. 13 at New Ulm, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 15 at Marshall, 2:45 p.m.

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Hockey girls combine with Faribault

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Waseca High School girls' hockey team is paired with Faribault this season, coached by Chas Benson and Amanda Reed. Abbe Hoehn and Anthony Schied will assist.

Benson, in his third year as head coach, has guided the Bluejays to a record of 22-21 during that span. Last year's squad finished 10-10-3, including 6-7-1 in the Big South Conference.

Returning skaters include senior captain Karlyn Schueler, Stevie Johnson and Aurora Still, junior captain Maddy Benson, junior Kaylee Lawson and sophomores Emma Huelsnitz, McKenna Mortenson and goaltender Illamay Draheim.

Hoping to make an impact on the varsity in 2024-25 are sophomore Jayden Drager, freshmen Savannah Conway, Sadie Wagner, Clara Nawrocky, Allison Drager and Zoey Gibson, 8th-graders Ava Gruden, Camilla Staloch and Maddie Halla, and seventh-grader Lila Pavlic.

Key players who graduate include Emma Keith, a captain, five-time

South Central Flyers won three of five to start season

letterwinner and leading scorer. She currently plays for St. Katherine University. The other captain last year was Izzy Slechtz, a five-time letterwinner and a top line scorer.

"We have a solid group of girls this year," said Coach Benson. "We are looking to compete at the top end of our conference like the previous two years. As always, our goal is to host a first round section game as well as make a run in the playoffs. With a combination of our leadership, great goaltending, and a good group of additions, I am excited to see what we can do."

The key to success, according to Benson, is consistency.

"If we can continue to play solid team defense, as we have in the last few years, we should find success," said Benson. "Also, with Illamay Draheim in net gives us a great chance to keep our opponents off the scoreboard every contest. Our challenges going into the year will be finding the back of the net. With so many new players, we will see how quickly they can develop

"We are looking to compete at the top of our conference like the previous two years." — Coach Chas Benson

chemistry in the offensive zone."

The Flyers won three of five games to start the season, most recently a 3-0 shutout of visiting Windom. Mortenson scored two goals, Schluter one, with two assists from Maddy Benson and one by Mortenson.

Draheim set the Waseca High School record for career shutouts, notching No. 14.

South Central Flyers Waseca/Faribault Girls' Hockey 2024-25 Schedule

Nov. 12 vs. Rochester Mayo, lost 3-1
Nov. 14 vs. New Prague, won 3-0
Nov. 19 at Fairmont, lost 4-1
Nov. 23 vs. Worthington, won 3-0
Nov. 26 vs. Windom, won 3-0
Dec. 3 vs. Red Wing at Faribault Ice Arena, 7 p.m.
Dec. 5 vs. Fairmont at Waseca Ice Arena, 7 p.m.

Dec. 7 at Luverne, 12 noon
Dec. 10 at Winona, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 12 vs. Minnesota River at Faribault Ice Arena, 7 p.m.
Dec. 14 vs. Marshall at Waseca, 3 p.m.
Dec. 17 at New Ulm, 7 p.m.
Dec. 19 vs. Visitation at St. Thomas Ice Arena, 7:30
Dec. 26 at Winona Bud King Ice Arena, TBD
Jan. 3 vs. Minnesota River at LeSueur Arena, 7 p.m.
Jan. 7 vs. Mankato West at Mankato All Seasons Arena, 7 p.m.
Jan. 11 at Worthington, 3 p.m.
Jan. 14 vs. New Ulm at Waseca, 7 p.m.
Jan. 16 vs. Rochester Lourdes at Graham Arena, 7 p.m.
Jan. 18 vs. Luverne at Waseca, 11 a.m.
Jan. 21 vs. Rochester Century at Rochester Rec Center, 7 p.m.
Jan. 24 vs. Marshall at Marshall Red Baron Arena, 7 p.m.
Feb. 1 at Simley, 6 p.m.
Feb. 3 at Windom, 7 p.m.
Feb. 5 Section quarterfinals, TBD
Feb. 8 Section semifinals, TBD



CC GIRLS — Members of the 2023 Waseca High School girls' cross country team. Front from left: Violet Rohwer, Stella Omvedt, Callie Dufault, Maren Schimming, Kelsey Draeger, unidentified; back: Norah Schimming, Melanie Krueger Eineke,



HIGH HOPES — Led by some of the best wrestling talent in the state, the WEM/JWP grizzlies expect another exciting season. Front from left: Ava Quast, Cambria Schlie, Elouise Cowdin, Callie March, Ariana Aguilar, Abby Sobolik, Elizabeth Harvey, Julia Gonzalez-Garcia, Elayna Krueger, Anne Adams. Row two: Kaley Langford, Payton Miller, Eli Fall, Bennett Eckenrode, Damien Reyes, Charlie Keech, Jackson Knish, David Mielke, Nathaniel Adams, Parker Smith, Bri'Ana Masso, Maddox Looney. Row three: Parker James, Devin Cowdin, Mason Dennis, Quinn Anderson, Spencer Nordstrom, Brenden Masso, Johnny Balzotti, Lila Pavlic, Isaac Miller, Trey Richards, Aiden Grueber, Lilly Ewert, Anaeleyse Skidmore, Ben Root, Reed Sammon, Lawrence Pietz. Back: Charles Adams, Trenton Huber, Carson James, Brady Murphy, Carson Petry, Zach Quast, Lucas Morsching, Keegan Kuball, Avery Fall, Maddox Moreno, Carter Hoehn, Luke Cahill, Kavan Sheehy, Tarek Tolzmann, Dakota Blaisdell, Blayden Elliott.

Photo by Mike Roy, Janesville Journal

WEM/JWP wrestlers ready to rumble, again

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Last season was marked by stand-out performances and impressive achievements for the WEM/JWP Grizzlies wrestling team, with defending state champion Keegan Kuball leading the way by securing his second state title.

Carson Petry also made waves by earning his third appearance at state and achieving his second all-state honor with a fourth-place finish. Avery Fall joined the ranks by making his first appearance at the state tournament, showcasing the depth of talent in the lineup.

"These athletes have set the standard for excellence on and off the mat, leading by example through hard work, sportsmanship, and dedication," said co-head coach Adam Roesler. "Their commitment extends beyond competition, as they serve as role models for younger teammates, creating a positive and disciplined atmosphere in the wrestling room."

One notable setback last season was an injury to Brady Murphy, a previous state placewinner who finished fourth at the 2023 state tournament. However, Murphy is back this year and ready to make an immediate impact, adding strength to the team's already formidable roster.

Lucas Morsching also emerged as a strong competitor last season, joining the 20-win club in a single sea-

son.

"This year, the team expects him to be another crucial contributor, both in duals and individual events," commented Roesler.

With a combined career total of 382 wins, these five athletes bring both skill and experience.

Kuball has 129 career wins, Petry 109, Morsching 68 and Fall 47.

"They're set not only to secure key victories, but also to use their veteran leadership to support and develop the next generation of talent, aiming for another successful season," explained Roesler.

Key wrestlers who graduated last year were Gavin Krause (86 career wins), Isaac Quast (50 career wins) and Patrick Adams (12 career wins).

"As the new wrestling season approaches, the program reflects on the legacy left by three standout seniors from the 2023-24 season: Gavin Krause, Patrick Adams, and Issac Quast. Known for their leadership, integrity, and commitment to fostering a family-like atmosphere, these athletes played a pivotal role both on and off the mat. Throughout their high school careers, Krause, Adams, and Quast amassed an impressive 162 wins, stepping up in clutch moments to secure crucial victories for the team. Their effort and enthusiasm set a high standard in the wrestling room, inspiring their teammates and strengthening the program. While their presence will

be missed this season, their impact endures. These seniors leave behind a legacy of dedication and resilience, laying a strong foundation for future teams to build upon.

"As the new wrestling season approaches, the program reflects on the legacy left by three standout seniors from the 2023-24 season: Gavin Krause, Patrick Adams, and Issac Quast," said Roesler. "Known for their leadership, integrity, and commitment to fostering a family-like atmosphere, these athletes played a pivotal role both on and off the mat. Throughout their high school careers, Krause, Adams, and Quast amassed an impressive 162 wins, stepping up in clutch moments to secure crucial victories for the team. Their effort and enthusiasm set a high standard in the wrestling room, inspiring their teammates and strengthening the program. While their presence will be missed this season, their impact endures. These seniors leave behind a legacy of dedication and resilience, laying a strong foundation for future teams to build upon."

Others who hope to contribute to the varsity are Carson James, Maddox Moreno, Zach Quast, Parker James and Kavan Sheehy.

Skyler Petry is Roesler's co-head coach. Roesler, in his 17th year as coach, has guided the Grizzlies to a record of 167-213 and two Gopher Conference championships. Third-

year co-head coach Petry has a career win-loss mark of 31-26.

Assistant coaches include Mike Richards (13th year), Shaun Murphy (fifth year), Rich Davis (fourth year), Brady Ayers (third year) and Colin Ayers (third year).

How does Roesler feel the upcoming season will go?

"The last two seasons marked a pivotal change in our wrestling program," he said. "Even when out-matched, the team demonstrated resilience and dedication, fighting not only for individual wins but for each other. This transformation reflects a cultural shift led by our current student-athlete leaders, who have brought a renewed sense of belief, accountability, and unity to the mat. This commitment to improvement is evident in early-morning workouts, where each athlete is driven to push their limits. The team knows that their collective success depends on the growth of every individual, and they are focused on the 'controllables' of athletics: attitude, effort, and preparation. With the right people in leadership roles over the past two seasons, the team has embraced a growth mindset."

The Grizzlies have prioritized personal development alongside competitive goals.

"With a season centered on individual gains and constant improvement, we're excited to challenge for

top spots in the Gopher Conference and make a strong showing in the section finals," said Roesler. "The drive and culture are in place, and we're ready to make an impact."

Roesler picks Kenyon-Wanamingo as the top-tier team in the conference. He lists the Grizzlies, NRHEG, Westfield, Medford and Triton as second-tier squads.

Lake Crystal/Wellcome Memorial/Nicollet looks like the team to beat in Section 2A.

"Our motto this year is 'Win the Struggle,'" said Roesler. "Our goal is to develop young men and women who aren't afraid to confront these obstacles head-on. It takes leadership, integrity, family support, and positive efforts to make meaningful progress. We're encouraging our athletes to tackle their challenges, both for themselves and for their team."

In all, the Grizzlies return 15 var-

sity wrestlers and 10 varsity starters.

Kuball and Petry are the captains, with one more to be named each week.

And as for the Grizzlies, they look to be in good hands with coaches Roesler and Petry.

WEM/JWP Wrestling 2024-25 Schedule

Dec. 7 at Blue Earth Area Invitational, 10 a.m.
Dec. 14 at Byron Invitational, 10 a.m.
Dec. 19 at New Prague, 5 p.m.
Dec. 20 vs. Westfield, 7 p.m.
Jan. 4 at Norwood-Young America Invitational, 9 a.m.
Jan. 7 Quad at LCWM, 5 p.m.
Jan. 9 at Kenyon-Wanamingo, 5 p.m.
Jan. 17 at St. Croix Lutheran Invitational, 5 p.m. (Girls)
Jan. 17 vs. Maple River, United South Central, 7 p.m. (Boys)
Jan. 18 at St. Croix Lutheran Invitational, 9:30 a.m.
Jan. 23 at Medford, 7 p.m.
Jan. 25 at Sibley East Invitational, 10 a.m.
Jan. 30 vs. NRHEG, 7 p.m.
Feb. 1 at Maple River Invitational, 9:30 a.m.
Feb. 6 at Triton, 7 p.m.



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JWP boys again aim to contend

Bulldogs coming off best season ever under coach Nick James

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

It may be a stretch to say the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton boys' basketball program is exactly where head coach Nick James feels it should be.

But it's close.

The Bulldogs are coming off their best season ever in James' eight-year tenure, finishing 22-7 overall and 13-2 in the Gopher Conference, including 9-0 in the conference's west division. They lost to Waseca in the section semifinals.

James, assisted by Connor Morton, Ben Holden, Gabe Hauer, Matt Dahlberg and Lenny Kroll, has guided JWP to a 107-103 record.

This year figures to be a challenging one for the Bulldogs, who graduated 53 percent of their scoring and rebounding from last season, but with some outstanding athletes waiting to step up on the varsity level gives James hope they will not only compete but maybe even challenge for a title or two.

"Our main goal is to get better and improve as the season progresses."

— Coach James

Leading the list of returnees are Daulton Bauer, a third team all-conference selection last year, and honorable-mention all-conference player Caleb Quast. Also back are Gavin Bauer, Landon Johnson, Ethan Born and Isaiah Berndt, all proven athletes at the varsity level.

The main goal? Improve.

"Our main goal is to get better and improve as the season progresses," said James. "We hope to compete for a conference title and be in the top tier of the section. Winning playoff games is also a goal every year."

James is looking for speed, ath-



COUNTING ON CONTENTING — The JWP High School boys' basketball team is hoping to contend for a title or two this season. Front from left: Tyson Kronbach, Seth Dahlbert, Jaxon Miller, Caleb Quast, Daulton Bauer, Gavin Weedman, Jaxon Wolff. Back: Parker Gearity, Isaiah Berndt, Jeffrey Simonson, Ethan Born, Gavin Bauer, Zander Terbeest, Landon Johnson.

letism and strength to help overcome a shortage of overall size.

"Ball handling and outside shooting will hopefully be a strength and advantage this year," said James. "We are not very big, so we will need to execute, especially in the rebounding department. We will need to do a great job finding bodies

and boxing out. Also, I think how we defend will determine a lot."

James lists Belle Plain, Waseca and Glencoe-Silver Lake as the teams to beat in Section 2AA.

Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Boys' Basketball 2024-25 Schedule
Dec. 3 at Hayfield, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 6 vs. Jordan at Maple River, 5:30 p.m.

Dec. 13 vs. Blomling Prairie, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 17 at Belle Plaine, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 3 at Bethlehem Academy, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 7 vs. Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 9 vs. Triton, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 14 vs. NRHEG, 5:45 p.m.
Jan. 17 at Randolph, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 21 vs. WEM, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 24 vs. Kenyon-Wanamingo, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 27 vs. United South Central, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 1 at St. Clair, 7 p.m.

Photo by Mike Roy, Janesville Journal

Feb. 3 at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 7 vs. NRHEG, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 10 vs. Sibley East, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 14 at WEM, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 21 at United South Central, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 25 vs. Albert Lea, 7:15 p.m.

JWP girls look to build on last year

By MIKE ROY
Janesville Journal

Last year was one of the best seasons for the JWP girls' basketball program in a long time.

Even more impressive? It was Head Coach Brandon Goebel's first year with the squad.

With how much success the girls had this year, it's no wonder they are hungry for an even more successful season this time. Goebel even hopes they will contend for the Gopher Conference and Section 2AA titles.

Joining Goebel in his second season with JWP are junior varsity coach Emily Olson, C-squad coach Liz Kvebak, and assistant coach Andrea Kronbach.

2023-24 Season

The last season was fantastic for JWP in nearly all facets. They had a 20-7 overall record and were 11-5 in the conference (7-3 in division). After starting the season 6-4 before the winter break, they won 14 of their next 16 games going into the playoffs. They were a game or two away from representing the Western Division in the conference championship game. They also made history when they beat New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva for the first time in two decades and swept both games the two teams played against each other.

However, an otherwise stellar season was cut short when St. Clair — a talented basketball team dealing with a losing streak going into the playoffs — upset the Bulldogs in Janesville and handed them a 37-52 loss to end the season.

Expectations

It's no surprise that after a great first year as coach, Goebel feels that this team has the talent to contend for both the conference and section titles this year. "We have a very talented team that is willing to work this year," he said.

Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Girls' Basketball 2024-25 Schedule
Nov. 26 vs. United South Central, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 2 at Sibley East, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 6 vs. Hayfield/Schaeffer Academy, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 10 vs. LCWM, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 17 at Blooming Prairie, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 19 vs. Maple River, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 3 vs. Bethlehem Academy, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 7 at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 9 at Triton, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 14 vs. NRHG, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 16 vs. Randolph, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 21 at WEM, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 23 vs. New Ulm Cathedral, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 24 at Kenyon-Wanaminto, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 27 at United South Central, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 28 vs. Tri-City United, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 1 at St. Clair, 5:45 p.m.
Feb. 3 at Medford, 5:45 p.m.
Feb. 7 at NRHEG, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 10 at Minnesota Valley Lutheran, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 13 vs. WEM, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 18 at Cleveland, 7:15 p.m.



LADY BULLDOGS — THE 2024-25 JWP High School girls' basketball team. Front from left: Kwynn Krause, Katie Olson, Mikayla Wheelock, Ellie Morsching, Nevaeh Weimert, Aubrey Adams. Back: Onikia Herme, Lilly Strauss, Autumn Thissen, Paige Walz, Presley James, Claire Walz, Hope Dimmel.

Photo by Mike Roy, Janesville Journal



NO SUBSTITUTE FOR EXPERIENCE — JWP's Nevaeh 4) is one of several returnees for the Bulldogs.

Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens



CHEERLEADERS — The 2024-25 JWP winter cheerleaders. From left: Elayna Kruger, Cambria Schlie, Calista Macha, Ariana Aguilar, Abby Soloik, Elizabeth Harvey, Julia Garcia-Gonzales, Elouise Cowdin.

Photo by Mike Roy, Janesville Journal



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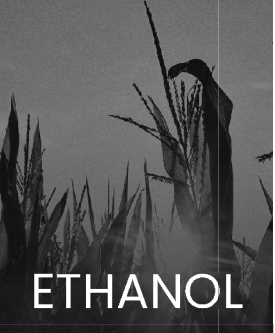
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NRHEG Girls Basketball

Is this the Lady Panthers' year?

VanMaldeghem twins return

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

The Lady Panthers' basketball squad returns a young team this season.

The Panthers, 20-8 overall and 11-5 in the Gopher Conference last year, return a handful of athletes, including their two 'MVPs' the VanMaldeghem twins, Camryn and Quinn.

Both All Conference selections a year ago, Camryn tallied 488 points while Quinn, the defensive rock notched 82 steals while nabbing 243 boards.

Other returning athletes include Chloe Stork, who remained sidelined a majority of last season with injuries, Izley Boerner, Kylie Olson, Clara Buendorf, Savannah Farr and Ezra Boerner.

After losing in the Sub-Section Championship game in three consecutive seasons, what are the expectations of a group expected to start more than one new varsity player for the first time this season?

"They are competitive, athletic, and a fun group of girls," NRHEG Head Coach Onika Peterson reports. "We are bringing back a couple of kids who played big minutes for us last year. This is a group that has some speed, rebounds and runs the floor well, and should cause some havoc on defense."

Per the students making the leap from junior varsity, to varsity, Peterson says they should expect 'big minutes.'

"We have a tough schedule this year and are excited to have some tough battles that we can learn from, hoping to continue to improve all season long so that we are playing our best come playoff

time."

The girls biggest weakness, per Peterson are a lack of numbers.

"Numbers across the state are down for girls basketball unfortunately," Peterson stated. "A weakness would be losing kids due to sickness or injury."

The Panthers look to replace three starters from a year ago, Hallie Schultz, Faith Nielsen and Preslie Nielsen. Schultz and Faith both were All Conference honorable mentions a year ago.

In order to succeed this season, Peterson says the girls must run the floor and play aggressive defense. The group needs to rely on their strengths, "Strong athletes, speed and athleticism."

"Rebound and run the floor every chance we can, defensively we need to be smart but aggressive," Peterson continued. "We have a solid core of returning athletes but are looking for who will be stepping into some holes that we still need to fill from last season."

The Panthers have enjoyed success under Peterson, compiling an 11-year record of 169-104.

Peterson picks Hayfield or JWP as the conference favorite and Glencoe Silver Lake, TCU or JWP as the teams to beat in the section.

Peterson is assisted by Kayley Camerer (JV), and Betsy Schoenrock (Middle School/High School Assistant).

The Lady Panthers entire roster is comprised of no seniors, juniors: Gabby Schlaak, Quinn VanMaldeghem, Camryn VanMaldeghem, Chloe Stork. Sophomores: Izley Boerner, Clara Buendorf, Savannah Farr, Kylie Olson. Freshman: Ezra Boerner,



LADY PANTHERS — The 2024-25 NRHEG High School girls' basketball team. Front row (floor) managers from left: Marnie Mullenbach, Lauren Johnson, Vivienne Schlaak, Jade Wyrum and Eva Buendorf. Second row, seated, from left: Izley Boerner, Gabby Schlaak, Quinn VanMaldeghem, Camryn VanMaldeghem, Chloe Stork and Ezra Boerner. Back row standing from left: Coach Kayley Camerer, Kenley Gehrke, Clara Buendorf, Kylie Olson, Savannah Farr, Alex Estrada, and Coach Onika Peterson.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

"We have a tough schedule this year and are excited to have some tough battles that we can learn from, hoping to continue to improve all season long so that we are playing our best come playoff time."

— Onika Peterson

Kenley Gehrke and Alexandra Estrada.

2024-25 NRHEG Girls' Basketball

Nov. 22 vs. Triton, 7:16 p.m.

Nov. 26 at Fairmont, 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 3 vs. Maple River, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 5 at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 13 at Maple River, TBD
Dec. 14 at Maple River, TBD

Dec. 20 at USC, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 27 at Norwood-Young America, 12:30 p.m.
Dec. 28 at Norwood-Young America, 4 p.m.
Jan. 3 vs. Kenyon-Wanamingo, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 4 at Goodhue, 5:30 p.m.
Jan. 7 vs. WEM, 7:15
Jan. 10 vs. Hayfield, 6 p.m.
Jan. 14 at JWP, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 16 vs. Blooming Prairie, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 17 at Bethlehem Academy, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 27 vs. Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 31 vs. USC, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 3 at WEM, 7:15 p.m.

Feb. 7 vs. JWP, 6 p.m.
Feb. 10 vs. St. Clair, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 13 vs. Alden-Conger, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 14 at Tri-City United, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 20 Section tournament, TBD
Feb. 24 Section tournament, TBD
Feb. 27 Section tournament, TBD
March 3 Section at Mankato, TBD
March 7 Section finals at Mankato, 8 p.m.

NRHEG girls fall to Triton in 2024-25 season opener

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

According to NRHEG girls' basketball coach Onika Peterson, the first game of the season is always interesting.

Triton is a tough team and the girls' do have a challenging schedule this season.

The Panthers played with the Cobras for the first half, but ultimately lost 57-41 on Friday night in New Richland.

The Panthers started alright but trailed 29-26 at the half.

"Triton was a tough team to start with; their physicality, speed, and pressure caused us a lot of issues with our offense," Peterson said. "This is the first time in awhile that it felt like we were killed on the offensive and defensive boards. We are looking to

bounce back playing a little better Panther basketball."

Statistically for the Panthers:

G. SCHLAACK- 3 pts, 8 rebounds, 4 assists, 1 steal

E. BOERNER- 5 pts, 1 assist, 1 steal

Q. VANMALDEGHEM- 6 rebounds, 2 assists, 2 steals, 2 blocked shots

I. BOERNER- 7 pts, 4 rebounds, 1 steal

C. BUENDORF- 1 rebound, 1 assist, 1 steal

C. VANMALDEGHEM- 15 pts, 6 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals, 3 blocked shots

C. STORK- 1 rebound, 1 assist, 1 steal

K. OLSON- 11 pts, 13 rebounds, 1 blocked shot

The Panthers had a short break before they traveled to Fairmont on Tuesday, Nov. 26. Kenyon-Wanamingo Dec. 9.

Cheerleaders



2024-25 NRHEG winter cheerleaders. Back row from left: Ariel Star Anhalt, Orianna Degan, Sierra Misgen, Madison Bogue, Autumn Baseman and Alexis Olson. Front row: Alexia Schmidt, Tru Thao, Ella Jenö and Avary Riskadahl.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

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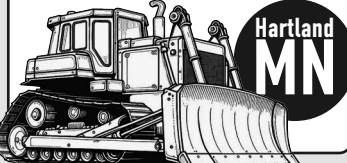
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NRHEG Wrestling

High hopes

NRHEG grapplers return a dozen letterwinners

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

For the NRHEG High School wrestling team, some things never seem to change.

The Panthers are again optimistic. "We are expecting to make a strong attempt at regaining a top-three finish in the conference," said coach Shaun Larson. "We are hoping to learn from our setbacks last season, and have a winning season this year."

Larson, in his 12th season since Paul Cyr retired as head coach, guided the Panthers to a record of 5-16 overall and 0-6 in the Gopher Conference last season. Larson, who's assisted by Nate Jensen and Erik Olson, has a career win-loss mark of 84-124. Jensen is entering his 27th year with the program and Olson, his second.

The Panthers' best finish in recent years was in 2022-23, when they lost to Lake Crystal - Wellcome Memorial in the section semifinals.

NRHEG graduated some very talented wrestlers a year ago: Parker Bunn, Annabelle Petsinger, George Roesle, and Reese Routh.

"Parker was a help for us last season at 133, where he finished 4th in the section," Larson stated. "We will miss his experience in the lower weights."

"Annabelle was a pioneer in our program," Larson continued. "Annabelle was a 6-year varsity wrestler, the first girl to compete at

NRHEG, a three-time state entrant, a two-time place winner, one of which was a state championship (first champion for Coach Larson.) Annabelle amassed over 50 falls for our program, and will be sorely missed.

"George Roesler was statistically the most valuable wrestler for NRHEG last season," Larson reported. "George competed at the State Tournament, and was a consistent leader and point-getter for the Panthers in 23-24."

"Reese was a tough out for the Panthers in the last two seasons in the middle of the lineup," Larson concluded. "Reese also will leave us with State Tournament experience from 2022, which is not always easy to replace."

Wrestling at the collegiate level still are NRHEG Graduates Makota Mlsgen (MN State Mankato); Petsinger (Iowa Central Community College). Nikolas Petsinger wrestled the last two seasons with Rochester Community and Technical College.

This year's Panther squad welcomes no less than 12 returning letterwinners.

They are seniors Harbor Cromwell 172; Cole Hutchens 215; Jace Ihrke 285; Aidan Schlaak 160; Seth Staloch 139. Juniors: Devlin Hudson 215; Wyatt Larson 189. Sophomore Ryan Schlaak 189 (STATE ENTRANT 2024). Freshman: Dakota Schlaak 127; Charles Tufte 114/121; Noah Weller 160. 8th



GRAPPLING TRADITION — The 2024-25 NRHEG High School wrestling team. Back row from left: Cooper Cords, Kailin Hudson, Hunter McMann, Aidan Schlaak, Cole Hutchens, Ryan, Schlaak and Noah Weller. Middle row: Wyatt Larson, Harbor Cromwell, Logan Schiell, Chase Johannsen, Devlin Hudson, Khaiden Madson, Dakota Schlaak, and Zoe Wilson. Front row: Wyatt Hendrickson, Jacob Klaras, Eli Hendrickson, Charles Tufte, Owen Schlaak, Riften Jacobson, Tucker Flatness, Gram Jacobson, and Adrian Naser. Multiple wrestlers not pictured.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

grader Eli Hendrickson 145.

Several wrestlers participated in off-season competition and 13 attended a team camp in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Larson likes the Panthers strength in the larger weight classes.

"We have solid wrestlers with several years of experience at the top end of our line up," he said. "We have a group of athletes that work well together, and if we work together we will be strong. Our weaknesses come from lack of experience in the lighter weights. These younger wrestlers have been working hard however, and we are thinking they open some eyes in the area."

Larson is also hoping wrestlers compete for the entire match.

"Last season our downfall was giving up too many bonus points," he continued. "If we can eliminate that we will be much more competitive. Also taking risks to score points in situations where we have been tentative in the recent past. If we focus on scoring instead of the winning and losing, the wins should come as a result."

Larson looks for Kenyon-Wanamingo to be the team to beat in the Gopher Conference and Lake Crystal - Wellcome Memorial in Section 2A.

2024-25 NRHEG Wrestling

Dec. 5 at United South Central, 7 p.m.
Dec. 7 at St. James Area Invitational, 9:45 a.m.
Dec. 12 at LeSueur-Henderson, 7 p.m.
Dec. 13 at Lakeville South, TBD
Dec. 19 at Blue Earth Area, 6 p.m.
Dec. 20 at Redwood Valley, 4 p.m.
Dec. 21 at Redwood palley, 9 a.m.
Jan. 9 at Westfield (Blooming Prairie), 7 p.m.

Jan. 11 at Stewartville Invitational, 8 a.m.
Jan. 17 vs. Medford, St. Clair/Loyola, 5 p.m.
Jan. 23 Quad at St. James Area, 5 p.m.
Jan. 28 at Triton, 5 p.m.
Jan. 30 at WEM/JWP, 7 p.m.
Feb. 1 at Maple River Invitational, 9:30 a.m.
Feb. 6 vs. Kenyon-Wanamingo, 7 p.m.
Feb. 13 Section tournament, TBD
Feb. 15 Section championship, 2 p.m.
Feb. 22 Section individual finals at Blue Earth Area, 10 a.m.

NRHEG Boys Basketball

Familiar faces

New coach is no stranger for NRHEG boys' basketball team

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

If there's one thing NRHEG boys' basketball coach Dan Schmidt can count on, it's optimism.

Schmidt feels the Panthers, 6-48 under his direction, can improve on last year's record of 3-24. The Panthers were 1-14 in the Gopher Conference

Returning varsity athletes include seniors Aaden Hanna, Grayson Schaefer and Jase Knudson, and junior Hudson Chrz.

Also vying for varsity playing team will be juniors Owen Wayne and Gavin Lewison, sophomores Brendan Schmidt and Dominic Olson, junior Wyatt Tuttle, junior Deshawn Jones and sophomore center Lavon Lewison.

Graduated off last year's squad: Daxter Lee, a four-year starter; William Tuttle, two-year starter.

So what does Coach Schmidt expect?

"We're looking to improve as the season goes along, and hope to be playing our best basketball by the

end of the season," he said. "We'll be inexperienced, so I expect some bumps along the way. But we have a very smart team, with good chemistry, that

can make adjustments on the fly, we should be able to be very versatile on both ends of the floor."

Schmidt, again assisted by Aaron Gilliland and Tyler Schlaak, feels his team's strengths are in ball movement, defensive flexibility and attitude, and chemistry.

Their biggest challenges, according to Schmidt, are rebounding, scoring and inexperience at the varsity level.

"Knowing we'll be young, we'll be relying on the seniors to be strong leaders and willing to help the younger guys in the early stages of the season," said Schmidt. "We'll also need some of those young guys to contribute from the onset. It's going to be a complete team effort going forward, and I look forward to seeing the progress with this group. If we can rebound above expectations and find our groove on offense,



POTENTIAL — The 2024-25 NRHEG High School boys' basketball team. Front from left: Dom Olson, Brendan Schmidt, Ricky Zapata, Owen Wayne, Jordan Brouwers, Wyatt Tuttle, Aaden Hanna and Deshawn Jones. Back row: Charlie Fuller, Justin Beauvais, Lavon Jewison, Greyson Schaefer, Hudson Chrz, Jase Knudson, Gavin Lewison and Quen Meyering.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

I feel like we can be competitive. We have the desire on defense, so we just need to get the offense up to speed."

Schmidt sees JWP, Triton, Randolph and Blooming Prairie as the top teams to beat in the Gopher Conference, with Waseca, Belle Plaine, LCWM, Maple River and JWP leading the way in Section 2AA.

Dec. 3 at Triton, 7:15 p.m.

2024-25 NRHEG Boys' Basketball

Dec. 12 vs. St. Clair, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 13 vs. Randolph, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 17 at Maple River, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 19 vs. USC, 7:15 p.m.
Dec. 20 at LeSueur-Henderson, 7 p.m.
Jan. 3 at Kenyon-Wanamingo, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 7 at WEM, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 10 vs. Hayfield, 7:30 p.m.
Jan. 14 at JWP, 5:45 p.m.
Jan. 17 at Blooming Prairie, 7:15 p.m.

Jan. 20 at LCWM, 7 p.m.
Jan. 24 vs. Bethlehem Academy, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 28 at Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Jan. 30 at USC, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 3 vs. WEM, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 6 at Nicollet, 7 p.m.
Feb. 7 vs. JWP, 7:30 p.m.
Feb. 11 vs. Blooming Prairie, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 13 at Mankato Loyola, 7 p.m.
Feb. 14 at Alden-Conger, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 17 vs. Tri-City United, 7:15

p.m.
Feb. 20 vs. Waseca, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 21 vs. Medford, 7:15 p.m.
Feb. 28 at Martin County West, 7 p.m.
March 4 Section, TBD
March 6 Section, TBD
March 10 Section at Mankato, TBD
March 11 Section finals at Mankato, 8 p.m.



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Waseca County 4-H holds achievement celebration

Around 150 people gathered at The Mill in Waseca on Friday, November 15 to celebrate Waseca County 4-H. Many awards were given to youth leaders, adult leaders and community supporters for their accomplishments and support.

Youth awards were given to:

- Avary Hopper, Jacob Knutson - the "I Dare You" Award for showing emerging youth leadership
- Karley Hamilton - Meat Goat Achievement Award
- Alexis Myers - Dairy Goat Achievement Award
- Charley Kietzman - Dairy Achievement Award
- Oriana Jewison - Poultry Achievement Award
- Teagan Tietje - Outstanding Club Secretary
- Gus Bethke, Kenley Gehrke - The "Matt Hines Spirit of 4-H" Award

1st year members received a certificate for joining 4-H. They included:

Morgyn Adams, Benjamin Amborn, Charlotte Amborn, Cora Amborn, Lydia Barnes, Willow Bartelt, Sophia Berg, Amos Bethke, Warren Christensen, Liam Cory, Emma Dobberstein, Finley Erdman, Kailyn Gerdts, Piper Gerdts, Aryanna Gorski, Evelyn Griffin, Daniel Guritz, Charlotte Haekenkamp, Henry Haekenkamp, Oliver Haekenkamp, Violet Haekenkamp, Alexander Hinkhouse, Rosemilla Hinkhouse, Sadie Holthus, Aurella Johnson, Charles Kahnke, Bailee Kaiser, Rylee Kaiser, Harlow McGinnis, Rori Mulcahey, Kimora Neal, Samara Neal, Kaden Peirce, Kelton Peirce, Noah Rand-Johnson, Nash Roeker, Levi Rohe, Natalia Rivera, Owen Rivera, Edison Roesler, Cora Schaetzke, Orlin Schaetzke, Josh Stangler, Kinsley Traynor, Archer Weber, Mattias Yezdi, Regina Yezdi, Gabby Youngerberg, and Thomas Zimprich

Many youth were also honored for excellence in 4-H record-keeping. Medals were awarded to youth who received a high score on their project records. They were Oriana Jewison, Jacob Knutson, Abby Sommers and Kinley Thostenson.

Cloverbuds, who are 4-H members in grades Kindergarten - 2nd Grade, also completed 4-H

records and were awarded a certificate. They included: Henry Haekenkamp, Violet Haekenkamp, Leighton Humphries, and Harlow McGinnis.

Recognition was given to 4-H Camp attendees and counselors. 4-H Campers this year were:

- Isabel Berg
- Lillian Berg
- Gemma Eaton
- Audrey Gray
- Violet Jewison
- Brayleigh Kuball
- Jacob Lewer
- Breckyn Moen
- Presley Roeker
- Natalie Schoenfeld
- Abby Sommers
- Brody Gray
- Mikayla Lewer
- Hadley Roeker

• Kaitlyn Schoenfeld
Avary Hopper, Hunter Myers, and Alexis Myers were also recognized as attending as Camp Counselors this year:

Youth recognized for participating in Arts-In were:

- Addison Anderson
- Willow Bartelt
- Elaina Berg
- Isabel Berg
- Alexis Myers
- Angel Myers
- Audrey Gray

Steve Scheffert and Crystal Myers were recognized as being the adult volunteers who organized it all.

Youth receiving recognition for their contributions to the Waseca County 4-H program as graduating members included:

- Sam Carlson
- Joe Feldkamp
- Hunter Myers
- Angel Myers
- Cole Schlueter
- Timmi Volkmer
- Kloe Wadd
- George Roesler

The Waseca County 4-H Ambassadors are a group of youth in 7th grade and older who serve the 4-H program through assisting at events and promoting 4-H. Our 2023-2024 ambassadors were Isabel Anderson, Gus Bethke, Olivia Eaton, Isaac Feldkamp, Sam Feldkamp, Bailey Hodgkins, Oriana Jewison, Charley Kietzman, Alexis Myers, Angel Myers, Hunter Myers, Hadley Roeker, and Alexis Olson.

Jacob Klaras was recognized for participating in both Regional and State Project Bowl.

Youth receiving recognition for participating in the Livestock Judging Contest at the Minnesota State Fair were Olivia Eaton, Karley Hamilton, Addison Kelm, Olivia Johnson, Paige Johnson, Ashley Fliflet, Oriana Jewison, and Bella Eaton.

Youth who participated in regional and state events included Mikayla Lewer and Hadley Roeker, University of Minnesota Livestock Judging Camp, and Riley Cromwell, Building Leadership and Understanding (BLU) Retreat.

Our 2024-2025 Waseca County 4-H Ambassadors are:

- Audrey Gray
- Charley Kietzman
- Karley Hamilton
- Paige Johnson
- Claire Bartlet
- Olivia Eaton
- Alexis Myers
- Oriana Jewison
- Violet Jewison
- Sam Feldkamp
- Isaac Feldkamp
- Luke Feldkamp

Adults and community friends of 4-H were also honored. Special awards were given to:

- The late Brian Sommers - 4-H Alumni Award
- Ben & Andrea Anderson - Outstanding Adult Volunteer
- Caroline Scheffert - Distinguished Service Award
- TEAM Academy Charter School - Friend of 4-H Award

An award was presented for the "4-H Family of the Year." Receiving this honor were the Tom and Jamie Gray family of Waseca.

First Year Adult Volunteer Certificates of Leadership were awarded to:

- Timothy Bice
- Brent Haekenkamp
- Samantha Haekenkamp
- Kelly Levos

- Rich Hinkhouse
- Dacia Hinkhouse
- Jeremy Stangler
- Nicole Schlaak
- Natalie Roeker
- Ashley Tolzman
- Amy Jo Lewer

The 4-H Award of the Silver Clover for 5 years of serving as a volunteer was awarded to:

- Jamie Gray
- Julie Tesch

The 4-H Award of the Gold Clover for 10 years of serving as a volunteer was awarded to:

- Andrea Anderson
- Jeannie Feldkamp
- Jill Peine
- Caroline Scheffert

The 4-H Award of the Pearl Clover for 15 years of serving as a volunteer was awarded to:

- McKinsy Rew

Recognition was also given to the 2023-2024 4-H Federation Board officers for their service and leadership: Oriana Jewison - President; Alexis Myers - Vice President; Olivia Eaton - Secretary; Hunter Myers - Youth Treasurer; Brody Gray, Jacob Knutson and Hadley Roeker - Youth Club Representatives. Adult board members were Jennifer Hamilton - Adult Treasurer, Joyce Jahr, Crystal Myers, Melissa Eaton and Carly Johnson.

New youth officers were installed for the 2024-2025 year. Leading the Waseca County 4-H Federation this year are:

- Alexis Myers President
- Paige Johnson Vice President
- Charley Kietzman Secretary
- Oriana Jewison Youth Treasurer

CC Youth Rep
• Brody Gray HGE Youth Rep
• HGE Youth Rep JJJ Youth Rep PS Youth Rep RR Youth Rep VBB Youth Rep WPP Youth Rep

Recognition was given to the community, business and parental support of the 4-H program. Thank you to all who continue to support the Waseca County 4-H Program in making the best better. The program ended with a slide show.

Waseca County 4-H is honored to be supported by several businesses, organizations, and community members who have chosen to make an impact in the lives of 289 Waseca County 4-H youth members and 64 adult volunteers. We are so grateful for the continued support of the 4-H mission to make the best better. Donors and supporters in 2024 included:

Supreme Champion Donor (\$2,500+)
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Around 150 people gathered at The Mill in Waseca on Friday, November 15 to celebrate Waseca County 4-H. Above are the showmanship champions.

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4-H Alumni Award - Brian Sommers family



4-H Camp participants



4-H Camp participants



23-24 Waseca County 4-H Ambassadors

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Commissioners, Waseca County Fair Board/Ag Society, Waseca County Soil & Water (Special conservation awards), Waseca County Solid Waste (Garage Sale), and Waseca Rotary Club (Food Stand)

For more information on joining 4-H or volunteering with the program, or for making a gift of financial support, contact the Waseca County Extension Office at 507-835-0600.

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The City of Waseca will be operating an aeration system on the north shore of Loon Lake immediately south of Loon Lake Park as soon as December 11th, 2024, or as soon as ice conditions permit.

Extreme caution should be used when the system is in operation

Thin ice and open water will be created on the lake, especially in the vicinity of the area posted with “THIN ICE” signs. If there are any questions concerning this aeration system, please contact the City of Waseca Engineering Department at 507-835-9730.

Loon Lake is located within the City limits of Waseca, in Waseca County.

