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WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 1 Vol. III \$2

Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca

Friday, January 5, 2024

Pages 6-7



2023

Fun at Farmamerica
The following events are taking place at Farmamerica.
January 12, 2024 - Raise a toast at 6 p.m. A women's night out Four course meal and entertainment.
January 27, 2024 - Winter Charm on the farm from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. Celebrate winter with carriage rides, snowshoeing, s'mores, hot chocolate, snow painting and more.
Tickets can be purchased on Farmamerica's website.

Bible prophecy seminar Jan. 6 in Waseca from 10 a.m.- 3p.m.
Waseca Bible Church will be hosting a free bible prophecy seminar on Saturday Jan. 6 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Starfire Event Center in the Lynx Room. Located at 206 SW 2nd Ave. Waseca this seminar will include bible teaching video segments from David Jeremiah, Andy Woods and more!
Sponsored by Waseca Bible Church
www.wasecabiblechurch.org
"God gives prophecy (28% of the Bible) not to scare us but to prepare us."

Farewell service for pastor Matthews Jan. 7 in Waldorf
Farewell service for Waldorf Pastor Michael Matthews January 7, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.
After 24 years, Pastor Matthews has accepted a call to service in Arizona. Following the farewell service will be a potluck dinner. All are invited.

Free throw championship Jan. 7 at Waseca high school gym
The Knights of Columbus are sponsoring a free throw and three point contest for boys and girls ages 9-14 on January 7, 2024 at Waseca high school beginning at 3 p.m. Please contact Jeff Kummerfeldt at 507-676-2166 if interested.

Waseca Library story time for ages 3-5, 5:30 January 8
"Romp and Rhyme" story time for children ages 3 to 5 is free and open to the public at the Waseca Library starting at 5:30 on Monday, January 8. Reading includes movement and imagination to keep young participants engaged.

Janesville Library Craft Night 5 p.m. January 9
Crafters are invited to bring their own projects and tools to the library, then network with others while working on individual projects, perhaps sharing tips and inspirations. Begins at 5 p.m. at the Janesville library, 102 W. Second Street.

Winter Crops at U of M Extension 9 a.m. January 11
The Southern Research and Outreach Center at Waseca will be hosting the annual Winter Crops Day Thursday, January 11. Registration begins at 8:30 with the program beginning at 9:00 am. This event is free to attend. Information at (507) 837-5629.

Briefs continued on 4

A word from The Word

Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 4:8

'Bell ringing' raises \$4,300
By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor
More than \$4,300 was raised through the "bell ringing challenge" set up by Waseca County Salvation Army over the past two months. The contest was among the city of Waseca police and fire departments and the Waseca County sheriff's department. Each group was given a 2-hour time span to ring Salvation Army bells and solicit donations outside the Waseca Walmart on Saturday, Dec. 2. The group whose efforts brought in the highest dollar amount by the end of their shift wins a "traveling" award—a wooden plaque indicating the year of their triumph.
For the second year in a row, the Waseca Police Department volunteered.
Bells continued on 3



From left: Waseca Fire Chief Jason Forshee, Officer Andrew Harren, Waseca Police Chief Penny Vought, Representative John Petersburg, Tom Bendorf, and Sheriff Jay Dulas.
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

Making a real difference

BackPack program helps fight local food insecurity

1 in 11 children are hungry in Minnesota
By DEB BENTLY
News Editor
"I don't know whether 'amazing' is the right word," comments Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center (WANSC) director Cindy Kolander, "but I know the Backpack program has made a real difference in children's lives." Kolander is speaking of the weekly system which sends food home over the weekend with children who have been identified as being at risk of food insecurity.
Statistics from previous years show that as many as four in 10 Minnesota households were eligible for "free and reduced price" lunch options. Beginning with the 2023-24 school year, the Minnesota Legislature decided that meals provided to students at school will be at no cost to families, regardless of their level of income. Perhaps part of their motive for that decision was information from many different studies that found children who experience consistent hunger not only suffer more health problems, they also are more likely to have sporadic attendance at school, more likely to repeat a grade, and more likely to exhibit negative behaviors.
Based on current statistics from Feeding America/Second Harvest Minnesota, 1 in every 15 people in our state face hunger. The number is even higher among children: 1 in every 11. This means that a significant portion of our population either skips or skimps on meals. In early 2023 the poverty level in Waseca County was 8.8%, but that number has been climbing steadily during the year as more families live paycheck to paycheck due to continued inflation.
WANSC has been providing "backpacks" of food to students identified by their school counselors since 2009, based on archived files researched by Kolander. This is when school staff, counselors and the WANSC Board of Directors became aware of the scope and extent of the hunger problem and started the "Weekend Treasures" program to supply nutritious food for food insecure students through grade 6 to take home



Veda, Mason, Devon and Aiden, participants in the Southwest Metro Transitions program, regularly help the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center "BackPack" program, which sends food home with about 275 Waseca area students each week over weekends during the school year.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

The WANSC Board of Directors made the decision this past June to expand the weekend backpack program to students K-12 in all Waseca schools. Since then, the food shelf has been purchasing food supplies to fill just shy of 300 Backpacks each week to be sent home with food insecure students each weekend. The number is twice as many as were put together in previous years.
"We look for affordable, nutritious items," observes Kolander. The items are purchased through the food shelf account and consist of proteins, packaged fruit, cereal and snacks which go in each bag. "Food needs to be non-perishable and kid-friendly," by which, she explains, children need to be able to open the food easily. Food also must come in individual-sized packets.
School counselors at Hartley, Sacred Heart, TEAM Academy, Waseca Intermediate, Waseca Jr./Sr. High, and the Alternate Learning Center (ALC) review and provide Backpack weekly numbers for their sites. Based on those numbers, packets are prepared and delivered to the appropriate locations. Counselors at the respective sites assure that the food is delivered discreetly to students to take home for the weekend. Workers in the Backpack program never learn the names of the recipients.
"It costs about \$200 to provide a weekend backpack for one student for the school year," says Kolander. Costs for a typical month for the whole program range between \$5,000 and \$6,000. A major source of financial support are grants from the Waseca Area Foundation and United Way. "We're very grateful for that consistent generosity," Kolander adds. Also, support comes from corporate donors.

Program continued on 3

WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Pioneer named County's legal paper

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor
At its first meeting of 2024, the Waseca County Board of Commissioners took care of organizational matters ranging from new requirements in employment laws to the selection of its official newspaper. The board selected Brian Harguth as its chair, Doug Christopherson as its vice chair, and administrative department executive assistant Beth Weimert as its clerk.
When it became time to select an official publication for public notices, commissioners chose the Waseca County Pioneer over the Waseca County News, both of which had submitted bids.
Conversation on the topic revealed that the county usually spends about \$5,000 a year on such legally required notices, with amounts over the past five years falling as low as \$3,052.
The County News has been the official publication for the past two years, and had submitted a bid about one-third lower than in 2023; The Waseca County Pioneer's bid was higher, by a small amount, than that of the County News.
Nonetheless, commissioners voted to name the Pioneer as the official publication, based at least partly on observations shared by county administrator Johnson, who mentioned that "several" times over the past year, the County News had failed to include county notices on the date requested. Johnson pointed out that such mistakes can be "problematic, costly, and have lingering effects."
He offered the recent example of a notice which was not published prior to a planning and zoning meeting. He pointed out that, since the required public notice had not appeared, an important business item could not be managed at the scheduled time. Since meetings take place weeks apart, it was a major inconvenience to contractors who might then have to wait before receiving the news whether their proposal had been the one selected—such delays could lead to problems such as not being able to get the best price on supplies, uncertainty regarding project scheduling, and questions regarding the number of employees they needed to take on.
Johnson also offered that persistent turnover in the staff of the County News made it difficult to establish "consistency and continuity."
Waseca County engineer Jim Kollar shared a list of 11 bridges

Open for carryout



Pepto's Pizzeria is open for carryout at the former Waseca train depot located at 308 S. State St.
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

A look back at 2023

In the past year the Waseca County Pioneer has covered many exciting stories worth remembering. Here is a look back at the best highlights from the year that was 2023.

January

- The Waseca County Pioneer is proud to announce the addition of its website, which went public Thursday, January 5, 2023. The website can be found at: www.wasecacountypioneer.com
- After 34 years of service in law enforcement in Waseca County, Sheriff Brad Milbrath has retired. Two celebrations for his retirement were held on Friday, Dec. 30: one at the Waseca County East Annex building from 2:30 to 4 p.m., and another one at the Mill from 5:30 to 8 p.m.
- 26 years: Over a quarter of a century. That's how many years Allan Rose has served the City of Waseca as both a council member and a mayor pro tempore.
- Rose held his retirement party at the Waseca American Legion, celebrating from 5-9 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 30. He was surrounded by plenty of family members and fellow city staff he's known for decades. There was a

2023 continued on 6

County continued on 5



Compostings

by Al Batt

Hartland resident cannot be reached

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

Here's your gift. Forgive the brown paper bag. I don't like to spend money on wrapping paper.

It's the gift I gave you last year. I don't like to spend money on gifts either.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. Not everyone is meant to be a Minnesotan. Friends and neighbors flee to the welcoming arms of warmer temperatures found in the south. My wife and I stay here and eat lefse. She presented delicious lefse to five grandchildren. She didn't force them to eat it and they didn't eat it. Only one had tried lefse before and the other four proved to be cautious eaters. I told them it was potatoes, butter and sugar. They like those things, but purposely forgot to sample the lefse. I didn't add, "Try it, you might like it." I'm OK with them not eating the lefse. That means there is more for me.

The liftgate on my car isn't as tall as I am. I bumped my head on it while putting holiday things into the car. I'd just flunked Situational Awareness 101. It was a glancing blow, but it stung like the dickens. I'm going to wear a safety helmet when I go shopping.

Christmas can be stressful and exhausting. Every day with a loved one is a gift. The year 2023 showed me how lucky I am to have family and friends. Sadly, people important to us die around Christmas. Winston Evenson died at 96. People said he had a "good run." I wish he'd been able to put on a few more miles. I taught a writing class in which I assigned my students the exercise of concocting mottos for themselves. One, being as knuckleheaded as his instructor, always came up with, "I don't believe in having a motto." I shared one of mine, "I try to make the best use of every moment." I don't know if Winston had that as a motto, but that's how he lived his life. Anne Lamott wrote that something was "like trying to put an octopus to bed." That's how difficult it is to say goodbye, but platitudes and gratitude help. So does repeating their stories.

A Hartland resident became weary of his cellphone bills this summer. He tossed his phone onto the lawn and ran the mower over it

a few times. He can't be reached for comment.

BLATHERSKITE

There are alleged lucky ways to usher in a New Year. Put my right foot down first when I get out of bed on New Year's Day. Saying "Rabbit, rabbit" before saying anything else on the first day of a month brings good luck for a month. Eating grains, ring-shaped foods like bagels or donuts, tangerines, greens, pork or cornbread on New Year's Day. I went with my right foot first, said "Rabbit, rabbit" and ate oatmeal. I should be golden.

I'VE LEARNED

When I was telling stories in Oklahoma, a fellow told me the lone star on the flag of Texas is a rating.

In Ohio, an audience member asked me, "What has five toes and isn't your foot?" It was his foot. Social media has shown us why products need warning labels.

It's difficult to lose both socks of a pair, but it's easy to lose one.

Something I'm hoping to learn. The population of Waldorf, Minnesota, is 201. Who is the one?

NATURE NOTES

I'd finished my radio show about nature and at its completion, the station played The Mamas and Papas singing, "I've been for a walk on a winter's day. I'd be safe and warm if I was in L.A. California dreamin' on such a winter's day."

I went for a walk on a winter's day without the California dreaming. The feeders were semi-busy. Mild winter weather leads to lessened feeder activity. Severe weather brings birds to the feeders just as it brings people to the grocery stores.

If I taught a bird appreciation class, and I have, Joan E. Strassman's "Slow Birding: The Art and Science of Enjoying the Birds in Your Own Backyard" would be a good textbook. Joan presents new and old information in pleasing ways. A dark-eyed junco loses 7% of its body weight when at rest overnight. Robins have found that regurgitated insects and earthworms make a great baby formula. Thanks to jays burying acorns to cache, "mighty oaks from little blue jays grow." Cooper's hawks, once known as chicken hawks, have created another definition of the term "feeder bird."

MEETING ADJOURNED

Being kind is the work of a lifetime.

A privilege to report the news

As many of you know, I was an English teacher at NRHEG Secondary for more than 25 years. Any of you who are former students, you may be interested to learn "the shoe is on the other foot" now, since producing a weekly column is a little like being told "Write an essay on any topic."

Just like my students, I am now forced to consider what subject will be interesting to my readers, as well as what impressions I am willing to share. Given the (mostly) weekly nature of the assignment, I also have to remember what I've talked about before, and consider whether it's worthy of further discussion.

People frequently ask, "What's new?"

I seldom have a quick answer for that one, since, frankly, everything is new. Given the nature of my work for the newspaper, only my calendar knows for sure where I will be and who I will be talking with on any



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

given day. Sometimes, depending on what I've been able to arrange, I have whole days open. Other times I am racing from place to place, barely managing to keep the schedule circumstances have created for me.

One thing for sure, I enjoy the community connections the newspaper is able to facilitate, and I feel privileged to meet and speak with the many people in our coverage area whose desire is to make a positive impact—or even simply to be positive people.

This week has given me many ex-

amples to share. In this edition is a story about the "BackPack" program operated by the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center (WANSC). We all know there are people in our community who experience difficult times; It's a delight to have learned more about the WANSC's determination to help—and about the many volunteers and donors who make that help possible.

Also delightful is the news that our community supported two successful blood drives over the past few days. Out at Farmamerica on Friday, and at

Grace Lutheran Church from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. that same day, donors lined up to bare their sleeves. I found Kloe Wadd's statement profound: "To give blood is to give life." From the perspective of those holding the events, it makes sense that folks among us who are healthy and vibrant have every reason to contribute to a system which supports others whose bodies are in need of a little help.

A Red Cross worker informed me that about 25% of the eligible American population donates blood. Another 10% or so try to, but do not meet the donation criteria.

For anyone who stays away because of a fear of needles, just imagine how many needles the patients have had to endure: surely you can handle one.

For anything you do that helps others, thank you. Keep up the good work.

What are your 2024 resolutions?

Happy New Year! It is now 2024, although the only genuine change I've encountered so far is remembering to use a "four" instead of a "three" when I write the date. My New Year's Eve was spent working at the bar, instead of celebrating and watching the countdown, and if I'm honest, it wasn't that bad. In normal years, I never really made a big deal of the new year's arrival anyway. Sure, I watched the countdown, stayed up until midnight, but then I would just go to bed. This time at least I got to make some money.

I had known beforehand what to expect at work, with the Vikings game (what a sad time) and then the fact that it was New Year's Eve. Turns out, not a lot of people go to the bar for the countdown and change of the year. There were about ten people there when the clock switched; they all took their shots and kissed their loved ones and that



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

was it - fairly relaxed in terms of the bar.

Everyone always asks what everyone's new year resolutions are. If someone asked me, I'd answer honestly with "I don't know." I've tried resolutions in the past, but like everyone else, they usually fell apart for me in about a month or two. In high school, it was always something like starting to work out, going to bed at a decent time or eating healthier foods. You know, the classics. But after a while, I would fall back into the same routine as before, too dis-

tracted by the things in my life to bother expending more energy on keeping resolutions I had perhaps already known would not be kept.

So the past couple of years, I've given up on New Year's resolutions because there are always things I want to work on. At least now and then, if there was something, sometimes, I thought I should take care of, I'd make the excuse to wait until New Years to start. I don't want to do that anymore: I should be starting the goals right then and there, rather than waiting. I guess that means my "res-

olution" is not to bother with New Year's resolutions. Out with the resolutions and in with the new goals I want, whenever I want to start them. As I've been working out more, the goals I have been working on are more personal and invisible to the outside world. Working on my fear of missing out and improving my self-confidence and self-image. You know, things like that.

Not that I have a feeling this year will be any different. Each year I sit and watch in silent awe at what happens in the world around me. Hopefully next year can be more peaceful, but that is unlikely. After all, who knows what the future brings? I sure don't.

My Determination: "Hope is a fickle, dangerous thing. It steals your focus and aims it toward the possibilities instead of keeping it where it belongs - on the probabilities." - Rebecca Yarros, Fourth Wing

She breathed live and love into the world

You know the feeling like someone's standing right behind you?

That feeling came over me Sunday evening as I worked on the newspaper. Slowly at first, then more strongly.

I spent the day working on the Jane Wagner story, reading stories, talking to people, and finally, putting ink to paper.

The feeling started as I laid out the front page. And then it got stronger and stronger. As I finished writing the last outline and the page was complete, I paused for a moment to admire my work.

And then I turned around. I had assumed one of my friends was behind me, since it's not uncommon, when I am working, for someone to pop into the office and look at the screen while I put everything in place. In



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

this case, while visiting friends in Florida, working remotely, I thought it was one of them.

But when I turned around no one was there.

I immediately thought of Jane.

I'd like to think maybe she took just a minute of her afterlife, in Heaven, and popped in to take a look at the newspaper.

While I was growing up, Jane's mom, Joie, was my babysitter. I have

many fond memories of Grandma Joie and also fond feelings of admiration for the entire Wagner family. The twins, Maddie and Marnie, were only a year younger than I. I was a freshman, and Carlie a senior, when NRHEG won its second straight girls' state title in basketball in 2014.

Everyone knew Jane; it seemed like she brought joy wherever she went. When she would see me in public, she would stop me, or holler

down the street for me to come talk to her.

She breathed life and love into those around her.

The memories and impact Jane and the Wagner family have created in the minds and lives of those around them are mountainous. May we all strive to be a little more like Jane and bring kindness into the world.

"If tears could build a stairway, and memories a lane, I'd walk right up to Heaven and bring you home again."

Author unknown.

"Although it's difficult today to see beyond the sorrow, may looking back in memory help comfort you tomorrow."

Author unknown.

Grace Lutheran holds successful blood drive

Grace Lutheran Church of Waseca set and exceeded a goal of receiving 36 units of blood for its Red Cross Blood Drive held from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, December 29. The drive actually brought in a total of 40 units.

High School senior Addie Wiesler oversaw the organization for the blood drive. Her work helped her qualify to receive a Red Cross scholarship. Mary Jenatscheck provided supervision for the event.

"Leading up to the blood drive we learned from the Red Cross about the critical need for blood. The blood donors provided such a needed and generous gift," said Jenatscheck. The American Red Cross continues to experience a national blood and

platelet shortage. The organization declared a national blood shortage on Sept. 11, 2023 citing a critically low blood supply level.



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DEADLINES: Pioneer: Noon Tuesday
GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$55 Per Year, Waseca County Residents
\$65 State of Minnesota • \$75 Outside Minnesota

Waseca County Pioneer (USPS permit #25304) is published weekly on Friday, 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.

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Sheriff's posse volunteers brought a horse to call attention to their service "ringing the bell" for the Waseca County Salvation Army outside the Waseca Walmart store on December 2.

■ Bells

from Page 1

unteers brought in the most: \$1,777. The Sheriff's Department raised \$1,449; and fire volunteers collected \$1,074.

"This community supports each other," Chair of the Waseca County Salvation Army John Petersburg said. "I'd like to give a heartfelt thank you to all who are a part of this."

Waseca Police Chief Penny Vought said her group had a really fun time.

"I know people in need, in our community, will benefit from this," Vought said.

In their efforts to raise funds, various departments got creative.

The Sheriff's office brought in a horse and jingle bells. The fire department brought in a rescue dog.

Despite the embellishments, however, the police department brought in the most. Chief Vought shared that one donation pushed her department's collection efforts over the top when a patron approached them and asked if they needed funds. That individual then wrote a check for \$1,000—clearly a major boost to their cause.

Petersburg thinks the end-of-year total for donations will be about \$8,000.

For those looking to donate, they can access the Salvation Army website and select the Waseca County chapter. Posters around town also have a QR code which persons with a smartphone can scan and donate from.

The Salvation Army of Waseca is also looking for committee members to join their four-person group. Members typically meet about four times a year for lunch at the home of Petersburg. Interested persons are encouraged to contact Petersburg.

■ Program

from Page 1

porations and philanthropic organizations, as well as from individuals and local "drives" sponsored by various groups. This year's iWealth holiday basket initiative raised \$12,000, some of which has gone to support the .

"For the Backpack program, monetary donations are the most practical because we need close to 300 of each item per week," said Kolander. "Since we buy in bulk, and because certain programs/food suppliers can provide special pricing, the food shelf can probably stretch those donated dollars further than a typical consumer can."

Given the volume of food needed to continue supplying the bags, Kolander says she is always

shopping. She tells the story of contacting a Hy-Vee food store and requesting more than 1,000 cans of a certain brand of chicken noodle soup that was on sale. "They were completely surprised by the number," Kolander remembers. "But they were happy to oblige and supply as close to that number to us for purchase as they were able."

Kolander also expresses her gratitude for the consistent work done by a group of students from the Southwest Metro Transitional Program, which helps special needs students earn their diplomas. The students come to the food shelf and put together a production line, filling the majority of the bags needed each week and then delivering them to the appropriate school(s). Another set of volunteers is coordinated by Grace Lutheran Church to package and deliver the remaining Backpacks to Sacred Heart and TEAM.



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NRHEG's 'Hurricane'

Jane Wagner dies at age 57

By ELI LUTGENS
Publisher/Editor

There's a giant void in the New Richland area that in no way can be filled.

Hurricanes are, after all, extremely rare here on the prairie.

No longer will Jane Wagner be there to brighten the day of most anyone she encountered. The area's favorite basketball mom died suddenly last Sunday at the age of 57.

Wagner, nicknamed "Hurricane," a moniker she embraced, was born in 1966 and grew up in New Richland. She met her husband, Darren, in study hall in high school. Together they raised five children: Alex, 35; Danny 32; Carlie, 28; and twins Maddie and Marnie, 25.

"Everybody knows everybody by name," Jane said in an interview in 2016. "We're all friends."

"Her smile would light any room, her heart would heal any hurt," Carlie, Jane's oldest daughter, said on Facebook Sunday. "She was the most giving and selfless person, and she loved her family so, so much, and it most definitely showed. Love you Mom."

The Wagner family can easily be associated with sports, and New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva.

"Jane was the mom who was at every game and track meet with a bag full of snacks for the kids," NRHEG Track Coach Duey Ferber told the Star Eagle.

Ferber coached the two Wagner boys Alex and Danny in junior high football and Carlie, Maddie, and Marnie in track for six years. In total, he spent 10 years coaching the Wagner kids.

"She would be bundled up at a cold track meet in her bag chair playfully blaming me for the cold weather and blaming me for her kids being out for track," Ferber said. "If you would rank Panther fans in the history of NRHEG, she would be at the top."

Jane would do whatever she could to help those around her.

In an article printed in the Star Eagle last year, Jane's name, referenced as "New Richland's most famous basketball mom" slipped into the story. While Gene Amley was being interviewed, Jane walked in.

"Tell me what you want and I'll bring you something good for supper," Jane told Gene before scurrying back to town.

Amley was asked if Jane and he were related.

"No," said Amley. "She's just looking in on me."

Other former coaches and teachers have nothing but kind words about Jane.

"Jane was nothing but upbeat, positive and supportive," NRHEG's John Schultz shared.

Schultz, either in the head coaching position or through the assistant role, coached Carlie in basketball from grades 3 through 12 and the twins from grades 7-12. He also was a teacher in physical education and health classes for three years to all five Wagner kids, and served as an assistant coach for two years to Danny and Alex when they played football.

"Once you met Jane, you would not forget her. And she would never forget you," said Schultz. "She was very family oriented and her pride and joy was her kids. And for good



The Wagner Family

"Jane was the mom who was at every game and track meet with a bag full of snacks for the kids. She would be bundled up at a cold track meet in her bag chair playfully blaming me for the cold weather and for her kids being out for track."

— Duey Ferber

reason. Her kids are so very kind as well. Jane and Darren did such a great job raising their children. Jane had a high energy personality. She always made you laugh. For this, she earned the nickname "Hurricane Jane." She will be missed so much."

"Jane was always introduced as The Hurricane, but often she was the eye of the storm, at the center of a bustling family unit," Mark Domeier said.

Domeier taught all five Wagner kids in English, coached the boys in junior high baseball, and is the famous "voice of Panthers," who served as announcer during the Lady Panthers' state championship seasons in 2013 and '14.

"As the matriarch of a great family, she was always even more concerned about her kids being good people and working hard than she was about any athletic achievements," said Domeier.

In another past interview, Carlie credited her humble, grateful attitude to her parents. "The Wagners' low-key approach to sports parenting gives a strong hint about where Carlie gets her humble, grateful attitude," the story reads. "The same could be said for New Richland as a whole. People here know about and celebrate Wagner's athletic accomplishments. But when they say hello to her, it's because they're her friends, not because she's a celebrity. As Jane said: "She's just Carlie here."

As NRHEG knows, she's just Jane here. She's the Panthers' No. 1 fan.

'To give blood is to give life'

Donations make vital difference to Wadd family

25 pints collected

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

As she finishes her time as "Miss Southern Minnesota," Kloe Wadd wanted to facilitate another public service event. When it was time to choose the cause, the choice was obvious.

"To give blood is to give life," she observed.

Wadd, 19, is now an Agricultural Business and Agricultural Communications major at the University of Minnesota, Crookston. She will be passing on her title with the Miss America Organization when a new recipient is named on January 20.

A blood drive held the afternoon of December 29 at Farmamerica filled quickly; by the end of the afternoon, 25 pints of blood had been collected. "People who know us know how important blood donation has been for our family," said Kari Wadd, mother to both Kloe and son Mason.

Publicity in advance of the blood drive described the lifesaving value of blood donations Mason, now 17, received after it was discovered he had a rare blood disorder. He received his first blood transfusion before he was even born, and needed several more while an infant. Kari now donates blood plasma to assist with research regarding that same disorder.

"More than half the people giving today," Kari observed during the drive, "are first-time donors." Many were also acquaintances and even relatives to the Wadd family.

Kari's sister Kendra Hoffman came from Hanska to take part. Hoffman expressed her pleasure at being able to meet all the Red Cross criteria and donate. "It's been a fantastic experience," she



A blood drive held Dec. 29 at Farmamerica was in observance of the many ways the Wadd family has benefitted from, and contributed to blood services. Kari (left) and Kloe (right) Wadd with family members Seth Rosin and Kendra Hoffman flanking blood drive worker Ashley Peterson, of Mankato.

enthused. "I'll gladly do it again in the future."

Cousin Seth Rosin, 21, came from Nicollet. Rosin, too, was donating for the first time. His reaction?

"Do it! It's exciting to be able to do something so simple and do so much good."

Kloe observed that the Red Cross has declared the U.S. to be in a "national emergency" when it comes to the blood supply. She had been told that donations have dropped considerably since the Covid pandemic, and perhaps people are nervous about returning to the donation tables.

"We really encourage people to donate," she

said. "We want people to know there are carefully designed safety procedures."

"We'll take care of them."

His family members mentioned that Mason had intended to be present for the blood drive, but because of having been exposed to Covid was forced to quarantine.

"It's a shame, too," said Kari. "He's coming up on the one-year anniversary of his heart surgery, and he is ready to share his story."

"He also wanted to express his gratitude. It's donors like the people here who saved his life."

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OBITUARIES

Winston Evenson

Winston Burnett Evenson, a loving father, grandfather, and proud member of his community, passed away peacefully, surrounded by his loving daughters, on December 22, 2023 at the New Richland Care Center. Born on June 28, 1927 in New Richland, Winston was the son of Arthur and Alice (Sunde) Evenson.

After graduating from New Richland High School in 1945, Winston answered the call of duty and joined the United States Army on September 5, 1946. Serving his country with honor and dedication, he was honorably discharged on January 22, 1948.

In June of 1951, Winston married the love of his life, Lorraine Wenzel, and together they built a beautiful life in New Richland. They were blessed with two daughters, Mary and LeAnn, who brought them immense joy and pride. He and Lorraine enjoyed their time together and with friends, spending time dancing at many different venues in the area.

Throughout his life, Winston worked as a dedicated truck driver for Shurson Trucking and also assisted in digging basements in the area. He later enjoyed working at WFS with area farmers. Winston's commitment to serving others extended beyond his work, as he devoted his time to the New Richland Fire Department and proudly served as chaplain for the American Legion Post 75. In 2010 he had the honor of joining local veterans on an honor flight to Washington DC; the first and only flight Winston took in his lifetime. Winston's sense of duty and love for his country were evident in his service, reflecting his unwavering commitment to the values he held dear. An active member of St. Peter Lutheran Church, Winston served as Sunday School superintendent, council member, and usher, embodying his strong Christian faith.

Known for his warm and friendly demeanor, Winston was cherished by all who knew him. He had a genuine passion for his country, frequently expressing his belief that it was the best place to live. A lover of sports, he enjoyed watching games and supporting his grandchildren and great-grandchildren in their various activities. Winston had an incredible memory and held a wealth of knowledge, earning him the reputation of being a great historian within the community and his family.

In his leisure time, Winston could often be found cruising around town in his golf cart, taking the opportunity to visit friends and have a friendly chat. His presence at the local elevator, sipping coffee with his companions, will be dearly missed. Winston had an unwavering love for his family, find-



Winston Evenson

ing great joy in spending time with them or hearing their voices over the phone.

As we bid farewell to Winston, we remember his compassionate spirit, his dedication to his community, and his profound love for his family. He leaves behind a legacy of kindness and genuine friendship that will be cherished by all who were fortunate enough to have known him.

Winston will be lovingly remembered by his daughters, Mary Routh and LeAnn (Curt) Fuchs; grandchildren, Roger (Yvonne) Nelson, Rusty (Kalisha Atkins) Routh, Adam (Missy) Routh, Barry (Emily) Fuchs, Ross (Megan) Fuchs, and Cole Fuchs; great-grandchildren, Axel, Rex, Magnus, Eero, Lila, Lucy, Leni, Leia, Elle, Jude, Ava, Eli, Rhett, Esme, Emma, Vivian, Owen, and Lila; siblings, Joanne (Roger) Cherrington, Kathryn Parriott, and Charles (Karee) Evenson, sisters-in-law, Ann Wenzel, Arlene (Rod) Johnson, and Karen Evenson; along with many nieces and nephews.

Winston was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Lorraine in 2019; son-in-law, Dean Routh; siblings, Roger (Yvonne) Evenson, Eilene (Maynard) Johnson, and Ellsworth Evenson; brothers-in-law, Earl Parriott, Lester (Marian) Wenzel, and Billy Wenzel; and niece, Ruth Ann Hager.

A funeral service was held on Saturday, December 30, 2023 at 11 a.m. at St. Peter Lutheran Church, New Richland, MN; Pastor Scott Williams officiated. Interment is at St Peter Cemetery in New Richland, MN.

Winston will be forever remembered in our hearts as someone who loved his life, had pride in his country and community, and truly enjoyed being in the company of friends and family. May his legacy serve as a reminder to live each day to the fullest, to cherish our loved ones, and to approach life's challenges with the same steadfast determination that defined Winston's remarkable journey.

Margaret Hasslen

MARGARET MARIE (GUYER) HASSLEN, age 102, of Waseca, died, Saturday, December 30, 2023, at Lakeshore Inn Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Waseca.

Born in Waseca, on December 19, 1921, a daughter of the late William and Gena (Moen) Guyer. Margaret graduated from Waseca High School in 1939, she attended Mankato Teachers College, then graduated from Minneapolis Business College. Her years of employment included E.F. Johnson Co., Waseca Mutual Insurance Co., Bank of America in Pasadena, California, Southern School of Agriculture, and the University of Minnesota Technical College, where she met and married Harland Hass-

len. They enjoyed gardening, traveling, and spending winters in Tucson, Arizona. She was an active member of Faith United Methodist Church, Monday Study Club, plus a lot of coffee parties. Margaret was a gracious person who was blessed with good health for most of her life and always generous to her family, friends, and community.

She is survived by her stepdaughter, Kathy, and Gary Perreault; two step-grandchildren, Brady, and Andrew Perreault; step great-grandson, Caden Perreault; niece Betty and husband Charles Rafferty, and several great nieces, nephews, and many wonderful friends. She is preceded in death by her parents, William and Gena; her husband Harland; stepson Douglas and his

wife Linda Hasslen; brother and sister-in-law George and Ethel Guyer; sister, Helen Smith; and niece, Sharon and husband Mark Weckwerth.

Visitation was held, Wednesday, January 3, 2024, from 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM at Faith United Methodist Church in Waseca. Funeral services were held at 11:00 AM at the church with Pastor Jon Schultz officiating. Private family interment was held in the Woodville Cemetery in Waseca. Memorials may be made in Margaret's name to Faith United Methodist Church in Waseca.

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Margaret Hasslen

Delores Weller

Delores Joann Weller, 87, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, December 27, 2023 at her home. A funeral service was held Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at St. Theodores Catholic Church at 11AM with visitation held an hour prior. Father Kurt Farrell will be officiating.

Delores was born on Sept. 14, 1936 in Waseca MN to Leo and Helen (Johnson) Praxl. She attended Sacred Heart Catholic School in Waseca, MN. Delores was united in

matrimony to the love of her life, Richard Weller, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church on Sept. 21, 1954. Together the couple moved to Albert Lea in 1955.

Delores worked at Enders Tool Co for 28 years and Edward Manual Acting for 8 years. She enjoyed ballroom dancing in Clear Lake and polka in Gibbon, MN. She also enjoyed hunting and fishing, specifically geese in Saskatchewan, upland game in Alberta, and pheasants in South Dakota. Together they shared a cabin at Shell Lake for 6 years.

Delores is preceded in death by her parents Leo and Helen Praxl and brothers Jack, Jim, and Wayne.

Delores is survived by her husband Richard, sister-in-law Phoebe Praxl, and many nieces and nephews.

The family would like to give a special thanks to Delores' Care team, Embrace Home Health Care, and St. Croix Hospice for their exceptional care.

Memorials are preferred to Embrace Home Health Care and St. Croix Hospice.



Delores Weller

■ Briefs

from Page 1

Farmamerica "Raise a Toast" event 6 p.m. January 12

The Farmamerica "Raise a Toast" four-course meal and ladies' night out fellowship will begin at 6 p.m. Friday, January 12. For more information contact Farmamerica: 507-835-2052.

Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet 8 p.m. January 22

The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting the annual Community Awards Banquet from 5 to 7:30 p.m. January 22 at Starfire Event Center. Cost is \$35 per person.

Waseca American Legion Adult Carnival 5 p.m. Jan. 26

An American Legion fundraiser set to begin at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 26, will include beer and wine tasting, a "wine wall," games with prizes, and both a silent and a live auction. Food will include Philly cheesesteak, loaded fries, and more. For more information: 507-833-9935.

Farmamerica Winter Charm on the Farm 11 a.m. January 27

Family oriented Winter Charm on the Farm will be at Farmamerica from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. Celebrate winter with carriage rides, snowshoeing, s'mores, hot chocolate, snow painting and more. Tickets can be purchased on Farmamerica's website. More information by calling 507-835-2052.

Waseca Area Caregiver Services Fundraiser 8 p.m. January 28

A fundraiser is being held to support veterans and underserved communities is being hosted January 28 at the Waseca VFW by Waseca Area Caregiver Services. The fundraiser will be an All-You-Can-Eat breakfast with a bake sale, and music provided by Kozy. Breakfast is from 8 a.m. to 12 or while supplies last.

3 on 3 basketball tournament April 6, 2024

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

Shepherd's Robe Free store Tuesdays from 1-3

and 5-7 p.m.

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

Waldorf Veterans Memorial Fund Drive

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

Waseca County Stagecoach History

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

Lester Keith Root

LESTER KEITH ROOT, age 91 of Waseca died on Monday, January 1, 2024 at Colony Court in Waseca.

Born on December 17, 1932 in Waseca County, Minnesota, he was the son of Enoch and Irene (O'Riley) Root. He attended school in rural Waseca County. Lester proudly served his country in the United States Navy during the Korean War, serving on the USS Leyte from 1950 until 1953. Lester met Minnie Oeltjenbruns on a blind date at a card party. They married six months later in Mountain Lake, Minnesota on June 6, 1954.

Lester worked for Herter's and then the E.F. Johnson Co. in Waseca until his retirement. He enjoyed spending time in his workshop (listening to classic country radio), where he could build, repair, or restore almost anything for family and friends including buggies and sleighs. In addition to spending time with his family and watching his grandkids sporting events, Lester and Minnie enjoyed dancing, playing cards, fishing and traveling in their motor home throughout the United States. Lester was a proud member of St. John Lutheran Church in Waseca and the Waseca American Legion and VFW.

He is survived by his wife, Minnie of Waseca; three children, Delwin (Sheryl) Root, Dawn Kraus, and Donna (Robert) Jorissen; four grandchildren, Jacob, Andrew, Ashley and Joshua; and six great grandchildren, Vivian, Owen, Dylan, Stella, Graham, and Leona.



Lester Root

He is also survived by siblings, Leona Wenzel, Leland Root, and Lyle (Sharon) Root. He was preceded in death by his parents; sister, Leta Clemons; and brothers, Lyndel and Lowell.

Visitation will be held on Monday, January 8, 2024 from 4-7 PM at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca, and will continue for one hour before services at the church on Tuesday.

Memorial services will be held on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 11:00 AM at St. John Lutheran Church in Waseca. Burial will follow at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to a hospice facility of your choice.

Lester's family would like to extend a special thanks to the staffs of Colony Court and Mayo Clinic Hospice for their kindness and care for Lester.



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Waseca Archives

86 Years Ago – The Waseca Journal, January 5, 1938

- The fervor of Waseca county sportsmen took a pendulum swing during the year 1937, according to figures released from the county auditor's office this week which showed a sharp decline in the number of small game licenses issues and a corresponding rise in the number of fishing licenses. Small game licenses this year numbered 1122 as compared with 1750 a year ago, a drop of 628 hunters who took to the fields of the county in 1937. Fishing licenses showed an increase of 290 when 2927 licenses were issued to top last year's figure of 2637.

- After a wait of two years, Janesville was allotted funds through PWA early this week with which to proceed with the erection of a new municipal power plant. The allotment, according to press dispatches, will be \$105,455. Janesville approved the project by vote two years ago, but the funds were held up due to litigation in federal courts regarding the legality of using public funds for the construction of municipal power plants. A recent decision of the supreme court upheld the validity of the plan, thereby releasing funds for this purpose.

- At a meeting of the county Red Cross at the Legion club rooms on Wednesday night, Martin Koehler, Waseca druggist, was elected chairman of the group for the year 1938, succeeding Miss Dorothy Huseby of New Richland in the position.

- With 4,000 tons to pack this season, work got under way today at the Johnston ice house and on the lake cutting, storing and packing the annual ice-harvest. The work is handled under the direction of Ray Johnston with a crew of eight men on the lake, 14 at the ice-house and eight on trucks. The hole from which the ice is being taken is cut about 30 feet into the lake in front of the bath-house at Clear Lake park. About 2,000 tons will be packed for consumption in Waseca and the remaining 2,000 tons will be shipped from Waseca to Tracy for use by the C&NW Railway.

93 Years Ago – The Waseca Herald, January 1, 1931

- In the December payment for November butterfat, the Waseca Co-operative Creamery patrons received 40 cents a pound net, which is probably the highest price paid by any cooperative creamery in Minnesota. This is due to the exceptionally high quality of Waseca butter, which has been handled for years by a big Philadelphia concern which pays a nice premium above the regular market price, as they cater to a high-class trade. In view of the fact that butter prices have dropped to the lowest figure in 25 years, Buttermaker Anderson and the officers of the Waseca Creamery Ass'n are entitled to congratulations on this record.

- Last Sunday night Joe Powell, son of Hiram Powell of Blooming Grove, parked the family car north of the Farmers National Bank while he went to the theatre. When he came out the car was gone. The thief had no trouble in starting away as the key had been left in the car. Sheriff Wadd and the police were called and surrounding towns were notified and a description of the car broadcasted, but as yet no trace of it has been found.

- Dr. B. J. Gallagher has been recently notified of his appointment as resident physician for the two railroads entering Waseca. He received the appointment from the North Western shortly after the death of the late Dr. Swartwood and the M. & St. L. appointment last week. The work requires the periodical examination of railway employees and caring for any injury of illness sustained in the course of their employment. In this case, the railway companies rather than the doctor are to be congratulated in selecting a man who has been eminently successful in his profession. Dr. Gallagher is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and took post-graduate work at the Mayo Clinic, where he later became a member of the Mayo staff in the operating department. In addition to his experience in Rochester, he served as a surgeon overseas during the World War and had a year's experience in a German prison camp, as he refused to abandon the wounded American soldiers when the regiment to which he was attached was captured by the enemy.

151 Years Ago – The Waseca Weekly News, January 1, 1873

- Last week, the surveyors on the Minneapolis & St. Louis road reached Wilton, where, at last accounts, they were looking for the best point of crossing of the LeSueur River. This line, as surveyed, passes about a mile and a half west of this village. As a result of these surveys, real estate has taken a rise in Wilton, and one or two sales have been made. In connection with this matter, it is proper to say that Messers. Wells and Washburn, of Minneapolis, were in New York last week to see what could be done in the way of raising means to build the road early next season.

- Last Saturday, Mr. L. A. Gage, of this township, was in the Brick Store of Mr. Simon Smith, trading. He laid his pocket-book and mittens on the counter in the front room while he stepped into the back room to look at some sugars. He was not gone more than a couple of minutes, but when he returned his pocket-book, containing \$15.00, was gone. The person who stole it would feel better during the remainder of life if he were to return it, and perhaps save a public exposure by doing so. P.S. Since the above was in type we learn that the pocket-book was found on the street, and returned to the owner.

- We have always been skeptical in regard to spiritual manifestations. We have seriously doubted the capacity of spirits to exercise muscular power on earth. But that doubt is now removed. It was removed in this wise: A very respectable, honest, worthy, hospitable farmer of St. Mary township, by name Dennis Sheehan, on or about Christmas, came into this village, as, indeed, he has done many a time heretofore; and while he was acted upon in a mysterious manner by spirits which seemed to take entire control of him. He started home, after a while, but the evil spirits still clung to him and did their utmost to freeze him to-death on the prairie. After a terrible struggle, however, he threw off their influence as to reach home. It was a narrow escape, we are told, as his hands and feet and face do testify – Such spirits are always dangerous to have around, and we would advise spewing them out.

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Board approves 4.71% levy increase

By MELISSA DUNN
Staff Writer

The Waseca School board approved a \$5.3 million tax levy, an increase of 4.71% for taxes payable in 2024 at the “Truth in Taxation” meeting held December 21. No members of the public were in attendance for business director Matt Moline’s detailed report summarizing the distribution of local tax levies used in support of the district. Moline’s data of levy amounts from 2008 up to the current year demonstrate a six-year average of a 1.71% increase per year. Adjustments are based on changes in population, state statutes and board authority, changes in property values, building bond, and census data.

An interesting piece of Moline’s report summarized legislative actions to assist districts including local optional revenue (LOR), a system under which the state allows school boards to access some operating dollars without having to seek voter approval. Moline said the district currently uses the full amount allowed but Waseca is one of 98 districts that does not have an additional operating referendum above and beyond the LOR.

Moline said this is the first year the Agriculture to Tax Credit, new in 2018, has increased to the full 70%. Since about 36% of the area covered by the district is agricultural land, it will receive around \$600,000 in state aid that originally would have been paid by taxpayers.

■ County

from Page 1

within the county which are regarded as presenting a priority need for replacement. Kollar pointed out that the list is shorter than in the last couple of years because a number of bridges were replaced during this past construction season.

Now at the top of the list are a bridge on County Road 5 and two on County Road 3. Of those three, Kollar told commissioners, contracts for work this year are already in place for two, and the bid process is underway to find a contractor for the third.

Commissioner De Malterer complimented Kollar’s work: “We knew we were behind,” she commented regarding the number of insufficient bridges in the county. “It’s a very positive thing to see us making progress.”

Also acting on the “organizational” nature of the meeting, Kollar confirmed with county commissioners that, as it has in the past, the Waseca County website will serve as the “official” publishing agent for any legally required public notices.

Human resources department head Melissa Sexton reported on the state’s new “Earned Sick and Safe Time” (ESST) requirement. Under this new law, anyone who works for an employer for 80 hours or more during a given year must be regarded as an employee and be given the opportunity to earn sick and safe time at a rate of one hour earned for each 30 hours worked.

In answer to commissioner Brian Harguth’s question whether the new requirements would create a “logistical nightmare” for her department, Sexton responded that only 8 to 10 seasonal and temporary employees are likely to be affected by the new rule, as the existing county policies already meet or exceed the new standards for its 126 full-time and part-time workers. County administrator Michael Johnson predicted that Sexton’s department will also be expected to produce and submit a report to the state regarding the county’s level of compliance.

Waseca County facilities manager Brian Tomford shared information with commissioners regarding “abandoned” cemeteries which, over time, have become the county’s responsibility. Tomford told the board the list of such cemeteries, currently includes locations named Peddlers’ Grove, Dusbabeck, Freedom Free, Prairie Peace, Felske, and Radloff.

Tomford presented a proposed policy to be followed when individuals request burial in any of these little-used locations; among the requirements is that the applicant

WASECA SCHOOL BOARD

The 2023-24 audit report by Clifton Larson Allen resulted in a “clean” report; no compliance issues were noted and only one deficiency in the financial reporting process.

Superintendent Eric Hudspith and Director of Teaching and Learning Brooke McGuire shared highlights of the district’s World’s Best Workforce (WBWF) report, which was submitted to the state in December. The purpose of WBWF is to enhance student achievement and review the teaching and learning supports the district has established, as well as ensuring the long-term strategic plans and goals in place are monitored and tracked. McGuire’s presentation for school year 2022-23 illustrated that 90.1% of incoming kindergarteners were assessed to be ready for school, that 43.5% of third-graders read at a proficient level, achievement gaps for students of color were reduced by less than ten percent, 71% of graduating seniors felt prepared for the transition to college, the workplace, or the military, and 74.2% of students within the district graduated in four years. McGuire summarized that while the kindergarten readiness goal had been met, the other goals were on track.

The school board will hold its organizational meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 4.

that two area residents, Sexton and city resident Charles Benson, had applied to join the planning and zoning board. Commissioners expressed the hope that Benson, already a member of the regional Economic Development Authority (EDA) would remain with that board.

During the “reports” section at the close of the meeting, Johnson complimented board members on their decision to reduce the county’s final property tax levy for taxes payable in 2024. During their December “budget and levy” discussion, board members had voted to decrease the percentage change from 1.5% to half a percent.

He pointed out that doing so continued an important trend of “doing more with less local tax input.”

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pulled pork sandwich meal provided as well as some musical entertainment later in the evening.

- Gary Schoenfeld, a Waseca County native and fourth-generation farmer, is one of the newest members of the American Soybean Association's (ASA) Corteva Young Leader Program.

- Tom Hovestad, agronomist at the SROC was honored for his 40 years of service to the UM Southern Research and Outreach Center.

- The City of Waseca approved its 2023 tax levy and budget during its final meeting of 2022; it also bid farewell to outgoing mayor Roy Srp and city councilman Allan Rose.

Interim city manager Carl Sonnenberg asked for a moment of recognition for the two departing council members. "Never underestimate the difference you made, and the lives you touched," Srp read from one of two plaques presented during the meeting.

- Five county officials were sworn into public office by the honorable Judge Carol Hanks during the regular meeting of the Waseca County Commissioners January 3, 2023. They were: County Attorney Rachel Cornelius (2nd term); County Sheriff Jay Dulas (first term, replacing retired sheriff Brad Milbrath); county commissioners, re-elected, all of which ran unopposed: Blair Nelson, DeAnne Malterer, and Brad Krause.

- New Waseca school board member Theron Kruger was sworn in at the board's January 5 organizational meeting.

- The Janesville Council swore in two members and the mayor at its Monday, January 9 meeting: incumbent Melissa Kopachek, incumbent Mayor Andy Arnoldt, and new council member Ivan Maas. Kopachek and Maas beat out Daniel Frenk for the two open seats, while Arnoldt was left unchallenged for the mayoral position.

- Chad Neitzel, newly elected New Richland mayor, was sworn in by Gail Schmidt, her last official act as mayor, during the regular meeting of the city council Monday, January 9, 2023.

- One person who deserves to claim he's helped Waseca get to where it is today is 92-year-old Ed Frederick. But, for those who try to thank him, he simply turns the tables. "All I feel is gratitude for my time in Waseca."

"I've been so fortunate in my life," Frederick expressed. "I'm 92 going on 93. God's been great to me."

- With about a month of work put into rehearsing, the Waseca High School is presenting its one-act play How to Succeed in High School Without Really Trying in the school Performing Arts Center Saturday, Jan. 21 at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.

- The Waseca High School girls' basketball team does not have to look far for consistent point production this season.

Kloe Wadd has it covered.

Wadd, a 6-foot-2 senior center, has been unstoppable at times and was again Friday, Jan. 21, totaling 31 points as the Bluejays blasted visiting Blue Earth Area 58-24 in the WHS gym.

- The six-game homestand is proving to be great for the Waseca High School girls' hockey team. With a 6-1 win against Austin Tuesday, Jan. 10 and a 4-2 victory against Red Wing Monday, the girls have won four of five games in said homestand.

- Newly installed mayor Randy Zimmerman presided over his first city council meeting Tuesday evening.

- Waseca resident, Blooming Prairie native Jon Butler, 41, has worked for FM BANK for more than a decade, and will serve as president of the newly relocated charter at its location in the former Wells Fargo Building in Waseca, set to open in the summer of 2023.

- Nick Edwards was recently promoted to the position of Captain with the Waseca Fire Department.

- Has anyone ever wondered how to get out of roll call, give a presentation in French class without knowing French, party like it's 1999 at graduation, or find a way for Tom Cruise to help remember how DNA works? Probably not. But those were among many questions answered in Waseca Theater Department's one-act play "How to Succeed in High School Without Really Trying" by Jonathan Rand.

February

- Four candidates were crowned at the Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Pageant at the Waseca Performing Arts Center on Saturday, Jan. 28.

New 2023 royalty are, Miss Waseca Sleigh and Cutter 2023, Bai-



FarmAmerica's Winter Charm on the Farm focuses on enjoying the outdoors during wintertime. Photo by Mike Huerkamp



Kevin Walter left, and Dan Bulfer smile while helping out at the Sacred Heart Fish Fry March 10. Pioneer photos by Eli Lutgens



Lexi Hanson, fifth-grade, strikes a pose during her dance number. Pioneer photo by Tristan Jensen

lie Thom; Miss South Central 2023, Jasmin Kotek; Miss Waseca County Sleigh and Cutter's Outstanding Teen 2023, Kloe Wadd; and Miss South Central's Outstanding Teen, Maura Erickson.

- After 22 years of service to the Waseca County Sheriff's Department, Sergeant Dave Melchert has retired.

Hundreds came out to his retirement party at the Waseca County East Annex Building the afternoon of Tuesday, Jan. 31. After the public party, Melchert celebrated with family and friends at El Molino.

- Sixth-graders Jude Adams and Wyatt Partain served as emcees for TEAM Academy's school-wide Talent Show the afternoon of January 27. It takes a lot of courage to showcase one's talents in front of peers and family members, yet all twelve acts did just that.

- It's snow week at Waseca High School from Feb. 10-17. Coronation and a pepfest will be on Thursday Feb. 16, at a time to be determined, in the Waseca Performing Arts Center (PAC), followed by pictures. A semi-formal snow dance for students will cap off Thursday evening from 8 to 10:30 p.m. in the high school commons.

Candidates for queen are: Ella Dufault, Lindsey Kopetzki, Thyme Lang, Sarah Robbins, Chloe Schumacher and Klow Wadd. For king: Joseph Adamek, Ethan Davis, Leo Harguth, Alexander Honstad, Griffin Krautkramer, Korbin Schumacher.

- "It's great to see these athletes achieving success," says Joni Churchill, one of four coaches for

NRHEG's competitive cheerleading team. "They've given their all, and it's brought them recognition."

The 15-member team won its third straight state championship on January 28, and will be taking part in a national competition in Orlando on Feb. 10. The state title, however, is not what opened the pathway for their trip to the Sunshine State. That happened last October during a qualifying event held in Minnetonka. Team members have been preparing ever since.

- Waseca County officer Doug Gerdts has been hired to be chief deputy under Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas. The decision came last week, and was approved during the Tuesday morning meeting of the Waseca County Commissioners.

"Doug will be a great addition to the leadership team and I look forward to working with him," Sheriff Dulas said in a statement.

Gerdts' great uncle Don Eustice served as Waseca County Sheriff until he was shot and killed in 1976 while conducting a welfare check.

Gerdts grew up on a Waseca County farm and has been a deputy for the sheriff's department for more than two decades. His first day in his



Brad Milbrath had two retirement parties, one at the Waseca County East Annex Building, and the other at the Mill, Friday, Dec. 30. Milbrath served as a law enforcement officer in Waseca County for 34 years, 12 as the Sheriff.

Promotion



Nick Edwards was recently promoted to the position of Captain with the Waseca Fire Department.

Decade of service



The Waseca Fire Department recently recognized two firefighters for 10 years of service during its annual meeting: Kevin Kelm and Lonnie Mitchell.



Vicky Singlestad presents Adam and Anne Harguth with their Outstanding Young Farmer award.

ward to working with him," Sheriff Dulas said in a statement.

Gerdts' great uncle Don Eustice served as Waseca County Sheriff until he was shot and killed in 1976 while conducting a welfare check.

Gerdts grew up on a Waseca County farm and has been a deputy for the sheriff's department for more than two decades. His first day in his

new role will be Feb. 13.

- "Everybody needs some level of play," says Sean Beaver of Great American Kites. "In our case, we take this 2,000-year-old toy and make it new again."

Beaver and his company will again be flying giant kites over Waseca's Clear Lake as part of the annual Sleigh and Cutter celebration. The



Mayor Randy Zimmerman



Thyme Lang, playing a popular girl, woos Nathaniel Andrs, who is portraying a stereotypical nerd.



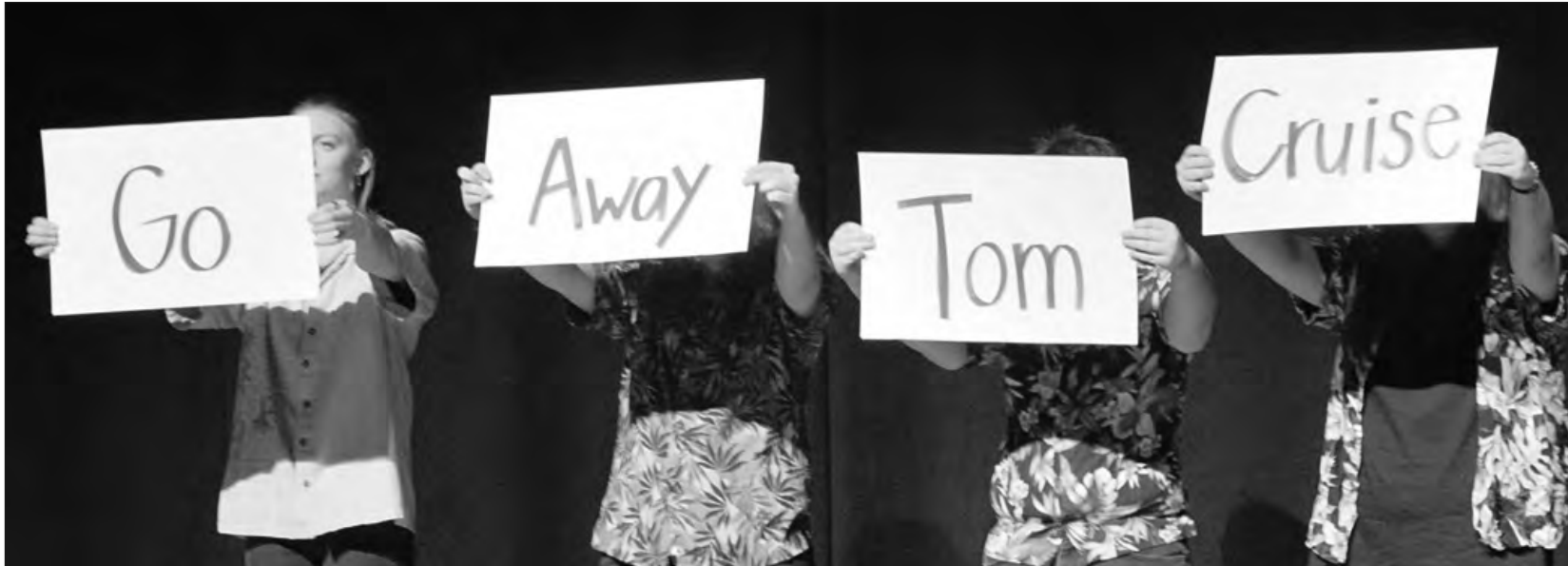
Sergeant Dave Melchert



1,000 POINTS - Waseca girls basketball coach Joan Conway with senior Kloe Wadd after she scored her 1,000th career point in a 51-35 win over Belle Plaine Thursday, Feb. 16, 2023.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens event is scheduled for 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 19. A crew of only four people—including Beaver; his wife, Stephany; and his son Joe—

2023 continued on 6



Ava Norland, Branden Busse, Patrick Howe, and Chelsea Richardson

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will be bringing the company’s “full collection” of “several hundred kites.” They hope to be joined by kite enthusiasts from the region, including some who will have taken part in a kite show the previous day in Clear Lake, Iowa.

- Waseca senior Christian Rodriguez celebrated his 100th career win on the wrestling mat and officially committed to play football at Gustavus Adolphus College, all in the same week.
- Waseca Archery Club played host to the Minnesota Archers Association (MAA) for two major archery events during the weekend of January 27 to 29. Saturday, Jan. 28 was the 2023 All-State Vegas Shoot, a qualifying competition for archers to participate in the Vegas Shoot which is known as the largest and most prestigious indoor archery tournament in the world, attracting more than 4,000 competitors globally.
- Hartley Elementary School kicked off “I Love to Read” month with a visit from Minnesota author and illustrator David LaRochelle Wednesday, Feb. 1. Hartley’s theme for 2023’s “I Love to Read” month was “I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream to Read!”
- Kyle Ahlschlager recently cemented his place in Waseca boys’ hockey history becoming the all-time points leader and first Bluejay to net 100 career goals. He reached the century mark Tuesday Jan. 24 against Redwood Valley. The second title came a week later against Fairmont. “Hitting 100 goals was something I always wanted to do,” Ahlschlager said. “It wasn’t like a big sigh or relief or anything when I did it. I was just glad it happened. It’s a cool thing to do something that’s never been done in our town before.”
- Pepito’s Pizzeria is now open for carryout at the former Waseca train depot located at 308 S. State St. Hours are 3 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday through Friday and Saturday noon to 9:30 p.m. The new pizzeria and brewery, owned by Ward House owner and brewer John Mansfield, shown above, will be open for in-house dining at a date to be determined.
- “We got excited and built the building before we could pay for it,” said Larry Sipe, chairman of the Neighborhood Service Center (NSC) board. A fundraiser to help fix this oversight was held Saturday, Feb. 11 at the American Legion hall. The event, which raised about \$3,200 featured a dinner, silent auction, bake sale, and meat raffle.
- Carl Sonnenberg will no longer be Waseca’s interim city manager. Following a work session Tuesday evening, Feb. 7, the city officially extended an offer to Sonnenberg to take the position full time, which he accepted.
- Waseca Public Schools recently announced Christian Rodriguez and Cecelia Huttemier as winners of the Triple ‘A’ Awards for 2023.
- For around 20 minutes during Janesville’s city council meeting Monday, Feb. 13, all five council members and city attorney Jason Moran went through the first draft of an ordinance to regulate THC sales within the city.
- The 1993 Bluejay Wrestling team - dubbed “The Wrecking Crew” - was acknowledged during a Feb. wrestling meet in Waseca. The team was considered young and not full of the “senior capacity” that other Waseca teams had before them. Despite this, they pulled off a 9-8 season with quality wrestlers at every weight “using their techniques to the best of their ability.”
- The fairgrounds are a bustling place the morning before the Sleigh and Cutter parade. Some 35 units, large and small, have registered to take part in this year’s event—a number which has planners and organizers more than satisfied. “It was a great turnout,” says Sleigh and



Keegan Kuball, a sophomore wrestling at 285 pounds for WEM-JWP, defeated Cameron Scholten of Jackson County Central to become the 4th Grizzly individual state champion
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens



Pioneer columnist and writer Amelia Roessler in front of “The Castle on the Hill” in Segovia, Spain.

Cutter planning committee member Ken Borgmann. “The largest number we’ve had in many years.”

- Snow week royalty gathered in the Waseca High School gymnasium Thursday morning, Feb. 16 to find out who among them would be king and queen. Student Council President Aubrey Hanson and Senior Class President Avery Madsen crowned Korbin Schumacher and Ella Dufault Waseca snow Week royals. The ceremony’s emcees were Hailey Dettmer and Jayme Sandbeck.
- Waseca High School girls’ basketball senior Kloe Wadd scored her 1,000th career point Thursday evening Feb. 16 in a home victory over Belle Plaine 51-35. Wadd’s milestone point came on a free throw with 13:49 remaining in the second half. After the bucket, the game was paused as she celebrated with teammates and embraced coach Joan Conway. The accomplishment makes her the seventh Bluejay to attain the feat. She joins Madison Gehloff, Gus Boyer, Lexie Ulfers, Mikayla Rolling, Tressa Beckel, and Amy Busch.
- Itron announced to staff on Monday its intention to close its up-to-450-employee Waseca factory at the end of 2024 and relocate its operations to West Union, South Carolina.
- March
 - To call the Janesville Council meeting this past Monday, Feb. 27 “heated” may be a bit of an understatement.
 - Talk about a potential THC ordinance was highly animated, leading to City Attorney Jason Moran counting how many times he was interrupted while trying to explain the proposed ordinance, Mayor Andy Arnoldt having to call for order several times, council member Ivan Maas

suggesting tabling discussion on the THC ordinance for six months, and ultimately council member Melissa Kopachek walking out of the meeting when Maas’s motion carried 3-1.

- It was a really good day for Waseca High School wrestling. That may have been an understatement from Bluejay head coach Jake Janike.
- Out of the 13 WHS wrestlers who took part in the Section 1AA tournament over Friday and Saturday, Feb. 24-25, seven moved onto the second round of competition. Five medaled and three made the championship round in their respective weight classes. Freshman Matthew Veroeven was victorious in his match, and became the Section 1AA champion in the 220-pound weight class. All it took was one escape to defeat Zumbrotta-Mazeppa’s Wyatt Mulder and capture the title.
- Seniors Christian Rodriguez at 170 and Payton Garza at 195 were the other two that made it to the championship round. Although they lost their matches and had to settle for second place, they still qualified to wrestle in the state tournament along with Veroeven Friday and Saturday March 3-4.
- It was a great Saturday for the WEM-JWP Grizzlies wrestling team Feb. 25. Eleven wrestlers out of 14 medaled, and the team will send three wrestlers to the state tournament: freshman Brady Murphy at 106 pounds, sophomore Keegan Kuball at 285, and senior Jack Cahill at 220.



The 1993 Waseca High School wrestling team, known as the “Wrecking Crew,” gathered for a 30-year anniversary on Feb. 9.
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens



Annabelle Petsinger, a junior wrestling 120 pounds in the girls’ division, defeated Stillwater’s Audrey Rogotzke to become NRHEG’s first female state champion, and only the school’s 7th individual champion since the district’s consolidation in the 1990s.
Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens



DECORATED - Ed Frederick has earned many awards throughout the years ranging from plaques from the University of Minnesota to his contributions to the FFA.

- Waseca County schools sent nine wrestlers to the Minnesota State High School League tournament last weekend. Two of them found gold: Keegan Kuball of WEM-JWP and Annabelle Petsinger of NRHEG returned home state champions.
- “What leads me here tonight is that...I can’t do this anymore. These meetings are getting increasingly more challenging to attend,” stated Janesville council member Melissa Kopachek on a late-night Facebook video which she used to announce her intention to resign. The video was

posted Tuesday, March 14, after the most recent city council meeting.

The Janesville council held a special meeting Thursday, Mar. 16 to accept the resignation, effective immediately.

- After Pastor Andrada left Trinity Lutheran Church in February, the congregation began its search for a new officiant.
- In the meantime, an interim pastor who has served around the United States and Canada will serve the church until a full-time leader can be found.



Parade organizer Ken Borgmann

Kristian Bjornstad arrived at Trinity Lutheran almost two weeks ago, and is enjoying it so far. “The first service was pretty amazing because of the congregation,” he says. “Everyone was very nice to me and made me feel comfortable.”

- Good food, conversations, and stories were shared during the annual Farm and City Luncheon March 16, hosted by the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce at the Mill in Waseca.
- Following a lunch catered by the Pheasant Cafe, the following families were honored with awards:
 - Farm Family of the year (FFOY): Cedar Crate Farms, Dan and Lara Zimmerli of Waldorf.
 - After 15 years, the Waseca County Sheriff’s Posse was the host of the Minnesota Sheriff’s Mounted Posse Association’s convention, which took place at the Mill on Saturday, March 18.
- The state convention brings around 250 people from throughout Minnesota to its event. Every year, one of the state’s 87 counties with a sheriff’s posse gets a chance to host.
- The Adam and Anne Harguth family was celebrated with the Waseca County’s Outstanding Young Farmer award during the 2023 Waseca County Farm and City Luncheon Thursday, March 16.
- What can be better than delicious barbecue, discounts on drinks, bean bag tournaments, horse races, live music, and auctions of signed Justin Jefferson and Kirill Kaprizov jerseys?
- The Minnesota Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #16 had all of that and more at The Mill in Waseca Saturday, March 25.
- A hot button issue in Waseca for the past few years has been the Gaiter Lake development project. The controversy surrounds a 62-acre property owned by the city and slated for development, including possible installation of a storm-water retention pond, water and sewer lines, and more at city expense, then offering the lots for sale.
- After 11 seasons, 203 career wins, three conference titles and three state tournaments, head coach of the Waseca Lady Bluejays’ basketball team, Joan Conway, has made the difficult decision to step down.



Miss Minnesota Outstanding Teen Julia Schumacher crowns Kloe Wadd, while Miss Minnesota 2022 Rachel Evangelisto crowns Bailie Thom. Wadd was also voted Miss Congeniality.

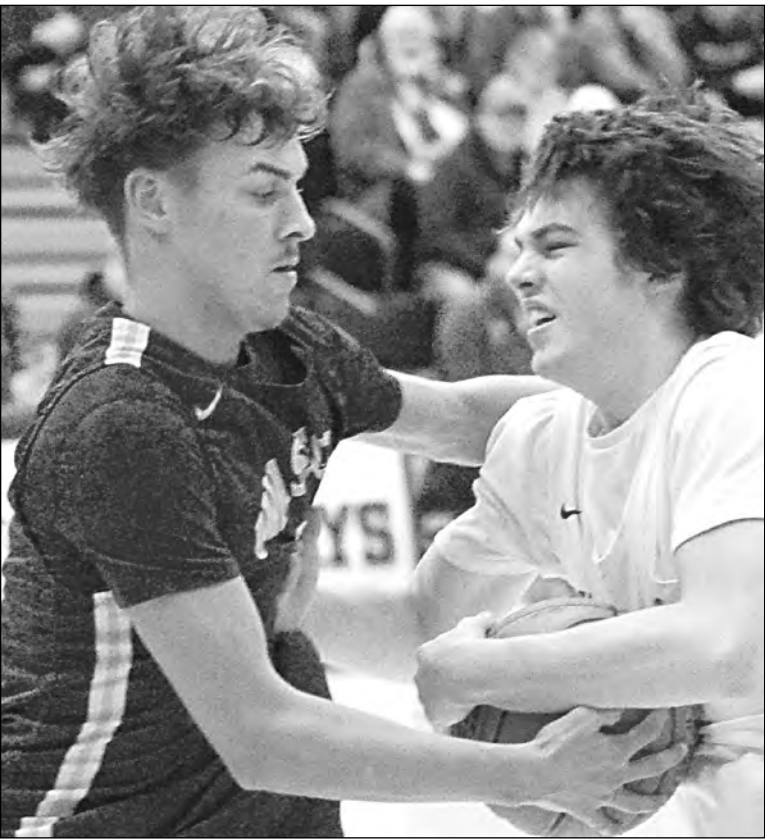


Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School crowned its snow royalty during halftime of the boys’ basketball game against Maple River Tuesday, Feb. 14. It was a short and sweet coronation with Faith Olson crowned as queen and Michael VanRavenhorst becoming king. The other queen candidates were Adalynn Davis, Kylee Hanks, Paris Herme, and Ashlin Keyes. King candidates were Ian Barnes, Kelton Erler, Zachary Groh, and Ryder Thissen.

Groh, a student council representative, explained at JWP’s School Board meeting Monday, Feb. 13 that the other council members wanted to try it out for this year. “It should provide a better way for the parents to be able to come,” he told them.

Last year’s king and queen, Dylan Sheeran and Addison Oliver, had the honor of crowning Olson and VanRavenhorst. The student council, with the help of the Bulldog Backers, thought having the former royalty present was a great first step to try and bring back some of the traditions that had been in place for past homecoming and snow week celebrations.

Pioneer photo by Michael Roy



TUG OF WAR — The Bluejays' Cody Vagts, left, battles with JWP's Caleb Quast for a loose ball Dec. 22 in Waseca. Pioneer photo by Jim Lutgens

Busy Bluejays fall at Jordan

WHS boys even record at 5-5

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The Waseca High School boys' basketball team, still without the services of standout junior guard Damarius Russell, saw its record slip to 5-5 with a 69-54 loss at Jordan Tuesday, Jan. 2.

The Bluejays, who led by two at halftime, were outbounded 42-23 for the night, spelling defeat.

"We had some long droughts on offense," said WHS coach Seth Anderson. "But we are getting closer to playing a style that fits us."

Zach Hulscher led Waseca in scoring with 14 points to go along with four rebounds and two assists. Also reaching double digits was Laird Keeton, who finished with 12 points.

Others: Deron Russell 8P, 6A, 5R, 3 steals; Caden Danner 6P; Carson Ohnstad 8P, 2A, 3S; Jacob Thompson 4P, 8R, 4A, one blocked shot; Tauston Rupe 3P, 2R; Andrew Robran 2R.

The Bluejays made 10 of 30 first-half field goals and 18-for-53 for the game.

The WHS boys drilled Rochester's STEM Academy, a first-year program, 107-54 for third place in the Myron Glass Holiday Classic hosted by Rochester Lourdes Dec. 29.

"STEM Academy is certainly trying to figure things out," said Anderson. "Lots of guys got playing time, which was a fun way to end the 2023 portion of our basketball season."

Individually for Waseca: Ethan Hiller 2P, 3R, 3A, 3S, 1B; Russell 12P, 2R, 7A, 3S; Keeton 16P, 5R, 2A, 1S; Caden Danner 7, 4R, 4A, 1S; Ohnstad 18P, 1A, 1S; Cody Vagts 9P, 4R, 3A, 1S; Hulscher 7P, 2R, 1A, 3S; Jacob Thompson 1R, 1A, 2S; Rupe 2P, 4R, 2A; Cameron Karsten 3A, 1B; Logan Heyer 3P, 3R, 1B; Wyatt Hager 10P, 6R; Sebastian Teague 8P, 3A, 1S; Robran 6P, 2R, 2S, 2B; Geo VanEnglenburg 5P, 2R, 2A, 1S, 1B.

Saeed Mohamed scored 31 to lead STEM.

The Bluejays ran into a Wisconsin powerhouse in the opening round at Rochester and lost 100-66 to New Richmond Dec. 28.

"They are now 8-2 playing in the second-biggest class out of five classes in Wisconsin," said Anderson. "This team was really good. They might be the most efficient offensive team we have ever played. They blitzed us from the perimeter and beat us for layups. They were impressive. They played at a speed that we couldn't keep up with. I liked how we dug in and started to find some footing and figure things out defensively as the game went on."

Individually: Hiller 4P, 2R; Russell 15P, 1R, 3A, 4S; Keeton 14P, 2R, 2B; Ohnstad 7P, 4R, 1S; Vagts 3P, 1R; Hulscher 18P, 1R, 1A, 1S; Thompson 3R, 6A; Rupe 3P, 2R; Teague 2P, 2R; Robran 2P, 3R, 1A.

The Jays dropped a 77-69 deci-

Bluejays hand Austin 10-0 shutout

WHS icemen total 68 shots; loss at LaCrescent-Hokah leaves squad 7-4 overall

The Waseca High School boys' hockey team faced Austin in a non-conference game Dec. 19 at Waseca Community Arena.

In terms of goals, the Bluejays were not gracious hosts.

Waseca led 2-0 after one period and 9-0 after two while skating to a one-sided 10-0 victory.

Jude Gehring got the Bluejays started with a goal at 14:00 of the first period on assists by Jayden Gehring and Preston Miller, with Keaton Rooker scoring unassisted just 21 seconds later.

Otto Schoenrock, Cash Lynch, Griffin Storey, Hunter Anderson, Brayden Hesch Priem, Jude Gehring and Jayden Gehring scored in the second period, with assists going to Storey, Henry Huttemier, Lynch, Schoenrock, Rooker and Jude Gehring. Anderson netted the lone third-period goal.

Waseca totaled 68 shots on goal, Austin 12 while the Jays had only one penalty to two for the Packers.

Josiah Schmidke was in goal for Waseca.

The Bluejays took a long road trip Dec. 21 and lost 7-2 to LaCrescent-Hokah.

Anderson scored first, assisted by Lucas Groll at 3:42 of the first period, but it was almost all LaCrescent-Hokah after that.

Hesch-Priem scored in the second period, assisted by Jackson Dahl.

For the game, the Bluejays were outshot 34-26, with four penalties to the home team's two.

Waseca goalie Carter Martens made 36 saves.

The Bluejays ran their record to 7-4 overall and 5-2 in the Big South. They hosted Minnesota River Thursday, play Saturday, Jan. 6 at 3 p.m. at Worthington, and entertain



Anderson Hesch-Priem

Dodge County Thursday, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m.

WHS hockey girls can't keep pace with Hutch

The Waseca High School girls' hockey team opened post-holiday play by hosting Hutchinson in a nonconference game Tuesday, Jan. 2 at Waseca Community Arena.

The Tigers proved to be a formidable foe.

Hutchinson took a 2-0 lead early in the second period and, although the Bluejays managed to tie it, Waseca surrendered what would become the game-winning goal late in the second stanza on the way to a 3-2 loss.

The teams skated to a 0-0 deadlock until Hutchinson scored the only goal of the first period at the 12:31 mark, making it 2-0 just 38 seconds into the second.

Emily Gordon pulled Waseca within a goal at 1:37 of the second, scoring on an assist by Ava Hopkins. Kaylee Lawson scored at 8:33, assisted by Ryley Bartz, to knot it, but the Tigers found the net at the 11:29 mark to round out the scoring.

Hutchinson outshot the Bluejays 43-22. Waseca was called for five penalties for 10 minutes while Hutchinson was whistled four times for eight minutes. Neither team scored a power-play goal.

Waseca goalie Ilamay Draheim finished with 40 saves.

The Bluejays split a home-and-home series with Rochester Century/Rochester John Marshall Dec. 28 and 29 by identical 3-2 scores.

The Jays fell short in the first game at Waseca, with goals by Maizee Storey and Izabela Slechta. Katlyn Schueler assisted on both. Rochester scored the game-winner at 3:36 of the third period.

The Bluejays outshot the visitors 37-27. They were called for four penalties, one fewer than Rochester.

Draheim registered 24 saves, including the 2,000th save of her high school career.

The Bluejays won 3-2 in overtime at Rochester. Storey scored all three, with assists by Emma Keith, Emma Huelsnitz and Schueler. Storey scored the game-winner at 5:53 of overtime.

Waseca, which held a 39-38 edge in shots on goal, was called for four penalties to six for Rochester.

Draheim made 36 saves.

The Bluejays, 7-5-3 overall and 4-2-1 in the Big South, play Friday at 7:15 p.m. at New Ulm, Saturday at 1 p.m. at Worthington, and Jan. 9 at home against New Ulm.



SO CLOSE — Waseca freshman forward Makayka Forthun (18) looks to score as Hutchinson's Raedyn Roling (10) and Kohle Fitterer (17) at Waseca Community Arena Tuesday, Jan. 2. Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens



Above left, Waseca junior defense player Ryley Bartz (13) moves in on Hutchinson's Raedyn Rolling (10). Above right, senior forward Emma Keith (21) wins a race to the puck. Below left, goalie Ilamay Draheim makes a save. Below right, Keith mixes it up with Kinley Miller.



Lady Jays snap skid in holiday tourney

The Waseca High School girls' basketball team got back on the winning track with a 52-42 victory over Lewiston-Altura in the third-place game of the Lewiston Holiday Tournament Dec. 28 at Winona State University.

The Bluejays were edged 51-47 by Plainview-Elgin-Millville in the opening round Dec. 27.

No individual statistics are available for those games.

The Bluejays wrapped up their pre-holiday schedule with a tough loss at Glencoe-Silver Lake Dec. 21. The home team led 41-7 at half-time. The final was 62-23.

Mia Kanewischer led Waseca in scoring with six points. Addison Weiseler totaled five, Callie Dufault and Lily Owens three each. Adding two apiece were Lexi Kanewischer, Ella Krautkremer and Avery Gaul.

GSL's Brooke Micholichuk led all scorers with 22.

The Bluejays, 3-9 overall and 0-1 in the Big South Conference, are back in action Friday, Jan. 9 at Kenyon-Wanamingo. They play at WEM Tuesday and host Hayfield Thursday, Jan. 11.

Lady Panthers make it 7 straight

NRHEG girls claim crown at St. James, improving to 10-1 overall

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

There's no doubt it. The NRHEG High School girls' basketball team is on a roll. The Panthers improved to 3-0 in the Gopher Conference and 8-1 overall with wins over St. Clair and United South Central before tacking on two more victories while winning the St. James Holiday Tournament. The Panthers started their run Dec. 21 at St. Clair, where the rallied from a halftime deficit to win 72-69. "What a rollercoaster of a game," said NRHEG coach Onika Peterson. It began with an 11-point Panther lead in the first half. "But we couldn't buy a layup in the last eight minutes," said Peterson, whose team trailed 28-27 at halftime.

It was back and forth the rest of the way until the final few seconds, when Camryn VanMaldeghem came through with a huge steal and Faith Nielsen hit an easy shot to finish it off. "I am so proud of this team, their composure, and never die attitude!" said Peterson. "Hats off to a tough, well coached St. Clair team. It was a fun battle." For the Panthers, Camryn VanMaldeghem finished with 20 points, six rebounds and four steals while Faith Nielsen totaled 19 points and two rebounds. Izley Boerner also reached double-digit scoring with 13 points, adding five rebounds. Others: Quinn VanMaldeghem three points, 15 rebounds, two steals; Hallie Schultz six points, nine rebounds; Addy Stadheim two



ON A ROLL — The NRHEG girls' basketball team, above, is on a roll after running its winning streak to seven by taking the title in the St. James Holiday Tournament.

Photo by Judy Tweeten

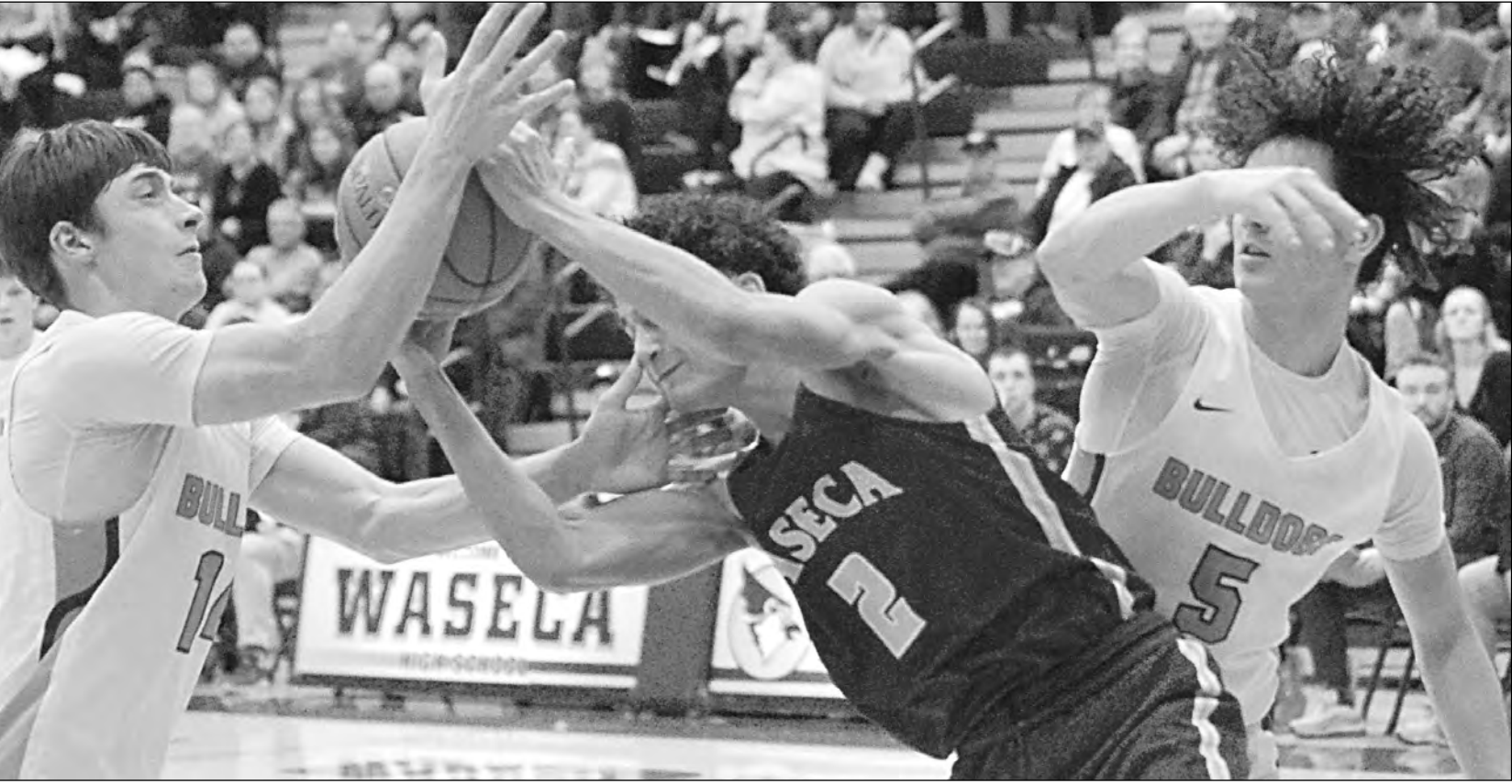
points; Chloe Stork one rebound; Paige Nielsen two points, four rebounds, one charge; Kylie Olson seven points, three rebounds. Coach Peterson recognized St. Clair senior guard Stephanie Cink, who topped the 1,000-point milestone for her career. "It was very well deserved," said Peterson. The Panthers hosted USC the next night and won handily, 80-36. It was 48-20 at halftime. "Our effort was great tonight,"

said Peterson. "We didn't shoot the ball overly well, but our offensive rebounding was huge. We are going into the holiday break with a couple of nice wins under our belt." Individually: Faith Nielsen 11P, 2R, 1A; Quinn VanMaldeghem 5R, 2A, 1S; Boerner 13P, 4R, 2A, 2S; Clara Buendorf 1R; Schultz 8P, 11R, 3S, 1S, 1 block; Camryn VanMaldeghem 16P, 9R, 8A, 3S; Stork 4P, 3R, 1A, 1B; Hope Nielsen 3P; Olson 4P, 3R, 2B. The success continued Dec. 27-28

"I'm so proud of this team, their composure and never die attitude!" — NRHEG coach Onika Peterson

at St. James, where the Panthers defeated Lake Crystal-Wellcome Memorial 66-57 in the first round and topped St. James 74-68 for the championship. The Panthers extended their win-

ning streak to seven games. They return to action Friday, Jan. 5 at Kenyon-Wanamingo and Jan. 9 at WEM. They host Hayfield Jan. 11.



DEFENSE — Above, the Bulldogs' Ryan Kronbach (14) and Landon Johnson (5) make things difficult for Waseca's Laird Keaton (2) during a nonconference game at Waseca. Below right, Daulton Bauer goes in for a layup. Far below right, JWP coach Nick James surveys the action.

Pioneer photos by Jim Lutgens

Another road win lifts JWP boys to 6-3

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Can the JWP High School boys' basketball team win without Memphis James leading the squad in scoring? Yes. The talented senior was held to 12 points Tuesday, Jan. 2 at Belle Plaine, where the Bulldogs picked up a big 77-74 come-from-behind victory. Ryan Kronbach emerged as JWP's top scorer with 15 points, adding seven rebounds, three assists and one blocked shot, while Gavin Bauer totaled 14 points, five rebounds, two assists and three steals and Daulton Bauer registered 12 points, seven rebounds, two assists and a steal. James finished with 12 points, five rebounds, four assists, one steal and one block. Others: Landon Johnson 7P, 3R, 2A, 1S, 2B; Caleb Quast 10P, 3R, 3A, 3S; Austin Quast 3P; and Cole Schluter 4P, 2R, 1B. The Bulldogs won despite being outrebounded 41-33, outscoring the home team 36-30 in the paint, while

turning the ball over 14 times, three fewer than Belle Plaine, which led 37-32 at halftime. The JWP boys were also on the road Dec. 29 when they defeated Sleepy-Eye St. Mary's 77-68. The Bulldogs led 36-25 at halftime. They held their turnovers to eight. Both teams had 34 rebounds. James topped all scorers with 32 points. He also had three rebounds, two assists and two steals. Others: Daulton Bauer 19P, 5R, 4A, 1S; Johnson 4P, 2R; Caleb Quast 4P, 8R, 2A, 2S; Kronbach 9P, 3R, 2A, 2S; and Schluter 9P, 7R, 2A. The Bulldogs played well but fell short 73-59 at Waseca Dec. 22. James topped all scorers with 27 points. Others: Daulton Bauer 6P, 9A, 1S; Johnson 2P, 2R, 1S; Caleb Quast 2P, 3R, 1S; Steven Dimmel 3P; Kronbach 8P, 9R, 3A, 3S; Austin Quast 2P, 1S; Schluter 9P, 6R, 3S. The Bulldogs pounded Maple Rivre 74-46 at Mapleton Dec. 19, taking a 41-22 halftime advantage. Individually: Daulton Bauer 10P, 2R, 5A; Gavin Bauer 3P, 4R, 4R,



3A, 1B; Johnson 11P, 3R, 1A; Caleb Quast 13P, 5A, 1B; Dimmel 4P, 4R, 2A; Kronbach 9P, 8R, 3A, 2S; James 12P, 6R, 3A, 1S; Isiah Berndt 3R; Austin Quast 6P; Schluter 6P, 5R. The Bulldogs made 22 of 33 two-point field goals and nine of 18 threes. They outrebounded the Eagles 39-21. JWP, 6-3 overall and 1-0 in the Gopher Conference, hosts Bethlehem Academy Friday. The Bulldogs are at Spring Grove Saturday, at Medford Jan. 9 and at St. Clair Jan. 11.



NRHEG boys endure absences while dropping 4 in a row

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

The NRHEG boys' basketball team hit the road for a third straight school-night game Monday, Dec. 18 at STEM Academy of Rochester. It was memorable. The Panthers played solid basketball while winning 79-59 before a capacity crowd in STEM Academy's first-ever home game. "What an environment," said NRHEG coach Dan Schmidt. "In a smaller gym, with probably their entire student body in attendance, we came out firing on all cylinders." The Panthers built an early 10-1 lead before the Cobras battled back to within two points. It stayed close until NRHEG went on a run with about seven minutes left in the half, taking a 44-26 lead at the intermission. The second half was similar, with the Panthers controlling the action while maintaining a 15-to-20-point lead. Will Tuttle had a big night for the Panthers with 27 points and eight rebounds. Daxter Lee recorded a double-double with 25 points and 10 rebounds, as well as four assists and three steals. Schmidt said Jared Lee did a phenomenal job off the bench with nine points, three rebounds, and three steals. Levin Kitzer added six points. Greyson Schaefer put in four points and six rebounds. Rounding out the scoring was Jordan Brouwers with three and Aaden Hanna two. The Panthers struggled Dec. 18 at United South Central, where they dropped a 51-31 decision. They also had trouble mustering much offense in the Bethany Lutheran College Holiday Tournament Dec. 27-29 at Mankato, falling 103-35 to New Ulm, 74-52 to Mankato Loyola and 66-33 to Fairmont in the seventh-place game. "We opened against the worst possible matchup we could have had," said Schmidt. "New Ulm was just too big, too fast, and too strong for us. New Ulm shot 61% from the field, combined with our inability to protect the basketball. nd, has been the trend, we played

"New Ulm was just too big, too fast, and too strong for us." — NRHEG coach Dan Schmidt

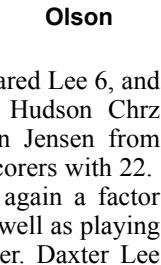


J.Chrz



Lee

without a full roster again, missing Daxter Lee and Greyson Schaefer." Jackson Chrz led NRHEG with 16 points, 3 rebounds, and 5 assists. Will Tuttle contributed 9 points, Jared Lee 6, and Levin Kitzer and Hudson Chrz had 2 each. Ayden Jensen from New Ulm led all scorers with 22. Turnovers were again a factor against Loyola, as well as playing without a full roster. Daxter Lee was back, but playing sick, and the Panthers were still without Schaefer. Jackson Chrz led NRHEG with 14 points, Tuttle and Jared Lee 9 each, Sam Olson 6 and Daxter Lee 4. Jase Knudson, finally back from a broken thumb, chipped in 3. Hudson Chrz, Kitzer, and Brouwers added 2 each. Turnovers were again the key against Fairmont. Tuttle led with 13 points. Daxter Lee followed with 5. Ricky Zapata scored 4. Aaden Hanna 3, Jackson Chrz, Jared Lee, Knudson, and Brouwers 2 apiece. The Panthers, 2-7, are home Friday, Jan. 5 against Kenyon-Wanamingo and Jan. 9 against WEM.



Olson

Sports in brief

NRHEG matmen drop 2 at Medford

The NRHEG High School wrestling team traveled to Medford Dec. 21 for its final pre-holiday action. It was a good night to forget. The Panthers lost both dual meets in the triangular, 56-13 to Medford and 54-18 to Mankato East. "It would not be truthful if I told

you we had a good night tonight," said NRHEG coach Shawn Larson. "As the coach, I take full responsibility for not having these athletes ready to compete. We will look into several factors to make sure we try not to duplicate what we saw today. I can assure you that we are not going to quit, and the Panthers will be back." The Panthers wrestle Friday, Jan. 5 at Albert Lea.

Grizzlies fall 42-32 at Westfield

The WEM-JWP wrestling team faced Westfield Dec. 21 and lost 42-32 at Blooming Prairie. Winners for the Bulldogs were Carson Petry, 127 pounds; Carson James, 133; Lucas Morsching, 152; Gavin Krause, 160; Isaac Quast, 172; and Keegan Kuball, 285.

Kuball won by fall in 21 seconds. The Grizzlies wrestle Saturday in the Norwood-Young America Invitational starting at 9 a.m. They host Kenyon-Wanamingo Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. **JWP girls stop Sibley East** The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton girls' basketball team got

the new year started right Tuesday as it defeated visiting Sibley East 71-33. Bulldogs' scoring: Nevaeh Weimert 19 points, Katie Olson 18, Presley James 8, Mikayla Wheelock 8, Kwynn Krause 5, Lilly Strauss 5, Ali Olson 4, Lexie Dahlberg 2, Hope Dimmel 2. The Bulldogs lost 61-50 at Maple River Dec. 19 and fell 49-34 to Blooming Prairie at Janesville Dec.

15 after stifling LeSueur-Henderson 57-17 Dec. 14. The Bulldogs, 7-4 overall and 1-1 in the Gopher Conference, hosted Blue Earth Area Thursday and play at Bethlehem Academy Friday. Next week they entertain Medford Tuesday and Waseca Friday.

Waldorf Service



Participating in a Christmas Eve program at First Lutheran Church of Waldorf were (Front row) Colten Bluhm, Emma Brunson, Nolan Bartsch, James Brunson and Huxley Weimert. (Back row) Inara Cords, Genny Cords, Faye Bartsch, Kena Weimert and Pastor Michael Mathews.

Freedom Christmas Program



The young members of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Freedom Township presented a Christmas Eve program which explained the message and colors of the advent wreath. Participants were Gemma, Eisley and Enzo Lin, Ava Trumbull, Paisley and Grady Coy, and Brynn Hanson. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

The Pastor's Column
Looking forward to a blessed 2024

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

What are you looking forward to the most this year? I am looking forward to some trips I get to take in June. My wife, Naomi, is looking forward to seeing her kids in her 3-year-old class after the winter break. In years past she would be looking forward to planting her garden and planning the right plants and places to grow them most effectively. While we lived up North we would look forward to spring, which always came late, and we were stuck waiting for the sun to warm the land.

The kids and grandchildren, that I watched this year, waited so impatiently for Christmas and now they are dreading going back to school. They experience the emotional high of Christmas and then struggle to find things to do before heading back to school. Even though my kids are mostly adults they are still trying to figure out how to manage their expectations through Christmas and the New Years.

We make plans and purposes for the new year, often calling them resolutions, seeking to make a change in our lives or actions. Those resolutions are often discarded in a few weeks if not days. Rather than make promises to make change, God has called us to be transformed in our thoughts, actions and in relationship to Him.

Romans 12:1-2 reminds us of how we are to be transformed:

I Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-

-this is your spiritual act of worship.2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

We are to be transformed not by our own motivation and will, but by God's. He calls us to respond to His offer of mercy with worship. The focus is not on our own selves, but on Him and His work. We are not changed in our own strength but by His extension of mercy.

From His mercy we are called to no longer be conformed to the pattern of this world but be transformed. He extends mercy to transform our minds by changing the way we think and what we think about. If we have been transformed, we think more about God and His mercy, we think about His grace and mercy extended to us, we dwell upon the gift of salvation extended to us and then upon God's plan to offer that gift to others.

The greatest question you can ask yourself about your own transformation is, what are you thinking about? Are you thinking about God and extending His kingdom or are you focused on something else? Are you dwelling upon His plan and purposes or your own? If we are transformed by God's mercy, His plans become our plans, His thoughts become our thoughts. Look forward this year to what God will do through you to see others come to know Christ.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH 2200 4th St NE, Waseca 507-835-2235 Service times 9:30 a.m. * * * 4TH STREET EVANGELICAL CHURCH 605 4th St NE, Waseca 507-201-7293 (Pastor Andrew Isker) Worship Sundays 10 a.m. * * * FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 801 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-3167 Worship Sundays 9:30 a.m. * * * CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH 309 6th St NE, Waseca 507-835-9176 Worship Sundays traditional 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m. Sunday School/Fellowship; 10:45 a.m. contemporary service * * * ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH 401 3rd Ave NE, Waseca 507-833-1703 Sundays 9:00 a.m. * * * ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH 314 4th Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-2647 Worship Sunday 9:00 a.m. * * * FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH 503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca 507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net) Worship Sunday 10 a.m. * * * GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 E Elm Ave, Waseca 507-835-1709 Worship Sunday 9 a.m. * * * SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH 111 4th St NW, Waseca 507-835-1222 Worsihp Saturday 5:15 p.m., Sundays 8:00 and 10:00 a.m., weekdays 8:30 a.m. Tues., Wed. and Fri., 7:00 a.m. Thurs. * * * REAL LIFE CHURCH 620 W Elm Ave, Waseca	507-607-8245 Sunday worship 10 a.m. * * * CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST LATTER-DAY SAINTS 1001 9th Ave SE, Waseca 507-835-4640 Sacrament meeting 10:00 a.m. * * * GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 1221 8th St SE, Waseca 507-835-2213 Sunday worship 10:45 a.m., 6:00 p.m. * * * CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY 900 14th Ave SE, Waseca 507-833-1082 Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m., Sun Evening 6:00 p.m., Wed. evening 6:30 p.m. * * * ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters Wednesday - 7 p.m. Worship * * * ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship * * * TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting * * * FIRST CONGREGATIONAL New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Pamela Jensen Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * * LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting * * * VISTA LUTHERAN	CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship * * * VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Brian Schanil Pastor Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark * * * ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Saturday - 5 p.m. Mass * * * FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Rev. Michael Mathews, pastor Sundays: Worship 8 a.m.; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and adult bible class * * * IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship * * * ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship * * * ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Father Brian Mulligan Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship * * * TRINITY LUTHERAN Wilton Township Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor Sunday - 10:45 a.m. Worship * * * THE CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS Brad Donner, Branch President Waseca, Minnesota www.lds.org Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18 * * * TRINITY LUTHERAN	CHURCH 412 N. Main Street, Janesville Interhim Pastor Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship, 9 Bible Class, 10:15 a.m. Worship * * * JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 401 N. West St., Janesville Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Worship * * * BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 43089 180th St., Morristown Pastor Kathy King Sunday - 8:15 a.m. Summer worship hours, (10:45 a.m. Worship, winter) * * * ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH 307 W. 2nd St, Janesville 10 a.m. - Mass * * * FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH 300 Owen St., Janesville Pastor Sarah Krolak * * * ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH Alma City, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship * * * TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Smiths Mill, Minnesota Pastor Robert Harting Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship * * * NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA 404 30 120th St. Waseca Pastor Sarah Krolak 507-234-6463 Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; Second sunday "Young at heart" Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation * * * NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.
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ALTON TOWNSHIP
FILING NOTICE
ELECTION MARCH 12, 2024

TO ELECT:
1-SUPERVISOR –
TERM OF THREE YEARS
1-CLERK –
TERM OF TWO YEARS
Filing opens January 2, 2024 and
closes at 5:00pm on January 16, 2024.
Those wishing to file must do so with:

Filing must be done prior to the close date and
time with the \$2.00 filing fee.
A copy of this notice will be posted in the office
of the clerk.
Deb Westphal, Clerk
Alton Township

Wilton Township
Filing Notice

Filing opens January 2, 2024 for
the office of Clerk, for a two
year term and Supervisor for a
three year term. Filing closes at
8:00 PM January 16, 2024.

Filing to be done with
the Clerk. Annual meeting
to be held on March 12, 2024.
Norman Gehring
Clerk

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF WASECA
DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
Probate Court Division
Court File No.: 81-PR-23-846

In Re: Estate of
SCOTT J. ENGER, Decedent.

NOTICE AND ORDER OF HEARING
ON PETITION FOR FORMAL PRO-
BATE OF WILL AND APPOINT-
MENT OF PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVE IN UNSUPER-
VISED ADMINISTRATION AND
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
It is Ordered and Notice is hereby
given that on the 31st day of January,
2024, at 1:15 p.m., a hearing will be held
in the above Court at Waseca, Minne-
sota, for the Formal Adjudication of In-
testacy, Determination of Heirs and for
the appointment of Heidi M. Enger
whose address is 308 2nd St SE, New
Richland, Minnesota 56072, as Personal
Representative of the Estate of the above
named decedent in unsupervised admin-
istration, and that any objections thereto
must be filed with the Court. That, if
proper and no objections are filed, a Per-
sonal Representative will be appointed
to administer the Estate, to collect all as-
sets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes
and expenses, to sell real and personal
property, and to do all necessary acts for
the Estate. Upon completion of the ad-
ministration, the representative shall file
a final account for the allowance and
shall distribute the estate to the persons
thereunto entitled as ordered by the
Court, and close the estate.
Notice is further given that ALL
CREDITORS having claims against said
Estate are required to present the same
to said Personal Representative or to the
Court Administrator within four months
after the date of this Notice or said
claims will be barred.

Dated: 12/15/2023
/s/ Carol M. Hanks
Judge of District Court
/s/ Shannon M. Asselin
Deputy Court Administrator

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P.A.
Hayden J. Roslansky, #402545
216 N Main St, PO Box M
Janesville, MN 56048
Phone: 507-234-5106
Published in the Waseca County Pioneer
January 5, 2024, and January 12, 2024

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

To Whom It May Concern: Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Waseca will meet at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, to consider Municipal Project No. 2024-01, a project to provide street and utility improvements in the following location:

8th Avenue NE (CSAH 13) from 3rd Street NE to Clear Lake Drive

The total estimated cost of the project is \$5,865,000, a portion of which is proposed to be assessed to adjacent properties. A reasonable estimate of the impact of the assessment will be available at the hearing. Such persons that wish to speak in reference to the merits of the proposed project will be heard at the meeting. Questions may be directed to the City Engineer, Nathan Willey, at 507-835-9716.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

To Whom It May Concern: Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Waseca will meet at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, to consider Municipal Project No. 2024-02, a project to provide street improvements in the following location:

11th Avenue NW from State Hwy 13 to 10th Street NW

The total estimated cost of the project is \$442,900, a portion of which is proposed to be assessed to adjacent properties. A reasonable estimate of the impact of the assessment will be available at the hearing. Such persons that wish to speak in reference to the merits of the proposed project will be heard at the meeting. Questions may be directed to the City Engineer, Nathan Willey, at 507-835-9716.

NOTICE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND AND BUILDING SITE SALE
WASECA COUNTY
NEW RICHLAND TOWNSHIP
40 DEEDED ACRES
MARK QUERNA FARM

BRIEF TAX DESCRIPTION
SE1/4 of NW1/4 Section 16, Twp 105. R22
PARCEL ID: 07.0160710

TERMS:

The land consists of 38.2 acres of tillable land CPI is 91. The farm has been certified organic since 2005. The land is located 1/3 mile east of State Highway 13 on quiet blacktop road. This parcel is a buildable site.

1. Potential Buyers shall submit a sealed bid to Molly Byron, Attorney, Byron Law Office, PLLC, 122 North State Street, Waseca, MN 56093. The sealed bid shall be received by 9:30 a.m. on January 24, 2024.
2. The bids shall be opened at Byron Law Office, PLLC at 10:00 a.m. on January 24, 2024. All persons submitting a written bid will be allowed to raise their bid, by phone, after the bids have been opened. Phone calls to bidders will be placed by Byron Law Office, phone number 507-835-3355. Bidders must be available by phone at that time.
3. The successful bidder will be required to execute a purchase agreement and pay 10% of the purchase price as earnest money by 5:00 pm on January 24, 2024 at Byron Law Office. The entire remaining balance of the purchase price, without interest, will be due on or before February 24, 2024 at which time title will be conveyed by Warranty Deed. Possession of the real estate will be delivered at the time of closing.
4. Real estate taxes of \$ 1,096.00 for 2023 are paid in full. Real estate taxes and special assessments due and payable in 2024 shall be paid by the Buyer.
5. This property is being sold in "AS IS" condition and Sellers make no representation as to acreage, tiling or condition.
6. An abstract of title indicating marketable title in Seller's name shall be furnished. Title shall be transferred by Warranty Deed. Possession shall be given to the successful bidder upon receipt of payment in full.
7. The owners specifically reserve the right to reject any and all bids and waive irregularities in the bidding process. Any verbal announcement information given the day of sale takes precedence over print.

Information concerning this land sale may be obtained at Byron Law Office, PLLC, 122 North State Street, Waseca, MN 56093, phone 507.835.3355

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Raise a Toast at Farmamerica January 12

“After the somewhat stressful times of the harvest and the holidays,” observes Farmamerica program director Kari Wadd, “January seems like a good time for us women to take a deep breath, relax, and maybe pamper ourselves a little bit.”

Farmamerica’s January 12 “Raise a Toast” event is an opportunity for all that, and more. The organization invites

area women to “Get dressed up, grab the girls, and let us treat you for an evening.”

Participants will begin with a short motivational message from JoDee Halla of Christensen Farms, then move into the facility’s grand open hall to network, relax, and listen to live piano music played by Becky Borneke.

A “Farm to Fork” dinner prepared

and served by local caterers will follow, served in grand style.

“We’ve added many special touches,” hints Wadd, refusing to say more since some are intended to be pleasant surprises for participants as they arrive and take part.

“I think we’re putting together something very special. I hope area ladies are willing to take the time for themselves

and appreciate the good things in life.

“It’s a chance to relax and renew ourselves as we look forward to the year to come.”

“Raise a Toast” is meant to be the first in a series of “Farm to Fork” events Farmamerica will be holding as the year progresses. “Watch for more!” says Wadd enthusiastically.

Get your news in the Pioneer

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SMART Turns 10

Next week Southern Minnesota Area Rural Transit (SMART) will reach its tenth year providing public transportation in the communities it serves.

SMART started January 2, 2014, in Freeborn, Mower, and Steele counties, and later added Waseca county in 2016. Overall SMART covers nearly 2,300 square miles providing access to public transportation to over 125,000 individuals with a fleet of nearly 35 buses. SMART reached its first million-ride milestone in October of 2018 and then hit two million rides in March of 2023,

all thanks to the dedication of nearly 70 staff, 11 of whom have been with SMART since day one.

The organization’s drivers, dispatchers and managers are “passionate about providing public transit to the passengers we serve; we all look forward to the next ten years and beyond.”

Over the next several weeks and months, SMART will be celebrating its anniversary by handing out items to our passengers, as well as doing other random give-aways such as free rides – stay tuned to the SMART Facebook page for all the happenings at SMART!

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CHEERS TO A NEW YEAR

As I look back on this year, I'd like to thank the people of this community for being such an enjoyable part of it.

We wish you a safe and prosperous year!

Matthew Petsinger, Agent

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January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 Burger nite 5-7pm	3 6pm BAR Bingo	4 7pm HALL BINGO	5 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	6
7	8 7pm Post & AUX. Meeting	9 Burger nite 5-7pm	10 6pm BAR Bingo	11 7pm HALL BINGO	12 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	13
14 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your Host St. Paul Lutheran Church	15	16 Burger nite 5-7pm	17 6pm BAR Bingo	18 7pm HALL BINGO	19 WALLEYE or SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7pm YOUR HOST Fraternal order of police	20
21	22	23 Burger nite 5-7pm	24 6pm BAR Bingo	25 7pm HALL BINGO	26 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	27
28 ALL YOU can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am - Noon Your Host Waseca Care-givers	29	30 Burger nite 5-7pm	31 6pm BAR Bingo			

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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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