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# WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

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A day in the country

# Waterborne miracle on Loon Lake

## Never been this way before

By DEB BENTLY  
Staff Writer

Peter Madel Jr. and his wife Mary Ann have a long history with Loon Lake.

Peter's began about 1937, when his family moved to Waseca from Evanston, a suburb of Chicago. His family had just acquired a three-story hotel that once stood across the street from the county courthouse. Like any 7-year-old after a long journey, he took the short walk down to Trowbridge Park: "That was the leading park for kids back then," he recalls. He also remembers making something of a stir in his Chicago-style dress shirt and slacks, given that everyone around him was wearing bib overalls and a t-shirt. "They looked at me kind of sideways," Peter remembers. "It took me years to come out from under the impression they got of me that day."

Even back then, Loon Lake was a definite "poor cousin" to Clear Lake. Not only was it on the wrong side of the tracks, it was weedy and unappealing. In all the time he's been associated with Waseca, Peter believes he had never seen the bottom—except when the lake was drained, which he recalls happening twice.

His link to Loon Lake became "close" early in the 1960s when his father, who had owned a number of hotels in a number of different states, called his by-now-married son back



Pete and Mary Ann Madel

to town to manage a different sort of hospitality—a nursing home.

Peter and Mary Ann remember being taken aback at the time. "Up until then," Peter says, "the closest thing to a 'nursing home' was a widow who took care of old people in her house." By then, Peter had served in Korea as an aide for General Taylor for two years in the US Army and a few years working for his dad managing a hotel in Vermillion, SD—where he had met and married Mary Ann two years before.

Despite their surprise at her father-in-law's request, Mary Ann remembers, she and Peter eventually decided the job wasn't that different from managing a hotel—especially back then. "At first, the nursing home was more for short-term stays," she says. The facility had capacity for up to 60, but that was with

Madel continued on 3



**BEFORE AND AFTER** - The surface of Loon Lake in June, above and in September, below. Thanks to a specialized aeration system, the waters were able to naturally rid themselves of the rampant filamentous algae which has grown there for decades.



## Leaving a shining legacy

By DEB BENTLY  
Staff Writer

When New Richland resident and 1977 Waseca High School graduate George Klug saw the sticker, he was determined to transfer it to his boat: "Be the change you want to see in the world." Gandhi.

To Klug, the famous words are more than a suggestion.

For the past 7 years, he has known the precise nature of the difference he wants to make, of the legacy he would like to leave. The challenge has been to lead others to see it, too.

As a diesel mechanic with more than 30 years experience, as a machinist and fabricator, and as someone who makes a habit of "looking under technological rocks," Klug's talents and curiosity led to what seemed like a near miracle in 2015.

When he took the elements of a water improvement system he had been hired to manufacture and altered them slightly "to find out what would happen" when he submerged one of the units in a small private pond, he watched in gradually growing amazement over the next few weeks as the murky, green pond became clear. All this with two electrically-powered side-by-side oxygen aeration units each about the size of a small college refrigerator.

The system had been developed to improve water as it was circulated

through irrigation systems on crop production land in Idaho. It used simple principles of physics to "free" naturally occurring oxygen to aerate water and make oxygen available to living organisms—all without chemicals or other unnatural agents. It was only Klug's curiosity which led to modifying and submerging the system in a pond, and thus revealing the difference it could make to a body of water.

Informal experiments in other small private ponds led to further discoveries. Perhaps most amazing, that the system allowed oxygen levels in one formerly-green pond to remain strong even when the surface froze over and two feet of snow collected on top.

"That's when we realized we had to get some serious technicians involved," Klug recalls. He began reaching out to his contacts, and to their contacts, to politicians and scientists, to see what could be done both to discover the system's potential and to make it available as universally as possible.

Klug continued on 3



Klug

## Skinner named teacher of the year

By TRISTAN JENSEN  
Editorial Assistant

Dawn Skinner, Language Arts Instructor at the Waseca Area Learning Center, was named the Waseca Public Schools Teacher of the Year by the Waseca Education Association on Monday, November 18. Each year, teachers are



Skinner

nominated for this award by their peers. Nominees then complete an application detailing their experience and teaching philosophy, which goes to the award committee for review and selection. The award was presented to Skinner on behalf of the WEA by Craig Brenden, co-president.

Skinner grew up in the town of Mahtomedi, northeast of the Twin Cities, where she graduated from high school in 1990. From there she first attended St. Benedict's College followed by the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, where she received a Master's in English Education in 1999. In 1996 she married Mike Skinner, who is currently a math teacher in the Janesville-

Skinner continued on 4

*A word from The Word*  
 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.  
 Isaiah 12:3

# Bluejays blast off!!

## \$55,000 raised at annual event

By TRISTAN JENSEN  
Editorial Assistant

The eleventh annual Bluejay Blast, held Saturday, November 19, was a resounding success. The morning's silent auction included 115 donated items; 78 were offered during the evening's live auction. Items available included sports memorabilia and tickets, both for professional and school district events; bath and body luxuries; toys and games, and plenty of foods. As of Monday afternoon, \$55,000 had already been raised for Waseca Public School teachers and students, with some final donations and totals still to be counted.

At the morning's pancake breakfast and silent auction, 306 plates were served and 117 bidding numbers assigned. The Cash for Cupcakes game sold out more than half an hour before closing, and the bingo tables were packed. The auction tables, cotton candy sales, and face painting were equally busy. According to Michelle

Priebe, who has been a Bluejay Blast committee member since the event's founding, the turnout was the best she'd ever seen. "It's great to see so many people bring their families. It's a great community event," she said. "All these people coming out to support our kids is just amazing, and we do look at it as a community event. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles – there's just so many."

During the live auction social hour at Starfire Event Center, entertainment was provided by a jazz band comprised of Waseca Public School students and staff. Karen Pfarr-Anderson and Dr. Jason Miller served as co-emcees of the auction, with Dan Harguth as auctioneer. The event room was filled wall to wall as attendees enjoyed the various games and bid generously on auction items.

The Bluejay Blast committee members want to express their thanks to the community for the outstanding support, and hope everyone is looking forward to the twelfth annual fundraiser in 2023.



Face painting was only one of the many activities and opportunities for fun offered to attendees of the annual Bluejay Blast fundraiser. Pioneer photo by Tristan Jensen



The final performances of the Waseca Marching Jays for the 2022 season were held Nov. 10-12 in the high school gymnasium. Special lighting, dynamic marching, and high energy were highlights of the show. The show included the band's season feature, "A Fine Line."

Pioneer photo by Tristan Jensen

# Final march

## Marching Jays indoor concert

By TRISTAN JENSEN  
Editorial Assistant

On Saturday, November 12, 2022, the Waseca Marching Jays held their final performance of the year's Indoor concert titled "Flip Flop." The Indoor is a longstanding tradition to close the marching season in Waseca. Mary Williams, member of the Waseca Marching Classic board since 1988, said after the show, "My advertising pitch has always been 'The best of family entertainment,' and they've proven it again tonight."

The Marching Jays Indoor performance begins with the brass fanfare. This year, the brass section kicked the night off with "The Sound of Silence" from Simon & Garfunkel and Disturbed. The brass players' instruments were fitted with lights in red, blue, and purple that lit in re-

sponse to the vibrations when they played, and the song was performed with the lights down to best show the effects as the marchers' movements created various lighting displays. The fanfare was followed by the entrance of the full band in a high-energy performance of Bon Jovi's "Bad Medicine," as arranged by Tom Wallace.

This was followed by the indoor version of the Marching Jays' 2022 field show, "A Fine Line." The show was inspired by the works of Vincent Van Gogh and sought to translate the unique beauty of his paintings into music. Transferring the field show from a football field to the indoor floor requires change – some visual elements of the show needed to be

Concert continued on 5



## Compostings

by Al Batt  
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### Do trees poop?

**ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING**  
After Thanksgiving, I feel sorry for my pants.

What role did green beans play in your Thanksgiving dinner?  
The casserole.

#### DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. My morning got off to a rough start—I was awake. As I made ready to venture outside, I needed to put on a winter coat. When I first do that near year's end, it feels like I have the weight of the world on my shoulders.

The roads were busy with cardboard delivery trucks. My dreams had been of snow removal, which can be an excruciatingly repetitive task. My neighbor Crandall says we get early snows when people put up Christmas lights too early. Mother Nature sees the glow and thinks it's late December and wants us to have a white Christmas. That's why we get a white Thanksgiving.

I saw people wearing watch caps, beanies or toques at softball games this summer. There may be medical reasons for some, but not for all. They aren't stocking caps, those things have tassels or pom-poms. Seeing those caps made me want to make soup while clutching my sandals in August.

A friend (Pam Goehring), my wife and I attended an interment. There had been no funeral or visitation. The weather was colder than it needed to be and the robust wind made it feel like it was 2°. The Honor Guard fired their rifles three times. A bugler played Taps. There was no one there who knew the deceased but us. He'd outlived his family. The lone survivor was infirm. I watched a member of the honor guard stamp his feet for warmth. It was a sad occasion, yet I was happy to be where my feet were. The three of us remembered. Everyone should be remembered. We went home and ate funeral potatoes.

#### SCHOOL DAZE

I watched a classmate taking copious notes with an odd writing instrument. It wasn't a BIC Cristal pen. I knew about ballpoint pens, fountain pens and pencils. I knew too much about erasers, even trying an ink pen that had an eraser. It erased by tearing or wearing out the paper. The pen being used by my desk neighbor was a Flair made by Paper Mate. It was a felt-tip pen. The world was changing at breakneck speed. What next?

Blooming Prairie's teams carry the name Awesome Blossoms. I watched the University of Arkansas at Monticello Cotton Blossoms play basketball.

#### BAD JOKE DEPARTMENT

What's red and bad for teeth? A

brick.

My cousin got a job selling trampolines in Prague. His first Czech bounced this week.

What's worse than a box full of snakes? A box that was supposed to be full of snakes.

Do trees poop? Yes, how else would we get No. 2 pencils?

What always comes at the beginning of parades? The letter P.

How does it change many dyes to take a lightbulb?

#### THINGS I'M THANKFUL FOR

Peanut butter, hay bales, stop signs, rural churches, birds, those who help animals, homemade biscuits, having more fun than a barrel of monkeys and that goldfish crackers don't taste like carp.

#### HARTLAND NEWS

How does Hartland maintain its population? Anyone leaving town must find a replacement before being allowed to move. If a former resident finds more than one replacement, that responsible person gets a plaque at the Community Center.

#### NATURE NOTES

It was the kind of November weather that is outlawed in 27 states. I'm not sure how much snow we'd been gifted. I reckon most people thought it had been enough, but the moisture was welcome. The snow came six weeks after the first junco had appeared in the yard. It was of sufficient quantity to entice pheasants into the yard along with a large mixed flock of blackbirds—red-winged blackbirds, rusty blackbirds, common grackles and brown-headed cowbirds. That flock mingled with starlings on the ground under the feeders and engaged in a feeding frenzy. A lovely young opossum ambled through that feathered world, frightening Eurasian collared-doves into flight.

As I watched from my window, a fox sparrow sorted through the leaves beneath a shrub and I noticed a frantic fluttering nearby. Ridiculously underdressed for temperatures cold enough that I needed to use a fur-lined teacup, I trudged through the snow because I was on a mission. I discovered a female house sparrow's foot had become lodged in a tiny fork in the bush. I freed the bird with little effort and no apparent harm. If birds have nightmares, she might have them. Some will say, "Why save a house sparrow? There are enough house sparrows."

That's not true. We'd have been one house sparrow short.

#### MEETING ADJOURNED

"Gratitude is the inward feeling of kindness received. Thankfulness is the natural impulse to express that feeling. Thanksgiving is the following of that impulse."—Henry Van Dyke.

## Cautiously testing my optimism

This year, I'm looking forward to Thanksgiving and Christmas a little more than usual. With the absence of Grandma from the family for the first time ever, it will be solemn. But at the very least, the celebrations will make me appreciate all the more how much it takes to cook a feast.

I think with all that's happened to my family, I'm getting better at recognizing the gifts in my life. I find that (including in these columns), I complain a bit too often. Of course, it's easy to blame the current culture and social media for this. Whether it's a rich person showing off a new Bentley or seeing a marriage photo shoot on Facebook for the tenth time, I feel like it's human nature to compare ourselves to others.

But I have a lot to be thankful for. I'm close to my mom, which many people can't say. I contribute my skills to two great newspapers. Many people appreciate the work I do. I have an adorable pet who loves me. I have a 2022 vehicle. I have a brother and sister I can get along with. I have the gift of music. I could



### Music to my Ears

by Michael Roy  
copyright © 2022 by Michael Roy

go on and on.

I know many people cringe at the thought of hearing "things could be a lot worse" when they are struggling in their lives. "It doesn't help me," they claim, which is fair. I've been in a bad mood plenty of times when people have tried to make me feel better and it didn't work.

But in my case, things could be a lot worse.

It's easy to focus on negative elements, and correspondingly difficult to keep reminding myself of those things that are positive. I am still trying to get to the bottom of why that is for me as well as many others. Maybe it's the company I keep—or what I do in my free time.

Not to get too political, but I think

the overall pessimistic attitude is what's wrong with our country and most countries in the world. Both sides of the aisle demonize the folks across from them. If one or the other gets their way, it's "the end of the country as we know it." We all know someone who is guilty of getting caught up in the tidal wave that is politics. (I'm guilty of it myself.)

I honestly do believe that if we all change our attitude toward each other, we would be a country that's much better off. We all want lower taxes, right? We all care about the welfare of our society to some degree, correct? Then why can't we all just get along?

I go back to the mantra that things could always be worse. Sure, Mur-

phy's law states that "anything that can go wrong will go wrong." But if we worry too much about what can go wrong, we're basically manifesting negativity, and so guaranteeing that Murphy's law will come into play.

That's why instead of being negative, I try to be "cautiously optimistic." The Minnesota Vikings test me on my attitude every single week. I'm still optimistic about the team since we're 8-2. But since we got embarrassed by the Cowboys 40-3 this past Sunday, I can keep my cool because I was cautious about my optimism. No, I'm not salty that we got blown out by a team that blew a 14-point lead against Green Bay.

This year, try your hardest to look inward and find what you're grateful for. Your mind will thank you for it.

On a side note, congratulations to the JWP and Waseca theater departments for such great performances of The Little Mermaid and Little Women, respectively. I enjoyed every minute of watching and taking photos of the two productions.

## All this family time and leftovers too

I really wanted to start this with the word "Thanksgiving!!!!!" but I figured that wouldn't be very cool. It would have shown, though, how excited I am for Thanksgiving. A full two days off school so that we college kids don't have another mental breakdown. I swear, not having a fall break because we start after the Minnesota State Fair is really tough. You wouldn't think that going three months straight with no break would be that bad, but it is.

Now, though, Thanksgiving! Pre-Christmas, really. This year, my friends and I decided to celebrate "Friendsgiving"; it was quite enjoyable. We have groups of friends living in three different rooms, so each room had to bring its own dish. My apartment decided to bring apple pie (store bought), and cheesy potatoes along with Oreos balls that we made. Some other dishes were rice, tacos,



### To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler  
copyright © 2022 by Amelia Roessler

homemade mac and cheese and even cheesecake! The cheesecake was delicious for being homemade in a 9 x 13 cake pan. I highly recommend having Friendsgiving with your friends, even though now it feels like we are family.

Speaking of food, my favorite Thanksgiving food isn't the turkey; it isn't the green beans; it isn't the cranberry sauce (ew). It's the Captain Morgan sweet potatoes that my mom makes (the Captain Morgan is baked out, don't worry). They literally

make my mouth water. Mashed sweet potatoes cooked in the oven and sprinkled with a layer of brown sugar and nuts. Then you take the King Hawaiian buns—which I always eat way too many of—and use them to scoop up the sweet potatoes. The next morning you can put the sweet potatoes in a sandwich with the King Hawaiian buns. So good. Although I will say my dad's turkey is always incredibly good; it usually gets mixed in with the sweet potatoes. My Thanksgiving plans, in case

anyone is curious about what Amelia is up to, are to come home a day early, sleep, have dinner with my grandma, then go up north to the cabin and have a Thanksgiving dinner there as well. I am excited for a lot of good leftovers that I will hopefully be taking back to college with me. Oh—I'm excited to see my family, too. Of course it will be nice to see them and have them ask me what I want for Christmas, even though I know they're just going to be disappointed again when I tell them I don't know.

I hope everyone has a great Thanksgiving and eats lots of food and has a really good time.

My determination: "If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world."

—J.R.R. Tolkien

## Newspapers don't give time off

Uff-da, I am sick this week. I came down with something that started hitting me Monday and it hasn't lightened up. This past month and a half has been kind of a mess. My best friend died. I got my wisdom teeth removed, oh yeah, and I'm running two newspapers, one of which is brand new.

We don't get time off in the newspaper businesses. I had two people tell me today, press day, to sleep. "Don't work," they told me. One of my best friends told me the other day that we come from two different worlds. He, a teacher, and I, a publisher/writer. I can't call in sick on press day. The paper has to get finished and set to the printer. If not, people don't get their paper on time, and people aren't happy about that. We have one job, to print a good paper on time.

So I muddle through. I worked from home today, and that creates its own set of challenges. A lot of phone calls, emails, and text messages were needed to coordinate with folks I would normally just talk to. It still beats the heck out of having to drive to the office and work while feeling this way.

On a lighter note, I just celebrated my 25th birthday, and it's Thanksgiving.

My birthday was relatively calm this year. They all kind of are. My mom took me out for lunch at El Molino; my dad took me out for dinner at the Yellow Mushroom.

It's the first time my dad and I have gone to Yellow Mushroom in a while and it brought some memories flooding back—Some good and some bad (but those were actually quite funny). Dad told me how the Yellow Mushroom was the hangout spot after ball games growing up. It was just where everybody went. I, too, re-



### STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens  
copyright © 2022 by Eli Lutgens

member our team going there for pizza after a youth baseball tournament.

The best memories, however, were with siblings, Nathan, Jessica, and my Dad. Because Nathan was always in a hurry, Dad would often call ahead so there wouldn't be much waiting when we arrived. Dad still talks about the time he did that and then "lost the order." So, Nathan ran amuck around the place. Although things didn't go as they were supposed to that night, the story makes our whole family laugh whenever Dad brings it up.

I think I received more birthday wishes this year than any other. Thank you to everyone who extended them.

Circling back to the past month and a half. By the time I started to feel crappy on Monday, I finally, essentially, caught up with my extra work which had piled up over the past month. I was asked a month ago to post pictures from the Waseca girls soccer season, and especially their final game. Well, I finally got to that number on my to-do list. My long list is written out and until I finish the week's essential work, that is, everything needed for the week's newspaper, I can't get to the list. I say all of that because I continue to be impressed by the gratitude people express for our work. More than one player asked for the photos to be posted and the post, on Facebook, re-

ceived a lot of comments. And I didn't even think I did very well taking the photos. This was my first season taking soccer photos, so I was learning on the fly. When it comes to basketball, football, baseball, and softball, for example, I have taken thousands of pictures, so I consider myself much better in those sports. That said, all the comments were positive.

Back to the present. Following my birthday celebration, which besides the time spent with my parents (thank you Suzy for the cake) I worked. Which was also how I got back to my to-do list long enough to post those pictures.

On to the weekend. I had a lovely time at the Bluejay Blast. Matt had paid for the table and invited me along with a plus one. The food was fantastic, and the night raised a lot of money for a good cause. Oh, and playing the heads or tails game, I ended up on stage... in the semi-finals. I lost. Congrats coach Wendland on your hard-fought victory.

I didn't have as many stories to write this week, only a couple thousand words worth. I didn't tally up the count last week, but I estimate it was in the 15,000 count range. However, I did count, and the final tally was 20 news articles, a personal record. Speaking with Dad, he shared that he used to have weeks like that while working for the Albert Lea Tribune. It was something of a

relief to know I wasn't the only person to wear those metaphorical shoes. Dad, at that time, still had newspaper pages to lay out, so it was almost as much work as I had to do. He wasn't a publisher with a staff to manage, but also, I don't have the stress of having anyone to answer to besides myself and our readers. My dad likes to say the newspaper belongs to the readers; we're just the caretakers. I like to say the readers, and our advertisers (one and the same in our community paper) are my bosses. I follow the golden rule of treating others how I want to be treated. It's how I treat readers when they come into the office and it's how I conduct myself with just about everyone.

One last thing. I intended to write about how I deal with getting sick. I take a lot of vitamins, drink a lot of Canada Dry (the only beverage which soothes), cough drops are a must, Vicks vapor rub (Grandma taught me that one), sore throat spray, and tea, lots of tea. This time around, my friend Jake suggested garlic and "sweating it out." So, Monday evening, I went to bed, ate my clove of minced garlic, and went to sleep under three layers of blankets. I think it worked. I woke up feeling sick, but not as bad as expected. And uncharacteristically, I have felt better as the day has progressed. So that's what I do when I get sick.

Here's to hoping Thanksgiving dinner can be enjoyed.

P.S. My favorite Thanksgiving food is really everything my mom cooks. I think her potatoes are my favorite.

"The more you practice the art of thankfulness, the more you have to be thankful for." - Norman Vincent Peale

**WASECA COUNTY PIONEER**

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**PHONE: 507-837-6767**

email: [news@wasecacountypioneer.com](mailto:news@wasecacountypioneer.com)  
Address: 103 S. State Street  
Mail: PO Box 578, Waseca MN 56093

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Contributing writers/photographers: Chris Schlaak, Santiago Ramirez, Al Batt,

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**Looking in the Mirror**  
*Looking in the Mirror*

by **Jonah Stafford**  
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# Returning home for Thanksgiving

Today's the day! I am leaving for Thanksgiving break in a few hours, returning home for several days of leisure and family fun. To be honest, I'm most excited to just not have to do anything. Or at least nothing related to school or work. However, over this break, I still need to dedicate some time to productivity. For one, I need to replace my phone ASAP because due to a series of unfortunate events, it is pretty close to disrepair. I'm at a stage in my life where I can probably afford to pay my own phone bill and make payments on a new phone, but I've never done either of those before, so it might be challenging to get started. One thing I do know, though, is that Black Friday will have lots of phone-related deals, as it always does, so I won't get ripped off too badly. Besides that, I plan on doing a bit of career strategizing: I'll have the luxury of taking a step back and seeing what's out there, so why not take advantage?

I enjoyed myself at two "Friendsgivings" at Saint Mary's over the past couple of weeks, but I am not actually that excited for actual Thanksgiving. Maybe I'm just a hater, but I don't really like any traditional Thanksgiving foods except sweet potatoes, pie, and cranberry sauce on a good day. That, along with the historical implications of even celebrating such

a holiday in the first place, rubs me the wrong way. It's great having an excuse to see family between Halloween and Christmas, but I'm not terribly into Thanksgiving for these reasons.

It's already almost December, which is kind of crazy. It seems like yesterday I was packing my bags to come back to school in August, and already so much has happened. The end of the semester is creeping up in under a month, but to be honest I don't really want it to end. I guess Christmas break getting cut down to two weeks vs four this year is kind of a blessing in disguise. I have a lot of projects coming up, especially related to the Writing Center, to look forward to and I don't really want to put a pause on anything.

When I came back from fall break, I wrote a column about starting a new file on Pokemon Black Version. I have since beaten that game again (and its sequel) and picked up Pokemon Scarlet, which just came out this past Friday. Besides my family, I feel like it'll be my main time sink for this break. I've had a lot of fun with it so far and I only see that continuing! In general, it's the simple, fun things in life that keep me going and Pokemon does that for me so I'm glad to have some new content.

## ■ Madel

from Page 1

double occupancy in each room. For the next five decades, Peter continued to manage and grow Lakeshore Inn, while he and Mary Ann also raised their growing family: sons Peter III, Barry and Chris and daughter Elizabeth (now Corchran). Inescapably, given the location, Loon Lake featured in their collected memories, although not as frequently as it would have if it had not been so unappealing.

One of Peter's favorite stories centers around a fishing pier built out into the lake in the early 1970s. Constructed personally by one of the Lakeshore Inn's handymen, it was a sturdy, railed, T-shaped structure that extended about 18 feet out into the water. Some of the more ambulatory guests at the Inn would go out there for fresh air and sunshine, and would occasionally fish.

Unfortunately, a flock of geese also enjoyed the dock, and in a case of unlucky timing had coated it in droppings just prior to a state inspection. "They came back with a deficiency," remembers Peter, an edge still changing the tone of his voice. "I couldn't believe it—as if I had any control over the geese." Still, a state "deficiency" had to be answered promptly, both with what would be done to solve the immediate problem and how it would be prevented in the future.

The obvious first step was taken: The dock was cleaned. As for the future: "I had a sign made," laughs Peter. Beginning with the words "Attention all geese," the sign declared sternly that it was against Minnesota State statute to defecate on the dock. To Peter's complete surprise, the solution was accepted by the state agency. The story has become legend. Peter even had the chance, once, to share it with the national head of the overseeing agency—who had a good laugh.

Perhaps most remarkably, the sign seems to have worked. "The geese never went on the dock after that," Peter recalls. The sign, and the dock, stayed in place for roughly 20 years—but Mary Ann remembers that the mosquitoes eventually became so intimidating that hardly anyone would go out there anymore, and so the dock was taken down.

Mary Ann also relates that each of the couple's four children had jobs at the Lakeshore Inn during

their high school years. She vividly recalls times after their shifts had ended when her three boys would hop into a canoe and paddle out to the island in the middle of Loon Lake.

"The weeds would just drag on their paddles," she remembers. "They would lift them up, and they would be covered in green. They would have to be cleaned off before the boys could paddle with them again."

Though that was decades ago and the boys in question now look more like grandparents than venturesome vagabonds—they knew of a secret field of hemp growing on the island—the story of the lake was always more of the same.

"Weeds, all summer long," declares Mary Ann.

"I'd been seeing the lake since before I was ten years old," says Peter, now 92. "It was never anything but weedy." As for any fishing, he remembers mostly bullheads.

"It was a green lake, pure and simple," he says.

Between them, he and Mary Ann list adjectives like "filthy," "grungy," and "ugly." Peter draws an analogy to split pea soup, and says that even seeing the water would require shoving a hole in a huge, thick coating of filamentous algae.

But to the couple's complete amazement, a lifetime of experience was changed this August. Thanks to a specialized type of water treatment—one still under development and thus being used on a test basis—Peter and Mary Ann speak in tones of wonder.

"I could see fish swimming," chirps Mary Ann.

"I've known that lake for 60 years and I'd never seen the bottom," says Peter, "but I could see it." He then adds jokingly: "It's a wonder there weren't any bodies!" "Whatever process they're using," he says, "it sure is doing a great job."

"Wouldn't it be nice," asks Mary Ann rhetorically, "if that's how it looks from now on?"

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Assisting at a benefit held Saturday at the Waldorf Community Center, are, front row from left: Darnell Mears, Abbie Hermel, Becca Hermel, Genna Mears, and Britney Hermel. Back row: Tyler Arndt, Gladys Kline, David Hermel, Josh Bruender, Bradley Hermel, Kaitlin Hermel.  
 Pioneer photo by Michael Roy

# Waldorf's Genna Mears battles cancer

By **MICHAEL ROY**  
 Editor

March 2021 was a shocking month for Genna Mears: A mass was discovered on her right lung. A few months later, she was diagnosed with Stage III non-small cell lung cancer. In December, Mears had ear and throat pains. An EKG scan and some doctor visits led to the discovery that she had had her first-ever heart attack.

According to the GoFundMe page, Mears had been doing hydration on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and going to chemotherapy every three weeks from May to September of this year.

Since then, she's been continuing to fight her cancer. "It's been a journey," she admits. "I've had some issues with getting pretty sick." There was one point when it was too risky

for her to get surgery to remove the infected portion of her lung. "They decided not to put me under in the beginning since there was a chance I would not survive the surgery."

It wasn't until a month later that she got the surgery. Slowly but surely, she's felt better, but acknowledges that the battle continues. "I still get coughing fits when it's hard for me to breathe."

Throughout her fight, she's had her family by her side. Within the past few months, Mears's family planned a benefit for her which took place at the Waldorf Community Center Saturday, November 19. Mears's daughter Britney Hermel led in organizing the event with her boyfriend, Josh Bruender, making calls to local businesses who donated items to the silent auction.

"It's been great seeing all that support from everyone," Bruender says. "It hasn't been a hesitant, 'Sure, we can possibly help,' from anyone. Everyone we've reached out to has said, 'Absolutely. We'll do whatever we can.'"

The family received inspiration to sponsor a benefit from Logan Nessel's family who held one after he fractured two vertebrae during a diving accident. "We thought, 'We should do the same thing,'" Bruender says.

The benefit included a pulled pork meal which was \$10 for adults and \$7 for ages 10 and younger. The silent auction took place from 1-3 p.m. Donations included a free septic pumping from JR Bruender Construction, three full synthetic oil changes from QuickLane, shirts and a gift card

from Mankato MotorSports, a goody basket from Dasch Salon, a combine tractor set from Arnold's, and other donations.

What does the immediate future hold for Mears? She will find out in the next month when she starts physical therapy twice a week and makes regular visits to her oncologist to receive updates on her progress. "We're talking about doing immune therapy for a year," she explains. "They also found a spot on my breast, so I'm getting that checked out on December 30."

Britney Hermel and family have organized a GoFundMe page to help Mears catch up on her bills and pay for medical expenses. Go to <https://www.gofundme.com/f/gennas-fight-against-lung-cancer-to-date>.

## ■ Klug

from Page 1

"This was just too good to let lie," he observes.

The level of response, however, was not in line with the level of possibility. Some of the test results Klug was able to present intrigued and drew in some members of the scientific community who started to study the system's benefits. This group reached a conclusion that it would take hard evidence and persistence if the system was going to get the widespread use its benefits deserved.

Somewhere along the way, Klug's eyes turned to an unlikely source of promise: Loon Lake.

An intensive study of the lake—including nearly a decade of persistently monitored oxygen levels—had been carried out by Minnesota State University-Mankato from about 2007 to 2016. A document over 100 pages long chronicled the history, fish population, and chemical levels in the water.

This bonanza of data offered a foundation for comparison that had not been available for the previously

conducted trials. Any changes which might occur in the water's "vital statistics" after Klug's system was installed could be processed and analyzed with a level of perspective not possible before. In addition, Klug himself had been testing oxygen levels in the water regularly over the past four winters. Klug approached officials on both the city and county levels to explain his intentions and get permission to proceed, as well as a summer aeration permit.

As anyone who knows Waseca is aware, Loon Lake has always been something of a "poor cousin" to other bodies of water in the region. In living memory, much of its surface has been covered in thick, impassable masses of green growth for nearly the entire summer.

Thus, when Klug and his companions had gotten the necessary approvals and were ready to begin this summer's work, there was hardly anyone around to take notice of their efforts. In April and May, they watched and monitored various aspects of the lake's transition from wintry weather into early summer. Though they were watching for invasive species, what they discovered as the source of the impassable floating masses turned out to be indigenous "filamentous algae," a type of

growth classified as "nuisance" by the state department of natural resources. Because algae takes in nutrients directly from the water, extra nitrogen from lawn runoff or biological waste quickly contributes to increased growth. Though naturally occurring, the growth can be especially harmful as winter sets in and it dies. Klug explains that, as the algae decomposes, bacteria proliferate to consume it. The bacteria use up oxygen at a rapid pace, leading to a reduced supply for other breathing organisms. If the lake is frozen over, this can be especially harmful because oxygen cannot be drawn in from the atmosphere.

According to Klug, the DNR has recorded the levels of oxygen deprivation which various life forms can survive. Among fish, perch are some of the first to be killed as levels of "free" oxygen fall.

After their measurements and observations in late spring, Klug and his companions installed the aeration system early in July. Even though tiny in relation to the size of the lake, the units began to change the oxygen levels in the water; huge sections of the lake had been matted in algae in June. By September, the water was clear. Kayakers and fishermen were able to navigate what had previously

been impassable.

Measurements continue to be taken, and will be recorded regularly through the winter. Next spring, the aeration units will be activated as soon as the ice is out. Between what was recorded in the past and the information future testing will provide, Klug hopes to amass a body of evidence that will lead to public funding to support this improved aeration system, and to the benefits he has seen it provide. As the aeration units continue to be activated during the warm months of the year, the lake's ecosystem is likely to recover to stronger and stronger levels, with three or more years of summer aeration needed to overcome oxygen deficits.

Klug anticipates that, without the decomposing algae which has been part of the lake's ecosystem for so many years, oxygen levels through the winter will be much stronger than in the past. Perhaps equally important: "A year from now, I hope we will be in a good place to provide data that shows the improvements our system can initiate."

Editorial Note: Watch for on-going updates about oxygen levels in Loon Lake as the winter proceeds.

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OBITUARIES

Susan "Shuzy" Enzenhauer

Susan "Shuzy" Enzenhauer, age 59, of Waseca died on November 15, 2022, at her home in Waseca.

Born on March 24, 1963, in Owatonna to Herbert William Enzenhauer and Ella Rachel (Dale) Carlson. She attended Owatonna Public Schools where she was active with the band as a trumpet player. She graduated with the class of 1981. Susan continued her education receiving an associates degree in Graphic Design from Vocation Technical School. She first worked at Brown Printing then NCS. She later worked at Nick's Pizza as a delivery driver and as a general manager at Dollar Deals. Susan loved attending concerts and was known to jump on stage to sing with the band. Her favorite concerts to attend were Heart, ACDC, and Neil Young. She was an avid pool and dart player. In her early years, she was a big softball and volleyball player. She enjoyed camping with her family and friends. Susan loved to grill for everyone when there were sporting events going on. She loved the holidays. Every year she looked forward to cooking Thanksgiving dinner for her family and prior to her passing she already had Christmas gifts for her grandchildren ready. Susan was a gentle, fun-loving soul who loved animals, and spending time with her grandchildren. Her home was always open



Susan Enzenhauer

to anyone that needed a place to rest. She was a member of Associated Lutheran Church in Owatonna.

Susan is survived by her daughter, Colbe (Jeremy) Bauernfeind of Owatonna; grandchildren, Wilder and Bodhi Bauernfeind; aunts, Gladys Enzenhauer and Jean (Ron) Kjos; nephews, Brandon (Tessa) Enzenhauer and Fenton Enzenhauer; other relatives and friends.

Preceded in death by her father, Herbert Enzenhauer; mother, Ella Carlson; brothers, David and Jeff Enzenhauer.

Time of Remembrance was at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, November 23, 2022, at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service. Visitation was one hour prior to the service at the funeral chapel.

Ryan Bruhn

Ryan John Bruhn, age 47 of Waseca, passed away peacefully in the comforts of his home on November 18, 2022.

Born on September 28, 1975, in Detroit Lakes to Steve and Diane (Schwandt) Bruhn. Ryan grew up in Vergas, Minnesota and attended Frazee Public School, graduating with the class of 1994. After graduating, Ryan worked alongside his dad on the family farm. He then relocated to Waseca, where he worked for Greener World Solutions. In 2017, Ryan returned to his love of farming in Vergas.

Ryan enjoyed hunting, riding his Harley, farming, spending time with his nieces, hanging out with his dog "JB", throwing bags with his brother-in-law, and going on adventures with his daughters!

Ryan had three amazing daughters who were the center of his life. He was their biggest and loudest supporter at all their events, from sports to dance recitals and everything in between. He also volunteered his time as a coach. He was a true "girl dad" - enjoying Starbucks runs and TikTok dances.

Ryan is survived by his daughters: Morgan, Mallory, and Ava of Waseca; mother: Diane Bruhn of Vergas; sister: Sara (Greg) Sliter of Rice; nieces: Ella and Olivia Sliter; and several aunts, uncles, cousins, other relatives, and friends.

He was preceded in death by his



Ryan Bruhn

father: Steve Bruhn; grandparents: Jane and Claude Bruhn and Margie and Duane Schwandt; and cousin: Aaron Albright.

Visitation will be held from 4 - 7 p.m. on Friday, November 25, 2022 at the State Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation will continue for one hour prior to the service at the church on Saturday.

Mass of Christian Burial will be 11 a.m. on Saturday, November 26, 2022 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca. Burial will be at Calvary Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred and may be directed to the family.



Janesville Area Foundation board members and grant recipients, Front, from left: Mary White, Sharon Tlusty, Arlene Pooler, Mike Daschner, and Jessica Keech. Back, from left: Gary Cummins, Kelly Eustice, Mike Finley, Mike Niemczyk, Andrea Kronbach, Jessica Rollins, Cory Jewison, Tyler Fellows, Julie Olson, and Liz Janike. Pioneer photos by Michael Roy

Janesville Area Foundation gifts \$12,000 awarded Monday evening

By MICHAEL ROY Editor

The Janesville Area Foundation Awarded \$12,371 in grants on Monday, November 14, 2022. The Waseca Area Foundation also provided an extra \$9,677 in grants to local non-profits.

Board member Mike Finley explained to the crowd how JAF awards grants. "Our deadline to apply for grants was September 30. After that, the board got together to decide how to split the funds we have to those that applied. It's all about providing grants to people."

Sometimes, the foundation doesn't have enough funds to award the grant money it wants to applicants. Instead, it turns to its affiliate in Waseca to help fund. "We never want to turn anyone away," Finley said. "So, the Waseca Area Foundation helps provide grants through the EF Johnson Foundation."

Eleven organizations received grants from JAF. Andrea Kronbach accepted a \$600 grant for JWP Pre-school and Wrap Around Care. The purpose of the grant is to provide sensory and social emotional learning tools.

"We have three classrooms between the wrap-around program and preschool," she elaborated. "Getting past the Covid pandemic, we are seeing a need for those tools this year. We are very thankful for this grant."

The JWP Family and Consumer Science Department received \$200 at

the awards program. FACS teacher Mary White said that the students in her class collaborated with Band Director Adam Hille to create custom bell covers for the tubas to show off school spirit. White showed a prototype of the covers to the crowd.

Jessica Keech of the JWP Special Education department was awarded \$1,741 for the school's Cricut Club. "The Cricut Club is a life skills program where students work on service projects," she explained. "An example would be creating Christmas cards for nursing homes." Keech collaborated with fellow special education teacher Jennifer Bangs for the Cricut Club.

Jessica Rollins accepted a \$250 grant which will go toward providing free rides for JWP and Trinity Lutheran students to FarmAmerica. "It also helps pay for agriculture career programs," she added. "We provide an entire day of hands-on experiences, and we pair students' interests with activities."

Trinity Lutheran School received \$1,000 for electronic signage in front of the school. JWP baseball was awarded \$2,000 for a turtle baseball shell net to make practices and games more efficient. "It allows us not to have to chase foul balls all the time," Head Coach Cory Jewison stated. "The shell will last us quite a few years."

Liz Janike accepted a \$1,000 grant for Junior Achievement which will help the organization provide mate-



JWP Family and Consumer Science teacher Mary White shares the tuba bell covers her class made for the school's band.

rials and coursework for JWP students. Janesville Public Library received \$1,000 from JAF and an additional \$1,000 from the Private Literacy Fund to purchase new adult books. "It's a pilot program," Janesville librarian Sharon Tlusty said. "We are getting some new releases so patrons don't have to wait."

The JWP Hall of Fame received \$500 to help pay for its annual banquet and awards ceremonies.

Janesville Matters received a \$3,000 grant from JAF to pay for new planters downtown. "We want to keep sprucing up the community so people in town can look and say, 'I'm happy to be in this community,'" Arlene Pooley stated. "Oh, and we're always looking for volunteers!"

Lastly, Janesville Boy Scout Troop 89 received \$1,080 to purchase tents. Scout Master Mike Daschner along with Julie Olson announced that

there will be a girls' scouts troop in Janesville soon.

"Tents are always needed," Daschner explained. "Boy Scouts need to camp 15 times to join the Order of the Arrow. As you can imagine, tents can deteriorate very quickly because of that."

In addition to the 11 recipients receiving grants from JAF, four more recipients of grants from the EF Johnson Foundation were briefly recognized. JWP science teacher Erik Kehoe received \$1,000 for a 3D printer; Andrea Kronbach accepted \$3,000 for the JWP Community Education Department's youth development scholarships and preschool program support; Waseca Area Caregivers were awarded \$3,677 for their Caring Hands Program; and Lutheran Social Service received \$2,000 for foster family programming.

Skinner

from Page 1

Waldorf-Pemberton district. They have two children ages 21 and 18. Before coming to Waseca Public Schools, Skinner taught in Forest Lake, North Branch, and Waterville. She has been a teacher in Waseca since 2002, teaching first at Waseca High School and transferring to the Waseca ALC in 2009. She came to Waseca from Waterville after being offered what she described as "literally my dream job," teaching English and Theater.

Since she was in eighth grade, Skinner knew she wanted to be a teacher. Her plan at the time was to go to college to be a music and theater teacher, to which she says her father responded, "No, you're not. You have to teach something that will pay the bills." English was the obvious next thought for Skinner. "I had a really important English teacher when I was in high school, and she is the reason I am an English teacher," Ms. Lambert was her name, and Skinner now counts her among her best friends.

After more than 20 years in the profession, she says she stays for the kids. "I love my kids. I teach what people would call the hardest kids, and for me they are incredible. They think such deep thoughts and they trust me, so we do curriculum here that is college level because they trust me to get them there."

While being a parent and a teacher is enough to keep anyone busy, Skinner also serves as Treasurer and Membership Coordinator of the Minnesota Thespians, the state branch of the Educational Theater Association; she also co-founded a Gay-Straight Alliance at the Waseca ALC. She applied for and received the Classroom Focused Grant this year, a \$3,000 grant from the Education Minnesota Foundation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning which is being used to support her Theatre for Social Justice course. This innovative ALC

class encourages students to use the arts to grapple with the big issues that affect them as teens. The class culminates in a play - the fourth play put on by Skinner's ALC students is scheduled for January and addresses teen suicide. Next year, Skinner plans to cooperate with another instructor at the Waseca ALC to expand the class into the visual arts curriculum as well, and already hopes to see that effort supported by the same grant.

Continuing education, community service, and outstanding accomplishments are all factors in the selection of Teacher of the Year, but a large portion of the process also rests on applicants' educational philosophy - their core beliefs regarding teaching and learning - and how they put it into practice in their classrooms. In short, Skinner describes her philosophy as "Relationships before Rigor," which she says is commonly discussed in educational spheres but less commonly implemented. In the Waseca ALC, Skinner teaches primarily students who have struggled and often failed in traditional classrooms, whether due to social or curricular factors. "We concentrate on making sure kids are safe, heard, and appreciated before we expect them to do a lot of big projects. It's all about making relationships."

By meeting her students where they are and connecting with them, Skinner is able to teach more effectively. She says that once she's established those relationships, her focus is on allowing students to take agency over their learning, encouraging self-evaluation, and teaching skills for life outside of school. In addition to her English and Theatre curricula, Skinner teaches her students executive function strategies, skills for emotional regulation, goal-setting, and self-advocacy. As she wrote in her application to the Teacher of the Year committee, "The educational philosophy I have described is one that moves students from teacher-directed learning to self-directed learning and prepares them for success in the real world. As a high school teacher, I can think of no



Dawn Skinner being introduced during the Waseca school district teacher of the year awards ceremony.

greater goal than to foster individuals who can be active participants in their own lives, their communities, and their world. Not one of my students will remember the language arts lessons I taught them, but they will certainly remember the successes they achieved in my classroom, and the way I treated them as people. There is no higher honor than to have former students who are still 'my kids' after all these years."

Skinner expands her curriculum broadly to best serve students at the Waseca ALC, but she is still an English Language Arts teacher, and her philosophy of relationship-building and applicability to the real world extends into that curriculum as well. During the next "hexmester," as the Waseca ALC follows a six-part school year, she'll be teaching a class which she calls "I Hate English." It is, officially, Remedial Language and Literature, but Skinner says that the traditional approach to remedial classes can be boring and demoralizing, and it isn't what her students need. During the class, she talks with her students about alternate methods of accessing information. Two such methods are graphic novels and audiobooks. She talks with them about

the benefits and downsides of these methods - and why watching the movie is not a good strategy - and helps her students to choose the method that best fits their needs and goals. Many of her fellow English teachers balk at the idea of not only allowing but encouraging students not to read the full, traditional versions of the assigned books. "It's another way to get reluctant readers access to materials," Skinner says of the practice. To her, it's what makes sense. "That's what I do here; I find ways to make education accessible to kids who have grown to dislike education."

The Teacher of the Year award is an honor, and Skinner has received and accepted plentiful acknowledgments and congratulations. Her colleagues and her former students agree that she is deserving of the award and its accompanying praise. Skinner hasn't said that she disagrees, but did add, "The Teacher of the Year recognizes one person in a district where everyone goes above and beyond. The recognition of my peers is wonderful, but there are many teachers who deserve this recognition who work for Waseca. We have an incredible district."



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# City takes ditch

By **TRISTAN JENSEN**  
Editorial Assistant

Final public hearings for four county ditch authority items took place during the November 15 county board meeting. The first was for partial abandonment and transfer of County Ditch 15-1, part of which is located within Waseca City limits. The remaining three hearings were for redetermination of benefits for County Ditches 15-1, 16, and 28. No members of the public submitted comments or written materials during the public comment periods for any of the four hearings.

In the first hearing, Kale Van Bruggen of Rinke Noonan Attorneys at Law, the attorney for the Drainage Authority, began by explaining the petition from the city which prompted the hearing. County Ditch 15-1 is a tile system with no open ditch. It was established in 1920 and includes both rural and city land with an outlet into Clear Lake. The City of Waseca petitioned the county to transfer the portion of CD 15-1 which lies in residential areas of the city to its control, and to officially abandon a portion of the system which has been non-functional since 2017. The petition made the claim that the City of Waseca is better situated to manage the tile system within city residential areas. Officially abandoning the portion which has been capped and had no outlet would allow landowners or developers to work on that land without needing to involve the county. After opportunity for public comment, Van Bruggen explained the options to the board. A draft of the Findings and Order had been prepared prior to the hearing which, with no public comments to consider, the Board of Commissioners could now vote to approve or reject. The board voted unanimously in favor of the Findings and Order, officially completing the partial abandonment and transfer of CD 15-1. Following the vote, the county retains responsibility for 1,730 feet of tile south of Clear Lake.

The three hearings for redetermination of benefits followed the same procedure. Van Bruggen explained that Statute 103e.351 allows the Board of Commissioners to update the tax roll for the county's ditch systems by engaging the services of accredited drainage ditch viewers to determine the financial benefits to landowners. The process of redeter-

## WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

mining benefits for CD 15-1, CD 16, and CD 28 began in July of 2017, but faced some delays. Following Zabel's evidence of notice, one of the viewers involved in the redetermination presented their findings. A public comment period was opened, followed by a review of the options available to the Board of Commissioners and a vote. During the hearing for CD 15-1, viewer Mark Behrends explained that the process for determining the financial benefits of a ditch system for landowners examines five factors: land acreage within the watershed, soil type, location of the land relative to the ditch system, whether there is tile on the property, and the efficiency of the system. These elements determine the financial benefit of the system to each impacted landowner and their percentage of the total benefit for the tax roll. During this process, the viewers communicate regularly with impacted landowners. At the end of each hearing the Board of Commissioners had three options. They could order investigation related evidence from the public, if any was given, reject the viewers' report and require a new one, or accept the viewers' report to update the tax roll.

In anticipation of the partial transfer and abandonment of CD-15, the viewers had prepared a report which reflected the county's updated area of responsibility which showed that over a period of 25 years CD 15-1 would provide benefits of \$604,317 to landowners across 955.17 acres. For the redetermination of CD 16, viewer Kendall Lengseth gave the report. CD 16 was established in 1921 and consists of 22,930 feet of tile with no open ditches outletted into the Little Cobb River. The viewers determined the system gave landowners a financial benefit of \$839,997 over a period of twenty-five years and across 1,075.02 acres. Behrends gave the report for CD 28, which consists of 18,570 feet of tile and no open ditch outletted into the Le Sueur River. The viewers determined the system provides landowners a benefit of \$747,918 over a period of twenty-five years and across 996.64 acres. The board unanimously approved all three reports for the tax roll.

# Controversial contract revisited

By **TRISTAN JENSEN**  
Editorial Assistant

At its November 15 meeting, the Waseca County Board of Commissioners revisited the controversial matter of the county's contract with Blue Plus, an agency which coordinates care and case management for elderly, disabled, and income qualified residents who receive medical assistance. Board chair Brad Krause was called upon to cast the deciding ballot in a vote that stood 2-2. The controversy centered around the County's relationship with South County Health Alliance (SCHA), the county-based purchasing entity which until now has been the sole provider for those receiving medical assistance in Waseca County. At the November 1 meeting, the same vote failed 4-1, with those voting against utilizing the contract expressing their wish to leave that relationship unaltered. However, a Minnesota Supreme Court decision is requiring Waseca County to offer a second plan. County Administrator Michael Johnson pointed out that, since the state supreme court decision leaves the county no choice but to begin using a second plan, financial damage to SCHA is inevitable. Cooperating with Blue Plus and approving the contract means that the county will receive state reimbursement for work done by county staff on behalf of medical assistance recipients on the Blue Plus plan. Affirming the board's previous rejection of the contract at this time would mean no access to this state-level funding, and it

would be unlikely Blue Plus would be willing to re-contract with the county in the future. The contract does, however, include an exit clause.

The vote was repeated at the November 15 meeting out of concern that the November 1 action had been taken without sufficient information, according to Public Health Director Sarah Berry. A work session was held between the November 1 and 15 meetings to update commissioners about the contract and the county's obligations and benefits, as well as the impact of their initial decision on elderly and disabled recipients of medical assistance.

"I want our elderly and disabled residents to be able to call and hear familiar voices, and I want those voices to get paid for the work they're doing regardless," Commissioner DeAnne Malterer said. Commissioner Doug Christopherson said he'd sought advice from numerous sources: all had advised him to consider the status of the health plan members, and had argued it would be most beneficial to utilize the Blue Plus contract, thus preventing interruptions or barriers to receiving care. "We're frustrated and we don't like this, but if we didn't do it then we'd be doing more harm than good," he said.

Commissioner Brian Harguth said he could see how accepting the contract would be better for the members of the health plans, but he still could not vote for it, calling working with Blue Plus "like feeding Goliath." He

## WASECA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

expressed concerns that if the county opens the door to Blue Plus and a second health plan, more will come and SCHA will be pushed out entirely. "The door is already open," Christopherson replied. "It's just who's going to get the money."

Commissioner Blair Nelson, who is on the SCHA board, voiced concerns about the financial health of the organization with Blue Plus entering the picture. If a county-based purchasing entity is not taking in enough revenue, it can make a "cash call" to their member counties to make up the difference. Nelson asked whether the obligations the county had to respond to a cash call might outweigh the financial reimbursements gained from contracting with Blue Plus.

A roll call vote was taken: Commissioners Malterer and Christopherson voted to utilize the contract, while Harguth and Nelson voted not to. Board chair Krause was last to vote, and after a long period of consideration weighed in in support of the contract, causing the motion to pass three to two. "Let's move on," he said shortly.

Chris Howard, representing the Ditch Authority, presented several matters. First, he requested and was authorized to set the interest rate paid by the ditch authority slightly higher than that specified by the federal reserve (FED) so that his office would be able to compete with private bor-

rowing agencies for loans. A repayment plan for a project on County Ditch 20 was approved.

The Board of Commissioners passed a resolution to allow staff to apply for a Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) grant which would cover the full costs of repairing and improving a trail leading from Janesville to Lake Elysian. The board also passed a resolution in support of a grant the City of Waseca is submitting for up to \$500,000 to build a trail along the county fairgrounds.

A conditional use permit was approved for RPN Solar Holdings to build a one-megawatt solar farm north of Waseca.

Scott Roemhildt, the DNR's South Region Director, visited to introduce himself to board members and invite them to reach out with questions or concerns. "I don't want the complexity of our organization to limit access," he explained. Roemhildt serves 32 counties as South Region Director: He said visiting Waseca County's leaders is special to him, since his family farmed here for five generations. Roemhildt introduced DNR staff members Brook Hocker and Benjamin Schaefer, who shared information about work the DNR does in Waseca County. This includes long-term monitoring of St. Olaf Lake as a "sentinel lake," updates to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain mapping, and payments to the school districts from the DNR's School Trust Fund.

## ■ Concert

from Page 1

altered or cut for safety and logistics purposes in the smaller space. What the Marching Jays seek to never leave behind, however, is their showmanship. The field show included solos by junior clarinet players Addie Bomsta and Isabelle Wilhelmi, senior accordion player Eddie Herman, and junior pianist Norah Schimming. Following the field show, a slideshow of the Year in Review was presented. The Marching Jays had a very successful season, according to Director Devon Lawrence, with two grand champion, one first place and 5 second place titles as well as five additional caption awards. At the Minnesota State Championship, Youth in Music, the Waseca Marching Jays placed second in state. The Year in Review also showed time spent in practice, both serious and silly, making memories along with music.

"Top Velocity," a group comprised of the top performing marchers in the band, was next to take the floor. They marched a fast-paced performance to the song "Upside Down and Inside Out" by OK Go. The routine included many challenging "sets," or movements from place to place, requiring marchers to be both quick and precise. The floor lights were once again turned down low as the marchers wore illuminated gloves and made use of the rare opportunity to march with their hands free to add visual effects to their performance.

The traditional Children's March was next. It began with a student-written skit following Marty McFly

and Doc Brown on a wacky tour through time as they tried to find and meet the "musical geniuses" who wrote Marty's new favorite song. They never found the artists they were looking for, but they did meet some interesting characters and make it "back to the future" before inviting the "future of the Marching Jays" to the floor to march through time together. This is something Director Lawrence knows is special to the kids and the community — many of his students talk about their own chances to join in on the children's march. Following intermission, another set of future Marching Jays took the floor in the eighth-grade band feature, Katy Perry's "Hot and Cold." The number allowed middle school musicians to take their first steps into adding visual performance to their music. Current Marching Jays members work with the eighth-graders as they prepare for their part in the Indoor performance, forging connections between future and current members and giving the next generation a taste of what they could soon be a part of.

"Girls — and Nathaniel — just want to have fun," said master of ceremonies Karen Pfarr, announcing the start of the color guard feature. The guard performed to an arrangement of Cindi Lauper's "Girls Just Wanna Have Fun," produced by guard instructor Alli Larkin. Soloists hammed it up, performing as a young girl pleading with her parents for the freedom to have fun before the call came to "speed things up" and "add some color," prompting a costume change from black and white dresses to tank-tops and neon shorts for a high-energy finish. The woodwind section was featured next, performing "Live and Let Die" from the 1973 movie, arranged by Paul Mur-

tha. The marchers dressed in their best spy clothes, featuring suits and sunglasses galore as they performed the classic piece, which Pfarr noted younger audiences may instead recognize from Shrek 3. The final section feature was for the percussionists — drumline and front-line. The drumline put on another light show as the combined section performed an arrangement by Marques Eckhoff which combined Soundgarden's "Black Hole Sun" and Bon Jovi's "Wanted Dead or Alive."

A second slideshow was played, giving tribute to the seniors, before the whole band graced the floor together for a finale performance of Green Day's "Still Breathing," arranged by Tom Wallace. The band dressed for grunge rock and roll and put their hearts and souls into their performance, ensuring a fun number for both band and audience.

The finale was followed by Director Lawrence's acknowledgements, before the band came out for the final time of the season. They sang "You'll Never Walk Alone" before grouping tightly together with their arms around each other for Michael Smith's "Friends." Both songs are sung and played throughout the season when band members come together as a team and as a family: This traditional closing of the Indoor is a highly emotional moment. Even as the first notes began, tears could be seen. According to tradition, each grade level left in turn during "Friends," beginning with the freshmen, until the seniors had the floor alone. Despite their tears the 24 seniors let loose, trading musicality for unrestrained passion. In the final bars of the song, the senior class closed into a circle to be together in their final moments as a marching band.

"There's been something extraordinary in the water here in Waseca," said Janean Hall, longtime supporter of the Waseca Marching Jays through volunteer work and music education, referring to generations of excellence in the band program. Director Lawrence couldn't help but agree. "It feels good," he said about working with Waseca's band. "It's a lot of work, and it's a lot of hours, but it's the kids that make it worth it." He also expressed his appreciation for the community. Lawrence is from Rosemount, which has a program well known for being large, well-funded, and highly successful, but said that the enthusiasm and participation from the community there can't match up to Waseca.

The students are what the band is about, and who makes the band great is a chorus repeated again and again. Brittney Ross, senior clarinet player, talked about the feeling of performing and how special that can be. Her favorite thing about marching band, she said, is "when we finish a competition, and then go sit on a hill and watch other bands compete. I've had so many wonderful conversations and memories there." Senior drum major Lindsey Kopetzki, previously a mellophone player, said that her favorite things are competing, especially at the Sioux Falls competition, and the Indoor. She talked about this year's Sioux Falls performance, where the band had an especially successful day taking fifth in the field championships and Parade Grand Champion, plus the Sweepstakes Award and the award for Outstanding Drum Majors. "I was already crying, you know, before they even announced we'd won Best Drum Majors," Kopetzki continued. "As we were leaving the field after awards, Director Lawrence says to me that he's got more news—I won a scholarship from the Youth in Music competition. Only eight people got that scholarship." She doesn't know yet where she wants to go to college, but she's considering a pre-law program. "Music will always be a part of my college career; wherever I go I'll want to be in the band."

On the flipside, Kopetzki's younger brother Allen is a freshman trumpet player in his first year. He said that, with his sister as drum major, he felt obligated to join the band. "It's a lot to take in," he said about his first experiences, "but the first week of new marchers' training I wanted to quit. Then we got to band camp, and it was still a lot to take in, but around the second week I found myself thinking, 'Hey, this is actually fun.' Then comes Indoor, and I see everyone and I'm thinking, 'These people are slightly insane.' Now, I know why everyone was so crazy about it. It was really fun." Allen said he's glad he stuck with it through his initial desire to quit — an impulse shared by many first-year marchers over the generations — and that he'll definitely be in band throughout his high school career.

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# A Day in the Country

HAPPENINGS IN THE LOCAL AG COMMUNITY

## A look back at the 2022 season

By **MARK BERNARD**  
Staff Writer

Harvest 2022 is largely in the books and for most, brought about far better than anticipated yields, especially for corn. There were times when area farmers were not quite sure what we had until the combines started rolling. Soybean yields were respectable in most cases, although not generally on a par with 2021. Corn yields, on the other hand, wowed a lot of us, leaving many of us wondering where the yield came from. In an email exchange, Tom Hoverstad, researcher and crop scientist at the Southern Research and Outreach Center (SROC) in Waseca made a couple observations:

First, he mentions a lack of extreme temperatures during the corn grain filling period: "It seems neither the daytime highs nor the nighttime lows strayed far from normal. I would have to check the records, but I think 90 or 91 is as hot as we got July through Sept. I think this was good for corn yields."

Second, he was impressed by the calm conditions July through September. "Remember how windy it was late winter and spring? What may be more remarkable is how calm it was late in the summer. Our records report wind each day in total miles for the 24-hour period. These daily records are totaled for the month. Both August and September totaled under 3000 miles of wind. I looked at our records going back 10 years and did not find another month with such a low total during the growing season, yet it happened twice this year. I think this may not have been the best for soybean yield and disease development."

I would concur with Tom's observations on both counts. I saw only four days with highs in the 90s in the SROC data. Temperatures got warm, but never terribly oppressive for extended periods of time. I ran the squirrel cage fan very little on the lams this past summer. It was hard to get hay to dry sometimes without any breeze. Didn't matter if you were trying to make haylage and blow it in a silo. That'll work anytime. Luckily the lengthy intervals between significant rainfall events were such that none of it got rained on other than a sprinkle. When it did rain, the rainfall amounts were generous.

Our growing season precipitation was a little more hit and miss here than along the Hwy 14 & I-90 corridors. We were fortunate after the dry fall last year to pick up over 4" of rain in April with some of what fell in March coming along for the ride once the ground thawed. Little of either month's precip drained away. May precip was short, well below what's normal at the SROC. June was especially dry in New Richland (2.10") and even drier at our farmstead where I received less than 2" for the month. There was much snarling and gnashing of teeth when the rains kept passing north or south of us. I started watering the garden in late June and early July. It started raining shortly after that. Want to make it rain? Water your garden!

We got lucky in July and August though, and as Tom pointed out in his comments, with the moderate temperatures and fully developed canopy shading the ground, we made the most of it. We had some cornfield averages over 280 bu./acre with whole farm averages in some cases



Shown above is a photo from the 2022 harvest of a local field located between Waseca and New Richland.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bentley

around 250. The corn had tremendous roots and with the lack of wind-storm events, it stood and didn't snap as in some previous years, which has been a killer about 3 years in a row on some operations. A lot of farmers now carry wind coverage on their corn as standard operating procedure. At least the rootworms had fun in some area corn on corn. No insurance for that. Rotating out of corn is the best cure for it.

Corn matured and dried down much more quickly than expected. At the end of August, most were convinced it could be a long fall. A warmer than normal first half of September and October sped the drying process along so that most were done with corn harvest by the end of October. Many also burned less dryer gas as a result. That was good news in light of all the increased input

costs. Tar spot is a relatively new disease that has shown up in corn. It has been slowly working its way this direction for the past several years after being a problem farther east. The disease set in late, so the yield impact was largely negligible, but it has the potential to be a problem down the road. It could be found in almost every field and type of corn including sweet corn and Indian corn. Luckily, it can be treated with fungicides and there are some major differences in tolerance between hybrids.

Soybeans were a difficult read. As Tom Hoverstad also mentioned, the best way to estimate soybean yields is with the combine. The crop looked really good up until August 19 when we first noticed Sudden Death Syndrome (SDS) in soybeans. A week

later, when I got back from the Pro Farmer Crop Tour, it was noticeable in many more fields. In fields affected previously, the areas had grown in size and scope. Many hadn't used seed treatment to prevent SDS. The expense was cited as their primary reason; since the spring was relatively dry, some didn't think it was warranted. Given the price of soybeans, I was somewhat surprised that the "throw the kitchen sink at it" mentality hadn't prevailed. Most claimed they could see the impact of SDS on their yield maps.

For those who used the "kitchen sink" approach, yields were more stable, and some claimed yields were as good or better than last year. White mold was largely a non-issue although scattered plants were affected in some late field assessments. Some did treat fields for white mold

where it had previously been a major problem. While in many of those cases entire fields were treated so there was no basis for comparison, where comparisons could be made, it showed a positive economic response.

To sum up, good soybean yields, and fantastic corn yields were the hallmark of the 2022 harvest. Coupled with good prices, cash grain farmers definitely had plenty to smile about despite the high input costs. While soils are drier than we might like going into 2023, the profile was nowhere near full this past spring. Perhaps surprisingly, 2022 proved we could still raise a bumper crop given timely rains and moderate growing season temperatures.



*Jodie Thompson*  
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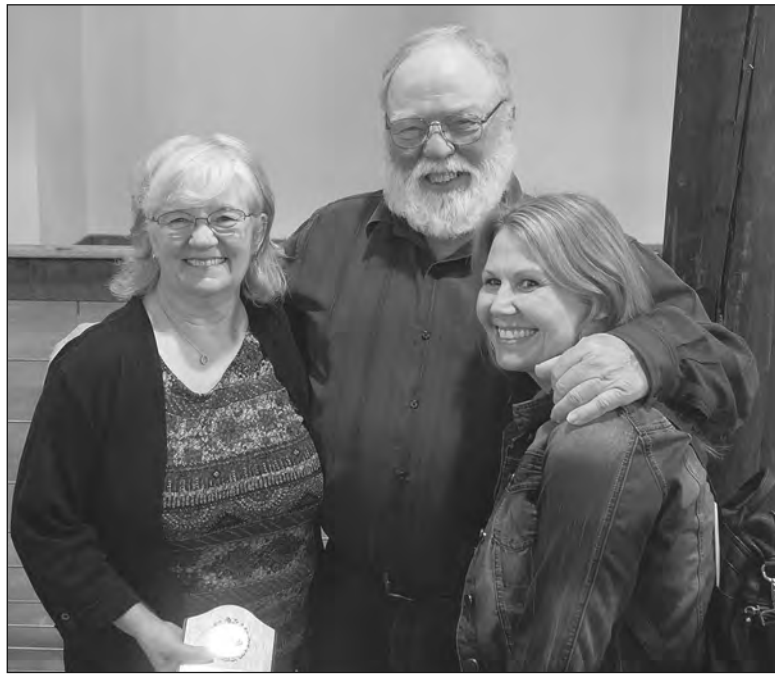
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# A Day in the Country

HAPPENINGS IN THE LOCAL AG COMMUNITY



Winning the Distinguished Waseca County Agriculture Leadership award for 2022 during the annual Farm and City Luncheon were Dale and Judy Hoffman.

Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

## Hoffmans are active agriculture leaders

By ELI LUTGENS  
Publisher

Dale and Judy Hoffman were recognized as recipients of Waseca County's Active, Distinguished Agriculture Leadership award.

The Waseca Chamber of Agri-Business has been involved with this award for roughly 10 years, recognizing active farming families under the age of 75.

This year's award recognized the Hoffmans, who live just east of Waseca.

The Hoffmans do a lot to contribute, not only to agriculture, but to the agriculture community of Waseca County. The couple started farming in 1973 on Dale's family farm, milking a dairy herd of 25 cows which later increased to 40 head. In 2014 they exited the dairy industry and began raising beef cattle. Their operation has grown to 800 acres, consisting of corn, soybeans, and hay.

Working with two, and now three generations has allowed the Hoffmans to expand and enjoy their family farm life. They say farming with family is one of the greatest joys they could have ever asked for.

Both Dale and Judy serve their agricultural community to an "above and beyond" degree. Dale has served as an active member of multiple organizations: DHIA Board member, AMPI District Board/officer, AMPI regional and Cooperative Board 1976-2012 as Finance Committee Chair/acting Treasurer; Meriden Shipping Association, Waseca County Dairy Association President, American Dairy Association board member.

Not to be outdone, Judy has tirelessly given her time to many vital boards and initiatives: AMPI Division Officer-Secretary; helping to start the AMPI Ladies Auxiliary in Waseca County, Midwest Dairy Association Divisional board and Cooperative board. She was the chairperson for the Princess Kay of the Milky Way committee, Waseca County Dairy Association board member - assistant to the president/also princess coordinator, and Farm Camp Minnesota-Treasurer. Together they were chair couple for AMPI's Young Cooperator Pro-

gram involving and educating dairy farmers within the industry.

The Hoffmans are as humble as they come, but they are no strangers to accolades. Dale has been named Waseca County Outstanding Farmer, Dale and Judy have received the Milk Pitcher award from Waseca County Dairy Association, 1996 Waseca County Farm Family of the year, 2006-'07 Friend of Education Waseca Public Schools, and 2002 Waseca County 4-H Hall of Fame. Their partnership in family, farming, and service has made Waseca County a stronger Ag Community.

"Dale and Judy Hoffman have shown tremendous leadership," shares Gyles Randall of the Waseca Area Foundation. "Their commitment to educating anybody and everybody who would listen about how important agriculture is to our community, state, and nation is honorable. They have truly helped build the bridge from farm to city. Running a successful dairy farm can be difficult enough, but the Hoffmans stretched themselves to serve on countless boards and committees to make Minnesota agriculture stronger. Dale and Judy's impact has rippled through their family as their children and grandchildren are now involved in farming operations. In addition to their accomplishments as farmers, they still found time to give back to their faith community at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Meridan and to the local government in Woodville. With people like Dale and Judy, our community is enriched."

"I noticed this award is specifically for those under the age of 75 and I'm kinda glad to hear that," Dale Hoffman jokes.

"I'd like to thank the committee on behalf of both Judy and myself. I'd like to thank the community for honoring us with this award. I hope we deserve it and live up to the standards. We do farm, presently, with our children and grandchildren. I have to thank them also for their support through the years as it continues. I'm thankful and honored for this award and I want to again, say thank you to the committee."

## Beschnett Vineyard 15 years in Waseca

By TRISTAN JENSEN  
Editorial Assistant

Beschnett Vineyard and Winery, the only vineyard in Waseca County, took root in the year 2007. Bill and Phyllis Beschnett, with help from their son Bil Beschnett, own and operate the vineyard, which was licensed in 2018. "We live on an acreage south of Waseca and had a few tillable acres," said Phyllis, who is now president of the vineyard and winery. "We explored many options and had heard of the University of Minnesota's work developing cold-hardy grapes. We decided this would be a good use for the land and in 2007 planted our first 200 Frontenac grape plants." Today, the Beschnetts grow four University of Minnesota grape varieties - Frontenac, Frontenac Gris, LaCrescent, and Marquette - with a total of 1,600 plants.

Bill and Phyllis both grew up on farms, with a deep appreciation for a farmer's love of the land. Their farm winery is a result of their upbringing, and "feels like a return to our roots," said Phyllis. Her family farmed in Iowa, while Bill's farmed in Good Thunder, Minnesota. They met during college at Mankato State University, and moved to Waseca in 1968. Bill is a chiropractor, and still practices in Waseca in addition to working the vineyard. Phyllis started her working life as a teacher, then worked in Bill's office for many years. Their son Bil was born in 1970, graduated from Waseca High School, and works as an appraiser in Waseca in addition to his role in winemaking. Bill and Phyllis invested in Clear Lake Press Signs and Apparel in 1988, and Phyllis eventually became owner before selling in 2017, just prior to the vineyard's licensure.

The eleven-year transition from their first plants to the opening of their licensed vineyard didn't come easily for the Beschnetts. "It's a process," Phyllis said. "We knew very little about growing grapes, so we joined the Minnesota Grape Growers and learned a great deal from attending conventions and workshops and by reaching out to the Arboretum and Horticultural Research Center." Each year after 2007, the Beschnetts built up their numbers by adding a few hundred plants. Growing grapes requires setting posts every six feet with wires run between to allow tendrils to climb. Once the vines mature, they must be regularly pruned and trained by hand to grow within the wires. A larger pruning of old growth is necessary every winter, and the growing season begins anew as soon as snow begins to melt around March. Phyllis explained, "It is hard work, but it's fun. I like to be out when it's quiet."

While the grape varieties the Beschnetts grow have been bred to handle northern weather, some plants are lost: "They're pretty good about coming back, but when it's really cold for a long period it does some damage." Phyllis explained that when this happens, a new plant can grow from the roots of the old, but it must be re-trained. Doing so requires a full three years to get a good harvest again, the same time period as for a new plant.

Grape harvest takes place in September, and requires "all hands on deck."

"When we first started harvesting the grapes, we had a group of friends and family that gathered to help," Phyllis remembers. "As the years went on this became a day we looked forward to, a day when we worked



FAMILY VINEYARD - From left, Phyllis, Bil, and Bill Beschnett.

together, enjoyed some food and beverages, and spent time enjoying each other. We still depend on family and friends to help with the harvest and with the crushing and pressing of the grapes."

Bil Beschnett, the son of Phyllis and Bill, handles the winemaking. The process starts the same day the grapes are harvested. First, grapes are put through a de-stemmer and crusher. White grapes are then pressed immediately, and the fermentation process for the white wine begins. Settlings fall to the bottom and are removed several times, and the wine is put through a cold stabilization process. Phyllis said, sometimes during winter, the wines can be put out in the snow. Dark grape varieties ferment on the skins, which helps the wine to retain color. Some varieties and batches ferment this way for about a week, some for longer. The grapes are then pressed

and oaked and the aging process - at least two years for the red wines - begins. During the winemaking process, Bil regularly performs tests of the Ph. sugars, and other components to ensure quality.

As soon as their crop was established, the Beschnetts tried their hand at winemaking in small batches for personal use. Until they obtained their farm winery license in 2018, this was the only use for the wine they made - a hobby. Minnesota's farm winery license sets requirements for minimum acreage devoted to growing and producing, the use of locally produced products, and maximum gallons produced per year, to which the Beschnett Vineyard and Winery must adhere. This license permitted them to sell their wine, officially marking the establishment of the vineyard and winery business in Waseca County.

## Waseca County's farmers of the year

By ELI LUTGENS  
Publisher

Earlier this year the Casey and Natalie Roeker family were recognized as Waseca County's 2022 Farm Family of the Year and Outstanding Young Farming Family.

This was the first time in Waseca County history when a family won both titles.

The Waseca County Extension committee selects the farm family of the year, and has been recognizing exceptional local family operations for more than 30 years, honoring farm families from across Minnesota for their contributions to the agriculture industry and their local communities. The sponsors of this statewide award include: University of MN Extension, the College of Food, Agriculture and National Resource Sciences, the College of Veterinary Medicine, and the MN agriculture experiment stations, along with Farmfest.

And the award goes to... The Roekers were selected for this year's award because of their "continuous positive promotion of agriculture and livestock," the extension office announced.

Casey and Natalie, along with their children Hadley, Presley and Nash, farm 580 acres of cropland in New Richland, consisting of corn, soybeans, and alfalfa. They also raise

replacement dairy heifers for a dairy operation in Rice County and raise feeder cattle. Their farm was deemed a century farm in 2007.

Casey's father began farming with his grandfather in 1976 with corn, soybeans, wheat and hogs. In 1994 Casey and his brother became more involved in farm operations. Hadley, 10; Presley, 8; and Nash, 4, all have farm chores to do to keep the farm running smoothly.

Besides his contributions on the farm, Casey works at the UMN Southern Research and Outreach Center in livestock. Natalie keeps the farm, house, and family running. "There is always plenty to do!" she jokes.

Casey serves as a leader in the couple's congregation at Trinity Lutheran in New Richland and Natalie is active as a 4-H leader and assists with the county fair.

"On behalf of Natalie, my kids, Hadley, Presley, and Nash, I want to thank the Waseca County Ag Chamber Committee and University of MN Extension," Casey Roeker said. "What an honor to receive these awards. There's a ton of young families that were very deserving. Shortly after I received a call from our banker, Carol Raimann, that we were selected for the Chamber award, I started to reflect on the past 16 years. The first thing that came to



FAMILY - The Roeker family, Casey, Natalie, Hadley, Presley, and Nash. Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

mind was how blessed we are to receive it. Again, I am reminded of how many good farmers we have in this county. It's fantastic to receive this award."

"The thing is we get to do this every day," Casey Roeker continued. "We love it through the challenges, the ups and downs. We're grateful for the experiences farming has given us. I'm grateful for the people who helped us along the way. The list is really long and I can't thank everybody. I've got three tables [of people] who came to support us here today and we're very glad you're all here. I also want to thank our kids. They're with us all the way, riding the tractor and combine, helping us with chores. I remember Hadley, she was only 7 years old. I got home

from work, the dryer had been running from what I heard and she said, 'What do you need help with Dad? I want to get in the field.' Natalie had just picked up calves that day. She helped out a lot. It's a memory I'll never forget."

"To be able to raise our kids on the farm means the world to us. Other than that, I just want to say that we enjoy the problem solving that farming brings to us. To see it all come together and see the results at the end of the year is very rewarding. And finishing up, I just want to express our greatest joy is raising our family on the farm and watching our kids raised in our lifestyle along with us. Thanks again to everybody."



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## Young entrepreneurs



During the Waseca Chamber of Commerce's annual business and industry celebration, Emily and Bill Knudsen were honored as Waseca's Young Entrepreneurs, an award which goes to business owners under the age of 40 who have demonstrated innovation, resourcefulness and imagination.

## Nohner excelling in an unexpected role

By MELISSA DUNN  
Staff Writer

The November 17 regular school board meeting began with Superintendent Eric Hudspeth introducing Waseca Area Learning Center (ALC) director Mandi Nohner, who has been with the Waseca school district since 2005. "Mandi had the opportunity in September to step in and be the director of the ALC for this school year," Hudspeth informed the board, "which probably changed her plans of how the school year was going to start for her, since we had the conversation on August 31. But she has done, and continues to do, an exceptional job of leading our mission at the ALC."

The Waseca Area Learning Center is a personalized alternative high school program designed to meet the needs of students who are not successful in the traditional school setting. The ALC currently serves 70 students from the school districts of JWP, WEM, and NRHEG as well as Waseca. To attend an ALC, students need to meet one or more of a list of criteria as stipulated in ALC legislation. Among items on the list are being behind in completing credit for graduation, experiencing physical or mental health conditions, and having truancy issues. "Our goal is for students to either go on to postsecondary education or to get gainful employment to be a productive citizen," Nohner says. "Our students have the option to get a Waseca diploma or one from their home district. Then we would go off of that home district's graduation requirements." At the ALC, Waseca's normal trimester schedule is divided into six "hexesters." Nohner says the altered grading periods give students more opportunities to earn their needed credits. "If they miss the start of one, they don't have to

## WASECA SCHOOL BOARD

wait as long before they can jump in and try again," she says. The ALC also offers independent study for students who demonstrate personal motivation, night school, summer credit recovery, and apprenticeship programs with area employers Cinch and Crystal Valley.

Nohner presented performance measures, results, and data comparing last year's first semester to this year's. Based on attendance and credit recovery, "We've actually gone up twenty-one percent," she stated. Nohner also highlighted innovative opportunities provided by the ALC: earning credits with work experience, Friday symposiums of martial arts, ice fishing, other community projects, and something she calls 'forced family fun.' "They don't always want to do it, but they do it," she says with a laugh. "We make 'em do it. Next week we're cooking a Thanksgiving meal together, and then we'll sit down at a big long table in the hallway and eat. We really work on acceptance of others and their differences." Board member Grant Scheffert commented that he appreciated the ALC lists "building relationships" as one of its top objectives. "It seems like that would be core to making your students be successful."

Nohner agreed. "Yes, I've found that if you build a positive relationship with a student, they are willing to go above and beyond in really any aspect. Especially behavior." Superintendent Eric Hudspeth expressed "how fortunate Waseca is to be the host and the home of this program that just cares about kids, and about getting them to the next stage in their lives. We want to be known as an ALC that is innovative and forward-thinking."

Other matters covered at the board meeting included financial and enrollment updates by business manager Elizabeth Beery, and recognition of the 2022 Waseca Education Association Teacher of the Year Dawn Skinner. Skinner teaches language arts and drama classes at the Waseca Area Learning Center and has been doing so since 2003.

## Why is the Veteran important today?

By STORMIE SCHMIDT  
Waseca High School

Three Waseca high school students submitted written essays in answer to the question, "Why is the Veteran important?"

The following is penned by first place winner Stormie Schmidt. Her essay will be submitted at the district level for competition, in addition, she earned a \$200 scholarship for her work. Here is her essay, titled, Veterans Importance:

American politician and attorney John Doolittle once said, "America's Veterans have served their country with the belief that democracy and freedom are ideals to be upheld around the world." Many may ask why is it important to recognize veterans? What have they done for me? Veterans are men and women who have put their lives on the line to fight for the freedom of Americans. To further explain the importance of veterans, I will tell you about my dad.

At the age of 20 my dad joined the

U.S. Navy; he was a Gunners Mate. My dad served through the Gulf War and Desert Storm. Here he was exposed to multiple unidentified gasses, which would later result in a neurological disease known as ALS. ALS attacks the nerve system that is in control of voluntary muscle movements such as chewing, walking and talking. My dad was honorably discharged for his duties in 1992. In 2016, my dad was officially diagnosed after six long years of "not knowing" why he was getting so sick. The disease slowly started and later intensified causing breathing problems, muscle weakness, heart failure, and lung failure. Though this time, my dad never stopped being proud of serving; he talked many times to me about "doing it all over again for his country." For him becoming a veteran for the United States was one of his proudest accomplishments. He was proud of the work that he had done and believed that without others like him, our nation wouldn't be as strong of a de-



Barb Klampe, center, introduces the winners of the Voice of Democracy essay contest. From left: Ashton Jenzen, Klampe, Will King, and Stormie Schmidt. Pioneer photo by Eli Lutgens

mocracy as it is. Unfortunately, in 2018, my dad lost his battle with ALS. When people remember him, they talk about how proud he was being a U.S. Navy veteran who fought for Americans' freedoms. I will remember him as the man who instilled the importance of our freedoms and the sacrifices that went into getting them.

My dad was only one of many veterans who have gone through the same experiences or similar ones. My point in sharing his story was not to make you feel sorry for me but to show what veterans go through even after leaving the front lines. These men and women do not join the armed forces for the free college

benefits or being called a hero; they join because they are genuinely proud of this country and want it to continue to thrive as a strong, independent democracy. Without them, we wouldn't have the freedoms we do today. Veterans are the heart and soul of this great nation that we are blessed to live in. We need to continue to express gratitude and teach the younger generation the importance and sacrifice these powerful men and women have gone through.

I will leave you today with a quote from Elmer Davis which I believe encapsulates the importances of our veterans: "This nation will remain the land of the free only as long as it is the home of the brave."

## FFA visits, school policies approved

By MICHAEL ROY  
Editor

The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton School Board meeting on Monday, November 21 was a productive one. The JWP Future Farmers of America gave a presentation to the board members, and the board discussed changes to a school policy regarding the use of facilities and equipment.

FFA Treasurer Sam Carlson led the presentation, explaining the activities the FFA has carried out so far and is planning for the remainder of the school year. "We went to an apple orchard in Faribault for our fall trip," he explained to the board. "Then we stopped at the World's Largest Candy Store near Jordan because who doesn't love candy?"

FFA member Allie Hanks described the group's trip to Indianapolis. Members visited the Indianapolis Speedway and learned about different parts of the agriculture industry. "It was like a college fair about agriculture," she said. "We learned about the different branches of ag work there. There were colleges from all 50 states that offered ag programs at their schools, too."

Carlson then updated the board on the FFA's fruit sales, which totaled near \$8,000 this school year. "It will help us out tremendously," he claimed.

The funds raised from the fruit sales will help the FFA pay for bus rides to competitions and help graduating seniors who have been in the program for

years.

Policy 902 regarding the use of the district facilities and equipment drummed up a lot of questions. The policy states that any food provided at gatherings within school facilities or on school property would need to come from a ServeSafe certified person. It was stated that the policy is nearly identical to one used at the Waseca school district.

Board member Kendra Hoehn questioned Superintendent Jeremy Erler about potluck meals for sports teams. "Will that be an issue?" she asked him. "With this policy, it's not allowed," Erler replied. "All food that would be brought into the school would need to be from a certified kitchen."

If potluck meals were to happen at the school, the person who cooked the food would need to provide proof of certification. "Otherwise, we'd be liable," Erler elaborated.

Board member Tim Oelke took issue with the "priority of use" list in the policy. "I would rather have youth programs have priority over the cities of Janesville, Waldorf, and Pemberton," he expressed. "I feel like the youth programs are an extension of the JWP school, whose teams have the top priority over the cities."

After getting back to the topic of the food situation, the board decided to suspend further discussions on the policy indefinitely. The board then approved 14 other policy changes (eight of them

## JWP SCHOOL BOARD

considered substantial, six considered non-substantial) which included the district's code of ethics, drug and alcohol testing, and more.

Superintendent Erler began his report by telling the board about his experience substituting for the nurse's office for a few days. School nurse Laura Hoffmann is out on leave until December, and her long-term substitute Sharyn Miller had other obligations, according to Erler.

Erler was also happy to report that after a long wait, the school's chiller was finally on the roof. "We ran wire for it today, and the glycol lines are hooked up to it," he said. "We'll get it lined up once spring hits."

Other topics addressed in his report included the elementary starting targeted services for kids needing help with math and reading, new clubs starting at the school, principals starting their formal observations for the year, and the district's efforts to purchase two new dishwashers for the kitchens. "Right now, we can do about 30 racks of dishes an hour," Erler said. "With the new dishwashers, we can do 200 an hour."

The district is looking to do an analysis on three areas of the school with Growth Operators. They would assess the school's Human Resources depart-

ment, update 20 or more job descriptions at the school, and perform a comparable work study to see how the school compares to other districts around the state. The total investment to Growth Operators would range anywhere from \$19,000 to \$27,000.

Erler noted that the school's teachers' union highly favored updating the job descriptions at JWP. But Oelke was hesitant about the district paying that much to an organization it's never worked with before. "What other school districts use this company?" he asked Erler. "I don't want to go blindly into this. I'm apprehensive because we have approved stuff in the past where we didn't get our money's worth."

The board decided to postpone the assessment option indefinitely to give Erler time to look into what other schools use Growth Operators to assess their district's performance.

The board members ended the meeting accepting donations with many thanks from four organizations. Utility Consultants donated \$50 to go toward the JWP National Honor Society; Kids Count gave \$139.08 for Community Education; the University of Minnesota donated \$885 to go toward aquaponics equipment for Ag classes; and the Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children Division for Early Childhood (CEC DEC) donated \$603.88 for a DEC mini grant.

## 1-1 on the week, 2-0 in-conference

By MICHAEL ROY  
Editor

The Waseca girls' hockey team split two games this week and stayed undefeated in the Big South after a 5-1 victory over Worthington on Saturday, November 19. However, that decisive victory didn't come without a harsh 9-1 loss on the road to Visitation Catholic in Mendota Heights the previous Thursday.

## Visitation 9, Waseca 1

After starting off the season with a win for the first time in a decade, Waseca's bout with Visitation left them with a bad taste in their mouths. The home team went to work with a goal

in the first four minutes of the game. Another goal ten minutes in made it 2-0 in the first period.

Visitation had its way with Waseca's defense and the Bluejay goaltender Ilamay Draheim. Draheim was asked to face 36 shots, 27 of them in the first two periods of the game. Draheim was unable to keep out four goals in the second with three more slipping by her in the third period. Kiya Pospisil, who was assisted by Maizee Storey, scored the lone goal for Waseca late in the third period to prevent a shutout.

While Visitation Catholic committed zero penalties all game, Waseca had four. Two were on Cece Huttemier

for interference and tripping, while the other two were on Emma Keith for tripping and body checking.

## Waseca 5, Worthington 1

After a tough first loss on the road, the Bluejays turned it around against Worthington.

Both teams' offenses were relatively quiet, with the Trojans shooting 18 times to Waseca's 17. However, the Bluejays cashed in on four of them right away. Emma Huelsnitz scored the first one (assisted by Maddy Benson and Katlyn Schueller) in 24 seconds. Three more were tallied by Ryley Bartz (assisted by Schueller and Madelyn Malecha), Katlyn Schueller

(assisted by Kiya Pospisil and McKenna Mortensen), and Maddy Benson (assisted by Emma Keith).

Senior Cece Huttemier scored the Bluejays' fifth goal less than two minutes into the third period and was assisted by Emily Gordon. Worthington's only goal of the night was a shorthanded goal by the Trojans' Riley Nickel.

The win keeps them undefeated in the Big South Conference. Windom, another conference opponent, visited the Jays on Tuesday, November 22. Visitation will visit Waseca for a rematch the following Saturday.

## Election certified; new boilers purchased

By JESSICA LUTGENS  
Staff Writer

All members were present for the New Richland City Council's Monday, Nov. 14 meeting. The agenda and consent agenda, with adjustments for discussion on October accounts payable and finances in the "new business" portion of the meeting, were approved.

Present for public comment was Dan Petsinger with concerns regarding waste from a neighbor's dog in his yard. City Administrator Tony Martens told Petsinger that the issue has gone through the ordinance violation letter and administrative fine stages; the neighbor will likely be issued a citation for the violation. He also advised Petsinger to keep track of any costs incurred, as they may be reimbursed

during restitution if the matter comes to that.

The ambulance report was submitted in written form. It revealed that the New Richland ambulance has responded to 176 runs as of Nov. 10 this year. One new crew member was approved, as was the ambulance report. A discussion addressed ambulance revenue as well as the wages paid to the ambulance director. This led to a motion to reduce the number of hours worked each month by the director from 60 to 50 while keeping the rate of pay at \$1,000/month. The motion carried.

The fire department report, submitted in written form, stated that the department experienced no calls during the month of October. The report was approved.

## NEW RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL

The police report, also submitted in written form, stated that the NRPD responded to 115 calls for service in October. The report also showed that a new rifle for a squad vehicle was purchased, new headlights were installed in both squad vehicles, and the department will participate in annual taser/firearms qualifications at the end of this month. The report was approved.

In unfinished business, the council approved an employee policy manual, which will take effect Jan. 1, 2023, along with a "Paid Time Off" transition

plan. A new city logo was also approved, with further details to be explained in a separate article. A variance application for phosphorus and chloride at the wastewater treatment plant to be done by Bolton and Menk at a cost of up to \$5,000 was approved. The purchases of two boilers was approved: one for the water plant at a cost of \$11,750 plus wiring and one for the maintenance shop at a cost of \$5,460 plus wiring. Financials and accounts payable for October were discussed and approved.

Resolution 22-17 certifying election results was approved before the council went into closed session for a labor negotiation discussion, and the meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

**R** Sales & Service!  
**Rick's Appliance** Rick Maas  
Owner  
108 2nd Ave. NW  
Waseca, MN 56093  
507-461-9615  
ricksappliance108@gmail.com

**THE S.H.O.P.**  
32452 Hwy 13 South  
Waseca, MN 56093  
507-835-7040  
BRIAN HARGUTH KEITH JOHNSON

# Argus archives

## 100 Years Ago

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

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

- L. T. Silkey was down from his LeRay farm Thursday morning and was a business caller at this office. He stated that on the previous Saturday he returned from New Hampton, Iowa, where he went to secure additional stock for his already well-known herd of hogs. This time he secured one of the most famous hogs known, rather one sired by the famous "American Eagle," of which there is none better in the entire country. With this added to his entire stock, he will be enabled to still further raise the standard of well bred hogs - bred upon a scientific basis, with a view of minimum expense and maximum profit.

- L. T. Silkey was down from his LeRay farm Thursday morning and was a business caller at this office. He stated that on the previous Saturday he returned from New Hampton, Iowa, where he went to secure additional stock for his already well-known herd of hogs. This time he secured one of the most famous hogs known, rather one sired by the famous "American Eagle," of which there is none better in the entire country. With this added to his entire stock, he will be enabled to still further raise the standard of well bred hogs - bred upon a scientific basis, with a view of minimum expense and maximum profit.

## 75 Years Ago

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

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

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

## 50 Years Ago

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

- After some discussion about its merit, the District 830 School Board voted Monday night to make application for Minnesota's "Right to Read" program. The decision will involve the local school district in a pilot program designed to concentrate on improving reading skills by upgrading the abilities of teachers.

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

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## 25 Years Ago

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

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

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

# Looking back: Waseca archives

## 100 Years Ago - Waseca Herald

- Defying a downpouring rain, and puddles of water and mud over one thousand people turned out to pay honors to Judge Senn Thursday evening after his election to the district judgeship. The fight had been one of the hottest in years and almost every one in the city and county took a personal interest in it and considered Judge Senn's victory, their victory.

- At 7:30 the Waseca band assembled at the court house and a torch light procession was formed. About two or three hundred men carried torch lights. The procession started down Second street, the band playing the music for which it is famous and the crowds surged the street. After marching up and down the street they turned on Lake avenue and went down to the high school grounds. A huge bonfire was started and in a minute or two it was crackling and leaping in flames. It was a time of jubilee everywhere, for Waseca county has just won the judgeship for the first time since the district was created.

- The total cost of the West Elm St. drain was reported at the city council meeting last evening to be about \$1261, figuring in interest charges and publication costs up to date. It was decided to make the assessments at \$20 a lot where there is but one house on a lot at \$35 where there are two houses, or a total of \$595 for the abutting property owners, excepting the C. & N. W., which was assessed \$200, making a total of \$795.

- Fifty years of married life is something of a record in these days when the divorce courts are working overtime and when the word home has lost some of its former charm. Yet Mr. and Mrs. Peter McLin celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary at their home in this city last week. This was an event long looked forward to in the lives of these

people. Fifty years of happy married life these days is an achievement.

## 75 Years Ago - Waseca Herald

- The number of Waseca county deer hunters topped all previous records, according to County Auditor Art Brisbane, who announced that 397 Waseca people had purchased licenses to hunt deer. Reports from other counties show similar gains over last year and some 200,000 are hunting this season. Hunters returning from up north state that many have had trouble getting their deer, although this year there is snow on the ground. Far north the snow is heavy enough to make walking a hard process.

- Waseca may have had a fine fall, but snow and cold weather caught many farmers with soy beans and corn still in the field and the loss is liable to be sizable. Losses will run higher in soy beans than in corn. Cleatus Murphy estimated, since soy beans will take less punishment than corn. Farmers waiting for combines and corn pickers will have trouble cleaning their fields. The first snow on November 7 brought ice and softened the fields so that farmers could not get out to finish work on soy beans and corn. The last snow of seven inches has increased the trouble for farmers as far as getting out in the fields and a weather report today forecasted four more inches on the way.

- The Waseca public schools at their annual open house entertained almost 500 parents last Thursday night who came to inspect the schools, watch different demonstrations by students and check exhibits prepared to show what their children are doing as they get an education. Parents numbered about 70 more than last year and about 150 more than open house in 1945, the first year the plan was started. There were 700 booklets mailed out to parents explaining the open house plan and

urging them to attend, talk with the teachers and check points on education with which they are not familiar. Besides regular income tax problems.

## 50 Years Ago - Waseca Journal

- The Journal learned in a telephone call from the State Department Saturday that Dave Kunst should be home by Thanksgiving. Dave was to have left the American Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan today (Monday) for his journey home to Waseca. Jan Kunst, Dave's wife, told the Journal today that Dave tires easily and his flight home will be "broken up" to allow him plenty of rest. Jan said she has no idea how Dave is coming home whether on a military or commercial flight. She also doesn't know if he is traveling on his feet or on a stretcher. Dave had been in the hospital 13 days and was given an average of two x-rays a day.

- Sunday was a cold bleak day in Waseca, but a great day for the elderly citizens of the Waseca area as groundbreaking took place for the new "Maple Terrace" housing project. Reverend Paul Knutson, president chairman of the Waseca Housing Authority, thanked the Sacred Heart Parish for what he termed "the best site in town" for the project.

- Dr. Loren L. Braun, a professor of chemistry at Idaho State University, has published a textbook on "Essentials of Organic Biochemistry." He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. August Braun, Janesville, and a brother of Mrs. Grove Brown, Waseca. He graduated from Waseca Central High School in 1947. "This book presents an overview of the fields of organic and biochemistry," Dr. Braun wrote in the preface.

## 25 Years Ago - Waseca County News

- Two Waseca residents were taken to the Waseca Area Medical Center

# Star archives

## 25 Years Ago - New Richland Star, November 13, 1997

- Halgren's Auto Sales & Repair has moved their automobile sales business to a new building at the intersection of Highways 13 and 30 on the east edge of New Richland. "This new site which is more visible gives us better exposure," Dale Halgren said. The former site of the A & W Root Beer Stand the building remained empty since The Family Affair closed a number of years ago. Dale Halgren said he had been trying to buy the property for more than a year and finally succeeded late this summer.

- Flying was Patrick Arnfelt's first love. From the time his cousin, Dan Sampson, gave him his first flying lesson in 1987, Patrick knew one day he would wind up in an airliner cockpit. Those of us who knew him well obviously watched him fly his own personal aircraft and marveled at the fact that at the young age of 20, and with only 1,000 hours of flying time, he landed his first job with a major airline, Continental Airlines. On July 29, 1995, Patrick married Jennifer Schwab. Less than a month later, on August 21, Patrick and Jennifer were returning home from a visit in Red Wing when, just a few miles from their home, their Jimmy slammed into the side of a gravel truck on a County Road 45 intersection. Recently, Continental did a rare thing by naming one of their aircraft "The Spirit of Patrick Arnfelt" in his memory. The plane, an ATR-42, was the type Patrick flew when he first became employed at Continental. Patrick Arnfelt was the grandson of Glen and Alma Routh of rural New Richland.

- The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5 have signed an agreement that describes the environmental commitments of both agencies in Minnesota over the next 21 months. Minnesota was the first state in the region to complete an environmental partnership agreement this year.

## 50 Years Ago - New Richland Star, November 16, 1972

- Golden Valley Lutheran Cross Country team, rated one of the best in the Midwest, got outstanding performances from Gordy Benfield of

girls had been taking music lessons. At the Forsberg farm they were met by a car driven by Ragnar Nordass of Blue Earth, coming from Waseca, which plowed into the left side of the Hieb car, taking off the front wheel, front fender, and scraping the whole left side of the car. Mr. Nordass had another accident that day while en route to Waseca. His car skidded on a stretch of ice and rolled over, taking off the right headlight and badly damaging the car generally. In driving the car in this condition he evidently misjudged the road, striking the Hieb car, swinging it around and leaving it crosswise of the road and headed for the ditch. It is remarkable that none of the passengers of the cars was hurt in so serious an accident.

- Clear and Reeds lakes will be open to winter anglers but dark house angling or spearing will not be permitted it was announced today by Chester S. Wilson state game and fish commissioner. St. Olaf lake will be closed to both open angling and dark house fishing and spearing.

- When Arthur Klessig received a weighty package by mail Monday he surmised a trick was being played by his brother, Leo, of Omak, Wash. He opened the package and what did he find? A western Russet potato. What did it weigh? A little matter of three pounds lacking one ounce. It was ten inches in length, a beauty if we ever saw one. Art is scouring his territory to find a bigger one to send to Leo.

## 100 Years Ago - New Richland

- Dr. Patricia Jean Olds, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. George H. Olds, has been invited to lecture at a workshop in Berlin, Germany, which will be held November 20th to December 2nd. The workshop on the topic "Contraception: The Masculine Gender," is being sponsored by the Schering Corporation of Berlin. Some fifty to sixty experts of various disciplines in biology medicine have been invited to attend the workshop; about 25 have been asked to speak to the group. Dr. Olds will lecture on "Sperm Ultrastructure as an Indication of Sterility." The aim of the workshop is to suggest new directions in research on contraceptives and their application to real-life situations.

## 75 Years Ago - New Richland Star, November 13, 1947

- An auto accident that might have been more serious and even fatal occurred Monday night on highway 13. Rev. S. P. Hieb and his daughters, Misses Sheila and Doris, were returning from Albert Lea where the

and treated and released for smoke inhalation Sunday after a fire broke out in their kitchen. Waseca Fire Department investigators said the fire broke out in the kitchen of the Andersons' residence at 7:56 p.m. Waseca Fire Chief Bob Johnson said the cause of the fire was grease from a pan on the stove.

- Two goals by Kristi Petersen and the shutout goal-tending of Jessie Rose sparked the Waseca Junior Gold girls' hockey team to a 3-0 victory over the Mankato East Junior Varsity at Mankato Thursday and played a penalty-free game. The Waseca girls will be competing as an independent club team this winter and next, before becoming a high school team in 1999-2000. Seventh-grader Mandi Swenson got Waseca's first score of the year when she converted a pass from Katie Benson five minutes into the game. Petersen gave Waseca some breathing room in the middle period with two goals. Rose, who had plenty of help from her defense, was forced to make only 12 saves in the contest.

- With one fell swoop, over a century's worth of history came tumbling down. On Saturday, Nov. 8, a crane knocked down the granary that stood at the corner of State Street and Fifth Avenue Southeast for over 102 years. Gary Isker, who cares for the property with his wife Sally, said that the building needed to come down because it had become a liability. The property has been in the Isker family since this 1930s. They have no plans for the property at this time. According to a 1930 Sanborn fire insurance map, the granary was built in 1895 as part of the Everett, Aughenbaugh & Company's numerous grain elevators in the area. The building hasn't been in service since the mid-1970s. The granary had been a victim of arson twice in 1996, once in April and again in June.

## Star, November 10, 1922

- Thursday C. C. Sybilrud of Albert Lea shot a beautiful specimen of the bald eagle family two miles north of Emmons on Edd Freemot's farm. The bird measured seven feet and eight inches from tip to tip of the expanding wings and three feet from the beak to the tip of the tail. It has a long and powerful bill the curve commencing at the cere. The wings reached to tip of tail and its legs are feathered to the toes. The body is dark brown, the feathers of head and neck pointed and of a golden hue. The eagle is being mounted.

- Lawrence Verplank, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. E. Verplank, accidentally got his hand caught in a corn shredder Wednesday of this week and as a result was rushed to the Naeva hospital at Albert Lea where it was found necessary to amputate two of his fingers.

- Peter, the eleven year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Christensen living four miles out of Freeborn was badly burned about the face and right arm while trying to start a fire in the range by the use of kerosene. On last Thursday the little fellow was alone, his parents having gone to town, and when dinner time came decided to start a fire with the above result. The explosion set his clothing on fire and he ran outside to the water trough where he succeeded in putting out the fire. The only people near were some tilers working in a field. Being in great agony the little fellow went to them for help.

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**Thank you for your support!**

## Be thankful for doing dishes

By PASTOR KEN ANDRS

Someone needs to do the dishes. It is one of those inevitable tasks following a big family meal, some people hop right in, while others hem and haw, and even more find something else to do. The dishes still need to get done.

I think everyone has something that they struggle with when it comes to chores. I generally struggle with getting started, but if I can get going then things get done. For some people it is a certain task that they just don't like to do, for others it is just the fact that it is a chore that needs to be done. No matter how much laundry we do, or how much you eat out, there will always be more to do.

Now there are some things that feel like a chore, and some things that actually are. Chores are mundane things that get done for our own health and well-being. They are tasks that make our lives easier but are of minimal benefit to others. There comes a point where we need to turn from looking at ourselves and the things we need to get done and turn towards God.

That is the difficult practice, to turn towards God while doing the mundane things in life. There is joy in doing things for the glory of God, but it is difficult to get into that frame of mind. A kitchen monk named Brother Lawrence developed a philosophy and practice of pursuing Christ in the mundane things of life. His work of Practicing the Presence of God was recorded into a book after he was interviewed by Cardinals in the 17th Century. Once of the quotes from this writing follows:

As often as I could, I placed myself as a worshiper before Him, fixing my mind upon his holy presence, recalling it when I found it wandering from him. This proved to be an exercise frequently painful, yet I persisted through all difficulties.

As well as:  
Nor is it needful that we should

**"No matter how much laundry we do, or how much you eat out, there will always be more to do."**

— Pastor Ken Andrs

have great things to do. . . We can do little things for God; I turn the cake that is frying on the pan for love of him, and that done, if there is nothing else to call me, I prostrate myself in worship before him, who has given me grace to work; afterwards I rise happier than a king. It is enough for me to pick up but a straw from the ground for the love of God.

Let us take the same attitude as that of Brother Lawrence, who took the mundane chores of the kitchen, and turned them to the glory of God. He found a deeper love for God by doing things with intention and purpose. In all things this week, do them for God with thankfulness in your heart.

Take these words from Psalm 100 and think about them as you do the dishes, being thankful, at the very least, that God has given you dishes.

1 Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his;

we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving

and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

5 For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

## Thanksgiving across different cultures

By SANTIAGO RAMIREZ  
Publisher

Cultural differences have always fascinated me; the times that the Lord has allowed me to travel, I have enjoyed the variety of cuisines -one of the most vital cultural marks- and the fact that people love others through the preparation of their typical dishes. This is a common denominator that I have found, especially in third-world countries.

As part of my nature to be fascinated by cultural differences, in my first year living here in the United States, I was very excited to experience the famous Thanksgiving. If I am honest, I was a little disappointed; it was more the stress around getting everything ready for the occasion and the eagerness for the arrival of black Friday than the value that the date itself is supposed to have. The following year was nothing more or less than a faithful portrait of the previous one, and by the third year, my expectations were lowered entirely. I say this with humility because I understand that it is not a date that has to meet my expectations; however, given my curiosity, I have investigated a little the origin of this tradition, and the disappointment is born of the distance between the celebration and its roots.

For this year beyond the tradition, I was wondering if our life as little Christs (Christians) should not be a life of constant thanksgiving, in other words, a life characterized by gratitude in all circumstances; I think the answer is yes, gratitude, and the act of giving thanks should be, among others, a distinctive mark of every Christian. With this feeling, I was preparing my last sermon, and I believe that the Lord led me to the epistle of Philippians where, at the end of it, Paul and Timothy encourage the church with words that I think should be universal among the people of God.

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:4-7 **\*\*Bold is mine.**

The story of Thanksgiving deserves to be told again, year after year, as cultural traits define us; I also believe we should be thankful on every occasion and not depending on circumstances, which is how I see 21st-century Christians in North America act.

Let me close with -in my opinion- a beautiful story.

Rodolfo Enrique Cabral, better known as Facundo Cabral, was an Argentine singer-songwriter, traveler, and thinker who, with his guitar, went around the world singing and telling stories. In his 1999 live album, in monologue five, he said to us:

"God took the form of a homeless and went down to the village. He looked for the shoemaker's house and told him: -Brother; I am penniless; I don't have a single coin on me; these are my only sandals, and they are broken. If you would do me a favor...."

-The shoemaker said, "I am tired of everyone coming to ask and no one to give."

-The Lord said to him, "I could give you what you need."

-The shoemaker, suspicious, seeing a homeless, asked him, "Could you give me the million dollars I need to be happy?"

-The Lord said, "I could give you ten times more than that, but in exchange for something. -In exchange for what," asked the shoemaker. -In exchange for your legs."

-The shoemaker asked, "Why do I want 10 million dollars if I won't be able to walk? Then the Lord said, "I can give you \$100 million in exchange for your arms."

-The shoemaker asked, "Why do I want \$100 million if I won't even be able to eat by myself? Then the Lord said to him, "I can give you \$1 billion in exchange for your eyes."

-The shoemaker thought a little and asked, "Why do I want \$1 billion if I won't be able to see my wife, my children, my friends?"

Then the Lord said to him, "Ah, brother, brother! What a fortune you have, and you don't realize it!"

"If you take away the history of a people, they will no longer know who they are. They will lose any sense of values or where they are going. Remove a people's history, and you can take its place with anything else." -Alan Hirsch and Mark Nelson, Recomposition, 2019

Las diferencias culturales siempre me han fascinado; las veces que el Señor me ha dado la oportunidad de viajar he disfrutado de la variedad de las cocinas —que son una de las marcas culturales más fuertes— y el hecho de que la gente ame a través de preparar sus platos típicos. Este es un común denominador que he encontrado sobretodo en países tercermundistas.

Como parte de mi naturaleza que se fascina con las diferencias culturales, mi primer año viviendo acá en Estados Unidos me encontraba muy emocionado por vivir en carne propia el famoso Thanksgiving. Si soy honesto me decepcioné un poco, fue más el estrés alrededor de tener todo listo para la ocasión y el afán por la llegada del blackfriday que el valor mismo que se supone, tiene la fecha. El año siguiente fue ni más ni menos que un fiel retrato del anterior, y ya para el tercero mis expectativas bajaron por completo. Digo esto desde la humildad, pues entiendo que no es una fecha que tenga que cumplir mis expectativas, sin embargo, dada mi curiosidad he investigado un poco el origen de esta tradición y la decepción nace de la distancia que hay entre la celebración y sus orígenes.

Para este año más allá de la tradición me estuve preguntando si acaso nuestra vida como pequeños Cristos (cristianos) no debe ser una vida de constante acción de gracias, en otras palabras una vida caracterizada por la gratitud en toda circunstancia; creo que la respuesta es que sí, la gratitud, y el acto de dar gracias debería ser, entre otras, una marca distintiva de cada cristiano. Con este sentir estuve preparando mi último sermón y creo que el Señor me llevo a la epístola de Filipenses en donde, al final de la misma Pablo y Timoteo animan a la iglesia con unas palabras que creo deberían ser universales entre el pueblo de Dios.

Alégrese siempre en el Señor. Insisto: ¡Alégrese! Que su amabilidad sea evidente a todos. El Señor está cerca. No se inquieten por nada; más bien, en toda ocasión, con oración y ruego, presenten sus peticiones a Dios y denle gracias. Y la paz de Dios, que sobrepasa todo entendimiento, cuidará sus corazones y sus pensamientos en Cristo Jesús. Filipenses 4:4-7 NVI **\*\*Negrillas mías.**

Creo que la historia del Thanksgiving merece ser contada otra vez,

año tras año, pues los rasgos culturales nos definen, creo también que deberíamos ser agradecidos en toda ocasión y no dependiendo de las circunstancias, que es como veo que los cristianos siglo 21 en norte America actuamos.

Permítanme cerrar con —a mi parecer— una hermosa historia.

Rodolfo Enrique Cabral, más conocido como Facundo Cabral fue un canta autor, viajero y pensante argentino que, con su guitarra iba por el mundo cantando y contando historias. En su álbum en vivo de 1999, en el monólogo 5 nos contó que:

"Dios tomó forma de mendigo y bajo al pueblo. Buscó la casa del zapatero y le dijo: —hermano, soy muy pobre, no tengo una sola moneda encima; estas son mis únicas sandalias y, están rotas. Si tu me hicieras el favor..."

—El zapatero le dijo: estoy cansado de que todos vengan a pedir y nadie a dar.

—El Señor le dijo —yo podría darte lo que tú necesitas.

—El zapatero desconfiado, viendo un mendigo le preguntó —¿tú podrías darme el millón de dólares que yo necesito para ser feliz?"

—El Señor le dijo —yo podría darte 10 veces más que eso, pero a cambio de algo. —A cambio de qué —preguntó el zapatero. —A cambio de tus piernas.

—El zapatero preguntó —¿para qué quiero yo 10 millones de dólares si no voy a poder caminar? Entonces el Señor le dijo —puedo darte 100 millones de dólares a cambio de tus brazos.

—El zapatero preguntó —¿para qué quiero yo 100 millones de dólares si ni siquiera voy a poder comer solo? Entonces el Señor le dijo —puedo darte 1000 millones de dólares a cambio de sus ojos.

—El zapatero pensó poco y preguntó —¿para qué quiero yo 1000 millones de dólares si no voy a poder ver a mi mujer, a mis hijos, a mis amigos?

Entonces el Señor le dijo —¡Ah, hermano, hermano. Qué fortuna tienes y no te das cuenta!"

"Si quita la historia de un pueblo, ya no sabrán quienes son. Perderán cualquier sentido de valores o hacia donde van. Elimine la historia de un pueblo y podrá ocupar su lugar con cualquier otra cosa." -Alan Hirsch y Mark Nelson, Recomposición, 2019.

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Monday - 1 p.m. Quilters  
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Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor  
Thursday - 6:30 p.m. Soup & Study  
Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship

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New Richland, Minnesota  
Pastor Mary Iverson  
Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday Worship, Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee  
Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting  
Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting

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Pastor Pamela Jensen  
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship

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Sunday School  
Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting

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Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

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Waldorf, Minnesota  
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

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Waldorf, Minnesota  
Father Brian Mulligan  
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship

**TRINITY LUTHERAN**  
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Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor  
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship

**THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS**  
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[www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org)

Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School  
Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18

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412 N. Main Street, Janesville  
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Wednesday, Saturday - 6:30 p.m. Worship  
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**JANESVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
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Vacancy  
Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship  
Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship

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November 2022						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 5-7pm BURGER NITE	2 6pm Bar Bingo	3 7pm Bingo	4 Meat Raffle 5:30pm	5 BENEFIT for FRANK J. STENCEL starts 5pm
6	7	8 5-7pm BURGER NITE get out & VOTE	9 6pm Bar Bingo	10 U.S. Marine Corps Birthday 1775 7pm Bingo	11 VETERANS DAY Meat Raffle 5:30pm	12 Private event.
13	14 7pm Post & AUX Meeting	15 5-7pm BURGER NITE	16 6pm Bar Bingo	17 7pm Bingo	18 Meat Raffle 5:30 WALLEYE OR SHRIMP DINNER 5:30 to 7:00	19 TURKEY BINGO starts at 7:00pm MEAL Available
20	21	22 5-7pm BURGER NITE	23 6pm Bar Bingo	24 THANKSGIVING Closed	25 Meat Raffle 5:30pm	26 Private event
27 All you can EAT Breakfast VFW 8:00am to Noon Your Host Fraternal Order Of Police	28	29 5-7pm BURGER NITE	30 6pm Bar Bingo			

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**Little Women**



Katelyn Robeck, Lindsey Kopetzki, Kiera Landrum



Katelyn Robeck, Kiera Landrum, Elaina Andrs, Grace Lapides, Josie Perrizo



Kiera Landrum (standing) and Lindsey Kopetzki



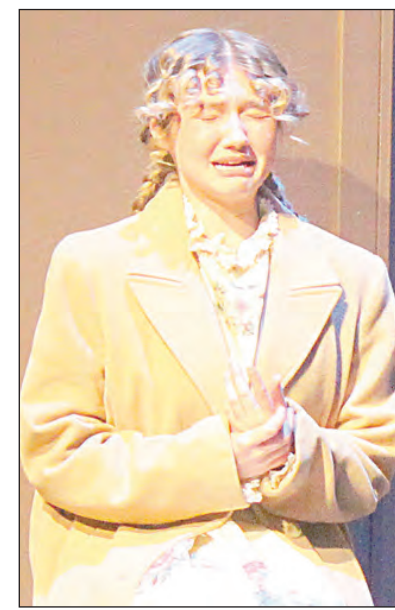
Alexander Kotz



Andrés Vásquez and Grace Lapides



Kiera Landrum and Branden Busse



Grace Lapides



Esme Pearce and Grace Lapides with a parrot voiced by Adrian Arreguin



From left: Josie Perrizo, Grace Lapides, Mason Wadd, and Kiera Landrum



Andrés Vásquez and Kiera Landrum

# Waseca presents Little Women

By MICHAEL ROY  
Editor

Laughter and heartbreak. Hijinks and solemnity. Comedy and tragedy.

The Waseca High School Theater's production of *Little Women* had it all with four fantastic shows on November 17-19 at 7 p.m. and on Sunday, November 20 at 4 p.m. *Little Women* was adapted from Louisa May Alcott's book by playwright Kate Hamill. It was two hours of thoughtful and playful entertainment from the cast and crew of 29 led by Director Anna Pollock.

Saturday night was a special performance for the group as, after taking their bows, senior cast members Grace Lapides and Lindsey Kopetzki presented a bouquet of flowers to Director Pollock. Each flower represented the characters from *Little Women*, where there is an allegory related to planting flowers during which the characters compare each other to certain blooms. For example, the daisy represented Beth March, while the rock represented Jo March.

As Lapides presented the flowers, Pollock was confused since the last performance—when such gifts are usually presented—wasn't until the next afternoon. "We didn't want the flowers to die!" Lapides exclaimed.

Pollock was nearly in tears as she took the bouquet of flowers (and the rock) from Lapides and Kopetzki. "This cast has been the most amazing to work with," she said. "Thank you so much for everything."

Lapides replied, "You have made us feel safe here. You've made it fun to work on this play every night. Thank you."

Pollock said that if it hadn't been for her father, Chuck, the facilities manager of the Waseca Performance

Arts Center, the play wouldn't have been as great as it was. He helped with the audio, visual, and scenic design of the play.

Others thanked were the Waseca Drama Department Board, Johann de Jager for aiding in building the set pieces, Culligan Ultrapure and Subway of Waseca for providing water and food for the actors, and many more individuals and organizations.

This year's cast included five seniors. Cast members were: Lindsey Kopetzki as Marmee March; Josie Perrizo as Meg March; Kiera Landrum as Jo March; Katelyn Robeck as Beth March; Grace Lapides as Amy March; Elaina Andrs as Hannah; Esme Pearce as Aunt March; Sophie Farris as Mrs. Mingott and a messenger; Andrés Vásquez as Theodore "Laurie" Lawrence; Nathanael Andrs as John Brooks; Alexander Kotz as Mr. Laurence; Branden Busse as Mr. Dashwood; Mason Wadd as Robert March; Patrick Howe as a doctor; and Adrian Arreguin as a parrot.

There were fourteen stage crew members and background characters for *Little Women*. They are Quinn Dahle, Arianna Krosseng, and Timothea Volkmer, Kacie Perrizo, Gabriel Beltran, Sadie Schimming, Layla Keith, Alyssa Kilmer, Mia Mitchell, Sunny Mei, Elliott Galle, and Amber Hagen. Dahle was the stage manager. Cody Sieberg was in charge of the lights with Allen Kopetzki taking charge of the sound.

While it was an emotional night for the seniors, the theater department has two more shows on the docket for this school year. They are *How to Succeed in High School Without Really Trying* (authored by Jonathan Rand) and *Mamma Mia!* by Catherine Johnson.



Andrés Vásquez



GROUP HUG — The cast for *Little Women* gathered around for a group hug after their performance on Saturday, November 19.



Katelyn Robeck and Kiera Landrum



IN AWE — As Josie Perrizo (center) looked on, Waseca theater Director Anna Pollock was given a bouquet of flowers representing each member of the March family in *Little Women*. Seniors Lindsey Kopetzki and Grace Lapides also presented her a card from the cast and crew.

Pioneer photos by Michael Roy