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WASECA
COUNTY
PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

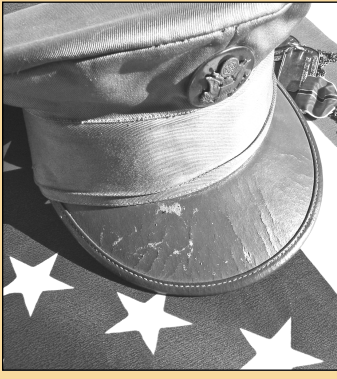
No. 21 Vol. V \$2

Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca

Thursday, May 21, 2026



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Memorial Day

Graduation Open house ads available
Celebrate this year's graduates in the paper with a photo and open house announcement. Cost is \$25 for one week or \$40 for two weeks. Please email:news@wasecacitypioneer.com.

Blood Drive at Grace Lutheran Church Thursday, May 21
Grace Lutheran Church is hosting a blood drive on Thursday, May 21 from noon to 6 p.m. Successful donors will receive a free beach towel. Appointments preferred and can be made at redcrossblood.org. Walk-ins are also welcome.

Bruce Bednarchuk at the Indian Island Winery May 22
Bruce Bednarchuk will perform at the Indian Island Winery from 6-8:30 p.m. on Friday, May 22. He is a composer, arranger and studio musician.

AZBY at the Mill Event Center May 22
AZBY will perform at the Mill Event Center from 8-11:30 p.m. on Friday, May 22. They play 70s classic rock and 90s alternative.

Retired staff from all iterations of the NRHEG School District gather May 29
All retired employees from the Ellendale, Geneva, Hartland and New Richland schools are invited to gather at The Willows around 11 a.m. Friday, May 29 for a social luncheon. Employees from all lines of work are heartily invited. For more information, call 507-380-9336.

Line Dancing fun night May 30
A Line Dance fun night at The Mill event center from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, May 30, will include classes and dancing. Admission is \$10 if purchased pre-sale, \$15 at the door.

Barnyard Treasures Spring Pop-up Sale New Richland May 30
There will be another Barnyard Treasures Spring Pop-Up Sale in New Richland at 10 a.m. till 4 p.m. on Saturday, May 30. Look for sourdough, wood working, garden decor, antiques, jams and jellies, barnwood and tin signs. They will have at least 11 vendors on hand and are located at 8623 SW 108th St. New Richland.

Tom Sexton 2026 Campaign Kick-Off Friday, June 5
Minnesota House of Representatives member Tom Sexton, representing legislative district 19B, will be kicking off his 2026 campaign from 4:30 to 7 p.m. June 5 at The Mill Event Center in Waseca. The event will include a \$10 burger fry.

A word from
The Word

For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

Psalms 30:5

Waseca Chorale singers surprised with ovation

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

If the members of the Waseca Chorale were taken unawares after their concert on May 16 when the audience rose to its feet in a resounding standing ovation, that would have been perfectly suited to the evening's theme. The concert was named "Surprise!" and the people who attended had been persistently reminded of small "surprises" throughout the program.

The 40 or so members of the Chorale began preparing for the concert in January; directors Deb Wantoch-Yess and John Hoehn describe having struggled to choose a name that suited the wide variety of songs ranging from contemporary to classic and from introspective to uplifting. Their selection of the name seemed the best way to let audience members know they would be treated to 90 minutes of unpredictable variety. The concert took place in the Waseca Junior Senior High School's performing arts center.

Emcee for the evening was David Oraskovich who, along with providing information about the group and the numbers they would be performing, found himself playing the role of an auction spotter during the song "Auction Cries." The lyrics were a collection of phrases from actual auction advertisements; audience members would have been truly and deeply surprised to find themselves taking home the wringer washer, bundle of cedar shingles, or chicken feeder offered among the lyrics.

The tenor and bass sections of the Chorale were featured in "If I Were a

Chorale continued on 14



HARMONY - Members of the Waseca Chorale presented their spring concert the evening of Saturday, May 16. Titled "Surprise!" the program featured a wide variety of songs ranging from introspective to uplifting. As the final song ended, the audience rose to a spontaneous standing ovation.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bentley



ARTS AND CLASS - Anders Peterson directed the seventh- and eighth-grade junior high school bands during the Junior High Fine Arts.
Pioneer photos by Jessica Revermann

Junior High Fine Arts Showcase

A touch of class from our Waseca junior high students

The Junior High Fine Arts Showcase took place the evening of Monday, May 11 and included grades 7 and 8. It was directed by Anders Peterson, Selma Kleinsmith and Megan Kreinbring, in collaboration with Jen Popp. Each choir performed four songs, with each band playing one number independently before combining. The next performance will be the JSHS Jazz Concert at 7 p.m. on May 22.

Seventh Grade Band, flute: Kaylee Fierke, Violet Hughes, Maggie Johnson and Adelynn Kruger. Clarinet: Danny Alvarez, Alayna Eastwood, Sydney Hayes, Ashton Hyatt, Avery Pechacek, Levi Rohe, Addyson Rugger, Daniel Switzer and Lauren Tegmeier. Bass clarinet: Alexandra Vega. Alto sax: Owen Fierke, Joe Har-

Showcase continued on 3



CAREER DAY - Left, Janie Beckstrand and Amy Watje attended the Immersive Career Education Day at the Waseca Community Arena on behalf of United Prairie Bank on Tuesday, May 12. Right, Jessi VanBlarcom and Brooklyn O'Malley attended the Immersive Career Education Day on behalf of McDonald's
Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann



Waseca seniors get a taste of the workforce

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

More than 30 local businesses and agencies introduced themselves to the members of the Waseca High School graduating class during an "Immersive Career Education Day" set up outdoors in the community arena parking lot across the street from the school the morning of Tuesday, May 12. Companies and agencies shared information about the work they do and qualifications their employees need. In some cases, potential employers handed out job applications.

Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas allowed students a look at one of the department's vehicles, which had its light flashing. Nearby, a road flare was burning on the ground. "We wanted to show seniors what the flares looked like when they're lit," he explained. He also demonstrated "Stop Sticks" a specialized tool which can be stretched across a roadway to stop "excessive speeders" by puncturing their tires. "But they don't blow the tires, if that happens and they're doing 90 mph down the highway, there could be a rollover or an accident. Instead, the nails inside the stick have hard little straw-like structures that stay in the tire to allow for a slower release of air, that way the person fleeing

Careers continued on 14

Agritourism venue variance no longer on table

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

By not bringing a discussion regarding a requested variance off the "table," members of the Waseca County Board of Adjustment have set back by at least one year plans to have an "agritourism" business at Calonett Venues LLC, just east of Kiesler's Campground along Old Highway 13.

Calonett Venues applied in January for a setback variance that would have been the first permitting matter toward making it possible for owners Walter and Cheryl Mishek to operate a concert and special event venue on the premises. Preliminary plans included setting up a stage with a powerful sound system and hosting gatherings with up to 280 people an average of once a week or so.

As is the procedure for nearly all variances, neighbors were notified of the upcoming consideration on the Board of Adjustment (BOA) agenda for its April 9 meeting; some neighbors appeared at the meeting to express concerns regarding noise levels, hours of operation, and more.

After hearing concerns, BOA members chose to table consideration of the variance to their next scheduled meeting, May 7. They requested additional information be acquired in the intervening weeks.

The Misheks were contacted and asked for numerous pieces of information including potential crowd sizes, intended hours of operation, parking lot capacity, and more, with a requested submission date of April 20. The Misheks responded with a request for an extension, including that the matter be moved to the June meeting to give them more time. The matter remained on the May listing.

When BOA members met on May 7, Wilson informed them Roberts Rules of Order stipulate that a board member must speak to bring a tabled item off the table and onto the agenda. If no one takes that initiative, the item is regarded as having failed, in which case it would be one year before the Planning and Zoning department would accept any new variance application from Calonett.

As agenda items were addressed during the May 7 meeting, no BOA member spoke to the matter, leading to the one-year delay.

Story
idea?

837-6767



Compostings

by Al Batt

Rounding up cows

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING
What's wrong?

I lost another ball today.
You should give up bowling.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. It blew my whiskers off. A lot of farmland changed hands in May. Fierce winds moved the soil. The wind blew so hard that a hen laid the same egg twice.

When you think of Iowa, what do you think of? Was it eggs? Probably not, but Iowa is the largest egg-producing state, followed by Ohio and Indiana. My mother had the egg money she earned by selling eggs from her hens to Sibilrud's Grocery Store, which she used to buy essentials like food. No one told her how to spend her egg money. Why would we? She spent it on us.

My mother was of such a height that the sun visor in her car blocked no sunlight from her eyes. If we were leaving at noon on Friday, Mom was ready to go by 9 Thursday morning. Mom liked her coffee strong enough to float a spoon. When served decaf and creamer, John Wayne became annoyed and famously asked, "Who turned my coffee into dessert?" John would have loved my mother's coffee. Mom turned the end piece of bread toward the inside of the sandwich. She cut off the blue part of the cheese and we ate the rest. She was somebody who made everybody feel like somebody.

Do I miss talking to my mother? I never stopped talking to her. Happy Mother's Day, Mom.

YOU ARE GETTING OLDER

If you can forget what you're doing while you're doing it.

If you remember driving cars with more cigarette lighters than seatbelts.

If your first-aid kit contained Band-Aids, Mercurochrome or Merthiolate, iodine and horehound cough drops. Mercurochrome, Merthiolate and iodine were used on scrapes and cuts. Iodine is an effective germicide still in use. Mercurochrome and Merthiolate were banned due to mercury toxicity. Any products sold under those names today use mercury-free ingredients. Iodine was the more effective antiseptic, and it created intense stinging. Mercurochrome was water-based and my favorite because it didn't sting. Merthiolate had alcohol, so it carried a stinging sensation. Mercurochrome and Merthiolate left bright red-orange stains, earning those products the nickname "monkey blood." Iodine left a dark yellow-brown stain. Kids

blew on their treated wounds, hoping to lessen the sting or make the antiseptic dry faster. Horehound cough drops are traditional, old-fashioned herbal lozenges used to soothe sore throats and relieve coughs. Made from a member of the mint family, they feature an earthy, licorice-like flavor.

I'VE LEARNED

According to the USGA, a typical 18-hole golf course covers 110 to 200 acres.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

What kind of water does a cat drink? Purrified water.

A friend asked me to help round up his 37 cows. I said, "40."

My grandson swallowed a bunch of Scrabble tiles. His next trip to the toilet could spell disaster.

One-one was a racehorse. Two-two was one too. One-one won one race. Two-two won one too.

NATURE NOTES

I watched ring-billed gulls fly invisible roads in the sky. The European Seagull Screeching Championship takes place at the Verloren Gernoare cafe near the Belgian coastal city of De Panne. Ring-billed gulls are nicknamed McGulls, dumpster gulls, landfill gulls, fast-food gulls and french-fry gulls. I associate the cries of these iconic birds with tranquil weather.

Maple helicopters aren't Mayo helicopters. The winged seeds of a maple tree are called helicopters, keys, whirlybirds, spinners, whirligigs, spinning jennies, whirlers, twisters, whirlwinds, wing nuts or samaras. Red maple samaras are red, in contrast to those of the silver maple, which are green in spring when the samaras of both the red and silver maples disperse. Norway, sugar and Japanese maples drop their seeds in the fall.

In the King James Bible, the Song of Solomon includes: "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of the birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," heralding the onset of spring in what is now the modern-day Middle East. Turtle derived from "turtur," imitating the cooing call of a dove. The New International Version of that text is "Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land." The New Living Translation of the Bible reads, "The flowers are springing up, the season of singing birds has come, and the cooing of turtledoves fills the air."

Get outside and count the dandelions.

MEETING ADJOURNED

"Neither genius, fame, nor love show the greatness of the soul. Only kindness can do that."—Jean Baptiste Henri Lacordaire.



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

Confronted with a force of nature

There is a difference between knowing something and feeling it in your gut.

The other morning, I was volunteering at Farmamerica. This time of year, the organization offers field trips to students from area schools. Students from various communities arrive, are introduced to the facility and its offerings, and are divided into groups to visit the various locations in a rotation that gives them about half an hour at each site.

It's a delightful opportunity for the children, many of whom don't even realize that chickens not only lay eggs, they are capable of brooding and hatching them. Children are accompanied by a strong mix of chaperones and a lot of energy, so the large Farmamerica campus is a great choice for some good old-fashioned learning combined with exercise and fresh air.

Volunteers staff the different sites, supervising and guiding as children learn about everything from elements of agriculture that touch their everyday lives to

schoolyard games played during recess at the one-room school buildings.

My job for the day was guiding kids through the 1850s farmstead, where they would get a look at the way settlers' lifestyles developed from the time they arrived to the time they were established enough to build a "mansion" of a cabin complete with glass windows.

I had been the interpreter on the site before, but because it had been awhile, I parked my car among the trees, opened the windows in anticipation of the 80-some degree day ahead, and began perusing the information so my narratives would be as accurate as possible.

I realized I smelled smoke and wondered idly why that might be.

A moment later I looked up from the papers and realized I was surrounded by a haze of smoke so thick I could barely see past the trees I was parked among; it became obvious I should see what was happening.

When my line of sight brought



The smoke shack at Farmamerica caught fire when Deb was there to guide kids through the farmstead.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

the site's "smoke shack" into view, the small structure was more than living up to its name. Thick smoke was pouring out of every opening and being pushed rapidly northward by the day's strong wind.

I had been given a handheld radio "just in case of emergency." Since what I saw before me clearly qualified, I pressed the button and asked "Can anyone hear me?" The question was mostly to make sure I was pressing the right button.

I then proceeded to describe what I saw in front of me. I have very strong recollection of saying the words, "I don't see any flames yet, but there's definitely a fire in-

side," mostly because the flames appeared seconds later, stabbing out from the space above the loosely-hung door.

The radio conversation among staff included numerous requests and instructions, including getting some fire extinguishers to the site and, of course, calling 9-1-1.

For me, still temporarily alone at the location, there was only the knowledge there was nothing I could do.

What I saw in front of me made it clear that, whether it burned to ashes or was extinguished in short order, the structure would need to be replaced. The thing to watch

Bently continued on 14

Sharing life stories building friendships

This week I learned Mikhail Rostislavovich was stepping aside from his role as President of the Waseca Chamber of Commerce due to health concerns.

Mikhail contacted me the night before he sent over a press release with his decision. My advice to him was to do what is best for him. His health battle, cancer, is all too common today.

It feels like Mikhail has been here far longer than the five years he has called Waseca home. During that time he has accomplished a lot. But, for me, his friendship has meant the most. Mikhail slipped into my life unnoticed at first. A news story here or there about projects he was working on. That was not unusual. We publish stories and releases all the time – there are many recurring faces. Without much fanfare we met once or twice before we had a real conversation. It was over a year before I learned of his incredible life story, secondhand, from Editor Deb Bently.

Mikhail, around that time, invited me to lunch and I had the pleasure of hearing his story firsthand. Although our lunches have been a regular occur-



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

rence, we've only made it through to his 20s or so in his life story. It took a few lunches for me to share my life journey, which he insisted on hearing. Mikhail, has a few years on me. (He is 71, I am 28.)

I don't try to rush through anything in life, if it can be helped. The same is true of conversations with friends. I want to know details, thoughts, feelings, emotions. One of my favorite interviews to go through is talking to local business owners. I look forward to asking them if they were scared of starting their business. What those first days were like, if they thought of quitting. How did they persevere? It's hard to relate to non-business owners about the risk and feelings involved with

starting a business. I love that connection.

My point here is when Mikhail is going through his life story, I stop him to ask many questions about the moments and memories he shares. Often I tell him to slow down, I don't want the "Cliff notes" version. I want to be there, in the memory. That's how I write stories and it's also how I have conversations with my friends.

Numerous times I have thought about writing about Mikhail or sharing his story. Others have already done so and, so far, I have decided I would prefer to simply enjoy his story as a friend, not as a reporter.

I intended to write about the impact Mikhail has had on my life. He has

taught me, indirectly, how to be more assertive and confident when directing meetings and staff. Mikhail runs a tight ship when directing others. He doesn't hesitate or settle; he is calculated and professional, and all the while doing so kindly, respectfully.

I am certain there are other areas he has impacted my life that I will doubtless think about after this column goes to print. As for Waseca, I asked a respected member of the community, not myself or my staff, to put together a list of Mikhail's accomplishments in Waseca. The list follows:

- Served as President of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce during a period of major community growth and transition.

- Served as President of Discover Waseca Tourism, helping promote local events, tourism, and community engagement.

- Served as President of the Waseca Arts Council, supporting arts programming and creative opportunities in the

Friendship continued on 9

WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

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PHONE: 507-837-6767

email: news@wasecacountypioneer.com

Address: Office at 111 Elm Avenue West

Mail: PO Box 578, Waseca MN 56093

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To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

Sports are the ultimate connector

Well, the Wild and the Wolves have lost and there's nothing left to live for. An exaggeration, but still disappointing when Minnesota sports prove they're Minnesota sports. And don't even get me started about the Frost.

The good news is, now that I'm in Denver, I can pretend and be glad that "my team" the Avalanche won and is advancing. Maybe I'll see if I can go to the Minnesota vs. Broncos preseason game on Aug. 29 when they're in Denver and see where my heart lies then.

I've always tried to follow sports, but if someone asks me if I'm an avid sports watcher or follower, I can't honestly say I am. I follow with whether someone has won or lost, but a lot of my knowledge comes from listening to sports podcasts that don't actually talk about sports a whole lot.

As much as I enjoy sports, I think

a part of me stays up to date so I can have another topic of conversation as I mingle; it allows me to talk to more people. I also enjoy how playing sports can help build a life-changing community.

I played in a fours sand volleyball tournament on Saturday. I was part of the same team that I play as part of in a weekly competitive sand volleyball league. In that league, we are currently in first and will hopefully move up to the better league if we continue to do well. I promise this was not meant to be a brag, it just fills my heart to be finally good at volleyball.

All this to say, my team clicks and plays well together. We had intended to play in the upper division of this tournament, but due to sign-up errors, we played in the lower division. This just meant that while it was extremely fun and a blast to play in, after four



Amelia's team won the fours sand volleyball tournament, coming home with the two-litre glass boot.

Pioneer photo by Amelia Roessler

pool game wins and three playoff game wins, we came home with the ultimate prize: the boot.

Everyone who wins a league in this organization gets a two-litre glass boot, to be filled with tap beer for free at the bar across the street. I've been playing leagues in the organization since I arrived in Denver, but have not gotten the chance to blissfully sip out of the glass boot. So this win, while not challenging, was still quite fun for me, as I was able to come home with the boot. What I'm going to do with it, I don't know. But it looks very nice sitting on my counter.

But as I was playing in this tournament, it was easy to see how every-

one knew each other. It is a community where (most) everyone is extremely supportive and loves to play with and against each other.

Sports are a great connector. Volleyball has opened up doors for friendships for me that I have been extremely grateful for. Jack plays golf to connect with his friends and co-workers. People join leagues to make and enjoy time with friends, while staying healthy and exercising. Even pickleball has become a top sport for community, for those of any age.

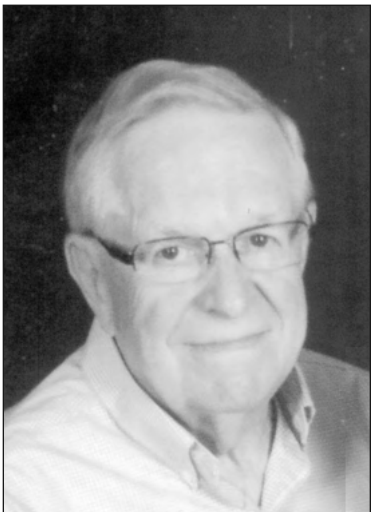
My Determination: "In the dust of defeat as well as the laurels of victory there is a glory to be found if one has done his best." — Eric Liddell

OBITUARIES

Dale Joecks

Dale Ronald Joecks, age 88, passed away on May 12, 2026 at Prairie Senior Cottages in New Richland, where he received wonderful care.

Dale was born in Waseca on February 28, 1938, the youngest son of Erich and Elizabeth (Schoenrock) Joecks of New Richland. He was a member of First Lutheran Church in Waldorf, where he was baptized and confirmed. He grew up on the family farm near Waldorf where he helped his parents farm. When he was old enough, he took a job hauling grain. In 1956, he graduated from Waldorf High School.



Dale Joecks

On September 7, 1958, he married Judith Kay Lorig, daughter of Elwin (Bud) and Darlene (McKeighan) Lorig at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Waseca. They made their first home in Waseca, where Dale was employed by Patton Chevrolet. A true car enthusiast, Dale thoroughly enjoyed his time selling cars at Patton. Dale also worked at Corchran, Inc. in Waseca, which he loved reminiscing about. We think he had a lot of fun at Corchran's.

In the fall of 1960, Dale and Judy moved to the home farm, planted their first crop that spring, and continued farming until retiring in 2018. After retirement, he still enjoyed helping with tillage until age 80. Their son Todd and his family moved to the home farm in 2004 where they lovingly operate this now third generation farm.

Dale liked to travel but liked getting home even better. Dale and Judy enjoyed a number of great company trips around the world with customers, fellow dealers and friends during his time selling seed for Super Crost. The time he spent with his family, whether it was a road trip to CA, or a trip to the Dairy Queen, was what he enjoyed the most.

He is survived by his wife, Judy Joecks of New Richland; children, Becky Joecks of Sioux Falls, SD, Todd (Denise) Joecks of New Richland, Gail Joecks of St. Louis Park; one grandchild, Lucas Joecks; as well as many cousins, nieces, nephews, and their families.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Erich and Elizabeth Joecks; sister, Leona Collins; brothers, Luverne Joecks, Kenneth Joecks; granddaughter, Elizabeth Moen; mother and father-in-law, Elwin and Darlene Lorig; sisters-in-law, Loretta Joecks, Leola Joecks, Nancy Lorig; brothers-in-law, Orville Collins, Douglas Lorig, and Philip Lorig; and nephew, Curtis Collins.

Visitation for Dale will be from 4 - 7 PM on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation will continue one hour prior to the service at the church on Wednesday.

Funeral Service was at 11:00 AM on Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at First Lutheran Church in Waldorf. Burial followed at First Lutheran Cemetery in Waldorf.

Memorials may be directed to the First Lutheran Church of Waldorf, MN in Dale's honor. Dsofuneral.com

Skip Ristau

Lavern "Skip" Ristau, age 91 of Waseca, died on the morning of Friday, April 10, 2026, at his Colonial Court Home in Waseca.

Born on October 28, 1934 in Waseca, Minnesota, Skip was the son of R.J. and Irene (Koester) Ristau. He graduated from Waseca High School in 1953 and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1954. He served during the Korean Conflict in South Korea. He was also stationed in Iwo Jima and Japan before being honorably discharged in 1957. Skip was very proud of his years of service and always smiled when someone came up and thanked him for his service.

Skip met his future wife, Shirley while home on leave. They were married on November 10, 1956 in Albert Lea. They moved briefly to Alabama while Skip finished his military duty before moving back to Minnesota. After a short stay in Janesville, they

moved to rural Waseca.

Skip did some mechanic work upon moving to Minnesota and then worked alongside his brother Bud on the family farm for several years before going to work for Kohnert and Youngberg construction. This is where Skip learned his lifelong passion of working in the carpentry field. He spent several years with K & Y before moving on to the carpenter position at UMW. He worked there for almost 20 years before it closed. He then spent the next 4 years working at the Minnesota State Capitol Building. He retired in 1995. In retirement, Skip and Shirley spent 19 years wintering in Mesa, AZ until Shirley's passing in 2014.

Skip enjoyed going on multiple fishing trips. He loved cutting wood on weekends with his family. He also enjoyed spending summers with friends and family at his cabin on Reeds Lake. He enjoyed his retirement – taking up golf at the age of 63 and he man-

aged a hole in one. Skip was a life long member of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Waseca.

Skip was a hard worker. He passed this work ethic onto his children. Even in retirement he helped do small projects in Arizona for friends and picked up golf balls. He loved coming out to the shop when he was in Minnesota. Skip was always willing to help out – even if that meant sweeping. He will be missed.

Skip is survived by his two children, Greg "Skip" (Diane Lewis) Ristau of Waseca and Tammy (Dale) Liska of Mesa, AZ; grandchildren Jennifer (Brandon) Bauleke of Savage, Joshua (Angie) Ristau of Waseca, Katie Liska of Mesa, AZ, and Bethany Lewis of St. Paul; and six great-grandchildren, Charlie, Will, and Lucy Bauleke, Corbin and Cullen Ristau, and Briley Gorder. He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Shirley; and brother.

Funeral services will be held on



Skip Ristau

Thursday, May 28, 2026 at 2:00 PM at the State Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation will be held on Thursday from 12:00 PM until the time of services at the funeral home. A private interment will be held at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca.

Gerald Rocca

Gerald Thomas Rocca, known to most as "Rock" or "Gerry," passed away on May 13, 2026, at the age of 63. A native of Iowa City, Gerry was born on September 16, 1962, to Shirley and Phil Rocca Sr.

Gerry "Rock" graduated from City High School in Iowa City with the Class of 1981. During his 30-year career with the federal prison system, he and his family moved around before eventually landing in Waseca, MN. Around Waseca, many knew him from the youth football field or wrestling mat, dance studio (owned by Sharri), Waseca High School cheer events, or the Eagles Club where he freely gave his time and energy. He retired in Fernandina Beach, FL, with plenty of crazy stories and the kind of humor that could light up any room.

But, of all the titles he held in

life, his favorites were husband, dad, and most recently, "Grandpa Rock".

He found joy in life's simple pleasures: crossword puzzles, walking his dog, bike rides, camping, reading, and spending time with the people he loved most. He was an avid fan of the Chicago Bears, Chicago Cubs, and Iowa Hawkeyes, and found much joy in rooting against the Green Bay Packers. Once you were in his circle, you were family for life. He never missed a birthday or weekly call. He showed his love through sarcasm, jokes, teasing, and always being there when it mattered.

Gerry is survived by his wife of almost 40 years, Sharri, and two daughters Allison Koziol (Matt and grandson Boone) of Canton, GA, and Tiffany Sherman (Brian) of Jacksonville, FL. He is also survived by his older brother Andy Rocca (Terri and sons Nick,

Joel, Ben), younger brother Phil Rocca Jr. (Philip III, Paige, Peter); aunt and uncles, James Rocca, Loretta (James) Clark, and Mike (Beryl) Rooca; Father-in-Law, Fred Kamrath, nephew and niece Bradley Jr. and Brigette Kamrath; and two grandchildren on the way.

He is preceded in death by his Mother-in-Law, Rose Marie Kamrath, Brother-in-Law, Bradley Kamrath Sr., nephew, Bryce Kamrath, his mother Shirley Rocca, and father Phil Rocca Sr.

A life celebration will be held at 10:30 AM, Friday, June 5, 2026 at Lensing Funeral & Cremation Service, Iowa City. Friends are welcome to join the family at The Kirkwood Room, next to the funeral home, following the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorials donations may be directed to the Waseca Area Foundation, 501 E. Elm Ave, Waseca, MN, 56093 or online at wasecaareafounda-



Gerald Rocca

tion.org. In memo, please note Gerry Rocca. Donations will benefit the Waseca Football and Wrestling Programs. Online condolences at www.lensingfuneral.com

‘Ask a Trooper’: stopping for buses

Question: Did I hear something about a new law about stopping for school buses?

Answer: In March 2026, Minnesota law changed to require drivers to stop at least 20 feet away from a school bus whenever the red lights are flashing. The stop arm does not need to be fully extended. This new requirement aims to remove confusion and clarify expectations for every driver on the road.

What changed

In the past, some drivers waited until the stop arm was fully extended before stopping. That is no longer the case. Now, the rule is simple: When a school bus's red lights begin flashing, you must stop — no exceptions — at least 20 feet away from the bus.

- This applies whether the stop arm is extended or not.
 - This applies when approaching from behind the bus.
 - This applies to oncoming traffic on undivided roads.
- This change removes guesswork and helps protect students as they enter or exit the bus.
- You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.
- If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson – Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at, Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us)

Barbara Weber

Barbara Ruth Weber, age 89, of Amery, Wisconsin, formerly of Waterville, passed away on Sunday, May 17, 2026, in Amery, Wisconsin.

Barbara was born on March 24, 1937, in Waseca, the daughter of Herman and Ruth (Tolmann) Cords. She began her education at Trinity Lutheran School in Janesville, completing eighth grade there before attending Janesville High School, where she graduated with the Class of 1955.

Barbara continued her education at Concordia University in St. Paul, earning her associate degree in elementary education.

Following graduation, Barbara began her teaching career in Kansas. It was there that she met Everett Weber, and together they

were united in marriage on June 19, 1960, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Together they had two sons and shared 21 years of marriage before Everett passed away on August 28, 1981.

Barbara and Everett began their married life in Kansas, where she continued teaching until the birth of their oldest son, when she devoted herself to raising her family. In 1975, the family moved to Elysian for a short time before settling in Waterville. After her sons were grown, Barbara returned to the workforce and was employed at Brown Printing in Waseca.

Barbara enjoyed reading, tending to her flower garden, studying history, and visiting cemeteries.

She treasured time spent having coffee with friends in Waterville and volunteered at the local nurs-

ing home. She was a lifelong member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville, where her faith remained a steady foundation throughout her life.

Barbara is survived by her sons, Dean and Dennis; siblings: Robert Cords, Alma Johnston, and Mary (Frank) Thull; and many nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Everett; brother, Gerald (Linda) Cords; sister, Charlotte (Bill) Harms; and brother-in-law, Richard Johnston.

Funeral services will be held at 1:00 PM on Friday, May 22, 2026, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Janesville. Interment will follow at St. John-Trinity Lutheran Cemetery in Iosco Township, Waseca County. Visitation will



Barbara Weber

begin at 11:30 AM and continue until the time of the service at the church on Friday. DSOFuneral.com



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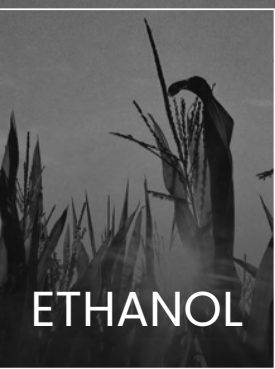
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MEMORIAL DAY

MAY 25, 2026



Theodore Anderson



Anthony Arnfelt



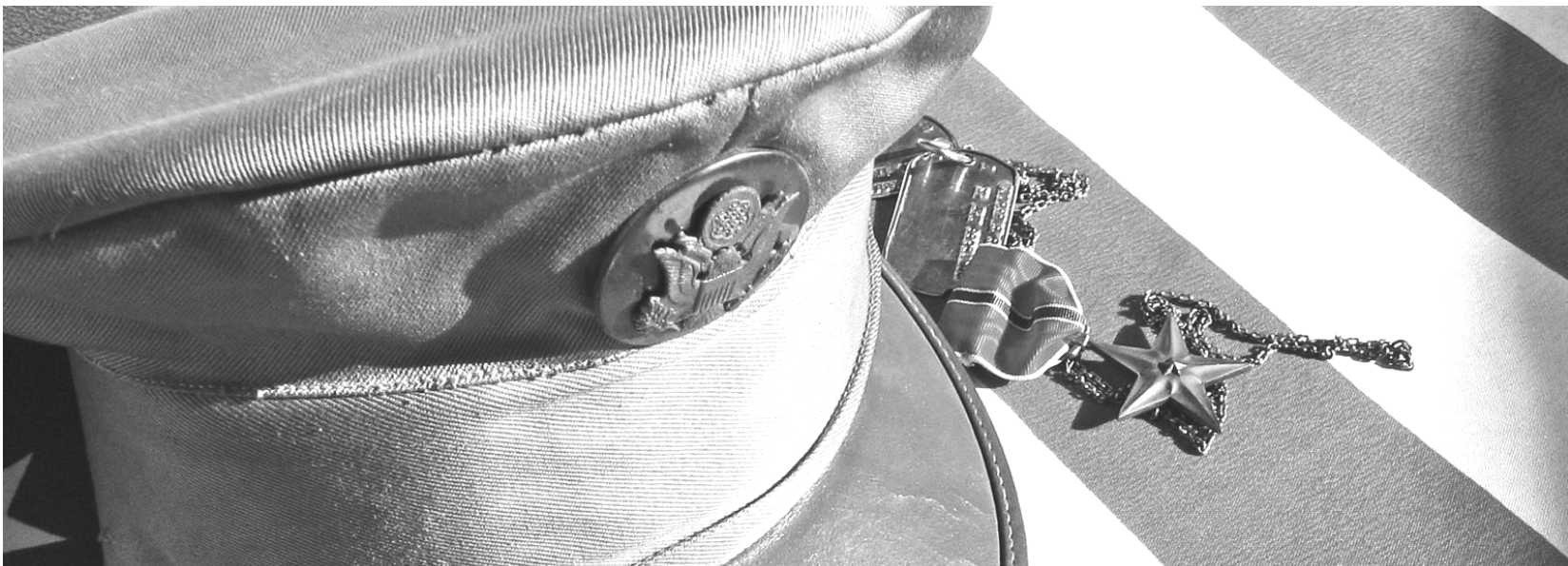
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Area Memorial Day ceremonies

Memorial Day Events
Veterans organizations will celebrate Memorial Day, Monday, May 25, 2026, in accordance with the following schedule. Please set aside time to attend one of these events in commemoration of those who have and are currently serving our country in the military. The events especially pay tribute to those who have given the ultimate sacrifice of their lives, establishing freedom in the United States of America.

Those who wish to be able to sit during outdoor ceremonies may wish to consider bringing a lawn chair.

Waseca
The program starts at 9 a.m. Monday at the south side of the Waseca County courthouse with a short parade followed by a ceremony. The speaker during the ceremony will be Colonel (retired) Tom Sexton USAF; Commander

Darnell Anderson will be the master of ceremonies for the program, which will begin with flag raising ceremonies led by V.F.W. Honor Guard members Blaine Brooks, Chris Weber and Dean Farley.

Anyone wishing to be seated during the ceremony should bring a lawn chair.

The national anthem and other musical selections will be played by the members of the Waseca High School Band, directed by Devon Lawrence. Singing the national anthem as well as other pieces will be members of the high school male and female sextets, directed by Megan Kreinbring.

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address will be delivered by Violet Rohwer. John and Simon Hoehn will sing "The Empty Chair."

In the event of rain or other inclement weather, the program will be moved inside Waseca High

School, with a start time of 9:30 a.m.

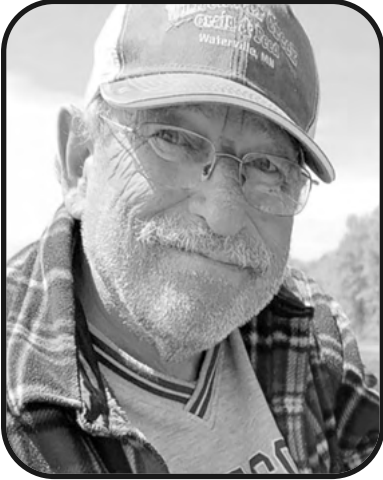
Janesville
A Memorial Day program will begin at 9 a.m. May 25 at JWP High School. The speaker will be Ryan Rohwer.

New Richland
The New Richland American Legion invites all members of the public to its annual Memorial Day program, scheduled for 11 a.m. Monday, May 25 in the NRHEG Secondary School gymnasium. Along with ceremonial observations, the program will feature local news reporter Deb Bently as speaker. The school choir will sing the national anthem, "My Country 'tis of Thee," and "America, the Beautiful." Seniors Chloe Stork and Jacob Karl will give readings.

After the ceremony, participants are invited to The Willows restaurant, which will offer lunch

that day even though it's typically closed on Mondays. A limited menu will feature pulled pork sandwiches and potato salad for \$11 a person.

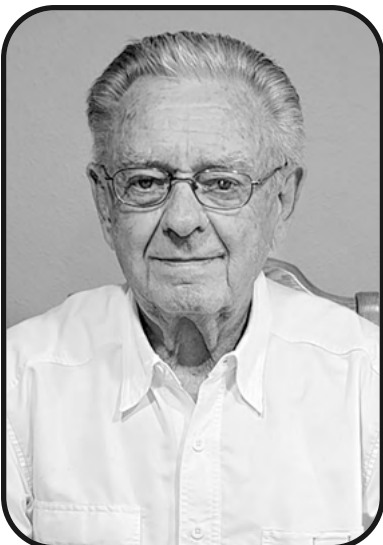
Waldorf
The Waldorf American Legion Post #587 Memorial Day Program will be at the Waldorf Community Center located on Main Street at 10:15 a.m. with Past American Legion District Commander Mark Maloney as speaker. Prior to the program at 9 a.m., a graveside service will take place at Zoar's Cemetery. Following the program, graveside services will be presented at St. Joseph Community Cemetery and First Lutheran Church Cemetery. A potluck dinner will begin at noon in the Community Center; everyone is welcome.



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Ceraig Berberich



Dale Froehlich



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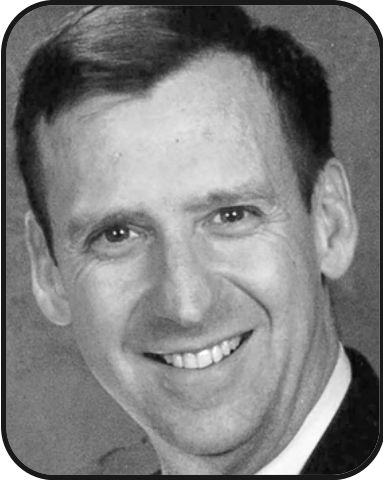
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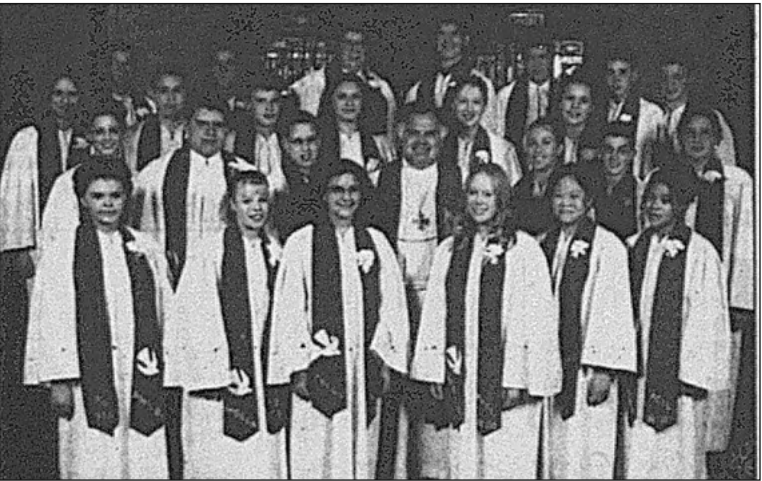
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MLS

Janesville

25 years ago

- Jenniter Lynn Wilmes, daughter of Chuck and Jane Wilmes of Janesville, and Mark Leo Slater, son of Donald and Doreen Slater of Mankato, wish to announce their engagement. Jennifer Is a 1996 graduate of Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School and a 2000 graduate of Minnesota State University In Mankato. She is currently employed as a first grade teacher at Saint Anne's In Le Sueur. Mark is a 1999 graduate of Mankato East High School and is attending Riverland Community College In Austin, where he is majoring in law enforcement. He is currently employed as a reserve officer for Eagie Lake. A Saturday, June 30, 2001, wedding is planned In Janesville.



- Trinity Lutheran Church of Janesville heid Its confirmation on Sunday, April 8. Front row (from left): Ashley Sydnies, Angela Bluhm, Keily Christenson, Danielle Jesse, Bonnie Trahme and Nicole Ozmun, Second row: Heather Johnson, Del Menze, Timothy Malterer, Rev. Larry Griffin, Brooke Milbrett, John Hartfiel and Keisha Roemhildt. Third row: Amanda Rosen, Lee Fetchenhier, Kevin Mosher, Ashley Flaten, Jo Hannah Trahms and Kaleena Steinberg. Fourth row: Nels Barbknecht, Zachary Mulcahey, Jeffrey Gottschalk, James Schlie, Joshua Mertens, Brian Linde and Lance Meyer.

- The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton Junior High golf team remained perfect for the year by edging St. Clair 163 to 165 at Terrace View Golf Course in Mankato May 1. The Bulldogs have won both of their starts and are 3-0 overall. Dan Sprengeler led JWP and earned medalist honors for the meet by shooting a none-over-par 36. Kevin Pommier fired a 39 to finish in fourth place, while Lance Meyer and Cory Schroeder tied for firth place with 44s. Tanner Barbknecht and Greg Homers tied for eighth place by shooting 47s and John Hartfiel carded a 53 to place 13th.

50 years ago



- Like mothers all over America, Mrs. Ron Anderson, Pemberton, Is looking forward to a day off next Sunday. Even though she has 14 children, Mrs. Anderson says, "I don't lift a finger on Mother's Day. Ron and the kids do everything." The Andersons are shown bere with their children, who range in age from nine months to 15. In the bottom row are Valerie, 8j Steve, 12; Mr. and Mins. Anderson and son, Mike, nine months, JI, 7; Kathy Jo, 6; and Sue, 14, Above, from left, are Joe, 12; Mark, 15; Doug, 13; Kelth, 11g Paula, 4; Karla, 10; Peter, 10; and Danny, 9.

- The Janesville Dairy Queen will be participating in "Minnesota Hypertension Detection Days", a statewide high blood pressure screening program scheduled May 18 and 19 at participating Dairy Queen stores. High blood pressure or hypertension ranks as the country's sixth leading health problem. On May 18-19, volunteers, composed of members of the medical community along with trained lay people, will administer blood pressure checks at the Janesville Dairy Queen and refer those with elevated blood pressure to doctors for further diagnosis and prescribed care.

- On Tuesday evening, April 13, Mrs. Lee Tetzloff entertained the members of her Bridge Club at dessert lunch at eight o'clock, followed by an evening of Bridge. Mrs. Audrey Scott was a guest. Mrs. Gene Wiebusch and Mrs. David Pope took home the prizes for the evening. Mrs. Melvin Sprengeler was hostess to her Bridge Club members on April 28, at dessert lunch and an evening of cards. Mrs. Gayle Gardner was a guest. Prizes at Contract Bridge were awarded to Mrs. Velma Dahl and Mrs. Fred W. Arnoldt. Mrs. Gene Wiebusch will be the hostess on May 12.

75 years ago

- Dr. R.C. Hottinger, who purchased and took possession this week of the Brown building, has already started work on remodeling the inside into his new offices and treatment rooms, and said that he hoped to be able to have the renovation completed by June 15. He said that he was very pleased with his new location which will afford him ample space for a good sized waiting room, three large treatment rooms, besides space for X-ray apparatus and other essential equipment.

- LaVon Tetzloff was born in St. Clair, Minn. She attended Trinity Lutheran school for four years, and Janesville public school for eight years. She participated in many extra-curricular activities. Included in these are G.A.A. Glee Club, Hi-Lite Staff, Annual subject is Social Sciences and her Staff, and Cubettes. Her favorite sport is basketball. After school is over, LaVon would like to get a job which included traveling. As for entertainment, LaVon's favorite form is dancing to old time music, played by the Jolly Lumberjacks, going to comedies starring Fred MacMurray, and listening to Mail Order, Her pet peeve is gossip.

100 years ago

- Get our new low prices on quality chicks for balance of May and the months of June and July. A late season makes late chick easier raised and very profitable. Phone write or drive to our Hatchery. Hatches every Monday and Thursday. Waseca Hatcher, Waseca, Minn.

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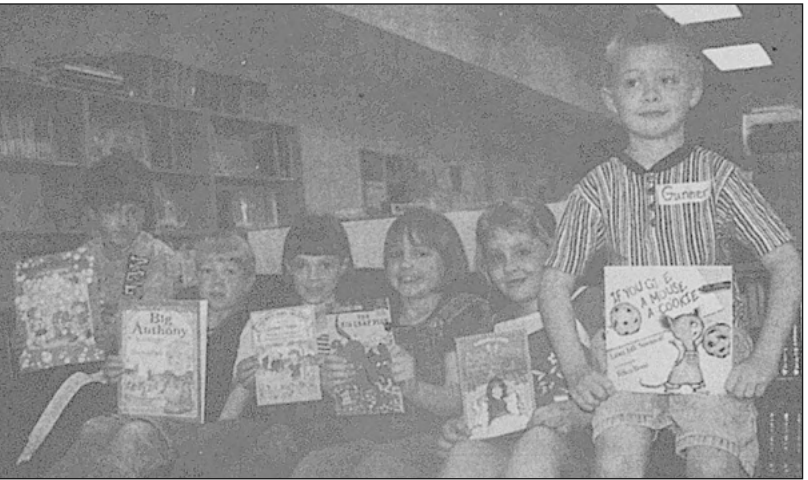
25 years ago

- The House of the Month for May is a beautiful Cape Cod style home at 708 9th Ave. NW. The main level features a large sunken living room, which opens into a dining room and kitchen. Adjacent to the kitchen is the laundry room, and sliding doors lead off the dining room out into a 12' x 12' screened-in gazebo. Two bedrooms also rest on the main level. The upper level holds a third bedroom, as well as a space for a home office or reading room. The basement features a spacious family room/den. Other features of this house include 1 ½ baths and a large tandem garage. New carpet and floor coverings have been installed, and the roof was reshingled in 1999. The house sits in a quiet northwest location, with a large front and back yard.



- These are the Waseca High School music department students who have been selected to perform in the all-state musical groups for the 2001-02 school year.They are (front row, from left:) Josh Cosens, All-State Jazz Band; Katie Hoyme, All-State Band; Alex Nelson, All-State Mixed Choir; Kyra Kingsley, All-State Band; and Josh Abraham, All-State Band. Back row: George Bagan, All-State Orchestra; Brad Schultz, All-State Band; and Tyler Nelson, All-State Band.

- Casey's General Store hopes to open a second convenience store with gas pumps at 6th Ave. SW and South State Street. The Waseca Planning Commission will hold a public hearing tonight at 7 p.m. at city hall to consider the request. The plan would require a conditional use permit to allow gas pumps in a B-3 District (Limited Business) and variances for off street parking on the north side of the building as well as building setbacks. Four of the five trees on the property would be cut down; however, the plan calls for Casey's to provide landscaping along the south property line to serve as a buffer from adjacent residents. The property proposed for the General Store is the former Lewer Auto Sales Lot.



- These are the book winners for the month of April as part of the Blast Off for Reading campaign at Hartley Elementary School in Waseca, They are (from left:) Jordan Loeftier, Seth Dixon, Mallori Malenke, Abigail Terrell, Jessica Fraichard and Gunner Johnson. Each class was given reading goals. Any student who attained their goal had their names placed in a drawing. Mc Donald's certificates, books and t-shirts were awarded.

- The University of South Dakota School of Business recently presented scholarships to students at an awards ceremony held on campus. Alumni and supporters of the school of business provided the awards and scholarships. Matthew Buenzow, the son of Steve Buenzow and Mary Buenzow of Waseca, is a junior majoring in Accounting. He received the Walter A. Buhler Scholarship, a Partner of Arther Andersen & Co.

50 years ago

- Scholarships totaling nearly \$36,500 were presented to 198 Augustana College students during the annual Awards Day ceremonies in the college's gym-auditorium. President Charles L. Balcer presided over the presentations of the honor scholarships which cover the 1976-77 school year. President Sherwood O. Berg of South Dakota State University spoke on "Scholarship-So What?" before an audience which included the scholarship recipients," their parents and friends and other academic honorees. During the program announcement was made of graduate and undergraduate scholarships, fellowships and assistantships received by Augustana seniors as well as members of the 1976 Augustana Honor Society and the winners of departmental academic honors. Undergraduate winners of Awards Day scholarships included: Aid Association for Lutherans Scholarships-Donald Anderson, Waseca; The Julian Hofstad Scholarship-Patti Patton, Waseca; Youngdahl Memorial Award-Judy Mahler, Waseca.

- The St. Cloud State University Jazz Ensemble II will present its spring concert at 7 p.m. May 9, in the Performing Arts Center Recital Hall. Donna Salzle, 208 9th Ave. NE Waseca, a sophomore is a member of the Jazz Ensemble II playing the saxophone. She is majoring in urban affairs and music. The concert is free and open to the public and is sponsored by the university's music department. "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy," "Here's that Rainy Day," "Sunny," "Scarborough Fair," "Light my Fire," and "Norwegian Wood," will be performed. Works by Thad Jones, Sammy Nestica and Dominic Spera are also included in the program. The jazz ensemble is directed by Allen Marquardt, instructor of music at SCSU.

75 years ago

- Carl E. Peterson and son Carlton have announced the sale of their Red Owl Agency store located at 109 North State in Waseca. The owners said they will take inventory May 20 and the new owner will assume management May 21. Name of the purchaser, a Minneapolis man, was not revealed because of the present business commitments.

- Word has just been received from Myron Clark that he will be the speaker for the next Dairy Council meeting to be held at the Waseca Creamery hall on Tuesday eventing May 22. Mr. Clark will discuss the dairy situation in Minnesota with particular emphasis on marketing and quality. The meeting will afford an opportunity for Waseca county dairymen to get acquainted with the new commissioner.

- Six-year-old Douglas Miller who received a eye cut with a piece of glass shortly before nine on Wednesday of last week is making satisfactory progress toward recovery that his parents Mr. and Mrs. Charles II. Miller hope they may bring him home from the hospital in Rochester, the latter part of this week.

100 years ago

- Esteem has more engaging charms than friendship, and even love. It captivates hearts better, and never makes ingrates. Rochefoucauld

- Mr. Burch Root sold a heifer to O. Priebe just recently.

- Mr. A.W. Bathke purchased a new car Friday at Waseca.

- Mr. George Doran has been hauling tile getting ready to improve his farm.

New Richland

25 Years Ago

- The section solo and ensemble contest was held at Minnesota State University - Mankato last Saturday, May 5. The NRHEG Jazz ensemble received the highest superior rating they have ever received with a 39 (out of 40) while performing "Senor Banana," featuring Dave Halbakken on trumpet, "Since I Fell for You," featuring Ellen Johnson on alto sax, and "A Nasty Bit Of Blues," featuring Tyler Moe on bari sax, Gavin Berg on piano and Alex Barnett on percussion.

- Adam Groskreutz of Wells and Jodi Berg of New Richland announce their engagement. Jodi is the daughter of Stanford and Kathleen Berg of New Richland. She is a graduate of Riverland Community College and a nursing student. Adam is the son of Neil and Jean Groskreutz of Wells. He is a graduate of South Central Technical College with a degree in agriculture. A June 9, 2001 wedding is planned.

- Erik and Bridget Wiebold of Shakopee announce the birth of their daughter, Hannah Grace, born on Saturday, April 21, 2001 at St. Francis Regional Medical center in Shakopee. Hannah weighed 8 pounds, 10 ounces and was 21 inches in length.

- In a one-hitter thrown by Erin Anderson, the Panthers swamped Faribault Bethlehem Academy 12-1, Wednesday, May 2 at Faribault. In the process Anderson struck out nine, walked two while facing 28 batters. On Tuesday, May 1, the Panthers were rained out in the top of the fourth inning, leading 5-1 over Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton.

50 Years Ago

- Jim Jacobson and Dann Phillips, senior members of the New Richland-Hartland FFA chapter, have been awarded State Farmer degrees for their involvement in FFA and farming activities during their high school careers.

- The New Richland-Hartland High School Track team, under the direction of their coaches, Don Haugen, Roger Melquist and Gary Nordlie, ran away with the District IIA track meet, Tuesday evening, scoring 142 points. Austin Pacilli was second with 75; Grand Meadow third with 69 and Hayfield fourth with 61.

75 Years Ago

- The marriage of Adrian Boie of New Richland and Miss Marjorie Hanson of Lemond will take place Sunday, June 17, at the Pontoppidan Lutheran Church of Lemond, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

- A baby girl weighing six pounds was born to Mr. and Mrs. Donald Matasosky of Minneapolis Monday, June 11.

- Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Chicos, living southwest of New Richland, are the parents of a son born June 12 at the Naeve hospital, Albert Lea.

Friendship
from Page 2

community. Completely transforming the organization and the center.

- Served as President of the local Exchange Club chapter and helped lead significant membership growth and statewide recognition.

- Active member and leader within the Tuscan Lodge No. 77 Masons.

- Helped strengthen collaboration between local nonprofits, civic groups, schools, businesses, and local government.

- Assisted in organizing and supporting major community events, fundraisers, recognition programs, and civic celebrations throughout Waseca.

- Played a leadership role in welcoming and mentoring new leaders and community volunteers.

- Helped coordinate and support candidate forums, legislative coffees, town halls, and civic engagement opportunities for residents.

- Assisted with business retention and economic development conversations involving downtown redevelopment, housing, tourism, and workforce initiatives.

- Supported local tourism attractions, arts events, seasonal celebrations, and community branding efforts.

- Advocated for community partnerships that brought organizations together instead of operating in silos.

- Supported charitable and service-focused efforts benefiting the Waseca Area Food Shelf and other community nonprofits.

- Assisted with recognition events honoring veterans, first responders, volunteers, and community leaders.

- Served as a mentor and encourager to younger community leaders and volunteers entering civic service.

- Brought regional and statewide

organizational connections back into the Waseca community to benefit local initiatives.

- Helped modernize and professionalize several local organizations through branding, communication, partnerships, and event execution.

- Worked to preserve and promote Waseca's sense of hospitality, volunteerism, and civic pride.

- Consistently volunteered his time, leadership, and expertise across multiple organizations simultaneously for the betterment of the community.

- Known for creating welcoming, relationship-driven environments that encourage people to become more involved in community life.

- Assisted organizations during periods of transition, restructuring, or uncertainty to help maintain continuity and stability.

- Frequently recognized for his formal professionalism, strong public presence, and dedication to service-oriented leadership.

- Helped elevate the visibility of Waseca organizations and events beyond the immediate community through networking and advocacy.

- Integral part of getting Marketplace Commons across the finish line.

- Always a sounding board for other civic leaders.

- His expertise is unique and is often called upon by elected officials and City/County leadership.

"Both abundance and lack exist simultaneously in our lives, as parallel realities. It is always our conscious choice which secret garden we will tend... when we choose not to focus on what is missing from our lives but are grateful for the abundance that's present - love, health, family, friends, work, the joys of nature and personal pursuits that bring us pleasure - the wasteland of illusion falls away and we experience Heaven on earth." - Sarah Ban Breathnach

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WHS nine continues winning trend

Blue Jay baseball team tops Maple River 12-2 for fourth victory in six outings

The Waseca Bluejays are undoubtedly playing some better baseball.

The Jays won for the fourth time in six outings Saturday, defeating Maple River 12-2 in a nonconference game at Tink Larson Field in Waseca.

A nine-run first inning buoyed the Bluejays, who played near-flawless defense to win handily.

"We had a good day today," said Larson, the Hall of Fame coach who still volunteers for the Bluejays. "Scoring nine runs in the first inning takes a lot of the pressure off.

Owen Honstad went 2-for-3 with a triple and two runs scored. Logan

Reger was 2-for-4. Kellen Klinger doubled and drove in three runs while Hayden Stencel had a double and two RBIs. Avery Wetzel, Kallen Glynn and Payton Garza also hit safely. Glynn doubled.

The Bluejays stranded nine baserunners, one more than Maple River.

Reger pitched all five innings for the victory. He struck out two and walked two.

The Bluejays defeated Sibley East 6-4 at Gaylord last Tuesday.

Sibley East took a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning on three hits, but lost a runner on the bases to end the inning.

Waseca tied it 1-1 in the second. Wetzel led off with a single and moved to second on a walk to Jaiden Schafer. Waseca then received a break when the Sibley East short-stop dropped the ball on a force out at second base that loaded the bases.

Riley Mitchell then drove Wetzel home on a groundout to the short-stop.

The Bluejays had a big third inning, scoring three times. Reger singled with one out, his second hit of the game. Reger then stole second and moved to third on a single by Klinger. Reger scored on a fielder's choice by Schafer. After Schafer moved to second on defen-

sive indifference, Stencel singled to center to score Klinger and Stencel.

The Jays added their final run in the fifth when Klinger tripled and scored on a sacrifice fly by Wetzel.

Stencel went the first six innings on the mound to earn the win. He gave up nine hits, walked three, and struck out five.

Cash Lynch pitched the seventh inning, giving up a three-run homer after an error and a hit batter.

Reger and Klinger each had two hits for the Bluejays, who were out-hit 10-7.

The Bluejays were blanked by LeSueur-Henderson 3-0 at LeSueur last Monday. Honstad had Waseca's

only hit, a double to lead off the game. Reger took the pitching loss. Kameron Ferch pitched in relief.

"We played O.K.," said Larson. "We just couldn't get any hits. We left eight runners on base in the first three innings. We left the bases loaded in the first two innings while the game was still scoreless. A hit in each of those innings and it could have been a different final result."

The Bluejays played errorless defense.

After finishing the regular season Monday at Triton, the Bluejays open section tournament play today.

Season winding down for WHS golf

Section, state are all that remain for Jays

There were sustained wins of 35 mph and gusts up to 48 mph as the Waseca High School boys' golf team ventured to Dacotah Ridge in Morton for last week's Big South Conference tournament.

Combined with inconsistent play on the part of the Bluejays, it made for a rough day for Waseca.

"The boys' Big South championship was, admittedly, a tough day for us," said WHS coach Bill Dwinells.

The Bluejays finished 11th among 14 teams.

The bright spots for Waseca were provided by juniors Avery Selvik and Braiden Nelson, the only two Bluejays to break 100 for 18 holes.

"It was a difficult day weather-wise," said Dwinells.

A day earlier the WHS girls were at Dacotah Ridge, where they also finished 11th out of 14 Big South schools.

Senior Madison Rasche and junior Elli Hoban finished among the top 30 individuals.

The same day, the boys played a home dual against Belle Plaine at Lakeside Golf Course, a makeup from an earlier weather-canceled event.

Waseca's varsity and junior varsity competed and both teams took home the win against Belle Plaine.

On the varsity side, the boys won by a margin of 11 strokes. Nelson, junior Brody Dufault, eighth-grader Colin Selvik, sophomore Troone Corchoran, and junior Avery Selvik took five of the top ten spots, with Nelson finishing first at 40 for nine holes and Dufault taking second at 45.

On the JV side Dylan Hansen, Archer O'Brien, Nolan Dufault, Liam Lever, Julius Oviedo, Ethan Casterton, Wyatt Hager and Max Malouff took eight of the top 10 spots. Hansen finished first at 45.

The boys are at New Prague Country Club May 26 for the opening round of individual section play. The girls start May 27 at New Prague.

On May 4, the WHS girls finished in last place at the Worthington Invitational.

Rasche took seventh place for another top 10-finish. Sophomore Maddie Root continued to improve with a top-30 finish.

The boys finished fifth out of seven teams at the Marshall Invitational. Nelson posted another top-five finish, placing fourth while Brody Dufault and Corchoran posted top-25 finishes with scores of 89 and 87, respectively.

Softball Bluejays endure full slate

From exceedingly high winds to spells of lightning strikes, last week was not your typical one for high school athletics.

But don't ask the Waseca High School softball team.

The Bluejays were too busy playing games to notice.

The WHS girls played no less than five contests in six days, culminated with a 7-4 nonconference loss to Waterville-Elysian-Morristown at Waseca Saturday.

"A close game for our Bluejays, but they battled until the very end," said WHS coach Amanda Sommers. "After a week of five games, I was proud that the girls battled until the bottom of the seventh but came up short. A few errors by our defense impacted this game, but I was proud of our grittiness at the plate. We had 12 team hits and were putting the ball in play."

Hannah Sommers, Ellery Waldron, Madison Roessler and Brier Hayes had two hits apiece. Sommers doubled. Adding one hit each were Avery Barto, Hannah Rugger, Lauren Grant and Allison Mader. Barto's hit was a double.

The Bluejays struck out 11 times and walked twice.

Sommers and Rugger split the pitching duties, with Sommers taking the loss. They combined for five strikeouts and four walks.

The Bluejays shut out visiting Sibley East 10-0 Friday, totaling 12 hits and eight walks.

Rugger had three hits, including two doubles, while Sommers doubled twice and drove in three runs. Adding one hit apiece were Barto, Claire Roemhildt, Waldron, Grant, Roessler, Mader and Hannah Teague. Waldron tripled and had two RBIs.

Barto pitched a shutout, striking out 12 and not issuing a walk while allowing three hits in six innings.

"It was an exciting night at the ballpark for our Lady Jays," said Coach Sommers. "We were sharp and aggressive at the plate. The middle of our lineup carried us at the



ONE OF FIVE □ Above, Waseca shortstop Avery Barto fires to first for the out during the Bluejays' victory over Medford 7-2 last Tuesday, one of five games in the week for the Bluejays Lauren Grant, Barto and Claire Roemhildt celebrate at home plate. Photos by Jim Lutgens

plate with some huge hits and key RBIs. I was very proud of us offensively in this game, with almost everyone getting a hit. Defensively, we were also sharp. With no recorded errors in the game for our defense, we were able to shut down Sibley East. The key to our success was being able to combine our performance at the plate, and play clean and sharp in the field. Barto was lights-out in the circle for us as well."

The Jays dropped a 7-0 decision at Maple River Thursday.

Hits went to Sommers, Waldron and Grant. Barto took the pitching loss.

"An interesting night, with two lightning delays extending the evening," said Coach Sommers.

On an extremely windy Tuesday, the Bluejays defeated Medford 7-2 on the WHS field.

Sommers, a freshman, hit her long-awaited first home run of the season, adding a double while totaling two RBIs. Grant singled twice and drove in a run. Roessler and Waldron added one hit each.

Rugger went the route in the circle, striking out 12 and walking three while giving up two hits in

seven innings.

"This was a great team win for us," said Coach Sommers. "Defensively, we played quite sharp in this game. Rugger had an outstanding game for us in the circle. Offensively, the middle of our lineup provided pop for us in this game. This and Rugger's excellent pitching performance was a key to our success."

The Bluejays started the week Monday with an 8-0 home loss to St. James.

The lone hits were by Barto and Waldron.

The Bluejays struck out 18 times and did not draw a walk.

Sommers started and took the pitching loss, with Barto throwing in relief.

"Lainey Bowers from St. James is an excellent pitcher, one of the best in the state," said Coach Sommers. "I was proud of our girls for going a full seven innings in this game. Our defense played excellent and kept us in our game, while offensively we struggled at the plate."

The Bluejays, 6-14, drew the No. 12 seed in the Section 2AA tournament and opened postseason play Tuesday at No. 5 seed Randolph.



WHS tracksters 1st, 2nd in invitational

Coach David Abel was hopeful for a hometown sweep as the Waseca High School track teams hosted an invitational last Tuesday.

He had to settle for coming awfully close.

The Bluejay boys topped a six-team field while the girls finished a close second to JWP/WEM.

"It was a good meet despite the wind," said Abel. "We were really hoping for a Waseca team sweep. The girls came up a little short. We probably could have tweaked the lineup a little and got the win, but the girls did great anyway."

The Waseca boys won with 172 points, with JWP/WEM second at 138. Following were St. James/Madelia with 59, Blue Earth Area 45, NRHEG 40 and Mankato Loyola/Cleveland 38.

The Bluejays displayed their

dominance by winning three relays. Jonah Worke, Jett Rohl, Jordan Johnston and Aydan Kath took the 4x100 in 43.85 seconds. Johnston, Tovin Grannis, Malachi Noble and Rohl won the 4x200 in 1:33.04. Noble, Brady Tloutan, Sunny Mei and Grannis clocked 3:45.26 to win the 4x400.

Grannis added two individual firsts, winning the 300 hurdles in 43.69 and the high jump at 6 feet. Worke was first in the 100 in 11.90 and Landon Rutt won the 1600 in 5:03.52.

Other places: Kath, 2nd, 100, 11.95; Tloutan, 2nd, 400, 53.08; Rutt, 2nd, 800, 2:18.48; Landon Madsen, 2nd, shot put, 40-3.5 and 3rd, discus, 123-7; Owen Rupe, 2nd, discus, 151-2 and 3rd, high jump, 5-8; Mei, 2nd, high jump, 5-10 and 3rd, 400, 53.84; ; William

Mansfield, 2nd, triple jump, 39.8.25 and 4th, long jump, 18-1.75; Noble, 4th, 400, 53.84; Ryan Yoder, 4th, 800, 2:27.99, 4th, 1600, 5:36.11, and 4th, triple jump, 38-2.5; Aiden DeRaad, 4th, shot put, 39-4; Rohl 5th, 100, 12.19; Sam Feldkamp, 5th, 3200, 13:45.47.

JWP/WEM's girls won with 126 points, followed by Waseca with 118, Blue Earth Area 93.5, St. James/Madelia 79, Mankato Loyola/Cleveland 54.5 and NRHEG 48.

Finishing first for Waseca were Ellie Kopischke, 800, 2:33.57; Taylor Markeson, 3200, 12:46.15, and Reese Rodriguez, triple jump, 32.0.25.

Rodriguez, Stella Omtvedt, Maren Schimming and Kopischke won the 4x200 in 1:54.54 while Omtvedt, Rodriguez, Schimming

and Kopischke took the 4x400 in 4:24.79.

Other places: Schimming, 2nd, 400, 1:04.29; Omtvedt, 2nd, 800, 2:34.64; Ava VanDenHemel, 2nd, 1600, 6:02.16 and 4th, 800, 2:25.22; Kelsey Draeger, 2nd, 3200, 13:51.25; Addie Zimmerman, 3rd, 300 hurdles, 59.12 and 4th, 100 hurdles, 20.2; 4x200 relay, 3rd, 2:03.12 (Lauren Holmseth, Allyson Holmseth, Vivian Mader, Elizabeth Aboki); 4x800, 3rd, 11:15.23 (Markeson, Jenna Yoder, Quinn Yoder, Draeger); Jenna Yoder, 4th, 1600, 6:15.3 and 5th, 800, 2:45.77; Megan Tegmeier, 4th, 3200, 14:28.79; 4x100 relay, 4th (Rodriguez, Zimmerman, Aboki, Angelica Lopez); Savanna Vagts, high jump, 4-8.

The Bluejays are off until sections May 28 and 30 at Faribault.



WINNING FORM □ Reese Rodriguez competes in the triple jump at last week's Waseca Invitational.

JWP baseball team ends regular season

Bulldogs seeded second in section

The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School baseball team completed the regular season last week with two wins in four games.

The Bulldogs ran into a hot-hitting New Clm Cathedral team Friday and lost 24-2 at Janesville.

"It was a very difficult game," said JWP coach Cory Jewison, whose team was forced to use four pitchers for the second game in a row.

On the positive side, Jesson Helder and Ryan Wolfson were able make their varsity pitching debut. Helder had three strikeouts in 1 2/3 inning.

"We put in players who normally do not play on varsity," said Jewison. "I was glad they were able to get in."

The day before the Bulldogs won 11-6 at Hayfield.

Chase Gerdts was 3-for-5 with a triple and three RBIs, Caleb Quast 2-for-3 with two stolen bases, and Ayden Peterson 2-for-3 with two walks. Parker Gearity had two hits Seth Dahlberg and Gavin Bauer one each. Bauer had a double and two RBIs

Peterson pitched a complete game, allowing six earned runs on 12 hits, with three strikeouts.

On Wednesday, the Bulldogs were 10-runned 11-1 by Triton at Dodge Center.

Quast, Gerdts, Yale Johnson, Blayne Wandrie and Jaxon Wolff added one hit apiece. Gerdts tripled. Zander Terbeest started on the mound and took the loss. Wandrie pitched in relief.

A day earlier saw the Bulldogs beat Blooming Prairie 12-5 at Janesville.

Gerdts had four hits in five at-



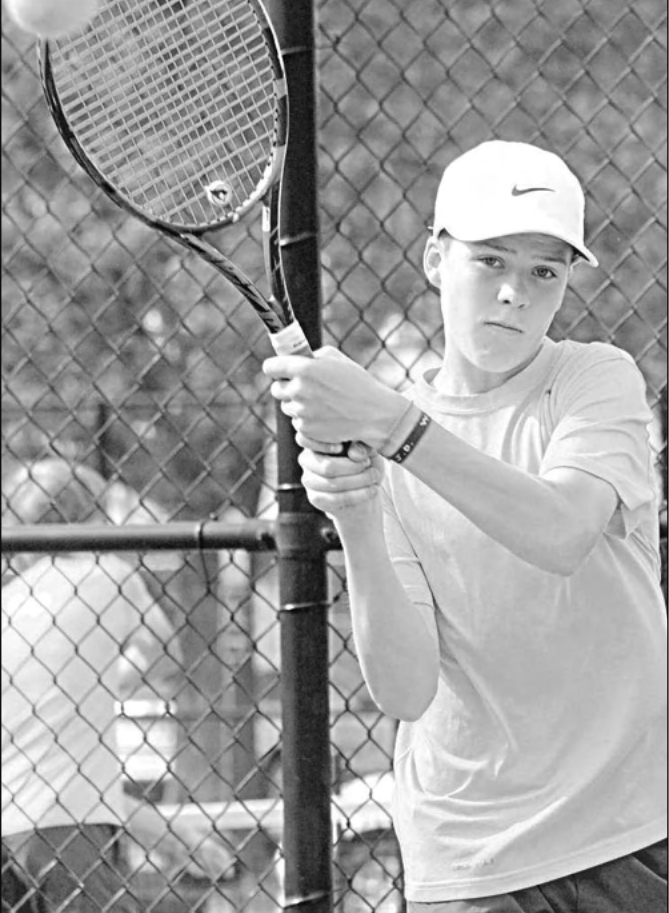
NO. 2 SEED — The JWP baseball team got the No. 2 seed in Section 1A. At left, the Bulldogs Ayden Peterson delivers a pitch. At right, outfielder Caleb Quast makes a diving effort.

bats, scoring three times and tripling. Johnson was 2-for-5 with a double and four RBIs. Gearity had three hits, Dahlberg and Wandrie two each. Quast and Peterson had one hit apiece. Michael Walker stole two bases.

Gerdts got the pitching win, surrendering two earned runs in 5 2/3 innings on five hits and six walks.

He fanned seven.

JWP, 12-6, seeded No. 2 in Section 1A, began tournament play Wednesday with a home game against 13th-seeded Schaeffer Academy. The winner advances to the double-elimination portion of the tournament Saturday, May 23 at noon at Riverland Community College in Austin.



SECTION TRIUMPH — The Waseca High School boys tennis team defeated Lake City 4-2 last week in the opening round of section team play. Manning the top three singles positions for the Bluejays were, from left, Henry Huttemier, Armaan Bhatti and Keenan Collins.

Photos by John Lutgens

WHS netmen roll in section tourney opener

The section tournament opener went about as expected for the Waseca High School boys' tennis team.

The Bluejays, seeded third, handily dispatched sixth-seeded Lake City 4-2 on the WHS courts.

The No. 3 doubles match was not completed due to lightning in the area after Waseca claimed the fourth and deciding point.

All four points came in straight sets at singles. Junior Henry Huttemier won 6-3, 6-1 at No. 1, sophomore Armaan Bhatti swept 6-2, 6-0 at No. 2, freshman Keenan Collins prevailed 6-2, 6-0 at No. 3, and seventh-grader Korbin Collins rolled 6-2, 6-4 at No. 4.

The Collins brothers defeated juniors. Bhatti beat a senior.

At No. 1 doubles, Allen Kopetzki and Nolan McQuery were defeated 6-2, 6-2 while the No. 2 doubles duo of Bryghton Rugger and Carson True lost 6-3, 6-0.

The No. 3 doubles match was starting the third set when play was halted.

The win advanced the Bluejays to the section semifinals against second-seeded Winona Cotter Tuesday morning at the Rochester Athletic Club. The winner faced No. 1 Rochester Lourdes or No. 4 Red Wing in the finals.

The Bluejays lost to Cotter and Lourdes during the regular season.

The Jays are back at the Rochester Athletic Club today for the opening round of section individual competition.

Bulldogs 1st, 2nd at Waseca

The JWP/WEM track and field teams finished at the top of the standings in last Tuesday's Waseca Invitational, where the girls finished first and the boys second out of six squads.

The Bulldog girls won with 126 points, just ahead of second-place Waseca's 118.

Rachel Mielke led the Bulldogs, winning the 200-meter dash in 27.64 seconds while taking second in the 100 in 13.51 and second in the long jump at 16-1. Mielke, Kyla Schlingmann, Katelyn Olson and Nevaeh Weimert won the 4x100 relay in 52.68. Ashlynn Wolff won the high jump at 5-2 and was second in the 200 in 27.67. Alese Wolf was first in the long jump at 16-5.

Other Bulldog places: Ashlynn Wolff, 3rd, 100, 13.56 and 3rd, 400, 1:03.49; Norah Welvaert, 3rd, 200, 28.11 and 4th, 100, 13.77; Jacelynn Mulder, 3rd, 400, 1:04.62; Aubrey Adams, 3rd, shot put, 30-5.5; Olson, 3rd, long jump, 15-5.5 and 5th, 200, 28.52; MaKaela Westphal, 4th, 400, 1:04.99; Addison Johnson, 4th, 300 hurdles, 1:04.17; Alese Wolff, 5th, 400, 1:06.43 and 6th, 200, 28.95; 4x100 relay, 5th (Victoria Appel, Avery Bronk, Annalise Rysdam, Johnson); 4x800, 5th (Alenka Jans, Jaelyn Wilmes, Anne Adams, Welvaert); Kwynn Krause, 6th, 400, 1:06.6.

The JWP/WEM boys totaled 138 points to 172 for first-place Waseca.

Gavin Weedman had a big day, winning the long jump at 20 feet and the triple jump at 42-6.5 while joining Teagan Mulder, Tyson Kronbach and Wyatt Jans for first in the 4x800 in 9:07.83. The other Bulldog firsts were by Gavin Atherton, 400, 52:02; and Wesley Heinz, 3200, 12:18.26.

Also: Kronbach, 2nd, 200, 25.34; Auston Holicky, 2nd, 3200, 12:34.48 and 6th, 1600, 5:38.88; Cole Bartz, 2nd, long jump, 18-9; 4x200, 2nd, 1:35.38 (James Morgan, Bartz, Daulton Bauer, Atherton); 4x400, 2nd, 3:38.93 (Bauer, Wyatt Jans, Kronbach, Atherton); Jans, 3rd, 200, 25.96; Bauer, 3rd, long jump, 18-7 and 5th, triple jump, 38-0.25; Teagan Mulder, 3rd, triple jump, 38-6 and 5th, high jump, 5-4; Brennan Welvaert, 4th, 1600, 5:31.79; Parker Smith, 4th, 3200, 13:28.66; Charles Adams, 4th, 300 hurdles, 53.41; Aiden Gruber, 5th, 200, 26.18 and 5th, long jump, 17-11; Bartz, 5th, shot put, 37-10; Weedman, 6th, 400, 57.38; 4x200 relay, 6th, 1:52.12 (Grayson Einertson, David Mielke, Blake Schlie, Nate Cofield).



RECORD PACE — JWP/WEM eighth-grader Rachel Mielke was one of two Bulldogs breaking school records Saturday, joining senior Nevaeh Weimert.

JWP/WEM girls tenth in True Team state track meet

For the second year in a row the JWP/WEM girls' track and field team competed in the True Team state and field meet held Saturday at Eden Prairie.

The True Team format differs from traditional track and field, which usually awards points to the top six or seven placewinners. In True Team, everyone who enters an event scores, with 24 places given at the state meet.

The Bulldogs finished 10th with 355 points. Holdingford won with 544.5.

Senior Addison Condon captured the lone first for the Bulldogs, going 17 feet, 4 inches to win the long jump. She was third in the triple jump at 33-11.25.

Also having a big day was senior Nevaeh Weimert, who took fifth in the 200 in 26.53 seconds, fifth in the 400 in 1:01.66, seventh in the 100 in 12.91 and 12th in the triple jump at 31-10.5.

Rachel Mielke, an eighth-grader, was third in the 300 hurdles in 46.38.

The Bulldogs' top-finishing relay was the 4x200, which clocked 1:49.5 for fourth with Kyla Schlingmann, Makenzie Westphal, Katie Olson and Mielke.

Other JWP/WEM places: Condon, 12th, 100, 13.23 and 10th, 200, 27.4; Mielke, 11th, 100 hurdles, 16.94; Jacelynn Mulder, 19th, 100 hurdles, 18.38 and 9th, 300 hurdles, 49.75; Kwynn Krause, 21st, 400, 1:05.59 and 23rd, 800, 2:45.49; Westphal, 24th, 800, 2:51.37; Norah Welvaert, 13th, 1500, 5:56.26 and 15th, 3200, 13:37.61; Alenka Jans, 23rd, 1600, 6:32.13; Magdalen Rauenhorst, 24th, 3200, 15:21.42; Aubrey Adams, 22nd, discus, 72-05 and 15th, shot put, 26-1.5; Raelyn Eich, 24th, discus, 64-02 and 24th, shot put, 26-1.5; Lydia Bjortmont, 13th, high jump 4-6; Anne Adams, 23rd, high jump, 4-2; Sarah Bulman, 16th, pole vault, 8-0; Aubrey Anderson, 21st, pole vault, 7-0; 4x400, 8th, 4:23.67 (Schlingmann, Krause, Westphal, Mulder); 4x100, 10th, 53.19 (Schlingmann, Westphal, Olson, Kayleigh Donner); 4x800, 11th, 11:44.34 (Appel, Splett, Groh, Jans).

JWP softball girls end regular season, draw No. 8 seed

The Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School softball team went 1-1 last week, running its season record to 12-8.

The Bulldogs topped Hayfield 6-2 Thursday at Janesville.

Brielle James led the offense, going 2-for-2 with a triple and an

RBI. Raylen Blasing was 2-for-2 with a triple, Lyla Simonson 2-for-2 with one RBI, and Mya Wheelock 2-for-2 with a double. Lillian Ewert and Ryleigh Donner also hit safely.

Donner was the winning pitcher, allowing one earned run in four innings. She struck out five and

walked three.

The Bulldogs dropped a 15-14 slugfest at Blooming Prairie last Tuesday.

Offensive leaders: Kayle Langford 3-for-4 with a double and three RBIs; Wheelock 3-for-5 with one RBI; Donner 2-for-3; Ewert 2-

for-3 with two RBIs. Blasing, Lyla Simonson, James and Lily Quast each had one hit.

The Bulldogs, seeded eighth in Section 2A, hosted No. 9 Springfield Monday. The winner played Tuesday at top-seeded Martin County West.

The tournament continues at Caswell Park in Mankato, with the quarterfinals and semifinals May 23 and the championship May 28.

The Bulldogs are at St. James today for sub-section competition.

Softball Panthers end regular season

NRHEG draws No. 6 section seed

The NRHEG High School softball team was already well on its way to 10-running Triton when Mother Nature settled the issue. Lightning spotted in the area halted play after four innings as the Panthers defeated the visiting Cobras 16-5 at New Richland's Legion Field last Thursday. The Panthers, according to coach Wendy Schultz, won despite not playing well on defense, finishing the day with six errors. "Honestly, this was not a well-played game defensively for us," said Schultz, whose team committed all six errors in the first two innings as Triton took a 5-1 lead. The Panthers also cost themselves with a couple baserunning mistakes. But they didn't fold. "The girls held their composure and bounced back in the next two

innings, committing no errors," said Schultz. The Panther bats, meanwhile, came to life, highlighted by Quinn CanMaldeghe at 2-for-3 with a triple and four runs, and Kyera Eustice at 2-for-3 with a double and two RBIs. "Quinn and Kyera's bats were alive," said Schultz. Izley Boerner went 2-for-3, Faith Phillips 2-for-4. Ezra Boerner and Addy Stadheim had one hit each. Brooklyn Summer and Chloe Stork both scored three runs. Izley Boerner was the winning pitcher. She allowed no earned runs on two hits, with two strikeouts and two walks. The Panthers had a rough outing at Randolph last Tuesday, getting just two hits in a 12-0 four-inning loss.



SOFTBALL – At left, the Panthers' Izley Boerner fires a pitch. At right, NRHEG's Olivia Berg slides safely into second.

Photos by Jodi Wayne



Stork and Eustice had the hits. Izley Boerner gave up 12 earned runs on 14 hits. The Panthers had five fielding errors. "This was a tough game defensively," said Schultz. "On a more

positive note, offensively we had only two hits but had a lot of hard-hit balls that Randolph played well. We will keep plugging away at practice." The Panthers finished the regular

season 9-7 overall and 6-4 in the Gopher Conference. The Panthers drew the No. 6 seed in Section 1A and hosted No. 11 Bethlehem Academy Monday. The winner plays Tuesday at No. 3 seed

Lewiston-Altura. The tournament continues May 21 at Todd Park in Austin, with the semifinals set for May 25 and championship May 27.

NRHEG nine walks off against Lyle Pacelli, 12-11

Panthers seeded No. 1 in Section 1A

The NRHEG High School baseball team delivered one of its most exciting wins of the season last Tuesday, rallying for a dramatic 12-11 walk-off victory over Lyle/Austin Pacelli at Jeff and Carol Reese Field in New Richland. Trailing 11-6 entering the bottom of the seventh inning, the Panthers exploded for six runs to complete an incredible comeback victory. With two outs and the bases loaded in the final inning, Sean Lassahn came through in the clutch with a bases-clearing triple to tie the game at 11-11 and ignite the Panthers' dugout. After Mack Gilliland was intentionally walked to put runners on first and third, A.J. Deen ended the game on the very first pitch he saw, delivering a walk-off RBI single to give NRHEG the 12-11 victory. The Panthers pounded out 12 hits in the win. Mack Gilliland led the offense, going 3-for-4 with a double, two runs scored, and two stolen bases. Deen finished 2-for-4 with three RBIs, including the game-winning hit, while Dakota Schlaak and Brooks Gilliland each added two hits and an RBI. Jordan Brouwers and Calvin Nissen contributed one hit apiece. Lassahn drove in four runs on the night, highlighted by his game-tying triple. NRHEG got on the board early when Deen lifted a sacrifice fly in the first inning. Dakota Schlaak added an RBI single in the second, and Brooks Gilliland extended the Panthers' lead in the third with an RBI double. On the mound, Owen Wayne kept NRHEG in the game and earned the win with a strong outing, striking out eight over five innings while

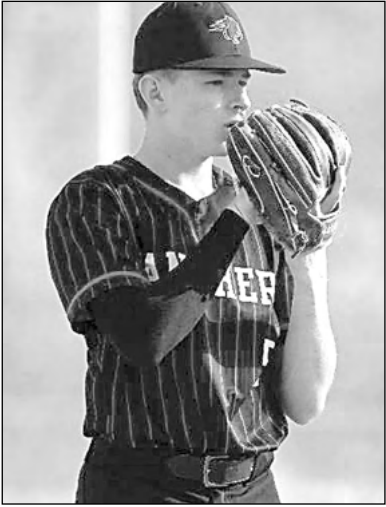
"The boys showed grit and how to never give up until the final out."
— NRHEG coach Marcus Fischer

allowing just two earned runs. The comeback showed the toughness and fight of the Panthers, who refused to back down and capped the night with a thrilling walk-off finish in front of the home crowd. "The boys showed grit and how to never give up until the last out is made," said NRHEG coach Marcus Fischer. "They had to persevere and have each other's backs. We got into a tough situation while being up after five innings. The wind and dust made it very difficult to see the ball off the bat for our outfielders. We made a few mistakes in the outfield, and it was difficult throwing the ball back into the wind to hit our cuts. It was not the situation we wanted to get into, but we fought until the end." The Panthers fell to Randolph 6-2 on Monday at Reese Field despite outpitching their opponent 6-4. The Panthers continued to battle throughout the night and had the game within two runs entering the seventh inning, but another pair of Randolph runs in the final inning helped seal the game. "We competed well throughout most of the game and put ourselves in position to win, but ultimately fell just short," said Fischer. Deen and Lassahn each recorded



FINISHING STRONG – The NRHEG baseball team earned the No. 1 seed in the Section 1A tournament, finishing 12-1 for the regular season. Above left, Sean Lassahn celebrates at third after hitting a seventh-inning triple. Clockwise from top right: Owen Wayne greets Brock Holland at home plate; Dakota Schlaak makes a throw from the outfield; Brooks Gilliland follows through on a pitch; Wayne looks in for the signal; Holland bunts.

Photos by Jodi Wayne



two hits, including a double by Deen. Ryan Schlaak contributed a hit and a run scored, while Nissen drove in a run. Mack Gilliland gave the Panthers a solid start on the mound, pitching 6 1/3 innings while allowing four

hits and striking out five. The Panthers defense also played a clean game without committing an error. "Mack did a wonderful job executing pitches, attacking batters, and showing composure on the mound," said Fischer.

The Panthers, 12-4 overall and 5-3 in the Gopher Conference, drew the No. 1 seed in Section 1A, earning a first-round home matchup against 16th-seeded Houston Wednesday. The winner advances to the double-elimination portion of the tourna-

ment Saturday, May 23 at noon at Riverland Community College in Austin.

Golfers host third round of conference

The NRHEG High School golf teams hosted the third round of Gopher Conference play last Monday at Riverview Golf Course. The Panther boys finished eighth as a team. Scores: Reid Sandry 95, Shan Hansen 97, Braxton Arnold 90, Chuck Tufte 115, Matt Williams 117, Blake Olson 121. The NRHEG girls did not field a team score. Individuals: Alexis Olson 116, Addison Bauleke 124, Hailey Staska 132.



FINISHING FIRST – The Panthers' Hudson Chrz, left, and Gabby Schlaak, right, captured firsts at Waseca last week.

Photos by Larry Nydegger



Tracksters try some new events at Waseca

With wind gusts upwards of 40 mph, the conditions were less-than-ideal for a track and field meet as the NRHEG Panthers competed at Waseca last Tuesday. "But there were still smiles to be seen on our athletes," said NRHEG co-head coach Larry Nydegger. It's because the Panthers performed surprisingly well in some first-ever attempts at new events. Among the highlights: Brendan Schmidt tried the high jump for the first time and finished fourth at 5 feet, 6 inches. Jacob Karl attempted the 300-meter hurdles for the first time and took third, clocking 51.97 seconds. And Chloe Riewer was a first-time entrant in the 3200. She was third in 14:17. In addition, the Panthers' Holly

Bartness accomplished something that Nydegger does not believe has been accomplished in the history of NRHEG. "By competing in the 100 hurdles, she has now competed in every running event that track and field has to offer," said Nydegger. Bartness finished sixth, clocking 20.74. Finishing first for the Panthers were Gabby Schlaak, 100 hurdles, 1:51; Julieann Wobbrock, 1600, 5:56; and Hudson Chrz, 110 hurdles, 19.03. Ellie Clark clocked 55.63 for second in the 300 hurdles. Colton Lermond was third in the 3200 in 13:22. The Panthers compete at the sub-section level today at St. James.

LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF WASECA

DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
PROBATE COURT DIVISION
Court File No.: 81-PR-26-302_

In Re: Estate of

MYRWOOD A. BAGNE,
Decedent

ORDER AND NOTICE OF
HEARING FOR FORMAL
PROBATE OF WILL AND AP-
POINTMENT OF PERSONAL
REPRESENTATIVE IN UNSU-

PERVISED ADMINISTRATION
AND
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TO ALL INTERESTED PER-
SONS:

It is Ordered and Notice is hereby given that on the 10th day of June, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., a hearing will be held in the above named Court at Waseca, Waseca County, Minnesota, for the formal probate of an instrument purporting to be the will of the above named decedent, dated November 3, 2017, and for the appointment of Karen E. Pederson whose address is PO Box 561, Waseca, MN 56093 as personal rep-

resentative of the estate of the above named decedent, in an unsupervised probate, and that any objections thereto must be filed with the Court. That, if proper, and no objections are filed, personal representative will be appointed to administer the estate, to collect all assets, pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, and sell real and personal property, and do all necessary acts for the estate. Upon completion of the probate, the representatives shall file a final account for the allowance and shall distribute the estate to the persons thereunto entitled as ordered by the Court and close the estate.

Notice is further given that ALL CREDITORS having claims against said estate are required to present the same to said personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this notice or said claims will be barred.

Dated: April 30, 2026.

/s/_Carol M. Hanks

Judge of District Court

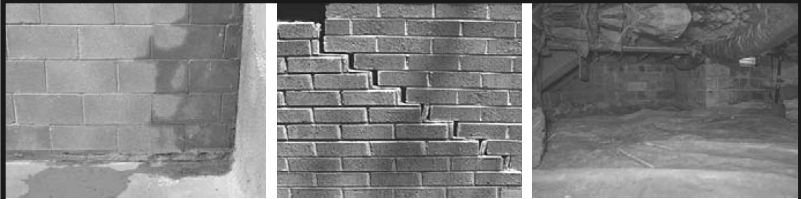
/s/_Shannon Asselin
Court Administrator

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
WASECA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

The Waseca County Planning Commission will hold a public hearing at the Waseca County East Annex (Commissioner's Room), 300 N. State Street, Waseca, MN 56093 on Thursday, June 4, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.to consider the following item:

A. Request for a Conditional Use Permit to create a pond closer than the required 75ft setback. Taylor J. R. Erickson and Benjamin P. Doyle request a Conditional Use Permit to create a pond on their common property line. The parcels (PID: 05.030.1110 and 05.030.1150) are in the A-1 Agricultural Protection Zoning district. The requested proposal is pursuant to the requirements of Section 4.13(A)(2)(e)2 of the Waseca County UDC.

The staff report on this item will be available at the Waseca County Planning and Zoning Office, 300 N State St., Waseca during regular business hours 8-4:30, and will be on the county website www.wasecacounty.gov at the agenda tab by June 1, 2026. Oral comments will be accepted at the meeting. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all Waseca County services, programs and activities.

Tina G. Wilson, Planning and Zoning Administrator

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642 May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	2
3	4	5 Burger Night 5-7 pm	6 6pm Bar Bingo	7 7pm BINGO	8 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	9
10 Breakfast VFW 8:00am to noon Your Host VFW Baseball Team	11 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	12 Burger Night 5-7 pm	13 6pm Bar Bingo	14 7pm BINGO	15 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	16
24	25	26 Burger Night 5-7 pm	27 6pm Bar Bingo	28 7pm BINGO	29 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	30
31						

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TUE.- 1pm to 11pm Tue. Is Lady's nite 2 for one-Men Busch light \$2.50 from 4 to 6pm.
WED.- SAT-1pm to 11 pm
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Local students earn spring accolades

Concordia Nebraska
Isabella Wolter of Janesville, earned a Bachelor of Science-Education

Southern New Hampshire University Dean's List
Jaiden Robinson, Waseca
Erin Keck, Waseca
Donald McVey, Waseca

SNHU Spring 2026 President's List
Chelsey Ulferts, Waseca
Katharine Duffy, Waseca.

Minnesota State University, Mankato degrees Janesville, MN
Lillian Cahill, BS, Marketing
Coral Cousins, BS, Marketing, Cum Laude
Kelton Erler, BS, Aviation, Cum Laude
Kylee Hanks, BS, Environmental Science, Summa Cum Laude
Annabelle Hofteig, BS, Elementary Education, Summa Cum Laude
Faith Olson, BS, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Summa Cum Laude
Addison Peed, BS, Environmental Science, Summa Cum Laude
Addison Peed, BS, Political Science, Summa Cum Laude
Ashley Schreiner, BS, Interdisciplinary Studies

New Richland, MN
Severin Eads, BS, Law Enforcement, Magna Cum Laude
Nicole Loken, GC, Spec Ed: Learning Disability, Magna Cum Laude

Nicole Loken, GC, Special Ed: Emotional/Behavioral, Magna Cum Laude
Tayler Schmidt, BS, Communication Sciences and Disorders, Summa Cum Laude
Tayler Schmidt, CERT, American Sign Language, Summa Cum Laude
Kristina Tufte, BS, Applied Leadership

Waseca, MN
Claire Adams, BS, Special Ed: Academic and Behavior Strategy, Cum Laude
Aspen Aschman, BS, Psychology, Summa Cum Laude
Autumn Bless, BBA, Business Administration
Erika Bowers, BS, Aviation
Theresa Breck, BFA, Dance, Summa Cum Laude
Riley Britton, BS, Construction Management
Dahminik Deutsch, BS, Aviation, Magna Cum Laude
Eddy Gallegos, BS, Music Industry
Sammie Neff, MS, Advanced Professional Nurse
Benjamin Priebe, BBA, Business Administration
Isabella Sorenson, BS, Management, Summa Cum Laude
Ryan Zimmerman, BS, Social Studies Teaching, Cum Laude

Concordia Nebraska recognizes church work students at Sending Service
Isabella Wolter of Janesville, MN



YOUNG ARTISTS - The High School Art Show held in the Beckmann Gallery at the Waseca Art Center featured work from 36 students representing eight area high schools.

Student art show displays talent

WASECA, Minn - The Waseca Art Center recently celebrated the creativity and talent of young regional artists during its High School Art Show held in the Beckmann Gallery, featuring work from 36 students representing eight area high schools.

The exhibit showcased a wide variety of artistic mediums and styles, giving students the opportunity to display their work in a professional gallery setting. On the final day of the exhibit, students participated in a special workshop led by professional multi-media artist Heidi Jeub, who also served as juror for the show.

First Place in the three-dimensional category was awarded to Chase Gerdtis of Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School for his sculpture, "Steel Prairie Sentinel," a striking bison created entirely from found metal objects. Following the exhibition, the piece was transported from the Waseca Art Center to the Mankato Sculpture Walk for public display.

First Place in the two-dimensional category went to Phoenix Machtemes of Le Sueur-Henderson High School for "Cosmo," a white charcoal on black paper portrait of her cat that impressed judges with its detail and composition.

The People's Choice Award, determined by votes cast by gallery visitors throughout the duration of the exhibit, was awarded to Anya Gaona of Waseca High School for her watercolor painting, "Puppy Love."

Best in Show honors were awarded to Sadie Jensen of Blooming Prairie High School for her pencil drawing, "A Day in the Life," which captivated attendees and jurors alike with its remarkable realism and technical skill.

"Museums and galleries are not only places to celebrate established artists, but also spaces where emerging talent can be encouraged and inspired," said Mikhail Rostislavovich, President of the Waseca Art Center. "Seeing these students display such creativity, discipline, and courage in sharing their work publicly gives us tremendous hope for the future of the arts in our region. We are incredibly proud to provide a platform where young artists can be recognized and celebrated."

The Waseca Art Center extends its gratitude to the participating students, schools, families, and community members who visited the exhibit and supported the next generation of artists.

■ Bently from Page 2

for was the safety of the barn, probably 200 feet or more away, but in line with the ferocious wind.

Staff members arrived bringing the fire extinguishers; they slowed the fire somewhat, but had no hope of putting it out. My understanding of the extinguishers changed then and there—it became clear they would be very useful to put out a fire just getting its start, but against the robust flames pouring from the small building, they were of little help.

Even with the wind carrying the heat northward, all of us now waiting for the fire department—whose sirens we could hear approaching—had to step repeatedly backward.

Standing there among the 1850s buildings, I imagined how hopeless it would have been to a pioneer family to see those same flames. Inside, some of their food being preserved for the winter was being destroyed. Outside, any efforts to fetch and throw enough water would be utterly futile.

Around them, they had to worry for the other structures and whether the fire would spread.

I have always had great respect for the resilience and determination our early pioneers showed when they came to the wide open spaces to establish a new home for themselves and their families. My regard grew as I recognized the utter helplessness we humans face when confronted by a true force of nature.

Fortunately, the Waseca Fire Department arrived, extinguished the fire, and ensured it would not reignite. The distances between the buildings kept the fire from spreading. Completely counter to what one might have expected, I was able to lead the scheduled tours of the site that day with surprisingly little disruption.

But as for me, I had faced a demon and known I had no power against it. I had received a visceral reminder of how valuable the services are which have been made possible by the society which grew from the resilience and determination of our pioneers.

There is a difference between "knowing" something and feeling it in your gut.



SURPRISE! - Deb Wantoch-Yess directs the Waseca Chorale during their May 16 concert. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

■ Chorale from Page 1

The tenor and bass sections of the Chorale were featured in "If I Were a Rich Man" from Fiddler on the Roof. Filled with energy and humor, the song had a nostalgic element for Wasecans who saw the 1990s community theater production of the play. Bass Don Frankenberry, who had the role of Tevye in the play, donned the leather cap he wore and introduced the song with the play's wistful words about how his life would change if he were wealthy.

Energetic solos during the concert included a "rap" enhancement to the Pentatonix hit "Sing" by Garrett Natysin, a soulful extra touch to "Chain of Fools" from Nancy Meyer Lehman, and a wistful beginning to "I Dreamed A World" by Michael Myers. The audience was also treated to two sophisticated piano performances from Chorale accompanist

Noah Wilson, who is in a master's program in piano performance at Minnesota State University Mankato.

Chorale members include Bass voices Mike Anthony, Gary Arnold, Paul Byron, Don, Don Frankenberry, Carroll Galvin, Matt Jirele, Garrett Natysin, Tyler Paulson, Curt Yess, Tenors John Hoehn, Al Judd, Andrew Miller, Michael Myers, Charles Priebe, Alto voices Toni Bauleke, Marlys Froehle, Sallene Hoehn, Nancy Meyer Lehman, Mallory Malacek, Mary Schultz, Jodie Thompson, Rachel Switzer, Deb Vetter, Sopranos Ruth Anderson, Vanessa Barr, Sarah Berry, Candace Eads, Aimee Hill, Janice Hoverstad, Julie Kramer, Dawn Leigh, Kelli Lenz, Deb Miller, Peg Olson, Kathy Roycraft, Sarah Whitesitt, Marilyn Wilkus and Deb Wantoch-Yess.

The performance was made possible in part by a grant from the E.F. Johnson Foundation, the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, and funds appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature General Fund and the Waseca County Art Fund.



SOLOIST - Soloist Garrett Natysin highlighted the Pentatonix song "Sing" with a rap solo. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

■ Careers from Page 1

won't get hurt, but we can still stop them." He said there =are two ways to use the stop sticks. "You can throw them, or you can place them across the highway and pull them into the path of the oncoming vehicle."

FMB Bank's David Trecka said, "We are showing kids what we do at the bank, how to cash checks, how to fill out those forms. How to fill out a deposit slip, how interest works, the value of opening a savings account, loan approval. I'm trying to get as much in as possible in the short amount of time I have."

Ryan Berg, who is employed by Greener World Solutions said, "We deal with insulations and specialty coatings, like for walls and pipes, which get liquid applied, and that includes commercial, residential and industrial."

A list of all businesses includes Connors Plumbing and Heating of



Ryan Berg and Jason Reger of Greener World Solutions attended the Career Day. Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

Waseca: James Brothers Construction; CAR Tire and Auto Center; First Main Street Insurance of United Prairie; United Prairie Bank; Keen Bank; Swanson Acupuncture; Smiles for Independent Living, which helps people of all ages, but focuses on people with disabilities; Mediacom; Minnwest Insurance; Dennis Steffel Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Services; Rhino Trident Manufacturing, located in the old Brown Printing building; Palmer Bus Service; Riverland Community College out of Albert Lea, Austin and

Owatonna; Alexandria Technical College; ICAN of Waseca; McDonald's; the Department of Justice Federal Bureau of Prisons; NOVA Academy of Cosmetology; Fernbrook Family Center; the U.S. Navy, National Guard, Army and Marines; Big Idea Inc., which deals in paint, welders, cranes and drones.

Rich Rogers of Big Idea said, "I've had maybe 60 students come through my trailer so far, I might've snagged a kid or two, a few of them seemed really receptive."

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