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■ Inside:

- 3 - Elysian turtle race
- 3 - Aspyñ Acres
- 4 - Justice Center
- 4 - Obituaries
- 5 - Baked on 15th
- 5 - Lyme disease
- 6-7 - County Fair
- 8 - Andrew Gonzalez
- 12 - Xcel Energy



ADVENTURE TIME - Jessie Niño captured this image of a brown bear in Alaska while filming for his YouTube channel, *Jessie's Drone Adventures*.

Beloved hobby leads to enviable employment

By **DEB BENTLY**
News Editor

"I never pictured myself doing this," admits Jessie Niño. "But I'm glad it worked out this way."

Even since before graduating from Waseca High School in 2009, Niño had begun a YouTube channel. "It was always just a way to have some fun," he recalls. He would carry around a handheld camera, film casual moments and make humorous, light-hearted observations, then post the videos online.

Back in those days, he would not have predicted he would someday become a "YouTube Partner" and be able to make a living with his hobby. "People ask me, 'So that's all you do?' and I get to say 'Yep. I travel around making videos and post them online.'"

Filming continued on 4



Jessie Niño, who graduated from Waseca High School in 2009, now makes his living by producing a YouTube Channel named "Jessie's Drone Adventures." He is shown here with a plaque YouTube provides to creators who reach 100,000 viewers, and with his drone and its remote control.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Waseca County Fair July 8 to 12
The Waseca County Fair is scheduled for July 8 to 12 at the County Fairgrounds in Waseca.

Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board Meeting July 9
The SWCD will be holding its monthly board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 9. The meetings will be held in the SWCD offices located at 300 North State Street - Door 4.

Tom Madigan Book Signing at Waseca Art Center July 11
Waseca grad Tom Madigan will be signing copies of his book at the Waseca Art Center from 1-3 p.m. on Saturday, July 11. His book, "I Survived: Living with the Trauma of a Dependent Parent." Refreshments and snacks provided.

Fred the Bear at Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm July 11
Fred the Bear will play the Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm from 4-8 p.m. on Saturday, July 11. They play the music of Bruce Springsteen.

Paul Stewart at Indian Island Winery July 12
Musician Paul Stewart will play the Indian Island Winery from 1-3:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 12. He plays rock, blues and country.

Real Life Church outdoor service at Clear Lake Park Sunday, July 12
Real Life Church is hosting an outdoor worship service at the Clear Lake Bandshell at 10 a.m. on Sunday, July 12. A free picnic lunch will be provided after the service, also a bounce house and other family activities. Bring a lawn chair, everyone is welcome.

A word from The Word
And on that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted.
Isaiah 12:4

2026 Waseca Lakefest Boat Parade



RED, WHITE AND FUN - The 2026 Lakefest Boat Parade at Clear Lake Park took place on Saturday, July 4. Left, first place for the Crazy Party Barge category was Color the Lake. Right, the Discover Waseca Tourism boat was a patriotic fest.



Boat Parade brings patriotism, creativity

By **BEN REVERMANN**
Staff writer

The 2026 Lakefest Boat Parade took place in front of Clear Lake Park on our nation's 250th birthday, this past July 4, 2026. The beach was full of cheering Fourth of July celebrants who came to watch the show and take a dip in the lake. Prizes were given in numerous categories: Taking first in the "Creative" competition was "Wake and Bake." For "Crazy Party Barge," it was "Color the Lake." In "Patriotic," first place was "Land of the Free." Taking second and third, respectively, were "Happy Birthday America" and "Red, White and Cousin Crew." Winners were invited to collect their prizes at the Boathouse after the parade.

In spite of rain both before and after, the

weather did allow the day to take place on schedule; the sun was out but occasionally disappeared behind a cloud or two. The parade route included two passes by the park, giving each spectator a chance in case they missed the first time around. Emcee for the day was Cory Harguth. There were three judges, the wife of the late Blair Nelson, Deanne. The President of the Waseca Lakes Association Trevor Kane-wischer, and the organizer of the lake parade, Tom Glaser.

The judges and the emcee were gathered out on the Clear Lake Park Pier. Leading the parade was the Blair Nelson Paddle Boat, with a wide variety of entries following behind. These included "Red, White and Blue," a speed boat with a bald eagle at the helm and mom at the wheel. "Color the Lake" was a pontoon

decorated to look like a Crayola box full of crayons, with plenty of assorted color children. "Harty's Party" was an America themed pontoon with Toby Keith playing while pretty women danced. "Land of the Free" featured George Washington, Lady Liberty and Uncle Sam.

Mixed in with the decorated units was an un-decorated and unregistered boat occupied by a family. As they putt-putted through, they called out, "We're not in the parade, but snuck through anyway." Harguth congratulated his ingenuity.

"Wake and Bake" brought an entire family dressed up as donuts, with a white board listing each family member as a pastry, and their prices. "Ship Show" had the tallest display for the American flag. "Happy Birthday America"

had patriotism in a box, wrapped up like gifts. Discover Waseca Tourism brought Waseca city council member Stacy Schroeder as Lady Liberty, accompanied by Discover Waseca president Mikhail Rostislavovich.

Glaser, parade organizer said, "I was surprised there weren't more patriotic entries, with the holiday and all. Overall, the whole group raised the bar this year, I was really impressed. A lot of work was done to those floats, you can tell." He also spoke of how he himself was in the Patriotic category four years ago, "And I was the only boat out there" and how much the parade has grown. He mentioned planning for next year may include some changes to the award structure, including giving out some "honorable mention" titles.

National competition is special in every way for Wasecan Lieser

By **DEB BENTLY**
News Editor

There were many things Jake Lieser knew he would be experiencing as he took part in the national-level Special Olympics competition held from June 20 to 26 in the Twin Cities.

He knew he would see old friends and make new ones. He knew the atmosphere would be one of friendly acceptance and mutual support. He knew he would have a chance to trade for state pins with participants from all over the country.

But he didn't know he would find himself on the winner's podium three times, coming home with a gold medal in the 400 meter walk and the shotput, and a silver in the 4x100 relay.

Asked about his time at the competition, he first describes the friendly atmosphere and the chance to interact

with so many people because of the pin exchange. "I would have liked to get all 50 states," he comments, "but I did pretty well—I got 30."

As Lieser knows from past competitions, the most sought-after pins tend to be those from Alaska and Hawaii; he is pleased to have gotten one of them, the island state.

As for his success in the competitions, he says he is glad he practiced and prepared.

Remembering the support given to Waseca area special athletes and receiving encouraging messages from back home were real motivating factors, he said, as was the in-person support given to him by his mother, Linda Becker of Faribault; his coach, Connie Hoehn; and his fiancée, Cheyenne McCarty.

Lieser continued on 5



Jake Lieser was on the winner's podium three times during the national Special Olympics competition in the Twin Cities in June. He is pictured here at a surprise reception held in his honor on June 30 by the Waseca Exchange Club, of which he is a member.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently



Compostings

by Al Batt

About to Timbuktu

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

Weasel thinks he's royalty. What gave him that idea? He ate at a Burger King, drank a Royal Crown Cola, went on a Princess Cruise, bought Duke's Mayonnaise, and ate at a Dairy Queen in just two weeks.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. Most people around me had those "Been there, done that" expressions, but others ran the gamut from boredom to panic. I heard uncontrolled sobbing as I made my way through the TSA line at the airport. I reckoned it was coming from the spirits of Orville and Wilbur Wright, the brothers credited with flying the first successful airplane. They were crying to see what their invention had given rise to. It could have been worse. They could have invented the leaf blower. Once I had cleared security, I was hiking around the Atlanta airport when a couple walking ahead of me had some travel papers drop from their satchel. I picked them up, caught up with them, and said, "I think you dropped these." They didn't thank me, but the man said, "You're not from Alabama, are you?" I had no idea what that meant—and I was OK with that.

A ROUNDABOUT TO TIMBUKTU

A friend told me she needed to see her doctor. The fly in the ointment was that the physician had moved his office. She discovered there were three roundabouts on the road to the new location. She took the wrong exit and ended up in Timbuktu. I told her that was a lucky break. Timbuktu is beautiful at this time of the year. I guessed. I've not been there. She was on time for her appointment because she'd left enough wiggle room, but she didn't enjoy being honked at by drivers who knew where they were going. Those other people were happy to have a reason to honk, toot or beep their horns. I can't remember the last time I honked my horn at another living being.

AT THE POLITE COFFEE SHOP

Everyone says, "Hot enough for you?" I said, "Do the uncomfortable temperatures meet your approval?"

I loitered while waiting for my wife to get a cup of coffee. A kind woman asked, "Are you in line?"

I replied, "I'm not, sorry."

I apologized for not being in line.

I'VE LEARNED

Store eggs with the pointed end down.

The combined auto insurance and fuel costs as a share of household income is highest in Louisiana, followed by Mississippi and Florida. Residents of New Hampshire pay the lowest, slightly lower than in Massa-

chusetts. Iowa is the 30th lowest, and Minnesota 38th.

<https://www.moneygeek.com/insurance/auto/gas-and-car-insurance-cost-burden-by-state/>

You have too many photos on your phone.

Jerry "The Beaver" Mathers, the star of "Leave It to Beaver," was born in Sioux City, Iowa.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

At a man's funeral, his widow asked if anyone would like to say a word.

It was a literal crowd, so the first guy stood up and said, "Plethora."

The widow said, "Thank you. That means a lot."

The next person said, "Earth."

The widow replied, "Thank you. That means the world to me."

The next fellow said, "Watering hole."

The widow responded, "Thank you. I know you meant well."

Another individual uttered, "Bargain."

The widow countered with, "Thank you. That means a great deal."

A man added, "Worcestershire."

The widow said, "Thank you. I know that was hard for you to say."

The final speaker said, "Defibrillator"

"Thanks. It's what he would have wanted," said the deceased's wife.

NATURE NOTES

The minimum temperature for honeybee flight is 54°. The optimum temperature for flight activity is 72-77°, but activity continues up to about 100° before declining. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension found that bumblebees fly in adverse weather conditions: temperatures lower than 55°, light rain, cloudy or foggy conditions, wind speeds higher than 15 mph, and poor light conditions.

Wild parsnip is an invasive plant that could cause painful skin burns when its sap comes into contact with skin exposed to sunlight. It's a member of the carrot family with yellow, flat-topped flower clusters. It thrives in open, disturbed areas like roadsides and pastures.

Opossums don't spend lengthy periods hanging by their tails or sleep while hanging by their tails. It's a common misconception perpetuated in cartoons. Their tails aren't strong enough to support their weight for more than a moment. Young opossums could hang in there, but not for long, because they don't have the muscle structure necessary to hold the position. Opossums can use their prehensile tails like a fifth limb to aid in climbing trees and other structures, or for carrying bedding materials.

MEETING ADJOURNED

"Never lose a chance of saying a kind word."—William Makepeace Thackeray.



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

Yearly accomplishment requires planning, good weather

I have just come back from my annual Fourth of July sojourn up north, where I get to ride on my husband's coattails while he takes charge of a fireworks show for Veronen's Resort located on Bad Medicine Lake about half an hour from Park Rapids. When guests there learn I am part of the fireworks crew, they thank me profusely for the exciting—and safe—presentations John has put on there for 17 years in a row.

I express my gratitude and answer the often repeated question: Yes, this show will have the fireballs everyone loves. But this is one setting where I am only a helper: in fact, I've taken to calling myself "clerical" because of the time I spend helping prepare for the show, my most important skills are being able to type smoothly and quickly and to create a computer spreadsheet that helps keep track of what features we have for the show and the order they will be used in.

I help with some of the wiring and other tasks, too, but others are much faster and more flexible than I am, so I tend to be left with some of the putzy jobs.

Because the location where the fireworks are fired from is not far enough away from where the land-based audience sits, this show cannot include the powerful "shells" that are four or more inches in diameter and fly hundreds of feet in the sky. Instead it uses "cakes" and other smaller items, many of which are sold to regular folks at fireworks stores in other states.

The cakes are not legal in Minnesota unless they are part of an authorized display, and to be authorized the show must have at least one licensed pyrotechnician on staff. They also cost much less apiece than the shells do, so what our show lacks in size, it makes up for in quantity, lasting 45 minutes or so and firing numerous products in a timed sequence that choreographs



FIREBALL - Deb helped her husband create an exciting and safe fireworks show at Bad Medicine Lake in northern Minnesota.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

with an energetic music sound track.

It requires planning, preparation, and hours and hours and hours of work. It's also heavily reliant on the weather. Fireworks are unlikely to work properly once they've gotten wet, but they're still a huge explosion risk, becoming a giant, messy liability. The "solution" is not to get them wet, which creates tremendous caution and attentiveness to what the weather will be doing in the hours leading up to shoot time.

Preliminary forecasts around Wednesday had everyone questioning whether a display on Saturday would work out, since rain was supposed to be moving through sporadically all day.

Fortunately, the weather changed

its mind and everything "went off" on schedule. Then, around midnight when everyone else was packing up their chairs and drinks and heading back to their campsite, the pyrotechnician crew had more than an hour's work to do pulling all the equipment back together, piling up the trash, and clearing the area. Like I said—hours and hours and hours of work.

If you would like to see a sample of the high-energy show, Deanna Sinclair, a camper at Veronen's Resort, kindly shared a video she made of the last 90 or so seconds of the show. She gave permission for us to post it on the Facebook pages for the Waseca County Pioneer and the NRHEG Star Eagle. Pop on over and have a look!

Enjoying Minnesota, Caribou Coffee

For those of you who don't know, I am a Caribou Coffee fanatic.

So when I heard that a Caribou was making its way to Waseca, I was ecstatic. And then absolutely devastated, realizing I am still in Denver.

When I arrived in Minnesota on the Friday before the 4th of July to stay for the week, I made it my mission to go to Waseca's Caribou at least once. I did pick up a Caribou crafted press on my way home, not from Waseca, but hopefully by the time you read this I can say I was successful in my endeavors.

As an update to last week's fire I mentioned: it grew. And grew. And grew. As I write this, the number of acres covered by fire is 26,405 with zero percent contained. It's been a week. But with the high winds, no



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

humidity, and definitely no rain, there's been a struggle to get any of the fires roaring across southern and western Colorado contained. The death of three firefighters made national headlines and I am thankful for those working endlessly to try to help.

In lighter news, being back in Minnesota has been nice. Being here for two weekends allows me to ap-

preciate my time and not just be in and out and worry that I didn't do enough, didn't appreciate things enough. I get to see family, catch up with friends...but once again miss the county fair.

While my family and I traveled up north together for the Fourth, I was reminded about other things I love that are not part of my Denver life: the sound of loons, dragonflies, fish-

ing on the boat, playing cards. I may be a strong, independent woman living states away from my family, but that doesn't mean I don't love every second I spend with them. Just now, I cherish it even more.

By the time you read this, I will have been enjoying the pleasures of home for the week. Well, the pleasures of my parents' home, as I now have gotten used to saying. Not my house, but my parents' house; not my yard, their yard; not my dogs, but my parents' dogs (always my dogs in my heart).

My Determination: "When the snows fall and the white winds blow, the lone wolf dies but the pack survives." — George R.R. Martin, A Game of Thrones

Nightly cribbage bouts continue



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

that. He taught me to play when I was only 10 years old. His dad taught him to play even younger than that.

In total, my dad tallied 62 "skunks" to my 39. A skunk, in cribbage, occurs when a player wins by more than 30 points, the equivalent to a "street."

Cribbage is played to 121 points and is scored on a board; players advance pegs along a line of holes to show their progress. The first one to the final hole is the winner. Each "street" is 30 points. It's a quick, easy way to measure the number of points scored throughout the game, and happens to be divided into "streets" in the same way football has quarters and baseball has innings.

At the office, where we have kept track this year, I am up 14 wins. Dad has registered eight skunks to my two.

Notably a skunk is worth two wins. Between the two score sheets, subtracting the extra tally win from a skunk, Dad and I estimate he's only up about 45 wins over the past decade of games played.

Notably, over that time, I am the only one of us to register a "double skunk." I beat my dad, one time, by more than 60 points. In my lifetime of cribbage games, which total thousands of games, I have only ever seen two double skunks. I was the winner on both occasions. The other came against a family friend,

'Buddy,' aka Waseca native Terry Bortle.

During that same day of losing, Buddy said a famous quote that lives in infamy in our household.

Leading 120 to 114, Buddy exhaled and said, "Boy I needed that one."

I proceeded to peg two points on each of his first three cards played, and one for a 'go' to score the game-winning 121st point, before he could count his hand. The player who is not dealing counts their points first. To peg seven points without Buddy getting any is incredibly unlikely and rare. Buddy was not having a good day, that day. At that time we used to "cut" before every game to see who deals. In that stretch, Buddy lost 17 games and 17 cuts in a row.

From that day forward, Buddy and I played a lot more ping pong.

I intended to write about my 4th of July. This year I spent the first half playing in a card tournament at my store. It ended in a 4-way tie for first, with me in the tie. After that, I spent the evening with my best friend, Jake. We watched four boxing matches while I worked on the newspaper. During the final fight of the night, the official called the match in the twelfth and final round. Jake and the announcers were upset. One of the TV commentators said it was the worst call he had ever seen.

Jake and the announcers were

wrong. The fighter who was knocked down for a second time, both during the first 30 seconds of the final round, was exhausted and done. I think the official saved this man from potentially serious harm.

The two fighters were both friends and Ohio natives (the fight was in Cleveland) and had sparred together for years. The 33-year-old, the loser in the fight, had never fought a 12-round fight before. After round seven, the younger fighter, 22 years old, took control and dominated. I don't think it was necessary for him to risk hurting his friend when the fight, from my perspective, was already done.

Yes, the part of me that wants to see a good ending, the animalistic human side of me, would have probably enjoyed seeing the fight end without intervention. But the human, compassionate and logical side of me commends the official for stepping in. And like the New Richland baseball team which lost 3-2 in the Conference Championship game, the losing boxer will live the rest of his life knowing he was good enough to win a championship. (He had clearly won the first six rounds of the fight. However, he lost the final six frames, and the match and the title.)

Maybe this is a good comparison to the cribbage matches between my dad and me: He is the older veteran who can no longer keep up with the young buck.

"I refuse to let adversity and past failures define who I am." - Mike Tyson

"I consider myself blessed. I consider you blessed. We've all been blessed with God-given talents. Mine just happens to be beating people up." — Sugar Ray Leonard

WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

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OBITUARIES

Dayna Besser

Dayna M. (Stenzel) Besser, age 55 of Owatonna, MN passed away peacefully Monday, June 29, 2026 at Prairie Senior Cottages in Owatonna surrounded by her family. A visitation will be held on Friday, July 3, 2026 from 3:00pm-7:00pm at Nasinec Funeral Home in Wells, MN. Please see nasinecfh.com to leave online condolences.

Dayna Marie was born July 13, 1970 to Maynard and Syvilla (Mills) Stenzel in Wells, MN. She graduated from Alden High School in 1988 before perusing her passion for art and design at Brown College; where she earned her degree in graphic design in 1993.

On December 21, 1996, she married Christopher (Chris) Besser. Together they welcomed two daughters; Mikayla born February of 1998 and Morgan born November of 2002. Family was the center of Dayna's world. She rarely missed a horse show, cheerleading event, band concert or basketball game for her daughters. She was their biggest supporter and took immense pride in every accomplishment, no matter how big or small.

Dayna had a remarkable gift for making people feel welcome. She never met a stranger and could strike up a conversation with anyone she met. She cherished lifelong friendships. She found joy in life's simple pleasures in crafting, thrifting, listening to rock music, traveling to multiple states and spending time with the people she loved the most. Whether surrounded by family or friends,



Dayna Besser

Dayna's life was filled with laughter, love and countless memories which will continue to bring comfort to those who knew her.

She is preceded in death by her parents; her former husband Chris Besser; her great-nephew, Jeremiah Meza; father-in-law Kenneth Besser; uncles Roger Mills, Tommy Mills and Vern Olson.

Dayna is survived by her daughters: Mikayla Besser of New Richland and Morgan (Devin) Stankiewicz of Janesville; siblings: Dawn (Gary) Strohmman of Mankinen, MN, Jarrod (Kelly) Stenzel of Rosemount, MN, Donna (Darryl) Chamberlin of Sarasota, FL and Jason (Stacy) Stenzel of Waseca, MN; two aunts: Janice Olson of New Richland, MN and Kay (Tom) Sherratt of Le Sueur, MN; uncle: Howard (Pat) Stenzel of Blaine, MN; and many nieces, nephews and their families.

Briggs retires after more than 17 years leading Steele-Waseca Electric

By Karen M. Jorgensen
Steele County Times

When Syd Briggs retired on June 30, he will have spent 17-1/2 years as the general manager of Steele Waseca Cooperative Electric (SWCE) in Owatonna. The company is a member-owned electric utility cooperative serving the surrounding area and providing electricity and energy management programs to its members.

It provides electric service to rural areas in Steele, Waseca and Rice counties as well as portions of several others.

Briggs said he is originally from Texas, growing up in Del Rio. His retirement from Steele-Waseca, he said, is almost 35 years to the day from July 1, 1991, when he started work at the Rio Grande Electric Cooperative in Brackettville, Texas. Besides Texas, Briggs said he also worked at Southwest Arkansas Electric.

His path to Owatonna from Texas and Arkansas was really quite simple, he said. "My daughter married a guy from Minnesota," he said, and then his son had a job opportunity in the state. And since he had grandchildren in the state it just made sense.

He said he has grown to love Minnesota and plans to stay in Owatonna after he retires. He loves having four seasons, he said, and can put up with the cold because the "summers are amazing."

In his last column as general manager in the company newsletter for customers, he even admitted that he had the opportunity to try lutefisk for the first time after he arrived here and "believe it or not, I became a fan. It needed a lot of butter, salt and pepper, but I began to look forward to lutefisk suppers at the end of each year."

He has seen numerous changes over the years, he said, as the need for electricity has increased.

Steele-Waseca, he said, gets its electricity from Great River Energy. When he came to Owatonna, he said, almost 90% of that electricity was

generated from coal and gas. Today, he said, the numbers have changed from 90% coal and gas to 50% renewables. Great River, he said, has sold its coal plant and he said he expects they will be 100% carbon free by the mid-2030s. "That's a big change," he said.

Coal can be more reliable, he said, but it is good to be moving away from it and reducing the carbon emissions.

Whether the electricity is sourced from coal or renewables, the electricity produced all goes to the electric grid and is directed to where it is needed.

Briggs said he sees a future where most of the members will be buying electric vehicles. Already everyone is using more electricity than in the past and data centers will play a big role in future demand.

Great River and its partners such as Steele-Waseca have plans dealing with an increase in data centers.

If a data center uses more energy than Great River can supply, he said, they will make the decision that the center has to have their own service to generate electricity.

"We have provisions so no one can make our bills (to customers) go up," he said.

Data centers are needed, he added, even by the electric company. Steele-Waseca has equipment where meters call in when an area is out of power, for example.

Weather predictions come from data centers and use AI, he said.

AI and data centers are now just a part of life.

Great River, he said, is pro-active and has already been making plans to meet the new demands for electricity.

Steele-Waseca has been considering a consolidation with neighboring Goodhue County Cooperative Electric Association. With Briggs' retirement, SWCE began sharing Goodhue General Manager Kelly Hovel starting July 1. Hovel has 18 years of experience at Goodhue and has already been taking part in meetings and activities at Steele-Waseca.



INTEGRATED ACCESS - Waseca County commissioners (from left) Brad Milbrath, Brian Harguth, Brad Krause, De Malterer, and Doug Christopherson greeted visitors and answered questions about the planned new county justice center during two open house sessions on Tuesday, June 30. Also greeting visitors was Minnesota House District 19B Representative Tom Sexton, who has helped support the project in numerous ways.

Open house offers an open book on new justice center

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Traffic was light for the two open house sessions at the Waseca County Courthouse Annex on June 30 when county commissioners, the county sheriff, facilities director Brian Tomford and county administrator Michael Johnson stood ready to supply information and answer questions about the \$28 million structure due to be constructed at the west side of the historic 1897 county courthouse. Architectural renditions and floor plans showed what the building will look like inside and out.

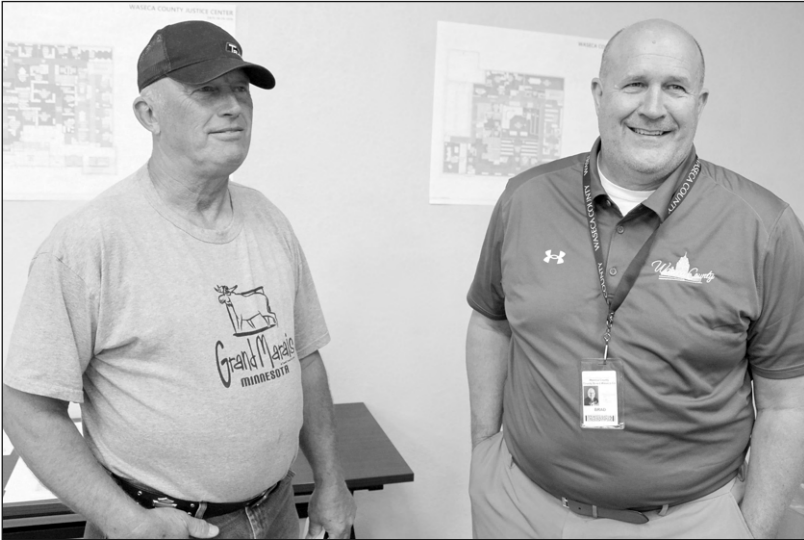
Handouts summarized various aspects of the project, including that the need for an expansion was first discussed in 2003; since then, one document summarized, workspaces in the courthouse and annex, which is across the street, have been filled

and used beyond their intended capacity, with some offices located in spaces not originally intended to be occupied.

Another difficulty is that departments whose work is closely interrelated—for example the county attorney and court services—are located where there was room, rather than where they can most efficiently coordinate their work.

The new structure will provide integrated access to technology, an aspect of communication, safety, and records retrieval which has become more and more central over recent decades; it will provide a secure entry where people's bags are scanned, and will comply with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

At this time, specifications for the various aspects of construction have



County commissioner Brad Milbrath shared information about the planned Justice Center construction with open house guest Brad Schnepf during one of two informational sessions held at the Courthouse Annex on Tuesday, June 30.

Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

been shared with contractors; the county is expecting to receive bids about midway through July. Expected construction costs are about \$28,600,000, with an anticipated \$4 million in soft costs and contingency funding.

According to materials shared at the open house, the county has been

setting aside funds for a project like this one since 2021, and has \$7 million available. Also supporting the project are \$3 million from a congressionally directed spending award. This means the county will need to bond for about \$23 million for the project.

■ Aspyn

from Page 3

says. "The fawn stays where the mother leaves it until she comes back. It stays almost perfectly still so that it doesn't alert predators to its position."

Though well intentioned, Haslip points out, people who pick up fawns

thinking they are lost or abandoned are probably essentially "kidnaping" them.

She advises that anyone who believes they have come across a young deer in need of help should begin by keeping an eye on it from a distance and calling someone like her for input. If an animal does need to be collected, it should be done through proper channels.

When a fawn is in distress, Haslip has the facilities and knows what to do to rehabilitate it, raise it until it

can live independently, and then release it. One obvious message the deer is ready to be set free, she says, is when it jumps the fence around her enclosure and simply leaves.

She says she has found fawns thrive on goat milk, so she keeps a frozen supply on hand. She has a cupboard full of medications which can help with various conditions.

"A lot of people ask whether I get attached to the animals," Haslip says of her work. "Well, yes I do. But I also need to channel that attachment

into doing what's best for the animal—which means limiting how much I interact."

Aspyn Acres is the southernmost animal rehabilitation facility in Minnesota, so it tends to be the point of first contact for distressed animals all across the southern third of the state. Haslip encourages people who find an animal in distress to contact her for information and input. Aspyn Acres' phone number is 507-461-2108.

■ Filming

from Page 1

He goes on to explain his channel, "Jessie's Drone Adventures," is a one-person operation: "I'm my only employee, and I'm my own cameraman, editor, researcher, and technician."

Currently visiting family in Waseca, Niño is staying a couple of months looking for likely subjects in southern Minnesota.

His current residence is in Arizona, so the majority of his videos feature the desert and mountain areas of that state. He says he searches out surprising and unfamiliar locations, and is able to use his drone to film things not visible from roads or paths. This includes wildlife; in Arizona he has caught footage of deer, coyotes, gila monsters, javelina (also known as "cactus pigs") and rattlesnakes.

He has also traveled to Alaska, where he visited forgotten locations and managed to catch video of black and brown bears, and—to his tremendous pleasure—humpback whales and a pod of orca.

While his videos include occasional tense moments, Niño says he bases his choices as he films on what

is morally right, what is safe for him and his equipment, and feedback from viewers about what they want to see more of.

"Feedback is a blessing," he comments. "Without it, I feel like I'm working in a vacuum."

Niño's path to becoming a professional YouTuber was far from direct.

After graduating high school, he got a "regular" job at Brown Printing, where he filled various roles until leaving in 2016. Next, he got a job at the Verizon Wireless call center located, at the time, in Mankato.

The work paid the bills and provided money to support his continuing YouTube hobby, but "I always found myself thinking there must be something more."

In 2018, the Mankato call center closed and offered employees the chance to relocate to any of a few other locations around the country. Niño says he chose Arizona because he had been on vacations in the Las Vegas area and richly enjoyed hiking, riding his bike, and exploring in the desert, providing even more opportunities for filming.

At his own expense and strictly for the fun of it, he continued making and posting videos. He says the shutdown in 2020 gave him the motivation to increase his activity, since it allowed him extra time outdoors

"I always found myself thinking there must be something more."

— Jessie Niño

and people were spending more time online. It was something of a surprise to him when he received an email from YouTube in 2022 informing him he had reached the threshold to become a partner: 1,000 subscribers and 4,000 watched hours. This meant YouTube would begin inserting advertisements into his videos and he would be paid for it.

"By 2023, I was bringing in some fairly respectable part-time income," he describes. In 2024, he realized he could step away from the call center job and support himself with the work he enjoyed.

As for what draws people to his channel, Niño says he has no "special sauce," or, if he has it, he can't define what it is.

He believes his sincerity, the personal energy and sense of fun he puts into his work, and his moral approach to filming are part of his success.

"I don't interrupt when people or animals are out doing something," he says. "I make my choices on the basis of being a decent human being."

When he visits an area to make a video, he does some research ahead

of time, he says, but doesn't want to know "everything" in advance. "You want to be genuine," he observes. "People like it when you're honest with them."

He films his walks with a handheld camera about the same size as a small television remote, a traditional Nikon camera, and, of course, his drone.

He sends the drone out above difficult to reach areas and sometimes finds significant surprises, including old car wrecks still lying among the trees; buildings and structures blocked from sight; and picturesque waterfalls or streams.

"I've crashed multiple drones," he admits, telling the story of one which fell in a remote, difficult to access location. Two days of rain kept him from hiking in to find it until it was rendered completely unusable.

Niño says he is the only person he knows who makes his living as a YouTuber, but he points out he had no plan or system that got him where he is. The best advice for someone who might want to make it a goal, he says, is "Stop talking and start filming."

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KNOW THE SIGNS - Sometimes, a rash that looks like a bullseye appears around the tick bite in the case of Lyme disease. Other symptoms could include a fever, headache and feeling very tired.

Stay safe outdoors

Protect yourself from Lyme Disease and tick bites

This summer, more people are heading out to parks, trails, and lakes. Many may return home with unwanted hitchhikers like ticks. Lyme disease and other tick illnesses are on the rise.

Warmer weather means more outdoor activities, which gives these tiny bugs more chances to bite people and pets.

Ticks love to hang out in tall grass and wooded areas. They can carry bacteria that cause Lyme disease, a serious illness that can harm your joints, heart, and nervous system. While ticks are most active during warm months, they can come out anytime the temperature is above freezing.

Lyme disease often starts with a fever, headache and feeling very tired. Sometimes, a rash that looks like a bullseye appears around the bite. If caught early, it can be treated easily. If left untreated,

it can lead to bigger health problems later. Fortunately, you can prevent Lyme disease with a few easy steps.

Quick Tips to Prevent Tick Bites: Wear long sleeves and pants in grassy or wooded areas; use a repellent that contains DEET or permethrin; stick to marked paths and stay away from tall brush; use tweezers to pull the tick straight out.

"Time outdoors is great for our health, but so is staying safe," said Josh Ramaker, Community Health Supervisor. "Taking just a few simple steps can lower your risk of tick bites and Lyme disease."

If you find a tick on your skin, remove it right away. If you start to feel sick or notice a strange rash, call your doctor. For more information, visit [CDC.Gov/Lyme](https://www.cdc.gov/lyme) or contact Josh Ramaker at 507-560-0102 or josh.ramaker@le-sueurcounty.gov.

“We’re gonna have church”

The public is cordially invited to an outdoor worship service sponsored by Waseca’s Faith United Methodist Church at the Waseca County Fairgrounds free stage at 10 a.m. on Sunday, July 12. Organizers say there will be singing...lots of singing. Leading the music will be Michael and Tammi Ferch as they bring their musical talents and share their Christian faith. Mike is a Waseca native. Tammi hails from Madelia. Since their col-

lege days at Minnesota State University Mankato and through their decades of employment in Owatonna (he at Wenger, she at Federated Insurance) music has filled not only their lives, but also those of their children and grandchildren.

Faith United Methodist Church of Waseca cordially invites the public to join in worship and song. Come one, come all, and prepare to be blessed.



Happy 70th anniversary

Bill and Dorothy Hintz will celebrate 70 years of marriage on July 15. They were wed in Yankton, South Dakota in 1956, and have spent their en-

tire married lives as Wasecans. Bill was a real estate dealer for some time, and also served as a member of the Waseca County Board of Commissioners.

Baked on 15th makes its debut at Waseca Farmers’ Market

By **BEN REVERMANN**
Staff writer

Mackenzie Johnson, the proprietor of “Baked on 15th” set up a booth at the Waseca Farmers’ Market for the first time the morning of July 4. Johnson, 28, sells sourdough and baked treats from a stand located along 15th Street NE in Owatonna. “We stock it three Fridays a month at 2 p.m.,” she elaborated. “It’s across from the Owatonna middle school, and I do pretty good from there. I also sell cookies, scones, bagels and cinnamon rolls. Currently my monster cookies are the only thing I make that do not have any sourdough in them. Everything else is sourdough related.

“My menu doesn’t have a lot of items on it. The things I do have I’m sticking with for now.” Johnson mentioned she typically posts her products for the stand on Facebook so buyers can have an idea before they arrive. She also fills special orders; interested



BAKED GOODS - To celebrate America's 250th birthday, Mackenzie Johnson of Owatonna, her four daughters and mother, and her sourdough stand, “Baked on 15th” attended the Waseca Farmers Market on Saturday, July 4, 2026.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann

buyers can send their requests via Facebook Messenger.<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61587112271428>. She said her plans as summer progresses are to continue at the Waseca Farmers Market and keep her

stand stocked; once that’s working well, she might expand to the Medford market. . for now, but said, “I have been eyeing the Medford Farmers Market, but I’ll see how that goes later on this summer.”

Bob Childs Turtle Races in Elysian



PATRIOTIC PAINTED TURTLES - 12 racing lanes featured rounds of turtles and their owners hoping for a fast turtle win at the Bob Childs Elysian Turtle Races on Saturday, July 4.

Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

■ Lieser

from Page 1

Lieser says he will never forget the surges of excitement and pleasure first as he qualified for finals, and then as he came in first.

As the event came to a close on June 26, he returned to life as usual,

working at Waseca’s Kwik Trip South. During his shifts, he received congratulations and good wishes from his co-workers and from store customers.

And one more pleasant surprise awaited him; About 30 members of the Waseca Exchange Club, of which Lieser is a member, greeted him at a surprise reception the evening of June 31 at Mikhail Rostislavovich’s home. Lured there under fabricated

circumstances, he was temporarily speechless as the small crowd greeted him.

Waseca Mayor Randy Zimmerman and County Board of Commissioners Chair De Malterer, read the text of a proclamation honoring the accomplishments of all local athletes; the proclamation is scheduled to be signed at the next meetings of the city council and the county board. Rostislavovich read a district

level Exchange Club proclamation; the district spans the whole state of Minnesota and parts of neighboring states.

Food and beverages for the reception were provided by Kwik Trip South and by Pizza Ranch of Waseca.

“I couldn’t believe it,” says Lieser of the moment when the group shouted “surprise.” “That was really special.”

Happy 70th Anniversary Mom and Dad!

With love:
Cherie, Ron, Mike,
Beth, Kim & John

Story Idea?

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ETHANOL



2026 Waseca County Free Fair Events Schedule
Saturday, June 27

Sunday, June 28

Sunday, July

-* ote: All te tiles are due in
by Sunday at pm

onday, July

uesday, July 7

Wednesday, July 8

pm

S nduro Auto ompact ar Race
(Grandstand)

8:30 pm

Gen Juke o (Beer Garden)
Friday, July 10

lace to be determined

7 pm

id est R nduro Auto Race
(Grandstand)

8:30 pm

lay (Beer Garden)
ursday, July
K DS DA !

pm

Demolition Der y (Grandstand)
Skit o Fonic (Beer Garden)
Saturday, July 11

8:30 pm

12- pm

Kids Day Acti ities on ak sland



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2026 Waseca County Free Fair Events Schedule cont.
Saturday, July 11 (cont.)

7:00 pm	Great Frontier Bull Riding “Dirt Kickin’ Wicked Good!”-Grandstand
8:30 pm	SHAG (Beer Garden)
	Sunday, July 12

***Schedule Subject to Change**

**A complete schedule of 4-H Livestock Shows and Events can be found at <https://z.umn.edu/2026CountyFairSchedule> or scan the QR code.*



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Happy Hour 6:30 till 7:30pm
2-4-1 Captain Morgan Drinks
& 2-4-1 16 oz Modelos

Thur. July 9
★

Jam out to your favorite 90's music with the Gen X Jukebox
8:30pm - 12:30am
Happy Hour 6:30 till 7:30pm 2-4-1 LALO Tequila Drinks
& 2-4-1 16 oz Busch Lights

Fri. July 10
★

It's FRIDAY!! Come party with the Skitzo Fonik Band
8:30pm - 12:30am
Happy Hour 6:30 till 7:30pm
2-4-1 Windsor Drinks & 2-4-1 16 oz Coors Lights

Sat. July 11
★

Come get crazy with the SHAG Band
8:30pm-12:30am
Happy Hour 6:30 till 7:30pm 2-4-1 Titos Vodka drinks
& 2-4-1 16 oz Miller Lites

Sun. July 12
★

Cornhole Tournament:
Registration 11:30am - Start Time 12:30pm
Help us "Use it all up!" -- 3pm till Beer Garden closes at 6 pm
2-4-1 special on all OPEN products.

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The Pastor's Column

The courage to rest

By PASTOR MIKE COGLAN

During the wonderful holiday last weekend, I was laid up with pain from spinal stenosis.

It's a recurring issue that can lie dormant for months or years. But when it hits, I need to rest

- usually on top of several bags of ice. Resting is not my normal habit. But it should be.

If we are going to tell a good story with our lives, we must learn to rest well. God designed human beings with limits. We need daily sleep and regular rhythms of rest. Ignoring those limits isn't strength—it's resistance to the way we were made.

Our culture often celebrates exhaustion. We hear sayings like, "Sleep is for the weak," or "I'll sleep when I'm dead." Entire industries exist to help us stay awake. Yet our constant busyness comes with a cost. We often treat rest as laziness instead of seeing it as part of faithful living.

The Bible presents a very different vision. In Scripture, rest is woven into creation itself.

The Hebrew day began at sundown—not with work, but with stopping. The rhythm of life began with rest and then moved into labor. Even more striking, God built Sabbath into the weekly pattern of life.

Jesus Himself embraced rest. One of the most memorable scenes in the Gospels takes place during a storm at sea. The disciples were terrified as waves crashed over the boat, but Jesus was asleep. While they panicked, He rested. When awakened, He calmed the storm and asked, "Why are you so afraid?"

The lesson isn't simply that Jesus had power over nature. His example reminds us that trust and rest are connected. Strong faith is not frantic. Sometimes the most faithful response is to be still. Charles Spurgeon once said, "God gave us sleep to remind us we are not Him."

Every time our energy fades, we remember something important: we are creatures, not creators. Rest is part of our design. That design matters because fatigue changes us. Tired people make poor decisions. Exhaustion weakens courage, clouds judgment, and creates anxiety. We are not meant to run endlessly.

God knew this, which is why rest became one of the Ten Commandments. "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." God gave humanity a maintenance schedule: six days of work and one day of rest. Sabbath exists for at least three purposes: to strengthen the body, restore the soul, and renew the mind.

First, rest strengthens the body. Even modern research confirms what Scripture taught long ago: people cannot function indefinitely without recovery. Productivity declines, mistakes increase, and health suffers when people push beyond healthy limits.

Yet many people continue to live at an unsustainable pace. Part of this comes from unrealistic expectations. We want more, faster. We take on debt, increase obligations, and work longer to maintain lifestyles that leave little margin. Families become stretched thin.

Relationships suffer. Souls become exhausted. One sign that life is out of balance is the inability to stop.

God rested after creation—not because He was tired, but because He was setting an example. If God, who governs the universe, paused to enjoy what He had made, then surely we can step away from our work.

Rest cannot simply be postponed until exhaustion forces us to stop. You cannot continually drain yourself and expect occasional vacations to repair everything. Our bodies need regular rhythms of restoration.

Second, rest restores the soul. Psalm 127 says: "In vain you rise early and stay up late... for He grants sleep to those He loves." Sleep itself becomes an act of trust. When we refuse to rest because we feel responsible for solving everything, we act as if the world depends entirely on us. Rest reminds us that God continues working even while we sleep.

But restoring the soul involves more than sleep. It also includes worship. Weekly gathering with a church family is not merely a religious obligation—it is part of God's design for renewal. Christianity was never intended to be solitary. Through Christ, God's presence now lives within His people. When believers gather, we bring encouragement, truth, prayer, and worship into one another's lives. Church becomes a spiritual oasis where tired hearts are refreshed and people remember what is ultimately true: God is still in control.

Finally, rest renews the mind. Rest is not just the absence of work—it includes enjoyment.

Many people feel guilty when they stop being productive. But that guilt often reveals unhealthy thinking. Some of us secretly believe our worth comes from our output. Work can become an idol.

Jesus said, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." Rest includes recreation, delight, creativity, and leisure. It means doing things that restore joy and remind us that life is more than accomplishment.

Paint. Walk. Golf. Read. Build puzzles. Sit quietly. Laugh with friends. Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still and know that I am God." One ancient translation rendered it this way: "Have leisure, and know that I am God."

The purpose of Sabbath is not guilt—it is grace. Jesus corrected people who had turned Sabbath into a burden. He reminded them: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." God did not create people to serve a day; He gave people a day as a gift.

Whether your sabbath is on Sunday or another day, the principle remains: build intentional time for worship, restoration, and delight into your life.

So here is the challenge: What needs to change so that you can rest well?

Do you need better sleep habits?

Do you need firmer limits on work?

Do you need a weekly Sabbath?

God's invitation is simple: Come away. Be still. Get some rest.



NEWLY WELCOMED - The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism and the Chamber Ambassadors welcomed Andrew Gonzalez, middle, a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones, as one of the Chamber's newest members.

Chamber welcomes Andrew Gonzales

WASECA, Minn. — The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, along with the Chamber Ambassadors, are pleased to welcome Andrew Gonzales, Financial Advisor with Edward Jones, as one of the Chamber's newest members.

Located at 112 North State Street in Waseca, Andrew Gonzales works with individuals, families and business owners to help them identify their financial goals and develop personalized strategies for working toward them. His areas of focus include retirement savings strategies, estate and legacy strategies, college savings, business retirement plans, wealth strategies and assisting new investors.

Andrew believes that understanding each client's goals, priorities and comfort with risk is an important part of developing an effective long-term financial strategy. Whether clients are preparing for retirement, saving for a child or grandchild's education, building wealth or protecting their family's financial future, he is committed to providing personal guidance and monitoring their progress over time.

"We are excited to welcome Andrew to the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism," said Robin Dulas, Executive Director of the Chamber. "Andrew's commitment to taking the time to understand his clients and helping them work toward

their financial goals is a wonderful addition to our local business community. We look forward to supporting him as he grows his practice and becomes even more involved in the Waseca area."

Jodie Thompson, President of the Waseca Area Chamber Board of Directors, added, "Businesses like Andrew's provide valuable resources and expertise to individuals, families and employers throughout our community. We are pleased to have him join the Chamber and appreciate his investment in Waseca and the people who live and work here."

The Chamber Ambassadors recently visited Gonzales to officially

welcome him to the organization and learn more about the services he provides.

"The Chamber Ambassadors are proud to welcome Andrew to the Chamber," said Katie Gonzales, Chamber Ambassador Chair. "Andrew is approachable, dedicated and genuinely interested in helping others plan for their futures. We are excited to introduce him to our Chamber members and help him build connections throughout the community."

To learn more or schedule an appointment with Andrew Gonzales, contact his Edward Jones office at 507-571-2267.

ZED by Duane M. Abel



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Farmamerica to host Band for the Barn fundraiser

(Waseca, Minnesota) – Farmamerica invites the community to enjoy an evening of live music, food, and fun while helping preserve one of Farmamerica's historic landmarks during Band for the Barn on Saturday, July 25th.

The event will take place on Farmamerica's grounds and will feature live music by Gold Star Band, food and beverages from local vendors, and opportunities to gather with family and friends in support of a meaningful cause.

Band for the Barn is more than a summer concert; it's a fundraiser benefiting the preservation of Farmamerica's iconic Red Barn. As one of the sites' most recognizable historic structures, the barn has welcomed generations of visitors and serves as a

centerpiece for Farmamerica's mission of connecting people to the evolving story of agriculture.

Doors open at 5:00 PM, with live music beginning at 6:00 PM. Presale tickets are encouraged and can be purchased online at farmamerica.org/events, at the Farmamerica Visitor Center, or at Waseca Music Company. Tickets will also be

available at the door on the day of the event.

Community members who are unable to attend but would still like to support the Red Barn campaign are encouraged to donate through the GoFundMe campaign page, gofundme.com/t/farmamericas-red-barn.

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Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship

ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Pastor Ava Adams-Morris
Waldorf, Minnesota
Sunday — 9 a.m. Worship

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
300 Owen St., Janesville
Pastor Sarah Krolak

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
503 2nd Ave NE, Waseca
507-835-4548 (office email: 1cwaseca@hickorytech.net)
Worship Sunday 10 a.m.

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

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC
Waldorf, Minnesota
Father Brian Mulligan
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH
Alma City, Minnesota
Pastor Robert Harting
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
300 E Elm Ave, Waseca
507-835-1709
Worship Sunday 9 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN
Wilton Township
Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor
Services 6 p.m. Saturday

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Brad Donner, Branch President
Waseca, Minnesota
www.lds.org
Sunday — 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School
Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Smiths Mill, Minnesota
Pastor Robert Harting
Thursday - 7:00 p.m. Worship
Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH
111 4th St NW, Waseca
Father Glenn Ferichs
507-835-1222
Worship Sundays 10:00 a.m., Tues. and Wed. at 8:30 a.m. and Thurs. at 7 a.m.; Saturdays at 5 p.m.

LESUEUR RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Pastor Dan Kordahl
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 9:30 a.m. Sunday School
Tuesday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting

ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL CHURCH
Alma City, Minnesota
Pastor Robert Harting
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship

NORTH WASECA LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA
404 30 120th St. Waseca
Pastor Sarah Krolak
507-234-6463
Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship, Second Sunday "Young at heart"
Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. confirmation

REAL LIFE CHURCH
620 W Elm Ave, Waseca

VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Brad Donner, Branch President
Waseca, Minnesota
www.lds.org
Sunday — 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School
Wednesday — 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages

ST. ANN CATHOLIC CHURCH
307 W. 2nd St. Janesville
10 a.m. - Mass

Get your news in the Pioneer:

- e-mail news@wasecacountypioneer.com
- mail P.O. Box 578, Waseca, MN, 56093
- Office at 111 West Elm Ave, Waseca

Janesville

25 years ago



- 25 Years Ago: Yentsch, Morehead and Schnepf vie for Miss Janesville:

Jena Yentsch is the daughter of Douglas and Marilyn Yentsch. She is 17 years old and recently completed her junior year at JWP High School. She will be performing a skit entitled “The Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day” as her talent presentation. Jena wants to become Miss Janesville because she would greatly enjoy the experience. It would give her more of an opportunity to set an example and be a role model for the young children in our community. She would also be very honored to represent our wonderful community. Jena will be sponsored by the Janesville State Bank.

Courtney Morehead is the daughter of Ronda Morehead. She is 17 years old and recently completed her junior year at JWP High School. She will be singing “I’m Still Holding Out For You” as her talent presentation. Courtney wants to become Miss Janesville to be a good representative for the town. I see Miss Janesville as a role model for all kids. It says it does not matter how you look, it’s all about personality. Courtney will be sponsored by Dusk to Dawn.

Heather Schnepf is the daughter of Brad and Vickie Schnepf. She is 17 years old and recently completed her junior year at JWP High School. She will be playing a flute solo “The Wind Beneath My Wings” as her talent presentation at the coronation pageant. Heather wants to become Miss Janesville because she feels it would be a great honor and fund experience to enjoy. She thinks that it is such an honor to be a role model to the young children fo the community and would take on the honor with much enthusiasm and enjoyment. Heather will be sponsored by Prail Bus Service.

50 years ago

- Janesville will mark 100 years of colorful history when it stages an all out Centennial celebration Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, June 24,25,26. Highlighting the three-day event will be the big Centennial parade Sunday afternoon at 1:30 p.m. Another spectacular event will be a huge fireworks display at 8:30 Thursday evening at Lake Elysian one mile north of Janesville. Royal United Shows big carnival will be on the mid-way all three days. Plenty of free, supervised parking space will be provided.

- Mr. and Mrs. Richard Carda announce the engagement to their daughter, Jean Marie, the Richard Dumdei, son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Dumdei, all of Janesville. Jean is presently employed at Waseca Mutual Insurance Company of Waseca and Richard is presently employed with Pluym-Grams Contractors. A fall wedding is being planned.

- Colleen Jewison, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Jewison, has been awarded a \$500 Edward B. Osborn Trust scholarship through the American Dietetic Association. Miss Jewison, a dietetic major at Mankato State University, is one of nine recipients of this award in the United States. These scholarships are given annually to outstanding students entertaining their senior year preparing for a career in dietetics.

75 years ago

- Attending the first district Legion convention last week as a delegate of the local post. Ray Blasing was elected a delegate to the national convention in Los Angeles this fall. Ray and Paul Kopischke were the delegates to the district meet. Ethan Allen and George Clunis of New Richland, retiring district commander and adjutant respectively, were also elected delegates to the national convention.

- The Lady Eights Bridge Club met at the home of Mrs. Irene Wegge June 22. Prizes were taken home by Mrs. Roy Hendricks and Mrs. Cyril Arnold. Mrs. Roy Johnson will entertain July 20. Following cards, dessert lunch and coffee were served.

- Mrs. Bruce Hering entertained the What’s Trump Bridge Club members in her home June 23, with all members present. Mrs. Charlie Johnosn and Mrs. David Tonoll were the prize winners for the evening. The next meeting will be with Mrs. Charlie Johnson. Dessert lunch and coffee was served after cards.

100 years ago

- The rain Sunday and Monday was worth more to the farmers of Waseca county that the government will be able to do for them by way of legislation in the next ten years.

- Some time ago, Will Hayes said that the “rube” was being eliminated from the country towns by the movies and hick characters in the rural places have passed out as a result of the education in the latest modes of life spread by the motion picture. Maybe so, old top, but what have you done for the city “hich”-he appears so hopelessly helpless?

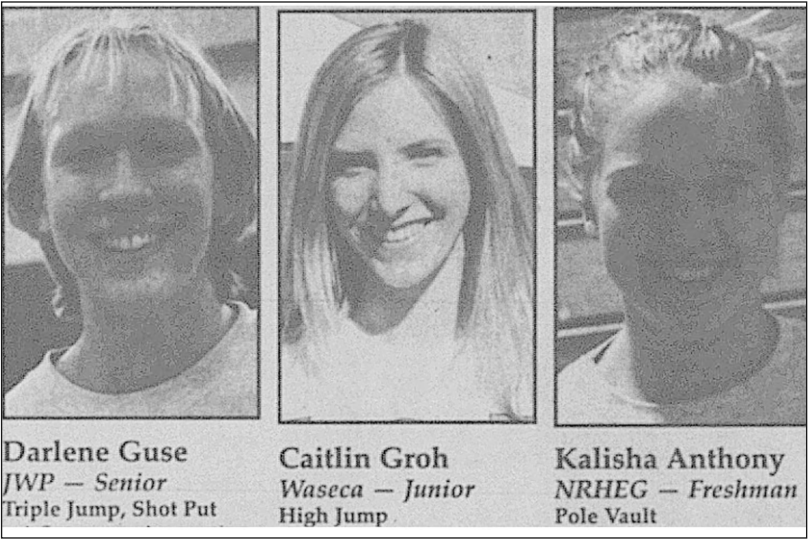
- Over in Blue Earth County vandals have stolen the tightening devices from the cables protecting traffic along a certain stretch of the highway. What in the world are we coming to? The next thing our engineers will be called upon to do will probably be to securely anchor the road at each end to prevent some enterprising thief from walking away with it.

- Emmons Smith of Waseca is a candidate for re-election to the Board of County Commissioners. Emmons Smith is one of the men who has lifted Waseca county out of the mud, his work for good roads alone adding three thousand dollars to the value of the county’s acreage for every thousand spent. He’s a good man for the county-certainly a better one for his district.

Story idea? • 837-6767

Waseca

25 years ago



Darlene Guse
JWP — Senior
Triple Jump, Shot Put

Caitlin Groh
Waseca — Junior
High Jump

Kalisha Anthony
NRHEG — Freshman
Pole Vault

- Waseca Area Track and Field:

Darlene Guse: A first year track competitor, Guse earned JWP’s highest finish as the state meet. She won the conference and sub-section shot put title, took second at the section and placed third at state. Guse also triple jumped, threw the discus and ran relays. She had the area’s top shot put toss of 39’ 5.75” this season.

Caitlin Groh: Groh is the all-area high jumper for the second straight year, matching last year’s best leap of 5’ 2”. She was also a solid 400 runner for the Jays. Groh captured the South Central Conference high jump championship. She ran on the 4 x 400 relay that finished second in the conference.

Kalisha Anthony: Anthony earned her second all-area selection by winning the conference, sub-section and section pole vault titles, and being the only Panther to advance to state. Her 10-foot leap was the best in the area and a new school record. She also ran the 4x100, 4x200 and 100-meter hurdles.

50 years ago

- Members of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce will host their annual Salute to Industry Day luncheon on Tuesday, June 29, at the Powell House. To be honored this year is Dean’s Specialty Supply Company, and industry founded in 1954 by Dean Fleming and serving as a distributor of feed medications, vitamins premixes, minerals and other animal health products. Master of ceremonies for the luncheon that will honor Dean’s Specialty for 22 years of service to Waseca and the food and fiber industry will be Mike Halverson, vice president of the Waseca Chamber. The welcome will be given by Waseca Mayor Avery (Doc) Hall; a keynote address will be presented by Quentin Marsh, senior vice president of the National Bank of Commerce, Mankato and a special presentation will be made by Dale Kritzer, chamber president.

- Sharon Patten, Waseca was among the 372 who took part in spring-quarter commencement ceremonies for the University of Minnesota’s Graduate School June 12 in Northrop Auditorium. She received a Master of Arts degree. Students who completed their studies during the winter quarter also were eligible to participate in the commencement ceremony.

- Jill Louise Stoltenberg, Waseca was among the 145 who took part in spring-quarter commencement ceremonies for the University of Minnesota’s School of Dentistry June 4 in Northrop Auditorium. She received a B.S. in dental hygiene with distinction.

75 years ago

- The Rosemount Field DDay will be at the Rosemount Station on Friday, July 6. The Waseca Field Day will be held at the Waseca Station on Tuesday, July 10. Plans are being made to have an exchange with Jefferson County at Louisville Kentucky. Any 4-H club member who is a junior leader or is 14 years old or older should contact his local leaders if they are interested in the trip.

- Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Rasmussen were happily surprised last Thursday evening when a group of friends arrived to help them celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary. A social evening was enjoyed.

100 years ago

- A.Guyer, Candidate for County Treasurer: Having lived in Waseca County since 1869, I believed I am well known to every voter, and if nominated and elected my only aim will be to serve the people of Waseca County. Your vote will be appreciated June 21st.

- WM. A. Manthey, Candidate for the re-election to the office of County Treasurer, “To the voters of Waseca county: Service, economy and courtesy has been my policy in serving the people of Waseca county. This police I promise to continue. I thank you for you vote and appreciate your support in interest of my nomination to the above office.

- Vote As You Work, Tom Davis For Governor: Call for a Farmer Labor ballot at primary June 21. Davis is the outstanding candidate for Governor on any ticket; one of the Northwest’s greatest speakers; a man who could lead a REAL FIGHT for farm relief; one who has been in the Progressive fight for years. Davis favors: A law guaranteeing bank deposits, similar to that of Nebraska where not a bank depositor has lost a dollar. Keep the primary law. Do not return to the boss controlled caucus and convention. Save our waterpower. This is an electrical age. Power companies controlling waterpower, control electricity and thus control our destinies. State workmen’s compensation; the Teachers’ Tenure Bill. Business in Minnesota isn’t in a rut. We need a change. Call for a Farmer-Labor ballot June 21 and nominate a ma who will make a real leader, not a sitpatter.

H&J Fuel, Inc.
507-461-0604

On-Site Bulk Fuel Delivery
Waseca, Mn

New Richland

25 years ago



- It was an interesting experience and a lot of fun for these girls at Girls State June 10-16. Megan Tappe (left) and Lacey Peterson were sponsored by the New Richland American Legion Andrew Borgen Post 75 Auxiliary. They were among 443 girls on the campus of Bethel College in St. Paul learning more about city, county and state government.

- Brian Oftedahl has joined the United States Army under the Delayed Entry Program. Oftedahl will report for basic training at Fort Still, Lawton, Oklahoma. His parents are Dean Oftedahl of Pemberton and Ruth Oftedahl of Blue Earth.

- Kyree Wobbrock, age 13, daughter of Joyce and Dan Wobbrock of New Richland, Minnesota has been selected as a state finalist in the MISS MINNESOTA AMERICAN COED PAGEANT to be held on July 27, 28 and 29 at the City Center Marriott Hotel in Minneapolis.

50 years ago

- The LeSueur River Lutheran Church congregation will celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the dedication of its church building on Sunday Morning, July 18.



- This photograph of New Richland was taken in the early 1900s or late 1890s by A. R. Berge, who was a professional photographer. Mr. Berge’s business is located second from the right, in what is now the Village Cafe. The Saloon is the first building to your right. It was built in 1893.

- Dawn I. Nelson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Milton Nelson of rural New Richland, has been accepted an offer of admissions and plans to enroll at Golden Valley Lutheran college this fall. Dawn is a 1976 graduate of New Richland-Hartland High School.

75 years ago

- Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Hokanson, living northeast of New Richland are the parents of a daughter, born to them at Memorial hospital, Waseca, Saturday, July 28.

- Garfield Hanson of Lemond and Miss Luella Klinger of Waseca Wednesday noon, August 1, with wedding reception at 1:30 in the church parlors.

WASECA COUNTY
PIONEER

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By: Brian Tomford, Waseca County Facilities Director
Waseca County

LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF WASECA
DISTRICT COURT
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
PROBATE COURT DIVISION
Court File No.: 81-PR-26 462

In Re: Estate of

EUGENE E. WELCH,
Decedent

ORDER AND NOTICE OF
HEARING FOR FORMAL

PROBATE AND APPOINTMENT
OF PERSONAL REPRESENTA-
TIVE IN UNSUPERVISED AD-
MINISTRATION AND
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

It is Ordered and Notice is hereby given that on the 12th day of August, 2026, at 9:15 a.m., a hearing will be held in the above named Court at Waseca, Waseca County, Minnesota, for the formal probate and for the appointment of Lorraine

Welch whose address is 4242 Pleasant Ave. Minneapolis, MN 55409 as personal representative 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 representative shall file a final account for the allowance and shall distribute the estate to the persons thereunto entitled as ordered by the Court and close the estate.

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

Dated: 07/02/2026

/s/ Carol M. Hank
Judge of District Court

/s/ Shannon M. Asselin
Deputy Court Administrator

PATTON, HOVERSTEN & BERG,
P.A.
Hayden Roslansky, (402545)
216 North Main Street P.O. Box M
Janesville, MN 56048
Phone: 507 -234 – 5106
Published in the Waseca County
Pioneer on July 9 and 16, 2026

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JULY

2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6pm Bar Bingo	2 7pm BINGO	3 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	4 250 th Independence Day
5	6	7	8 6pm Bar Bingo	9 7pm BINGO	10 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	11 QUEEN OF HEARTS DRAWING 5pm
12	13 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	14	15 6pm Bar Bingo	16 7pm BINGO	17 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	18 QUEEN OF HEARTS DRAWING 5pm
19	20	21	22 6pm Bar Bingo	23 7pm BINGO	24 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm	25 QUEEN OF HEARTS DRAWING 5pm
26	27 Korean War Veterans Armistice Day	28 National Buffalo Soldiers Day	29 6pm Bar Bingo	30 7pm BINGO	31 MEAT Raffle 5:30 Horse racing 6:30pm BLAKE'S FOOD TRUCK 5-7 PM	

HOURS OF OPERATION

SUN.– MON. CLOSED

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

POST & AUX MEETING 7pm club open 6pm MEMBERS only. Mn. Gambling license number 00385

NOTICE OF FILING DATES

FOR 2026 WASECA CITY ELECTION

NOTICE is hereby given by the City of Waseca, Minnesota that the first day of filing of candidates for the November 3, 2026, City General Election is **Tuesday, July 14, 2026**, and the last day for filing is **Tuesday, July 28, 2026**.

The offices to be filled at said election are as follows:

Mayor – two-year term

Council member Ward 1 – four-year term

Council member Ward 2 – four-year term

Council member Ward 3 – four-year term

Candidates must file in the office of the City Clerk, City Hall, 508 South State Street, Waseca, Minnesota, during regular business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. from July 14, 2026, to July 28, 2026. The City Clerk's office will remain open until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 28, 2026, to accept final filings.

Candidates must be eligible voters in Minnesota, at least 21 years of age upon assuming office, and have maintained residence in the Ward from which the candidate seeks election for 30 days before the general election. Filing fee is \$2.00.

Julia Zuehlke
City Clerk

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 9, 16 and 23, 2026.

Attention Woodville Township Residents

The following offices will be up for election to be filled at the November general election.

Clerk, 4-year term

Supervisor, 6-year term

Filings open Tuesday, July 14, 2026 at 8 a.m., and close Tuesday, August 30, 2026 at 5 p.m.

Interested parties should email the township clerk at

woodvilletownshipclerk@outlook.com

or by phone at 507-461-0193.

Andrew Miller, Woodville Township Clerk

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on July 9, 2026

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID

WASECA COUNTY RE-USE FACILITY

Contractor's sealed proposals for the construction of Waseca County Re-use Facility will be received by the Owner in accordance with the plans and specifications prepared by:

ARCHITECT

WIDSETH

3777 40th Avenue NW, Suite 200

Rochester, MN 55901

SITE VISIT INFORMATION

Pre-Bid Meeting: Wednesday, June 17, 2026, at 10:00 AM (CST)

Location: 31080 State Hwy 13, Waseca, MN 56093

BID DATE INFORMATION:

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2026

Bid Time: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 at 10:00 AM (CST)

Location: Online via QuestCDN vBid

Attn: Jim Kollar, Public Works Director

31080 State Hwy 13, Waseca, MN 56093

at which time they will be submitted electronically via QuestCDN - vBID. Bids will be received and evaluated, the awarded by will be announced on July 21, 2026 during the County Board meeting.

Bids will be received for the following Prevailing Wage project:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Expansion of County owned existing 1,150 s.f. wood framed storage facility with new 1,135 s.f. addition. Building is for storage and resale of donated items. Existing building currently has hazardous materials but is not classified as 'H' occupancy. New structure is wood framed with insulated walls, roof and prefinished metal exterior materials.

Each bid must be accompanied with a cashier's check, bid bond, U.S. Government Bonds (at par value) or certified check equal to five percent (5%) of the amount of the proposal. Security is payable to the Owner as a guarantee of prompt execution of the contract in accordance with the proposal and Contract documents, along with furnishing Payment and Performance Bonds of One Hundred percent (100%) of the bid amount acceptable to the Owner.

For a electronic bid submissions provide a scanned copy of your Security bond with your bid. Provide a original copy to the Bid Recipient within five (5) days of bid due date.

This Bidder shall be required to execute the Agreement and obtain the Performance Bond, Labor and Material, Payment Bond and Project Insurance within ten (10) calendar days from the date when Notice of Award is delivered to the Bidder.

Complete digital project bidding documents are available at https://widseth.com. Click "Bid Documents" in the top right corner of your screen or go to www.questcdn.com and enter the Quest project No. 10197520 on the website's Project Search page. Please contact QuestCDN.com at (952) 233-1632 or info@questcdn.com for assistance in free membership registration, downloading and working with this digital project information. You may download the digital plan documents electronically for \$25. An additional fee of \$45 will be charged to electronically bid the project. An optional paper set of project documents is also available from CES Imaging for a nonrefundable price of \$30 plus printing costs. If you choose a paper copy you will get all addenda as paper copies and will be charged for the printing costs. Please make your check payable to CES Imaging and send it to 1701 James Circle N, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430. Please contact CES Imaging Repro Dept at (763) 560-9098 or (800) 831-8587 for pricing and if you have any questions.

The successful bidder must be a "responsible contractor." The term "responsible contractor" means a contractor as defined in Minnesota Statutes Section 16C.285, subdivision 3. Any prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that does not meet the minimum criteria or fails to comply with the verification requirements is not a responsible contractor and is not eligible to be awarded a construction contract for the project or to perform work on the project. A prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that makes a false statement under oath verifying compliance with the minimum criteria will be ineligible to be awarded a construction contract on the project and the submission of a false statement may result in termination of a contract awarded to a prime contractor, subcontractor, or motor carrier that submits the false statement. A prime contractor shall include in its verification of compliance a list of all of its first-tier subcontractors that it intends to retain for work on the project. Before execution of a construction contract, a prime contractor shall submit a supplemental verification under oath confirming that all subcontractors and motor carriers that the prime contractor intends to use to perform project work have verified to the prime contractor, through a signed statement under oath by an owner or officer, that they meet the minimum criteria for a responsible contractor.

Bids may not be withdrawn within forty-five (45) days after the scheduled closing time for receiving bids without consent of the Owner. The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all bids and rebid the project until a satisfactory bid is received.

By:

Jim Kollar, Public Works Director
Waseca County



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Janesville Fire Department



HAPPY RETIREMENT - The Janesville Fire Department recently congratulated Eric Blasing on his retirement. He served for 25 years.

Celebrating Hofmann Apiaries BEE BASH in rural Janesville

Join Hofmann Apiaries to celebrate their fourth annual Pollinator Party on Saturday, August 1st from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 4661 420th Avenue in rural Janesville, Minnesota 56048.

Tour the historic farm where local honey producers will share their bee keeping knowledge and how it might have been “back in the day.” Enjoy static displays in both the Honey House and Wax Shed. Visitors can walk the restored prairie and pollinator gardens. Consult with Waseca Soil and Water Conservation and UMN Extension representatives about efforts to restore habitat for wildlife as well as pollinators. Learn what resources are available to landowners in the area.

Vendors will provide honey

bee related merchandise, pollinator plants, honey, and Hofmann Apiaries memorabilia. The IDC food wagon will offer lunch for purchase.

Enjoy live music from 1p.m. to 3p.m and join in Queen Bee’s pollinator ArtCar treasure hunt.

Bring your lawn chair and wear comfortable shoes as exploring the site and the restored buildings require walking distances, stairs, and uneven surfaces.

The Bee Bash will be held rain or shine.

Hofmann Apiaries “Bee Bash” is FREE and open to the public. Donations to Hofmann Apiaries are graciously welcomed either at the event or via Waseca County History Center, attention Hofmann Apiaries!

Child’s History of Waseca County

Cont. CHAPTER XIII, 1855. Preparations for winter—Hauling provisions from Iowa. Trip made to Auburn, Iowa, by the author—December 19, 1855 on the prairie all night—One man frozen to death—A cold Christmas.

On the 14th I drove into Auburn and bought my load, consisting of flour, pork, butter and groceries. I returned to the Yankee’s to stay over night and to buy some seed corn.

The 15th was so stormy and cold that I delayed a day. On the 16th I again started. Everything went well enough until afternoon, when the forward bolster of the wagon broke and I was compelled to put up with a farmer, unload the wagon and make a new bolster. Fortunately I struck the right house—the home of a carpenter. Although the father was not at home, he had some grown up boys from whom I obtained the use of tools to make the necessary repairs. It took all the next day to get ready for another start, and most of the day it snowed.

On the 18th I started quite early. The weather was clear but cold, and the road hard to travel. I got as far as the Brink house that day, and as the snow was about a foot deep, and hauling a wagon and breaking the roads were laborious, I accepted a fair offer for a portion of the load that night.

It was rather late on the morning of the 19th of December, my twenty-second birthday, when I started from the Brink house to cross that eighteen miles of uninhabited prairie. In climbing the hill on the west side of the Cedar, the wagon slid out of the track and the off hind wheel caught in a small tree, which had to be cut down. The oxen had become discouraged and I was unable to get

them to haul the load to the top of the hill. I was in for a tug. I had to unload and carry ten hundred pounds of that flour about two rods to the top of the hill on my shoulders. It was noon by the time I had reached the top of the hill and had reloaded, and it was eighteen miles to the house of my Norwegian friends on the west side of the prairie. Not a track had been made since the last fall of snow, across the prairie, and it was a question whether to proceed that day or wait till morning. I finally concluded to proceed. The snow was drifted in many places and progress was decidedly slow. To add to the discomfort of the situation, a storm of wind and fine, hard snow set in from the northwest about the middle of the afternoon; when darkness settled down on the prairie, I was only a little more than half way across it, with little prospect of proceeding much further that night.

Editorial Note - Upon rummaging through the vast library of contents here, I stumbled across a very old blue book titled, “Child’s History of Waseca County Minnesota for Fifty Years, 1854-1904.”

After thumbing through the first several pages it was determined this book was too interesting to go back on the shelf. So, it was used as a stand for a computer monitor. Several months later, after finding a more suitable stand, I opened the book to show a reader who stopped into the office. After reading about the Horse Thief Detective Association, I made the decision that this piece of history should not be lost to time. Since then we have included, “a little bit of this and a little bit of that,” from the book.

Xcel Energy Pole Replacement Project



GETTING THE JOB DONE - Waseca local and Xcel Energy employee Bradyen Edwards, left, and fellow employee Cole Tallege were completing the final block of the Xcel Energy pole replacement project and service update along 4th Ave SW (next to old Bird’s Eye) on Wednesday, July 1, 2026.

Pioneer photo by Ben Revermann



RECOGNIZING DEDICATION - The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism and the Chamber Ambassadors presented a Century Award to the SROC in recognition of more than 100 years of service.

Chamber Ambassadors acknowledge 100 years University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center receives award

WASECA, Minn. — The Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism and the Chamber Ambassadors recently presented a Century Award to the University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center in recognition of more than 100 years of service, research and dedication to agriculture and the Waseca community.

The award was presented during a Business After Hours event hosted by the Southern Research and Outreach Center at its Waseca facility. Chamber members and community leaders gathered to learn more about the center’s history, current research and continued impact on agriculture throughout southern Minnesota and beyond.

The University of Minnesota’s Board of Regents purchased 246 acres near Waseca in August 1912, and the Southeast Demonstration Farm and Experiment Station began operations in 1913.

The facility became known as the Southern Research and Outreach

Center in 1999 and is now one of 10 Research and Outreach Centers within the University of Minnesota’s College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences.

Today, the center includes 926 acres dedicated to research, outreach and Extension activities. Its researchers study areas including agronomy, dairy heifers, horticultural science, nutrient management, plant pathology and swine production. The center also supports research involving corn and soybean production, crop development, soil fertility, water quality, vegetable production and the management of insects, diseases and weeds.

“The Southern Research and Outreach Center has been an important part of Waseca’s history and identity for more than a century,” said Robin Dulas, Executive Director of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism. “Its work has helped advance agriculture, strengthen our local economy and connect our community to the resources and expertise of the University of Minnesota. We are honored

to recognize this remarkable milestone with the Chamber’s Century Award.”

While the center’s early work focused primarily on improving agricultural production, its mission has expanded over the years to include the development of practices and technologies that positively affect food production, human health, renewable energy and the environment. Its research is designed to improve agricultural productivity while promoting the responsible use of natural resources.

“The Century Award recognizes organizations that have demonstrated extraordinary longevity, resilience and commitment to our community,” said Jodie Thompson, President of the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Board of Directors. “The Southern Research and Outreach Center has not only been part of Waseca for more than 100 years—it has helped shape the agricultural industry and provide valuable knowledge that benefits producers, families and communities across Minnesota.”

The Chamber Ambassadors present awards throughout the year to recognize local businesses and organizations for significant milestones, investments and accomplishments.

“It was a privilege for the Chamber Ambassadors to recognize the Southern Research and Outreach Center for more than a century of service,” said Katie Gonzales, Chair of the Chamber Ambassadors. “The center’s talented staff, researchers and community partners have built an incredible legacy. We appreciate the opportunity to celebrate their accomplishments and learn more about the innovative work taking place right here in Waseca.”

The Business After Hours event also provided guests with an opportunity to tour the facility, meet members of the Southern Research and Outreach Center team and connect with other Chamber members. Business After Hours events encourage networking while showcasing the businesses, organizations and institutions that contribute to the strength and vitality of the Waseca area.

2026 Waseca Lakefest Boat Parade



Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann

