WASECA COUNTY PIONEER

LOCAL COMMUNITY-DRIVEN NEWSPAPER SERVING ALL OF WASECA COUNTY

No. 47 Vol. V $2 Office at 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca Thursday, November 19, 2026

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WHS Fall Play

Burger Fry fundraiser at Waseca American Legion Friday, Nov. 20

The Waseca Sons of American Legion will host a burger fry fundraiser for the Waseca Friends of the Library at 5:30 p.m. Friday, November 20. Cost is $12 for a hamburger or fish sandwich with fries.

Waseca Junior Senior High School Fall Play, Nov. 20, 21

"Circus Olympus" is a high-energy comedy which puts a humorous twist on a wide range of stories and characters from Greek mythology. The play will be presented at 7 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 20, and at 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 21.

Members Show featuring Joan Finnegan at Waseca Art Center Nov. 21

The Waseca Art Center will feature painter Joan Finnegan along with the WAC members' show from 2-4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21.

Turkey Trot at Farmamerica Nov. 21

Farmamerica's family-friendly Turkey Trot fun run/walk invites people to run, jog, walk, and even push strollers at their own pace for the 5K event, completing as many or as few laps as they wish. Advance registration is required; either use the Farmamerica website or stop by the facility in advance. To secure your T-shirt and fun race merch, register by Nov. 10.

Winter Farmers Market at Farmamerica Nov. 21

Winter Farmers Market events will be from 8 a.m. to noon at Farmamerica's indoor visitor center on many Saturdays through March. Consider shopping from local bakers, picklemakers, and crafters prior to the annual Turkey Trot.

Turkey Bingo at St. Joseph's Church of Waldorf Nov. 22

St. Joseph's Church of Waldorf will hold their Turkey Bingo at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 22. Door prizes, bake sale and lunch.

IV Play at the Mill Event Center Wednesday, Nov. 25

IV Plan will be at the Mill Event Center from 9 p.m. till midnight Wednesday, Nov. 25.

Turkey Trot Family Fun Run at New Richland High School Thursday, Nov. 26

Join the Panther High School Team and Youth Wrestling club for a two mile Turkey Trot and Family Fun Run in New Richland at 8 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 26. They will depart from the back parking lot by the wrestling room. Donations are welcome and will directly support the New Richland Care Center - Flood Relief.

A word from The Word

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so distrubed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

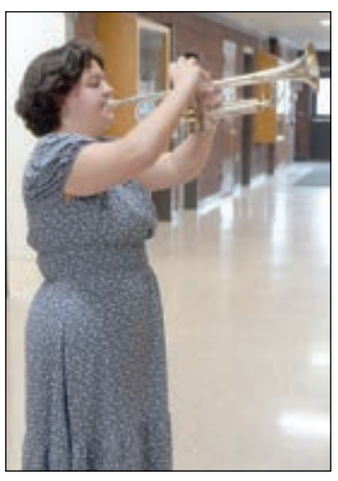
Psalm 27:4

2026 Waseca Veterans Day











HONORING THE BRAVE - The Waseca Public Schools celebrated Veterans Day on Wednesday, Nov. 11 with programs at the Waseca Junior Senior High School, the Waseca Intermediate School and at Hartley Elementary School. Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann





NEON FUN - The Waseca Marching Jays Indoor 2026 featured music, dancing, costume changes and more. Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann and Deb Bently

Waseca Marching Jays Indoor 2026: 'Neon Lights'

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Waseca Junior Senior High School gym was packed with spectators and family members attending the Waseca Marching Jays Indoor 2026 titled, "Neon Lights" over the weekend of Nov. 13, 14, and 15. Eager viewers settled down into the bleachers to watch as the 2026 Minnesota State AA Champion group provided music, dancing and a varied combination of small-group performances. Those who chose to purchase the multi-page programs were able to peruse short tributes to each of the 12 seniors who were performing in their final Indoor.

Black lights highlighted specially-selected costumes to pepper the

Indoor continued on 12

Waldorf City Council refining 2027 tax levy

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

During their meeting the evening of Monday, Nov. 9, members of the Waldorf city council reviewed and approved results from the Nov. 3 election. Missy Sorbo, who has served on the council for a number of years, will be Waldorf's mayor at the start of 2027. David Hendricks and Charlie Barnes were elected as councilmen; however, Barnes is going to decline his position for personal reasons.

WALDORF CITY COUNCIL

Also during the meeting, council members made it clear the city's 2027 tax levy will not increase by 15 percent over the 2026 amounts; instead they believe it will be about 8.99 percent–although the final decision will be made during the December council meeting.

The city received a $2,400 grant from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation toward the cost of landscaping in the newly refurbished park.

A tax assessment regarding unpaid charges has been approved for two residents with an unpaid INI loan and water bill.

Newly reelected Sheriff Jay Dulas was present and thanked those in attendance and promised to be the type of Sheriff Waldorf deserves.

The city website is going to be upgraded to premium; This will allow for site clean-up and 25 gigabytes of backup for a monthly fee of $432; the contract will be up for renewal in April of 2031.

A council workshop at 6 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 30, will include employee reviews and conversation to refine the 2027 tax levy.

Wellness seminar focuses on farmers, agriculture

State Ag Department offers help with stress

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Minnesota Department of Agriculture staff member Meg Moynihan used a personal experience to illustrate how stressful it is to be in a position of "having all of the responsibility, and sometimes very little of the control."

Moynihan was a presenter at a rural wellness forum sponsored by MNPrairie, the social services collaborative which currently covers residents in Waseca, Dodge and Steele counties. The seminar was held Nov. 14 in a building on the Dodge County fairgrounds in Kasson.

The experience Moynihan described dealt with an organic dairy farm in southern Minnesota which she and her husband have operated together since 2012. In 2016, they received the surprise notice that the company which purchased their milk was going to end its pickup routes in their area, and in 30 days they would no longer be able to sell their product. After a search for a new buyer was unsuccessful, Moynihah described, two to three times a week they would have to attach a hose to their storage tanks and send thousands of gallons of perfectly good, organically certified milk out to be poured on fields.

She described the heartbreak, the frustration, the financial loss, and the stress the circumstances

Stress continued on 5





FINDING WELLNESS - Left, Minnesota Department of Agriculture staff member Meg Moynihan presented at a rural wellness forum on November 14 in Kasson. Right, Ray Stenglein spoke at the same rural wellness forum, which was sponsored by social services agency MNPrairie.

QPR provides training for difficult conversations

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

Ray Stenglein has a lifetime of experience in the construction industry, and can list off many projects he and his company have carried out in the area.

His world was turned upside down in 2016 when his teenage daughter died by suicide.

The circumstance brought him to the realization that suicide is a rising problem in the U.S., with the number of deaths nationally having risen from about 44,000 in 2015 to nearly 49,000 in 2024.

Stenglein was a speaker at a rural wellness forum sponsored by social services agency MNPrairie; the forum took place on Nov. 14 at the Dodge County fairgrounds in Kasson. Those in attendance included members of MNPrairie staff, counselors and social workers, and interested members

Conversations continued on 6



Compostings

by Al Batt

A milkshake candy bar

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

We're going to have hamburgers for lunch.

Hammers?

Hamburgers!

Even better.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. In Mequon, Wisconsin, I heard the story of a couple of young men who got a job moving a piano. They went to the address and found the piano, which took them forever to move. It was a terrible job. They struggled with a piano, much bigger than they had been told, that skinned their knuckles. They were on the road in the truck with the piano when their radio dispatcher asked them when they were going to pick up the piano. They had gone to the wrong address and accidentally stolen a piano. By the time they called the police to confess, the victim had already reported the theft. No charges were filed.

Reid Nelson of Sheboygan had been telling me about his neighbors who smoked so many cigarettes that their dog had a smoker's cough whenever it attempted to bark, when Reid took a commercial break and mentioned the Milkshake candy bar that he'd enjoyed as a boy. I don't remember it. It was produced from 1927 to 1996. It was a yogurt-filled chocolate candy bar created by the Hollywood Candy Company, which also created the Zero Bar and Payday. The Milkshake Bar had a jingle, "That's what my tummy's shaking for."

I recall the fabled Seven Up Bar (retired in 1979), with cherry, coconut, caramel, fudge, jelly, maple and Brazil nut centers in its seven segments—a box of assorted chocolates in one bar.

I'VE LEARNED

Guess what's in the hotdish and get your meal for half-price at the Eat Around It Café, where I couldn't get a cup of tea because someone else was using the bag. They cut up my pork chop for only a $1 additional charge.

At Mel's Repair, where all cars are Mel adjusted, Mel found that the trouble with my car was the air freshener. It was an endangered species. Mel believes that one day, cars will carry signs warning others that a human is driving.

My neighbor Crandall eats only watermelons that have seeds in them. It keeps him from eating too fast.

Money talks, but it doesn't give directions.

Somewhere, someone ran out of gas in a drive-through lane. I have nothing to complain about.

BAD JOKES

I have the memory of…one of those big, gray animals with a trunk.

Why did the chicken cross the road? To show the opossum it could be done.

"I busted a mirror and got seven years bad luck, but my lawyer thinks he can get me five."—Steven Wright.

What's the difference between 10+10 and 11+11? Nothing. They are both twenty and twenty too.

NATURE NOTES

Niagara Cave is a place where I could be certain the trickle-down theory works. Stalagmites and stalactites are some of the best-known cave formations. They are icicle-shaped deposits formed when water dissolves overlying limestone and then re-deposits calcium carbonate along the ceilings or floors of underlying caves. Stalactites form on ceilings and hang downward. You can remember this with the phrase "Stalactites hang TIGHT to the ceiling." When stalactites are actively forming, they drip water. Where that water hits the floor, a mound-shaped stalagmite will form. You can remember this with the phrase "Stalagmites push up with all of their MIGHT."

In the fall, turkeys continue to walk farm fields in search of dropped corn, but many of the big birds shift to a menu of calorie-rich acorns. Flocks may move several miles to find acorn-rich environments. Hen turkeys live in flocks with their female offspring. Several hens and their offspring often merge into a single flock. Hens that weren't successful in hatching chicks may form smaller flocks with other lone hens. Male turkeys (toms) form their own flocks, and, depending on population, these flocks might be segregated by age, with young male turkeys, commonly called jakes, banding together.

The provincial bird of Alberta is the great horned owl, British Columbia's is the Steller's Jay, Manitoba—great gray owl, New Brunswick—black-capped chickadee, Newfoundland and Labrador—Atlantic puffin, Nova Scotia—osprey, Northwest Territories—gyrfalcon, Nunavut—rock ptarmigan, Ontario—common loon, Prince Edward Island—blue jay, Quebec—snowy owl, Saskatchewan—sharp-tailed grouse, and Yukon's provincial bird is the common raven. The Royal Canadian Geographical Society chose the Canada jay as the national bird of Canada, but the Canadian government has yet to do so officially. That jay's nicknames include gray jay, camp robber, whiskyjack and gorby. "Gorby" doesn't refer to a resemblance to the late Mikhail Gorbachev, but derives from the Scots word gorb, meaning "glutton."

MEETING ADJOURNED

The decal on the car window read, "I hope something good happens to you today." I'm no decal, but my hope is the same.

WASECA COUNTY

PIONEER

SERVING THE WHOLE OF WASECA COUNTY

including the communities of Waseca, Janesville, New Richland, and Waldorf

PHONE: 507-837-6767

email: news@wasecacountypioneer.com

Address: Office at 111 Elm Avenue West

Mail: PO Box 578, Waseca MN 56093

DEADLINES: Pioneer: Noon Monday
GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

ELI LUTGENS	Publisher
DEB BENTLY	News Editor
AMELIA ROESSLER	Editor
JIM LUTGENS	Sports Editor/Dad
JON LUCCA	Ad Design
BEN REVERMANN	Staff Writer
TERESA ROSACKER	Advertising Sales
MELISSA DUNN	Staff Writer

Contributing writers/photographers: Dave Zika, Al Batt, Darin Reese, Payge Rosacker, Rachael Jaegar, Rachel Loverink, Jessica Lutgens, Cassie Rupe, Debbie Rodriguez, Pastor Michael Coglan, Rev. Glenn K. Frerichs, Pastor Michael Grannis, Pastor Rick Wulf, and Pastor Jillene Gallatin

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

$59 Per Year, Waseca County Residents

$69 State of Minnesota • $79 Outside Minnesota

Waseca County Pioneer (USPS permit #25304) is published weekly on Thursday, by Pioneer Publications Inc., 111 Elm Avenue West, Waseca, MN, 56093.

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Periodicals Postage at New Richland, MN. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Waseca County Pioneer, P.O. Box 578, Waseca, MN, 56093.

Speculations about deer and driving



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

It's easy to forget little details when you're caught up in the moment.

So there I was, rushing to drive to the NRHEG school board meeting because I had been working on some newspaper details and lost track of the time.

I'm headed down the road, looking at the clock and the speedometer wondering whether I'll make it on time. I look up and there, filling the view illuminated by my headlights, is a doe who, thanks to the circumstances, seems bigger than my car.

I register her presence, let out a startled screech, and she's gone.

At that point I decided it would be okay if I were to arrive at the school board meeting a bit late. Because I go to so many meetings, I can afford to miss saying the Pledge of Allegiance for the ump-teenth time this month.

Not even 10 minutes later, this time on Highway 30 between New Richland and Ellendale, my headlights show a quick reflection of eyes and then a white flag of a tail bobbing across the road up ahead. That one deer is already safely off the road, I know, but what about the friends who so often follow?

I slowed down to 40 mph or so, and during the minutes I am creeping along, a pickup catches up to me from behind and passes me as if I'm standing still–which by typical standards, I kind of am. I bet that driver had no inkling whatsoever that three deer had crossed the road only seconds before. He also had no way of knowing I was grateful he passed me–now it would be him rather than me who startled any deer.

It was a particularly dark night, which led me to wonder–not for the first time–how the deer manage to move so quickly across so many different types of terrain when there is so little visibility.

Running through my head was a conversation I once had with NRHEG teacher Robin Eder, who commutes every school day from Geneva to New Richland. She had referred to that stretch of Highway 30 as "Venison Alley," and the name has stuck with me ever since–especially given that a person can seldom drive there without seeing at least one carcass along the road.

I couldn't help thinking about conversations among Waseca County board of commissioner members earlier in the year regarding the new law permitting the use of any legal firearm while deer hunting. As they reached out for more information to guide their decision about whether Waseca County should exempt itself from the expansion–something the law allowed for–commissioners were told the long-standing rule about using only shotguns while hunting deer in southern Minnesota had been established to limit the number of deer taken in the region, since back then there were worries that the population was at risk.

Anyway, it's interesting how quickly the whole mood of a drive can change–from a distracted rush to a mindful vigil. Given that I saw, or saw hints of, about half a dozen deer along the way, I was honestly surprised to find myself at the school board meeting a few minutes early–the drive had seemed most of an hour long.

Waymo rides and audiobook adventures



To Be Determined

by Amelia Roessler

I experienced some technological firsts this past week, so let's talk about it.

The first notable one is the Waymo I got the opportunity to take home from a bar on Friday night.

I had never ridden a Waymo before, but was excited to try out the self-driving vehicle for my ride home. For context, Waymo officially launched its public, driverless ride-share service in Denver on September 1, after spending the past year testing its vehicles in the Denver area. At first, it was weird to see the light blue, oddly-shappen, camera-laden vehicle traveling around the city, and lately it's been weird to see them without drivers as they navigate their own way around the streets. And it was even weirder to ride in one.

When they first started showing up, the price of taking a Waymo was much, much higher than would be charged by a human driving an Uber or a Lyft. But as time has gone on, their prices have now become comparable, and at times even cheaper, than the other ride-share services.

So when Jack, a friend, and I were looking for a ride back to our apartment, Waymo happened to be the cheaper option (especially without the need to tip!), and I begged that we jump at the opportunity. So when the blue, boxy vehicle pulled up, I ran to get in and experience what I hadn't before—riding in a truly driverless vehicle.

After getting the whole spiel about safety and all the features played out on the large screen in front of all the seats, we set about picking the music and volume, singing our hearts out to Katy Perry's "Firework" and Carrie Underwood's "Before He Cheats." As we set out, I watched the screen as it showed the car's position on a map of the route it was taking through the streets. Also on the screen were blobs indicating the positions of other cars on the same roads.

It was fascinating. Although I would have liked the option for seat heaters, my favorite part was the fact that we had no driver to talk to or worry about the volume level of our conversations, which is what I think about every time. Plus, the vehicle was comfortable and extremely roomy.

Along with a functional, safe ride home, I now also have the right to say I have taken a Waymo, ridden in the up-and-coming self-driving ride-share vehicle that is most likely to take over the industry just as Uber and Lyft displaced taxis.

The other technological adventure I had recently is surprisingly common: I made use of an audiobook for the first time. I'm betting you're surprised–how can someone who's ridden in a Waymo not already be an experienced audiobook user?--but I have always loved the feeling of having a book in my hands. I guess I felt like I would be doing books an injustice if I experienced them some other way.

I read The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah, a well-written, beautiful, and sad story about a girl who moves to Alaska and learns tough life lessons about relationships and nature. I read it for bookclub, and because it is so popular, the only copy of the book available from the online library system Libby was the audiobook. So I, knowing that bookclub would be fast approaching, took a chance.

Now, I do listen to podcasts (and have become an avid listener and fan of the KFAN Powertrip Morning Show), but listening to an audiobook was odd to me. Having one person reading while also adopting different voices for the characters was offputting at first. But the thing that threw me the most was that I didn't know what to do with myself as I listened. I don't drive enough places to listen in the car, and I don't walk long enough to satisfy a 15-hour book. I missed the ability to sit quietly on the couch, or in bed at night, and open a book wherever and whenever. I sat on the couch attempting a game of sudoku, and ended up just clicking my pen and twisting it open and closed, staring out the window as the plot unfolded.

It also made me impatient. I eventually put it on double speed and was done with the book in three or four days. Maybe I'll try it again at some point, but for now, I'll stick to my beloved pages.

My Determination: "Books are the mile markers of my life. Some people have family photos or home movies to record their past. I've got books. Characters. For as long as I can remember, books have been my safe place." — Kristin Hannah, The Great Alone

29 years, wouldn't have it any other way



STAR GAZING

by Eli Lutgens

I celebrated another revolution around the sun Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2026.

I share birthdays with two folks whose company I really enjoy. Tink Larson and Blair Nelson. Lately, Tink and I have shared a few emails back and forth about football and life updates. We ran into each other after the Bluejays Section Football game. It makes my heart happy to see someone so active and full of life.

I still think about Blair; I hope he is having a happy, heavenly birthday.

This year has been an experience.

I began 2026 with memorable trips to Philadelphia and Florida. In my ultimate plans for my life, I intend to travel and spend as much time with the people I love most in life. At the same time I desire to have a life of meaning. All of those things were accomplished while traveling as I worked remotely on projects I take great joy and meaning in.

I have written about my health journey these past months and it has had a profound impact on my life, mentally and physically.

I don't expect to ever again take the ability to walk for granted.

I have an incredible respect for people suffering from chronic pain or disability.

Time is precious and it is easy to slip into "auto-pilot."

In the immortal words of Al Batt, "Be kind. Be patient."

Tuesday was a press day for the newspaper, which means it was full of work until it was complete. To prepare, I accomplished as much work as I could in advance and scheduled my physical therapy days on Monday and Wednesday to leave Tuesday open. Speaking of which, Wednesday looks like my last day of physical therapy. I will continue training and working out every other day at YMCA, in order to keep getting stronger.

After sleeping in, I worked, and headed to see one of my best friends, Jane.

We had a plan to do some work, have lunch and enjoy each other's company.

Jane also does some work for me. Growing up I always dreamed of simply employing all of the people I enjoy most in life, in order to spend my life surrounded by people I love. (And also I hated, absolutely hated the idea of the people I love having terrible jobs working for unfair, selfish or cruel bosses). I have pretty well accomplished that goal. I don't think I have a friend or someone I love who does not do everything they can to support me in life and vice versa. Even my best friend Jake, whom I intend to visit in the evening, helps me work regularly. There is not a week that goes by that I do not spend at least one entire evening sitting on his couch working. He helps however he is able.

My friend Jane is making me a cake again this year, chocolate, with chocolate and more more chocolate. I believe it is chocolate, layered with chocolate, and there may be chocolate chips in it, and there is chocolate gnash on the outside. It is probably 10,000 calories, but it tastes delicious.

In order to avoid the problem I had each of the last two years of receiving four birthday cakes, I have planned gatherings with people on separate days. This may sound selfish, but I call it practical. Today I am spending time with my two best friends, one over lunch, the other dinner.

Friday, my friends are gathering for food and games. Sunday I intend to have dinner to celebrate one final time with two friends who may be absent Friday. Is it excessive?

Does it allow me to spend time with the people I love? Yes.

And importantly, there won't be four cakes at one gathering.

Saturday I intend to travel to US Bank Stadium to watch the Bluejay football team compete in the state-semifinals. I have been asked to make predictions as to the outcome.

My prediction will appear in next week's paper.

As I reflect on 29 years of life, I don't feel the desire to say it has gone quickly. Each day is a gift which I try to make the most of. Numerous times I have said what I am about to say, which can be shortened to say my life is serendipitous. Or maybe it isn't.

I would not have picked another time to be alive.

I would not have picked another profession to have.

I would not have picked another body to inhabit. (okay, maybe next time I will arrange for fewer aches and pains.)

Instead of saying I would not, I will rephrase it.

This is the time I want to be alive.

This is the profession and lifestyle I chose.

This is the body I choose to work with improving daily.

As a youth there was a TV show I watched called Drake and Josh. Or maybe it was something else on Disney or Nickelodeon. A band was working on a song and it had the words, "I am not (insert chorus)." It was suggested to drop the 'not' and just say "I am." It changed the entire tune of the song from a sad song to a happy one.

Maybe I will focus on the "I am" theme in 2027 as opposed to the "not."

Thank you, everyone, for the birthday wishes. Forgive my sentimentality and remember to enjoy life and be kind.

Thanksgiving Dinner by Christ the King Lutheran Church Thursday, Nov. 26

A Thanksgiving Dinner from Christ the King Lutheran Church for seniors and those alone for the holiday will be held with delivery beginning at 11:30 a.m., dine-in from noon through 1:30 p.m. This meal is free but donations are accepted. Reservations required by Nov. 16, call 507-835-9176 or email ctkwaseca@outlook.com.

Santa Anonymous Fundraising Auction at Boxcar Bar Nov. 28

A live auction for a wide variety of donations from county businesses and individuals will include items large and small such as professional sports packages, custom ice fishing rentals, electronics, and much, much more. Auction begins at 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 28 at the Boxcar Bar.

Cook the Book: Brilliant Bites at Waseca Public Library Wednesday, Dec. 2

Visit the library to choose a recipe from the selected cookbook. Then bring the finished dish on the day of the meeting at noon Wednesday, Dec. 2 to share. Meet other members of the community, trade recipes and try something new.

"Just Friends" to perform at First Lutheran, Waldorf, Wednesday, Dec. 2

The gospel harmony group "Just Friends" will be performing at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 2 at First Lutheran Church, 120 Third Avenue, in Waldorf. The performance will be preceded by a 6:30 p.m. social hour in the church basement. All are welcome; a free-will offering will be accepted.

Achieving Dreams for Disabilities Cookie Dazzle Dec. 5

Achieving Dreams for Disabilities will be selling plates of 12 cookies for $8 at the Waseca Senior Center from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Dec. 5. Breads and other baked treats will also be available. Donated baked goods can be dropped off at the Senior Center from 5 to 6:30 on Dec. 4.

Christmas Bazaar at St. Paul's Lutheran Church Dec. 5

There will be a Christmas Bazaar at St. Paul's Lutheran Church from 10:30 a.m. thru 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. Crafts, baked goods, homemade lefse, hot beef sandwiches and sloppy joes. Located at 314 4th Ave. NE.

Winter Farmers Market at Farmamerica Dec. 5

Winter Farmers Market events will be from 8 a.m. to noon at Farmamerica's indoor visitor center on many Saturdays through March. Consider shopping from local bakers, pickle-makers, and crafters on Dec. 5.

WHS fall play delivers energy, humor and irony

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"I mainly enjoy how comical it is," observes Waseca high-schooler Teagan Neidecker. "There's so much for people to laugh at."'

Neidecker is speaking of "Circus Olympus," a full-length play set to be performed at the high school's performing arts center at 7 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 20, and 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 21. Admission is $7 for adults, $4 for students and senior citizens.

Another strong element, Neidecker continues, is the mix-and-match quality of the play's action that allows all the members of the cast to make significant contributions.

Fall play continued on 4



GREEK GEEKS - More than 30 Waseca High School students comprise the cast and crew of "Circus Olympus," which puts an energetically humorous twist on a range of Greek myths. The play will be performed 7 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 20 and 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 22. Admission is $7 for adults, $4 for students and senior citizens. Pioneer photo by Deb Bently



SEASONAL HARMONIES - The nearly 60 members of the Waseca Chorale will present their holiday concert, "Light and Peace" at 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 29 at Sacred Heart Church in Waseca. Admission is $10 for adults, $7 for children age 12 and under.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

Waseca Chorale to bring new twists to familiar favorites

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"It will shake the roof," says Waseca Chorale member Toni Bauleke of the number "Variations on Jingle Bells," which is part of the group's upcoming performance at 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 29, at Sacred Heart Church in Waseca.

"Variations," comments fellow singer Deb Vetter, "keeps you on your toes. You just never know what's coming next." She goes on to mention a nearly operatic piece which pops up among the other versions.

"It's very upbeat," says Bauleke. "I think people will really enjoy it."

Tenor Michael Myers gives his enthusiastic recommendation to "Yearning," the all-male number included in the concert. In addition to being beautiful to listen to and demanding to perform, he says its tone and lyrics reflect the deeper message of Christmas. Though there are not any bells being played, one Chorale member observes, there is a part of the song where the vocalists send a strong impression that there are.

In balance with the all-male piece, "Be Glad This Festive Day" will include only female voices.

According to directors Deb Wantoch-Yess and John Hoehn, the Waseca Chorale is at one of its highest ever membership levels, with nearly 60 singers blending their voices to create a musical atmosphere. The Nov. 29 concert will last about 75 minutes, and includes an intermission.

Cost at the door is $10 for adults, $7 for youth age 12 and under.

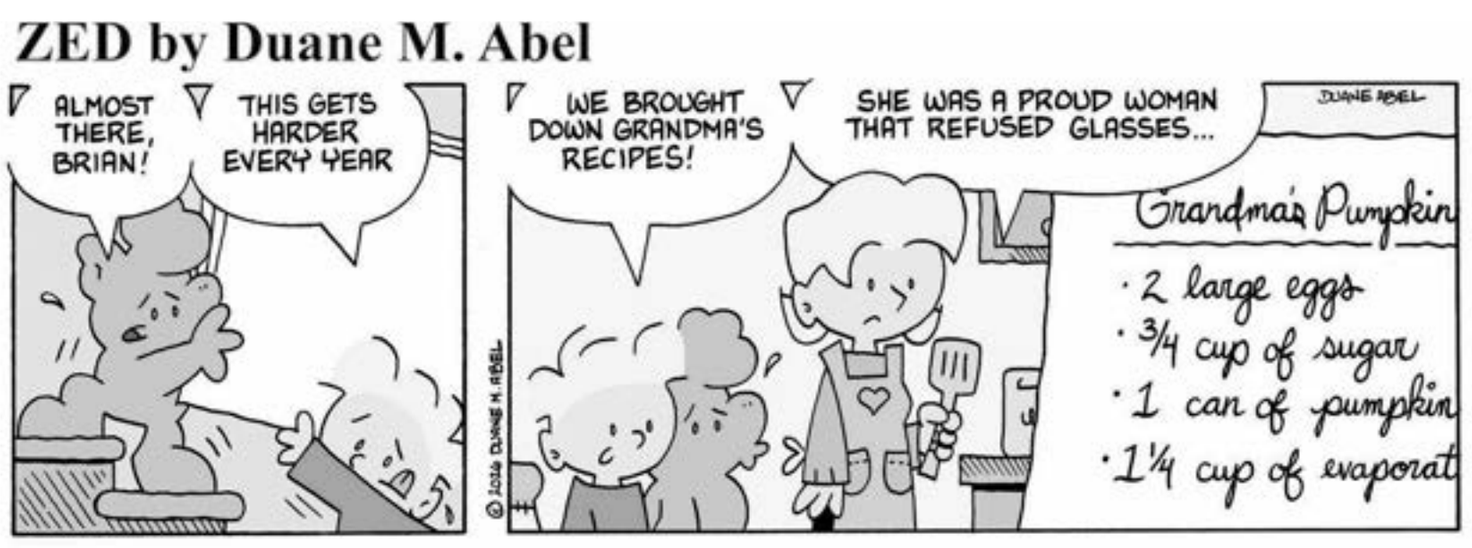
Member Nancy Lehman says she is excited to hear "Light of Peace" when, in addition to the harmonies the group has been practicing since September, it will be accompanied by a violin, flute and a percussion instrument known as the Bohdran.

Director Wantoch-Yess explains "Light of Peace" is a compilation of five movements which share a Celtic tone.

The number "Dance in the Dawn" will feature a children's choir, another touch Chorale members look forward to with anticipation. Young singers are between the ages of 8 and 11, and will include Emily Whitesitt, Braxton Sylvester, Lina Berry, Lilla Berry, Lucy Huber, Rudy Neff, Olive Neff, Clark Durisen, Gracelynn Gilson and Kykar Lloyd.

Director John Hoehn suggests the final number of the concert, "God Rest Ye," will stay with audience members for days after the concert ends. A rearrangement of the beautiful traditional carol "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen," the piece adds a few unexpected touches he believes audience members will appreciate.

Waseca Chorale concerts are made possible, in part, by grants from the Waseca Area Foundation through the E.F. Johnson Fund and the Waseca County Arts Fund.



Waseca Area Foundation gives $200k to area causes

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

During its fall celebration the evening of Nov. 10, the Waseca Area Foundation (WAF) and a range of affiliated charitable funds donated nearly $200,000 to local causes. There are two rounds of grants each year, in the spring and fall.

Area non profit organizations apply for grants and the board of directors is responsible for deciding which requests are granted and to what level. Funds which supported the distribution on Nov. 10 included the E.F. Johnson Foundation, J. Priebe Education, Cally Jo Children's Fund, the Barb Penny Youth Fund, the Rosenau Legacy of Angels Fund, the Greg and Donnette Wheelock Fund, the Carol Bayerkohler Memorial Fund, Tracy Jevning Memorial Funds, Vollbrecht Cultural Arts Legacy Fund, the Scott and Holly Martin Fund, and an anonymous donor.

In her introduction, WAF board chair Katie Youngberg shared the story of three bricklayers who were asked what they were doing. One replied he was laying bricks, another said he was building a wall; the third proclaimed, "I'm building a cathedral."

Youngberg congratulated those present at the Starfire Event Center for the celebration on being similar to the third bricklayer, saying "Communities can either be limited by a mindset or inspired beyond it. The difference is hope: Hope is the vision, the expectation, and the belief that tomorrow can be better than today.

"But hope alone is not enough. Being active is the grit, determination, and commitment to make that future a reality."

Among the presentations during the celebration was more than $17,000 to the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center in support of its food distribution work, including a "backpack"

WAF continued on 5

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OBITUARIES

Shirley Dahnert



Shirley Dahnert

Shirley Ann Dahnert, age 94 of Waseca, died Saturday, November 14, 2026 under the care of St. Croix Hospice with family by her side.

Born April 14, 1932, Shirley was one of nine children born to Vern and Margaret (Brown) Peek. After graduating from Freeborn High School, Shirley moved to Waseca where she worked, met and married Russell Dahnert, on April 25, 1953. Shirley retired from Brown Printing Company in 1994.

Shirley will be remembered for her sense of humor, love of playing cards (Pfeffer) with friends and family, baking holiday cookies with her sisters, and spending time with her grandchildren. Shirley attended Sacred Heart Catholic Church, enjoyed fishing, camping, and traveling with family.

She is survived by her four children, Mary Dahnert of Jordan, MN, Pam (Tom) McAdaragh of Sioux Fall, SD, Blake (Jeanne) Dahnert of Walker, MN, Brian Dahnert of Waseca, MN; 6 grandchildren, Adam, Ryan, Alyssa, Michael, Meghan, Palmer; 10 great-grandchildren; two sisters-in-law, Margaret Dahnert and Vada Dahnert, both of Waseca.

Shirley was preceded in death by her husband Russell, and all 8 of her siblings.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, memorials are preferred to the American Cancer Society.

Visitation will be held from 4 -7 PM on Wednesday, November 18, 2026 at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Rosary will be held at 3:30 PM prior to the visitation at the funeral home. Visitation will continue one hour prior to the service at the church on Thursday.

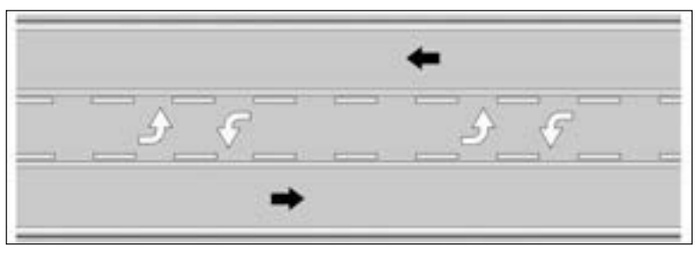
Mass of Christian Burial will be at 1:00 PM on Thursday, November 19, 2026 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Waseca. Burial will follow at Calvary Cemetery in Waseca.

Dsofuneral.com

Dale Radke

On November 2nd, this special Feast of All Souls Day, remembering the life and passing of Dale Frederick Radke. Born on December 14,1955. Died by natural causes at his home in Orlando, Florida on July 21, 2025. Dale is buried in Calvary Cemetery, New Richland, Minnesota with his parents Harold and Marcella Radke. Dale is remembered for his kindness, gentleness and giving to others. Dale had a love of golf. Dale is survived by his siblings Barbara Radke, Betty Radke, Harvey Radke, niece Carly Velazquez (Tyler), nephew Brady Rake, great nieces Emma Velazquez and Josephine Velazquez. Eternal Rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the Mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Anyone remembering Dale or your own loved ones that have passed on the Feast of All Souls Day are asked to donate to birthright330 Stadium Road, Suite 201, Mankato, MN 56001 from November 1st-November 8th in memory of Dale or in memory of a loved one that you have lost. The gift of life is such a blessing from God and we are given so many memories made with love.



'Ask a Trooper': center turn lanes

Question: We have this center turn lane in our town. I witnessed someone passing in this area. Is this allowed?

Answer: No. What you witnessed was illegal and unsafe. A center lane between lanes of traffic traveling in opposite directions may be designated for left turns only. This type of lane is marked by parallel solid and dashed yellow lines. These lines are sometimes accompanied by white arrows on the pavement. Vehicles traveling in either direction can use these lanes to make left turns onto another roadway or a driveway.

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During the Waseca Exchange Club's "Murder at Alexander House" fundraiser on Nov. 13 and 14, more than 20 volunteers portrayed characters from Russian history who had gathered for a private musical performance when a murder occurred in their midst. "Investigators" took on the task of identifying the murderer. Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann and Deb Bently







Royalty, murder and deception at Alexander House Nov. 13, 14

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

More than 100 detectives attempted to solve the third and final Murder Mystery at Alexander House the evenings of Friday and Saturday, Nov. 13 and 14. As they met and spoke with hosts Mikhail Rostislavovich and Dwight Tostenson, as well as more than 20 actors, guests were asked to solve the murder of the Grand Duke Kirill Vladimirovich.

The murder mystery event is a fundraiser held by the Waseca Exchange Club. This year, the club designated a portion of the money it raises for the Waseca Area Food Shelf.

The scenario for the performances capitalizes on Rostislavovich's Russian heritage, and on the 1916 construction and decor of the home located along North State Street in Waseca.

In the early part of the 20th century, the Romonov family which had led Russia for more than 300 years was under threat from the Bolsheviks, a revolutionary group which was attacking and killing Imperial family members, in addition to driving them from their homes and commandeering their wealth.

Romonov family members and their friends had gathered at Alexander House for a performance by composer Sergei Rachmaninoff when a murder occurred in their midst.

Guests were invited to explore the house and speak with individuals to acquire clues that would allow them to eliminate four of the five suspects, and to determine the location of the killing and the weapon used.

After their investigations, detectives gathered for beverages and snacks while comparing notes to identify the culprit.

Regarding the event, planning committee member Christy Easton said, "We're more comfortable this year compared to last. We've allowed guests more time to interview suspects, and we have assistant inspectors helping. Last year not a lot of people were able to solve the mystery, but I saw we had a lot of repeat visitors and that's a good sign."

Rostislavovich has announced he does not plan to host the event in his home in the future. It was whispered that at least one person solved the mystery on Saturday night.

Characters and the actors who played them were Grigori Rasputin, played by Chris Bently; Prime Minister Pytor Stolypin, played by Dr. Carroll Gavin; Countess Natalia Brasova, played by Ann Staloch; Vasily Maklakov, played by Representative Tom Sexton; Peter Carl Faberge, played by Brad Donner; Anna Vyrubova, played by Waseca Councilwoman Stacy Schroeder; Scullery Boy Vladimir, played by Jake Leiser; Sasha Tegleva, played by Waseca Senior Center Director Tarin Kuball; Agafya Constantinova, played by Deb Bently; and Dowager Empress, played by Grace Galvin.







■ Fall play

from Page 3

Eryn Harrison, who has roles ranging from one of the circus's ringleaders to "a snake"--a role, by the way, which makes sense once one sees it done–explains that "Circus Olympus" combines two unlikely plot elements: ancient Greek myths, and a group of circus performers who are excited and delighted to bring them to life while incorporating some lighthearted plot adaptations.

Within the story line of the play, actor Alex Henry is a cast member who is chosen by having his name drawn from a hat to be the chief decision maker for the performance, in the role of Zeus, king of the gods. Humorously, he is unprepared for the leadership role, and so tries to put on a brave face to most performers while shamelessly begging advice from a fellow ringleader played by Charlotte Griffith.

Henry uses facial expressions and body posture to signal his underlying uncertainty while his voice and words claim to have everything under control.

In the meantime, perhaps equally as part of their acting skill and out of genuine enjoyment, other actors willingly carry out the zany scenes of the play, falling down "dead," positioning themselves as part of a tapestry, and throwing tantrums as needed.

In her role as Athena, Story-James Kasl says she is grateful to be called upon to step outside her comfort zone, showing first cold anger, then a heated temper as human weaver Arachne boasts her skills at the loom exceed even those of a goddess. Arabella Hardeman says she enjoys two roles where her lines are somewhat puzzle-like: one where she is the minor goddess Echo and repeats significant words spoken by other characters, and another where she is part of a threesome whose statements are delivered one word at a time by each of the three. Mychal Tollefson says he enjoys his role as a guard whose job it is to shout at intruders. "It's fun to get to yell at someone when you know you won't hurt their feelings," he comments.

Director Erin Coy says she selected "Circus Olympus" for all the reasons cast members name. "It's an unusual combination of ideas," she observes, "a circus and Greek mythology.

"Besides that, it delivers a lot of laughs, high energy, and a great chance for my cast members to grow as actors."

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"Comet" training is designed to change crisis trajectories

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture offers a "Comet" course meant to give people tools to enter gently into a conversation with a person who may be approaching an emotional crisis.

The class is designed to train between 10 and 30 people at a time, and is provided at no cost to participants.

Department of Ag presenter Meg Moynihan explained the course's name is built on the idea that a source of gravity can radically alter the trajectory of a speeding comet.

"Each individual can be that source of 'gravity,' making a difference in the direction others take in a time of escalating emotions," Moynihan explained.

The 1.5 hour course, she said, centers around seven questions to engage someone who might be in crisis. It can be taken online, or organizations can make arrangements to have it meet in person at a location of their choosing.

"Often, we may want to support our friends, neighbors and colleagues in times of need," Moynihan observed, "but we are uncertain how to go about it.

"'Comet' prepares us to support others' mental health needs, especially in times of crisis."

Organizations wishing to plan a session can acquire more information on the Department of Agriculture website.

Courses with similar goals are also available from other sources, Moynihan shared. These include "QPR for Agriculture," with information available from the Minnesota Department of Health suicide prevention program; a three-hour course titled "SafeTALK" from the Minnesota branch of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI); and CALM Conversations (Counseling on Access to Lethal Means) offered through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Sen. Jasinski named Deputy Senate Republican Leader

Minnesota State Senator John Jasinski (Faribault) will once again serve as Deputy Leader of the Senate Republican Caucus, Minority Leader Jordan Rasmusson (Fergus Falls) announced today. The appointment comes the week after he was elected by his GOP colleagues to continue serving on the caucus's leadership team.

"Minnesota families are getting squeezed every month in large part because of policies that Democrats passed the last time they had a trifecta," Senator Jasinski said. "From expensive mandates to $10 billion in tax and fee increases to forced property tax hikes for schools and local governments, it's easy to connect the dots from their work to our high cost of living. Republicans will continue to work on bringing down costs that are crushing family budgets while holding Democrats accountable for their bad ideas."

"Thank you to Leader Rasmusson and to my colleagues for once again trusting me with this role," Senator Jasinski continued. "And more importantly, thank you to the residents of Goodhue, Rice, Steele, and Waseca counties for trusting me to be your voice in the Senate. I am here to serve you first and foremost, and I never forget that."

"There are few members of the Senate with the depth of experience and the great relationships – on both sides of the aisle – that Senator Jasinski has," Senator Rasmusson said. "He has been an outstanding asset to our leadership team and to the entire Republican caucus, and I'm excited to have him continue serving as deputy leader."

Senator Jasinski has served on the Senate Republican leadership team under four different caucus leaders: Senator Paul Gazelka, Senator Jeremy Miller, Senator Mark Johnson, and now Senator Jordan Rasmusson. He previously served as an assistant leader and as majority whip. Senator Jasinski was appointed deputy leader for the 2023-2024 biennium and continued serving in that role in 2025 and 2026.

Senator Jasinski represents District 19, which includes portions of Goodhue, Rice, Steele, and Waseca counties. He was first elected in 2016.

Rural development leadership funds

The Southern School of Agriculture (SSA) and the University of Minnesota-Waseca (UMW) Alumni Association are pleased to announce the availability of a $1,000 scholarship. The Rural Development Leadership Scholarship is designed to encourage individuals to seek leadership training opportunities that would result in a strengthened rural Minnesota by providing funds to offset the cost of these training opportunities. Leadership education or training may include but is not limited to programs such as MARL – Minnesota Agriculture and Rural Leadership Program; The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership; Leadership Programs in FFA or 4-H and other programs. These programs are only examples; all educational opportunities will be considered. Applicants must have (at a minimum) completed 8th grade.

The scholarship committee will select the recipients of these awards based on the criteria outlined. More than one individual may be selected to receive this scholarship. Funds will be provided based on cost (up to the total cost of the program). A total of $1,000 will be distributed annually.

To apply, mail all items below in one large envelope to Rural Development Leadership Fund, Southern Research and Outreach Center, 35838 120th St., Waseca, MN 56093.

1) Updated resume (activities, offices held, accomplishments, leadership awards, employment history, etc),

2) Cover letter summarizing the resume and chosen leadership program, costs, and how the program will elevate recipients skills. Please also indicate your relationship to any SSA/UMW alumni.

3) Two signed letters of recommendation from community/academic leaders

Questions can be directed to Kay Pedretti at (507) 313-6394 or umwalum@umn.edu

Applications must be postmarked no later than January 8, 2027.

Santa Anonymous auction set for afternoon of Nov. 28

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

In a way, the main item for sale at the Santa Anonymous auction beginning at 5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 28 at the Boxcar Bar in Waseca, is Christmas spirit.

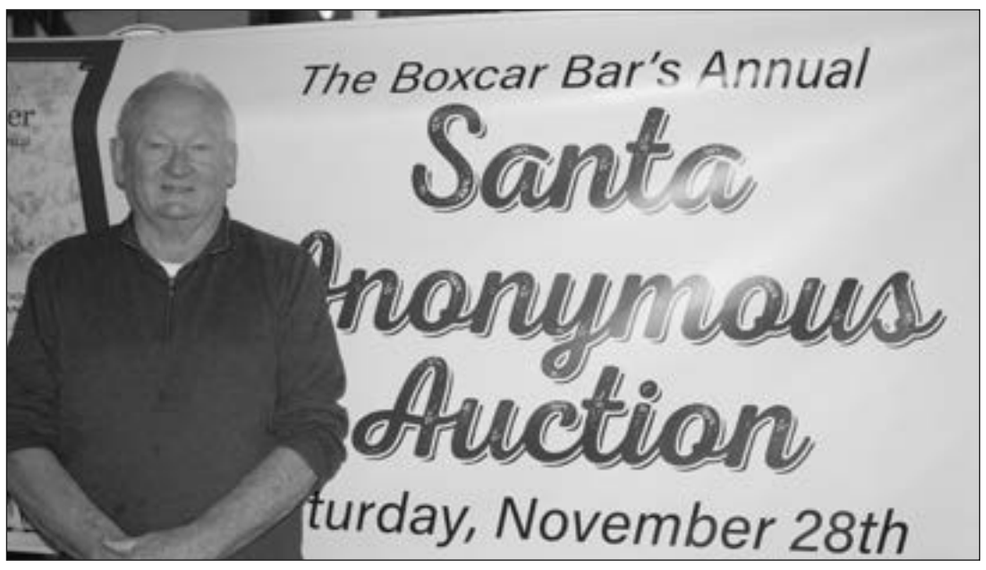
"It feels mighty good knowing, on Christmas morning, that 500 families in Waseca County are waking up to some very pleasant surprises because of what we've done," comments Boxcar owner and event organizer Todd Schmidt. Schmidt, with the help of Tae Born, Missy Pfeifer, Kelsey Kahne and Brittany Ziemke make the auction possible each year by contacting area businesses and individuals about contributing items.

In its thirty-first year, the auction now typically raises $30,000 or more.

"People are generous," comments Schmidt. "We were all kids once, and we all remember the excitement of Christmas morning. It's not only the gifts, it's the feeling of being loved and recognized that the gifts inspire."

Items donated are widely varied in every way–size, typical value, age, origin, and appearance. Selections ranging from homemade treats to furniture to hay rides to high-value professional sports packages are cycled across the auction block while a capacity crowd of bidders considers which items will elicit their donations. Auctioneers Bill Harguth and Landen Flemming remind buyers of the extra form of value each item brings with it.

But whatever anyone is buying, Schmidt says lightheartedly, it will not be at a bargain price.



BRINGING CHEER - Todd Schmidt of Waseca's Boxcar Bar is organizing the 31st Santa Anonymous auction with the help of Tae Born, Missy Pfeifer, Kelsey Kahnke and Brittany Ziemke. The event consistently raises more than $30,000 to support the Waseca County Santa Anonymous program, operated through the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

"People come ready to make their contributions," he says. "As for their money, their plan seems to be to go home with empty pockets." He remembers numerous times good-natured bidding wars have erupted over unusual items or even food that seemed to tempt people's taste buds.

Schmidt comments that, just like the items for sale, there is rich variety among the buyers. Some have been coming for decades, others are there for the first time. Schmidt says some have shared they were once among the children who benefitted from Santa Anonymous.

On last year's auction day, a snowstorm swept across the region over the morning hours. "We were worried," Schmidt recalls. "But even with the snow, we still raised $34,000."

Money brought in by the auction is donated to the Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center, which is in charge of reaching out to eligible families, learning what children's wishes are, and seeing what can be done to meet them.

Because of the Service Center's status as a not-for-profit entity, all donations are tax deductible.

Shortly before Christmas, families are assigned exclusive appointment times when they can peruse the available toys and other gifts, then make their selections. Items named on children's lists are sometimes deeply telling, WANSC director Cindy Kolander commented.

"More and more, we're getting requests for things like 'a pillow that isn't flat,' or 'a pair of shoes no one has ever worn before,'" she shares. "It feels really good to be able to grant those requests, and add a few other things on besides."

Kolander expresses her gratitude to the Boxcar team for their hard work and consistency. Schmidt extends his thanks to the business owners who contribute items for the sale and, of course, to the buyers who attend the auction.

"We're all working together to do something good," Schmidt says. "That makes the time and the effort worthwhile."

■ Stress

from Page 1

placed on her relationship with her husband, who eventually said he could not stay on the farm and watch the waste, and took a job as an over-the-road truck driver instead, saying she could "do what I wanted" with the farm and the cows.

"There was a point at which I realized I was definitely not okay," she told those in attendance at the wellness seminar. "I found a therapist and I got help."

She went on to talk about the "layers" which can introduce stress to a farming operation. There are a long list of financial elements–everything from finding the money to purchase inputs at the start of the year to worrying about prices when it comes time to sell. She mentioned the recent development that the per-hundred-weight price on live hogs abruptly dropped by nearly half, despite the fact that production costs have shown persistent increases.

Another layer has to do with equipment and deadlines: Machinery breakdowns or worker illness can delay time-sensitive work.

Along with that, there are the long days and the fact that family members sometimes work together under stressful circumstances, placing a strain on their relationship.

"So can agricultural work be stressful?" she asked rhetorically.

Because of those stresses, she said, the Department of Agriculture has a department and a string of services meant to provide support and guidance for farmers and ranchers.

For those who are feeling tremendous pressure, as she was in 2016, and feel like they would like someone who will provide a listening ear, she mentions the Minnesota Farm and Rural Helpline, 833-600-2670. A 24-hour service, it is answered by people acquainted with agriculture. "Some of the calls are very simple," she described. "It might be a farmer out plowing at 3 a.m. who just needs help staying awake.

"It might be someone saying 'It's noon, and I'm alone in the house, so I feel like I can speak freely.'

"Whatever the need, the people at the helpline will be there to listen and, if appropriate, suggest resources."

For those who believe they would like to speak with a therapist, Moynihan says the Department has three mental health providers located around the state. Closest to the Waseca County area is Tracie Self, who is based at Minnesota State University-Mankato. Her services are provided at no cost, and can either be in person or remote. She can be reached at 507-514-7057.

For financial matters, the Department has more than a dozen "farm advocates" who can help with lending/lender negotiations, mediation, farm programs, disaster programs and legal or social services. Their services are also at no cost to clients; they can be located by starting at www.mda.state.mn.us/farmadvocates.

Farmlink services are for families looking at farm transition or succession. Moynihan provided the example of a couple who raised four children, only one of whom stayed on the farm and helped with its operations. "Farmlink would work with the family to see what can be done," Moynihan described. The service would also help aging farmers who want help with questions as they plan the status of their farm in the future. The web address to reach the service is www.mda.state.mn.us/farmlink.

Moynihan also mentioned mediation services provided by the University of Minnesota Extension Service. Mediators, she clarified, are a neutral voice which can step in when "people are afraid of what they might find in the mailbox." Matters the mediators might be called in for include renegotiating, restructuring or resolving farm debt; USDA program determinations; neighbor conflicts and more. Contact information to find out more is Extension.umn.edu>get-help>farmer-lender-mediation.

"We don't want anyone to feel as if there's nowhere they can go for help," Moynihan said. "We encourage people to reach out and find out more about any of these services that could meet their needs."



CELEBRATING GROWTH - The Waseca Area Foundation recently donated nearly $200,000 to help local causes continue, expand, and begin programs and services provided to area local causes during their fall celebration on Nov. 10. Pictured here are representatives from some of the organizations which received grants this fall.
Pioneer photo by Deb Bently

■ WAF

from Page 3

program which sends food home with children over weekends, and general purchases for the food shelf. A similar backpack program at JWP schools received $3,000 in funding.

The "Women in Transition" program received $2,000; Children's Home was granted $3,000 to support events for foster families. Big Brothers Big Sisters received $7,500 for mentoring support. The Committee Against Domestic Abuse (CADA) received nearly $4,000 toward a security system for its Waseca office. The Waseca Champion Fund/Exchange Club was granted $500 toward beginning an adaptive bocce ball program.

The Redemption Project received $10,000 to support its operations. Two Rivers Habitat for Humanity was granted $10,000 toward the construction of homes in Waseca. Jobs Plus received $20,000 toward the purchase of a handicap accessible bus.

Infants Remembered in Silence was granted $5,000 toward bereavement packets.

Knitted Together received $500 toward its "Bright Course" curriculum.

Numerous arts programs were supported, including the Waseca Public Library's summer concert series, $5,000; the Library's water carnival, $1,000; the Waseca Chorale, $2,500; and live entertainment at Christmastime at the Mill, $1,250.

The Waseca Sleigh and Cutter Festival was granted $3,500 toward the lunch it provides participants following the parade and a fireworks display.

Farmamerica's Ag Leadership experience for grades 7 to 12, and the relocation of the facility's community garden also received funding; a total of just under $6,500.

Area schools were generously supported. The Waseca Hartley kindergarten received $1,050 for supplies and equipment. Hartley Elementary was granted $2,000 for a subscription to an online service called PebbleGo Next.

The Waseca Intermediate School received funding toward a Children's Theater field trip, nearly $3,000; the special education "accelerated reader" program was granted $1,600.

The SW Metro "transitions" program which works with intellectually handicapped individuals received about $9,700 toward the purchase of an electric stove and a countertop dishwasher.

At the Waseca Junior Senior High School, the college and career readiness program AVID was granted $1,700; a virtual business simulation was funded for $3,000; and water bottle filling stations were supported with $4,000.

Funding toward student scholarships was granted to Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton (JWP), $3,000; New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva (NRHEG), $3,000; Riverland and South Central Colleges, $10,000; and Waseca High School, $20,000.

NRHEG was also granted $1,500 toward the purchase of some new furniture for its "Panther Perch." JWP received $4,000 toward improving the lighting in its auditorium.

NRHEG Community Education was awarded $3,000, and Waseca Community Education received $10,000 to be used toward student development scholarships. Waseca Community Ed also received $3,000 in support for its 2027 Youth Theater production.

The Pastor's Column

The kindness warrior

By PASTOR RICK WULF
Christ Community Church

I googled the phrase "Keyboard Warrior". This is what it came up with: "A keyboard warrior is an informal, derogatory term for a person who makes aggressive, abusive, or highly opinionated posts on the internet, typically while concealing their true identity. These individuals often behave confrontationally in online discussions but would not exhibit similar aggression in real-life situations, a phenomenon attributed to the online disinhibition effect and the safety of anonymity."

We've all encountered a keyboard warrior. You know the type. They have an opinion about everything, a response to everyone, and apparently an unlimited supply of courage as long as they're sitting behind a screen. They are quick to point out what's wrong with the world, what's wrong with other people, and why everyone else needs to get their act together. They can turn a simple disagreement into a full-blown battle, often without ever having to look the other person in the eye.

I'm hoping that we've never been one of those people. Especially if we call ourselves people of faith. So, if you are a Jesus follower, what would happen if, instead of being keyboard warriors, we became kindness warriors, instead?

Perhaps, it might look like this:

1. Keyboard warriors tear down while kindness warriors build up

While it is easy to criticize, complain, and point out what's wrong, it's much more meaningful to look for opportunities to encourage and build people up. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:32: "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." That's incredibly different than how the world teaches us to respond to those who disagree with us. We don't need more people looking for someone to take down. We need more people looking for someone to lift up.

2. Keyboard warriors react when kindness warriors respond

Social media encourages immediate reactions. We type before we think and post before we consider the consequences. However, kindness compels intentionality. Sometimes the kindest thing we can do is pause, listen, and choose our words carefully. Look at what Proverbs 16:24 says: "Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones." Here's a very real prompt for you when you are wondering whether you should post or comment: Before you hit "send", consider whether your words will make things better or simply make you feel better.

3. Keyboard warriors look for opponents where kindness warriors look for opportunities

A keyboard warrior looks for someone to defeat, an argument to win, an audience to sway.

But a kindness warrior seeks someone to serve. Kindness isn't limited to people who agree with us, look like us, or treat us well. In fact, Jesus challenges us to love our enemies and do good to them (see Luke 6:35). Kindness is not simply being nice when it's convenient.

It's choosing to demonstrate God's love even when it costs us something. You don't have to win every argument to make a difference in someone's life.

4. Keyboard warriors want the last word, but kindness warriors want the right words

Kindness isn't a sign that you are weak. It's evidence that you have enough strength to put someone else ahead of yourself. I think this is where we have gone wrong with social media. While the intent was good-connect with people-the result has been a place where we are more disconnected than ever. When everyone else wants to say what is on their minds, even if it's harsh or mean, we are to be "quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry" (James 1:19).

Now, what I appreciate about the teachings of Paul, Solomon, Jesus, and James is that they don't simply tell us to be nice. They connect kindness to compassion and forgiveness. They remind us that kindness and our reactions are uniquely connected. As we live this fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), we are living out the example of Jesus.

Living out the Biblical fruit of kindness has a deeper purpose than simply being friendlier on Facebook, nicer to the difficult neighbor, holding your temper with the frustrating coworker, or even respectfully ignoring the person who disagrees with us. Kindness is learning to treat them the way God treated us, even when we didn't deserve it.

I'll end with one of my favorite passages from Titus. "But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life." (3:4-7).

God's kindness is so overwhelming. Because of His kindness, we are heirs of God, and we have received the fullness of His eternal blessings. As we share this kindness with others, we are actively living out this Hope, which people need so desperately.

So, the next time you have an opportunity to be a keyboard warrior and tell that person what you think (or what they should think), what if instead you were to be a kindness warrior, pointing them to the hope you have in Jesus. I know it's not always easy, but the best things in life come from doing the hardest things. I believe in you. I believe in us, His Church, who are called to live out His kindness every day.



Waseca County 4-H holds achievement celebration

Around 145 people gathered at FarmAmerica in Waseca on Friday, November 6th to celebrate Waseca County 4-H. Prior to the recognition program, a meal catered by Kelms BBQ was served. Many awards were given to youth leaders, adult leaders and community supporters for their accomplishments and support.

Youth awards were given to:

- Rylie Cromwell & Ty Krautkremer - the "I Dare You" Award for showing emerging youth leadership
- Kinley Thostenson – Outstanding Club Secretary
- Karley Hamilton & Kelton Peirce – The "Matt Hines Spirit of 4-H" Award

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

- Clover Clan – Palmer Dahnert, Alora Marweg, and Norah Mcclain
- Homegrown Explorers - Benjamin Berg, Aylah Maas, and Ada Weber
- Independent – Carter, Elizabeth, & Landon Olmanson, Elinor and Lillian Schultz and Rob Wilhelm
- Janesville Jacks & Jill's – Grace Bade, Avery Bode, and Taylee Mulcahey
- Palmer Sunbeams – Garrett Christensen, Gavin and Kylie Grey, Jocelyn Guildner, and Aubrie Hennen
- Riverside Ramblers – Olivia Bartelt, Henry and Sadie Britton, Elijah and Rowen Ingram, Elijah and Harper Janike, and Eleanor Jewison
- Waldorf Peppy Peppers – Lane Walser and Harper Wenzel

Youth were honored for participation in 4-H record-keeping. Medals were awarded to Kinley Thostenson, Hadley and Presley Roeker, Audrey Gray, and Jacob and Kayla Knutson.

Cloverbuds, who are 4-H members in grades Kindergarten – 2nd Grade, also completed 4-H records and were awarded a certificate. They included Harlow McGinnis, Chloe Knutson, August Lienemann, Nash Roeker, Harper DeSart, and Keegan Root.

Recognition was given to 4-H Camp attendees and counselors. Our 4-H Camper this year was Presley Roeker. Avary Hopper was also recognized as attending as Camp Counselors this year.

Youth recognized for participating in Arts-In were Willow Bartelt, jaxson and Jayson Lewer, Addison Anderson, and Audrey Gray. Steve Scheffert and Jamie Gray were recognized as being the adult volunteers who organized it all.

Youth receiving recognition for their contributions to the Waseca County 4-H program as graduating members included Katy Eldeen, Isaac Feldkamp, Lukas Hager, Karley Hamilton, Addison Kelm, Siri Kuhns, and Mackenzie Levos.

The Waseca County 4-H Ambassadors are a group of youth in 7th grade and older who serve the 4-H program through assisting at events and promoting 4-H. Our 2025-2026 ambassadors were Alexis Myers, Audrey Gray, Avary Hopper, August Bethke, Sam Feldkamp, Oriana Jewison, Paige Johnson, Violet Jewison, Luke Feldkamp, and Claire Bartelt.

Youth recognized for participating in regional and state opportunities, including project bowl and judging contests, were Audrey and Brody Gray, Oliver Haekenkamp, Isaac , Alexis, and Luke Feldkamp, Jaxson and Jayson Lewer, Jacob Klaras, Kenley Tolzman, and Cooper Mason.

Our 2026-2027 Waseca County 4-H Ambassadors are Audrey Gray, Alexis Myers, Oriana Jewison, Paige Johnson, Ashley Fliflet, Rylie Cromwell, Memphis Schlaak, Sam Feldkamp, Alexis Feldkamp, Luke Feldkamp, Olivia Eaton, Jacob Klaras, Avary Hopper, and Daniel Sipe.

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

- Jeannie Feldkamp - 4-H Alumni Award
- Britt Cromwell - Outstanding Adult Volunteer
- Carly and Miseal Mendoza - Distinguished Service Award
- Neighbors Meat Market - Friend of 4-H Award

An award was presented for the "4-H Family of the Year." Receiving this honor were Jen and Karley Hamilton and Clint Peltz.

First Year Adult Volunteer Certificates of Leadership were awarded to Jennifer Bartelt, David and Nicole Chicos, Victoria Genelin, Mindy Jewison, and AmyJo Lewer. The 4-H Award of the Gold Clover for 10 years of serving as a volunteer was awarded to Missy Eaton. The 4-H Award of the Pearl Clover for 15 years of serving as a volunteer was awarded to Sarah Frederick.

Recognition was also given to the 2025-2026 4-H Federation Board officers for their service and leadership: Oriana Jewison - President; Alexis Myers - Vice President; Hadley Roeker - Secretary; Paige Johnson - Youth Treasurer; Audrey Gray, Brody Gray, and Gus Bethke - Youth Reps. Adult board members were Jen Hamilton - Adult Treasurer Advisor; Crystal Myers, Melissa Eaton, Carly Mendoza, and Natalie Roeker; Adult Reps.

New youth officers were installed for the 2026-2027 year. Leading the Waseca County 4-H Federation this year are: Oriana Jewison - President; Olivia Eaton - Vice President; Avary Hopper - Secretary; Ashley Fliflet - Youth Treasurer; Daniel Sipe, Audrey Gray and Brody Gray - Youth Reps. Adult board members are: Jennifer Hamilton - Adult Treasurer Advisor; Natalie Roeker, Carly Mendoza, Melissa Eaton, and Mindy Jewison - Adult Reps.

This year's achievement celebration capped off an extraordinary season of growth, leadership, and project excellence, honoring the remarkable dedication of our participants and youth exhibitors. These outstanding accomplishments were made possible through the generous support of our sponsors and community partners, spanning our dedicated Green Ribbon supporters all the way up to our Supreme Champion Donors. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to every business, family, and volunteer whose vital contributions empower our participants, foster hands-on learning, and ensure the continued vitality of this program for years to come.

■ Conversations

from Page 1

of the public.

During his presentation, Stenglein shared the news that, although 4.5 times as many women attempt suicide as men, about four males die to every one female because, he said, "men use more lethal means."

Among farmers, ranchers and construction workers, he said, suicide is the second-leading cause of death, with people in those fields being 1.5 times more likely to die by suicide than people in other occupational groups.

As a practitioner for the QPR Institute, Stenglein's focus was to share how to approach a conversation when speaking with someone going through a difficult time.

Like fellow speaker Meg Moynihan of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Stenglein asked the audience to consider the wide range of stresses farmers and ranchers encounter. These include financial concerns sometimes as strong as a fear of losing the farm to foreclosure; weather and other important factors beyond the farmers' control; medical issues; long working hours; tensions in family relationships; social isolation; and more.

For some, he continued, those overlapping layers of stress and tension may lead to the conclusion "I'm better off not being here; I need a way out."

Especially men, Stenglein said, are hesitant to share feelings of inadequacy or defeat.

In both agriculture and construction, he described, men tend to have a culture of feeling they should not show weakness, that they should "pull themselves up by their bootstraps" and keep going. In other words, men often feel a sense of stigma about being seen as "vulnerable."

In small towns where "everyone seems to know everyone else's business," there is a concern that they will be seen seeking help at a mental health service. Or, since there is a shortage of mental health clinics in outstate Minnesota, the drive to visit one may seem prohibitively time-consuming.

Given people's tendency not to seek care for mental health conditions, Stenglein said, "we need to look out for each other."

The QPR system, he went on to instruct, stands for "question - persuade - refer."

Stenglein said he finds it an honor to meet with groups of workers and teach them the QPR system.

The "question" step, Stenglein emphasized, begins with a statement of caring. Something like, "You're my friend, and I want things to be okay for you. I'm concerned about something I've noticed recently."

Then a factual observation should be offered. "You've been late to work every day this week. I know that's not like you."

And then the question: "Are you good?"

The understanding among the group, he said, is that the question means something like "Will you be safe if you go out and do your job today? And will those working with you be safe?"

If the person answers yes, he is "good," Stenglein said, the asker is still encouraged to keep an eye on the person who is the source of concern.

If the answer is no, the response is another question: "You want to talk about it?"

"If he says 'yes,' then I'm going to let him talk. I'm going to hear whatever he has to say, and I'm going to offer my support.

"And then I need to ask outright, 'Are you thinking about suicide?'"

Stenglein observed that it's psychologically difficult even to state the words "Are you thinking about suicide," so he suggested that people practice it, either inside their heads, or out loud at a time when they can do so without causing concern.

If the answer to that question is "yes," the individual must not be left alone. A qualified agency, including a mental health emergency response team, law enforcement, or emergency medical professionals should be contacted immediately.

If the answer is no, the individual is not considering suicide, but still is not "good," "I'm also going to encourage him to find help." By "encourage," Stenglein continued, he means the support person should offer to make a phone call to an appropriate type of professional. One immediately available option is the national 988 help line.

"You don't have to be considering suicide to call 988," Stenglein said. "You could call it even if you are a person who's wondering how you can help someone you know.

"If he's not willing to call right now," Stenglein went on, "I'm going to get his promise that he'll make the call."

If the promise is something like "I'll call when I get home," Stenglein said, the support person should call sometime that evening and ask whether the phone call was made.

"It's a myth that, if someone believes it's time for them to die, there's nothing anyone can do to stop it," Stenglein said during his presentation.

"The desire to stay alive is stronger than the impulse to die," he said. "When someone is thinking about suicide, it's because they have the temporary feeling it's their only way out of a difficult time.

"It's a small moment, a 10-minute window when they've lost hope.

"If we interrupt the path to that 10-minute window, we can save lives.

"So be persistent. It shows you care."

Another step that should be considered, Stenglein said, is to limit access to a likely means of self-harm.

"I know we men don't want anyone taking our guns away," he observed. "It's time to explain you're just keeping him safe–that when he's no longer in that dark place, he can have access to them again."

Stenglein suggested numerous sources for more information, including the Minnesota Farm and Rural helpline 833-600-2670; the 988 nationwide mental health line; mobile crisis response teams, in Waseca County, the Spero mobile crisis intervention team can be reached using 911, or calling 844-274-7472. In a life-threatening emergency, dial 911 and notify law enforcement. "Life is complicated," he said. "It's always going to have its ups and downs, so we need to know how to respond."

Attend the Church of your Choice!

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CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH
309 6th St NE, Waseca
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Pastor Sarah Krolak
* * *
NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE WASECA COUNTY PIONEER.

Janesville

25 years ago

- Heather Erdman of Janesville is among the approximately 140,000 students included in the 24th annual edition of The National Dean's List, 2000-2001. The National Dean't List is the largest recognition program and publication in the nation honoring high achieving college students. Students are selected for this honor by their college deans, registrars or honor society advisors and must be in the upper 10 percent of their class, on their school's dean's list or have earned a comparable honor. Listed students are eligible to compete for $50,000 in scholarship awards funded by the publisher.



- TRINITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL BOYS' SOCCER TEAM WIN NEW ULM TOURNAMENT. Pictured front row (left to right): Bobby Stock, Sem Hartfiel, Noah Griffin, Danny Waterhouse, Nathan Roberts, Bobby Atkinson and Pete Effertz. Back row: Coach Lane Hartfiel, Ryan Schumacher, David Kraft, Josh Nikoley, Lucas Dimmel, Wyatt Wheelock, Grant Christensen and Tyler Witt. Not pic-tured: Collin Kubista.

- Brian Finley and Bridget Kester, seniors at Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton High School, have been nominated to compete in the National Honor Society Scholarship competition sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Based on teachers' nominations, Finley and Kester are the senior members of the NHS that have demonstrated outstanding achievement in academic and service. In recognizing leadership in co-curricular activities as well as academic performance, the NHS scholarship recognizes the impotence of a well-rounded education. Two hundred national NHS winners will be chosen this spring to receive $1,000 college scholarships.

50 years ago



- Mr. and Mrs. Robot Weldon, rural Madison Lake, announce the engagement of their daughter, Victoria, to Scott Walther, son of Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Walther, Janesville. Miss Welson is a graduate of Mankato West High School in 1975 and Mankato Commercial College in 1976. Her fiance is a graduate of Janesville High School in 1975. An April 1977 wedding is planned.

- Jerry Abraham, Janesville, is a member of the Moorhead State University Concert Band. Jerry, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Abraham, will be playing the tuba in the first public concert by the 41-piece 976-77 concert band on Sunday, November 7, at three o'clock on the MSU campus.

75 years ago

- Roy Wallace, 37, of Kansas drew $ pay from the farmer he had been working with on Thursday morning when it looked like the rain would make corn picking impossible. By night when he was arrested in Janesville, Wallace had $13 left admitted he'd had at least 35 drinks during the day. After a night in jail, the farmer help Wallace pay the fin of $35.60 imposed by Justice George Tetzloff of Janesville on a drunk and disorderly charge.

- A contest has developed in the village election at Janesville, Nov. 6 between Vernon Walther and Wilbert Lau for the office of trustee. Geo. Schmidt has filed for re-election as trustee clerk. The deadline was Tuesday and there were no filings for the officers of justice of peace, assessor and constable.

100 years ago

- Adolph Herbst, better knows as Otto Herbst, had a hearing in probate court last Saturday and was committed to the hospital for the insane at Rochester. He has been acting queerly for some time and is was thought better to have him taken care of before he injured himself or someone else. He was in a bad way when Policeman Larson took in him charge.

- A student nurse in a Minneapolis hospital who cause the death of a baby by feeding it the wrong medicine by mistake has been discharged and will never be given a license in this state. A chap at our elbow suggests that if the same strict procedure was applied to doctors in certain cases, there would be a worthwhile thinning in the medical profession.

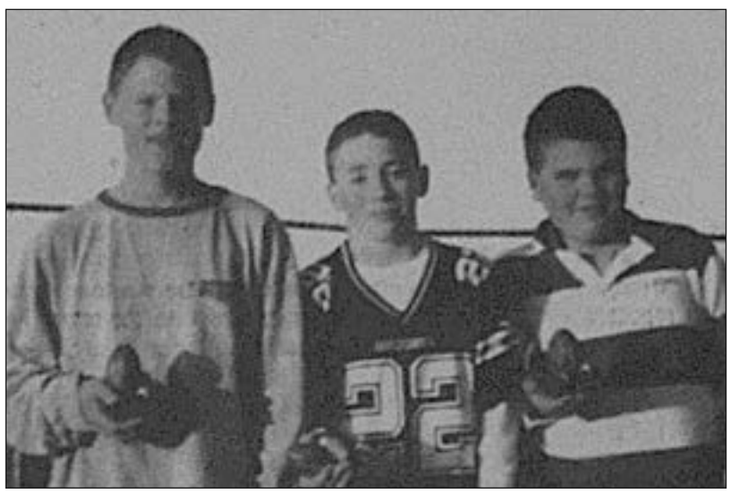
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Waseca

25 years ago

- Waseca Junior High School officials discovered Wednesday morning that four windows in front of the school were broken late Tuesday night or early Wednesday morning with what appear to have been large rocks. Waseca School Liaison Officer Ron Koble said, 'This is a serious act of vandalism. The community of Waseca owns this property. We take pride in what we have here in Waseca, and we don't want it treated with disrespect." He suspects that this was a random act of vandalism. Damage estimates are $1,000. The Waseca Police Department is offering up to a $500 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for this vandalism. Anyone with information on this vandalism is encouraged to call the Waseca Police Department at 835-9720.



- Sixth grade Punt, Pass and Run winners (from left): Kale Groskreutz (Running), Levi Fossen (Passing) and Wade Waugh (Punting)

- The following 4-H'ers proudly represented Waseca County at Regional dog shows around the state. Congratulations to: Megan Fischer-Champ Obedience Beginner A Sr. -Blue Showmanship Senior Novice. Nicole Nelson-White Obedience Beginner A Jr.-Red, Showmanship Jr. Novice. Kyle Sommers- Red Obedience Beginner A Jr.-Red, Showmanship Jr. Novice. Kyree Wobbrock-Blue, Obedience Graduate Beg Jr.-Reserve Champ-Showmanship Jr. Novice. Alison Barens-Blue Obedience Graduate Beg. Jr.- Gail Gorski-White, Obedience Novice Jr. Bridget Fischer-Bue, Showmanship Jr. Open. Four Dog Team-Red Alison Barens, Rachel Beckman, Bridget Fischer, Gail Gorski.

50 years ago

- Waseca School Superintendent Ben Trochill reported to the Journal that the school district's 1977 Pontiac Le Mans was recovered by Minneapolis police on Thursday, Nov. 4. Trochill had parked the automobile in ta St. Paul parking lot on Thursday, Oct. 14, returning about eight hours later to find it missing from the lot. The superintendent received a call Friday morning, Nov. 5, from an automobile insurance official who reported the recovery. Apparently six young people drove the automobile into a Minneapolis parking lot last week and aroused the suspicion of the lot's attendant. The car still bore tax exempt license plates. He notified the Minneapolis Police Department and they put the lot under surveillance. They soon arrested the driver who returned for the car. Waseca Pontiac dealer Phil Hasselquist is completing a check of the automobile to determine the extent of damages to the nearly new vehicle. The only apparent damage, according to Trochil, was a broken headlight. "They did manage to put 1,500 miles on the car during the three week period," he said. "But it does appear to be in good shape."

- Four students from Waseca will play in a joint concert of the Mankato State University Symphony Band and the two MSU Jazz Rock Ensembles at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 10, in the Elias J. Halling Recital Hall of the Performing Arts Center. All four of the students are members of the MSU Symphony Band. They are Dianna Deppe, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Orville W. Deppe. Joy Nelson Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy C. Nelson, Kendra K. Kanne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kennard K. Kanne. Mr. and Mrs. Harland Minges. The MSU Symphony Band, under the direction of Robert Goheen, will present band compositions by Vaughn Williams, Morton Gould, and Charles Ives. It will also represent various styles-marches, novelties and contemporary idioms. The concert is open to the public at no charge.



- WHEN PETER PAN PLYS THROUGH THE AIR ON Nov. 11, in the Waseca High School production of "Peter Pan," It will be due to the strength of tough piano cable riggings, a strong leather harness and the muscles of a couple of WHS guys. Stagecraft students currently working on the production include, Scott Armstrong, left, Mark Hildebrandt and Don Fette.

75 years ago

- Stanley Klampe, Waseca carpenter, is in Memorial hospital here to find out just why he is sore and has so many aches and pains. It's known that Stanley has some broken ribs but X-ray pictures still were being taken of his back following a fall of a barn at the Chester Bethke farm, Waseca Rt. 3, early Tuesday morning. Stanley came 49 years old Wednesday, so the fall Thursday morning was not exactly a welcome birthday gift. He fell some 10 or 12 feet and landed rather badly. There was a cut on the back of his head which required several stitches. Some torn ligaments are involved, so no wonder he has considerable misery. At the present, no serious complications seem to be involved, but careful watch is being taken.

- After four whole days of vacationing, it was hard to face the old books again this week, but by hook or by crook we did it. Can you believe that nine weeks of school have passed already? It doesn't seem quite possible, but we all know it's true because of nine week tests this week. After hours of cramming (hum hum!) everyone was fully prepared to sit down and display his knowledge. Last week Trudie and I each received a letter from Bob Zehm of "Bob's Watch Repair Shop". Seeing it concerts all teens, I thought you might be interested in knowing what he said. The letter read as follows: Dear Girls, Have been following your articles in "Time Out For Teens." I take my hat off to you girls for your sincerity in your comments about"Teen-Age Clubs". I have been working seriously on this about two months with the VFW and several other organizations. Not I think I am making progress and would like to talk with you girls to get some teen-age ideas on how it should be run, etc. Feel free to drop in to my shop at any time. Sincerely Bob Zehm

100 years ago

- Three Waseca men gave talks to the Boy Scouts Tuesday evening, explaining the principles of the three political parties on our state ticket. Atty. Henry Gallagher represented the Democratic party, Emerson Ward, the Republican party and Herman Panzram, the Farmer-Labor party. After the talks the boys held an election of their own with Bernard McCarthy, Harold Mitchell and Robert Gray, Judges; Russel Peterson and Warren Gray, clerks. When the ballots were counted it was found that Governor Christianson received 34 votes, Judge Jaques 5 and Magnus Johnson 3 for governor.

New Richland

25 years ago

- A total of 178 ballots were cast in the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva school board election, Tuesday. Spencer Kubat tallied 150, David Mangskau 137, Joell Quiram 162 and Bert Wiersma 152.



- By the submission of an application by Shelly Smidt (left), New Richland Care Center dietary supervisor, Sue Johnson Care Center Administrator was honored on October 12 as the Minnesota Dietary Managers Administrator of the year. Sue received a plaque for the honor from the Minnesota Dietary Managers Association at the conference in Bemidji.

50 years ago

- Residents of the New Richland-Hartland communities and students from the New Richland-Hartland schools will welcome their championship football team as they arrive back from the State Championship Class C Football game, Saturday with a pep rally at 3 pm in the high school gymnasium. Master of ceremonies will be Don Entwisle.

- The Red Cross Bloodmobile collected 75 pints of blood during its visit here, Tuesday November 9. Receiving special recognition for donations over a period of years were Rev. Ronald Mathison of Hartland and Mrs. Richard Crumb of New Richland , who received three gallon pins.

75 years ago

- Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Root of near New Richland, became the parents of their third daughter, born at Memorial hospital, Waseca, Saturday December 8. They have a little son, Glen Charles. The infant daughter has been named Rita Mae.

- Miss Beverly Johnson and Vernon Lunde were united in marriage at the LeSueur River Lutheran church Sunday, December 9.

- Mr. and Mrs. B. C. Rotegard joined their daughter, Miss Jane, and son, George, of the Twin Cities, at the Richard Rotegard home in Minneapolis Sunday. The Richard Rotegards infant son, Dana Richard, was baptized that morning at Lake Nokomis Lutheran church by Pastor C. Nestande.

- Mankato Production Credit Association held its annual Stockholders meeting at the Mankato Armory Wednesday, December 5. Over 750 farmers from Blue Earth, Brown, Nicollet, Sibley and Waseca counties attended.Carl Olstad, president of the association presided.

Waseca County Pioneer History Question of the week:

Who gifted the bandstand to the Waseca city park in 1915?

The answer to this question and future history questions can be found online at explore.wasecacounty.gov, through the Explore Waseca County app, or by scanning the QR code shown here.

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LESSONS AND CAROLS
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
DEB WANTOCH-YESS AND JOHN HOEHN
ACCOMPANIST: NOAH WILSON
PERCUSSIONISTS: DEVON LAWRENCE
WITH GUEST INSTRUMENTALISTS
CRISTA BOHLMANN & HANNAH LACROIX
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2026
AT 4:00PM
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH
111 4TH STREET NW, WASECA
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR
ADULTS $10 AND YOUTH 12 AND UNDER $7
This activity is made possible in part by grants from the Waseca Area Foundation through the EF Johnson Fund and Waseca County Arts Fund.







ON TO THE BANK — The Waseca High School football team punched its return ticket to U.S. Bank Stadium with a 19-16 victory over St. Croix Lutheran Academy last Saturday at Apple Valley. At left, the Bluejays' Jacob Knutson (45) Landen Madsen (62) and Jaxton Rohl (12) converge on the opposing quarterback. In the middle, Sam Selthun rumbles for a portion of his 201 yards rushing. At right, Brady McKenna (6) signals for a key fourth-quarter safety.
Photos by Cassie Rupe, Waseca Football Association

Next up, The Bank

Bluejays to face DGF in rematch of state semifinal

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

It's back to The Bank for the Waseca High School football team.

The Bluejays secured their spot in the Class AAA state semifinals on the Vikings' field with a tough 19-16 victory over Zumbrota-Mazeppa in a state quarterfinal game last Saturday at Apple Valley.

The Bluejays will tee it up Saturday, Nov. 21 at 4:30 at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis against Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton — a rematch of last year's state semifinal, which the Bluejays won before falling to Annandale in the finals.

As expected, the Zumbrota-Mazeppa game was not easy, but the Bluejays controlled the line of scrimmage both offensively and defensively while outrushing the Cougars 315-25.

Sam Selthun topped the 200-yard mark with 201 yards on 30 carrie3s, while quarterback Kellen Klinger ran for 72 on 20 attempts.

Waseca head coach Brad Wendland was pleased with the win and the opportunity to return to U.S. Bank Stadium.

"There's nothing like playing at U.S. Bank in front of our school and community," said Wendland. "Waseca is a great place to coach. It is an amazing experience and opportunity for the young men in our program. We will prepare hard."

The Z-M game was a defensive battle early on, with the first quarter ending in a scoreless tie.

The Bluejays engineered a 14-play drive late in the second quarter, capped by a two-yard run by Klinger. Owen Rupe added the PAT and it was 7-0 at halftime

Waseca's opening second-half drive took 4:11 off the clock, covering 66 yards in 10 plays, culminated by a 35-yard field goal from Rupe.

After forcing a quick three-and-out, the Bluejays went 64 yards in 14 plays, with the final yard covered by a short Klinger run.

The Cougars' offense finally came alive in the fourth quarter, but Brady McKenna iced the win by forcing the quarterback out of the back of the end zone.

Selthun and McKenna shared the iWealth Player of the Game honor.

This Saturday, the Bluejays will square off with a DGF team that was seeded second in the north half of the Class AAA state tournament. The Rebels knocked off third-seeded Annandale 18-14 and face top seed Pierz in the other semifinal.

The Class AAA state championship game is Saturday, Nov. 28 at 1 p.m. at U.S. Bank Stadium/

Waseca 19, Zumbrota-Mazeppa 16

TCU	0	0	0	16 - 16
WAS	0	7	3	9 - 19

First Quarter

No scoring

Second Quarter

WAS - Klinger 2 run (Rupe kick)

Third Quarter

WAS -Rupe 35 field goal

Fourth Quarter

WAS - Klinger 1 run (Rupe kick)
ZM - Stumpf 27 pass from Boeraas kick (Stumpf pass from Boraas)
ZM - Dohm 33 pass from Boraas (Tesmer pass from Boraas)
WAS - Safety, McKenna tackled quarterback in end zone

	Z-M	WAS
First downs	7	20
Rushing Yards	25	315
Passing Yards	169	29
Total Yds.	194	344
Penalties-Yards	4-30	7-65

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing – WAS: Selthun 30-201; Klinger 20-72; Rahe 4-44; Dymeck 3 —2; ZM: Boraas 8-16; Tesmer 2-8; Olson 9-1

Passing — WAS: Klinger 3-7, 29; ZM: Boraas 10-26, 169

Receiving — WAS: Rahe 2-23; Selthun 1-6; ZM: Meyers 5-59; Stumpf 2-57; Dohm 1-33; Tesmer 2-30

Waseca defense: Rahe 1T; Worke 2T; Rupe 2T, 2S; McKenna 8T, 1S, 3TFL; Kath 4T; O'Brien 1T; Rohl 4T, 1S; Powell 1T; Glynn 4T; Ristau 1T; Jeske 2T; Thompson 1T; Madsen 1T, 1TFL; Knutson 4T; Janike 1T; Castro 1Int.





STOP US IF YOU CAN — The rushing game was firing on all eight cylinders for the Waseca High School football team in its state quarterfinal victory over St. Croix Lutheran. At left, the Bluejays' Titan Rahe runs with the football. At right, Sam Selthun follows the blocking of Shakeem Brown (60) and Sean Noble (55).



UNDER PRESSURE — Owen Rupe (5) chases the St. Croix Lutheran quarterback into the end zone.





IN BRIEF

Christmas Bazaar at St. Paul's Lutheran Church Dec. 5

There will be a Christmas Bazaar at St. Paul's Lutheran Church from 10:30 a.m. thru 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. Crafts, baked goods, homemade lefse, hot beef sandwiches and sloppy joes. Located at 314 4th Ave. NE.

Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board Meeting Dec. 10

The SWCD will be holding its monthly board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 10. The meetings will be held in the SWCD offices located at 300 North State Street - Door 4.

Holiday Train to stop in Waseca on Dec. 11

The Canadian Pacific Kansas City (CPKC) Holiday Train is scheduled to make a brief stop in Waseca from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 11. The stop will be in the vicinity of the public safety building located along State Street South.

$1,000 scholarships available for UMW alumni family

The Southern School of Agriculture (SSA), and the University of Minnesota-Waseca (UMW) Alumni Association is pleased to announce the availability of scholarships to current high school seniors or graduates pursuing a two- or four-year degree, whose parent or grandparent is alum of the University of Minnesota-Waseca or the Southern School of Agriculture.

Two $1,000.00 scholarships will be awarded to a child, grandchild or great grandchild of an alumnus with a GPA of 3.0 and above, and who is pursuing a 2- or 4-year post secondary degree.

To apply, mail a completed resume (activities, offices held, accomplishments, leadership awards, employment history, future plans, etc), a cover letter summarizing the resume as well as indicating the name of your parent, grandparent or great grandparent who attended SSA or UMW and their years of attendance, two signed letters of recommendation from an instructor and community member, a copy of high school and/or college transcript to Alumni Scholarship Committee, Southern Research and Outreach Center, 35838 120th St., Waseca, MN 56093. Questions can be directed to Kay Pedretti at (507) 313-6394 or Email: umwalum@umn.edu.

Applications must be postmarked no later than January 8, 2027.

Home for the Holidays supports neighbors

By DEB BENTLY
News Editor

"It comes at just the right time to start warming your heart for Christmas," comments Gavin Berg, musician and New Richland area native who, with fellow hometown musician Adam Moen, plans and performs the New Richland Area Foundation's annual concert, Home for the Holidays.

This year's performances will be presented three times at New Richland's Trinity Lutheran Church at 204 First Avenue NW: 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 4, and again at 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. A new touch, a cocktail hour from 4:30 to 6:30 on Saturday at the Steeple Event Center, is also part of this year's celebration.

All funds from this year's concert will go directly to the New Richland Area Disaster Response Fund. As it has been for the past four years, the event is sponsored by the New Richland Area Foundation, a philanthropic group which distributes money to area organizations and events to support initiatives, activities, and services which help and support local residents.

The cocktail hour will offer snacks and social time for a free-will donation, along with a cash bar and the chance to see the new Steeple Event Center, a decommissioned church right next door to Trinity Lutheran.

Adam Moen and Gavin Berg are NRHEG school district graduates who have gone on to build careers as professional musicians. They will be joined again this year by fellow graduates and musicians Ellen Johnson and Eva Wayne.

"I have attended the concert each year," says area resident Teri Kormann. "I wouldn't miss it!

Gavin and Adam are both such talented musicians, as well as being wonderful guys! Their guest performers are also talented, and the song selections are varied enough that anyone who attends will be entertained throughout the entire concert."

Performer Eva Wayne says, "I started working with Gavin and Adam when I was a senior in high school, and now I am a senior in college still performing with them! I always love supporting the community through music and performing with such talented individuals."

Adam Moen feels much the same: "It's an honor to provide a benefit concert that helps people - the support goes both ways and it really shows. I feel as if we have created a new holiday tradition for our community, and I now look forward to it every year."

He goes on to say he and Berg start taking notes for the next year even while they're performing the current one, and they typically begin meeting to plan and prepare in September.

"There's nothing about the concert I don't enjoy," he says. "The audience participation elements, though, are some of the most fun."

Area resident Molly Hendrickson has been at nearly all the previous performances. She agrees that the good-natured humor and energy of the audience participation activities are a highlight. "I also love the overall energy the entire group brings. There are a lot of smiles and laughter throughout the evening.'

Gavin notes the concert is "about providing a bright spot in an all too shadow-filled world. Hundreds of people who are connected through our hometown gather together each year and laugh, maybe cry a little, and ultimately make a difference through the funds raised. Which then radiates far beyond the concerts. And that's a beautiful thing.

"So as long as people continue to enjoy the show, we'll be there!"

Molly Hendrickson observes, "The performance brings the community together, gets everyone in the Christmas spirit, and creates a truly heartwarming experience.

"I'm grateful we have an event like this to look forward to every year."

Interim update from Rep. Tom Sexton

Greetings Neighbor,

Last night I had the opportunity to attend a hearing for the PowerOn Midwest hearing in Wells, MN. The purpose of this series of hearings for PowerOn Midwest will confirm or deny the Certificate of Need for the transmission line. Specifically, this series of hearings will not address the actual routing for the transmission line; however, the routing is generally understood to be in the vicinity of Interstate 90 from the South Dakota border to Rochester where it will turn north and terminate at the North Rochester Substation. Per the meeting last night, the Administrative Law Judge anticipates transmitting his report to the MN Public Utilities Commission (PUC) on February 15th, 2027.

Per an overview slide provided by the Administrative Law team, the MN PUC will grant or deny the Certificate of Need (CON) based on the following four questions:

1. Is the project needed to maintain an adequate, reliable, and efficient energy supply?
2. Is there a more reasonable and prudent alternative?
3. Do the project's benefits justify its potential impacts on people, communities, and the environment?
4. Can it be designed, built, and operated consistent with State, federal, and local requirements?

The Administrative Law Judge made a key point during the opening presentation: Data Center growth was not considered as part of the original MISO Tranche 2.1 justification for this transmission line.

I encourage everyone to review the project references here.

Specifically, the preliminary schedule calls for filing the Certificate of Need, PUC Review Process, route development, and filing of Route Permit applications with the PUC in 2026-2027, if the Certificate of Need is approved.

Ongoing easement acquisition, pre-construction activities, construction, and restoration will occur from 2030-2024.

Overall in-service dates will vary from 2032-2034 by segment following construction and commissioning.

Whether or not I am selected for the Energy committee again, I will be watching this project closely as more and more transmission power lines will be needed to achieve the 2023 Carbon Free mandate by 2040. Achieving the Carbon Free by 2040 mandate will impact all of us as we pay higher electric utility bills to pay for more wind and solar energy, adding battery energy storage, and additional backup generation when wind, solar, and battery storage is not available. Please see this link for a summary of the requirements passed in 2023.

Coffee with Tom

Coffee with Tom will be at the Owatonna Chamber of Commerce on Friday (today), November 13th, 2026 from 12:00pm - 1:00pm.

Coffee with Tom will be in Waseca on Friday, November 20th, 2026 from 12:00pm – 1:00 pm.

Again, please continue check my Facebook page for updates on my Coffee with Tom dates and times.

Thank you for your support and feedback, and please reach out if you need assistance in the meantime.

I want to hear you

I am always here to listens to concerns or ideas of my constituents. I can be reached via email rep.tom.sexton@house.mn.gov or phone 651-296-5368.

Child's History of Waseca County

Chapter XVIII, 1856. Assault and battery—A lawsuit—Attempted claim jumping—John Greening as constable—First store at Waterlynn

It is perhaps well enough to say here that the plan of this work is to give the names of all the very early settlers, for a few years, and then, each year, give the events that are deemed of public interest as they transpired.

One of those outrages that sometimes stir the indignation of a whole community, whether large or small, occurred early in the summer of 1856. About the first of that loveliest of months in Minnesota, June, two brothers, calling themselves John and William Jaques, came wandering through the county, evidently bent on mischief. They said they came from Iowa, and pretended to be in search of government land—something at that time everywhere present in northern Iowa and Southern Minnesota. Upon their first entrance into the county, they camped near A. G. Sutlief's farm, in Wilton. They were very inquisitive as to claims. They enquired who had preempted? Who claimed more land than the law allowed? Who had claims to sell? Who had lived up to the requirements of the law, and who had not?

They seemed anxious, too, to find out who had horses to sell, what kind of horses they were, what kind of men owned horses, etc. They lost no opportunity to ply their inquisitiveness as they passed along through the settlement. Going thus from house to house, they became acquainted more or less, with the affairs and condition of each settler, from Otisco and Byron to St. Mary. In St. Mary they found, what they supposed to be a fine opening for a display of their innate meanness. As before stated in this history, several of the Krassins and two of the Prechels had settled in St. Mary, the previous year. Gottlieb Prechel had taken a claim on section thirty-two, adjoining the reservation then occupied by the Winnebago Indians.

In the latter part of the winter of 1855-6, Prechel and the Krassins had proved up and entered their lands, but this was not generally known in the settlement. This Prechel land was about three-fourths of a mile down the river from the old townsite of St. Mary. During the summer of 1855, PRechel had built a comfortable log house, with a thatched roof, and broken about ten acres of prairie. At the time he had crops growing upon the plowed land and was engaged in fencing it. Owing to the proximity of Indians, and the timidity of his family and himself, he moved into the house with Martin Krassin, after having entered his land.

Martin's house was on section thirty-four, nearly three miles further up the river. Madam Rumor had informed these roving Jaques that Prechel was not living on his land and that his claim could be jumped. "Only a Dutchman" claimed it; he could be easily driven off; there was a comfortable house ready made; there were breaking and fencing already done; there were fine timber, pure water, rich prairie; there was a glorious chance to take the product of other people's labor without paying for it, and why not improve their opportunity?

These men Jaques thought this a fine opening and so moved on to the premises and took possession. Prechel soon became aware of the fact and, and proceeded at once to see about the matter. Accompanied by his brother-in-law, Martin Krassin, he took his team, proceeded to the farm, and commenced cutting and hauling fencing. The two Jaques heard the chopping, soon came out where they were at work, and, with much assumed authority, ordered them off the premises. Krassin and Prechel could neither speak nor understand much of the English language, but tried to make the Jaques understand that the land belonged to Prechel and that he had paid the government for it. But the Messrs. Jaques would not listen, and were peremptory in demanding that the Germans should leave the claim. Prechel was somewhat timid, said but little, and desired to retreat; but Martin Krassin, being of a different make and mind, maintained that he had a better right there than the Jaques and ordered them to leave.

John Jaques at once commenced an assault upon Martin, and pounded him about the face and head in a most brutal manner. Martin was badly bruised and, for the time, driven from the land. All the German settlers were aroused and justly indignant at this brutal outrage; they concluded to try what virtue there was in law. There was no lawyer at hand, but, after some study, an affidavit of the facts was made before John Jenkins, Esq., who issued a warrant that was placed in the hands of John G. Greening, then acting constable, for the apprehension of John Jaques. Constable Greening summoned a posse and proceeded to perform his official duty.

Spending slowed at retail stores as high prices give shoppers pause

By MPR

Shoppers increased spending more slowly in October as economic uncertainty and high prices led more Americans to pull back on a variety of purchases from cars to clothing and furniture, even their hobbies, ahead of the unofficial start to the holiday shopping season.

Retail sales rose 0.2 percent in October, down from a 0.8 percent gain in September, according to the Commerce Department's report released Tuesday.

Sales at gas stations rose 1.5 percent last month after spiking 30.3 percent in September. Excluding gas stations, retail sales rose just 0.1 percent.

Overall retail sales were pulled down by decline in sales at motor vehicle and parts dealers. Auto vehicles and parts dealers had a 1.6 percent drop in sales in October, reversing a 1.3 percent increase in September. Excluding that sector, retail sales rose 0.6 percent.

Adjusting for higher prices, consumer spending was "negative," according to Heather Long, chief economist at Navy Federal Credit Union. The Consumer Price Index rose 0.4 percent in October, according to data released last week, hotter than expected.

"The cautious consumer is back," Long wrote Tuesday. "October retail sales were tepid. Budgets are tight for many households."

She noted the drop in gas prices in November will help free up some much-needed cash this holiday season, but middle-class and moderate-income households are "feeling the strain."

Yet even with a recent decline in gas prices, a gallon still costs nearly 20 percent more than at this time last year.

Business was down at multiple types of businesses, including clothing stores and furniture and home furnishing retailers, last month, according to the report. Even the sporting goods, musical instruments, books and hobby store sector struggled with a decline in sales. That sector had been strong this past spring and summer as shoppers focus on fun little splurges, Long noted.

One of the bright spots was online retailers, which saw a boost from a two-day Amazon Prime Day event, which took place in early October. That sector was up 1.2 percent.

The data offers only a snapshot of consumer spending and doesn't include activities like travel and hotel stays. But the lone services category – restaurants registered a 0.2 percent increase.

Still, the so-called control group—which excludes food services, autos, building materials and gas station sales and is used to calculate economic growth—rose a solid 0.6 percent.

Higher energy prices are ricocheting into other parts of the economy, with airfares, public transportation and shipping all jumping in price. Grocery prices, for example, increased 0.4%, a painful uptick after years of increases, according to new Labor Department data.

Massive investments in artificial intelligence have exacerbated inflation by driving up computer chip prices and, in turn, prices for laptops, phones and other consumer electronics.

Retailers are preparing for a surge in business over the Thanksgiving weekend, the unofficial start of the holiday shopping period. Stores have heavily advertised deals to lure customers who increasingly buy when they think prices have dropped.

Companies like Kohl's and Target and Walmart are trying to drive the affordability message home through marketing.

Target said it's offering more than 8,000 new gifts for the winter holidays, with more than half exclusive to the retailer. Most of the new holiday items at Target are $20 or less, including thousands of items that are priced at $5 and under. Kohl's has increased the number of gift sets across different types of merchandise.

Americans, despite the rising cost of credit, continue to rely on cards to finance spending, and credit experts say that defaults have been stable.

"More Americans are carrying credit cards than ever, and they're handling them well," said Charles Wise, head of global research and consulting at the credit reporting agency TransUnion.

Wise noted that outstanding credit card balances as of last month hit $1.17 trillion, up 5.1 percent from the year-ago period, based on data covering 178.5 million consumers who held an active credit card as of last month. Yet serious delinquency rates held steady, he said.

That signals that "consumers remain disciplined borrowers heading into the holidays," he added.

NEW RICHLAND CITY COUNCIL

Additional meeting planned to discuss tax levy

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff Writer

The current tax levy amount is planned to be 11.22 percent. There will be a work session on Nov. 18 at 5 p.m., regarding this issue, that amount may change. The council will vote on this at the regular Dec. 14 meeting.

Chris Howard, Director of the Waseca County Land and Water Resources gave the council a ditch update and said Houston Engineering Incorporated is conducting a study regarding the flood threat downstream and if any New Richland changes to the current water flow will become an issue or a danger to the public. The Waseca County Board of Commissioners has agreed to cover the cost of this study in the amount of $42,000.

The flood has affected water meters around town and City Administrator Tyler Lendt asked for authorization to purchase and replace 200 meter heads in the flood affected areas at $275 each for $55,000. The council approved $3,597.20 for Prokore Habitability Inspections to visit all homes affected by the floods to make sure those homes are safe for residents to return.

The council accepted donations in the amount of $3,350 from numerous sources. Tom Sexton, who is a member of the state legislature's bonding committee, gave a rundown on the meeting schedule for funding. He is hoping for a bonding hearing between January and May, which may add New Richland to be a part of the bonding bus tour, which will increase the chances of getting additional funding.

Sarah Sundve gave the ambulance report and said October had 98 runs. Tim Janzen, the newest hire, is an applicant from North Ambulance and will be starting soon.

City fire chief Chad Neitzel said there were five fire calls and one car accident.

Tanyce Bruegger, Police Chief, gave the police report. Total calls for October were 104, including 33 traffic stops, three animal complaints, 19 directed patrols/lock checks, eight assist other agencies, four suspicious circumstances, five disturbance/disorderly, and eight house watches. The Hide and Seek event saw approximately 40 participants, all but one wre found within a timeframe. The Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training conducted a review of the New Richland PD on 10/6/26 and they passed.

At the New Richland Care Center, Administrator Bob Johannsen reported continued progress on flood restoration work, including asbestos abatement and insurance claims processing. The facility also benefited from a successful flood relief fundraiser that attracted more than 700 attendees. The fundraiser at the Mill in Waseca saw over 700 people. The next Care Center fundraiser will take place at the Green Mill in Albert Lea all day on Wednesday, Nov. 18; purchase a meal or a gift card and the center will receive 25%.

The council approved a $59,000 proposal for engineering services that will support GIS infrastructure mapping, long-term infrastructure planning, and applications for Public Facilities Authority funding. Officials said the project will help the city prepare for future utility and roadway improvements.

For public comment Bob Swenson from South Broadway Street said a 100-year rain event has a 1% chance of occurring and means a large amount of rain that can happen in a 24-hour period.

The New Richland city council met in the evening of Monday, Nov. 9.

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Filed in District Court State of Minnesota 10/29/2026

State of Minnesota
Freeborn County
District Court
Third District
Court File Number: 24-JV-26-1676
Case Type: CHIPS - Permanency
Summons and Notice – Termination of
Parental Rights Matter

In the Matter of the Welfare of the Child(ren) of: Cora Charleen Griffen, Mother and Brett Lee Grant, Father

NOTICE TO: Cora Charleen Griffen**, Above-named parent(s) or legal custodian(s).**
A Termination of Parental Rights Petition has been filed in the Juvenile Court alleging that parental rights of the above-named parent(s) or legal custodian(s) to the child(ren) named in the petition should be permanently severed.
This is your notice that this Termination of Parental Rights case is scheduled for a hearing before the Juvenile Court located at 411 South Broadway Albert Lea MN 56007, on December 07, 2026 at 1:00 PM or as soon after as the case can be heard. Please contact court administration to get the hearing information.
YOU ARE ORDERED to appear before the Juvenile Court at the scheduled time and date.
You have a right to be represented by counsel.
If you fail to appear at the hearing, the Court may still conduct the hearing and grant appropriate relief, including permanently severing the parental rights of the above-named parent(s) or legal custodian(s) or taking permanent custody of the child(ren) named in the Petition.

Dated: October 29, 2026
Lacey Bartsch Court Administrator
Freeborn County District Court
411 South Broadway
Albert Lea MN 56007 507-668-6014

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on November 5, 12 and 19, 2026

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NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the Waseca City Council, according to Resolution Number 26-65, will hold its public **Truth-In-Taxation Meeting on Tuesday, December 1, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.** in the City Hall Council Chambers, 508 South State Street, Waseca, MN 56093.

If a continuation is needed, it will be held on Tuesday, December 15, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Published in the *Waseca County Pioneer* on November 12, 19 and November 25, 2026.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
WASECA COUNTY BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
The Waseca County Board of Adjustment will hold a public hearing at the Waseca County East Annex (Commissioner's Room), 300 N. State Street, Waseca, MN 56093 on Thursday, December 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. to consider the following item:

A. **Lois M Huerkamp** requests several after-the-fact variances for her parcel (PID 05.005.4300) in Government Lot Three (3) of Section Five (5), Township One Hundred Eight (108) North, Range Twenty-three (23) West in Iosco Township for the installation of a new septic system. The variance requests are:
   1. Variance of 10 ft less than the required 20 ft setback between the absorption area and the principal dwelling;
   2. Variance of 9 ft less than the required 10 ft setback between the absorption area and the property line;
   3. Variance of 4 ft less than the required 10 ft setback between the septic tank and the property line; and
   4. Variance to increase the impervious surface coverage 11% more than the required 25%.

The staff report for this item will be available at the Waseca County Planning and Zoning Office, 300 N State St., Waseca, MN 56093 during regular business hours 8:00–4:30, and will be on the county website www.wasecacounty.gov on the agenda tab by November 30, 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

Published in the Waseca County Pioneer on November 19, 2026

SWEET SOMMERS VFW POST 1642 November 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 BURGER NIGHT 5 TO 7	4 6PM BAR BINGO	5 7pm HALL BINGO	6 MEAT Raffle 5:30 pm Horse racing 6:30 pm	7
8 Breakfast 8-12 Your Host Girls Soccer team	9 7 pm Post & AUX. Meeting	10 Marine Corps Birthday	11 VETERANS DAY 6PM BAR BINGO	12 7pm HALL BINGO	13 MEAT Raffle 5:30 pm Horse racing 6:30 pm	14
15	16	17 BURGER NIGHT 5 TO 7	18 6PM BAR BINGO	19 7pm HALL BINGO	20 Walleye or Shrimp Dinner 5:30 – 7 pm your host VFW AUX	21 TURKEY BINGO— SLOPPY JOE'S AND CHIPS FROM 5-7 PM
22	23	24 BURGER NIGHT 5 TO 7	25 6PM BAR BINGO	26 7pm HALL BINGO	27 MEAT Raffle 5:30pm Horse racing 6:30 pm	28
29	30					

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

CHRISTMAS TIME
6th Annual • at The Mill
Saturday, December 5, 2026
Noon–7:00 PM
FREE FOR EVERYONE
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Letters to Santa • Face Painting • Caricatures
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ChristmasTimeMN.org



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MUSICAL TALENT - Find more photos on Waseca Pioneer's Facebook page and on the Pioneer's website.

Pioneer photos by Ben Revermann and Deb Bently

■ Indoor

from Page 1

evening with dazzling, neon displays. Marching Band Director Devon Lawrence said, "We're ready for tonight. Everything has gone well so far, the kids are prepared, they have a lot of energy. No one is sick tonight and we have an injury or two but that's always an issue and I'm not worried. I have faith in them." Songs like "I Wanna Dance with Somebody," "Blinding Lights," and "Dancing Queen" gave the show a mainstream appeal and showcased the diverse skills and talents of band members. Giana Zak, who plays the clarinet, said on Saturday night, "I think it's going well. We've improved so much from where we started three weeks ago, it was so confusing at first." Quinn Yoder who plays alto sax said, "I think it's better than it was last year."

Eight performances were presented prior to intermission, including a children's participation event which invited kids from the audience to join the band members on the gym floor for an obstacle course that included a limbo session and a flashing light dance party.

Band members used the 15-minute intermission to relax for a few minutes, rearrange instruments, and change costumes before returning for a final eight-song set. Larson Mortensen rated the night's performance at the intermission and said, "I think we're at an 8 out of 10. Our feet timing could improve. Fellow band member Lauren Zimprich said, "I've been told I'm getting better, I can memorize my music now and that was an issue for me. I know I need more practice but I'm getting pretty good."

Kristi Kopecki, one of the parents in the stands said, "The show has been amazing: I saw the Friday show and I am back tonight. They've been pretty consistent from night to night, but no matter what, I'll be here again tomorrow."

The final number for the night was vocal rather than instrumental: band members stood holding hands in a line singing the song "Friends." As each verse finished, first the ninth graders left, then the tenth grade, then the eleventh until only the seniors remained. Those seniors who performed their last show for the Marching Jays were Amber Hagen, Chelsia Eneboe, Colby Hoof, Dawson Goodlander, Elliott Galle, Isabella Garza, Kaliya Russell, Lacey Frank, Megan Hudak, Megan Tegmeier, Noelle Drake and Taylor Markeson.

After the performance Devon Lawrence gave special thanks before handing the microphone to Anastasia Garza, president for the Marching Jay Boosters, who brought different groups and individuals down to the floor after each performance, thanking them for their many hours of dedication and support.

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