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Waseca County Farm & City Luncheon on March 19

The county farm and city luncheon at Farmamerica will begin at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 19 to acknowledge the hardworking individuals who continue to move our ag industry forward. Tickets are \$20 per person and must be purchased in advance at the Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism. The deadline to purchase tickets is March 9. Must have a ticket to attend.

Albert Lea Chamber of Commerce Agricultural Luncheon Tuesday, March 24

Albert Lea Chamber of Commerce Agricultural Luncheon will be at noon on Tuesday, March 24 at the Freeborn County Fairgrounds in the Fairlane Building. As part of the luncheon, the Chamber will recognize the 47th Freeborn County Farm Family of the Year.

Ellendale Fire Department Fish Fry Friday, March 27

The Ellendale Fire Department is offering a fish fry the evening of Friday, March 27 from 5 p.m. until the food is gone. The event will be at the Ellendale Community Center. Free will donations will be accepted at the door.

Annual Farmamerica Meeting March 27

Farmamerica will hold their annual members meeting at 1 p.m. on Friday, March 27. The public is welcome to attend to reflect on the past year and share updates on what Farmamerica has been up to. Voting members are encouraged to attend and participate in the election of new board members. Please RSVP by calling 507-835-2052 or email hilary@farmamerica.org.

Geneva Bar and Grill Mini Cancer Auction Saturday, March 28

The Geneva Bar and Grill hosting a Mini Cancer Auction from 2 p.m. until all auction items sell out, on Saturday, March 28. All proceeds go toward the Geneva Cancer Auction.

Winter Farmers Market at Farmamerica on Saturday, March 28

A winter farmers market will be at Farmamerica from 8 a.m. till noon Saturday, March 28. Find locally grown, baked and made while supporting our local producers. Farmamerica is located at 7367 360th Ave., Waseca.

Pancake Breakfast at Geneva Bar and Grill Sunday, March 29

There will be a pancake breakfast at Geneva Bar and Grill from 8 a.m. till noon on Sunday, March 29. Serving pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage links, biscuits and gravy, milk, OJ and coffee. Free will donations accepted.

A word from

The Word

Life will be brighter than noon-day, and darkness will become like morning.

Job 11:17

Peppy Peppers Bingo introduces kids to 4-H

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

The Waldorf Peppy Peppers 4-H Club held its eighth annual bingo gathering the afternoon of Sunday, March 8. Those in attendance were treated to homemade snacks and juice, and could win any of numerous prizes. The event drew about 40 visitors. Fortunately, plenty of Peppers were there to help out.

Adult volunteer Amanda Bethke explained all the prizes and snacks were donated by the 4-H club members. “We do this to call attention to 4-H and to let kids know that it’s out there; we’re always looking for new members, and this is a fun way to do that.” There were chips, cookies, brownies and bars; there was also juice and coffee available over at the kitchen windows.

Up in the front of the room were four junior callers who were doing a fine job. Bethke pointed out Harper, Kenny, Landon and Jace. As she spoke, Jace called out “B-4”; Bethke added, “I don’t think I’ve ever heard Jace talk this loud before today.”

Of the 40 or so people present, well over half were 18 or younger. While Bethke was talking, “Bingo” was called out twice. After the winning cards were confirmed, both Elaine and Presley (two sisters) were al-



WINNERS - The Waldorf Peppy Peppers put on a bingo game at the community center on Sunday, March 8, 2026. Above, kitchen volunteers pictured from left: Natalie Roeker, Ashley Tolzman, Cade Root, Britt, Riley, and Kendrick Cromwell. Below, Presley and little Elaine were winners at the Waldorf Peppy Peppers 4-H bingo game at the community center on Sunday, March 8, 2026. They were carefully supervised by big sister Adley.

lowed to peruse the winners’ table and pick any item. Elaine chose a not-so-little bag of Reese’s Peanut Butter Easter eggs and big sister Presley picked a single plastic container of brand-new Play-Doh. Other items they might have chosen included cookies or pens and drawing paper. It was a nice afternoon and a pleasant atmosphere with plenty of smiles to go around.

Bethke also wanted everyone to know there will be a Peppy Peppers 4-H pancake breakfast from 7 a.m. to noon on Sunday, April 12 at the Waldorf community center. “It’s free and open to the public,” she mentioned. “They will be accepting free-will donations.”



Ellendale fire department move on schedule

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff writer

During the March 12 Ellendale city council meeting, it was announced that residents who believe the assessed value of their homes is in error will have a chance to appeal during a board of equalization open book meeting from 1 to 3 p.m. on April 8. Spring equalization meetings of this type are the one time a year property owners can appeal the recorded market value of their homes, which is a fundamental number in determining their property taxes.

Fire chief Logan Busho reported the process of moving into the new fire hall is on schedule; he stated that, thanks to numerous donations, which include items such as chairs, tables, white boards, and more, the setup is

proceeding in fine style. He also reported there were two fire calls in the past month; both were for accidents which occurred on the interstate. Busho requested council approval for two truck repairs, which cost, respectively, \$1,600 and \$2000. The fire department also requested \$2,040 for 10 tables and 28 chairs.

His report summarized a new arrangement which will save the department quite a bit of money over time. Firefighters are required to pass an annual FIT test ensuring their safety as they wear hefty self-contained breathing apparatus into dangerous environments. In the past, the department has paid up to \$500 to rent the necessary testing equipment. The Waseca fire department purchased the expensive equipment with the assistance of some grant money;

the arrangement is that area departments will each pay a one-time \$1,000 portion of the amount not covered by the grant, and then will be able to use the equipment for about a month each year into the indefinite future. Busho stated that under this system the arrangement will pay for itself by year two, with little or no cost in subsequent years.

City maintenance supervisor Josh Otto reported his department has purchased four new tires and four new rims for the city-owned maintenance truck at a cost of about \$1,500. There was also discussion of purchasing a new 75-gallon tank and pump for the back of the maintenance truck at a cost of \$500.

The council voted to amend the master fee schedule, changing the fire service first response fee from

\$750 to \$1,000.

Regarding the new Stadheim Apartment complex under construction at the west end of town, council members believe at least 10 units are being filled with 12 still available.

During public comment, resident Laura Kreinke advised the council to, “Cut those three trees over by the restrooms down in the park as soon as possible.”

Mayor Scott Groth congratulated the NRHEG girls’ basketball team for advancing to the state tournament. He commented that the recent Ellendale business owner “square table” discussion meeting went well. Groth also suggested the city should buy five American flags at a cost of about \$50 each to display in celebration of the country’s 250th year this July 4.

Wayne Signs Letter of Intent



NEW RICHLAND-HARTLAND-ELLENDALE-GENEVA

PANTHERS

Sponsored By: STATE BANK OF NEW RICHLAND

SIGNING - Owen Wayne played in his last tournament with the 507 Baseball Academy in Arizona in January and signed his letter of intent in February. Mr. Stork organized Owen’s signing day on March 9. His friends and teammates celebrated with him. Coach Fischer, Ms. Peterson, Mr. Domeier, Mr. Guildner, and Dr. Pederson attended as well.

WALDORF CITY COUNCIL

Council paves the way for Bevcomm to compete with Mediacom

By BEN REVERMANN
Staff Writer

During the Waldorf city council meeting the evening of Monday, March 9, it was announced that council member Carrie Ferch has been moved to the New Richland Care Center for health reasons; it was stated the council members and all of Waldorf send their good wishes. It was also announced that Mayor Rob Wilkening will be out of town for the April city council meeting, but the meeting will go on as planned.

The council voted to notify Mediacom that Waldorf will not renew the current franchise agreement contract, which was signed 15 years ago and ends in July 2027. A representative of Bevcomm was on hand to explain how the company will be installing new fiber-optic lines around town and signing up new Waldorf customers who might not want to stay with Mediacom. The Bevcomm fiber-optic line will be installed in a two-week period this summer, and can support phone and streaming services. The representative stated Bevcomm’s intent is not to eliminate Mediacom from Waldorf, but to offer residents an additional option. This will be done at no cost to the city. Bevcomm will notify every resident in town via mailers or door to door.

The council voted to allow an autopay option for paying city water bills; it will include a \$2 convenience charge for each use. The council voted to approve Positive Pay fraud prevention through the city accounts at Minnwest Bank. The council voted to change the use of city debit cards to credit cards.

Charlie Barnes attended the meeting on behalf of the Waldorf Veterans Memorial, which borders his property. He said he would like to kill the crab grass that is becoming invasive this spring. Barnes would also like to turn the installation of the memorial brick path to include everyone; “I would like that to be a community event if possible.” Roger Witt of Witt’s Electric said he will help install the wiring for the gazebo and is willing to donate his time.

The next park committee meeting is set for 6:30 p.m., Thursday, March 26; community members are encouraged to attend. The next Waldorf Days committee meeting is scheduled at the community center at 6 p.m. Monday, March 23. Again, members of the public are invited.

Quotes are being sought from three companies for the installation of new playground equipment near the city ballpark: Pro Playgrounds, Flagship Recreation and Midwest Playscapes. Each has provided its own proposed different playground schematic and price structure, with various options to choose from. The council has been informed that having the city dismantle and dispose of the old equipment would greatly decrease the bids from the companies. Around \$43,000 has been raised toward the project, with grant options available.

The water and sewer department reported nine residences failed to pay their water bill this month; another five submitted only partial payment. A total amount of \$1,587 was not collected; currently two non-paying residences have received shut-off notices and six are currently not receiving service.



Fence Lines

by Mark Bernard

Fly like an eagle, let my spirit carry me

The scurs and Weather Eye were on track as we experienced our first major spring snowstorm. Will it be the last or is Old Man Winter ready for an encore? Starting Thursday, mostly sunny with highs in the low 40's and lows in the upper 30's. Mostly sunny Friday on the vernal equinox, with highs in the low 50's and lows in the upper 30's.

Mostly sunny on Saturday with a slight chance of rain changing to snow. Highs in the upper 50's with lows in the mid-30's. Sunday, partly sunny with highs in the mid-40's and lows in the mid-20's. Cloudy on Monday with highs in the upper 40's and lows around 30. Tuesday, mostly cloudy with a fair chance of rain. Highs in the low 50's with lows in the low 30's. Cloudy on Wednesday with a fair chance of showers. Highs in the mid-40's with lows in the upper 20's. On the 23rd, we'll see the sunset at 7:30 p.m. CDT. The normal high for March 23rd is 43 and the normal low is 26. The scurs will be hankering for maple syrup soon.

The afternoons of March 8th and 9th presented tremendous afternoon opportunities to clean up around the yard. It was also a good time to deal with some of the low hanging limbs that take the fun out of mowing lawn, as if there's a lot of fun to begin with. I noticed how much sap flowed when pruning some soft maple and boxelder. I was guessing the sappers had started collecting and boiling it down in earnest. While I was picking up all those sticks, I pondered how much benefit I'd gain from it. Frequently storms create a fresh crop of sticks and debris. While it may be a waste of time, it's still that much less that'll need attention later. As a precaution, I'd tightened the shear pin on the snowblower and fueled up the tractor. Little did I know...

The weekend storm caught no one by surprise. It was all some TV stations could talk about, cutting into regularly scheduled programs with storm updates as it approached and conditions changed. It was our most noteworthy storm of the season, with roughly 11" measured in New Richland and 10" at the ranch. It was typical wet, spring snow, although I was surprised late Sunday afternoon how well it went through the blower. It gave the tractor a workout, but it went through without plugging it up. It went even better the next morning when temps dropped to 3 above. At the ranch, the liquid equivalent precip was 1.4". This included a bunch of sleet, graupel and rain that preceded the snowfall. At 4:30

a.m. Sunday morning, there was thundersnow. For this winter season anyway. March has regained its reputation for the snowiest month. Hopefully April doesn't say, "Hold my beer." It did just that in 2018.

The snow will melt, but in the meantime there were a lot of daubers down. What appeared to be Mother Nature inkling an early spring suddenly came unraveled. The daffodils and crocuses that were making a move suddenly found themselves buried under a foot of snow. In places there are drifts 2' - 3' deep covering the electric fence I'd been so proud of charging. The consolation is that any ewes left to lamb soon will be forced to stay up around the buildings. Their portal to those new tender green spears of grass has been temporarily cut off. Prior to the snow there had been three bald eagles devouring most of a road-kill deer carcass. They had it nearly picked clean by time the storm hit. Any remains are buried under several feet of snow. It used to be a big deal to see an eagle from a distance, much less having them sitting in our trees between courses of venison.

Before the recent cold snap it was very close to ice out on some area lakes. St. Olaf Lake had one floating chunk of ice in it ahead of the storm while Beaver was more stubborn, maybe 1/3 open. The SROC in Waseca reported that the frost depth on Monday the 16th was back to 3" after being absent less than a week earlier. With forecast highs back in the 50's soon, any frost left in the ground should leave quickly. As it was, it was nice to have the ground somewhat frozen for moving snow, especially when using the bucket. No one enjoys replacing the sod after gouging the turf during snow removal operations.

Poppy is getting more mature. Deep, heavy wet snow means those short Corgi legs don't offer enough clearance for that long Corgi undercarriage. Cuts down on her zoomies. Easier to sit on the porch and sniff the breeze. That's one of the reasons that getting the front yard blown out becomes crucial. More exercise area and it frees up space for Poppy's bathroom activities rather than concentrating them only in places that are passable. As a side benefit, flinging all that scattered Poppy poo over the edge of the road cut with the blower cleans the yard up nicely. The odds of bringing a hunk indoors with you on a shoe or inside a vehicle with the heater on are greatly diminished.

See you next week...real good then.



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

Visiting Pipestone

My travels took me to Pipestone this week, and I was deeply grateful.

I had never before visited the national monument located there. The extent of my knowledge was that a special type of stone is found there that is the preferred raw material for "peace" pipes made by Native Americans across history.

I left myself only a little more than an hour to walk through the visitor center. There is an outdoor trail that takes a person past the quarries and through some of the natural prairie, but the day was too cold and windy for that to be appealing. Inside the center, there are many photos, illustrations, videos and even a whole simulated wall that shows how the rust-red catlinite stone is in a vein under much harder limestone. A video includes footage demonstrating the steps needed when using hand tools to expose the catlinite.

Even today, only manual methods are allowed in the quarry. Along with that, only persons of Native American heritage are permitted to work there.

The best part of my visit was a conversation with Mark Peder-

son, a member of a local Native American family who occupies a work station inside the visitor center. He crafts demonstration items and answers people's questions. Relatives of his also serve as demonstrators, but on a Thursday afternoon only an hour or so before closing, I was one of very few visitors, and he was the only person at a station. We talked for a half hour or more.

Thanks to our exchange, I learned catlinite is very soft compared to other types of stone—one display claimed it is the world's "second-softest." It also revealed that signs of quarrying at Pipestone can be dated back tens of thousands of years.

Mark made a point of showing me a "drill" used before metal tools became available. A sharpened piece of dark-colored rock was tied at the bottom of a stick about a foot long. A pair of leather straps led to a horizontal "handle" which caused the leather to wrap around the stick first in one direction and then in the opposite one. As the handle moved up and down, the point would spin, changing directions as the straps wound and unwound, but always in motion—al-



CRAFTSMAN - Native American Mark Pederson is among the group of people who demonstrate stone working techniques at the National Monument located near the town of Pipestone.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

ways grinding away at the catlinite below.

I was impressed with the ingenuity, craftsmanship and stamina it must have taken to make and use tools like that one.

Other elements at the visitor center made it clear the special rock is not the only way Native Americans used the area at Pipestone. A wide variety of native plants with medicinal properties grows there. Some of the plants were also used in mixtures to be burned in the pipes; elements of

the display explained different plants were also regarded as having specific significance, for example, in hopes of bringing health or plenty or harmonious relationships.

As I said, I am grateful to have been there and to have widened my understanding of the place and the people who venerate it. Considering other people's perspectives is one important way to reach a stronger understanding of our own view of the world.

Can birds weather spring storms, climate change?

By MPR

Minnesotans may have heard the call of a red-winged black-bird or sandhill crane in recent days — earlier than usual.

Climate change is pushing some birds to migrate earlier. Sharon Stiteler, birder and author known as "Birdchick," joined Cathy Wurzer on Morning Edition to explain why and which species can handle spring storms.

"They're taking a gamble. The males want to get back, and especially the red-winged black-birds; they want to get the best territory possible," Stiteler said. "By getting here early and singing, they're establishing that, 'hey, I'm a pretty strong guy, I can get this territory, and if it snows a little bit, that's okay. I'm staking out the best that I can get for ladies when they arrive.'"

Stiteler said sandhill cranes and some waterfowl returning now can also take some snow. The real gamble is egg-laying. A

Tax Day blizzard would kill any eggs fertilized now. But if wintry conditions stay at bay, arriving earlier could translate into an extra clutch of eggs this season.

The concern is for insect-eating birds like warblers and tanagers that begin arriving in Minnesota in early May. If insects hatch earlier due to warmer temperatures, food supplies may be scarce by the time the birds arrive, Stiteler said.

"That's one of the reasons why it's super important that we try to plant as many native plant species as we can, because the more that's out there that can attract other types of insects, that can have other sorts of food that's available for these birds when they get back," she said.

Humans can help by putting out bird seed and making sure feeders are free of mold, which can pop up thanks to melting.

"If we get a lot of rain, go out and look at your feeders. If the seed looks clumped up, clean

that out, because that could cause an infection at the bird feeder," Stiteler said.



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SUBSCRIPTION RATES
\$57 Per Year, Waseca, Steele, & Freeborn Counties
\$67 State of Minnesota • \$77 Outside Minnesota

Published every Thursday by E.J.L. Publications, Inc., and Periodical Postage paid at the Post Office at New Richland, Minnesota 56072. Entire contents copyright © 2026 E.J.L. Publications, Inc. and respective authors. Opinions expressed in editorials or letters to the editor are those of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the Star Eagle or E.J.L. Publications, Inc. Letters may be edited for content or length. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to P.O. Box 248, New Richland, MN 56072-0248

“Snow” Full of Gratitude



WORKING HARD - The City of New Richland recently thanked the City's Maintenance Crew on Facebook for working diligently to ensure the streets are clear for the residents to navigate. "We acknowledge that some of these piles are substantial and may be an inconvenience, but clearing Broadway alone has taken all day. Please be kind and patient while our crew members work hard to complete the task. This isn't a one day job."



Compostings

by Al Batt

Apathy: the leading cause of whatever

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING
The lottery is up to \$496 million.
If you knew you were going to win the lottery, what would you do?
The first thing I'd do would be to buy a ticket.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE
I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. By this time of the winter, I hear, "If it's snowing, I'm not going." Spring marches in March. I am fond of each day, but some more than others. Meteorological spring begins on March 1 or when the spring equinox falls on March 20, or the day Mother Nature allows us to have it. The real March madness isn't basketball. It's the weather. It makes people mad. Winter can be a sore winner. I pre-shoveled this year. I did all my shoveling right before the latest blizzard when there was no snow on the ground. Easy peasy.

THOSE THRILLING DAYS OF YESTERYEAR IN THREE MEMORIES
I recall riding on the school bus, and pressing my face against a frost-covered window, like an algae-eating aquarium fish, so my breath would allow mirror writing. When I was riding a bus to school on a day I thought should have been a snow day, I used my forefinger to scribble "1q!9H" in the steam on the window.

Growing up, when foodstuffs tumbled to the floor, we had the 3-second rule in our house. If we picked it up within that time and blew on it (to remove whatever might have climbed aboard), it was OK to eat it. Sugar cookies were subject to a 5-second rule. If no one was watching and the dog didn't get to the food first, I could pick it up at my leisure and eat it. I was on a dirt diet, but I didn't know it.

Perpetual towel contraptions were found in public restrooms and gas stations. Metal dispensers allowed users to pull down a fresh section of cloth while the used portion was rolled back into the dispenser. A long roll of clean cloth fed from one spool, passed over a roller, and was collected onto a separate take-up roll in the back. The devices were criticized for being unhygienic when not maintained properly, leading to their replacement by paper towels or air dryers. The lack of maintenance led to a user pulling the cloth, only to find the entire roll had been used and the part available was completely soaked.

I'VE LEARNED
If nothing ever changed, there would be no butterflies.
Always carry plastic silverware in a sandwich bag. You never know when pie might happen.
Apathy is the leading cause of whatever.

What was more important than the invention of the first telephone? The invention of the second telephone.

The luckiest state is New Hampshire, based on lottery wins, chances of being struck by lightning, cost of living, housing affordability, average credit score, car accident deaths, natural disasters, workplace accidents and divorce rates. Iowa is the second luckiest and Minnesota is third. The unluckiest state is Texas. <https://www.actionnetwork.com/entertainment/the-luckiest-unluckiest-states>

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT
I just flew home from a ravioli convention and Boyardee's arms tired.

How do you turn cake into pie? Measure the ratio of its circumference to its diameter.

Everyone knows about the famous painter Bob Ross, but few have heard about his brother Albert, who was famous for his 6-foot wingspan.

I know only 25 letters of the alphabet. I don't know y.

NATURE NOTES
Knock, knock, who's there? A woodpecker drumming on a tree. Blackbirds and robins filled the cheep seats in the trees. They perform community service by returning in the spring.

Red-winged blackbirds flock together, which is a wing-wing situation. The males return before the females show up. They hurry back to compete for choice territories. They must be aware to survive, so they travel in flocks, which offer more eyes to spot predators and food. Their arrival is a harbinger of spring. The red-winged blackbird could be the most commonly seen bird in the Gopher State. The females, with streaky brown plumages, don't need to rush as they know there will be males to welcome their triumphant arrival. The males will be singing "Look-at-me" at full throttle.

I kept an ear out and heard sandhill cranes giving voice to a call that stirs the soul. Aldo Leopold wrote this about that sound, "High horns, low horns, silence and finally a pandemonium of trumpets, rattles, croaks and cries that almost shakes the bog with its nearness."

IN LOCAL NEWS
I visited with Dave Hagen of Blooming Prairie. He's a graduate of Ellendale, and although he'll deny it, my former teammate. His son Gabe was an All-American football player at Minnesota State-Mankato in 2024.

I watched the Minnesota State High School Girls' Basketball Tournament. My granddaughter, Joey Batt, is an assistant coach at Providence Academy, which won its fifth straight state championship. Huzzah!

MEETING ADJOURNED
A kind word is sunshine for the soul.



DELIVERY - Ellendale food shelf volunteers (from left) Joan Crosby, Becky Larson, Jon Asplund, Sue Asplund, Jim Crosby, Diane Lee and Cynthia Nelson prepared and served a taco bar meal at the United Methodist Church in Ellendale the afternoon of Sunday, March 8. All proceeds benefited the food shelf, which is open at the Methodist Church each Thursday afternoon from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

Ellendale Food Shelf well supported by community

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

According to committee members Becky Larson and Cynthia Nelson, the Ellendale Food Shelf has seen an impressive increase in usage over the past year, going from a typical number of 35 or fewer families during its weekly distribution to a new record number of 44. It has become common, Larson shares, to distribute between 1,500 and 1,700 pounds of food during the three-hour time slot from 3:30 to 6:30 on Thursday afternoons.

The food shelf has been in existence since 2009, and currently operates out of the United Methodist Church (UMC) at 200 Sixth Street North on the western edge of Ellendale, although it is not affiliated with the church. Nelson explains it's necessary to make that distinction because Channel One, a food distributor which serves food shelves all across southern Minnesota by delivering food at

prices below retail cost, has as a policy that it will not serve organizations which promote religion or faith.

Still, since the UMC provides space for storage and distribution, the church is one of the food shelf's largest contributors. Most of the people who serve on the shelf's committee are members at one or another of the churches located in Ellendale.

Summarizing the many tasks which must be performed to ensure each week's food delivery can take place, Larson says matter-of-factly, "There are some real benefits to being in a small town."

She goes on to express gratitude for the service of committee members, and then for the generosity of the community.

"People genuinely like to give," she observes.

For one thing, all work is performed on a volunteer basis.

Nelson also mentions how Ross Sletten, owner of Lerberg's Grocery in downtown Ellendale, has a system of filling bags with

typical popular items, setting them near the cash register, and offering people a chance to buy them to be donated to the food shelf. "It's a quick and easy reminder for people who mean to give and might just be forgetting," she comments.

She also expresses gratitude for the youth groups at area churches. She mentions a recent challenge between the boys and girls in one church. After some of the girls posted on Facebook that they were working to collect food for the local shelf, they received an invitation to bring their cars to the Owatonna Hy-Vee store; Larson says they came back with more than 500 pounds of donated food.

Acknowledging that many people give of their time and resources to keep the food shelf operating, Larson says the general approach of the whole team seems to be the adage, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

"We want to be here for anyone who's experiencing food

insecurity," says Larson. "We recognize a time could come when it might be any of us—you never know what turns life will take."

A recent "taco bar" fundraiser, which was planned, prepared and served by food shelf committee members, raised nearly \$4,100. "We were pleased," comments Larson. "It was another way the community showed us they value what we do."

Area merchants who contributed gift certificates for the fundraiser included Lerberg's foods, Lerberg's car wash and fitness, Floors 4-U, Steve's Meats, Ellendale Cafe, Two Doves Boutique, and Hope Butter.

Anyone wishing to donate to the Ellendale Food Shelf can mail a donation to P.O. Box 295, in Ellendale; stop by during distribution hours on Thursdays from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m., or call the Methodist Church at (507) 684-2731 to schedule an appointment.

Area food shelves benefit from statewide campaign

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

During the month of March, the Twin Cities based organization FoodShare holds a major fundraising drive to provide fi-

nancial support for about 300 participating food shelves around the state. Local shelves keep track of the number of people served and donations received during the target dates—this year from March 1 to April 6—and provide a summary report to the organization.

Funds raised by FoodShare during this "Fight Hunger" campaign are then distributed among the organizations in amounts relative to their reported numbers.

Because the FoodShare drive creates an opportunity to get additional donations based on donations received, local food

shelves work to increase awareness and encourage giving during the target dates. The FoodShare website indicates the Waseca, Janesville and New Richland food shelves are taking part in the program.

The organization Feeding America reports that nearly 550,000 Minnesotans are facing hunger. About a third of these individuals are under the age of 18.

FoodShare states that Minnesota's charitable food system (food shelves and food banks, meal programs, etc.) is running "at capacity," and goes on to list numerous contributing factors,

including rising food prices, growing inflation rates, and slowing wage growth. Information available on the FoodShare website states, "Massive leaps in food shelf attendance over the last five years suggest emergency food assistance providers will continue to be a critical resource to communities across the state."

Information on the site also states the annual numbers of visits to food shelves are now 150% higher than they were prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, with growing numbers of seniors becoming eligible for services.



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OBITUARIES

Edith Krause

I, Edith “Edie” Marie Krause at the age of 90 of rural Waseca, went home to be with Jesus on the afternoon of Thursday, March 12, 2026, surrounded by the love of my family.

I was born in Minneapolis on September 13, 1935 to my parents Iver and Florence (Erickson) Peterson. I was born-again when I gave my heart to Jesus at 10 years old one Sunday morning in Sunday School. I thank God for the Christian home I was born into and raised by the Word of God. I’ve failed many times during my lifetime, but Jesus always forgave me as I came to Him and repented of my sins. I’m very thankful that God gave His only Son to die on the cross, so that I could have my sins forgiven, and now I’m in heaven with Him. I’m also thankful for His presence in my life, His companionship, His love, His promise never to leave me nor forsake me. As the song goes, “Without Him I could do nothing, without Him I’d surely fail, without Him I would be drifting, like a ship without a sail.” So, any good that I’ve done in my lifetime is all because of Him. He gets the Glory!

I attended school in the Twin Cities and graduated from Minnehaha Academy. After schooling, a friend and I moved to Colorado for a short time, working as a telephone operator for “Ma Bell,” which I continued to do upon returning to Minnesota.

God blessed me with a good husband and father to our four sons. On March 18, 1960, I was united in marriage to James “Jim” Krause in the Twin Cities. I have fond memories of visiting my grandparents’ farm in Wisconsin as a child, and I soon became a full-time farm wife myself, supporting my husband as we raised our family and followed God’s path for our life together. It has been an honor to be a member of several faith communities and a pleasure to help others know the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I’ve had great joy in serving others, observing ways I could help, including supplying favorite snacks for children and grandchildren. I’ve also enjoyed compiling and studying our family’s



Edith Krause

history and genealogy. I love the family God has so wonderfully blessed me with!

I am survived by my four sons, Steve (Jill), Scott (Bev), Tim (Barb), and Kevin; grandchildren, Jason, Joseph, Nakia, Rachel (Andrew), Dakota (Aric), Sierra (Noah), Tyler (Callie), Nathan (Nicole), MesaJo (Christopher), Daniel (Sarah), Caleb; great-grandchildren, Tyler, Zaden, Hannah, Connor, Cayden, Ryland, Riddley, Olive, Elian, Cafourek, Iyoney, Trieghten, Adrein, Reagan, Elliott, Izon, Dovey, Kaia; great-great-grandson, Thorson. I am also remembered by sisters-in-law, Lorraine Peterson and Gladys Toews; and many nieces and nephews. I am preceded in death by both of my parents; my husband; two grandsons, Noah and Josiah; two brothers, Evert and Harold Peterson; my parents-in-law, Ervin and Esther Krause; siblings-in-law, Victor Krause, Jacob Toews, Rod Geary, Rachel Geary, Lilly Krause, and Margaret Peterson.

If anyone reading this does not know Jesus as your personal Savior, I invite you to repent of your sins and ask Him into your life. He will save you and I will see you in heaven.

Love and Prayers,
Edie Krause

Funeral services for Edie will be held at 11 a.m. on Monday, March 23, 2026 at the Third Street Chapel of Dennis-Steffel-Omtvedt Funeral and Cremation Service in Waseca. Visitation will be held for one hour before the service at the funeral home. Interment will follow at Woodville Cemetery in Waseca.

WCHS announces new exhibit: “This Old Thing”

Four Objects. Four Staff Picks. Countless Stories.

The Waseca County Historical Society (WCHS) is inviting the public to experience history in a new way this season — not through timelines or textbooks, but through something far more personal. The new exhibit, “This Old Thing,” features just four objects. Out of more than 270,000 items in the Society’s collection, only four were chosen.

They were not selected because they are the oldest.

Not because they are the most valuable.

Not because they are the most famous.

They were chosen because someone couldn’t stop thinking about them.

Each object in This Old Thing is a staff favorite — personally selected by executive director Amy Danielson, data manager/library manager Elizabeth Anselmo, head curator

Pauline Fenelon and assistant curator Anna Simmons. Each one carries a story that surprised, unsettled, delighted, or lingered long after it was first cataloged.

At first glance, there might not seem to be anything special about them. They deserve another look.

Why would a museum professional choose this object over thousands of others? What does it reveal about Waseca County’s past, and about the people who care for its history today? Visitors won’t know what the objects are until they step inside the museum doors.

“We wanted to create something intimate,” said Danielson. “When you work with history every day, certain objects stay with you. This



UNFORGETTABLE - For an exhibit opening April 7, Waseca County Historical Society staff members Elizabeth Anselmo, Pauline Fenelon, Anna Simmons and Amy Danielson (not pictured) selected items which, having once seen, they could not forget.

exhibit is about those moments — the ones that feel personal, unexpected, and sometimes even mysterious.” Each object is paired with a reflection from the staff member who chose it—and a glimpse into the story the object itself might tell, if it could speak about its travels through time.

This Old Thing is small by design. Focused. Intentional. And filled with quiet - and personal

- surprises.

The exhibit opens April 7 at the WCHS at 315 Second Avenue Northeast in Waseca. It will be on view for a limited time. Come see the four objects we couldn’t forget. And decide for yourself: What makes something unforgettable?

For more information, visit www.waseca-countyhistorycenter.org or call 507-835-7700.

Child’s History of Waseca County

CHAPTER VIII, 1855. Martin Krassin and John Greening – First Settlement in St. Mary – First Log Cabin to Burn in the Settlement – Joseph and Abraham Bird, John White – Bernard Gregory and Mr. Tower – John and David Jenkins Locate in Wilton.

Martin Krassin and John G. Greening, next to Mr. Sutlief, were the oldest land lookers of the county. Martin was a native of Prussia, born in the year 1821, and came to America with his family in July, 1854, stopping temporarily with his brothers, near Princeton, Wisconsin. He left his young wife there in the fall of 1854, and with Greening made an extensive tour of Minnesota, the greater part of the way on foot. They passed through this section, pushed on to Minnesota river, thence down that stream and on to St. Paul, whence they proceeded to La Crosse by boat, and thence to Krassin’s family in Wisconsin. As soon as grass started the next spring, Mr. Krassin, in company with his father and mother, his wife and one child, his brother, John F.; his brother-in-law Gottlieb Prechel, who was accompanied by wife and children; his youngest sister, Justina, now Mrs. J. E. Child; Fred Wobschall, Fred Proechel (Big Fred); and John G. Greening and family, made preparations to move to Minnesota. The

journey was a toilsome one, and they did not arrive until about the first of June, 1855.

They intended at first to settle about where Steve Krassin has a farm near the southwest corner of St. Mary township, but they soon learned that the Winnebago Indians owned the western tier of sections in St. Mary, and they were obliged to seek other locations. Martin, his father, Gottlieb, Sr., and his brother, John F., made claims in sections 34 and 35. Fred Prechel, then a single man, made his claim in section 34, next to Martin’s. Fred Wobschall, also a bachelor at that time, made his claim in section 35, where he resided up to the time of his death. All of these were in St. Mary township. Gottlieb Prechel and family first settled in the same township, on section 32, but the next year exchanged with Christian Krassin and settled on section 27, in St. Mary, where Mr. Prechel resided with his family until his death. John G. Greening, who came with the Krassins, was the first blacksmith to settle in the county, and he decided to make his home in the town of Otisco, on section 7. He constructed the first dug-out in the county. Late that fall, his log cabin took fire and was consumed. It was too late to build another, so he dug out a house in a side-hill, covered it with hay and sod, and lived there during the winter very comfortably.

Very soon after the arrival of Martin Krassin and his company, two brothers, Joseph Bird and Abram Bird, and their brother-in-law, John White, with their families, settled in the vicinity of what has since been known as St. Mary. Abram Bird settled on section 4, Wilton; Joseph Bird on Section 32, St. Mary; and John White, on section 33 of the latter town. The Bird brothers and their sister, Mrs. White, were English by birth, while John White was a native of the Emerald Isle. The Birds were industrious and successful farmers. Abram died in February, 1869, leaving a widow and several children. Joseph, about 1870, sold his farm and removed to Oregon. John White some years ago removed to Iscosco, where he died.

Almost simultaneously with the settlement of the Messrs. Bird and White, came Bernard Gregory and his brother-in-law named Tower, with their families. The Tower family remained long enough to help Mr. Gregory build his log house on section 32, St. Mary, and then pushed on further west into what was then called the Blue Earth valley. Mr. Gregory’s family consisted of his wife, two daughters, women grown, and three sons somewhat younger. Louise A. Gregory, the elder daughter, married a Mr. Ballard. She died August 15, 1878, aged forty-one years, five months and twelve days. Martha,

the younger, became the wife of Mr. Robert B. Moore, of this county. She passed away December 5, 1875, aged thirty-seven years, six months and thirteen days. Mr. Gregory died in this county July 12, 1880, aged eighty-one years, five months and thirteen days. His wife, Amanda C., died February 28, 1883, aged sixty-seven years, eight months and fourteen days. Austin, the oldest son, died in 1888. Mr. and Mrs. Gregory were kind hearted, agreeable toward strangers, and, during their first year’s residence, kindly entertained many a weary traveler. Peace to their ashes.

The latter part of June, the same year, Andrew Scott and wife, parents of Chris Scott, accompanied by their son, Charles D. Scott, with his wife, came on from Wisconsin. The old gentleman was a “character,” having some peculiar ways. He first made a claim on section 24, in Wilton, which he sold to John Jenkins, and then made on one section 13, in the same town. After much suffering from blood poison, which commenced in his feet, the old gentleman died about 1863 in Wilton. C. D. Scott made his claim on the town line between Otisco and Wilton, in sections 13 and 18, where he lived for many years, but always in poor health. He finally lost nearly all his property. He died several years ago.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send your letters of comment to
Star Eagle, P.O. Box 248, New Richland, MN 56072
or email us at steagle@hickorytech.net.

Dear Editor,

I would like to take this time to thank the volunteers who help deliver meals for the Ellendale Senior Dining Meals on Wheels program. While they asked not to be named, their impact on the program and the community is known. Ellendale Senior Dining serves the Ellendale & Geneva area and also delivers to the town of Clarks Grove. If you are age 60 and over or know someone who is and would like more in-

formation on this program, contact us at (507) 684-3311. We deliver meals on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. While the program does ask for a donation for the meals, nobody will be denied a meal because of inability to contribute. The best time to reach us is Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., or leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Jack Harpel

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Local school district establishes safe spaces for nursing mothers

Imagine being a new mom, just returning to work after maternity leave and there is no safe and quiet space for you to pump. For new moms, it is hard to be away from your newborn baby, but being able to pump while away helps to soften that feeling of separation. However, what do you do when you don't have a safe and comfortable place to do this at your workplace? Do you close your office door and hope someone doesn't need you for a while or hide out in a bathroom?

It was precisely this issue that sparked Amanda, the School Nurse at Tri-City United (TCU) Schools, to reach out to Ashley Killday, Le Sueur-Waseca Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) Coordinator. Originally, one of the four TCU school locations had a mother's room, but it didn't meet the spirit or expectation for mothers that breastfeed. Together with leadership, Amanda and the SHIP Coordinators from Le Sueur-Waseca and Rice Counties worked to create safe and comfortable spaces for nursing mothers at school district locations.

SHIP supported Amanda as she went to work on establishing a mother's room in each school. Within a month there were four mother's rooms already being utilized by staff. "As a mom myself, I couldn't be happier making sure that all working moms have a safe space for pumping and feel supported at their jobs," says Ashley Killday.

Policies were also updated to provide more sustainable support to nursing mothers. Prior to this project, 38% of staff scored TCU as supportive towards breastfeeding, but this project helped increase the score to 88%. That's an increase of 50% across the district. "This project could not have been more successful or better received by staff!" says Amanda. The new mother's rooms have succeeded in providing the desired safe and comfortable place for nursing mothers.

Contact Ashley Killday at 507-461-6167 or ashley.killday@wasecacounty.gov to supplement healthy food, physical activity, breastfeeding, tobacco education, or social wellbeing projects.

More American farmers are filing for bankruptcy. Here's why.

By MPR

Farm bankruptcies across the country are climbing.

In 2025, farmers filed 315 bankruptcy cases, which is higher than the previous four years, according to an American Farm Bureau Federation report. These are Chapter 12 bankruptcies, which are designed for "family farmers" according to the U.S. court definition.

Economists say the increase in filings is due to a combination of rising operational costs on the farm, such as fertilizer and machinery, and low crop prices that are putting pressure on farmers. Farm bankruptcy filings are typically a lagging indicator that farmers are facing financial distress.

The number of filings remains lower than in the 2010s, when farm bankruptcy filings exceeded 500 in some years.

But Joe Mahon, an economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, said earlier this month that farm bankruptcies could creep back up to those high levels.

"The commonality between what we're seeing right now and what we saw in the latter half of the last decade is sort of a prolonged period of strain on incomes starting to eat into savings," Mahon said. "That ends up resulting in a financial picture that causes more producers to look into filing for bankruptcy."

He said some farmers were able to build up a bit of a cash cushion between 2022 and 2023, when disruptions to crop supply associated with Russia's invasion of Ukraine and extreme weather in South

Farmers continued on 10

HERITAGE BITS

The 1988 Panthers varsity volleyball team of New Richland-Hartland/Ellendale-Geneva has been practicing hard every morning in the E-G gymnasium to be ready to travel to take on Gopher Conference foe Janesville in a non-conference game Tuesday, Sept. 6. They are from the left: seated, Michelle Hagen, Patt Stadheim, Michelle Eaker, Gretchen Anderson and Dana Simonson; sitting are Shannon Peterson, Amy Quiram, Katie Streng, Jill Lorenz, Tara Stollard; standing, Coach Lori Mueller, Gail Kaplan, Ann Felsheim, Shari Budach, Karla Sponberg, Angie Worrell and Amber Nissen. (3/12/26)

'Ask a Trooper': Headlights and Taillights

Question: I enjoy reading your column in the weekly newspaper. I have a question I hope you can address. We've had some heavy fog recently and I get frustrated with the vehicles that do not have their lights on. Sometimes the headlights are on and the rear lights are not. What is the advice/law in using your lights during the daytime when there is fog/rain/snow?

I think in the newer vehicles; the owners don't check if the lights are on, thinking they automatically come on under those conditions. More often than not my 2025 Subaru does not have any lights on, at least in the early stages of lower vision conditions. I look at my dashboard and can see if the headlights are on via the instrument lights. Then I go outside to the rear and sometimes the rear lights are not on.

The best way I have found is to get to know your vehicle switches and lights. So, when I am parked, I can try the different positions on the switch to see exactly what lights are coming on. If the light conditions haven't triggered the auto lights, I can manually turn them on. In general, I keep the switch in the position of headlights and running lights (rear lights included) automatically coming on when light conditions warrant coming on. They automatically turn off when the car is turned off.

Thank you for addressing my question.

Answer: Thank you for the question and you bring up a lot of good advice and points. Your headlights and taillights must be turned on at sunset and used until sunrise. Use them during weather conditions that include rain, snow, hail, sleet or fog, and any time you cannot clearly see the road ahead for at least 500 feet.

People often fail to turn on their headlights in rain and fog due to a false sense of security, over-reliance on automatic light sensors that don't always activate, and the mistaken belief that lights are only for seeing, rather than being seen. Other factors include confusion with daytime running lights (DRLs) and simply forgetting.

Key reasons for this dangerous habit include:

- Misunderstanding of Purpose: Many drivers do not realize that in the rain, headlights are crucial to make their vehicle visible to others, especially from the rear.
- Automatic System Failure: Auto-light sensors often do not register daytime, overcast, or rainy conditions as "dark enough" to activate headlights.
- Dashboard/DRL Confusion: Modern dashboards are often always lit, leading drivers to mistakenly believe their headlights are on.

- Habit/Forgetfulness: Drivers often forget to manually activate lights if they are used to automatic systems.

Ineffective DRLs: While Daytime Running Lights are on, they often do not activate rear tail lights, making the car invisible from behind.

You can avoid a ticket — and a crash — if you simply buckle up, drive at safe speeds, pay attention and always drive sober. Help us drive Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws or issues in Minnesota, send your questions to Sgt. Troy Christianson — Minnesota State Patrol at 2900 48th Street NW, Rochester MN 55901-5848. (Or reach him at Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us)

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IN BRIEF

Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board Meeting Thursday, April 9

The SWCD will be holding its monthly board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 9. The meetings will be held in the SWCD offices located at 300 North State Street - Door 4.

Volunteer Breakfast at Farmamerica April 10

There will be a Volunteer Breakfast at Farmamerica from 9 to 10:30 a.m. on Friday, April 10. Come enjoy breakfast, chat with staff and fellow volunteers, and learn about the many volunteer opportunities at Farmamerica. This is a free event, but please register at <https://farmamerica.ticketspice.com/volunteer-breakfast>.

Pancake Breakfast at Waldorf Community Center Sunday, April 12

The Waldorf Peppy Peppers 4-H Club is having their second annual pancake breakfast from 7 a.m. through noon on Sunday, April 12. This is open to the public with free-will donations accepted. Serving pancakes, eggs, sausage, juice and coffee.

Free CERT class April 17-19

Waseca County Emergency Management will be hosting Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) classes April 17-19 for any Waseca County resident who is interested in becoming a member of the CERT team. CERT volunteer members must attend all three days, and will receive free basic safety equipment. If you are interested, contact Denise Wright at 507-835-0694.

Grandparent/grandchild reading activity New Richland Public Library Thursday, May 14

The New Richland public library is hosting a reading activity featuring the book, "The Lion Who Stole my Arm," by Nicola Davies, recommended for students in grades 3-5 at 6:15 p.m. on Thursday, May 14. This is for grandparents to spend time with their grandchildren. Read the book, both show up and get free refreshments while you discuss the book with others.

CredibleMind offers free mental health resources

All area residents are eligible to use free online access to mental health resources available at MNPrairie's "CredibleMind" website. The site offers interactive, evidence-based ways to explore local and national mental well-being resources. Free and anonymous at www.mnprairie.crediblemind.com

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NRHEG girls drop two in state tourney

Panthers leave it all on the floor while finishing 27-5

By **JIM LUTGENS**
Sports Editor

Two things became inherently apparent during the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva girls' basketball state tournament opener against Hillcrest Lutheran Academy.

1. The Panthers, no matter how hard they try, are just not the same team without all-state guard and Minnesota Miss Basketball finalist Camryn VanMaldeghem.

2. Hillcrest will be a force to be reckoned with for several years.

Eighth-grader Elsa Retzlaff scored 31 points and her sister, sophomore Elin, scored 18 to lead Hillcrest Academy past the NRHEG girls 88-53 in a Class A quarterfinal game last Thursday at the University of Minnesota's Maturi Pavilion.

All VanMaldeghem could do was watch from the sidelines, wearing her team jersey and sweat pants, the result of a season-ending knee injury sustained in the Panthers' section championship win over Hayfield-Schaeffer Academy.

"I'm incredibly proud of what this team accomplished," said NRHEG coach Onika Peterson. "We had big goals coming off of last season and bringing everyone back. However, it has been a rollercoaster of injuries, celebrations, high and low emotions and everything in between. The girls never once complained, blamed, or had bad attitudes. They fought. They fought for the kid next to them on the court, they fought for the kid sitting on the bench, they fought for the injured player who should have been playing, they fought for their goals. They never once backed down."

The eventual blowout against Hillcrest developed rather slowly. The Comets scored the first four points, but a three-pointer by Gabby Schlaak and baskets from Chloe Stork and Quinn VanMaldeghem saw the Panthers trailing just 8-7 in the opening minutes. Unfortunately for the Panther faithful, that's as close as it would get the rest of the way.

Hillcrest led 16-9 after a couple of free throws from Schlaak at about the midway point of the second half, but then the Comets 24-7 run to take a 40-16 lead at halftime.

A three from Schlaak cut into the margin, but the Comets went on another run, and another one. The Panthers had trouble finding a rhythm and making free throws, a deadly combination in the state tournament.

By the end, exhaustion showed on the Panthers' faces as they successfully fought off a running-time scenario.

Coach Peterson pulled out all the stops of a team playing less-than-100-percent, effectively changing from a 1-3-1 zone to a 2-3 zone defense while calling a lot of time outs.

In the end, it was just too much Comets. But anyone watching could see the NRHEG girls gave it their all. The Panthers left it all on the court, and it showed.

With 2:10 remaining and Hillcrest leading 83-53, both coaches substituted freely in order to give more girls the opportunity to play in a state tournament. Reserve Hadley Roeker scored the Panthers' final points on a lay-up in the final seconds.

Schlaak finished with 20 points to lead the Panthers. Quinn VanMaldeghem scored 15.

Full NRHEG stats: Schlaak 20P, 12 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal; Ezra Boerner 4P, 4R, 1S; Q.VanMaldeghem 15P, 9R, 7A, 2S; Clara Buendorf 1P, 2A; Stork 9P, 7R; Savannah Farr 3P, 1R; Emelia Stadheim 1P, 2R, 1A; Kenley Gehrke 1S; Roeker 2P.

"That game was a struggle," said Peterson. "Their pressure defense got the best of us and once we settled down, their three-point shooting was the dagger that we couldn't

"I'm incredibly proud of what this team accomplished."

— **NRHEG coach Onika Peterson**

come back from. However, again they didn't make excuses."

The loss dropped the Panthers into the consolation round Friday morning against familiar state tournament foe Braham at Concordia University's Gangelhoff Center.

It was the Panthers' third state tourney matchup with Braham. In 2013, NRHEG pulled off an upset in the quarterfinals, and the next year the Panthers defeated Braham in a memorable semifinal game on their way to a second straight state championship.

The teams were again well matched, and it was closer than the final score indicates, but in the end Braham came away with an 80-65 victory.

Schlaak put the first points on the board from the free-throw line, but the Bombers scored the next 12 as the Panthers had problems with turnovers. Three-pointers by VanMaldeghem and Buendorf and another basket by VanMaldeghem cut it to 12-10 at about the midway point of the first half, and the Panthers regained the lead on a Stork free throw with seven minutes remaining. It was back and forth the rest of the first half, with Boerner's basket sending the teams into half-time with NRHEG on top 33-29.

Both teams used several time outs in the first half in an attempt to slow the other's momentum, but it didn't appear effective.

The Panthers built on their lead in the second half, going up as many as 10 points at 45-35, but again they were plagued by too many turnovers and could not find much success from the free-throw line, allowing Braham back in it. The Bombers pecked away, and eventually took a 58-57 lead with about five minutes left. With Stork fouling out and other Panthers picked up their fourth foul, the Bombers salted it away by sinking 10 free throws down the stretch.

"We didn't get the win," said Peterson. "However, we went down in true Panther girls' basketball fashion, fighting tooth and nail for the kid next to them until the final buzzer."

For the game, VanMaldeghem finished with 30 points before fouling out in the final seconds. Schlaak scored 13, Boerner 10.

Full NRHEG stats: Schlaak 13P, 5R, 4A, 6S; Boerner 10P, 1R, 3A, 1S; Q.VanMaldeghem 30P, 18R, 2A, 2S; Buendorf 3P, 3R, 2A, 2S; Stork 3P, 4R, 1A; Farr 1R; Stadheim 6P, 2R.

Morgan Rysdam scored 23, Avery Shockman 22 and Emily Davis 15 for the Section 8A champion Bombers, who improved to 25-7. The Panthers finished 27-5.

"Thank you for everyone who followed us this season," said Peterson. "The amazing representation from our four communities at the state tournament. The girls appreciated all the support and so did I."

Despite a disappointing state tournament, a section championship game that brought an end to the Panthers' leader, and the preseason loss of projected starting center Kylie Olson to a torn ACL, the 2025-26 NRHEG girls' basketball team surprised some, but not all. The Panther faithful and the players themselves believed it could happen all along. The Panthers overcame incredible adversity in the section title game.

It was a sensational season.

No two-game appearance in a state tournament can take that away.



SCENES FROM STATE — At left, the Panthers' Chloe Stork (15) drives to the basket against Hillcrest Lutheran Academy. At right, NRHEG's Quinn VanMaldeghem (4) looks to the hoop. Photos by Jodi Wayne



At left, Savannah Farr (14) takes a shot at the basket against Braham. At right, Clara Buendorf (10) goes to the basket.



At left, the Panthers' Emilia Stadheim (21) drives the lane against Hillcrest Academy. In the middle, Gabby Schlaak leads the fast break against Braham. At right, Ezra Boerner takes a shot against Braham.



At left, the Panthers' Ezra Boerner looks to drive against Hillcrest Academy. At right, the Panther fans were faithful.



At left, NRHEG's Gabby Schlaak (1) drives against Hillcrest Lutheran. At right, Clara Buendorf (10) uses her left hand.

Finstad in the Field: weekly update

DHS Shutdown Update
With the spring break travel season well underway, millions of Americans are feeling the effects of Washington’s dysfunction. Travelers are experiencing wait times of more than three hours at some airports due to shortages of Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officers who have been working without pay for nearly a month because Senate Democrats, including Senators Klobuchar and Smith, continue to oppose the House-passed appropriations package for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).
This reckless DHS shutdown is not only causing headaches for millions of travelers, it’s putting our national security at risk by disrupting Coast Guard, FEMA, and CISA operations, and needlessly forcing the men and women who protect our homeland to go without paychecks. I will continue to urge my colleagues across the aisle to put an end to the partisan games and urgently restore funding for DHS.

Calling on Gov. Walz to Clean Up Minnesota Medicaid Fraud
In recent weeks, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the withholding of \$259 million quarterly Medicaid funds to Minnesota due to Gov. Walz’s inability to enact commonsense safeguards in the state’s administration of CMS programs.
A federal audit found \$234.8 million in unsupported or possibly fraudulent Medicaid claims and \$15.4 million involving individuals without satisfactory immigration status, leading CMS to temporarily suspend federal funds and reject the state’s corrective action plan as insufficient.
Minnesota has become a case study in fraud and abuse of Medicaid dollars. Recently, I led my colleagues in calling on Gov. Walz to comply with federal law regarding the ongoing fraud, waste, and abuse within Minne-

sota’s Medicaid program and work with CMS to restore our state’s federal Medicaid funding for the people of our state who depend on these crucial services.
Honoring Justin Reinarts
In November, Justin Reinarts and Tabitha Trescott were senselessly murdered in an apparent domestic violence incident in Hanska. Justin took great pride in being a first responder, serving 17 years with the Hanska Fire Department. It was an honor to join his fellow firefighters to remember Justin and present the department with a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol in his memory.
Special thanks also to Morgan and Cris for joining us and sharing the great work that Minnesota United Against Domestic Violence is doing to give a voice to the victims in our southern Minnesota communities who were taken from us too soon.

Congressional Art Competition
I’m excited to announce that my office is now accepting entries for the 2026 Congressional Art Competition! Every year, I look forward to hosting this annual contest and showcasing the creativity of southern Minnesota’s most talented student artists. It’s always exciting to see the entries that beautifully tell the stories of our district. Last year, I was proud to welcome our first place artist, Ava Siok, to D.C. to see her winning piece, “Sparkling Sunset” hung in the halls of the U.S. Capitol, representing Minnesota’s First District.
The contest is open to 9th-12th grade students in Minnesota’s First District. This year’s optional theme is “America the Beautiful: 250 Years of Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” Submissions must be mailed or hand-delivered to the Rochester or New Ulm office by 5 p.m. CT on Friday, April 24th. Official rules, guidelines, and student forms can be found online at finstad.house.gov/art-competition.

Sheriff plans to run again in fall

By RICK BUSSLER
Steele County Times
While many sheriffs around Minnesota are retiring or leaving the profession altogether after a tumultuous period for law enforcement, Steele County’s top law enforcement official is poised to continue for at least another four years.
Sheriff Lon Thiele announced this week he is running for re-election in fall as he seeks his fifth term. He has been re-elected three times since taking over the reigns in 2011.
“I love what I’m doing,” said Thiele, who grew up in Steele County and has worked in the police profession for about 35 years. “I’m going for my fifth term because people believe in what I’m doing,” he added.
Together with the community, Thiele said he has achieved remarkable success over the past 15 years. “Through hard work, collaboration and a commitment to proactive policing strategies, the sheriff’s office has made Steele County a very safe place to live, work and raise a family,” he said.

“Our work is not done,” Thiele said. “As we look ahead, my focus remains clear on reducing crime through proactive strategies, continuing community outreach and engagement and investing in training and technology to keep our county safe.”
Thiele’s announcement comes after he recently took over as president of the Minnesota Sheriffs’ Association. In addition, he is also president of FBI-LEEDA, a premier national development association committed to training and education.
“No one from Minnesota has ever been president of the state and national groups at the same time,” said Thiele. “I’m able to put my voice forward for public safety. We have a voice from Smallville Minnesota on a national circuit in law enforcement,” he added.
He pointed out his greatest accomplishment has been representing Steele County on local, state and federal stages.
In fact, this week Thiele is hosting Gold Star



RUNNING IT BACK - Sheriff Lon Thiele has announced he is running for re-election this fall. He has been sheriff in Steele County since 2011
Photo by Rick Bussler

Training for the FBI-LEEDA group comprised of about 15 law enforcement professionals from around the country at the sheriff’s office in Steele County.
“I can’t sit like a bump on a log and not do anything in the position,” Thiele said about his high involvement. “My commitment is to Steele County, and I want to put my voice out there,” he said.
In his role, Thiele said he has come to understand the community’s needs, which he identifies as commitment to public safety and fiscal responsibility.
He said, “I understand that every dollar we spend comes from hardworking taxpayers. That’s why I have prioritized responsible budgeting, making sure we maximize resources without increasing the burden on our community.”
Thiele points to the recent move of the sheriff’s office to the existing detention center, which has

been underutilized since it was built in the 1990s. He led an effort to renovate the center to include the sheriff’s office, which parted ways with the City of Owatonna from the downtown Law Enforcement Center. He was able to set up his office for about \$4 million.
Community engagement and transparency are important to Thiele. “You need to be involved with the community you protect and serve,” he said, noting that may mean sitting in a dunk tank for a community cause.
“My approach has always been rooted in integrity, accountability and a deep respect for the people we serve,” Thiele said. “I firmly believe that law enforcement is most effective when it works hand-in-hand with the community.”
He added, “Serving Steele County has been an honor. Together, we’ve built a foundation of safety and trust, and I am committed to building on that success.”

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources news

Warmer weather prompts seasonal road, trail closures
The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has begun temporarily closing some DNR-managed roads and motorized trails as seasonal melting makes them too soft to support vehicle traffic without causing damage. The duration of the temporary closures in state forests, state parks, recreation areas, and wildlife management areas depends on local weather and surface conditions, which can shift rapidly.
“These spring thaws create wet, unstable conditions. Closures protect our roads and trails from damage, avoid costly repairs, and keep people and equipment safe, too,” said Matt Huseby, DNR’s Forest Roads Program coordinator. “If you’re planning a visit to any state-managed lands, check the DNR website for updates, respect closures, and use good judgement wherever you travel.”
For information on road and trail closures, visit the DNR’s road and trail closure webpage (mndnr.gov/closures). The DNR also posts signs at entry points and parking lots when temporary closures are in effect. Roads that can handle vehicle traffic during the spring thaw will remain open but might have vehicle weight restrictions.
Minnesota DNR announces open water fishing regulations for Upper Red Lake
Anglers fishing on Upper Red Lake during the 2026 open-water season that starts Saturday, May 9 will have a five-

walleye possession limit, with only one walleye longer than 17 inches allowed. This is the same regulation that was in place for the 2025 open-water season.
“Upper Red Lake walleye have been managed at a level that, among other factors, resulted in a number of recent strong year classes,” said Andy Thompson, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources area fisheries supervisor for Bemidji. “This regulation is an opportunity for anglers to keep abundant young walleye while also maintaining spawners at a level that continues to produce successful year classes.”
Spawning stock levels on Upper Red Lake have a “sweet spot” where abundance is high enough to produce newly hatched walleye, known as fry, but not so high that young fish don’t survive well due to competition for food. Through this regulation, the Minnesota DNR is seeking to keep the fishery in this condition by focusing harvest on the plentiful immature fish under 17 inches, so that future numbers of spawning walleye aren’t higher than desired, and overall harvest doesn’t exceed agreed-upon levels established with Red Lake Nation.
Walleye management on Upper Red Lake is a collaborative effort between Red Lake Nation and the Minnesota DNR, governed by a joint harvest plan revised by the Red Lakes Fisheries Technical Committee in 2015 and again in 2025. Winter harvest regulations for 2026-2027 will be determined

after the summer fishing season and fall assessment netting.
The Upper Red Lake Citizen Advisory Committee reviews walleye harvest totals and regulation options, and provides recommendations for the state waters of Upper Red Lake. Current fishing regulations for Upper Red Lake are detailed on the Minnesota DNR website (mndnr.gov/fishing/upper-red-lake-regulations.html).
The DNR reminds anglers to protect Upper Red Lake and all Minnesota waters from aquatic invasive species by cleaning and draining watercraft and equipment, and putting unwanted bait in the trash. A decontamination station is available at the Tamarac River Big Bog Public Water Access, referred to locally as Homestead Park.
Learn new outdoor recreation skills — from camping to mountain biking— with DNR’s I Can! program
Registration for summer and fall 2026 I Can! outdoor recreation programs in Minnesota state parks and recreation areas opens Friday, March 20.
The I Can! series of award-winning outdoor recreation programs helps beginners learn outdoor skills, including camping, fishing, mountain biking and paddling, in a range of beautiful state park settings. For those who have already tried the basics, participants can expand their knowledge by trying a more challenging program, like backpack and canoe camping or sea kayaking.
The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources offers these programs from the first weekend in June through the end of September. The DNR provides equipment for all programs, giving participants an opportunity to try an activity without investing in gear.
“Our goal is to help people try new outdoor activities and get started in a safe and supportive setting,” said Eric Peltó, special programs supervisor who oversees the I Can! program.
To register for I Can! programs, visit mndnr.gov/reservations or call 866-857-2757 (8 a.m.-8 p.m. daily, except holidays).
Registration fees include a state park vehicle permit for the program dates. Programs include:
I Can Camp!
One and two-night programs
Learn how to set up a tent, build a safe campfire, cook at a campsite and more. These programs are great for brand-new campers.
Locations: Trips are available at 19 different state parks across Minnesota
Backpack camping
Stepping out into the backcountry for the first time can be daunting. Learn all the basics of a successful trip, including packing and fitting a backpack,

hiking to a campsite, secure food storage methods and more.
Locations: Afton and Lake Maria state parks
Paddle canoe camping
Learn about canoe camping adventures, including paddling skills, how to pack gear in a canoe, plan a route and more.
Locations: Glendalough, Savanna Portage and St. Croix state parks
More I Can Camp! Information, including program dates and fees, is at mndnr.gov/state_parks/ican/camp.html
I Can Paddle!
Canoeing and kayaking, two-hour program
Learn the basics of canoeing or kayaking on a lake, including launching, paddling efficiently, and planning a safe outing.
Locations: 12 state parks across Minnesota
Sea kayaking, two-hour program
Level up from paddling on a lake or river and try sea kayaking on Lake Superior.
Location: Split Rock Lighthouse State Park
More I Can Paddle! information, including program dates and fees, is at mndnr.gov/state_parks/ican/paddle.html
I Can Mountain Bike!
Learn the fundamentals of mountain biking to safely hit the trails with confidence, from shifting gears to maneuvering around obstacles.
Location: Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area
More I Can Mountain Bike! information, including program dates and fees, is at mndnr.gov/state_parks/ican/mountain_bike.html
I Can Fish!
Experience the thrill of casting a line and reeling in a catch! These hands-on, two-hour sessions cover everything from baiting a hook to safely handling fish.
Locations: Father Hennepin, Fort Snelling, Sibley, and Whitewater state parks
More I Can Fish! information, including program dates and fees, is at mndnr.gov/state_parks/ican/fish.html
About I Can!
Since 2010, more than 100,000 people have participated in I Can! programs. The DNR’s I Can! series is made possible with funding from the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund, created after voters approved the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment in 2008. The Parks and Trails Fund receives 14.25% of the three-eighths percent sales tax revenue to support parks and trails of regional or statewide significance.

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FUND RAISER

Looking back at snowfalls of the past

When looking out at the latest snowfall that we received, I am reminded of March of '65 before I went into the Navy. I was working at the Conger Creamery at the time and had just finished my can route. After that I hauled a load of skim milk into Freeborn Foods. As I left the creamery, it started to sleet. I took the "Old Wilson Highway" which runs from Conger to Hwy. 69. It was gravel back then, but today it is blacktop. The road was muddy and icy, so as I got to the curve on the north end of Upper Twin Lake my front tires were in the grooves that were made in the mud. Meanwhile the back of the truck was inches from the guard rail. I decided that I didn't want to ride with the truck if it went off the road and into the bottom of that steep drop. With that being said, I opened the door and stood on the edge of the



Woods and Water

by Dick Herfindahl
Outdoors Writer

floor with my right foot on the gas and one hand on the steering wheel. I managed to navigate the curve and keep on going. My survival instincts told me to turn on a different road to avoid the blacktop. Unfortunately, the gravel on South Lincoln was also glare ice, and as I navigated the icy hill down and up the other side, there in front of me was a van sitting cross-ways at the top of the hill. I knew that hitting the brakes would send me off the road, so I pushed in the clutch

and let the truck roll back and fort between the hills until it came to rest at the bottom. I walked to a neighboring house and called Matson Truck lines to bring their crane over and winch me up the hill. By the time I got to Freeborn Foods, the sleet had turned to snow, and it was coming down hard. The snow wasn't letting up, so I left for Conger and barely made it back. The snow was coming down harder now, so my two co-workers and I spent the

night sleeping on top of boxes in the creamery. The next day the snow finally let up, so we went out to see which farms we could reach. The snow south of Conger was so deep on some of the side roads that only the top of the power poles were sticking out of the snow. Some farmers would bring the milk to the end of their driveway by sled. Some weren't so lucky and had to pour their milk down the drain because they only had so much room in the coolers. That winter, I shoveled more snow than I have the rest of my life. There is much more to the story, but that is a story for another time. Please take the time to remember our troops that are serving now and those that have served before them. They are the reason that we have all of the Freedoms that we enjoy today.

ZED by Duane M. Abel



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Wednesday - 5:15 p.m. Supper; 6 p.m. Bible Study

ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Otisco, Minnesota
Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor
Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship

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

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

VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Pastor Dan Kordahl
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship

VISTA EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Brian Schanil Pastor
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 9 a.m. Sunday School
Tuesdays: The Shepherd's Robe Ministry, 1-3 p.m., 6-8 p.m.; Bonfires and Yard Games, 6 p.m. until dark

CROSS OF GLORY LUTHERAN
Hartland, Minnesota
Rev. Marcia Pedersen
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship
Tuesday - Council meeting

(First Tuesday)
WEST FREEBORN LUTHERAN
Hartland, Minnesota
Rev. Marcia Pedersen
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship
Monday - Council meeting (First Monday of the month)
Friday - Quilting meets 9:00 a.m. twice a month, see news-letter for dates.

HARTLAND EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
Hartland, Minnesota
Pastor Phillip K. Lepak
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship

MANCHESTER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
Manchester, Minnesota
Pastor Phillip K. Lepak
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Father Glenn Frerichs
Friday - 10 a.m. on 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays p.m. Mass
Sunday - Mass at 8 a.m.

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN
Geneva, Minnesota
Pastor Leandra Anderson
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship (times very for holidays)
Monday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting

SIMPLY CHURCH
105 Second Street North East
Geneva, Minnesota
Todd Lundgren, Pastor
Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Worship

VIBRANT LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH
Ellendale, Minnesota
Pastor David Modder
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship; 10 a.m. Kids church
Check the website for additional updates
www.vibrantlifeag.com

FIRST LUTHERAN, AFLC
Ellendale, Minnesota
Pastor Kyle Smith
Saturday - 8 a.m. Men's Bible Study
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship
Monday - 7 p.m. Call to prayer
Wednesday - 9:30 a.m. Bible Study; 6 p.m. Confirmation; 7-9 p.m. Youth Group (No confirmation during summer)

ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST
Ellendale, Minnesota
Randy Cirkse, Pastor
Sunday - Summer Service time is 9:30 a.m. Worship; 9:15 a.m. Sunday school. (No summer Sunday school)
Worship is at 10:30 a.m. beginning after Sept. 3. Sunday School from Oct through May from 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Food shelf is open every Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

CENTRAL FREEBORN LUTHERAN CHURCH
Pastor Matt Griggs
Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship
FM Transmitter is used for those wanting to listen through their car radios at FM 90.7

EAST FREEBORN LUTHERAN
Pastor Matt Griggs
Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship
FM Transmitter is used for those wanting to listen through their car radios at FM 89.3

FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH
Hollandale, Minnesota
Rev. Neal Ooms
Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship; 9:20 Worship and kids church (now an eagle brook viewing church)

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMS
Hollandale, Minnesota
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH
Rev. Neal Ooms
101 East Park Avenue
Hollandale, Minnesota
Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Worship; 10:45 a.m. Sunday School

ZION LUTHERAN, ELCA
Rural Ellendale
Deacon Billie Jo Wicks
Sunday - 8:30 a.m. Worship

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN, ELCA
Meriden, Minnesota
Deacon Billie Jo Wicks
Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship

PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN
Lemond Township
Pastor Gena Parker
Sunday - 10:15 a.m. Worship

FIRST LUTHERAN, LCMC
Hope, Minnesota
Pastor Sandy Miller
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 10:15 a.m. Youth/Adult Study

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Clarks Grove, Minnesota
Pastor James Cameron
Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School; 10:30 a.m. Worship

HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LITOMYSL
Father Peter Schuster
Sunday - 8 a.m. Sacrament of Reconciliation; 8:30 a.m. Mass with Children's Church; Pre-school Sunday School during Mass
Wednesday - 6:30 p.m. - Faith Formation classes for grades K-Confirmation
www.litomysl.webs.com
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FIRST LUTHERAN
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Rev. Larry Sipe, pastor
Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Study

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN
Minnesota Lake, Minnesota
Rev. Larry Sipe, pastor
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

ST. PAUL UNITED
Minnesota Lake, Minnesota
Interim Pastor
Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School; 10:30 a.m. Worship

PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Minnesota Lake, Minnesota
Interim Pastor
Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Freedom Township
Rev. Larry Sipe
Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship

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

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

TRINITY LUTHERAN
Wilton Township
Rev. Larry Sipe, Pastor
Sunday - 10:45 a.m. Worship

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Brad Donner, Branch President
Waseca, Minnesota
www.lds.org
Sunday - 10 a.m. Sacrament Mtg.; 11:20 a.m. Sunday School
Wednesday - 7 p.m. Youth Activities, ages 12-18
NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE STAR EAGLE.

LOOKING BACK

25 years ago

- The Exchange Club Center for Family Unity - A partnership for the Prevention of Child Abuse - gratefully acknowledges the following businesses, organization and individuals for their fourth quarter contributions to the Center; Kathleen V. Anttila, Caryn Wendt, Children Trust Fund, Thomas J. Curran, Robin Roberts, Wells Fargo Bank, Waseca County Human Services Phyllis Beschneet, Waseca Are United Way, and the Exchange Club of North Metro Minneapolis.
- Heather Wayne of Ellendale has been named to the St. Olaf College Deans List for the first semester of 2000-2001. The Dean's List recognizes St. Olaf students with semester grade - point averages of 3.75 or higher (on a 4-point scale).
- Bruce A. and Betty Berg of New Richland announce the engagement of their daughter, Misty, to Micheal Como, son of Dean and Sue Como of North Mankato. A Saturday, April 14, 2001, wedding is planned at Trinity Lutheran Church in New Richland.

50 years ago



- Steve Scheffert, son of Eugene Scheffert of rural Waseca and the late Mrs. Scheffert is pictured as he accepted a State Award for having shown the top barrow at the Waseca County Fair, last summer. Making the presentation at the Waseca County Pork Producers at the American Legion clubrooms Tuesday evening was Bill Geotte, president of the Minnesota State Pork Producers.
- Chris Floden of the Waldorf-Pemberton FFA Chapter took first place in the FFA Extemporaneous Speaking Contest at both the district and regional levels, recently. He will enter competition at the state level in May.

75 years ago

- Miss Mary Bruzek, New Richland junior at the college of St. Theresa, Winona, will be initiated into Sigma Delta Pi, National Spanish honor society, in a ceremony at the College April 19. Miss Bruzek is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Bruzek, of New Richland.
- A daughter, Jane Laell, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Ervin Engel of Matawan, Friday, April 6, at St. Mary's Hospital, Minneapolis. The little miss weighed six pounds, 15 ounces and has a brother, Kenley, and two sisters, Sherry and Kalina. Mr. Engel manages the Standard Lumber Co. yard at Matawan.

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LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE	DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on February 8, 2023 as Document Number A332886 in the Office of the County Recorder of Waseca County, Minnesota.	PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Waseca County, Minnesota.	the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part.	assigns is six (6) months from the date of sale.	PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.
THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION.	ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Amerihome Mortgage Company, LLC by assignment recorded on April 25, 2024 as Document Number A336738 in the Office of the County Recorder of Waseca County, Minnesota.	THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$233,270.73	TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.	TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on October 23, 2026.	MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:	LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: The North One Half of Lots (11) and Twelve (12), Block Nine (9), First Addition to the Village, now City of Waseca, Minnesota, according to the map or plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the Register of Deeds in and for Waseca County, Minnesota.	RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Amerihome Mortgage Company, LLC	PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:	THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL	Dated: February 12, 2026
DATE OF MORTGAGE: October 14, 2022	STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 201 6TH ST SE, WASECA, MN 56093	TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17.276.1140	PLACE OF SALE: Waseca County Sheriff's Office, 122 3rd Ave. NW, Waseca, MN 56093.	AMERIHOME MORTGAGE COMPANY, LLC Mortgagee	TROTT LAW, P.C.
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$205,623.00	COUNTY IN WHICH	TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 1003336-0000078258-4	to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or	By: /s/ *N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq.* Samuel R. Coleman, Esq. Alexa Marsh, Esq. Attorneys for Mortgagee 25 Dale Street North St. Paul, MN 55102 (651) 209-9760 (25-1337-FC01)	
MORTGAGOR(S): Colton C. Eustice, a married man		THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover			
MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for American Portfolio Mortgage Corporation					

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE	Document Number A331902 in the Office of the County Recorder of Waseca County, Minnesota.	TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.	DATE AND TIME OF SALE: May 07, 2026 at 10:00 AM.	ORDER IS ENTERED UNDER MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 582.032, DETERMINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THE MORTGAGED PREMISES ARE IMPROVED WITH A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING OF LESS THAN FIVE UNITS, ARE NOT PROPERTY USED IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.	(26-0124-FC01)
THE RIGHT TO VERIFICATION OF THE DEBT AND IDENTITY OF THE ORIGINAL CREDITOR WITHIN THE TIME PROVIDED BY LAW IS NOT AFFECTED BY THIS ACTION.	ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: U.S. Bank National Association by assignment recorded on December 30, 2025 as Document Number A342247 in the Office of the County Recorder of Waseca County, Minnesota.	NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: American Pacific Mortgage Corporation	PLACE OF SALE: Waseca County Sheriff's Office, 122 3rd Ave. NW, Waseca, MN 56093.	MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None	Federal law may require reporting to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network for certain purchases of residential property by entities or trusts. A successful third party bidder may be required to provide ownership and identifying information as a condition to completing the transfer.
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:	LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Lot 2, in R. P. Ward's Subdivision (B) of the NW 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 18, Township 107 North, Range 22 West, Waseca County, Minnesota PIN# 175900190.	RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: U.S. Bank National Association	to pay the debt then secured by said mortgage and taxes, if any actually paid by the mortgagee, on the premises and the costs and disbursements allowed by law. The time allowed by law for redemption by said mortgagor(s), their personal representatives or assigns is six (6) months from the date of sale.	Dated: March 11, 2026	THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. Published in the NRHEG Star Eagle on March 19, 26, April 2, 9, 16 and 23.
DATE OF MORTGAGE: October 25, 2022	STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 804 5TH ST SW, WASECA, MN 56093	TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 17.590.0190	TIME AND DATE TO VACATE PROPERTY: Unless said mortgage is reinstated or the property redeemed, or unless the time for redemption is reduced by judicial order, you must vacate the premises by 11:59 p.m. on November 9, 2026.	U.S. BANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION Mortgagee	
ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$201,286.00	COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Waseca County, Minnesota.	TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 1002793-0006824944-6	THE TIME ALLOWED BY LAW FOR REDEMPTION BY THE MORTGAGOR, THE MORTGAGOR'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES OR ASSIGNS, MAY BE REDUCED TO FIVE WEEKS IF A JUDICIAL	TROTT LAW, P.C.	
MORTGAGOR(S): Rhett Warmsbecker, an unmarried man	THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$318,165.46	THAT no action or proceeding has been instituted at law to recover the debt then remaining secured by such mortgage, or any part thereof, or, if the action or proceeding has been instituted, that the same has been discontinued, or that an execution upon the judgment rendered therein has been returned unsatisfied, in whole or in part.		By: /s/ N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq. Samuel R. Coleman, Esq. *Alexa Marsh, Esq.* Attorneys for Mortgagee 25 Dale Street North St. Paul, MN 55102 (651) 209-9760	
MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for American Pacific Mortgage Corporation		PURSUANT, to the power of sale contained in said mortgage, the above described property will be sold by the Sheriff of said county as follows:			
DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on October 27, 2022 as					

STATE OF MINNESOTA COUNTY WASECA	TICE TO CREDITORS	the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate, including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate. Please see Notice of Remote Hearing.	will be barred.
THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT DISTRICT COURT PROBATE DIVISION Court File No. 81-PR-25-922	It is Ordered and Notice is given that on April 8 , 2026, at 10:00 A.M., a hearing will be held, via Zoom, in this Court at 307 North State Street Waseca, Minnesota, for the formal probate of an instrument purporting to be the Will of the Decedent dated, September 25, 2024, ("Will"), and for the appointment of Mark Engel, 28654 655th Avenue Hartland, Minnesota 56042 as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent in an UNSUPERVISED □ SUPER- VISED administration. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at	Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3- 801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims	BY THE COURT Dated: 02/17/26, 11:04:06 a.m. /s/Carol M. Hanks Judge of District Court Shannon Asselin Court Administrator Byron Law Office, PLLC Molly Byron MN# 0163843 122 North State St. Waseca, MN 56093 Telephone:507-835-3355 Fax:507-835-3303 Published in the Star Eagle March 12 and 19, 2026
Estate of Gerald C. Roemhildt aka Jerry Roemhildt Decedent			
NOTICE AND ORDER OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES AND NO-			

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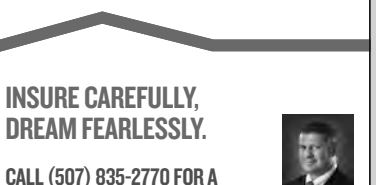


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■ Farmers
from Page 5

America led to higher crop prices for American farmers. At the same time, though, input costs began to balloon at the tail end of those years.

“We saw really kind of a short-lived surge in grain prices, particularly for wheat, and then in other crop prices as well during that period,” Mahon said. “But other than those two years, it’s been a long period of relatively weak farm incomes.”

In recent years, markets in South America have ramped up production of key crops such as soybeans. That has added more competition for American growers, especially amid the ongoing trade war with China and other countries.

“Agriculture continues to get more and more productive, and that’s for the world as a whole a good thing, because it means we can feed more people,” Mahon said. “But if you’re a producer, it kind of cuts both ways, because that leads to this sort of high supply of commodities, and that puts downward pressure on prices.”

Row crops are only one part of the farm economy, though. The livestock industry has been a bright spot, as a historically low U.S. cattle herd has led to strong prices for some livestock producers.

“So for those operations that have cattle available to sell, profit margins have been quite exceptional,” said Nate Kauffman, executive director of the Center for Agriculture and the Economy at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, earlier this month.

That economic strength among livestock producers has helped offset some of the losses crops incurred, Kauffman said.

Even still, the U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that farm-sector debt could increase by more than 5 percent to reach \$624.7 billion this year.

A tale of two states
Arkansas led the nation in farm

bankruptcy filings last year, with 33, according to the Farm Bureau report. That’s about double the amount in the state the year before.

Tyler Oxner, director of commodity activities and economics at the Arkansas Farm Bureau, said he’s still trying to figure out why bankruptcies are particularly high in his state.

“It may just be our aging demographic here in the state,” Oxner said. “And the sheer number of farms that are losing money over the past three years.”

Oxner said the war in Iran is further hurting fuel and fertilizer prices.

“With it being three years of bad financials, that cost is very hard to swallow now,” he said.

One-time government assistance payments, such as the Trump administration’s \$11 billion package for row-crop farmers, are helpful, Oxner said, but he is hoping for more long-term sustainability, such as more open trade.

In Iowa, the economic situation is a bit more nuanced. The state had the third-highest farm bankruptcy filings last year, but it’s also seeing an increase in new farms opening.

“Iowa, I think, is in a little bit of a unique position,” said Christopher Pudenz, economics and research manager at the Iowa Farm Bureau. “We have a strong livestock sector, we have our biofuel sector, and we’re able to export.”

Iowa experienced 18 farm bankruptcies in 2025, which Pudenz said was low, but still an increase from last year. Pudenz acknowledges that the agricultural economy is in a downturn and that there are no silver bullets to fix it.

“But just because things are challenging doesn’t mean they’re hopeless,” Pudenz said. “The ag economy has gone through downturns before and has come out on the backside and has had successful, thriving times after those downturns.”

This story was produced in partnership with Harvest Public Media, a collaboration of public media newsrooms in the Midwest and Great Plains. It reports on food systems, agriculture and rural issues.

Snowfall



MAKING THE MOST - Though some will think the Ides of March lived up to its unlucky reputation on Sunday, March 15, local resident Logan Piltingsrud had a blast building a snow fort in the 10.6" of snow that fell in the New Richland area.

58th Annual Irish Celebration



Congrats to Hudson Miller for being crowned this year's Miss St. Patrick and Bella Gerdts for being crowned the 2026 Miss Irish Rose. The other candidates in the queen pageant included NRHEG's Nora Flatness and Haylee Appel and Kayle Langford.



In Memory of Russell Anderson

October 4, 1933 - March 21, 2019







You may be gone from our sight,
but you're never gone from our hearts.
We love and miss you Dad.

Love always,
Caron, Wendi,
Kerry, & Julie



