

Bead Art Keychain at the New Richland Public Library, Jan. 29

Use a pattern to make fun animals and shapes, including crayons, lizards, and snakes by weaving pony beads together at the New Richland Library at 4 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 29. Then turn them into keychains to create a colorful accessory. For ages 9-12.

Sleigh and Cutter Ice Carving Jan. 28, 29 on courthouse lawn

The annual ice carving event sponsored as part of the Sleigh and Cutter festival will be Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 28 and 29 near the Veterans Memorial on the county courthouse lawn. Carving begins at 11 a.m. on Wednesday and noon on Thursday.

Deer Hunters Bingo and Membership Drive at VFW, Jan. 31

The Minnesota Deer Hunters Association South Central Chapter will hold a Deer Hunters Bingo and Membership Drive at the Sweet-Sommers VFW starting at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 31. Contact Tim at 507-201-7933 or Pat at 507-380-5363 with questions.

Waseca County Winter Farmers Market at Farmamerica Jan. 31

There will be a winter farmers market at Farmamerica from 8 a.m. till noon Saturday, Jan. 31. Find locally grown, baked and made while supporting our local producers. Farmamerica is located at 7367 360th Ave., Waseca.

County-wide political precinct caucuses 7 p.m. Feb. 3

All citizens are invited to attend political caucuses for the county Republican and Democratic parties. Registration will be at 6:30 p.m., with caucus business beginning at 7 p.m. One does not need to be a party member to attend. Information about locations, times, and more is available on the Secretary of State website at <https://www.sos.mn.gov/elections-voting/how-elections-work/precinct-caucuses/>

Community Valentine's Brunch at Cross of Glory Lutheran of Hartland, Sunday, Feb. 22

There will be a Community Valentine's Brunch at the Cross of Glory Lutheran Church from 9:30 a.m. through 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 22. There will be no charge, but free-will donations will be accepted. Cross of Glory is located at 401 Church St. Hartland.

A word from The Word



But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved.

Ephesians 2:4-5



SNOW COURT - Front row: Winter Pederson, Gabrielle Schlaak, Meela Budach, Nora Flatness, Kaitlyn Dobberstein, Kayden Warke. Back row: Ezekiel Morrison, Kaleb Hughes, Justin Beauvais, Quen Meyering, DeShawn Jones, Isaac Bauleke

NRHEG Snow Week fast approaching

The NRHEG 2026 Snow Week kicks off Jan. 31 and goes until Feb. 6. Coronation is set for 1:45 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3 at NRHEG High School, when royalty will be crowned based on a vote of the student body grades 9-12. Coronation is open to the community and will feature speeches from winter sports coaches.

Different dress-up themes for students will take place beginning on the 2nd.

Queen Candidates include	Schedule
Meela Budach Kaitlyn Dobberstein Nora Flatness Winter Pederson Gabrielle Schlaak Kayden Warke	Coronation ceremony 1:45 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3.
King Candidates include Isaac Bauleke Justin Beauvais Kaleb Hughes DeShawn Jones Quen Meyering Ezekiel Morrison	Monday, Feb. 2: Dress Up Day – Pajama/comfy; Snow Week Kick-off Assembly; bean bag tournament prelims for 6th and 8th grade; Girls' and Boys' Varsity Basketball at 7 p.m.
	Tuesday, Feb. 3: Dress Up Day – Generation Day; bean bag tournament prelims for 6th and 7th grade; Snow Coronation; Girls' and Boys' Varsity Basketball at 7 p.m.
	Wednesday, Feb. 4: Dress Up Day – White Lie; bean bag tournament prelims for 7th and 8th grade, finals for 6th grade; Snow Court will visit the Elementary school and New Richland Care Center.
	Thursday, Feb. 5: Dress Up Day – Dress as your type; high school bean bag tournament; 7th and 8th grade bean bag finals; Varsity Wrestling at home at 5 p.m.
	Friday, Feb. 6: Dress Up Day – Meme Day (Quarterzip and matcha); Varsity Girls' Basketball at 6 p.m. and Varsity Boys' Basketball at 7:30 p.m.



HOPE IN BUTTER - Victor Mrotz, owner of the Hope Creamery, with Judi Kalstad, who was one of the many people who bought the butter he donated at the Geneva Cancer Auction on Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026. Donors, buyers, and volunteers made it possible for this year's Geneva Cancer Auction to raise \$155,000 to aid in the fight against cancer. Star Eagle photo by Ben Revermann

Auction: part two

By KATHY PAULSEN

The 2026 Geneva Cancer Auction - "FIGHT THE FIGHT" - resumed on Friday, Jan. 16 at 7 p.m. at the Geneva Bar & Grill, as Jamie Hagen welcomed everyone. Sorry to say I am, guessing that the weather may have kept some people away, but I am pleased to say that many people braved the cold weather and attended and that over 100 sets of items were put up for bid that night.

And with that said, Jamie asked for the first item to be put up for bid, which included the famous "stew package," which includes of a bag of potatoes, a bag of onions, and a pound of the great HOPE BUTTER. That was followed by another "staple" of the Geneva Cancer Auction, which is a quart of Sue Hills' pickles, which this time were the HOT pickles that Sue makes.

Following those two items, many other great donations were auctioned, including several different collections of plaques that Vicki Wright, whose daughter Amber is fighting blood cancer, had donated. Also, a jar of Apple Pie Schnapp's was donated by Doug Felt in memory of his son Matt, who passed away following a fight with cancer.

Victor Mrotz once again arrived at the Geneva Cancer Auction and brought in a number of cases of his famous HOPE BUTTER, which were included with a number of other items that were put up for bid over the course of the night.

Later in the auction on Friday night, a pound of Hope butter was auctioned. Troy Hagen was the lucky bidder and he decided to donate the pound of butter back again, so that more money could be raised.

The butter was auctioned, donated back and resold a total of eight times before it was decided that it should be put in the refrigerator on Friday night.

And if that isn't enough, I believe after the first time it was donated back to the auction, Victor Mrotz was asked to sign the pound of butter, and many others followed suit and also signed their names on the wrapper of the butter.

The pound of butter was once

Auction continued on 5

Raise a Toast celebrates women in agriculture

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

About 60 women from around the region attended Farmamerica's Raise a Toast celebration the evening of Jan. 16. Farmamerica staff members explain the event's focus is honoring the essential role women play in agriculture.

Alongside the evening's conversation, dinner, and featured



ELEGANT GRACE - Dressed elegantly for the evening, a group of ladies raised a toast to women's contributions to agriculture.

speaker were door prizes, gifts, and a three-dimensional photo and video experience that included receiving a personalized photo magnet from Waseca's Magnetic North, owned by Meghan Larson.

The meal, catered by Kendra

Toast continued on 7

Leaders urge voters to attend caucuses

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

"If you want to see a better country, precinct caucuses are the way to start," declares Deb Hogenson, chair of the Waseca County Democratic Party.

County Republican treasurer Charlie Priebe phrases it another way, "If you feel inclined to complain about the way things are, you should come help change them."

Precinct caucuses will take place at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3; registration begins at 6:30. In the case of the Democratic party, all county precincts are invited to the cafeteria of Waseca's Central School Building. Republican precinct caucuses are at various school buildings and community centers across the county; a full list appears at the end of this article.

Much helpful information about precinct caucuses appears on the Secretary of State website at <https://www.sos.mn.gov/elections-voting/how-elections-work/precinct-caucuses>.

What local political leaders from both parties want people to know is that they are encouraged to attend, will be able to engage at whatever level they find personally suitable, and will be speaking with friends and neighbors from their own precincts.

There are 23 precincts in Waseca County. Based on population, they range from the size of entire communities of Janesville, New Richland and Waldorf, to whole townships, to divisions of the city of Waseca, where precinct lines are drawn by local governments to help facilitate city and county elections.

Once they begin, caucus discussions will last as long as precinct groups find suitable to accomplish a few tasks: select their precinct delegates to the county-wide convention and to endorse conventions, elect party officers, and discuss possible changes or additions to party platforms.

Democrat Hogenson explains that the Secretary of State office requires all major political parties to hold precinct caucuses, and even designates what day and time they must be held. "But each party decides the details and their way of going about things."

Because of this, there will be differences in the exact way business is handled—for example, how the Democrats are having all precincts gather in one large space, while Waseca County Republicans have spread their precinct caucuses across five locations.

County Republican Chair John Knotts observes that, with Tim Walz's recent announcement that he will not be seeking re-election in 2026, parties will want to know more about the qualifications voters want their candidates to possess. In fact, the Republican caucuses will begin with a "straw poll" on the question.

In order to vote or be selected as a candidate or alternate during the precinct

Caucus continued on 10



FenceLines

by Mark Bernard

Baby, we were born to run

The scurs and their Weather Eye foresaw a change in our temps and not for the better. Is Old Man Winter tightening his icy grip or does he relax a spell? Starting Thursday, partly sunny with highs around 10 above with lows around -20. Partly sunny Friday with a slight chance of overnight snow. Highs around -10 with lows near -20. Partly sunny on Saturday with highs around -10 and lows near -15. Sunday, mostly cloudy with highs near 10 above and lows near zero. Mostly cloudy Monday with highs around 10 above and lows near zero. Tuesday, mostly cloudy with highs in the low teens and lows around 0. Mostly sunny on Wednesday with highs around 10 above and lows around 0. On the 22nd we see our daylight hours increasing to 9 hours and 30 minutes, having gained roughly 36 minutes since the winter solstice. The normal high for January 21st is 21 and the normal low is 4. The scurs are seeing the bottom of those seemingly bottomless Christmas goodie plates.

This past week turned into winter again. Not that we didn't expect it, but we were hoping. Some snow on top of the ice didn't hurt too many feelings as there was a dearth of anything to get a grip on. Grit was applied only to have it melt into the surface of the ice once it thawed again. Rinse and repeat. It appears we're in for the coldest stretch of the winter. The cold is still annoying just the same. November and December had their moments, but overall weren't too terrible. The past couple winters we had smooth sailing for lengthy spells with a few cold days tossed in to see if we were paying attention. When we look back on the temperature data, last January was about normal and February wound up several degrees below normal. Our snowfall is lagging so far this January, but that can catch up quickly with just one storm. It could become one of those winters where, once it warms up, snow may follow. Stay tuned.

While cooped up inside much of the day, at least watching the birds passes the time. Keeping the feeders filled during the depths of the cold weather gets to be a workout. There are a dozen feeding stations, not counting the ear corn feeder for the pheasants. The total includes four thistle feeders, four suet feeders and four sunflower feeders. It makes it a little easier to stagger the refills, especially when it gets extremely cold. After chores the urgency to get in the house where it's warm and stay there becomes the guiding factor. The cooler weather had brought a lot more goldfinches to the yard. The

cardinals are back as well, although they're most frequently seen once the sun is down.

Most times they're under the lantern feeder, cleaning up before the bunnies take the night shift.

The New Year's alien has been a formidable opponent so far. I can honestly say I never remember coughing as much as I have this time around. Early last week was tough, although managed with some analgesics. The fever was controllable at least until the dosage started to wear off. Then it was game on again. We both still have lingering coughing fits as we try to dislodge the gunk deposited in our lungs. The worst thing is probably the lack of energy. It doesn't help matters that it's so cold outside. It's tough to get excited about going out into it again when you're already there. Crawling under a blanket to warm up is about as much ambition as one can muster once back inside after chores.

And speaking of chores, they're always there twice a day, like it or not. We're coming up on prime-time for lambing within the next several weeks, although they've held off during the coldest stretch so far. It's not bad when the brood ewes can be fed round bales and grain outside. Some have asked if they consume more feed during the coldest weather and they definitely do, particularly hay. That's fine as we have plenty and in fact we still have one bale left from two years ago before we start on this last summer's crop. Even the two-year old hay has kept relatively well, judging by how completely the ewes finish the bales off. If the feeders are kept operating as they should, there is very little left before it's time to put another one in the lot.

Poppy has been cooped up inside for much of the recent cold snap. Those small Corgi feet get cold pretty fast, so it's potty time, sniff around to see where her little buddies have been, then back in the house. There is opportunity to get outside for exercise, however, if one can get the sliding glass door thawed out. That becomes a "must do" if you're home alone with her, or she'll just about drive you crazy. A small space heater is strategically positioned, so that it gently warms the bottom corner of the door where it tends to freeze up. It takes an hour or so, but once the door is functional again, the squirrels figure out pretty quickly that they'd better eat quick and run. That's OK. That's what they're born to do.

See you next week...real good then.

Test/retest homes for cancer-causing radon

With doors and windows shut tight against the cold, dangerous levels of cancer-causing radon gas can build up in homes during the winter months, posing a health risk. Waseca County Public Health reminds residents that now is the time to test or retest homes for radon.

Radon is a colorless, odorless gas that occurs naturally in soil and can enter homes through cracks and other openings in the walls or foundation. When inhaled over a long period of time, radioactive radon particles can damage lungs and lead to lung cancer. It's estimate that radon causes about 21,000 lung cancer deaths in the U.S. each year.

Due to its unique geology and cold climate:

The average Minnesota home radon level is more than 3x the national average.

As many as 70% of Southcentral Minnesota homes have high radon, compared with 40% in the rest of the state.

"You can't see or smell radon,

so the only way to know if it's in your home, and help prevent future cancers, is to test for it," said Dan Tranter, supervisor of the Indoor Air Unit at the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). "People who have detected high radon levels and installed a radon mitigation system should test every 2 years to confirm the system is working. People who have tested before and results were low should test every five years."

Test sooner if the home has had significant changes (such as significant renovations, changes to an HVAC system or openings to soil), and if you use ground contact spaces that weren't tested before (such as a basement or new addition).

Waseca County Public Health provides test kits at no cost. For information about the availability of these test kits, stop at the front desk or contact Katie Reyes at 507-835-0657. Test kits also can be purchased at hardware and home improvement stores or ordered for \$12.95 at mn.radon.com.

Texas tale reveals unsettling details



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

share regards James' significant other, Paulette, a lifelong Texas resident. I was recently informed, to my complete surprise, a typical country speed limit in Texas is 75 miles per hour—This is on two-lane roads comparable to what we have in Minnesota—about 25 feet wide.

All right, the stage is set.

About a week ago, Paulette was driving her small-ish SUV on a country road after dark. Suddenly she realized there was a horse standing in the road facing away from her. A black one, not visible until the last moment. She didn't

even have time to hit the brakes before the collision occurred.

The horse's posterior rode up the hood of the vehicle, crashed into the windshield, and crushed in the roof right above the driver seat. A description that was shared with us stated that, if someone were sitting in the damaged vehicle's driver seat, there would be only about an inch between his or her nose and the crushed-in metal.

After the horse slid off Paulette's hood and roof, it landed in the roadway and was struck by a second vehicle.

Paulette's brake lights had offered that driver a warning; he had slowed down from full cruising speed. His vehicle was damaged, but not "totaled" in the complete way Paulette's was.

Imagining the forces involved, perhaps you will agree with my household's assessment that it was essentially miraculous that Paulette survived. She did end up with some frighteningly bloody cuts on her forehead which required hours of medical stitching to repair.

And one other thing. Since the horse was hit from behind, its bowels were emptied on and inside the car. James' laconic assessment was "If it can't be hosed off, it's probably not worth keeping."

Especially after hearing about this accident, I find myself thinking "bigger isn't always better."

Ice cream on a cold day in New York



Just a Thought...

by Eli Lutgens

shop with lines around the block... during the summer. We sat on the floor (They don't have seating.) and enjoyed our Sundays and shakes. There was no one else in the store. To quote my friends, "I didn't think ice cream on a cold day would be good. But this was worth it."

Tuesday we got up early and drove to New York. Since I was a small child, I dreamed of visiting the big city. Back then I thought it would be cool to live there. As an adult, that idea is a nightmare.

Nonetheless, driving into the city was breathtaking. I felt like a kid again, but all grown up.

Our first stop was Battery Island and a ferry to Liberty Island to see the Statue of Liberty. Another boat ride brought us to Ellis Island where so many of our ancestors entered the country. Standing in the same spots, lines, building as those people was humbling.

On the ferry ride back, a 15-year old Turkish immigrant sat next to us, whose family won the "green card lottery."

He could not believe I was 28-years old, thinking I must be a teenager. Additionally, he talked of his surprises coming here and the vast culture he was seeing in New York. He may or may not have

asked about different racial terms he had never heard before. I described the interaction as a 'teachable moment' as we talked for about 15 minutes.

Next we walked to the 9/11 memorial. This is the quietest place in New York City. Two large pools of everflowing water lie where the Twin Towers once stood. Every name of every person whose life was lost that day sits engraved along the black edges of the square pools.

Walking around each large pool, we saw fresh flowers adorning numerous names. I was only three years old on 9/11/2001, but I remember my daycare lady coming in to shut off the TV. She told us a bad movie had come on the screen. My dad arrived soon after to bring me home.

From the memorial we went to Times Square for a bite to eat. Joe's Pizza, I was told, was where we had to go. The pizza was cracker thin, crispy, and good. I enjoyed a classic slice of cheese. "The Outsiders," a musical on Broadway, was the reason for the trip to Times Square.

The show was perfect. Music, phenomenal. Story, just as good. I remember reading the book and watching the movie as a middle

school student in Mark Domeier's English class. My sister has the tattoo, "Nothing Gold Can Stay" on her back to honor her favorite quote experienced for the first time while reading her favorite book in that same English class.

I departed Philadelphia Wednesday morning and arrived in Davenport, Florida Thursday evening. My time visiting Kyle and Anastasiia has been filled recounting numerous moments, memories and life updates over this past week. Anastasiia's parents, Ukraine refugees, live with them. Each meal is generally prepared by them, beginning with breakfast.

Meals have included: traditional borscht soup; Herring Under a Fur Coat; and much more.

Today, Tuesday, I have errands to run before leaving for Miami for my friends' Paul and Heather's wedding. I am a groomsman. The Bachelor party, (We're visiting an escape room.) is Friday, followed by dinner in the evening and the wedding on Saturday. I will spend Thursday exploring Miami with the two.

To recap, I have left Philadelphia after a wonderful trip, which included a great finale in New York, driven to Florida where I have spent the last few days visiting two of my best friends. Next up, a drive to Miami and a wedding. More details on the following week to follow next week.

"A journey is best measured in friends, rather than miles." - Tim Cahill. (In this case, both as my mile marker this trip is 2,700.)

‘Ask a Trooper’: 2025 fatal crash numbers

Question: I listened to your radio show the other day and you were talking about fatal crashes were lower last year, what was the break down on the numbers?

Answer: In 2025, Minnesota saw a significant improvement in road safety, recording 370 traffic-related deaths. This marks the lowest fatality count since 2019 and reflects a 22% decrease from 2024 and 8% percent less than in 2023.

While the overall trend is positive, specific categories show where our roads are getting safer and where challenges remain:

Speed-related fatalities (98) were 29 percent less than in 2024 (138), 43 percent less than in 2021 (171) and the lowest since 2019. Unbelted deaths (70) were 31 percent less than in 2024 (101) and the lowest in the past seven years. Distraction-related deaths (21) were 30 percent less than in 2024 (30), 34 percent less than in 2020 (32) and the lowest in the past seven years. Bicycle fatalities (14) were twice as high as in 2024 (7). The next highest count

since 2019 was in 2020 (10). Motorcycle deaths (57) were 25 percent less than in 2024 (76) and the lowest since 2019.

The Minnesota State Patrol remains committed to a dual-pronged approach for 2026. While public education on the dangers of speeding, impairment, and distraction is vital, it must be supported by extra enforcement.

Let's work together to make 2026 the safest year yet. Buckle up, put the phone away, and drive for the conditions.

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)

NRHEG
Star Eagle

SERVING THE NEW RICHLAND-HARTLAND-ELLENDALE-GENEVA AREA
and the communities of Waseca, Otisco, Hope, Clarke Grove, Matawan, Freeborn and Waldorf

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DEADLINES: STAR EAGLE: Noon Monday
GOLDEN LINK: Previous Friday

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Youth Wrestling Tournament



A recent Facebook post shared by NRHEG Wrestling reads, “Great wrestling, sportsmanship, and attitude, all day! Thank you to all the families and coaches for a great day! Thank you to Westfield Razorbacks YOUTH Wrestling for hosting a great tournament on Sunday, Jan. 18. Ended up 2nd! (Could be wrong on scores) Vs Westfield: 38 -27 (W): Vs WEM: 46-35 (W): Vs CF: 32-37 (L): Vs Medford: 47-41 (W).”

Big Freeze returns to Albert Lea with winter celebration

Get ready to embrace the winter festivities as The Big Freeze returns to Albert Lea for its 17th annual community-wide celebration on Saturday, February 14, 2026! This beloved winter festival, packed with exciting activities for all ages, promises a day full of outdoor fun, friendly competition, and delicious food across multiple locations in town. Whether you're an outdoor enthusiast, a foodie, or just looking for some winter excitement, there's something for everyone at The Big Freeze!

Event Highlights:

- Medallion Hunt (Starts Monday, Feb. 9) – Sponsored by the Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce. This thrilling scavenger hunt kicks off the week leading up to the festival.
- Friday Night (Friday Night, Feb 13) - Sponsored by the 112 on Broadway, live music with Melissa Schulz acoustic starting at 6:30 p.m.
- Broom Ball Tournament (Sat., Feb 14, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. @ Lakeview Park) – Hit the ice for a 5-on-5 broom ball showdown! Open to all ages!
- Krispy Kreme Drive Thru (10 a.m. -1 p.m. @ First Presbyterian Church) – Enjoy some tasty Krispy Kreme donuts & wash it down with hot coffee and cocoa.
- Plunge for the Field (11 a.m. @ Edgewater Bay)– Take the plunge into the frozen lake for a great cause! Proceeds benefit the Inclusive Playground project.
- A Real Mermaid Experience (12 p.m. - 2 p.m. @ HeartWaves Studio) – Meet Mermaid Analise, snap photos, and enjoy fun ocean-themed activities!
- Ice Fishing Tournament (1:30 p.m. - 3 p.m. @ City Beach) – Compete for the biggest catch and exciting prizes! All ages welcome, and minnows are provided. Sponsored by Alerus & Albert Lea Anglers.
- Chili Cookoff & Bake Sale (11 a.m. - 2 p.m. @ Edgewater Bay Pavilion) – Warm up with tasty chili samples while supporting the Inclusive Miracle Field.
- Bloody Mary & Beer Bar (11 a.m. - 2 p.m. @ Edgewater Bay Pavilion) – Enjoy drinks served by 112 on Broadway!
- Galentines Shopping Event (10 a.m. - 3 p.m. @ Downtown Stores) – Treat yourself with snacks, prizes, and shopping specials at participating stores!
- Live Music & Buff Bash (8:30 p.m. @ 112 on Broadway) – End the night with live music from Will Barnett, wear buffalo plaid, and get \$1 off drinks!

Join the Fun!

The Big Freeze is the perfect way to celebrate winter and make lasting memories with family and friends. Stay updated on event details by following www.facebook.com/ExploreAlbertLea.

Don't miss out on Albert Lea's biggest winter festival; bundle up and join us for a day of icy excitement!

A look back at 2025

In the past year the Star Eagle has covered many exciting stories worth remembering. Here is a look back at the best highlights from the year that was 2025.

October

- Congratulations to 2025 Homecoming Queen Chloe Riewer and Homecoming King Jordan Brouwers. Riewer is the daughter of Andrew Riewer and Jodi Riewer and Brouwers is the son of Jessica Brouwers.
- All Saints Catholic Church in New Richland held its annual all-you-can-eat Dad's Belgian Waffles breakfast during its 2025 Fall Festival on Sunday, Sept. 28. God made sure to send them a light wind and plenty of sunshine for their celebration.
- The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School volleyball team started last week on a positive note, with a 3-0 victory over Hayfield Sept. 23.
- The Barnyard Treasures Fall Festival took place Saturday, Oct. 4 on 108th Street northeast of New Richland. There were nine vendors present and a lot of visitors coming and going for what should have been a chilly weekend, but ended up breaking heat records.
- After being driveable as an unpaved road since the beginning of the school year, New Richland's Ash Avenue South received its first round of asphalt paving the evening of Thursday, Oct. 2. Ash Avenue extends about four blocks southward from Highway 30 before coming to a dead end; that full length is now paved.
- A class reunion for the Ellendale High School Class of 1966 was held at the Blooming Prairie Cue Company & Pizza Cellar on Wednesday afternoon, September 17, 2025.
- Tyler Lendt, currently the assistant county veterans service officer with Mower County, has accepted the position as New Richland's city administrator after being offered the position last week.
- About 170 people took part in the second annual NRHEG One Mile Color Run, Walk or Stroll which set out from behind the Ellendale elementary building on Saturday, Oct. 11. This fundraiser was for the school's inclusive playground, which is currently entering phase three in its completion.
- The Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) held its fourth annual Fields of Faith (FOF) nationwide night out event on Wednesday, Oct. 8



Membership in the NRHEG chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) grew by 16 the afternoon of Nov. 5 during a ceremony held near the end of the school day at the NRHEG Secondary school building in New Richland.

at the NRHEG High School football field, located near the secondary school in New Richland. 59 students attended the event.

- During their October meeting, members of New Richland's Town and Country Garden Club discussed steps it will take to "clean up" a planting area along Highway 30.
- During their regular meeting the evening of Monday, Oct. 6, members of the Hartland city council discussed the groundbreaking ceremony along Broadway Street for the new community center/firehall which took place around Sept. 22.
- The NRHEG High School football team trekked to Medford last Thursday in search of a victory. The Panthers got one.
- Built in 2023 thanks to a grant, the Waseca County compost site located south of Waseca along Highway 13 is now offering compost for sale.
- City resident Wanda Hendrickson opened a new business in Waldorf as of Monday, October 13. Mechanics deal in cars, bankers deal in money. Hendrickson, 64, proudly deals in children at "Wanda's Daycare" where she is ready, willing and able to help with all child-care needs.
- The winner of this year's \$100 prize in the New Richland Halloween decorating contest will be decided by popular vote using an online ballot.
- Mayo Clinic Health System is ending on-call labor and delivery services at Owatonna's hospital next month, Nov. 17, meaning patients who go into labor could be diverted to other hospitals that are at least 40 minutes away.
- During their regular meeting the evening of Tuesday, Oct. 14, members of the Geneva city council voted to increase retirement payment amounts for city firefighters from \$800 to \$1,000 a year.
- The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School cross country team captured the gold medal in the girls' race and the silver in the boys' at The Oaks Golf Club in Hayfield for the Gopher Conference last week.
- According to organizing officer Drew DeRaad, more than 40 children and a few adults have signed up for a game of "hide-and-seek" set for 7 p.m. the evening of Thursday, Oct. 30 in New Richland.
- Members of the NRHEG school board were given a positive audit report during their regular meeting the evening of Monday, Oct. 20.

November

- "It's really only a small way of showing our appreciation," comments Stephanie Albert. "New Richland is such a wonderful town, and the veterans are a big part of what helps make it special."
- Like the section competition a week earlier, the state meet saw NRHEG High School's Julieann Wobbrock had a day. Wobbrock, a freshman, ran a great race to finish 18th in Class A in the state cross country meet last Saturday at the University of Minnesota's Les Bolstad Golf

2025 continued on 7



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Ellendale’s Food Shelf Donation



DELIVERY - A delivery of food (620.6 pounds) was made to the Ellendale Area Food Shelf. This generous donation came from the NRHEG Elementary School. Grades Kindergarten through 5th grade collected food for those in need. Advisors Calle Chartrand, Family Career and Community Leaders of America, and Liz Stiernagle, National Honor Society, head up this special collection. Neela Budach, Olivia Johnson, Kaitlyn Dobberstein, and Faith Phillips helped with the pickup and delivery. The Ellendale Area Food Shelf has also received very generous donations in the form of money and food from local organizations, area churches, and private citizens.

Wayne Norrid Wetmore Wealth Management Recognized as Best-in-State Wealth Management Team by Forbes

Wayne Norrid Wetmore Wealth Management, a private wealth advisory practice with Ameriprise Financial in Owatonna, was named to the list of “Best-in-State Wealth Management Teams” published by Forbes. The list recognizes financial advisors and their teams who have demonstrated high levels of ethical standards, professionalism, and success in the business. The rankings are based on data provided by thousands of the nation’s most productive advisors and their teams. Wayne Norrid Wetmore Wealth Management was chosen based on assets under management, industry experience, compliance record and best practices in their practice and approach to working with clients. Wayne Norrid Wetmore Wealth Management is led by Brandon Wayne, CRPC. The team also includes financial advisors Jacob Norrid, Christina Wetmore and Blaine (Zander) Johnson and support staff Pam Leyden, Shannon Weisbrod, Sherry McCartney, Melissa Jenkins and Kimberly

Esquivel. They have collectively served the Owatonna community since 2002. Wayne Norrid Wetmore Wealth Management provides financial advice that is anchored in a solid understanding of client needs and expectations and provided in one-on-one relationships with their clients. For more information, please contact Brandon Wayne at (507)444-0901 or visit the Ameriprise office at 1850 Austin Rd Ste 104, Owatonna or their website at www.wealthmgmt@ampf.com. About Ameriprise Financial At Ameriprise Financial, we have been helping people feel confident about their financial future for more than 130 years. With extensive investment advice, global asset management capabilities and insurance solutions, and a nationwide network of more than 10,000 financial advisors, we have the strength and expertise to serve the full range of individual and institutional investors' financial needs. Visit forbes.com for additional information about Forbes.

HERITAGE BITS



Paul’s Little Band was a popular attraction in Southern Minnesota. The band is pictured playing at Kernie’s in Ellendale in the ‘60s. Left to right: Gordon Hansen, Paul Beyer, and Elmer David.

ZED by Duane M. Abel

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Finstad brings investments to Southern Minnesota

One of the best parts of serving in Congress is getting communities across southern Minnesota the resources they need to improve quality of life for their residents. This week, the Senate passed H.R. 6938 - Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026, that appropriates funds for critical water infrastructure, including 11 Community Project Funding requests that I was proud to submit on behalf of municipalities across the First District.

Through this legislation, I was able to secure \$11.4 million for water improvement projects across the district:

Blooming Prairie	\$1,000,000
Butterfield	\$1,050,000
Dennison	\$1,000,000
Eagle Lake	\$1,050,000
Manchester	\$1,750,000
Nerstrand	\$1,000,000
Pine Island	\$1,000,000
Okabena	\$750,000

Pemberton \$800,000
Rochester \$1,000,000
Trimont \$1,000,000

I’m grateful for the opportunity to help bring these federal investments home to southern Minnesota. It’s an honor to advocate for this much-needed funding that strengthens critical water and utility infrastructure and supports the long-term vitality of our communities.

Removing criminals from Minnesota’s streets

Just one week after the attack on an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent in Minneapolis on January 7th, an ICE agent was assaulted in another incident Wednesday night in the Twin Cities while they were attempting to arrest an illegal immigrant.

ICE officers are currently facing a more than 1,300% increase in assaults, a 3,200% increase in vehicular attacks against them, and an 8,000% increase in death threats. These dangers have continued to escalate due to Democrats’ anti-law enforcement rhetoric and sanctuary policies that ignore the rule of law.

Despite protests and an increased presence of anti-ICE agitators in Minnesota, ICE continues to enforce our immigration laws, removing the worst of the worst criminal illegal immigrants from our state, which you can find here: www.dhs.gov/wow.

I joined KTTC News this week to discuss ICE’s presence in Minnesota and the work they’re doing to undo the consequences of reckless immigration policies from the Biden administration. For too long, criminal illegal aliens have been given a pass to break our laws and commit crimes in our communities. Thank you to President Trump, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Noem, and the brave ICE officers who are putting the safety of American citizens first.

Preserving integrity in federal programs

Weak immigration policies during the Biden administration and insufficient oversight resulted in lax approvals of immigration benefits that have directly impacted taxpayer funded programs in Minnesota. To address this, I introduced the Preserving Integrity in Immigration Benefits Act, which requires U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to review all immigration benefit requests approved after January 20, 2021, for countries identified as high-risk by the U.S. Department of State.

The Preserving Integrity in Immigration Benefits Act was passed by the House Judiciary Committee this week, marking a commonsense step toward restoring trust in a system that has been exploited, and assuring taxpayers that programs like this are serving only those who are eligible.

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by Al Batt

Kindness is the secret ingredient

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS' CLUB MEETING

I think my car was made in Prague.

What makes you think that?

Every time I start it, the Czech engine light comes on.

DRIVING BY BRUCE'S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. I fired up the car's furnace and pushed on. Old Man Winter had buttered the road for my driving pleasure. I felt like the last in line at a potluck, but there was no magma on the road. That was a good thing.

Winter is when we act like we're having a good time. It reminded me of another day when the weather had sneezed. The school bus roared past; its driver smiling and waving at me as I stood in the freezing rain at the end of our farm driveway while the wind filled my pockets. He was a safe and friendly bus driver, but forgetful.

I wore a coat that required an exhaustive search to find its brand name. Now when a glacier is nipping at any exposed skin, coats trumpet their brand names. I see people wearing coats of companies I should buy penny stock in. The North Face, Canada Goose, Patagonia, Columbia, Carhartt, Eddie Bauer, Land's End, REI and others. No need to ask what brand of coat someone wears. Their coats tell me.

THOSE THRILLING DAYS OF YESTERYEAR

I shared an office with Ed "Perky" Perkins. Perky was a great guy prone to playing the harmonica while wearing a sombrero. He was an extraordinary salesman. Perky could sell salt to a slug. He sold Kirby vacuum cleaners. I didn't. They were noisy machines. Perky explained the noise this way: "If you want music, use a radio. If you want clean carpets, use a Kirby." I wasn't as concerned about clean carpets as I was about being able to converse on the phone. Willie Nelson sold Kirby vacuum cleaners for a spell. Yes, that Willie Nelson—the famous singer and songwriter. I didn't share an office with Willie, but I'll bet he didn't sell as many as Perky. The noise might have driven Willie crazy. "Crazy" is a song written by Willie Nelson and popularized by Patsy Cline in 1961.

I'VE LEARNED

Motion-sensor faucets in public restrooms aren't emotion-sensor faucets. It does no good

to yell at them.

You will always be too young or too old to do something.

Tarzan's yell originated when he stepped on a Lego.

You can't throw away a rock. A friend said that when he was a boy, they were so poor that they ate stone soup. He was given a small stone to put in his mouth and then spit it out after he'd sucked the moisture from it.

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

A priest, a minister and a rabbit walked into a blood donation center. The nurse asked the rabbit, "What's your blood type?"

"I'm probably a type O," said the rabbit.

NATURE NOTES

I whistled while I walked.

The result of my breathing through the icicles that had formed in my nostrils.

I tiptoed through the little remaining snow. There was a breeze that enhanced the winter experience for me. The weather folks used to toss out the term "windchill factor" to make us feel more uncomfortable in our minds than we were in our bodies. I don't miss hearing it so often. It's true the weather doesn't always agree with me, but it isn't the weather's job to agree with me.

Canada geese flew over, sounding as if they were playing vuvuzelas. Other birds joined me on the raw January day. I heard no complaints from any of them, and I marveled at every feather. Birds dare to be great. They need to be great to survive. I watched chickadees and blue jays cache seeds for the next day. Their preparations remind me of "The Ant and the Grasshopper," one of Aesop's Fables. That fable describes how a hungry grasshopper begged for food from an ant when winter came. The ant refused to share. The tale sums up moral lessons about the virtues of hard work and planning for the future. I've seen the food storage behavior of chickadees, jays, nuthatches and squirrels. It's impressive. Nature leaves me in a perpetual state of astonishment. It's a wonderful state to be in.

Back in the house, where there was only a minor windchill factor, the bird clock sounded the call of an eastern screech-owl because it was 9 o'clock. I enjoyed that more than a cuckoo clock. Does the clock spark joy? You betcha! Life is good.

MEETING ADJOURNED

The secret ingredient is kindness.

Auction

from Page 1

again put up for bid on Saturday, and it was sold five more times and a total of over \$1,000 was raised at the auction this past weekend from one pound of Hope BUTTER.

Some say, "Butter is like GOLD," and I guess I tend to agree after seeing all that took place at the auction over the weekend.

Many other pounds of Hope butter were "paired up" with other items put up for bid over the course of the night, as well as dozens of farm fresh eggs, of which many of them were "brown" eggs that had been donated by David Christensen, in memory of his mother, Agnes, along with a number of dozens that were from Tim Simon, while others were from Gout & Jill, among others.

Another item up for bid was a large wood flag, which was one of four that had been made many, many years ago using wood that had originally been purchased at the Botsford Lumber Company, which was in Ellendale at the time. The wood flag had originally been on display and enjoyed in the home of Gen Koppen Wayne.

Once the flag was sold, it too was donated back to the auction and auctioned again and raised a total of \$575. Later another wooden flag, which was smaller than the first, was put up for bid and it was sold and the new owner was pleased to take it home.

Speaking of items being donated back, Ruth Hagen made a batch of chili for the auction on Friday night and put it in the crock pot that had contained "meatballs" during the first weekend of the 2026 Geneva Cancer Auction.

We later learned that the batch of chili was the 7th time that the Royal brand, "reddish orange" colored "Crock Pot" had been used to raise money for cancer over the past years. On Saturday afternoon the "Geneva Cancer Auction Crock Pot" was back at the auction once again. This time the crock pot was filled with homemade scalloped potatoes and ham and it was delicious. I know because my husband Daryl was the high bidder.

Along with the crock pot of scalloped potatoes, a large serving ladle, disposable soup bowls and forks were included for the auction, so we were able to enjoy the nice hot potatoes and ham while the auction was going on. We also shared bowls of the potatoes and ham with a number of others sitting in our area as well.

I guess I will have to fill up the crock pot again in April and put it up for bid again.

A large container of "Spooky Snacks" had been put up for bid previously at the auction and another large container was put up for bid again on Saturday. The snacks had been made and donated by Luke "Spooky" Wiersma. "Spooky" also donated a pan of "Yummy Bars" too and they were yummy too.

This past weekend's auction once again included a number of items from Florida that Steve Pence had donated along with a couple of groupings of hard covered books. Up for bid this past weekend were several more Twins Baseballs, including ones that Justin Berlader, Wade Boggs and Jack Morris had autographed.

It was great that Steve, even though he now lives far away, still continues to donate items for the auction which helps FIGHT THE

FIGHT" for cancer research.

This weekend's auction once again had a "piggy bank," - a cow that was donated and taken around the bar and it was filled to "overflowing" with money, before it was auctioned. Two different groupings of bracelets that Barb Kuckenbeckes' grandchildren had made were also put up for bid and the lucky bidders selected their favorite bracelet and took them home with them, as was a beautiful necklace and a St. Patrick's Day basket.

A 55-inch Samsung TV was donated by Sorenson's, as was as a "backpack" sprayer, an electric chain saw, a neck massager, a food processor, a couple of horses with a wagon, in memory of Jule Tukua; as well as a cowboy hat. A large number of cutting boards, many donated by Gary Anderson; a "coat tree"; a large round mirror; a small braided rug; a small child size bench that had an American flag painted on it; and a kids' rocking chair with a stuffed bear and a "Cookies for Santa" book were also put up for bid.

A variety of "welcome" signs, including one with Harley Davidson on it; a dog basket. a homemade fishing pole that was paired up with a cross-stitch picture of fishing lures, as well as a wood fishing pole, or pool cue holder were also put up for bid.

A couple of people donated a couple of very unique items this year too. One was an iron butterfly made using the tablespoons we use to eat soup and cereal with; and another was a "HOPE" sign made using "horseshoes."

Speaking of horseshoes, it was interesting to note that the Yaunt 2 Ranch Rodeo event that was held this past summer had 75 different riders. That is a lot of cowboys.

An assortment of "metal" type items were also up for bid, including a beverage stand, a large "jingle Bell," another of the Minnesota Wild emblem, as well as an Eagle; and a couple of Wheaties cereal boxes with sports teams on them.

Daisy Blue Naturals donated several collections of beauty products, and there were also several groups of hair care products, and a couple of purses, one of which was homemade. A number of items that Zola Wayne had enjoyed having in her home, including a large silver star, a Santa Claus, a blanket and a CD were donated in her honor.

And we can't forget the Lottery Board that was donated by Barb & Jack Kuckenbecker, the gift certificates to Lerberg's Car Wash, as well as a two-months certificate to the Fitness Center, also at Lerberg's.

In addition to all of the many great items that were put up for bid this past weekend, there were, of course, a great number of gift certificates for oil changes, a couple of certificates for detailing on vehicles; groups of cleaning items for the home and shop; as well as a screwdriver set, wrenches, shovels, a hammer, a 25-foot tape, along with a fire ring that all had been donated by many great supporters. The fire ring was also donated back and auctioned again, like so many other things this year. And speaking of fires, there were a couple of "fire blankets" too.

The auction also had a leather Minnesota gophers coat, as well as a number of other types of coats and sweatshirts, gloves, stocking hats, some homemade and in memory of loved ones that will keep people warm this winter, as well as "ball caps" that included many different "names" on them.

This past weekend's auction did



CUTE COLLECTOR - Little lady Eleanor Hensche, 2, was collecting donations for the Geneva Cancer Auction at the Geneva Bar and Grill with the help of her trusted cow penny bank on Saturday, Jan. 17, 2025. With her help they raised \$155,000 to aid in the fight against cancer.

Star Eagle photo by Ben Revermann

not have many quilts like there had been the first weekend of the 2026 auction this year, but there were a large number of blankets using a variety of cloth types and designs, as well as a couple of knitted items, and even some for babies.

And, of course, there was a great variety of FOOD type items, including a "half a hog" with processing, as well a number of "half" of hams and other "meat packages. There were a great number of meat & cheese trays with crackers, and assorted jerky. Casey's, along with the Pizza Cellar in Blooming Prairie, brought in hot pizza ready to eat and enjoy too. And there was a great selection of sweet things too, including pies, cakes, bars, cheesecakes, cookies, along with homemade candies and caramels.

It also had a great assortment of breads and cinnamon rolls, as well as lefse, that were paired up with a pound of Hope butter. And we can't forget the assortments of jams, jellies and jars of honey.

And what would a Geneva cancer auction be without deviled eggs, a variety of different types of pickles; a few groups of pickle rollups, which some compare to caviar; and five sets of stuffed mushrooms?

And if that wasn't enough, there were a few jars of homemade spaghetti sauce, certificates for containers of salads, along with dips and chips, gourmet fruit snacks and jars of peanuts.

And we can't forget the great variety of wines and moonshine, along with Bloody Mary mix, "Rum Chata" and "Jello shots" that were donated.

The auctioneers for the second weekend of the Geneva Cancer Auction were Jonny Kraling, from Blooming Prairie; Jim Manges, from Albert Lea, along with Jamie Hagen and Waylen Busho from our Geneva and Ellendale area, along with the assortment of people who helped take the items up for bid around to the people in attendance for a closer look. The auction would not be a success without them.

Also in conjunction with the auction, the Geneva Cancer Auction raf-

fle tickets were also being sold for the 42nd Geneva Cancer Auction drawing. The drawing this year included a GRAND PRIZE of \$1,000 in cash, 2nd, \$500, 3rd, 300 and 3rd, \$200.

At 8 p.m. the raffle winners' tickets were drawn and include the Grand prize going to Jim Johnson, 2nd prize, Jolene Swenson, 3rd prize, Clinton Pirsing, and 4th place, T & T Body Shop.

It was also announced this weekend that the Geneva 2026 "Mini" cancer auction will be held a bit earlier this year, on March 28, starting at 2 p.m., which is a week before Easter this year, instead of the first Saturday in April as it has been in years past.

A Geneva Cancer Auction Pancake Breakfast will also be held on Sunday, March 29 at the Geneva Bar & Grill from 8 a.m. – noon.

On Sunday morning Keith & Tina Hagen and Keith & Ruth Hagen drove to Rochester to make the yearly presentation to the Eagles Cancer Telethon from the many different fundraising events that were held here in our area over this past year. A check in the amount of \$155,000 was presented during the telethon, which was the total of this past years' cancer fundraising activities.

Jamie shared a story about an event that happened during the Geneva Cancer Auction this past weekend, and went on to say that all those dollars that are raised or donated for Cancer Research all add up and that a great number of local people and businesses are to be thanked for what they do to help raise money for Cancer Research.

Jamie explained that, in our Geneva area, we are always "Fighting The Fight," and, before the 2026 auction came to a close, he offered up a big "THANK YOU to everyone for their support this past year, as well as for the current auction.

It is also hoped that the people of our area will continue to do what they can to support the many different cancer fundraising events over the course of this year.



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FOURTEEN AND COUNTING — The NRHEG girls' basketball team made it 14 consecutive wins by defeating WEM and St. Peter last week. From left, Gabby Schlaak (1) grabs a rebound, Clara Buendorf (10) drives to the basket, and Quinn VanMaldegheem (4) goes in for a layup. VanMaldegheem topped the 1,000-point scoring milestone against St. Peter.



Lady Panthers run winning streak to 14

NRHEG girls' basketball team looking good at season's midway mark

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Not much surprises NRHEG High School girls' basketball coach Onika Peterson.

But the fact the Panthers are halfway through the season? That prompted a moment of pause.

"It's crazy to think that we only have 10 games left in the regular season," said Peterson.

But that's what the Panthers have left after another pair of victories last week that ran their winning streak to 14 games.

The Panthers pounded WEM 79-50 in a Gopher Conference game Tuesday in New Richland, one night

after a 65-37 nonconference victory at St. Peter.

The WEM game was business as usual for the Panthers, who led 43-23 at halftime.

"The girls moved the ball well on offense and did a great job finding the open shooter," said Peterson. "Our defense had some lackadaisical moments at times, but overall it was a great team win."

It also a great night for NRHEG senior Camryn VanMaldegheem, who scored 37 points, and her twin sister Quinn, who topped all players with 15 rebounds.

Full stats: Gabby Schlaak 10P, 9R, 3 assists; Ezra Boerner 5P, 1R;

Q.VanMaldegheem 13P, 15R, 3A, 4S; Clara Buendorf 12P, 4R, 4A, 1 blocked shot; C.VanMaldegheem 37P, 8R, 4A, 2S; Savannah Farr 2P; Chloe Stork 9R, 1A, 1S, 1B; Alayna Groskreutz 1R.

Monday saw more of the same at St. Peter, where the Panthers led 30-15 at halftime.

It was a memorable evening for Quinn VanMaldegheem, who topped the 1,000-point scoring milestone early in the second half after finishing the first half with 15 points and 11 rebounds. She finished the night with an outstanding performance of 21 points, 21 rebounds, and 5 steals.

"Congratulations to Quinn," said

Peterson. "Overall, we didn't shoot the ball extremely well, but our rebounding was outstanding. We were able to generate second and third-chance scoring opportunities because of our effort on the glass. Defensively, we continue to be stifling. The girls do a great job of knowing where each other will be and understanding their responsibilities within our defensive schemes. Every now and then I'd like to hear a little more communication on defense, but the effort, awareness, and execution continue to be very strong."

Individual totals: Schlaak 9P, 2R, 1S, 1B; Boerner 3P, 2R;

Q.VanMaldegheem 21P, 21R, 5S; Buendorf 4P, 2A; Kenley Gehrke 1R; C.VanMaldegheem 25P, 3R, 3S, 3A; Farr 3P; Stork 3R, 2S, 3A; Groskreutz 1R, 1S; Hadley Roeker 1R.

The Panthers improved to 7-0 in the Gopher Conference, 4-0 in the West Division, and 14-2 for the season.

After a Tuesday nonconference game at Grand Meadow, the Panthers host Randolph tonight at 7 and entertain Houston Saturday at 6:30.

NRHEG matmen can't stop WEM/JWP

\$1632 raised for Kessler family

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

A stroke took the life of WEM/JWP seventh-grade wrestler Brady Kessler last week.

Last Thursday, the fans at NRHEG High School in New Richland gave something back.

A total of \$1632 was raised for the family of Kessler, who had a twin brother, Gus on the Grizzlies' squad.

There was, incidentally, a dual meet between the hometown Panthers and WEM/JWP, which the Grizzlies took by a 52-22 score.

"We didn't have our best tonight," said NRHEG coach Krey Kory. "But the guys keep learning and working to get better."

The Panthers started strong, with a 17-2 technical fall by Owen Schlaak at 107 pounds. Graham

Jacobson followed with a 15-0 tech. fall at 114 and it was quickly 10-0 Panthers.

But it was almost all Grizzlies after that.

The Panthers' only other wins were by Dakota Schlaak at 133 and Ryan Schlaak at 189. Both won by fall.

Also wrestling for the Panthers: Charles Tufte, Aaron Merritt, Braxton Arnold, Wyatt Hendrickson, Khaiden Madson Noah Weller and Wyatt Larson.

The Panthers wrestled Saturday in the Hayfield Invitational, where they lost 45-26 to Dover-Eyota and 43-18 to Owatonna. Jacobson and Ryan Schlaak won both their matches.

Also winning were Owen Schlaak, Tufte Bo Holland and



BONUS POINTS — NRHEG's Graham Jacobson throws Otto Root during the 114-pound match in last Thursday's dual meet loss to WEM/JWP in New Richland. Jacobson won by technical fall.

Photo by Jim Lutgens

Arnold.

"We had some kids battling illness and injuries and it was noticeable in the performances," said

Cory. "We weren't attacking or being as aggressive as we are capable of being."

The Panthers wrestle tonight at 5

p.m. at Waseca and Saturday at 9 a.m. at the Orono Invitational.

Feisty Panthers battle back for road victory

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

Say this about coach Dan Schmidt and the 2025-26 NRHEG High School boys' basketball team: they don't go down without a fight.

Facing a 10-point deficit in the second half, the Panthers rallied for an 81-79 nonconference victory over Martin Luther/Granada-Huntley/East Chain/Truman in Granada last Thursday.

"The boys never quit," said Schmidt. "They played extremely gritty basketball."

After a back-and-forth first half, which saw the Jaguars leading 36-35 at the break, the Panthers quickly

found themselves down by 10 thanks to some questionable shot selection and untimely turnovers.

"We chipped away at it," said Schmidt, who took the lead with 2 minutes remaining and never relinquished it, thanks to some very timely free throws down the stretch that helped counter a couple late Jaguar three-pointers.

"Our rebounding was so much better tonight," said Schmidt. "We've really pushed that it's all about effort and will, and the boys went out and battled for every rebound and loose ball. We got outstanding performances from everyone on the roster tonight, with six

players in double figures, some clutch free throws and tremendous defense when it was needed the most. All eight guys put together great games in their own ways."

Brock Holland led the Panthers in scoring with 16 points, including four threes. Mack Gilliland scored 15, going 7-for-11 at the free-throw line, and A.J. Deen and Calvin Nissen scored 12 apiece. Brooks Gilliland and Dom Olson contributed 10 points apiece. Brendan Schmidt hit two free throws in the waning seconds.

"Fynn Baumann did a fabulous job doing the dirty work for us, trying to create things on the defensive

end," said Coach Schmidt.

Full NRHEG statistics: Deen 12P, 13R, 1S; Olson 11P; Nissen 12P, 4R, 5S; B.Gilliland 10P, 7R, 5A; Baumann 1R; B.Schmidt 4P, 3R, 3S; M.Gilliland 15P, 5R, 5A; Holland 16P, 5R, 3A 3S.

Two nights earlier, the Panthers hosted Gopher Conference rival WEM and lost 94-70 in New Richland.

It was close early. Then the Buccaneers started making almost every shot they attempted.

"Between their shooting and rebounding, we had a hard time battling back," said Coach Schmidt. "We continue to struggle on the

boards with positioning and being strong to the ball, and in a game like tonight it really showed, as WEM dominated in that aspect."

Mack Gilliland led NRHEG with 24 points.

Individually for the Panthers: Deen 14P, 5R, 3A, 1B; Olson 1R, 1A; B.Gilliland 13P, 3R, 2A, 1S; Baumann 1S; B.Schmidt 2P, 3R; M.Gilliland 24P, 2R, 2S; Holland 5P, 7R, 3A, 3S; Levi Whiteside 2P, 1R.

The Panthers, 5-9, play tonight at 7 p.m. at Randolph. They host top-five ranked JWP Monday at 7 in New Richland.

STANDINGS

Boys' Basketball		
Big South Conference - Black		
	Conf.	Ov.
St. Peter	6-1	10-3
Belle Plaine	5-1	10-1
Marshall	4-3	6-6
Waseca	4-4	9-5
New Ulm	3-4	6-7
Worthington	1-4	2-11
Tri-City United	0-6	0-12

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Conf.	Ov.
Fairmont	8-1	11-2
Luverne	6-2	10-3
Jackson County Central	6-2	9-5
Blue Earth Area	5-3	9-3
St. James Area	4-4	7-4
Pipestone Area	2-6	4-9
Redwood Valley	1-7	2-12
Windom Area	0-7	6-8

Gopher Conference - West		
	Div.	Ov.
Janesville-WP	4-0	16-0
Waterville-EM	2-2	6-7
New Richland-HEG	2-2	5-9
United South Central	2-2	3-8
Medford	0-4	3-11

Gopher Conference East		
	Div.	Ov.
Triton	5-0	11-3
Blooming Prairie	3-2	12-3
Hayfield	3-2	8-6
Bethlehem Academy	2-3	6-7
Randolph	1-4	4-13
Kenyon-Wanamingo	1-4	5-9

Girls' Basketball		
Big South Conference - Black		
	Conf.	Ov.
Marshall	5-0	10-2
New Ulm	5-1	9-3
St. Peter	4-3	8-5
Belle Plaine	3-3	7-6
Tri-City United	3-3	6-8
Waseca	1-7	3-13
Worthington	0-5	2-12

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Conf.	Ov.
Fairmont	8-0	13-1
Pipestone Area	7-1	13-1
St. James Area	6-2	10-4
Windom Area	5-3	13-3
Luverne	3-5	8-6
Jackson County Cent.	2-6	6-10
Blue Earth Area	1-7	3-11
Redwood Valley	0-8	0-15

Gopher Conference - West		
	Div.	Ov.
New Richland-HEG	4-0	14-2
Janesville-WP	3-1	11-6
Waterville-EM	2-5	5-11
United South Central	1-6	7-8
Medford	0-0	0-0

Gopher Conference - East		
	Div.	Ov.
Hayfield/Schaeffer Ac.	5-0	14-3
Triton	5-1	9-5
Blooming Prairie	3-1	8-6
Randolph	2-4	3-10
Kenyon-Wanamingo	1-4	6-9
Bethlehem Academy	0-6	5-710

Boys' Hockey		
Big South Conference - Black		
	Div.	Ov.
Waseca	5-0	11-4-1
New Ulm	3-3	9-6
Minnesota River	3-3	8-8
Marshall	0-5	4-12

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Div.	Ov.
Luverne	5-0	15-3
Fairmont	4-2	5-7
Redwood Valley	2-4	3-11
Windom Area	2-5	4-12
Worthington	1-3	2-14

Girls' Hockey		
Big South Conference - Black		
	Div.	Ov.
Minnesota River	5-1	15-5
Marshall	3-1	18-4
New Ulm	1-3	4-14
South Central	0-4	0-14

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Div.	Ov.
Fairmont	3-0	8-7
Luverne	3-1	12-7
Worthington/Fulda	1-2	7-111
Windom Area	0-4	4-13

Wrestling		
Big South Conference - Black		
	Div.	Ov.
New Ulm	3-0	8-0
Marshall/Lakeview	2-0	11-2
Worthington	3-1	4-3
Tri-City United	2-2	5-4
St. Peter	2-2	4-5
Waseca	1-3	3-7
Martin County	0-5	5-8

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Div.	Ov.
Windom/Mt. Lake	3-0	11-7
Jackson County Central	2-0	2-1
St. James-Madelia	3-1	10-4
Pipestone Area	2-1	11-2
Redwood Valley	1-3	5-8
Luverne	1-3	4-11
Blue Earth Area	0-2	3-10



RAISING WOMEN - Farmamerica staff and board members who were present at Raise a Toast included (from left) Hilary Kruger- Administrative Coordinator; Kari Wadd- Program Coordinator; Angie Younberberg - Board Member; Morgan Mudgett - Communications Coordinator; Jessica Rollins - Executive Director; Baylee Sorenson - Board Member; Lisa Gjersvik - Board Chairperson; and Julie Tesch - Board Member.

Star Eagle photo by Deb Bently

■ Toast

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featured “make-your-own-cake” Treat Trolley operated by Amanda Riehm of The Tattooed Baker, offered the chance to choose frosting and toppings for small treats.

Speaker for the evening was Becky Harhaj who, with her husband Mike, operates Rebel Rooster Farm near Good Thunder.

Becky described a rather sudden move their four-member family made in 2015 to leave the Twin Cities area where they had lived their entire lives, to take up residence on a 33-acre farmsite near Good Thunder. At the time, Becky had spent most of two decades in the beauty industry, and had even become an instructor at a beauty college. Mike, she mentioned, is an engineer who continues to operate his business, taking advantage of modern electronic information sharing.

“We moved in on a Friday,” Becky recalled. “The animals were delivered on Saturday.” She commented on her own naivete at the time, when she had

thought to herself, “All they need is food and water.

“Somewhere in there I realized I had jumped in with both feet without testing the water first.”

The decision to move, she went on to tell, was for the sake of their two sons, both of whom were younger than 10 at the time. “We wanted to give them a quality life. We wanted them to know where their food came from.”

Not long after moving to the farm, Becky became pregnant with a daughter who is now 8 years old.

Becky said the farm evolved gradually, with various animals having come and gone over time. She mentioned she especially enjoys raising fowl, and so has become familiar with chickens, ducks, quail and guinea hens. The farm keeps beef cattle for personal use and raises both dairy and meat goats.

“I wouldn’t trade it for the world,” she stated.

Sources of income for the farm, she mentioned, include the sale of frozen chickens, goat milk products including soap, and various other products, commonly at the Mankato area farmers’ market. More infor-



mation about her farm and its offerings is available online at rebelroosterfarm.com.

She said a chief lesson for her has been the importance of “building a strong cohort,” that is, creating a circle of friends who are willing to provide advice, help with projects and tasks, and generally help build a

person up.

The one thing she misses from her former life, she said lightheartedly, is the ability to have a pizza delivered. “There are some nights,” she stated, “when it would be nice to have a warm meal without having to cook.”



Left, Tara Slattery (left) and owner Meghan Larson of Waseca’s Magnetic North produced personalized photo magnets for those in attendance at Farmamerica’s Raise a Toast. More information about the business is available on Facebook at Magnetic North Custom Photo Keepsakes. Right, Waseca County Dairy Princesses Katy Eldeen (left) and McKenna Eichhorn created a three-dimensional video recording during Farmamerica’s Raise a Toast.

Star Eagle photos by Deb Bently

■ 2025

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freshman, ran a great race to finish 18th in Class A in the state cross country meet last Saturday at the University of Minnesota’s Les Bolstad Golf Course.

- New Richland area resident Patty Bethke was the instructor for a community education class in making greeting cards held Monday, Nov. 3 at the New Richland secondary site Community Education classroom.

- The seventh annual Jingle, Mingle and Bingo took place at the Geneva Community Center on Saturday, Nov. 8. This event was hosted by the Geneva Cancer Auction Committee. Featured guests were Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.

- The second annual Holiday Hangout took place at the Ellendale Elementary school in the south gym on Saturday, Nov. 8.

- Membership in the NRHEG chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) grew by 16 the afternoon of Nov. 5 during a ceremony held near the end of the school day at the NRHEG Secondary school building in New Richland.

- About 25 representatives from the Ellendale and New Richland American Legion posts, along with many veterans who attended as individuals, were present for a 45-minute program at the NRHEG Secondary site in New Richland. Students in grades 4 through 12 attended, as did about 70 members of the general public.

- The 2025 Harvest has largely come to a close for most, and somewhat like last year, it meant a mixed bag on yields on both corn and soybeans. Much of the crop looked decent from the road only to be consistently inconsistent.

- A breakfast offered by the New Richland Area Lions Club on Sunday, Dec. 7

from 8 a.m. to 12:30 in the New Richland City Hall’s community room is benefiting four employees of the NRHEG school district who have been undergoing difficult times with their health.

- The five members of the NRHEG FFA livestock judging team won a place at this coming April’s state competition during an October contest in Arlington, where 25 chapters were represented. Team members learned of their accomplishment after returning home; results of their contest, they explain, are not typically announced at the event.

December

- Since shortly after being pardoned by former President Joe Biden last year, Waseca County’s famous resident turkeys, Blossom and Peach, have been living the high life at Farmamerica. They even get special attention from the facility’s Program Coordinator, Kari Wadd.

- The New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva High School wrestling team graduated some talented individuals from last year’s squad. But the biggest absence on the mat this season may be the Panthers’ longtime assistant and head coach, Shawn Larson.

- The New Richland area “Home for the Holidays” concerts featuring homegrown musicians Gavin Berg, Adam Moen, Eva Wayne and Ellen Johnson brought in about 375 people and \$10,000 in immediate donations across three performances, held at 7 p.m. Friday, Dec. 5 and at 2 and 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 6 at Trinity Lutheran Church in New Richland. An anonymous donation matching up to \$5,000 brought the total for the weekend to more than \$15,000.

- Members of the Hartland city council determined during their regular Dec. 1 meeting that the city will not increase its property tax levy for 2026.

- The ladies of the First Lutheran Church of Waldorf offered a community Christmas dinner over the luncheon hour



Top, about 25 representatives from the Ellendale and New Richland American Legion posts, along with many veterans who attended as individuals, were present for a 45-minute program at the NRHEG Secondary site in New Richland. Students in grades 4 through 12 attended, as did about 70 members of the general public. Bottom, the winner of this year’s \$100 prize in the New Richland Halloween decorating contest will be decided by popular vote using an online ballot.

at the town’s community center on Thursday, Dec. 4. Among those they served were city Mayor Rob Wilkening and Waseca County Sheriff Jay Dulas

- A cooperative project being undertaken by numerous regional power companies is underway to build a new 765 kiloVolt (kV) powerline intended to extend across most of southern Minnesota.

- NRHEG Senior Jacob Karl, son of Tony and Melissa Karl of rural Ellendale, signed on to run with the 2026-’27 Crown College cross country team during a brief ceremony held the afternoon of Dec. 12, 2025.

- In back-to-back concerts presented the evening of Dec. 8, the vocal and instrumental music departments at NRHEG shared an array of lively holiday tunes performed by students in grades 6 through 12.





Woods and Water

by Dick Herfindahl
Outdoors Writer

Spending time with family is the best

We finally had our last Christmas of the season. It was good to spend time with some of the grandsons, their significant others and our great granddaughter, Avery. It was a fun day and I believe that everyone had a good time.

I am really wanting to get back to doing a little painting. I have been putting it off for a few years, but I am telling myself it is time. I'd guess that I got out of it when my dad passed away. He was my biggest supporter, and we would always exchange ideas.

I spend a lot of time thinking about when I will get back up to the cabin. This is something that helps me get through the doldrums of winter. I sometimes picture myself on a lake making a cast while a fish breaks the surface to take my lure. I am actually reliving something that has happened many times over the years.

I have been hearing some good reports of people catching fish on various area lakes. So far, I haven't heard about anyone going through the ice in our area. With

the weather that we have been experiencing this past week, I don't see any "thin ice" in the near future.

Snow depth in Northern Minnesota is a little iffy in some areas of the north country, depending on the area. According to the DNR snow depth map, most area have 8"-12", but rain in some area, has made it difficult to tell for sure which areas have good snow.

Until next time: When I was a kid, my parents would take me to St. Olaf Lake for the annual fishing contest. It was always fun, but for me it wasn't very productive. I would usually, if I was lucky, catch one or two small perch for my efforts. That is probably why I have never been overly excited about ice fishing. Although I have been ice fishing a time or two with my grandson, Trevor, my childhood skill set stayed with me.

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.



Shown here is a picture of my great granddaughter, Avery showing off her braids to great grandpa, which she'd had done for the first time. Another is of her mom showing her a picture of how they looked.

LOOKING BACK

25 years ago



-Taking the oath of office as New Richland City Council members Monday evening were these five men. Seated at the left is Myron Schumacher, who was elected in the November election, and Steve Templin, who was re-elected to a position in November. Standing in the back center is Mayor Richard Baker. To fill vacancies due to resignations of Stanley Getskow and Richard Baker as trustees appointed for two year terms were Jay Johnson (left) and Kermit Kalke.

- Doug and Karla Christopherson, rural New Richland, are the parents of a daughter born Friday, January 5, 2001 at Naeve Hospital, Albert Lea. The little Miss has been named Olivia and she weighed 7 pounds and 8 ounces. Olivia has one sister, Abby, 2 1/2 years old.

50 Years Back



- Members of the New Richland FFA Wildlife team which placed second in the Region-District contest, Saturday, are pictured here with some of the props which helped them learn about birds. They are from the left; seated: Greg Swenson, Shannon Neumann; standing: Don Pederson and Mark Light.

- Gary Lust, son of Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Lust of New Richland, is getting a comprehensive survey of mankind from a variety of perspectives in a special January Term course at St. Johns University. The course is entitled "Images of Man in the World."

- Emily Jane Streng, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Streng of rural New Richland, was baptized at Trinity Lutheran Church, New Richland January 11, with the Rev. Allan Grundahl officiating.

75 Years Back

- A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. John R. Kent of near New Richland, at the Waseca Memorial hospital Thursday, February 8. The baby has been named Kathryn Ann and has a sister, Betty, age four.

- The locals (Morlea) took the measure of the Reed Oilers in an overtime game last Thursday evening 44 to 40. This has been the third overtime game this year, the local team being the victor in each fracas.

Attend the Church of your Choice!

ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
New Richland, Minnesota
Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor
Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School, Choir and Choir; 10:30 a.m. Worship
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 newsletter 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 vary 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 Cirksema, 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
Hollendale, 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
Hollendale, Minnesota
Pastor Jesse Krusemark
Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship

FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH
Rev. Neal Ooms
101 East Park Avenue
Hollendale, 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
www.stsidoreschool.webs.com

FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod
Waldorf, Minnesota
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 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
Saturday - 6 p.m.

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.

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE

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.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN: That default has occurred in the conditions of the following described mortgage:

DATE OF MORTGAGE: May 27, 2022

ORIGINAL PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF MORTGAGE: \$85,500.00

MORTGAGOR(S): Dennise Howard-Junkers, a married woman and Kathryn Witherell, an unmarried woman

MORTGAGEE: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Rocket Mortgage, LLC, FKA Quicken Loans, LLC

DATE AND PLACE OF FILING: Recorded on August 18, 2022 as Document Number A331215; as modified of record by document

recorded on October 01, 2024 as Document Number A338063 in the Office of the County Recorder of Waseca County, Minnesota.

ASSIGNMENTS OF MORTGAGE: Assigned to: Rocket Mortgage, LLC FKA Quicken Loans, LLC by assignment recorded on November 26, 2025 as Document Number A341973 in the Office of the County Recorder of Waseca County, Minnesota.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY: Land situated in the City of Janesville in the County of Waseca in the State of MN, and described as follows: Lot 10, Block 16, Original Plat of Janesville, Waseca County, Minnesota.

STREET ADDRESS OF PROPERTY: 210 E FRONT ST, JANESVILLE, MN 56048

COUNTY IN WHICH PROPERTY IS LOCATED: Waseca County, Minnesota.

THE AMOUNT CLAIMED TO BE DUE ON THE MORTGAGE ON THE DATE OF THE NOTICE: \$94,719.89

TRANSACTION AGENT: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc.

NAME OF MORTGAGE ORIGINATOR: Rocket Mortgage, LLC, FKA Quicken Loans, LLC

RESIDENTIAL SERVICER: Rocket Mortgage, LLC

TAX PARCEL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 14.100.2160

TRANSACTION AGENT'S MORTGAGE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 100039035037137766

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.

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 TIME OF SALE: February 26, 2026 at 10:00 AM.

PLACE OF SALE: Waseca County Sheriff's Office, 122 3rd Ave. NW, Waseca, MN 56093.

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.

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 August 26, 2026.

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 PRODUCTION, AND ARE ABANDONED.

MORTGAGOR(S) RELEASED FROM FINANCIAL OBLIGATION ON MORTGAGE: None

Dated: December 19, 2025

ROCKET MORTGAGE, LLC
FKA QUICKEN LOANS, LLC
Mortgagee

TROTT LAW, P.C.

By: /s/ Samuel R. Coleman, Esq.
Alexa Marsh, Esq.
Attorneys for Mortgagee
25 Dale Street North
St. Paul, MN 55102
(651) 209-9760
(25-1232-FC01)
THIS IS A COMMUNICATION FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. Published in the NRHEG Star Eagle on January 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and February 5, 2026

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City Clerk-Treasurer

City of Freeborn

OPENING DATE: January 14, 2026

CLOSING DATE: February 6, 2026

City of Freeborn is seeking candidates for the position of City Clerk-Treasurer. This position is responsible for the City's financial administration, elections, official records, management and coordination of Council meetings and directives. Complete job description available at City of Freeborn. Responsible for recording minutes and bookkeeping for the Joint Powers Authority. Qualified candidates will have a High School Diploma/GED, prior experience with bookkeeping, customer service, self-motivated, work independently with limited supervision. Experience with Banyon Fund Accounting is a plus. Salary determined by qualifications, education, and experience. Resumes/cover letter and application may be dropped off at the office or emailed: City of Freeborn, 402 Park Street, Freeborn, MN 56032 or ctyfrb@bevcomm.net by February 6, 2026. For questions, feel free to contact Barbara Jones, City Clerk-Treasurer at 507-863-2014 or via email at ctyfrb@bevcomm.net. The City of Freeborn is an EOE.

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Child’s History of Waseca County

Continuing Chapter III, 1855: Winter trip to Minnesota with ox teams – Venturesome crossing of the Mississippi on the ice – Climbing the bluff – First blizzard at Zumbro Falls – The liquor peddler and his grog – Mantorville the last house – Camping out in mid-winter two nights – Cattle with bleeding legs and without hay – Safe arrival at the Sutlief Shanty

The members of the company were not so much given to song and stories and funny jokes as they had been on the previous evening. The romance of camping out in mid-winter had lost to them, after their two days’ experience, something of its imaginary charms. They piled high the campfire with fuel and retired early to their hay beds, which were spread upon the snow-covered ground. The wind came up from the northwest in the evening, and before morning the weather was intensely cold. Long before daylight, the next morning, they arose, fed the cattle what hay there was in the beds, and ate their own breakfast. As soon as there was light enough to enable them to keep their course, they renewed their journey. They crossed the LeSueur river, in the town of New Richland, with some difficulty, the banks of the stream being very steep. Soon after crossing the river, they reached the height of the prairie level. They could then see, and took it for their guide, a large bur-oak tree standing alone on section thirty-six, in Wilton about a mile from the Sutlief shanty. Never were weary mortals more pleased than were those first settlers when Mr. Sutlief announced that that tree was within a mile of his claim.

They reached the Sutlief place at four o’clock p.m., rejoiced to find Mr. Barrett alive and well. To say that every member of the company was thankful for this safe resting place is a very mild way of expressing his feelings on that occasion.

The condition and appearance of the country, at that time, however, were neither very pleasing nor inviting to most of the pioneers, for they had come from a heavy timbered country. To the south and west, as far as the eye could reach, there was a vast

expanse of bleak prairie, without either tree or shrub, swept by the howling blasts of winter and covered with snow, sleet and ice. The few trees along the river looked to them then to be short and scrubby; the weather was intensely cold; it was thirty-five miles to the nearest postoffice – Mankato; they could get no newspapers and no letters, except at long intervals of time; there were no houses, no barns, no fences, no roads, no bridges, no human beings to be seen in any direction. This shanty was then the only human habitation between what was afterwards known as the Winnebago agency and Owatonna—the only one within the present limits of Waseca County.

The writer mentally resolved, within a week after his arrival, to return to Wisconsin as soon as his term of service should expire. But when the month of June came, what a change! The trees had put forth their fresh, green foliage; the prairies were decked with the most gorgeous flowers; feathered songsters held grand jubilee concerts in every grove, and prairie chickens in endless numbers made early morn melodious with their merry love-making. No more enchanting picture of a grand, rich country ever met the eye of a man than that presented in the valley of the LeSueur during the summer of 1855.

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

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

Eli Lutgens

■ Caucus from Page 1

caucuses, individuals must be eligible to vote by the Nov. 3 election. Others can attend and listen in, but depending on party procedures, are either not allowed to speak, or may speak only in limited circumstances.

Those who wonder whether they are “qualified” to attend need not wonder, leaders from both parties say. Attendees should evaluate whether their political beliefs and interests align more closely with those of the Democratic or Republican party, then attend the appropriate meeting.

“Not all Republicans think alike,” says Knotts light-heartedly. “We have our own liberals and conservatives, and it makes for some lively discussion.”

“What’s most important is that people come, take part in the democratic process, and share their viewpoints with like-minded neighbors.”

Hogenson is energetic as she describes the precinct caucuses. “They’re an important part of

what the founding fathers wanted for our nation,” she says. “The idea of a government ‘by the people, for the people, and of the people’ is much more than just words.

“Each citizen is meant to give genuine thought to how we can improve the way our country is run, and then share that input on the local level, so it can be passed along, step by step, all the way up to the national level.

“The precinct caucuses are the grass roots foundation for everything that follows.”

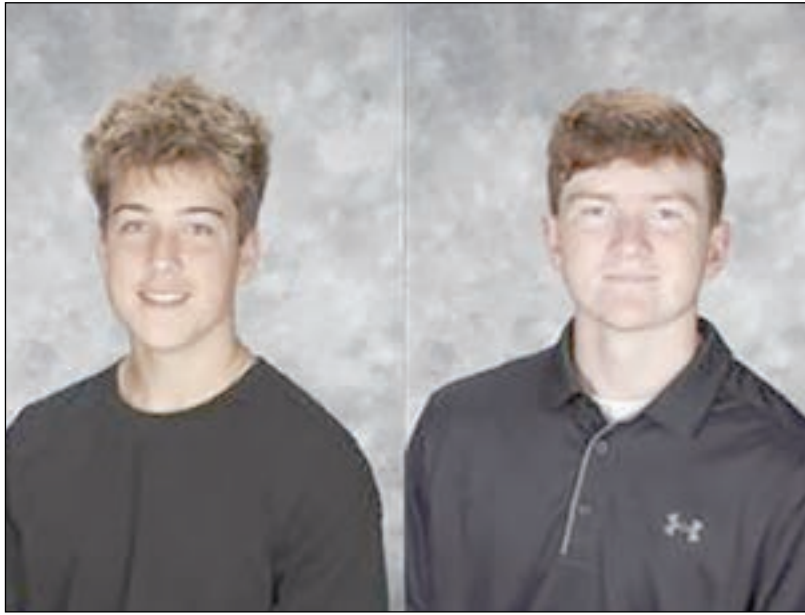
“I really encourage people to come,” comments Knotts. “We want to hear their contributions.”

Sites for Republican caucuses in Waseca County are the Waseca Junior and Senior High School, the Waseca Intermediate School, the high school buildings in both Janesville and New Richland, and the Waldorf Community Center.

All Democratic precinct caucuses will be in the cafeteria of Waseca’s Central School building.

Anyone wanting to know what precinct they live in will find a useful tool on the Minnesota Secretary of State website.

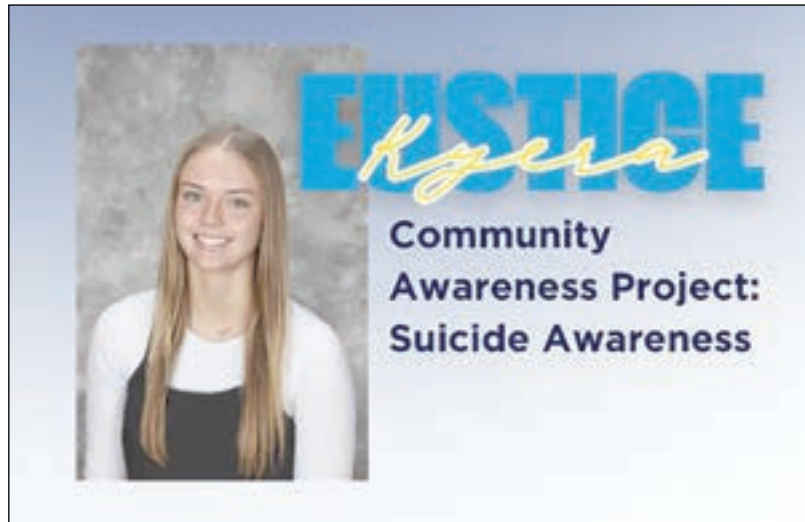
NRHEG DECA State Qualifiers



Jack Bartlett (left) and Fynn Baumann (right) are part of the team competitors moving on to State DECA. They will compete in travel and team decision making.



Justin Beauvais (left) and Bodie Newgard (right) are part of the team competitors moving on to State DECA. They will compete in sports and entertainment and team decision making.



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And At The Star Eagle Office

Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri., 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

2026 Waseca County Republican Caucus Locations

Feb. 3, 2026 • 7 PM • Arrive Early for Registration

7:00PM start time, all locations, arrive early to register and get seated

Additional caucus documents online at: www.wasecarepublicans.com

To find out what precinct you live in, visit: www.sos.mn.gov/elections-voting/election-day-voting/

Precinct	Location
Alton Township	Janesville High School
Blooming Grove Township	Waseca Intermediate School
Byron Township	New Richland High School
Elysian City	Janesville High School
Freedom Township	Waldorf Community Center
Janesville City	Janesville High School
Janesville Township	Janesville High School
Iosco Township	Waseca Intermediate School
New Richland City	New Richland High School
New Richland Township	New Richland High School
Otisco Township	New Richland High School
St. Mary Township	Waseca Intermediate School
Vivian Township	Waldorf Community Center
Waldorf City	Waldorf Community Center
Waseca 1A	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 1B	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
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Find out more at: Wasecarepublicans.com

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Prepared and paid for by the Waseca County Republican Party