



FenceLines

by Mark Bernard

The same old thing as yesterday

The scurs and their Weather Eye nailed the bitter cold temps accurately. Does Old Man Winter let our furnaces catch their breath in February or does he double down? Starting Thursday, sunny with highs around 10 above with lows around -10. Sunny Friday with a highs around 10 above with lows near zero. Mostly sunny on Saturday with a modest chance of evening snow. Highs around 20 and lows in the low teens above zero. Sunday, mostly cloudy with a slight chance of snow. Highs in the upper 20's with lows in the mid-teens. Cloudy Groundhog Day with highs around freezing and lows in the upper teens. Tuesday, mostly cloudy with a good chance of snow. Highs in the upper 20's with lows in the upper teens. Cloudy on Wednesday with a slight chance of snow. Highs around freezing and lows in the upper teens. On February 1st we'll see the sunrise at 7:30 a.m. CST. We also will have gained roughly an hour's worth of daylight since the winter solstice. On the 4th, we'll achieve just over 10 hours of daylight, about the same as we had November 6th. The normal high for Groundhog Day is 23 and the normal low is 5. Odds are he won't see his shadow. There's a movie about that, I think.

The Full Moon for the month is on the 1st. It goes primarily by the Full Snow Moon, so named as this is one of the snowiest months of the year across many parts of the country. In this area, fractionally ahead of January and trails only December in terms of snowfall amount. In Europe, it is known as the Ice Moon. While some point out that there isn't a lot of animal activity in February, some of the Native Americans might beg to differ. The Ojibwe called this the Sucker Moon after the suckers that ran in area streams this time of year. The Sioux called it the Raccoon Moon as the raccoons would awaken to forage about as the days grew longer and temperatures warmer. If they'd let the skunks sleep, then everyone would be happy. At the ranch, it is The Full Lamb Moon, although it could also be the Unhappy Corgi Moon.

The snow moisture content is always something interesting to ponder. January snowfall has a tendency to be relatively dry. However when I first ran the calculations on the January precipitation data, I came up with a much wetter estimate than I expected. Then I remembered that our early January precipitation fell as rain, .26" at the ranch and in Bugtussle. Once I subtracted that out and divided the liquid equivalent precip with the snowfall total, the moisture content came up with an old familiar number, roughly .07" per inch of snow. Magically, the SROC

matched that closely. That's very typical for snow in January, much drier than what we expect to see as we move farther into later February and March. Looking back at last year, February snowfall was well below normal. March snowfall made up for it and to no one's surprise it was wet and heavy. Not unusual for snowfall to contain .1" + of water per inch in it during March.

One positive to all this cold weather has been a definite decrease in insect activity. In the house, the lady beetle population seems to have slowed to a crawl. There are still a few visible, but they're not very mobile and not in everything like they were a few months ago. Not to say that we won't see more of them indoors as spring approaches, but the cold has definitely put a crimp in their style. Outdoors, there are few signs of any insects present. Earlier in January, there were actually still some boxelder bugs appearing on the south side of the office in town. They weren't numerous, but every once in a while one would be spotted. Probably best of all though is the lack of mosquitoes. After last summer, they got old fast. When it's -20, they're out of sight and out of mind.

Lambing at the ranch went from very slow to an all out barrage Sunday and Monday. It's so hard to see it coming with the wool still on the ewes and little forewarning in their behavior sometimes. The lambs are suddenly just "there" and you have to deal with them and their mothers accordingly. The cold didn't help matters, although two of them born Sunday did remarkably well for the temperatures. Obviously their mothers are caring for them well and the lambs are nursing. If not, it becomes a short duration situation. Pens are at a premium, so animals that aren't milking or nursing get booted in a hurry. It also becomes an issue of time as the Hay Fairy needs to procure more hay sometime during the process. Small squares are a pain in the butt, although they're necessary for small pens. Fewer sheep would mean fewer small squares. A novel concept.

Poppy has endured the coldest weather rather nicely. Of course, when you're just outside to go potty and chase squirrels, it only makes sense. We've even left her inside at chore time. As mentioned last week, those small Corgi feet can get cold in a hurry. As cold as it's been, even the squirrel chasing sessions come at a price. Longer term sessions result in a rear paw being lifted off the ground, signaling it's time to come inside and warm up. And this is how we learn.

See you next week...real good then.



In My Humble Opinion

by Deb Bently

Gray designs drawn in ditches

Given that we are currently in the "basement of winter," none of us Minnesotans can say we are surprised by our lingering cold snap. It does, however, give us strong motive to anticipate the figurative stairway-February and March-that will get us out of here.

In the meantime, though, I have found myself not necessarily liking, but at least appreciating the beauty created by the wind.

Either in this edition or an upcoming one, you will find an article about wind erosion. I became inspired to get in touch with the local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) first, when I had the unlikely problem of having mud tracked into my house during the month of January-not because the ground outside was soft, but because it was on top of the snow. Overnight from Sunday, Jan. 18, to Monday, winds county-wide blew so much soil off area fields that the snow turned gray.

When people would walk outside and get it stuck on their shoes, then come inside, what would normally have been a small puddle of water was instead a pool of watery mud.

Even without the irritation of a dirty floor, there was something

eerie about the discolored snow.

If you're wondering what there was to "appreciate" about that, you are wise to ask.

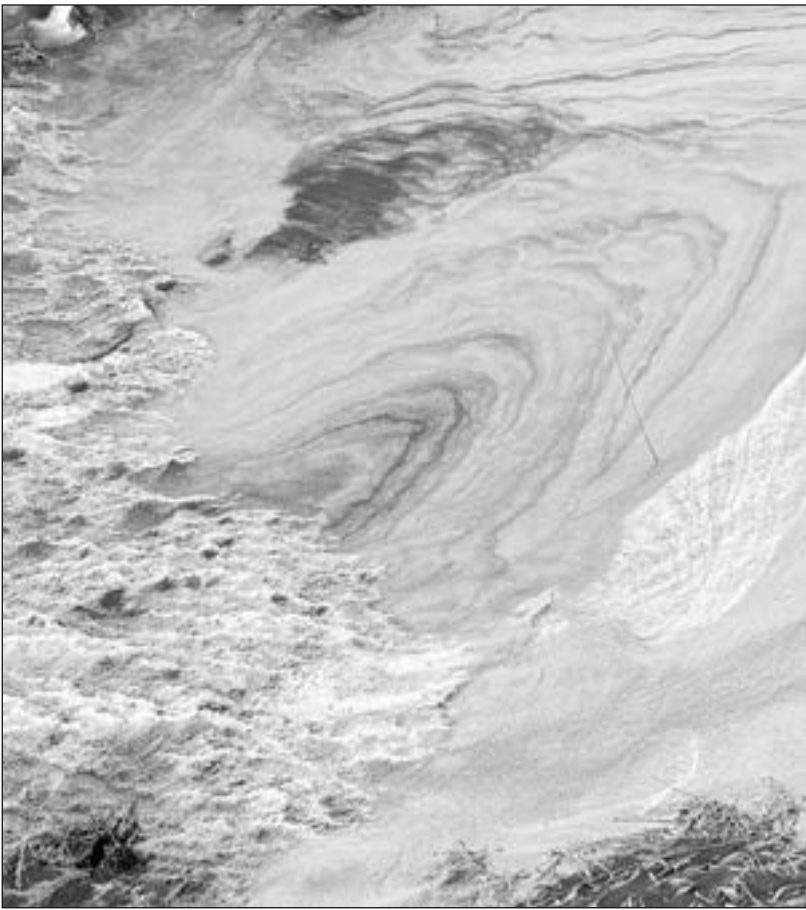
The gray snow was an inspiration to find out more, and certainly got me thinking, but the appreciation comes from other factors.

The largest was the designs drawn in the ditches.

They're mostly covered since we got some fresh snow, but for a while the designs on the snow made it seem as if the wind had been daydreaming while it swept a black paintbrush across a white canvas. There were distinct curving lines, arches of shading, reversed-out areas that were mostly black with small patches of white, astoundingly parallel lines.

It was windy and cold, but more than once I was so taken by the designs I stopped my car to take a closer look. When I wanted to take a picture, since my electric car windows were held shut by ice, I went so far as to open the door, step out, and hold myself upright on an often slippery surface while being pushed around by the wind. Though I was outside the car for moments, my fingers were chilled as I got back inside.

If the weather hadn't been so



hostile, I would have stopped more often than I did. I can tell you I was tempted over and over again, the designs were so intriguing.

The other element I appreciate is the snow in motion.

In summer we call them "dust devils." I think the best name for what we see in winter is "snow swirls." I guess the wind must form those miniature funnels all the time, but only when it is carrying something can we see the design.

If we lived in a time without enclosed, heated vehicles or temperature-controlled homes, perhaps I would see them as intimidating or threatening. But when I am in my nice, warm car looking out across a wide-open field where snow is being cast



Just a Thought...

by Eli Lutgens

Miami: a wedding, jellyfish and food

This week, Thursday morning, I drove to Miami for my friend Paul and Heathers' wedding, scheduled for Saturday.

A three-and-a-half-hour drive, arrival at the hotel and unpacking was followed by Paul's bachelor party. I use the term party loosely. Our destination was a large, semi-outdoor, four-story mall in downtown Miami. The weather was beautiful, 72 degrees, 90% humidity.

We went to dinner at a nice sushi restaurant, ate outside on their porch, and enjoyed many different varieties of sushi. My favorite fish this time around was the salmon. Very fresh, very good. We walked around downtown, and got dessert, gelato, at a nearby spot.

While getting dessert, we were sitting outside this little Italian ice cream shop when two gentlemen at a table engaged in conversation.

"You know it's rude to eat food out here," one said. "We're hungry."

They were homeless.

Paul's brother-in-law Ian couldn't hear them, so he got up to sit with them. After a couple minutes he got up with them and started walking off, saying nothing to us. We had to chase him down to find out what he was doing.

"It's fine," Ian said. "Don't worry." After more prodding as we chased, Ian said, "They're hungry. I'm buying them some food."

About five minutes later, he walked out of the neighboring 7-11 with some sandwiches for the gentleman. He sat down and prayed with them before we left.

I don't know how typical bachelor parties go, but I did not have praying with the homeless on my bingo card. We returned to the hotel for the evening and everyone went to sleep early. Everyone was tired from the long trips.

Friday morning I picked up Ian and we headed to South Beach. I really,



This photo was taken from the third floor of the mall with the city skyline in the back.

Star Eagle photo by Eli Lutgens

really wanted to go swimming in the ocean. Paul was busy getting last minute tasks done for his wedding or else he would have come with us.

Before the ocean, Ian insisted we stop at a film store. Yes, the kind of

Travel continued on 4

ZED by Duane M. Abel



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

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Compostings

by Al Batt

Kindness is a gift that should always be returned

ECHOES FROM THE LOAFERS’ CLUB MEETING

I want to be a millionaire just like my dad.

Was your father a millionaire? No, but he wanted to be a millionaire.

DRIVING BY BRUCE’S DRIVE

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. The week had been like folding a fitted sheet. The weather wouldn’t leave me alone. Grocery stores were rushed like a quarterback dropping back to pass in the last few seconds of a game. Coffee was being served on a stick. When it was 21 degrees below zero, minus 37 with the wind chill; it was cold enough for me. It could have been worse. The wind chill was minus 61 degrees at the Grand Marais Airport. I walked like a penguin to keep physics from taking over and putting me down on the ice.

I saw a “no passing” sign that had been clipped and ditched. Who knows what hit it, but it wasn’t one of the two empty plastic trash bins that had been stationed side by side at the end of a driveway along a highway before they parted ways. One was in the ditch on the east side of the road and the other on the west side. They were victims of our varied weather patterns.

A DAY OR TWO IN A LIFE

I had a sliver or a poisonous blowgun dart in my foot. I’m not sure which. I soaked my trotter in Epsom salt. The sliver came out. I’m not saying it was big, but if the sliver had been a walleye, it’d been a keeper.

I watched a high school basketball game (not in the Midwest) in which four fans were kicked out of the gym for offering constructive criticisms complete with vulgarities to the referees. I expect that school will hold a referendum to pay those four to stay home on game nights.

I’M A TRUCKER HAULING STORIES

I used to make a daily walk across the Washington Avenue Bridge to move between the East Bank and West Bank portions of the University of Minnesota. My mother gave me a scarf the length of two VW Bugs I wrapped around my melon to keep my thoughts from freezing.

I no longer own that scarf, so I needed to drive to the eastern edge of Iowa, not far from the Mississippi River, near the town of Walcott, to get to the Iowa 80 Truckstop, the World’s Largest

Truckstop, which features seven restaurants, barber shop, chiropractor, dentist, movie theater, workout room, showers, laundry facilities, library, truck wash, pet wash, chapel, service center, trucking museum, 900 truck parking places, 225 acres, convenience store—oh, yeah, and fuel. They are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and haven’t closed their doors since opening them in 1964.

ASK AL

“What should I do if my dog gets sprayed by a skunk?” Give the canine to a brother-in-law as a surprise birthday gift.

“What did people do before there were cameras?” They stared at things for a long time.

“What caused the sinking of the Titanic?” An impatient and rude passenger who yelled, “What does a man have to do to get ice around here?”

BAD JOKES DEPARTMENT

A friend has two tickets to the Super Bowl. She didn’t realize that was on the same day as her wedding. If you’re interested and want to go instead of her, it’s at the biggest Lutheran Church in Kansas City and the groom’s name is Bruce.

How do sheep laugh? Baha.

NATURE NOTES

A great horned owl hoots “Who’s awake? Me too” outside Darwyn Olson’s residence near Hartland. Darwyn wondered how to attract owls. After figuring out whoooo is in your area, you could do several things to encourage these raptors. A large birdbath can entice owls. Installing nesting boxes and keeping tree branches long for owls to perch on make for a hospitable habitat. Since owls are nocturnal, keep outside lights to a minimum at night. Downed logs and brush piles lure owls. If you raise rabbits or domestic fowl, a great horned owl might not be good company. If nothing else works, try dressing like a vole, the potato chip of the prairie, or like a skunk if you can pass the sniff test. Great horned owls eat skunks.

I saw a robin stubbornly spending the winter here. They are tough. That’s why one of them became Batman’s sidekick.

There are signs of spring that might be overly optimistic. Black-capped chickadees are singing “fee-bee” or “spring’s here,” and woodpeckers are drumming.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Kindness is one gift that should always be returned.

Opioid settlement money supporting local efforts

By DEB BENTLY
Staff Writer

Three area initiatives will receive more than \$29,000 to combat opioid addiction under a set of grants approved during the Jan. 20 meeting of the Waseca County Board of Commissioners. The grants were recommended by a 16-member Opioid Settlement Advisory Council offered through the county’s department of public health.

According to information shared at the meeting, the Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton school district will receive \$15,800 to initiate a “Hope Squad” program. According to information online, the program trains two staff members as counselors and advisors, giving them tools to help students become peer-to-peer supporters. The program also provides tools for activities and interactions meant to help build a positive atmosphere grounded in mutual trust.

Hope Squad was founded in 2004 by a high school principal in Utah who made a personal vow to design a system that would help improve student mental health, reducing harmful trends toward drug addiction and suicide.

The Waseca County Department of Corrections will receive \$10,500 toward a specialized youth counseling program operated through Fernbrook Family Center. Nicknamed RESET, the program works especially with youth who have entered the court system or who are in a less formal “diversion” process meant to help change their behavior before it potentially leads to criminal charges.

According to information shared during the county board meeting, the therapy is meant to help lead youth to examine the motivation behind certain behaviors and increase their recognition of what makes those choices undesirable. The therapy is meant to provide “structured intervention to address decision-making, coping skills, accountability, and goal setting.”

A group of community-building, family-centered events for graduates from the Waseca County Drug Court will be supported by a \$3,000 grant from opioid settlement funds. According to county attorney Rachel Cornelius, who will be planning the activities, graduates gather for events like picnics, bowling, outdoor sports and the like to help continue the atmosphere of mutual support and community that was created during their drug court experience.

Cornelius mentioned the events are very important in building a stable, new lifestyle which helps graduates keep from being drawn back to habits and places they frequented before entering recovery.

As she presented these three recommendations to county board members, county public health nurse Sarah Berry shared that these three agencies were among six which had applied for funding. The other applicants, she commented, will have a chance to update or modify their requests and submit them again for a March deadline.

She also revealed the grants are on a “reimbursement” basis—that is, recipients must submit evidence of expenditures made and will then receive the allotted funding.

Money for the grants comes from Waseca County’s share of about \$300 million awarded to Minnesota from a set of multistate lawsuits against pharmaceutical companies which profited from highly addictive opioid medications.

At this time, Berry stated, the county’s opioid advisory committee has more than \$300,000 available for dispersal.

Child’s History of Waseca County

Chapter IV, 1855. Drive cattle to Mankato – S.P.Child near unto death – Callens and Mansfield Shanty – Child caught on prairie at night and feet badly frozen – Terrible suffering and no physician near – The Winnebago Indians arrive

Shortly after their arrival at Sutlief’s place, Messrs. Barrett, Sutlief and S.P. Child started for Mankato with a portion of Sutlief’s cattle in order to get them kept there until spring, as the hay was running short. Mr. Sutlief returned within a few days, leaving S.P. Child at Van Brunt’s sawmill to get in logs for lumber. Mr. Barrett had a claim of his own near South Bend and remained there. Van Brunt’s mill was on the LeSueur river, about five miles east of Mankato. Owing to some misunderstanding, S.P. Child, after remaining at the mill a few days, started to return to Sutlief’s claim, intending to stop on the way, over night, at the shanty of Mansfield and Callens, who then resided about four miles south of what was soon after known as Winnebago Agency. Mr. Child found no one about the home and the door was locked; he therefore concluded to push through to Sutlief’s that day. This was a most unwise decision, for he had nearly twenty-five miles to travel before he would reach the Sutlief place. There was no road, and half the forenoon was already spent. He should have forced open the door and remained over night. But he was young, strong, and impetuous, and, thinking he could get through in good time, he started on. The snow was deep, especially in low places and in ravines, often taking him in waist deep. It was also covered with crust, strong enough to hold him up in some places, while in other places it would break through. During the middle of the day the weather was mild, and some of the snow that worked into his boots melted, making his socks and boots quite wet. Toward evening the weather became much colder and, despite all his efforts, his feet began to freeze soon after dark. There was no track he could follow, no land mark he could see, and he was enabled to keep his course only by a star which he selected as his guide. One can, perhaps, better imagine than describe the feelings and emotions of one so young thus toiling on with frozen feet, nerved by the hope of reaching shelter and by the prospect of perishing with cold and fatigue on an uninhabited prairie with only prairie wolves to gather at his deathbed. Hour after hour wore away; his feet to his ankles were frozen hard; drowsiness came over him; the prairie wolves howled in the distance; yet no sign of the shanti could be discovered. Though much exhausted and discouraged, he struggled on. He had passed the shanty to the south. Death was certain if he went forward.

Fortunately for him the inmates of the cabin were at work much later than usual that evening; by mere chance he discovered the light, and to the great astonishment of all present came in about eleven o’clock more dead than alive. His boots and socks were frozen tight to his feet and ankles, and some time and much labor were required to remove them.

The suffering he endured for many weeks can not be described. No medical aid could be obtained, and the flesh on his feet literally rotted away, leaving the blackened bones of his toes exposed. Many weeks of pain passed before he could step on his feet and it was months before he could walk without the aid of crutches. Most of the discolored bones of his toes were taken off by his brother who used a razor in the work of amputation. In the latter part of the following April, he was conveyed to Mankato where surgical aid was obtained and the

other injured bones were removed. By July following he had so far recovered the use of his feet that he took the position of government cook at the Winnebago Agency, among the Winnebago Indians. These Indians had been brought to their reservation during the month of June of that year – Gen. Fletcher being the agent at that time.

Editorial Note - Upon rummaging 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

■ School

from Page 1

and mathematics; tests in science are administered in grades 5 and 8. High school students are tested in reading in grade 10, mathematics in grade 11, and at various grade levels in science.

■ Mediation

from Page 1

and others who were there to support their cause, including members of the public and licensed staff.

Among the information shared during the meeting by paraprofessional Maryann Schlaak was the fact that some paras in the district work additional jobs to help make ends meet. Some, she reported, qualify for public assistance.

She named many demanding elements of the paras’ work days. “We

The Department of education states that the purpose of the tests is to “determine mastery of concepts and skills and to measure progress toward goals and objectives.”

Scores on the tests do not affect student grades, but can be implied to send a message about the success of various education programs and systems.

The tests tend to be unpopular among high school students, leading a significant number to take advantage of the possibility of “opting out,” something which can be done if parents sign appropriate forms. While there is no penalty to the student for choosing not to take the test, the district’s standing is harmed when the number reaches certain thresholds.

A spontaneous discussion among staff and board members speculated about incentives which could change student attitudes toward the test from one of withdrawal to a mood of challenge and shared achievement.

It was mentioned that other districts have built incentive programs around student activity passes—not so much about whether students achieve strong scores or not, but about whether a target number of students in a grade choose to take the test.

No conclusions were reached, but all present were encouraged to give the matter further thought and to share any ideas in the future.

help students arrive safely, regulate emotions, and prepare for learning,” she said. “Throughout the day, we work one-on-one and in small groups with students who have disabilities, learning differences, behavioral challenges, and medical needs.

“We de-escalate crises and help when students feel overwhelmed, frustrated, or afraid.”

Schlaak went on to say, “We do this work because we care deeply about students, but caring does not pay the rent.” Some paraprofessionals, she said, “leave the profession altogether, not because they want to, but because they cannot afford to stay.

“When paraprofessionals leave, students lose trusted adults. Teachers lose critical support.

“High turnover hurts the very children our district is committed to serving, especially students with disabilities.”

Dave and Nikki Chicos, parents of two children in the district, also took the podium to speak in support of paraprofessionals. Their older son Owen is in second grade, and “has significant medical, developmental, and physical complexities.”

The parents praised the support and caring approach they have seen paraprofessionals extend to their

children, and pointed out the “sense of community” built at school has been a significant element of their sons’ progress.

Fourth-grade teacher Jennie Bunn also spoke regarding the many roles filled by paraprofessionals and the importance of maintaining consistency.

She stated, “Paraprofessionals are underpaid and undervalued by our district despite their training, specialized skills, and critical role in student success.

“Higher pay is not just about recognition, it is about retention, sustainability, and fairness.”



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OBITUARIES

Kevin Alan Hamor

Kevin Alan Hamor passed away January 20, 2026. He resided in Ellendale, MN.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, February 21, 2026 at 2 p.m. at First Lutheran Church in Ellendale, MN with Pastor David Modder officiating. A visitation will be held one hour prior to the service.



Kevin Hamor

Freeborn County to host public input session on firearms zone policy

Freeborn County will host a public input session on Thursday, February 12, 2026 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Freeborn County Courthouse, Commissioners' Chambers.

The purpose of this meeting is to gather public input regarding recent changes in Minnesota law that allow counties to consider whether to maintain a shotgun-only zone or permit the use of rifles in designated areas. The Minnesota Legislature amended state law to provide local governments with discretion in how firearm use is regulated within their jurisdictions, making community feedback an important part of the decision-making process.

Residents are encouraged to

attend and share their perspectives, ask questions, and provide comments for consideration by the Freeborn County Board of Commissioners. This session is intended to be informational and to allow the Board to hear directly from the public before any action is taken.

Those unable to attend in person may still participate by contacting their Freeborn County Commissioners by phone or by submitting an email with questions, concerns, or comments. Commissioner contact information is available at:

<https://www.co.freeborn.mn.us/122/Board-of-Commissioners>

February meeting scheduled for Cannon River watershed joint powers board

In February, the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board (CRWJPB) will meet in person for its quarterly board meeting. The meeting will be on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. in the Rice County Government Services Building, located at 320 3rd Street NW in Faribault.

The CRWJPB was formed in June of 2020 to implement

the Cannon River Watershed Comprehensive Management Plan and improve local water quality. The CRWJPB represents the members of the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization. Learn more about this organization and its efforts to improve the Cannon River Watershed at <http://www.riceswcd.org/crwjpb>.

Big Island Rendezvous to host education fundraiser

The Big Island Rendezvous & Festival invites the community to support historical education at its Education Fundraiser on Friday, February 6, 2026 at the Albert Lea American Legion Post 56, located at 142 N. Broadway, Albert Lea.

This annual fundraiser helps support educational programming that brings history to life for students through immersive, hands-on experiences offered by the Big Island Rendezvous.

The evening begins with a social hour at 5 p.m., followed by dinner

at 6:30 p.m., and a live auction at 7:15 p.m. Guests will enjoy great food, community camaraderie, and the chance to bid on a wide variety of exciting silent and live auction items, including:

Gift Cards & Certificates from: Green Mill, Mom's Bread Company, Elbow Room, Jake's Pizza, Clothing Care Center, Piggy Blues BBQ, Bummy's BBQ, Skyline Liquor, Bend in the Road, Applebee's and more!

Service & Experience Packages:

• Oil changes from Dave Syver-

son, Shell Rapid Lube, and Wuer-flein Chevrolet

• Piggy Blues BBQ – Rib Feast

for 4 and BBQ Lunch for 4

Featured Auction Items:

• Timberwolves metal wall art

• Milwaukee Tools two-piece

drill set

• KTTC – \$2,000 advertising campaign

Tickets are \$25 per person or \$150 for a table of six. To purchase tickets, contact the Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce at 507-373-3938 or stop by

the office at 132 N Broadway Albert Lea MN.

The reservation deadline is 12 p.m. on Thursday, January 29, 2026.

The Big Island Rendezvous & Festival is a premier annual event in Albert Lea that brings history to life through interactive demonstrations, historical reenactments, and hands-on educational experiences. Its education programs provide students and families with unforgettable opportunities to learn about history in an engaging and meaningful way.

HERITAGE BITS



Years ago, Watkins salesmen traveled around the country selling their products. As part of their promotion, tours were scheduled yearly. Those who signed up were given a bus ride to Winona, treated to a great meal and given a tour of their facility. This photo was probably taken in the last half of the 1950s.

Front row, left to right: Mrs. Robert Kieselbach (her husband) was the salesman for this area, Mrs. Hubert (Della) Zak, Olga Brekke, Mrs. Pete (Mugsy) Swearingen, Mrs. Tanny (Grace) Ohnstad, Mrs. Gene (Marilyn) Krammerer, Mrs. Geo. (Margaret) Utpadel.

Second row: Mrs. Gene Budach, Mrs. Geo. (Ione) Schuster, unknown, Mrs. Philip (Vi) Klocek, Helen Schuster, Marcella Smith, Mrs. Arvid (Eva) Langlie, Mrs. Carlyle (Wanda) Vangen, Mrs. Lawrence (Beulah) Jensen, Mrs. Merlyn (LaDonna) Swearingen.

All men from left to right: Watkins rep., Robert Kieselbach, Forrest Howell, Henry Nelson, Hubert Zak, Jake Brekke, Geo. Utpadel, Lawrence Jensen, Lowell "Pete" Swearingen, unknown, Gene Kammerer, Don Schuster, Philip K,locek, Merlyn Swearingen, Geo. Schuster, Gene Budach, and Tanny Ohnstad. (1/29/26)

■ Travel

from Page 2

film that goes in old cameras. Ian buys, sells, repairs and photographs using classic cameras. He was in need of some new film. A brief visit to the film store made me feel like I time traveled. An old photo booth sat inside, along with film and retro cameras. The atmosphere in the room, the air, felt old, comfortable. It even had a certain smell, although that may have been the chemicals from their dark room.

Fifteen minutes later, we were standing on Miami's South Beach. The water was beautiful, Miami Dolphin Blue.

Our hour in the ocean swimming made me feel like a kid again.

The most memorable part of the trip, however?

I was stung by a jellyfish.

I didn't want to leave, so I was lingering near the shore, when my right arm suddenly was suddenly engulfed in pain. I quickly thrashed my arm and marched towards the sand. (You're not actually supposed to do that when stung. I'm told you're supposed to sit still in case there is a school of jellyfish.) My arm was red, hurt and within five minutes broke out in hives and bumps. I googled what I should do and the internet said to rinse off with sea water before doing anything. After this, Ian and I debated what to do and decided, on a whim, to ask the lifeguard. He sprayed my arm with a solution and informed me that if I were

going to die of an allergic reaction, it would have happened within the first five minutes.

Within two hours, my arm was just a little red. By evening there were no visible indicators that I was stung at all.

After a drive back to the hotel, the group of bachelor party goers departed for 'part 2' of Paul's bachelor party. Our destination: an Escape Room: a game where we were given an hour to escape from a 'prison.' Clues and puzzles were intended to be solved to escape from this four-room contraption. We began with our parties split, four persons in each cell, communicating with each other how to find numbers and identify combinations to locks, etc. A long string with a chain was used to throw keys and magnets back and forth between our side-by-side cells, separated by about four feet of wall. It was quite the scene trying to throw a chain up and sideways to our companions.

We just barely got out, navigating through many, many puzzles, en route to our escape with one minute to spare. Some of the clues included a four-page journal, a video introduction, and numbers carved into the wall.

Following the games, we returned to the hotel for pizza by the pool with all of the wedding guests.

Saturday, the big day, my friends Paul and Heather were united in marriage.

The wedding took place on a large 4,000-passenger cruise ship, as many were departing for a 7-day cruise afterwards. I opted for the free option of continuing my stay with Kyle and Anastasia.

Paul's father Mark, a pastor, performed the ceremony. It was very sweet. The vows were beautiful. (My favorite part of weddings, I've learned.)

The reception followed. Both Paul and Heather and father Mark told me numerous times how much it meant to them to have me attend. Mark pulled me aside afterwards and told me, "Before Paul moved to Minnesota from Texas two years ago, he didn't have any in-person friends."

I met Paul at the local game store I now own in Austin, Minnesota.

I will be brutally honest here for a minute. One of my biggest struggles when I first took over the shop was how to treat people whose company I didn't enjoy as much as others. I prayed about it. The answer I received was to treat these persons as if they were my best friends. With overwhelming love and support. And it changed everything for me. Two specific people I tried this with became two people whom I now love to spend time with. Paul, initially, was one of those people.

But I treated him like a best friend, and guess what happened. He became one of my favorite people.

I say often that people need a "third place" outside of work and home to spend their time. My goal with the game store is to provide that 'third place' in a healthy way for a group of people who really wouldn't have any other place they could comfortably find that community we all so desperately crave/need.

Paul's Dad, who visited Austin this summer, told me how important the game store was/is to Paul and the local

community. I've witnessed Paul come out of his shell over these past two years. I was so incredibly happy to see how far he's come. He lost over 100lbs, became a social butterfly and is now married to a beautiful and kind bride. Heather and Paul make each other better people.

Before I departed, Paul pulled me aside and started crying as he thanked me for coming. I was the only friend who could make the trip from Minnesota to attend his wedding. He was the reason I planned this vacation. I'm glad I did.

I will not forget the time we shared together this week or the honor I had to stand next to Paul as he married the love of his life.

A four-hour drive back to Orlando followed my three, event-filled days in Miami, which included a nice sushi restaurant, an Escape Room, a beautiful outdoor mall, South Beach, a jellyfish sting and a beautiful wedding ceremony filled with memorable lines.

After I recapped my trip to Kyle and Anastasia, we spent Sunday at the beach, enjoying much larger waves, up over my head, on the Western half of Florida. I must say, those waves are much more fun to play in. And, there were no jellyfish.

Next week will include a trip down to the Everglades and hopefully some Disney Park trips with Editor Deb and her sister-in-law Joan.

"We are all a little weird and life's a little weird, and when we find someone whose weirdness is compatible with ours, we join up with them and fall in mutual weirdness and call it love." - Dr. Suess.

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Woods and Water

by **i Herndahl**
Outdoors Writer

A fresh snow can be peaceful

There are times when a snowfall can be a relaxing experience. I am not talking about when it occurs enough to be a backbreaker, but when it is just enough to cover the ground. When it snows at home, it comes with rules. You need to shovel the sidewalk, especially for the mail carrier. I can recall one year when we got about two to three inches each day. Just enough so that it had to be shoveled every day. That is like having a weight hanging over your head. It is not a backbreaker, but just enough so you know that you need to get it shoveled.

There have been a few times when I have been at the cabin in April when we have gotten a significant snowfall. A fresh snowfall in the woods gives me a peaceful feeling. I am not sure what it is about a fresh snowfall, but I get a very cozy feeling about it, especially when at the cabin.

I don't plan on stumbling around in the woods any more, but I can still walk a few trails around the cabin. There were a few times when I would take my two oldest grand-

sons, Trevor and Taylor, up to the cabin in April to open it up and help clear any fallen trees.

After a couple of times going to the cabin in early spring, they realized that the lakes weren't ice free, so fishing wasn't an option. Those two boys were workers, and they cleared a lot of fallen trees when we were there. At that time, the cabin had no insulation, no loft and only a kerosene heater for heat. They slept on the floor in their sleeping bags.

After the boys figured out that they weren't going to get any fishing in, they decided it wasn't worth the trip up there, so I was on my own. They still came up in the summer and fall, but there was less work involved. Those boys were always good helpers. Once they learned how to clean fish, it made my life a lot easier.

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 are some pictures of different times that I was at the cabin when it snowed. One is of April when my son Brian and I were sitting by the campfire relaxing after an April snow fall. Another is of my two grandsons, Trevor and Taylor, while at the cabin with Grandpa.

Public invited to share input on Songbird Trail

Freeborn County and the City of Albert Lea are inviting residents and visitors to take a short online survey by Feb. 13 about the proposed Songbird Trail to help guide future planning, improvements, and decision-making related to the trail. Access the survey by going to <https://hdr.jotform.com/253483965770066>. The survey is also available on the Freeborn County website at: www.co.freeborn.mn.us/597/Songbird-Trail, along with the trail's purpose and features.

The proposed 50-mile regional trail would support walking, biking and rolling by transforming a historic Union Pacific rail corridor into a safe, scenic and accessible route in southern Minnesota. It will extend from Albert Lea through Manchester and Hartland in Freeborn County and eventually connect to the Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail near Waterville, via New Richland and Waseca.

In Albert Lea, the Songbird Trail will connect to the Blazing Star State Trail in Albert Lea via bike lanes on Front Street.

Freeborn and Waseca Counties developed the Freeborn-Waseca Regional Trail Master Plan in 2018 to envision a trail connecting between the Blazing Star State Trail in Albert Lea to the Sakatah Singing Hills State Trail in Waterville.

In 2022-2023, Freeborn County and the City of Albert Lea pushed forward with a Trail Action Plan to further refine the vision for the trail within their jurisdictions. They are now in the process of designing 6.4 miles of that trail route and will begin construction on the first phase in 2026.

The county and city are updating the master plan to meet requirements of the Greater Minnesota Regional Park and Trail Commission with the goal of applying for funding to build parts of the trail. They will use the survey responses in updating that plan.

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	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.	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)	FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH Rev. Neal Ooms 101 East Park Avenue Hollandale, Minnesota Sunday—9:30 a.m. Worship; 10:45 a.m. Sunday School	ST. JOHN LUTHERAN Minnesota Lake, Minnesota Rev. Larry Sipe, pastor Sunday — 9 a.m. Worship
ST. PETER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Otisco, Minnesota Rev. Scott Williams, Pastor Sunday - 8:45 a.m. Worship	HARTLAND EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN Hartland, Minnesota Pastor Phillip K. Lepak Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship	ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST Ellendale, Minnesota Randy Cirkse, Pastor Sunday - Summer Service time is 9:30 a.m. Worship; 9:15 a.m. Sunday school. (No summer Sunday school) Worship is at 10:30 a.m. beginning after Sept. 3. Sunday School from Oct through May from 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Food shelf is open every Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.	ZION LUTHERAN, ELCA Rural Ellendale Deacon Billie Jo Wicks Sunday—8:30 a.m. Worship	ST. PAUL UNITED Minnesota Lake, Minnesota Interim Pastor Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Sunday School; 10:30 a.m. Worship
TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Mary Iverson Sunday - 9 a.m. Sunday School; 10 a.m. Coffee Monday - 9 a.m. Quilting Wednesday - 6:15 p.m. Confirmation; 7 p.m. Council meeting (first Wednesday)	MANCHESTER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN Manchester, Minnesota Pastor Phillip K. Lepak Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship	ELLENDALE UNITED METHODIST Ellendale, Minnesota Randy Cirkse, Pastor Sunday - 10:30 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)	ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN, ELCA Meriden, Minnesota Deacon Billie Jo Wicks Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship	PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Minnesota Lake, Minnesota Interim Pastor Sunday — 9 a.m. Worship
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	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.	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	PONTOPPIDAN LUTHERAN Lemond Township Pastor Gena Parker Sunday—10:15 a.m. Worship	IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH Freedom Township Rev. Larry Sipe Sunday - 9:15 a.m. Worship
VISTA LUTHERAN CHURCH New Richland, Minnesota Pastor Dan Kordahl Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship	COMMUNITY LUTHERAN Geneva, Minnesota Pastor Leandra Anderson Sunday - 10 a.m. Worship (times vary for holidays) Monday - 8:30 a.m. Quilting	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	FIRST LUTHERAN, LCMC Hope, Minnesota Pastor Sandy Miller Sunday - 9 a.m. Worship; 10:15 a.m. Youth/Adult Study	ZOAR UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST Pastor Ava Adams-Morris Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday — 9 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	SIMPLY CHURCH 105 Second Street North East Geneva, Minnesota Todd Lundgren, Pastor Sunday - 9:30 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Worship	FAMILY OF FAITH COMMUNITY CHURCH Hollandale, Minnesota Rev. Neal Ooms Sunday—8:45 a.m. Worship; 9:20 Worship and kids church (now an eagle brook viewing church)	FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH Clarks Grove, Minnesota Pastor James Cameron Sunday—9:15 a.m. Sunday School; 10:30 a.m. Worship	ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC Waldorf, Minnesota Sunday - 8 a.m. Worship
CROSS OF GLORY LUTHERAN Hartland, Minnesota Rev. Marcia Pedersen Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Worship Tuesday - Council meeting	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	ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMC Hollandale, Minnesota Pastor Jesse Krusemark Sunday—9 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.stsidore.school.webs.com	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
			FIRST LUTHERAN Missouri Synod Waldorf, Minnesota Rev. Larry Sipe, pastor Sunday — 8 a.m. Worship; 9:10 a.m. Sunday School and Bible Study	NOTE: CHANGES IN CHURCH CALENDARS MUST BE MADE BY NOTIFICATION FROM A MEMBER OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE STAR EAGLE.



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STANDINGS

Boys' Basketball

Big South Conference - Black		
	Conf.	Ov.
Belle Plaine	5-1	10-2
St. Peter	6-2	11-4
Marshall	5-3	5-5
Waseca	5-4	10-6
New Ulm	4-4	7-7
Worthington	1-5	2-12
Tri-City United	0-7	0-13

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Conf.	Ov.
Fairmont	9-1	12-2
Jackson County Central	8-2	12-5
Luverne	6-3	11-4
Blue Earth Area	5-4	9-4
St. James Area	6-5	9-5
Pipestone Area	3-7	5-11
Windom Area	1-8	7-9
Redwood Valley	1-9	2-15

Gopher Conference - West		
	Div.	Ov.
Janesville-WP	5-0	17-0
New Richland-HEG	3-2	6-10
Waterville-EM	2-3	6-8
United South Central	2-2	3-9
Medford	0-5	3-13

Gopher Conference East		
	Div.	Ov.
Triton	6-0	14-3
Blooming Prairie	4-2	13-3
Hayfield	3-4	9-8
Bethlehem Academy	2-4	6-8
Randolph	2-4	6-13
Kenyon-Wanamingo	1-7	6-10

Girls' Basketball

Big South Conference - Black		
	Conf.	Ov.
Marshall	7-0	13-2
New Ulm	6-1	10-4
St. Peter	5-3	9-6
Belle Plaine	3-3	8-7
Tri-City United	3-4	6-9
Waseca	1-8	3-14
Worthington	0-6	2-13

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Conf.	Ov.
Fairmont	10-0	15-1
St. James Area	8-2	13-4
Pipestone Area	7-2	14-2
Windom Area	6-4	15-4
Luverne	3-6	8-9
Jackson County Cent.	3-6	7-11
Blue Earth Area	1-8	3-13
Redwood Valley	0-10	0-17

Gopher Conference - West		
	Div.	Ov.
New Richland-HEG	4-0	16-2
Janesville-WP	4-1	12-6
Waterville-EM	1-4	5-12
United South Central	1-7	7-11

Gopher Conference - East		
	Div.	Ov.
Hayfield/Schaeffer Ac.	5-1	15-4
Triton	6-1	11-5
Blooming Prairie	4-2	9-8
Randolph	3-4	7-11
Kenyon-Wanamingo	1-6	7-11
Bethlehem Academy	1-7	6-10

Boys' Hockey

Big South Conference - Black		
	Div.	Ov.
Waseca	5-0	11-5-2
New Ulm	3-3	12-7
Minnesota River	3-3	8-9
Marshall	0-5	5-13

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Div.	Ov.
Luverne	7-0	17-3
Fairmont	4-3	5-9
Windom Area	3-5	5-13
Redwood Valley	3-5	4-13
Worthington	1-5	2-17

Girls' Hockey

Big South Conference - Black		
	Div.	Ov.
Minnesota River	5-1	17-5
Marshall	4-1	19-4
New Ulm	1-4	4-16
South Central	0-4	0-14

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Div.	Ov.
Luverne	4-1	13-7
Fairmont	3-1	8-9
Worthington/Fulda	2-2	8-12
Windom Area	0-5	4-14

Wrestling

Big South Conference - Black		
	Div.	Ov.
New Ulm	6-0	11-0
Marshall/Lakeview	5-1	16-3
Tri-City United	3-2	7-6
St. Peter	3-3	5-6
Worthington	3-4	4-10
Waseca	1-5	4-10
Martin County	0-6	5-11

Big South Conference - Gold		
	Div.	Ov.
Jackson County Central	5-0	9-2
Windom/Mt. Lake	4-1	14-9
St. James-Madelia	4-3	11-7
Redwood Valley	3-3	10-9
Pipestone Area	2-3	12-5
Blue Earth Area	2-5	5-14
Luverne	0-5	7-11

Panthers rally past Medford

Lineup change sparks NRHEG

By JIM LUTGENS
Sports Editor

If there's one crew the New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva boys' basketball team could count on beating in recent years, it's Medford.

That was again the case in New Richland last Tuesday when the Panthers hosted the winless Tigers.

It did not come without at least a little drama.

The upstart Tigers connected on a couple early threes and jumped to an early 11-3 lead, prompting a time out and lineup change by NRHEG coach Dan Schmidt.

It must have helped.

The Panthers pulled even at 31 at the intermission and went on to a 73-66 victory in the first of a second round of games with Gopher Conference opponents.

"For some reason, we always start out sluggish against them," said Schmidt, whose team improved its record to 6-10 overall and 3-2 in the Gopher Conference West while the Tigers fell to 3-13 and 0-5.

So what did Schmidt have to say at halftime?

"We talked about coming out with intensity," said Schmidt. "And the boys really did."



DRIVE TIME— Driving to the basket against Medford are the Panthers' Calvin Nissen, left, and Brendan Schmidt, right.

Photos by Jim Lutgens

The Panthers fought to a 14-point lead to start the second half, only to allow a flurry of three-points to tie it.

The Panthers put it away with free throws down the stretch.

Brendan Schmidt, son of Coach Schmidt, led the Panthers with 14 points and 5 steals.

"He did a great job of attacking the basket, like we've been begging him to," said Coach Schmidt.

Mack Gilliland turned in another strong night with 14 points and 5 rebounds.

Calvin Nissen added 13 points, 4 assists, and 3 steals. Dom

Olson came off the bench with some big buckets down the stretch and kicked in 11 points. Brock Holland added 11 points, and played very poised all game.

Brooks Gilliland added 6 free throws at the end of the game. A.J. Deen added 5 points and 4 rebounds. Fynn Baumann again provided some great minutes defensively, and added 3 points.

Individual totals: Deen 5P, 4R, 2S; Olson 11P, 2R, 1A; Nissen 13P, 4A, 3S; B.Gilliland 6P, 6R, 2A; Baumann 3P, 2R; Schmidt 14P, 3R, 1A, 5S, 1B; M.Gilliland 14P, 5R,



1A, 4S; Holland 7P, 2R, 1A, 1S.

The Panthers again started slowly in a cross-conference meeting at Randolph on Thursday, but this time there was no comeback as the Rockets raced to a 95-58 decision."

"It was a tough game from the start," said Coach Schmidt. "We we lacked focus on both sides of the court. The effort was there, but mentally we just weren't in the game."

Individually: A.J. Deen 4P, 7R, 1B; Olson 2P, 3R; Nissen 15P, 1R, 1A; B.Gilliland 3P, 1R, 4A; Baumann 2P; M.Gilliland 13P, 2A, 1S, 1B; Holland 10P, 3R; David

Deen 1A; Jackson McGannon 1B; Sean Lassahn 2P, 1S; Levi Whiteside 2P.

We'll try to right the ship on Monday when we host the #3 rated JWP. We talk about next play/next game mentality, and we'll have to lock down on that. After hosting JWP, Kenyon-Wanamingo comes to town on The Panthers host Kenyon-Wanamingo tonight at 7 p.m. They play Monday at United South Central at 7 and Tuesday at 7 at home against Nicollet.

Lady Panthers defeat Randolph

Schlaak leads NRHEG with 28 points

When leading scorer Camryn VanMaldeghem found herself in foul trouble in the first half, the NRHEG High School girls' basketball team had to look for points from other sources against Randolph last Thursday.

The Panthers found it from seniors Gabby Schlaak and Chloe Stork.

Schlaak finished with a season-best and game-high 28 points while Stork added 10 first-half points as the Panthers blew past Randolph 78-44 at New Richland.

The win was the 16th straight by the NRHEG girls, who dropped the first two games of the season. They're 8-0 in the Gopher Conference, 4-0 in the West Division.

It came as no surprise for NRHEG coach Onika Peterson to see other girls step up with VanMaldeghem on the bench.

"Different kids have been stepping up all season," said Peterson. "It's been fun to watch their confidence continue to grow."

The Panthers led comfortably 38-24 at halftime.

Schlaak, who made eight three-pointers, finished with 28 points, 5 rebounds, 5 steals, 3 assists and 1

blocked shot. VanMaldeghem totaled 25 points, 5 rebounds, 6 steals and 2 assists.

Others: Ezra Boerner 3R, 1S, 3A; Quinn VanMaldeghem 6P, 13R, 5S, 4A, 3B; Clara Buendorf 3P, 2R, 3A; Kenley Gehrke 1R; Savannah Farr 6P, 3R; Stork 10P, 5R, 1S.

The Panthers prevailed 71-41 in a nonconference game at Grand Meadow on Tuesday. They led 32-25 at halftime.

"It wasn't our prettiest performance," said Peterson. "We struggled defensively at times, but a win is a win."

Camryn VanMaldeghem had her usual strong game with 31 points, 11 rebounds, 3 steals, 3 assists and 1 blocked shot. Two other scores reached double figures.

Individual totals: Schlaak 9P, 6R, 2S, 2A; Boerner 10P, 2R, 2S, 1A; Q.VanMaldeghem 5P, 9R, 6A, 5S, 1B; Buendorf 12P, 2R; Gehrke 2R; C.VanMaldeghem 31P, 11R, 3S, 3A, 1B; Farr 4P, 1R; Stork 5R, 1A.

After a girl-boy doubleheader against JWP Monday, the Panthers return to the court Friday at Kenyon-Wanamingo. They host United South Central for Senior Night Feb. 2 and play Feb. 3 at Southland.



FAST BREAK – The Panthers' Hadley Roeker (33) brings the ball up the court in the waning moments of NRHEG's 77-44 victory over Randolph last week. Alayna Groskreutz (21) trails the play.

Photo by Jim Lutgens

NRHEG grapplers fall twice at Waseca
Three Panthers win both matches

The NRHEG High School wrestling team traveled to a triangular at Waseca last Thursday to take on the Bluejays and St. Peter.

The Panthers lost 58-11 to St. Peter, with NRHEG victories by Owen Schlaak, 107 pounds; Charlie Tufte, 121; and Dakota Schlaak, 133.

The Bluejays wrestled well in a 46-27 loss to Waseca, according to Panthers coach Krey Cory.

NRHEG wins were by Owen Schlaak, 107; Graham Jacobson, 114; Tufte, 121, Bo Holland, 127, Devan Parpart, 133; and Dakota Schlaak, 139.

"It was a much better dual than the first match where everyone went out and fought to score points," said

"We need to stay confident in our ability."
— NRHEG coach Krey Cory

Cory. "We need to stay confident in our ability and continue what works for us."

The Panthers wrestle at Kenyon-Wanamingo tonight at 7 p.m. and compete in the Maple River Invitational Saturday starting at 10 a.m. They host Hayfield Feb. 5 at 6 p.m.



PANTHER POWER – NRHEG's Dakota Schlaak, right, scored a pair of wins last Thursday at Waseca.

Photo by Jim Lutgens

LOOKING BACK

25 years ago

- With the widespread community support, Crossroads of Owatonna will move into a new facility in Early February to serve more troubled kids in southeastern Minnesota. “This is a dream come true,” said Carl Evans, Director of Crossroads of Owatonna. “We have wanted to grow and expand our services to kids for a long time. With remarkable support from the Owatonna community, our dream has become reality.” Crossroads of Owatonna, a program of Lutheran Social Service, is a group home/shelter that provides counseling support and a safe haven to at - risk kids from ages 10-17.

- Ricky Tollefson and Jamie Sorenson are the parents of a daughter born Saturday, January 13, 2001, at Naeve Hospital, Albert Lea. Tylie Ray as she has been named, weighs 7 pounds 4 ounces and 20 1/2 “ in length.



- Virginia Peterson of Trinity Lutheran Church, New Richland, AAL Branch #9968 and Jim Peterson, president of the New Richland Lions, presented a check in the amount of \$1070 to Brian Lokus (left) of the New Richland Ambulance squad for a new cot. The funds were raised at a New Richland Lions breakfast December 3 and matched by the AAL Branch.

50 years ago



- Mrs. Ladonna Flowers, home economics instructor at New Richland-Hartland high school is pictured discussing the fact that Marlene Dorn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Dorn of near Otisco, was named Family Leader of Tomorrow at the school.

- A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. David Hueper of rural Wells, January 16 at St. Joseph's Hospital, Mankato. The husky little fellow weighed in at 8 pounds and 14 ounces. The little fellow has been given the name Grant David. He has 5 sisters, Kerry, Jerrilee, Kimberly, Tamy and Stacie. His grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. Holly Casper of Richfield and Emil Hueper, Sr. of Wells.

- The New Richland-Hartland Girls Basketball team took Waterville-Elysian to the cleaners, last Thursday night when they defeated them 35-16. Coach Ann Goudy was pleased with the girls showing.

75 years ago

- Miss Genevieve Frisk of the Vista Busy Bees 4-H club near New Richland won the County Radio speaking contest, last Friday evening. Genevieve's original talk on "What The American Creed Means To Me" won her the privilege of participating in the district contest over KD /HL Saturday.

- The New Richland boys played good ball last night as they defeated Freeborn by a score of 46-30. Schumacher dumped the first one in for the Cards as well as the first free toss. Captain Di-neen was the high point man for New Richland with 13. He tied with the Freeborn center who was also high with 13 points.

- Mr. and Mrs. John Possehl (Florance Neumann) of Lerdal, are the parents of a daughter, born at the Naeve hospital, Albert Lea, today (Thursday) February 22, weighing seven pounds, seven and one half ounces.



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4-Hers distribute baskets full of thanks

By STEELE COUNTY TIMES

There's no question that summer is usually a 4-H'er's time to shine, but that doesn't mean they're idle during the winter months.

The Lemond Snappy Boosters proved that last week with the delivery of seven snack baskets to area first responders – including snowplow crews. The baskets were delivered Jan. 12, the day after they were created.

The club leaders meet before the year – which essentially follows the school year – to brainstorm ideas for service projects, said Brooke Resler, one of the leaders.

They landed on the idea of fruit baskets for “the community helpers in Steele County,” she said, shored up with non-perishable snacks for the responders.

Including fire departments, law enforcement, ambulance services and snowplow crews, there were 14 locations that qualified as a first responder group.

While all were more than receptive to the idea, the group collected enough supplies to build and donate seven baskets.

Each group received a card, signed by the members of the club.

“It's really fun seeing the parents and the kids step up, because it's not just the kids,” Resler said.

A parent of one of the Snappy Boosters is an employee of Hormel Foods, and was able to get pepperoni sticks to add to the granola bars and other snacks, “so they can just grab and go,” she said.

The club does at least one service project every year and does a lot of volunteering throughout the communities.



From left, Claira Balzer, Madelyn Lightly and Kaitlyn Resler work to complete a fruit/snack basket that was delivered to one of Steele County's first responder units. The Lemond Snappy Boosters 4-H Club collected supplies to fill seven baskets for members of fire departments, ambulance services, law enforcement and snow plow crews.

Steele County Times photo

There are about 60 members of the Lemond Snappy Boosters; about 40 gathered at Pontoppidan Lutheran Church near Ellendale to put together the snack baskets.

Resler and her husband Bryan were both in 4-H; all four of their children are also members.

Club members come from across the county through an open enrollment, of sorts. New potential members can select the club they'd like to join.

“That's why I think our club is getting bigger,” Brooke Resler said, “because they bring their friends in. It's all about bringing in other families.”

Demitri Bauer, an eighth-grader at Owatonna Middle School, is the club president.

He described the first responder baskets as “helping the people who protect us, save us, help us,” and said the group often does another service project as summer approaches.

“I think it's nice just showing any gratitude, really,” said Joe Resler, a sophomore at Owatonna Christian School. “This isn't as big as what they do for us, but it's at least something we can do as

a big group, and it's not complicated.”

The club also makes cards for nursing home residents, he said.

For Demitri, 4-H “gives me a sense of leadership, and honestly, it's a fun place to be. There's nice people here.”

He assumed the role of club president in October and will step down in fall of 2026. That's when Joe, currently the vice-president of the club, will become president.

Demitri does general 4-H projects to display at the Steele County Free Fair and earned a trip to the Minnesota State Fair last summer.

“I'm a big cook, so I made a miso soup,” which earned him a grand champion ribbon locally, and a trip to the State Fair.

Joe shows goats, specifically, sables.

The breed is growing in popularity, he said, “and a lot of families that we're competing against now at the county and the state fair are actually people who bought from us and from the people we buy from.”

‘Ask a Trooper’: passing large vehicles, semis

Question: I travel a lot and I see a number of people making some poor choices when it comes to passing semis and large vehicles. There is no way these big rigs can stop in time when people do these unsafe maneuvers. Can you write about this?

Answer: A commercial vehicle is a motor vehicle or a combination of motor vehicles that weighs more than 26,000 pounds and is used to transport passengers or property. Buses, including school buses of all sizes, and smaller vehicles with hazardous materials placards are also considered commercial vehicles.

Before passing a commercial vehicle, make sure you have safe clearance to the side, behind and ahead of your vehicle.

Passing on a level highway: It takes three to five seconds longer to pass a commercial vehicle than a car. Allow enough time to pass and return to the right lane before coming within 100 feet of oncoming traffic.

Do not pass: If you plan to exit or turn off the road soon, stay behind the commercial vehicle until you reach the exit.

Passing while going uphill: Commercial vehicles often lose speed on an upgrade, making them easier to pass than a car.

Passing while going downhill: Commercial vehicles increase speed on a downgrade. Allow more distance to pass.

Complete your pass quickly: Do not remain alongside the commercial vehicle.

Move back into your lane only when you can see the front of the commercial vehicle in your rearview mirror. Maintain your speed after passing.

When a commercial vehicle passes you: Keep to the far side of your lane and slightly reduce your speed. Do not speed up while the commercial vehicle is passing.

Meeting a commercial vehicle from the opposite direction: Stay as far to the right as possible to avoid a sideswipe crash and reduce wind turbulence between the vehicles. Turbulence will push the vehicles away from each other, not toward each other.

Judging speed and distance: Because of their large size, commercial vehicles often appear to be traveling

slower than they actually are. Many car-commercial vehicle collisions occur at intersections because the driver of the car misjudges the speed and distance of the commercial vehicle.

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. You can also email him at: Troy.Christianson@state.mn.us.

Big Brothers Big Sisters looks for mentors

By STEELE COUNTY TIMES

We are three weeks into 2026, and there are probably plenty of people who have seen their New Year's resolution become more of a New Year's ... suggestion.

If your goals including making a change in your life, Michelle Redman has some advice: Say yes.

“My hope for this new year is simple and bold,” said the executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Minnesota.

Her hope is that “more people say yes to friendship, yes to showing up, yes to being present, yes to walking alongside a young person as they write their own story.”

As of Jan. 15, there were 337 “Littles” waiting for a “Big” across Steele, Dodge, Waseca, Rice

and Olmsted counties.

The kids waiting for a match are pretty evenly split between genders, said Allie Mayer, marketing manager for BBBS of Southern Minnesota.

Because January is National Mentoring Month, the organization is taking a new approach this year, with what it's calling an “Empower Hour” throughout the area.

“On Jan. 29, for one hour, in each of our communities, we will be hosting a little info session,” Mayer said. “It's a quick gathering where people can stop by and get a free coffee, and learn more about Big Brothers Big Sisters, ask any questions they might have, sign up to be a volunteer,” or maybe just gather some information to make a decision later.

“We want to meet people where they are, get out into the community and let people know that the need is urgent,” she said. “It is here, still, in 2026. We have 337 kids waiting for a Big.”

Pick a program

Most people think of the community-based program of Big Brothers Big Sisters, which matches kids with adults in the community for a one-to-one mentoring relationship.

Bigs must be at least 18 years old; Littles may be enrolled in the program from age 5 to 15, though many matches continue long after the child hits 15 – or older.

Two other programs are specific to the schools.

School-site mentoring matches high school students with an elementary school student for a

weekly meeting, typically 30 minutes per week.

The schools also partner with BBBS for adult-student matches throughout the school year, spending time together only during the school day. The meetings pause over the summer break, then resume in the fall.

Bigs and volunteers often choose to get involved with their spouse or children, to make it a family experience, Mayer said.

If a Little is open to a family match, “rather than providing one person for support, we're building a network of maybe four or five people,” she said.

All matches are based on compatibility, interest and location.

Making a match

Bigs continued on 8

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■ **County** from Page 1

lative session. Under the law, unless individual counties say otherwise by March 1 of this year, rifles of .22 caliber and larger will be allowed statewide during deer hunting season, eliminating the “shotgun only” restrictions which have been in place for decades in the southern and western parts of the state.

County administrator Michael Johnson had researched how other counties in the region are going about making their decisions, and admitted he had difficulty getting clear responses. Numerous counties indicated they would be “following the statute,” that is, allowing the use of rifles.

He reported that Rock County chose to hold a public hearing; more than 40 people attended to state their opinions.

County board members had asked Johnson to look into having a repre-

sentative from the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) attend a board meeting to share the agency's stance on the issue.

Johnson reported that the DNR seems to have taken a rather “hands off” position on the matter.

Statements online from DNR officials claim the shotgun laws were in place not because shotguns are safer than rifles, but to reduce the number of deer harvested. Since deer populations have increased over recent decades, the agency says the reduction is no longer important.

Commissioners commented they have received mixed feedback from constituents, some of whom have very strong feelings on the matter.

Another topic mentioned during the meeting is that the county has again applied for a permit to reduce cormorant populations on Loon Lake island. The hope is that the permit will be granted in time to allow removal of existing nests even before the birds return to the area this spring. The permit also seeks approval to terminate some of the birds before they establish nests.

Steele County releases request for proposals

The county is requesting proposals for local homeless prevention aid awards

Steele County Public Health is seeking proposals from community-based nonprofit organizations to help prevent homelessness in Steele County. Approximately \$150,000 is available for the 2026 funding year.

Local Homeless Prevention Aid (LHPA) was created by the Minnesota Legislature to help local governments ensure no child is homeless by keeping families from losing housing and helping those experiencing homelessness find housing.

The Steele County Board of

Commissioners has approved this funding to be distributed to local nonprofit organizations that provide homelessness prevention services in Steele County. Eligible organizations must meet requirements outlined in Minnesota Statute 477A.30, including plans for targeting families with children and unaccompanied youth, connecting families with social services, and providing rental assistance and/or case management services.

Applications must be submitted by Sunday, February 22,

2026 at 11:59 p.m. Funding decisions will be announced in March 2026, pending final approval from the Steele County Board of Commissioners. The full Request for Proposals and Application are available on the Steele County Public Health website, under “Funding Opportunities.”

For questions about the Steele County Local Homeless Prevention Aid awards, please contact us at SCPHN@Steele-CountyMN.gov or (507) 444-7650.

Steele County Public Health is

dedicated to preventing disease, promoting wellness, and protecting the health of Steele County residents through a variety of services such as family health programs, immunization clinics, and home health care. SCPH also provides resources for radon and water testing, health education, and emergency preparedness to realize its vision of Healthy People in Healthy Communities. Learn more: https://steele-countymn.gov/public_health.



Meghan and Todd Selvik

Selviks finalists for National Outstanding Young Farmer

Outstanding Farmers of America (OFA) announced today that Todd and Meghan Selvik of Waseca, Minnesota have been named finalists for the 2026 National Outstanding Young Farmer of America (NOYF) Award.

Nominations were submitted from across the United States by a nationwide network of county extension agents with the National Association of County Extension Agents, as well as members of OFA, former NOYF winners, and agricultural industry professionals. Nominations may be submitted by anyone, and while multiple nominations from a single state are allowed, no more than two finalists may represent any one state.

Eligible nominees must be between the ages of 21 and 40, not turning 41 prior to January 1, must be active farm operators, and must derive at least two-thirds of their income from farming. Nominees are evaluated based on progress in their agricultural careers (50%), soil and water conservation practices (25%), and contributions to their communities, states, and

the nation (25%).

“There are challenges in agriculture today, but there are also opportunities. These 10 finalists exemplify their ability to take on challenges, their love for their families and communities, and their desire to improve their operation for generations to come,” said Mary Johnson, National Outstanding Young Farmer of America coordinator. “These finalists represent the best of American farming. This award recognizes their hard work and dedication while welcoming them into Outstanding Farmers of America, where they can connect and network with top farmers from across the country.”

The finalists were notified in December and invited to attend the 2026 Outstanding Farmers of America Convention, scheduled for Feb. 4–7 in Hershey, Pennsylvania. During the convention, finalists will participate in in-person interviews to determine four honorees who will be named the National Outstanding Young Farmers of the Year for 2026. Winners will be announced during the final banquet on Saturday, Feb. 7.

■ Bigs

from Page 7

Anyone can be a mentor, Mayer said.

“We really want to give everyone a platform and a space to give back.”

For as many types of adult volunteers, “there are just as many unique Littles looking for that support,” she said.

Matches are not based on the amount of time a child has been on the list.

Instead, they are based on compatibility and interest, “and whether or not we think it’s a good fit for both a child and the volunteer, because more often than not, we hear about how much the Big is also getting out of the match relationship,” Mayer said.

“It can be hard” to wait for a match, she agreed, “but we know that a match made poorly is going to cause more harm than good, so the wait is necessary.”

BBBS also holds quarterly “Big for a Day” events with various community partners who provide volunteers to come in for an hour to help with an activity like BINGO, mini golf or a craft for Littles who haven’t been matched.

The event “gives the volunteer a chance to see what being a Big might look like, and also gives a Little a taste of what that mentorship could look like as well,” Mayer said.

“We want them to know that, just because we don’t have that perfect Big for them yet, that doesn’t mean we’re giving up. We’re still keeping up with their interests and what they’re looking for, because that changes over time, too, of course.”

Big meets Little

Each of the matches are paired with a Match Support Specialist, a staff person dedicated to making sure that everything’s running smoothly, that everyone is safe and happy. They also might provide activity ideas.

The MSS is involved for the entire relationship.

“They will be there from the start, all the way through the end of the match, so they (Bigs and Littles) always have a contact person,” Mayer said.

The specialist will check in with the Big, the Little and the parent about once a month over the phone, to make sure everything’s OK, and to answer any questions.

“The parent partnership makes all the difference in the success of the match,” Mayer said, “so we



Max, right, spends time outdoors with his Little, Ameer.

Steele County Times photo

really value the relationship that our parents get to build with the Bigs, as well as the staff.

“That holistic approach in supporting the match is extremely important.”

The organization also does what it can to level the playing field. It offers four to five free activities each month for the community-based matches to participate in.

“We don’t want money to be a barrier to becoming a volunteer, or feeling like you need to spend a lot of money to be a successful mentor,” Mayer said. “It’s simply about the consistency, and showing up.”

The organization’s new location at 141 E. Vine St. in Owatonna has been “tremendous for allowing us a better space to host things, and allow that kind of connection.”

Benefits for both

BBBS measures all programs for the success and growth of the child, but in the school programs, “we see a lot of parents reporting increased confidence, better peer relationships and communication,” Mayer said.

The school-age partnerships can see the pair connecting over shooting baskets during open gym, or spending time in the library, or maybe helping the younger student with a specific assignment.

“They can support in that way as well, but they kind of make the most of their time and bonding,” she said, over something as simple and timeless as a game of UNO.

The school program, Mayer added, “makes a big difference in the kids’ lives – both kids.”

A lot of the younger kids think of it as their special day of the week, she said, recounting the story of a recent snow day in Owatonna.

The elementary student “was so concerned that he had to call his mom and make sure it wasn’t his Big day, so he wasn’t missing his time” with the high school student, Mayer said.

“We hear that quite often, where they look forward to that special day of the week when their person comes” to spend time at school, she said.

In 2024, 100% of the Littles said their Big makes their life better.

Success stories

Matches can – and do – last long after the Little is old enough to become a Big.

“Our favorite stories are those that do (continue) through graduation, whether they were matched for 10 years or for two years,” Mayer said, with matches staying in touch long after the BBBS support has ended.

It proves that “we did our job,

and that our mission has been accomplished in providing them with a lifelong friend,” she said.

Mayer recently learned of a match that has been getting together for more than 30 years. The pair stopped by the new office to say “hi” when they happened to be getting lunch together one day.

“Seeing those types of relationships are still intact are always super special to us,” she said.

In 2024, BBBS of Southern Minnesota served 951 children, a record for the group. Volunteers and Bigs are always welcome.

“The new year is often filled with resolutions and expectations of chance,” said Redman, the executive director. “But the most lasting change doesn’t come from grand gestures. It comes from small, consistent moments: A weekly check-in, a shared hobby, a conversation during a walk or over a game.

“These moments add up,” she said. “They ignite confidence. They empower potential. And they reinforce that growth doesn’t happen alone.”

For more information, visit bbbsmn.org, or find them on Facebook, X and Instagram.

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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/

Janesville High School, 110 East 3rd St., Janesville

Precincts: Alton Township; Elysian City; Janesville City; Janesville Township

New Richland High School, 306 Ash Ave. South, New Richland

Precincts: Byron Township; Otisco Township; New Richland City; New Richland Township; Wilton Township

Waldorf Community Center, 119 S. Main St., Waldorf

Precincts: Freedom Township; Vivian Township; Waldorf City

Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School, 1717 Second St. NW, Waseca

Precincts: all City of Waseca precincts, 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B

Waseca Intermediate School, 400 19th Ave. NW, Waseca

Precincts: Blooming Grove Township; Isosco Township; St Mary Township; Woodville 1 Township; Woodville 2 Township

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
Isosco 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
Waseca 2A	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 2B	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 3A	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Waseca 3B	Waseca Jr. & Sr. High School
Woodville 1 Township	Waseca Intermediate School
Woodville 2 Township	Waseca Intermediate School

Find out more at: Wasecarepublicans.com
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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/ N. Kibongni Fondungallah, Esq. Samuel R. Coleman, Esq. *Alexa Marsh, Esq.* Attorneys for Mortgagee 25 Dale Street North St. Paul, MN 55102 (651) 209-9760	(25-1232-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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NOTICE

Berlin Township Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 17, 2026 - 6:30 p.m. Audit meeting; 7 p.m. regular meeting in the Ellendale Comm. Bldg.(in the Board Room)

Helen Schmidt, Berlin Township Clerk

NOTICE

Summit Township Board of Audit Meeting Monday, February 2, 2026 6:30 p.m. audit meeting, regular meeting at 7 p.m. - at the Town Hall

Andy Jewison
Summit Township Clerk

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BATH TOWNSHIP

ABSENTEE VOTING FOR BATH TOWNSHIP

OPEN POSITIONS:

- Supervisor
- Clerk

Saturday, March 7, 2026

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Minnesota voters may choose to vote early by using an absentee ballot instead of voting in person at the polling place on Election Day.

Ballots will be counted at the *end of the regular voting period*:

March 10, 2026 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Absentee voting location:

Bath Town Hall
29737 762nd Ave
Clarks Grove, MN 56016

Margaret Drury, Deputy Clerk
507-676-6594

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Second Weekend of Geneva Auction Jan. 16, 17



Keith Hagen with a Harley Davidson item

Keith Hagen holding a child's rocking chair that held a bear, as well as a "Cookies for Santa" book



Judy Christensen holding Eleanor Hensce who is holding a baby pillow above her head.

Photos by Kathy Paulson

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