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WAUPACA County Post

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Promotions cause consternation in Waupaca schools

New business manager, associate principal

BY ROBERT CLOUD
SENIOR EDITOR

WAUPACA – Unexpected promotions in the Waupaca School District have caused what some school board members called “disruptions” at the Feb. 13 meeting.

In response to Carl Hayek’s resignation as the district’s business services director in January, District Administrator Ron Saari quickly promoted two district employees.

Austin Moore was promoted from associate principal at Waupaca Middle School to the position of business services director.

Devon Feldt was promoted from being a seventh- and eighth-grade advisor at the Chain Exploration Center (CEC) to associate principal at WMS.

At the meeting, Saari read a memo that he sent to board members about the appointments to fill the vacant positions.

“We knew that we had one highly qualified individual on staff working on finishing his director of business services certification,” Saari said. “We also knew that earlier this year when Weyauwega had that same position posted, it took approximately eight months to find someone. There are cur-



Feldt



Moore

rently several business director positions posted around the state. Qualified candidates are hard to find.”

Saari noted that Moore has worked in the district for three years and has 27 years experience in education.

“He also demonstrated evidence of high educational and professional standards,” Saari said. “Austin is a known entity with a background in teaching, technology integration coach and administrator.”

Moore worked as a technology coach at the Neenah Joint School District from August 2014 to July 2021

Promotions
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This mixed-media drawing by Waupaca 11th grader Lalita Renteria was featured in the Youth Art Month exhibit at the Waupaca Area Public Library. On display is the best artwork of the year from students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The artwork will be on display until Saturday, April 6. See story page 3. James Card Photo

New London recommends capital spending projects

BY ROBERT CLOUD
SENIOR EDITOR

NEW LONDON – Members of the New London Common Council voted to approve more than \$560,000 in spending when they met Feb. 7 as the Capital Projects Committee of the Whole.

Of that amount, \$427,000 is for overflow parking and a pier at the city’s old street garage.

A trail along the Wolf River, running from The Waters Supper Club to Johnny’s Little Shop of Bait, is also included in the Parks and Recreation project.

The resolution stipulates that the Park and Recreation Department receive 50% state DNR funding for the project. The city also plans to help fund the project by using \$58,000 in reserve funds from its boat launch fees.

“People are paying their boat launch fees and they like to see things getting done,” Treasurer/Finance Director



The city of New London plans to renovate this trail along the Wolf River as a future capital spending project.

John Faucher Photo

Judy Radke said. “My suggestion would be to approve this be paid for out of assigned boat launch dollars because that is what they’re for.”

Radke noted that Park and Recreation Director Ginger Sowle was working to obtain state Department of Natural Resources grants for the project.

“What I would suggest you do is approve the project at

\$427,000 in anticipation of a grant that will be written to cover at least half of it and the rest of it come out of assigned fund balance,” she said, noting that Sowle needed city approval for the project and a plan in place before she could apply for the grants.

“If we don’t get the grants, then we can’t spend the money,” Sowle said.

The city also plans to spend

\$63,300 for engineering and design of a Newton Blackmour State Trail bridge.

A Waupaca County Greenways grant is expected to pay 20% of the project’s cost, bringing down New London’s actual outlay for the bridge to \$50,000.

Located over the Embarras River on New London’s east side, the bridge ran into obstacles in 2022 after engineers said the bridge needed to be high enough to allow boats to float beneath it during a high-water event, but not so high that a bucket truck would be unable to access nearby power lines.

“I feel like we’re dumping a lot of money into this walking trail,” Ald. Tim Roberts said. “I feel like we already hit a brick wall by the DNR saying we can’t put one (bridge) there.”

Sowles said the DNR has confirmed that the site would

Projects
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Lauren Griggs, the children’s library director, leads the Winter Wiggles program Feb. 16 at the Iola Village Library. See story page 6. Emily Conroy Photo

Waupaca County papers, SP Gazette set to merge

WAUPACA – Multi-Media Channels announced Feb. 19 that the Waupaca County Post and the Stevens Point Gazette have formed a strategic partnership for combined delivery, effective immediately.

In response to industry challenges, this cost-saving initiative ensures continued high-quality journalism while adapting to evolving market demands.

Maintaining unwavering journalistic standards, the Waupaca County Post will continue to provide comprehensive content including news, sports, advertising, obituaries and legal notices.

Readers in Waupaca,

New London, Clintonville, Weyauwega-Fremont, Iola-Scandinavia and Manawa will continue to see weekly coverage of their communities.

Delivery via USPS remains unchanged, with some subscribers benefiting from earlier arrival times.

This collaboration marks a proactive step toward sustainability in media operations.

The Waupaca County Post, New London Press Star and Clintonville Tribune-Gazette thank their loyal readers for their continued support as the newspapers navigate through these dynamic yet difficult times.

Clintonville volleyball booster club funds ignite controversy

Money given to another club

BY BERT LEHMAN
STAFF REPORTER

CLINTONVILLE – Questions have been raised regarding funds from the Clintonville volleyball booster club that were donated to Northern Ignite volleyball club.

Was the donation was approved by the booster club and what role the Clintonville School District should take regarding the situation.

Funds from the Clintonville volleyball booster club were donated to Northern Ignite by Jade Czarnecki, who was the varsity head coach of the Clintonville Truckers High School volleyball team at the time.

As head coach, she had authority to spend booster club funds. Czarnecki later resigned as Clintonville’s head volleyball coach, then accepted the club director position with Northern Ignite.

The Clintonville Tribune-Gazette contacted Czarnecki,

Northern Ignite board members and Clintonville Superintendent Troy Kuhn for information about the situation. The information they provided is listed below.

Czarnecki

Czarnecki was the varsity volleyball coach for Clintonville High School for two years, which put her in charge of the Clintonville volleyball booster club funds. She told the Clintonville Tribune-Gazette that the statement she provided refers to her time as the head coach of the high school volleyball team, and not her time with Northern Ignite.

“During my two years as head coach we hosted camps, open gyms, and even allocated funds for professional volleyball athletes to host a camp in our home gym,” Czarnecki said in the statement. “Even with all these wonderful opportunities, not every player was not able to participate and I still did not feel like I was doing enough for our girls and the volleyball community.”

Czarnecki said that while she was the volleyball head coach, she researched schools in Clintonville’s conference who had a successful volleyball program, asking one of the coaches what made them successful.

“The coach immediately attributed the success to having an established club that runs out of their home gym and all but three players in the school’s program play club volleyball whether at that club or elsewhere,” Czarnecki said in the statement.

That conversation, according to Czarnecki, was when she knew that a successful volleyball program in Clintonville couldn’t be achieved during only two months out of the school season, as that wasn’t enough time to effectively develop players and ignite their passion for volleyball.”

“The varsity head coach is responsible for player development of the seniors all the way down to fifth grade,” she said in the statement. “I needed to look at the big picture to understand what

it would take for Clintonville Volleyball to be successful in 5, 10, or 15 years. I then did research and as the head coach, I chose to donate to a non-profit that would have a greater impact on Clintonville Volleyball than I could have ever achieved through my role alone.”

Since WIAA rules limit who can coach student athletes in the offseason, Czarnecki stated that “between that and assisting with the establishment of the club, I made the difficult decision to resign from the head coaching position as to not put either program in a compromised position.”

She concluded her statement, “As an alumni of the school, I am excited to see where club volleyball will take the Clintonville program and wish the best for both parties.”

Northern Ignite

Northern Ignite provided the Clintonville Tribune-Gazette a statement signed by

Funds
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PROJECTS

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be approved.

"We haven't applied for the permits yet, but we met on-site with the waterways and floodways directors and they have said it's definitely a site that would be approved," she said.

City Administrator Chad Hoerth said the information that the DNR would not approve the site came from FEMA engineers. The DNR has since indicated that the site was something that could be worked out.

PROMOTIONS

FROM PAGE 1

and as a teacher in the Oshkosh School District from 2014 to 2021.

He earned his bachelor's degree in elementary education and teaching from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from UW-Oshkosh and advanced training in educational leadership and administration.

"It has been a very busy past month and a half, but I think I am starting to settle in," Feldt said.

In his statement to the board, Saari said administrative staff reviewed its options when hiring an associate principal at the middle school.

"We believed that hiring an interim external or internal AP would create more disruption than finding a quality and proven person from within our organization," Saari said. "We also mutually agreed that Mr. Devon Feldt was a highly qualified person on staff who had previously interviewed for an administrative position inside the district. Devon has proven himself to be a leader as a person who commands respect while exhibiting the qualities of genuine kindness and good humor, which are essential in effective leadership."

Feldt began teaching in 2019 at the Chain Exploration Center (CEC), a char-

"This is \$63,000 just to engineer it and then we're going to talk about another \$200,000 to build it," Roberts said.

"The state has a lot of money right now that they want to put into silent sports like this," Sowle said.

Council members approved all the capital spending projects unanimously except for the Newton Blackmour bridge. Roberts cast the sole vote against it.

Council members also approved \$20,000 for two new bleachers and \$7,000 for renovations of the ball diamond

at Pfeifer Park.

In 2021, the Park and Rec Department was quoted \$34,000 for a dump truck, which they ordered in early 2022. Due to vehicle supply chain issues, the truck did not arrive until recently and the price had risen by \$25,000 due to inflation.

Other capital projects include barricades and a small equipment for the Public Works Department, an additional \$25,000 for a zoning ordinance rewrite and \$6,000 for stump grinding and clean up at the cemetery.

a place where children will explore their passions and gain a strong educational foundation through project-based learning in a collaborative community."

"I am sorry that this all happened so quickly," board member Betty Manion said. "In hindsight, it's easy to see steps that were missed and interviews perhaps that could have been held but weren't, and this has nothing to do with Austin or Devon, who are highly qualified."

She said the hiring process should have been equally open to all qualified employees.

Board member Ron Brooks asked if they could step back from the associate principal's appointment and allow WMS and the Chain to share Feldt until the end of the school year.

Board vice-president Steve Klismet criticized the lack of communication with the CEC, noting the school board and governance council have been making progress while working together.

"I feel that we might have bent that trust a little bit," Klismet said. "It's a little upsetting that it happened so fast."

Several board members commented positively on Moore and Feldt's qualifications.

The board voted unanimously to approve the appointments.

FUNDS

FROM PAGE 1

three of its board members. They described Northern Ignite as "a non-profit volleyball club located in Clintonville, WI. Our goal is to bring as many opportunities to Clintonville Area volleyball athletes as possible, whether that be club teams, camps, clinics, sport specific education or access to a gym/weight room."

The statement said that in its first year of existence, Northern Ignite hosted more than 100 volleyball athletes through various camps and clinics.

"We were able to field 40+ athletes over four teams, ranging from 11-17 years old," the statement read. "A majority of those athletes were from the Clintonville School District."

The statement continued, "The donation we received during our inception helped establish Northern Ignite as a non-profit and solidify an infrastructure that can support continued success, just like we've seen in our first year. We encourage the community to keep supporting these female athletes as they continue to grow in a sport that they love."

Clintonville School District responds

In an interview with the Clintonville Tribune-Gazette, Kuhn said the account that the funds were used from belongs to the Clintonville volleyball booster club, which the Clintonville School District has no jurisdiction over.

"The (high school volleyball) coaches are in charge of the booster club, as well as the Trucker Volleyball Club (which is a school group), so that's where the difference of opinion comes in," Kuhn said. "First of all, the booster club should probably have a board set up. But the way it was set up originally, that this is going to be an account where we can put money in or out of without necessarily going through the school."

Kuhn said the volleyball booster club was formed before he was hired by the school district.

Regarding the relationship the district has with the volleyball booster club, Kuhn said the district does not work with the booster club because it is an entity not associated with the school district. He added that any checks written to the Clintonville School District for a fundraiser are deposited in a school activity account even if the funds are from a fundraiser organized by the booster club.

"The booster club was doing fundraisers, but they weren't specific about who to write the check to. Any checks that were written to the Clintonville School District got deposited in the student account, not the booster club account," Kuhn said. "There was never any transfer from Clintonville (School District) to booster or from booster to Clintonville."

While the funds were used to help start Northern Ignite, Kuhn said it was his understanding that "talk of creating an area volleyball club began years ago in anticipation of getting Clintonville and other kids extra reps to be successful in the future."

"To my understanding, there's two main differences in opinions right now," Kuhn said. "Was it ever disclosed that the money raised was specific to create a volleyball club? And two, was there an agreement, and who agreed to how to use the booster money to create the club, and how much money should be used to create a club?"

Kuhn said he became aware of the use of funds from people who heard about it in the community.

"I want to thank those people because if we did something wrong, I want to be the first to correct our policies and procedures, but also, not just myself, the school board members, everybody," Kuhn said. "The whole situation put a black eye on the district, especially the volleyball program, so we want to get as much factual information out there that we can share. Like we said after we investigated everything, the money was completely separate from the school district and we wanted

to make sure that the public knew there was no wrongdoing by the district and that we separate ourselves from booster clubs. That's why we put all that stuff on the (school) board agenda."

Upon hearing about the funds use, Kuhn said the district checked the Clintonville Trucker Volleyball student account and found that none of those funds were missing.

"After the post was published, my phone was blowing up," Kuhn said. "And it's really hard for me to tell people that I have been advised that I can't do anything about this because it's not our money. However, being the face of the district, I worked with people. The Northern Ignite board members called me, as well as the current coaches, and I said you guys have to figure this out because the school is not a part of the booster club money. That's where I would say the difference of opinions still are."

He said he also contacted the attorney for the school district to see what the district's role should be regarding the situation.

"The district's attorney said the school has no say in any of these funds, just back up and let other people handle it because you don't have jurisdiction over that," Kuhn said.

When asked why student activity accounts and use of district facilities were placed on the Feb. 12 school board agenda, Kuhn said, "We wanted to be transparent as a district. We wanted to show the public that we do have policies in place, we do have procedures in place. But yet at the same time, we can't tell a booster club how to run their program or use their money. We can't do that."

Kuhn added that in order for funds to be used from a student group activity account, a request for funds by the group has to be made and then there are a series of steps and approvals needed before the funds are released. This helps prevent situations like the one the Clintonville volleyball booster club is currently dealing with.



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Waupaca NEWS

Waupaca celebrates young artists

Art showcased at library

BY JAMES CARD
STAFF REPORTER

WAUPACA – There is a giant whale shark in the Waupaca Area Public Library.

The aquatic beast hangs from the ceiling in the downstairs exhibition room and is part of the annual Youth Art Month exhibit.

The papier mâché shark was crafted by 11th grader Kionna Jorgenson. It is one of many works of art in the exhibit.

The work ranges through many mediums: ceramics, pottery, sculpture, pencil sketches, paintings, textiles, metalwork, jewelry, etchings, found objects, print-making and mixed media.

A collaboration of the Waupaca School District, Waupaca Area Public Library and Waupaca Public Library Foundation, the exhibit shows the best artwork from kindergarten through 12th-grade students.

The exhibit was curated and organized by Waupaca art teachers Mackenzie Burns, Erika Elgersma, Mathew Lawniczak and Tricia Price. The ongoing exhibits at the library are organized by Liz Kneer, the exhibit room coordinator.

An awards ceremony was held on Tuesday evening, Feb. 20, to honor the outstanding artists. The Best in Show was Lily Swendrzynski. For Waupaca High School, first place went to Cooper Roberts, second place to Ula Rozanska and Lalita Renteria took third. Honorable mentions in-



This whale shark that hangs above the Youth Art exhibit at the Waupaca Area Public Library was made by Kionna Jorgenson. James Card Photos



This pointillist sketch at the Waupaca library's youth art exhibit was done with a Sharpie by Daylin Breitzman.

clude Sarah McCourt, Jenna Olson, Claire Hemmila, Stephanie Nickerson, Kevin Crawford, Brooke W., Tustin Phillips

For Waupaca Middle School, Jordan Cockrell took first place, Christine Packingham, took second and Luka Adkinson took third. Honorable mentions include Kendall Rice, Aiden Folz, Garrett Bohringer and Bailey Nelson.

For elementary school students from the Waupaca Learning Center and the Chain Exploration Center, Silas Hackett took first place, Lisette Heinsohn took second and Evelyn Fritz got third place. Honorable mentions include Cass Garrison, Liam Wohlrahe, Theodore Doscher, Emma Storck, Zachary Doscher, Grace Washburn and Jaqueline Johnson.

Local novel recognized

BY JAMES CARD
STAFF REPORTER

WAUPACA – Local author Richard Sweitzer's novel, "Ode: The Scion of Nerikan" was awarded a Star rating from Kirkus Reviews.

The star rating highlights books of exceptional merit and only 10% of novels published by traditional publishing houses receive one.

Sweitzer self-published his book and for novels published independently, less than 2% get a star rating. The star rating also puts his book in the running for the annual \$50,000 Kirkus Prize.

"My little book, written and published in Waupaca, made the cut," said Sweitzer.

The novel is a story about an immortal monster searching for a way to die, and a little girl who gives him reason to live for a little longer.

The Kirkus review describes the fantasy novel as "The author takes readers across the expanse of the richly imagined Eisen, around forests, into various cities and villages, and through harrow-



ing mountains. No journey, however, is more fulfilling than the emotional one at this story's core."

The book is available online and at the Bookcellar in Waupaca.

Winter hike planned in Waupaca

WAUPACA – A winter hike on the Shambeau Hill and Shambeau Park trails is planned from 3-5 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 25.

The "Hike Under the Snow Full Moon" event includes two hiking options – Shambeau Hill toward the Depot

and the Shambeau Park Loop and trail leading to the Depot.

The historic Depot at 525 Oak Street will be open for warming, hot drinks, activities and a campfire outside. All ages are welcome to this free event.

Parking for the hike is available at Shambeau Hill under the water tower, at the Depot and at Shambeau Park.

This event is sponsored by the Waupaca Historical Society, the Waupaca Area Public Library, and Waupaca Parks and Recreation.

PUMC offers youth grant program

WAUPACA – Parfreyville United Methodist Church (PUMC) has announced a seventh round of its Children and Youth Grant Program.

Based on a memorial donation dedicated for children and youth programs within PUMC, the grant program was created to make funds available within the local community.

Qualifying projects are typically awarded grants ranging from a few hundred dollars up to \$1,000.

PUMC will accept applications from religious or non-religious, public or private organizations that

focus on the needs of children and youth.

Project and program examples may include, but are not limited to, addressing health and nutritional needs, poverty and homelessness, education and youth mentoring.

Grant applications are to be submitted by April 30. Recipients will be notified by May 15 with funds available by May 30.

To obtain grant guidelines and application forms, contact the church office at 715-258-8615 or email office@warmumc.com.

Parfreyville United Methodist Church, part of the Waupaca Area Regional Ministry, is located at N1979 County Trunk K in Waupaca and on Facebook at Waupaca Area Regional Ministry of the UMC.

Fly-in with wheels

No snow, no problem

BY JAMES CARD
STAFF REPORTER

WAUPACA – Unlike other snow-dependent events that have been cancelled this winter, the annual Ski Plane and Chili Fly-in at the Waupaca Municipal Airport will continue despite a lack of snow.

It will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24.

Hosted by Waupaca's 444 EAA Chapter, the event will be held in the Celestial Kinetics hangar, home to the airport's newest aviation school. The event is open to the public.

"Planes will still be arriving and landing on either

the standard runway or the grass. The lack of snow this year is really disappointing but some planes are also equipped with 'wheel skis' and allow the regular wheel to drop past the ski for regular runway use," said Mike Ryszkiewicz, the chapter's president.

The spot landing contest is set for noon. The goal is to land on or after a runway stripe in the shortest distance and landing before the line gets a zero. Each pilot gets two attempts to land.

A viewing area will be set up for spectators can watch the action up close.

Besides the chili and deserts, the club will also have a 50-50 raffle and a silent auction with \$3,500 worth

of items to bid on.

Ryszkiewicz is expecting a big turn-out with aviators coming in from all over Wisconsin.

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Clintonville NEWS

Clintonville reviews club policies

Volleyball booster club controversy

BY BERT LEHMAN
STAFF REPORTER

CLINTONVILLE – Funds missing from the Clintonville volleyball booster club prompted the district to review policies for the student groups and clubs under its jurisdiction. The Clintonville School Board reviewed its policies at its Feb. 12 board meeting. The district has no jurisdiction over the volleyball booster club.

Student fundraisers

Superintendent Troy Kuhn told the board that the district does have policies regarding student fundraisers. He said that the district's administrative guidelines form asks for information about which club wants to do a fundraiser, as well as what the raised funds are intended to be used for.

"I try to be very specific when I talk to staff who do fundraisers, that a lot of time people will donate more money if they know exactly what it's going to be used for," Kuhn said.

The fundraising application is for any group or club who keep their money in the district's student account. These groups or clubs must follow the district's guidelines.

Clintonville School Board President Ben Huber said that booster clubs do their own fundraising and accounting.

"All funds go through them. The school does not have any accounting over that in any way, shape, or form," Huber said. "That is a booster that is separate from (the district). There are several booster clubs that are separate from the district, and the district does not review those ac-

counts. They (district) are not involved and have no jurisdiction over those booster clubs."

Huber added that he thinks some people are having difficulty separating a school student group from a booster club.

"The funds that go through our accounting process and our business manager, those funds are extremely closely watched," Huber said. "Booster funds are done by the club that applies for the 501c3, which, we as a district, don't have any control over."

School Board member Jason Moder used the Clintonville Quarterback Club as an example of a Clintonville booster club that has a board of directors who overlook the club's financials and decide on how the funds should be spent.

Huber said if checks are written to the Clintonville School District for a fundraiser, the funds are deposited in the student group account, which the district oversees. Whereas, if checks are written to a booster club, it is deposited by the booster club, and the district has no say in what happens to those funds.

Even though the district has no input regarding fundraisers conducted by a booster club, Kuhn told the board he would like to recommend that booster clubs let the district know when they are doing a fundraiser so the district is aware of the fundraiser.

School Board member Glen Drew Lundt asked the board members if changes need to be made to district policies so "certain situations" don't happen again. Specifically, Lundt asked if the district could help a booster club organize.

Huber said, "No, we are not in the business of forming booster clubs. We should not be involved, and I don't think statuto-

rily we can be involved."

Moder recommended that any group that wants advice on the ins and outs of being a booster club should contact one of the long-established booster clubs in the community.

"Board members on those said boosters can walk them through the process," Moder said. "The entire thing is not an easy process. I can tell you that from experience."

Student activity accounts

Kuhn provided the board with information about the various student activity accounts in the district.

He said the majority of every athletic team and school club has a financial activity account. There are also staff accounts that are used for various things.

"All of these accounts have to follow school policy and guidelines," Kuhn said.

Facilities rental, usage

Kuhn told the board that there is a lot of case law regarding who is allowed to rent a district facility because the district's buildings are public buildings.

"If you open it up to one community group, you need to open it up to all (community groups)," Kuhn said. "We can't discriminate against one or the other. Luckily, we haven't run into any of that, but that always has to be on the back of your mind if you have a group in there, that we're not going to set a precedence for the future."

Regarding the cost of renting a district facility, Moder said there shouldn't be a fluctuation in price between groups and clubs with members of the district versus groups and clubs with a high number of non-district members.

Foundation shares \$10,850 in grants

CLINTONVILLE – The Clintonville Area Foundation (CAF) awarded \$10,850 in grants to six charitable organizations serving the Clintonville area.

The grants, which benefit a range of community causes, were awarded from a variety of charitable funds within the community foundation this year.

"We are proud to announce that the Clintonville Area Foundation will once again this year be sharing funding with seven area nonprofit organizations, who will use these monies for better nutrition, clothing, victim services, museum signage and a local dog park," said Sue Aschliman, advisory board chair of the Clintonville Area Foundation.

Eligible nonprofit organizations submitted grant requests through the Foundation's annual competitive process. The Foundation's volunteer grants committee members Foundation shares recommend grant recipients to the advisory board for approval.

Grants awarded

- The Compassionate Connection Center – \$2,000 to support Harvest of the Month Healthy Eating initiative benefiting students and families in the Clintonville School District by providing locally sourced, in-season produce each month, as well as six parent/child cooking class sessions.
- Clintonville Goodfellows Association – \$1,500 to support milk and food vouchers redeemable at a local grocery store for each household that



Sue Aschliman, advisory board chair of the Clintonville Area Foundation, presents a \$3,000 grant to Mary Dobbe and Nancy Immel of the Clintonville Food Pantry.



Sue Aschliman, advisory board chair of the Clintonville Area Foundation, presents a \$2,250 grant to Lisa Jones, with the Community Clothes Closet. Submitted Photos

attends the 2024 holiday distribution.

- Clintonville Area Food Pantry – \$3,000 to ensure pantry users have access to fresh fruit despite rising food costs because fresh fruit is key to foundational nutritional eating.
- The Community Clothes Closet – \$2,250 to support six Traveling Closet distribution events in 2024, which provide free clothing, winter gear and other essentials to Clintonville families with a demonstrated need.
- Mission of Hope House of Wisconsin – \$1,500 to provide vouchers to help clients

have their basic needs met while working on their recovery from substance use and/or mental health disorders.

- Safe Haven Domestic Abuse Support Center – \$600 to purchase tools to keep the shelter pantry and clothing rooms more organized, which support client's emergency needs.

To learn more about the Foundation, visit www.ClintonvilleFoundation.org, write Clintonville Area Foundation c/o Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, 4455 W. Lawrence Street, Appleton, WI 54914 or call 920-830-1290.

City to vacate part of Garfield

BY BERT LEHMAN
STAFF REPORTER

CLINTONVILLE – The Clintonville Common Council approved a resolution to vacate the portion of Garfield Avenue between 12th Street and Wilson Street so it can be incorporated into the new campus of Clintonville Utilities.

The approval came after a public meeting on the matter during the council's Feb. 13 meeting. No residents spoke at the public meeting.

The council had started the process to vacate that portion of Garfield Avenue when it passed a preliminary resolution at its December meeting.

At the Feb. 13 meeting, Clintonville Utilities Manager Dave Tichinel said the city would vacate the portion of Garfield Avenue for the new Clintonville Utilities building that will be constructed where the former Armory building was located. The Armory was razed over the past couple weeks.

The new building will have a dock for large truck deliveries. "The main reason for me asking for this to be vacated is for safety," Tichinel said.

By vacating that portion of Garfield Avenue, the large trucks making the deliveries will not have to worry about traffic on the street.

Another reason for vacating that portion of Garfield Avenue is so the Clintonville Utilities properties can be secured with fencing, Tichinel said.

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Opinion

PUBLISHER'S LETTER

The Essence Of Accumulation: Sharing Makes It Meaningful

Dear Reader,

In a world where we amass treasures and experiences, let's not forget the profound truth – accumulation gains its true value when shared with others. Material possessions and achievements may fill our lives, but without someone to share them with, the joy they bring remains incomplete.

So, let's embrace the beauty of sharing, for it is in those shared moments that our accumulations find their true purpose and meaning.



PATRICK J. WOOD
Publisher
Author of "Reflections" a new book now available on Amazon.

Public hearing on Lind digester

Residents and visitors of Waupaca County and Wisconsin – please attend a critical public hearing for the town of Lind in Waupaca at 5 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 28, at Waupaca High School.

This hearing revolves around a controversial zoning change proposed by Vanguard Renewables/Blackrock in the town of Lind. The proposal's plan is to convert approximately 8 acres of agriculturally zoned farmland into industrial zoning to accommodate a manure/industrial waste anaerobic codigester facility. Vanguard Renewables plans to construct this facility on leased land from a local dairy farm CAFO (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation).

In preparation for the public hearing, please educate yourself about the goals set by the town of Lind's comprehensive plan and the irreversible impact that can come from digesters. You can find valuable information collected on the website: NoDigester.com and the Facebook Page: Citizens Protecting Rural Waupaca County.

These platforms, funded by concerned citizens, prioritize the integrity and purity of our county's natural resources, as well as personal health and property. It offers scientific evidence from experts studying the impact of anaerobic digesters, testimonies from residents living near similar facilities in

Wisconsin and across the US, and topics of sustainable farming techniques without the use of a digester. This reliable and transparent research stems from credible experts without conflicts of business interests.

Additionally, explore the Vanguard Renewables website or an informational meeting (I attended the 9/5/23 meeting). They put forth a 'win win win' and a 'trust me' kind of sales pitch from the CAFO and the companies who will greatly benefit monetarily. While I favor prosperity for all my neighbors, I strongly object to profits gained that put our environment, health and property at risk.

At the public hearing, you have the opportunity to voice opinions on the zoning change in a three-minute speech and/or submit a letter to the town of Lind supervisors regarding the proposal. Letters must be submitted by 2/27/24. See website: TownofLind.org

We are neighbors, both now and to future generations who will live here. Differing opinions should not divide us but rather open constructive and honest conversations to work toward a legacy of a true sustainable healthy environment for everyone.

I look forward to meeting you at the public hearing on Feb. 28.

MICHELLE WINTER
TOWN OF LIND

Wisconsinites charged for defrauding COVID funds

BY HINA SUZUKI
THE BADGER PROJECT

During the pandemic, the federal government distributed a massive \$4.2 trillion to local governments, businesses and people. Some of those funds were stolen, and one estimate puts the amount in the hundreds of billions of dollars.

Now, the government is trying to reclaim at least some of those stolen funds and prosecute the thieves.

In August 2023, the U.S. Department of Justice announced it had charged more than 3,000 defendants across the country with offenses related to COVID-19 fraud and seized over \$1.4 billion in relief funds.

In Wisconsin, federal prosecutors have charged nearly 40 people with crimes related to COVID-19 fraud.

The exact amount of stolen relief funds nationwide is unclear, but a 2023 analysis conducted by the Associated Press estimated nearly \$300 billion was illegally obtained from COVID-19 relief funding.

Most, according to the Associated Press, came from temporary programs established by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act, a \$2.2 trillion economic stimulus bill launched in 2020 during the Trump administration. Those programs were intended to aid small businesses and unemployed workers affected by the economic fallout of the pandemic.

"People have to come to grips with what happened, its scope and scale and how sophisticated [COVID-19 fraud] was to the point where it drew bad players and actors from overseas," said Seto Bagdoyan, a director of the Government Accountability Office's Forensic Audits and Investigative Service team. "The very sophisticated fraudsters were committing frauds across states, countries and programs too, so many of these schemes will take years to unravel and make their way through the judicial process."

Among those charged were 30 members of a Mil-



Higher education and state's future job market

WISCONSIN POLICY FORUM

Amid a national debate about the value of higher education, a college degree would be required for a nearly two-thirds of higher-paying job openings that state officials project to exist in Wisconsin through 2030.

In recent months, national journalists and academic leaders have discussed a waning confidence among some Americans in the value of a college education. Rising tuition costs and expanding student loan debt are raising questions about whether the benefits of a college degree outweigh the costs.

The Wisconsin Policy Forum's latest research examines the educational requirements of future job openings in Wisconsin, as projected by the state Department of Workforce Development. For each

occupation, the projections estimate annual job openings and provide information about the typical education needed for entry, wage data, and more.

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of the roughly 357,000 jobs projected to open each year in Wisconsin between 2020 and 2030 are in occupations that typically did not require a college degree or credential as of 2020.

For individuals seeking higher-paying jobs, however, these numbers tell only part of the story. Among jobs expected to open each year in Wisconsin through 2030, about 95,000 (26%) are in occupations that paid median wages of \$50,000 or higher in 2020.

For these jobs, more than half (54,802, or 58.1%) will be in occupations that typically require a bachelor's or advanced degree

for entry. Raising the bar further to occupations that pay a median wage of \$75,000 or more annually, 91% of jobs would require a bachelor's or advanced degree.

Most job openings are due to retirements or turnover. But looking at jobs projected to be newly created in Wisconsin through 2030, in higher-paying occupations, nearly 70% would require a bachelor's or advanced degree. Thus, new higher-paying jobs are even more likely to require a degree than those that already exist.

Concerns about the cost and value of college may not be wholly mitigated by these findings. The institution one attends and field of study can make big differences in assessing costs and benefits, and completing one's studies is critical. In fact, accumulating debt

without completing a degree or certificate can put an individual in a worse long-term financial situation than if they had not gone to college at all.

In addition, projections can only tell us what is most likely to occur. Unexpected events or technological advancements could impact the job market in ways that are difficult to forecast.

Despite these uncertainties, changes in Wisconsin's job market over the last 10 years, and projected changes through 2030, show a college degree will be an imperative for those seeking to fill many of the state's higher-paying jobs.

This information is a service of the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the state's leading resource for non-partisan state and local government research and civic education. Learn more at wispolicyforum.org.

Hurling verbal spitballs won't protect your kids

BY BILL BARTH

My older son Kyle, who has always been rather direct, calls it "Crackbook."

Don't get him started, or you'll likely hear a rant about people walking around in a daze staring at the phone in their hand. Living for "likes" and getting emotional if their "friends" are slow to comply. Not to mention filtering pictures that make people look like Casper the friendly ghost.

That's just Facebook. Look, I'm way too old to keep up with all this, but I've at least heard of Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok and X (aka Twitter). No doubt there are more where the young and hip hide out from the old and ornery.

At its best, social media is just kind of silly, a place where people hang out and show pictures of their food and pets. And grab their 15 seconds of fame by dancing around, cavorting with pals or some other inane but innocent activity.

The much darker side involves addiction, bullying and sexual exploitation. Congressional hearings were held recently on such topics and how harmful social media can be when abused, with or without the tacit approval of companies and people who make an economic killing in the industry.

Here's Sen. Josh Hawley, R-Missouri, lambasting Mark Zuckerberg, founder

of Facebook: "Your job is to be responsible for what your company has done. You've made billions of dollars on the people sitting behind you here. You've done nothing to help them. You've done nothing to compensate them. You've done nothing to put it right. You could do so here today and you should."

At which point Zuckerberg stood up, turned to families in the gallery, and said he was sorry. He did not reach for his wallet.

Good theater from Zuckerberg. And Hawley. Then everybody went home.

Meanwhile, the phones are still in the hands of the addicts and the weirdos. The addiction pushers at the companies continue to rake in all the money.

One is reminded of the old saying usually attributed to Mark Twain, but really originated by Twain's friend, essayist Charles Dudley Warner: "Everybody complains about the weather, but nobody does anything about it."

Don't expect Hawley – the fist-pumping, mob-fleeing hero of Jan. 6 – to do anything, either. He and his congressional colleagues may speechify and preen for the cameras, but they have avoided for years taking action to rein in Big Tech in the only effective way – by hitting them in their wallets.

Instead, tech companies hide behind section 230

of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, which shields them from liability for harmful material on their sites. The federal law was passed in 1998, at a time when the internet as we know it was more of a dream than reality. It was believed entrepreneurs attempting to blaze a trail to the digital future needed some protection from lawyers and liability. Probably true. But those conditions have dramatically changed. Today's tech giants sit on mountains of cash. They spend generously to grease the wheels in political circles.

Color me cynical, but maybe that has something to do with why politicians strut and babble in front of the cameras, while doing nothing to regulate the industry and hold the billionaires legally accountable for harm occurring on their platforms.

The harm, by the way, is not limited to bullying and exploiting vulnerable young people. It also includes what can only be called propaganda – be it left or right – meant to fool voters. Studies have shown social media platforms, as a business plan, steer more propaganda toward users who show an appetite for viewing such disinformation. It doesn't require much tech understanding to see the link between that targeted content and America's rapidly increas-

ing disunity.

Now, throw in AI, or artificial intelligence, with all its Terminator-like possibilities. This mess is not going to fix itself.

With legacy media – newspapers and television, for example – there are bright lines of legal accountability. Producers know false, harmful content can be costly. Ask Fox News, after the network lost a defamation case and agreed to pay Dominion Voting Systems \$787.5 million.

Congress could expose digital companies to similar standards and make them liable for harmful content on their platforms. Of course, they will claim it's too hard to police such matters. Apparently, though, it's easy enough for them to know if you are looking for a certain pair of shoes and flood your feed with offers.

Tech billionaires may be the bad guys here, but they're not alone. Congress can't (won't?) get it done.

Follow the money, folks. You'll find out who owns these political show ponies. Then maybe, when elections roll around, give somebody else a chance to do the right thing.

Bill Barth is the former editor of the Beloit Daily News, and a member of the Wisconsin Newspaper Hall of Fame.

waukee street gang known as the Wild 100s. They were charged for their role in a scheme involving millions in fraudulently obtained pandemic unemployment insurance benefits.

The funds were used to solicit murder for hire and to purchase firearms, controlled substances, jewelry

and vacations, according to a press release from the U.S. Attorney's Office of Eastern District of Wisconsin. Two members, Ronnell Bowman and Ronnie Jackson, are accused of arranging and executing a murder for pay in 2021.

Thomas Smith, of Pewaukee, admitted fraud-

ulently receiving over \$1.2 million in business loans through applications to an insured financial institution on behalf of eight different companies, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Western District of Wisconsin.

Smith made numerous false and misleading state-

ments about the companies' payroll expenses and directed his co-conspirators to send him portions of the funds.

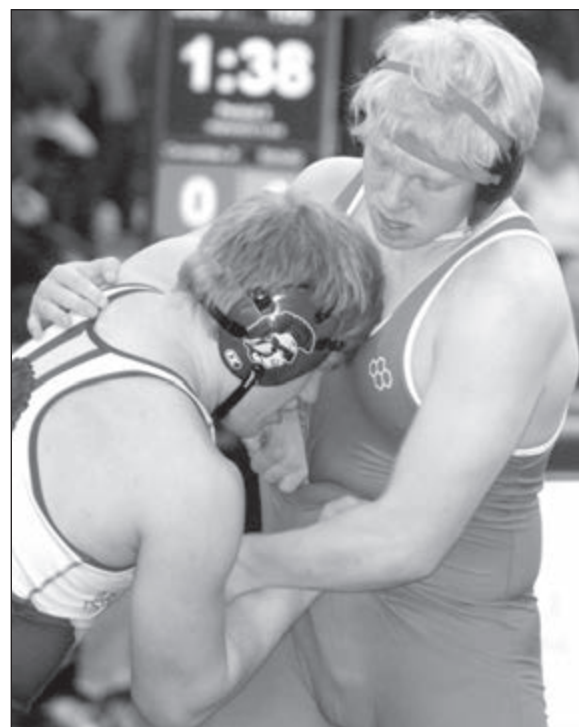
Smith pleaded guilty to one count of bank fraud in 2021 and was sentenced to 57 months in prison. He was ordered to pay \$960,000 in restitution.

Sports

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Weyauwega-Fremont's Zander Baehnman works on Cambridge's Curtis Peterson Feb. 13 at a Division 3 team sectional at Waterloo High School. Baehnman handed Peterson a 14-6 loss and the Warhawks went on to defeat the Blue Jays 64-16 in the semifinal round before beating Waterloo in the final. Perry Thomas Photo



New London's Preston Krueger faces Luxemburg-Casco's Ezra Waege in a 215-pound match Feb. 17 at a WIAA Division 2 sectional in Oconto Falls. Krueger defeated Waege 6-5, but did not qualify for state after placing fourth. Greg Seubert Photo

Warhawks dominate team sectional

BY GREG SEUBERT
 SPORTS EDITOR

WATERLOO – Four teams remain in the hunt for a WIAA Division 3 team wrestling state championship.

One of them is the Weyauwega-Fremont Warhawks.

The Warhawks are heading to the state team tournament – scheduled for Friday and Saturday, March 1-2, at the University of Wisconsin Field House in Madison – for the first time in program history after defeating two teams Feb. 13 at a team sectional at Waterloo High School.

Weyauwega-Fremont will join defending Division 3 champion Fennimore, Coleman and Cumberland at the state meet. Semifinal matches will begin at 10 a.m., with the No. 1 seed to face the No. 4 seed and the No. 2 seed to meet the No. 3 seed. The semifinal winners will then wrestle for the state championship at 3 p.m.

The Warhawks handed Lomira a 42-28 loss in the championship match in Waterloo after opening the sectional with a 64-16 win over Cambridge.

W-F 42, Lomira 28

Jaydon LeNoble (106 pounds), Aiden Marquette (144), Alex Loehrke (150), Tellyer Alix (190), Wyatt Wetzel (215) and Vanden Hoffman (285) had wins for the Warhawks in a matchup with the Lions.

LeNoble picked up a 5-3 win over Jordan Lisiecki, Marquette pinned Skyler Kindler in 1:47, Loehrke pinned Koby Sacotte in 2:52, Alix defeated Easton Neuman 13-8, Wetzel defeated Andrew Reha 3-1 in overtime and Hoffman beat Warren Sauer 6-2.

Sectional
 CONTINUES ON PAGE 12



Weyauwega-Fremont's Aiden Marquette reacts after pinning Waterloo's Gavin Schroud in a 144-pound match Feb. 17 at a WIAA Division 3 sectional at Dodgefield High School in Juneau. Marquette went on to place third and is one of eight Weyauwega-Fremont wrestlers heading to state. Perry Thomas Photo

W-F sending eight to state, after winning D3 sectional

BY GREG SEUBERT
 SPORTS EDITOR

JUNEAU – It's been a season of firsts for the Weyauwega-Fremont wrestling team.

The Warhawks sent a school-record 13 wrestlers to a WIAA Division 3 sectional meet at Dodgefield High School Feb. 17 and set another school record by qualifying eight wrestlers for the WIAA State Individual Wrestling Championships, set for Thursday to Saturday, Feb. 22-24, at the Kohl Center in Madison.

Weyauwega-Fremont also qualified for the first time for the state team championships, which will be held Friday and Saturday, March 1-2, also in Madison.

Four of the eight wrestlers won sectional championships and helped the Warhawks place first with 164 points: Jaydon LeNoble (106 pounds), Carter Birdyshaw (132), Carter McDaniel (165) and Vanden Hoffman (285).

The Warhawks' other state qualifiers are Connor

Johnson (second, 157); Josue Azuara (third, 113); Aiden Marquette (third, 144); and Tellyer Alix (third, 190).

"It was a dominating performance from start to finish," coach Tim Potratz said. "In the opening quarterfinal round, we won 12 out of our 13 matches and never looked back. We won the most matches of any team, qualified the most wrestlers to state, had the most pins and scored more points in their matches than any team in the tournament."

LeNoble won his championship with a 7-1 win over Westfield's Lincoln Beyer; Birdyshaw beat Marshall's Tucker Cobb 3-2; McDaniel defeated Johnson Creek's Taylor Joseph 7-1; and Hoffman pinned Omro's Andyboi Hernandez in 1:48.

Azuara lost a third-place match to Markesan's Gavin Slark 6-0; Marquette beat Johnson Creek's Luke Hartz in their third-place match; Johnson dropped a 7-3 decision to Pardeeville's Caleb Mackey in their champion-

ship match; and Markesan's Noah Hanefeld picked up a 5-4 win over Alix in another third-place match.

Weyauwega-Fremont's other wrestlers included Rylan Konen (120); Jake Buss (126); Ezra Balthazor (fourth, 138); Nolan Schrei (175); and Wyatt Wetzel (215).

"It is an honor as a high school athlete to be able to represent your team, your school and your community in a state tournament," Potratz said. "These kids will get to do that this week in the state individual tournament and our entire team will get to do that next week in the state team tournament. Congratulations to everyone in our wrestling family, from our youth and middle school coaches to parents to our awesome volunteer coaches, our fans, first-year assistant coach Tyler Wetzel and especially (assistant coach) Trevor Potratz for his skill, energy and positivity that has raised this program's level of performance to our current position."

State meet up next for 3 wrestlers

BY GREG SEUBERT
 SPORTS EDITOR

OCONTO FALLS – The season will continue for a pair of New London wrestlers and one from Waupaca.

New London's Hailie Krueger and Wyatt Magolski placed first and second in their respective weight class Feb. 17 at a WIAA Division 2 sectional meet at Oconto Falls High School.

Meanwhile, Waupaca's Caylin Johnson pinned Chilton/Hilbert's Samantha Meyer in 2:26 in the girls' 145-pound match. They were the only competitors in the weight class.

All three wrestlers have advanced to the WIAA State Individual Wrestling Championships, which will

be held Thursday to Saturday, Feb. 22-24, at the Kohl Center in Madison.

Krueger, the two-time defending girls' state champion at 145 pounds, moved up to 152 pounds this season and placed first in Oconto Falls with a pair of first-period pins.

She pinned Crivitz/Wausaukee's Cupcake Rolls in 1:42 in the semifinal round and won the championship by pinning Oconto Falls' Nicole Woosenkraft in 1:29.

Magolski, a senior who placed fourth at state at 113 last year and third at 106 in 2022, made it to the finals with a 17-0 technical fall over Elkhart

State
 CONTINUES ON PAGE 12

Hortonville has six champions

BY GREG SEUBERT
 SPORTS EDITOR

KIMBERLY – A solid season isn't over yet for the Hortonville wrestling team.

The Polar Bears had four champions Feb. 17 at a WIAA Division 1 sectional meet in Kimberly. All four wrestlers, as well as two others that placed second, qualified for the WIAA State Individual Wrestling Championships, which begin Thursday, Feb. 22, in Madison.

Cash Botting (126), Henry Niebauer (150) and Austin McHugh (215) won boys' championships, while Mackenzie Schiedermaier won the girls' 152-pound championship.

Botting pinned Pulaski's Conner Nooyen in 2:22 to win his championship; Niebauer beat Kaukauna's Kolin DeGroot 10-3; McHugh handed Appleton North's Blake Miller

Hortonville Wrestling
 CONTINUES ON PAGE 12

Comets win with two late goals

BY GREG SEUBERT
 SPORTS EDITOR

WAUPACA – At first, it looked like the Waupaca boys' hockey team would open WIAA state tournament play with an overtime game.

The Comets and Antigo headed into the final minute of regulation tied at 4-4, but Liam Bloedow's two goals gave Waupaca a 4-2 win over the Red Robins Feb. 15 in a Division 2 regional semifinal at the Waupaca Ice & Expo Center.

Waupaca, a No. 4 seed in its sectional bracket, headed to Tomahawk Feb. 20 to face the top-seeded Hatchets for a regional championship. Tomahawk defeat-

ed eighth-seeded Rhinelander 5-3 in the Hatchets' tournament opener.

The Comets scored the game's first two goals. Blake Schoenecker opened the scoring with 3:53 remaining in the first period off of an assist from Jace Moen.

Adam Mace gave Waupaca a 2-0 lead with 10:33 left in the second period, with Ryan Mace and Bloedow getting credit for the assist.

Eli Kessler's unassisted goal with 3:01 remaining in the second period cut Waupaca's lead to 2-1 and the Red Robins tied the game seven minutes into the third

Hockey
 CONTINUES ON PAGE 12

From softball diamond to Hall of Fame

BY GREG SEUBERT
 SPORTS EDITOR

WISCONSIN DELLS – Tom Anderson's accomplishments as Iola-Scandinavia High School's softball coach keeps growing.

Eight months after coaching the Thunderbirds to the program's first state championship, he is among the newest members of the Wisconsin Fastpitch Softball Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

The association inducted Anderson and three other coaches – Waterloo's Debra Braatz, Kaukauna's Tim Roehrig and Dodgeville's Gene Van Dyck – Feb. 10 during a banquet in Wisconsin Dells.

Anderson
 CONTINUES ON PAGE 12



The Wisconsin Fastpitch Softball Coaches Association inducted Iola-Scandinavia softball coach Tom Anderson and three others into its Hall of Fame Feb. 10 in Wisconsin Dells. Submitted Photo

National FFA WEEK

FEBRUARY 17-24, 2024

Clintonville FFA members learn leadership

BY CLINTONVILLE FFA
SPECIAL TO TRIBUNE-GAZETTE

The Clintonville FFA Chapter has planned many exciting activities for FFA week, and we cannot wait to celebrate.

We have gained a lot of new, active members this year, and we can't wait to see all of our members succeed in their events and competitions this year.

In the last year, the Clintonville FFA Chapter has increased not only our chapter size, but also our member involvement in Supervised Agricultural Experiences, CDEs, LDEs and more.

At the beginning of the month, members competed in their respective Leadership Development Events. Jacob Harbaugh advanced to sectionals in Discussion Meet. This years Parliamentary Procedure Team will be returning to sectionals again. The team consists of Abigail Krueger, Arianna Jepson, Nicole Sasse, Jenna Rogers, Logan Harbaugh, and Jacob Harbaugh. This year we have 5 Career Development Events compet-



Clintonville FFA members.

ing on March 22.

These teams consist of Dairy and Livestock Judging, Milk Quality and Products, Forestry, and Veterinary Science.

Not only does the Clintonville FFA participate in competitions but they also earn awards and get in-

involved in the FFA in other ways.

In June of last year, Logan Harbaugh competed in Creed Speaking at the State Level and placed third. Jacob Harbaugh earned a 3-Star Leadership Award. We were awarded the P.R.I.D.E Award for our in-

crease in membership. The chapter also earned a blue ribbon on its 2021-2022 scrapbook.

In October, while attending the National FFA Convention, the chapter earned its 2-star National Chapter Award.

Not only are they earning

awards and becoming leaders, but they are also having fun. This fall the chapter traveled down to Madison, Wisconsin to participate in the events at the World Dairy Expo.

We have also hosted many events such as a Back to School cookout, Pump-

kin Carving Contest, and a Holiday Party. Many members and school personnel are awaiting our annual Drive your Tractor to School Day.

While having fun is always good, a big part of FFA is growing leaders for tomorrow and strengthening your community. The Clintonville FFA has grown leaders through leadership conferences such as the Fall Leadership, the I AM/Connect and the Halftime Conference.

At these events, members have gained leadership skills and learned tips to improve their chapter.

To strengthen their community the chapter has sponsored plant sales, taught younger students about agriculture, and handed out boxes of donuts to all of the hard-working farmers in our area.

The Clintonville FFA is excited to be celebrating FFA Week. We are very proud of the things we have accomplished and what is in store for us in the future.

Join One 'n' Udder in Manawa FFA

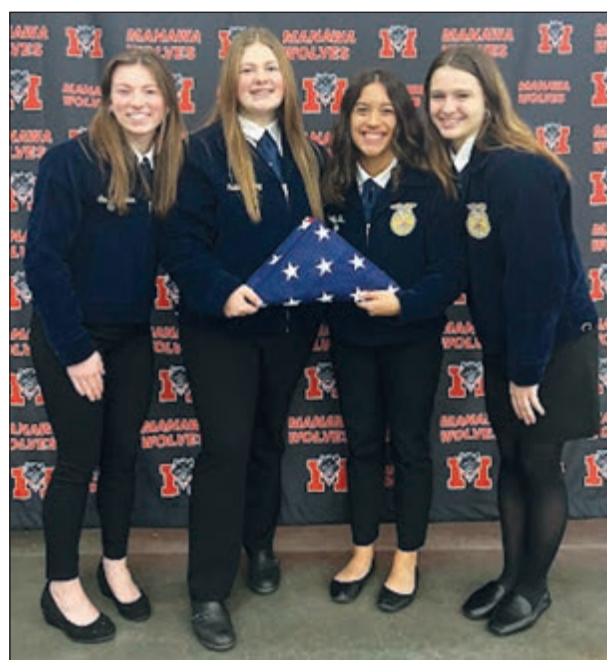
BY MANAWA FFA
SPECIAL TO POST

The Manawa FFA has been recognized as an elite chapter in Wisconsin for their program of activities that focus on growing leaders, building communities, and strengthening agriculture.

FFA members set a positive example with their leadership, work ethic and community service activities. There are currently more than 120 members of the Manawa FFA under the tutelage of Advisor Sandy Piechowski Cordes.



Traveling to and attending conferences and conventions connect Manawa FFA members to opportunities to develop premier leadership, personal growth and career success. Shown from left, Manawa members Olivia Tomko-Santos, Emily Buch, Ellie Schneiderwent, Rylee Vanden Heuvel, Isabella Ferg, Abby Elmhorst and Kelsey Behnke represented the chapter at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis.



Each November, Manawa FFA helps to organize a program for Veterans Day in our community as one of our citizenship projects. Shoen from left, FFA members Lexi Klotzbuecher, Isabella Ferg, Emily Buch and Abby Elmhorst shared an informational reading and demonstration about proper flag folding at an all-school assembly open to the public.

The officer leadership team includes Emily Buch, Spencer Strebe, Isabella Ferg, Kelsey Behnke, Olivia Tomko-Santos, Lexi Klotzbuecher, Rylee Vanden Heuvel, Abby Elmhorst, Jolie Jaeger, Daisy Krueger and Julia Seeger.

During National FFA Week, members will focus on service to others. Activities planned during the week include dress up days, collection drives, an all-school milk and cookie

break, a teacher appreciation activity, and other fun events.

A vital component to Manawa FFA is the emphasis on service learning. Manawa FFA members participate in a wide array of service activities including the Wolfwalk, Think Pink for cancer awareness, the Manawa Rodeo, Veteran's Day program, food pantry projects, elementary school projects, recycling, community beauti-



Join One 'N' Udder is the punny slogan decided by the FFA Officer Leadership Team. Shown from left are, FRONT: Jolie Jaeger, Lexi Klotzbuecher, Rylee Vanden Heuvel, Emily Buch; MIDDLE: Julia Seeger, Abby Elmhorst, Isabella Ferg; BACK: Spencer Strebe, Olivia Tomko-Santos, Daisy Krueger and Kelsey Behnke. Submitted Photos

fication, and agricultural literacy.

FFA gives many young people an important push to consider their futures - what kind of people, citizens and professionals they intend to be. The impact can be different for each student, but the core mission remains the same. The chapter strives

to develop premier leadership, personal growth and career success.

For more information about the Manawa FFA or Manawa FFA Alumni and Supporters, contact Sandy Cordes at Little Wolf High School via email at scordes@manawaschools.org or call 920-596-5800.

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National FFA WEEK

FEBRUARY 17-24, 2024

Busy year for New London FFA members

BY NEW LONDON FFA
SPECIAL TO PRESS STAR

In 2023, members of the New London FFA had a busy, successful and, most importantly, fun year.

There were lots of competitions, community service events and fun local activities for members to participate in.

To begin, our chapter has been active in the state and national conventions this year.

In June, nine members went to the State FFA Convention. Brooke Casey was the Section 8 State FFA Vice President who led the proficiency session at convention and assisted with many other convention highlights.

Evan Retzlaff participated in the state choir. Evan Retzlaff, Carolynn Backes, Heidi Weyland, Hanna Gorman and Jake Flocker participated in the Leadership Development Event or LDE Agricultural Issues and placed first in the state. They competed at nationals and placed bronze. Lora Korth and Heidi Weyland received their state degrees.

Lora Korth competed in the proficiency award areas of Forage and Diversified Agriculture. Brooke Casey competed in the proficiency award areas of Veterinary science and Equine. Casey won her veterinary science proficiency area and also won at the national level. Lora Korth also competed in the Wisconsin Star Farmer and Wisconsin Star in Agricultural Placement.

Samantha Prah and Shannon Prah competed in the agriscience fair and received a first and received a bronze rating at the national level. Evan Retzlaff also competed in the agriscience fair receiving a silver rating.

New London members traveled to Indianapolis, Nov. 1-4, 2023, for the National FFA Convention.

Other achievements not listed above include Abigail Weyland and Rachel Weyland receiving their American Degrees which is the highest degree a member can receive in FFA. Also in attendance were Samantha Prah, Brya Schmidt, RJ Weyland and Kimberly Murphy who enjoyed many tours of the agriculture industry.

An all time favorite activity of members is Ag Olympics. Members form a team of four to six where they compete in different agriculture activities all morning. Competitions include rutabaga toss, tug of war, calf hutch carry and more. This year 16 members attended; they worked as a team throughout the morning to get as many points for their team as they could. After the competition there is food and drinks and the members are able to socialize with each other.

The New London FFA



New London FFA members who attended the State FFA Convention were, from left, FRONT: Heidi Weyland, Brooke Casey, Hanna Gorman, Shannon Prah; BACK: Lora Korth, Jake Flocker, Evan Retzlaff, Carolynn Backes and Samantha Prah.



New London FFA members who attended the National FFA Convention were, from left, FRONT: Kimberly Murphy, Brya Schmidt, Rachel Weyland, Abigail Weyland, Heidi Weyland and Samantha Prah; BACK; Hanna Gorman, Jake Flocker, RJ Weyland, Evan Retzlaff and Carolynn Backes.



New London FFA members put together hygiene baskets for residents of Saint Joseph's Nursing Home. Shown, from left, are FRONT: Jaylynn Dallman, Josh Tank, Ben Murphy, Keeley Phillips, Allison Knoespel; MIDDLE: Carolynn Backes, Wyatt Adamovich, Layne Eidenberger, Hanna Gorman, Danielle Tank, Vincent Backes, Brya Schmidt, Alyssa Stoll; BACK: Lauren Nollenberg, Elizabeth Murphy, Morgan Williams, Kimberly Murphy, Sadie Belling, Jalaina Hintzke, Kylie Wagner and Evan Retzlaff.

also does many things to help out the community. The biggest event is hygiene baskets. Members brought in items and decorated cans for the season to fill with hygiene products for residents at Saint Joseph's Nursing Home Assisted Living. Members delivered 29 cans to residents this year. We also made cards for residents of Saint Joseph's Nursing Home.

Another way FFA is in the

community is through picking up trash. Every spring and fall the FFA picks up trash on the side of the road on highway 54. While this is a great community service activity, it also gives members the opportunity to bond with each other.

Another community service is providing petting zoos where students educate the youth about agriculture and the animals in agriculture.



New London FFA members organized a May Day Petting Zoo. Shown, from left, are Morgan Williams, Kimberly Murphy, Elizabeth Murphy, Hanna Gorman and Carolynn Backes.

The FFA went to four petting zoos and were able to teach kids about washing their hands before and after being with the animals, how to be safe around animals and learn more about animals and how to care for them.

New London FFA members also work every year preparing for the Waupaca County Fair. Members work with dairy cattle, swine, goats, sheep, poultry and beef cattle.

Claire Duch, Heidi Weyland and Nick Duch showed pigs, Samantha Prah, Lora Korth and Zachary Korth showed Dairy Cattle. Evan Retzlaff and Heidi Weyland exhibited sheep, and Evan also exhibited poultry. Rachel Weyland and Claire Duch exhibited beef cattle.

Some highlights include Claire receiving grand champion and reserve champion market steers, Heidi win-

ning reserve champion market lamb, Morgan Williams receiving grand champion with her pygmy goat. Zach winning grand and reserve champion Ayrshire cattle. Lora winning grand and reserve grade Holstein cows and Evan winning reserve champion Texel sheep.

Overall the New London FFA had a successful year and looks forward to 2024.

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Marion prepares for FFA Week 2024

BY MARION FFA
SPECIAL TO TRIBUNE-
GAZETTE

The Marion FFA is excited to share some of our big events and big happenings with you.

Marion FFA kicks off the year with our summer officer retreat. This year we hosted the event in our Ag classroom.

Officers had the opportunity to grow as leaders and to plan events for the first semester.

This fall our members worked with our Alumni chapter to volunteer at Col-oroma. They had a float in the parade and helped with cleanup Sunday afternoon. Our float won first place in our division.

Members also had the opportunity to attend the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. On our way we toured Albanese Candy Factory, Broken Wagon Bison Farm and Twisted Genetics.

Students also attended several general sessions, the career fair and the FFA shopping hall.

Members also had the opportunity to attend World Dairy Expo in Madison. Students had an opportunity to check out world class cattle and to visit with businesses from around the world.

Throughout the semester we had students attend the Sectional Leadership Work-

shop, Edge Conference and the Mission and Impact Conferences. These conferences give our members an opportunity to grow as leaders within our chapter and in their personal life.

Members also attend our monthly meetings, which include the business of the month and a fun activity. This year we have been averaging over 90% attendance at our meetings.

This year's FFA Week includes dress up days in both buildings, an elementary school coloring contest, lunch activities and the week wraps up with Ag olympics.

Ag olympics is an assembly at the high school where classes compete for points in various competitions. A few of the competitions are milk chug, lasso contest, relay, bale toss and tug o war. The winning class receives an ice sundae bar and the Ag Beam.

The Marion FFA is looking forward to a busy spring semester. In the upcoming months we have FFA week, CDE's, banquet, our greenhouse sale, drive your tractor to school day and Ag on the Lawn.

Ag on the Lawn is an event we host at our elementary school. We bring in farm animals, farm machinery, and farm related products. We spend the day teaching students about various aspects of agriculture!



Marion FFA members attended the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Members of Marion FFA went out and cleaned the highway as a community service.

Agri-sciences going strong in Waupaca

BY WAUPACA FFA
SPECIAL TO POST

Waupaca Agri-Sciences is dedicated to creating a viable curriculum, ensuring individuals are rigorously engaged in a relevant education to promote inquiry, innovation, professional excellence and the continued creation of a sustainable community.

While most are settling in for winter the WHS Agri-Science Department is preparing for spring.

We experienced a successful fall as the Waupaca FFA members traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana, for the National FFA Convention where they received their Three Star Chapter Award. This award is only obtained by 3% of the nations FFA chapters annually.

Our FFA members got the opportunity to network with schools and businesses from across the nation, connected by a common passion for the agriculture industry. Attendees toured Fair Oak Farms, an industrial apple orchard and a quick stop at the Albanese candy factory for tradition. While at the convention FFA members listened to uplifting motivational speakers, attended one of the largest career and education fairs in the nation and cheered on fellow FFA members as they were recognized for their accomplishments.

Three Waupaca FFA Alumni received their American FFA degrees this past convention. Karyn Mor-



Waupaca FFA members Aubrey Barbau, Emma Brunner, Rylee Nelson, Elwood Riley, Brett Strobush, MaKayla Parman, McKenna Cichy and Owen Bartel.



Shown, from left, are Emmalee Schmid, Braden Parman and Karyn Morrissey. They received their American FFA degrees at the National FFA Convention.

rissy, Emmalee Schmid and Braden Parment were among the 1% of FFA members to receive this honor.

As we are gearing up for

CTE month in February, the Agri-Science department will celebrate National FFA Week, Feb. 17-24. FFA members choose to celebrate



The annual Waupaca High School agri-sciences greenhouse sale will be on May 10-11.

this week to bring awareness to the agricultural industry, its diversity as well as the broad spectrum of opportunities for personal growth, premier leadership and ca-

reer success that FFA offers to all students here at WHS.

Waupaca FFA will celebrate the week with a number of events, keep an eye out for updates on the Waupaca Facebook page.

Looking toward the warmth of spring, the annual WHS greenhouse sale seems right around the corner. This year the greenhouse will be open 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 10-11. Visit the Waupaca FFA Facebook page for updates and more details.

The WHS floral and landscape design class will also be taking custom planter orders again this year, if you have a planter at home you that would like filled, they can be set outside the greenhouse starting March 1. Please include with your planter a sheet of paper detailing the following information: Name, email address, phone number, color preference, planter location (sun/shade/partial).

For more informations, email Hannah Whipple at hwhipple@waupacaschools.org.

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National FFA WEEK

FEBRUARY 17-24, 2024

W-F FFA wins National Chapter Award

BY W-F FFA
SPECIAL TO POST

The 94th annual Wisconsin State FFA convention was held June 12-15, 2023, at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison.

This convention attracted more than 3,700 members, advisors and guests each day who participated in workshops, activities and attended daily sessions. Weyauwega-Fremont had 25 members attend.

Reviewed during convention were the past year of service and successes for students involved in Wisconsin Agricultural Education and the FFA. In addition, local, chapter and individual achievements were also celebrated.

The W-F FFA won first in the National Chapter Award of almost 300 Chapters. The National Chapter Award looks at the FFA program as a whole and evaluates the program's activities and diversity. The chapter rank in each of the National Chapter Areas include, first place in Growing Leaders, second in Building Communities, and fifth in Strengthening Agriculture.

The W-F FFA Chapter earned Silver in their Food For America program. Food For America is where FFA members educate students in our district and community members about where their food comes from.

W-F FFA Chapter had 20 State Finalists in their Proficiency area. They include Brayden Grimm



Weyauwega-Fremont officers, shown from left are FRONT: Addysen Mitchell, Cathryn Gunst, Grace Radtke; BACK: Rio Hildebrandt, Christopher Gunst, Jessica Magdanz, Connie Peterson, Avery Samz, Luz Gomez-Chavez.

Submitted Photo

– Ag Mechanics Repair and Maintenance, Cody Hudziak – Agricultural Education, Ethan Marquette – Agricultural Processing, Ava Johnson – Beef Production, Bethany Magdanz – Dairy Production,

Eli Nett – Dairy Production, Ava Johnson – Diversified Livestock, Skylar Hahn – Equine Science, Ava Johnson – Equine Science, Cadence Schumacher – Equine Science, Ashley Warren – Food Science, Brayden Grimm – Forest Management, Victor Kiedrowski – Poultry Production, Bethany Magdanz –

Poultry Production, Ava Johnson – Sheep Production, Cody Hudziak – Specialty Animal Production, Ellie Pomrening - Specialty Animal Production, Bethany Magdanz – Swine Production, Eli Nett – Swine Production, and Cody Hudziak – Vegetable Production.

Additional Awards include Liza Pomrening was ranked first in Section 8 in her Middle School Essay Contest. She had to write an up-to 500 word essay about the theme chosen this year, which was "Elevate." Seven FFA members earned their State FFA Degree.

The State FFA Degree is the highest degree the state association can bestow upon its members.

The members earning the State FFA Degree were Ava Johnson, Bethany Magdanz, Eli Nett, Aida Zeinert, Bradley Winters, Ethan Marquette and Ryleigh Farkas.

Bethany Magdanz received the Three-Star Leader award. The award recognizes a selected member from a chapter for their work and dedication in student development, chapter development, and community development.



Weyauwega-Fremont FFA member Cody Hudziak earned first place for his proficiency in Vegetable Production at the 95th annual National FFA Convention on Nov. 3, 2023, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

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