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ACCIDENT WON'T KEEP THIS YOUNG MAN DOWN

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Willy Westman circles the Wojo Arena in rural Greenbush on a stallion named "Uno" while his cousin Kally Wojciechowski does the same beside him atop her stallion named "Champ".

Later that day, Willy stands up while secured to his track chair to open the chute doors to let the steers out, one at a time. Kally and Keith Wojciechowski-- Willy's uncle and Kally's dad-- speed after each of these steers atop their stallions to rope each one of them, as Willy cheers quietly and looks on with a smile on his face.

Before this moment, Willy began a life ride, one that proved more difficult than the rides he took atop bulls at rodeos, following an accident nearly eight months ago. But since then, he has gotten back up, rediscovered his smile, and returned to his life's passion-- rodeos.

Back on November 11, he was driving his truck home on Highway 59 near Lancaster when he hit a patch of ice and a crossing. His truck rolled, tossing him around in it. According to his caringbridge site, he was life-flighted to Sanford Hospital in Fargo.

As a result of this accident, he broke his spine at the T7 vertebrae, paralyzing him from the waist down. He also broke a heel, cheekbone, and seven ribs, and suffered a collapsed lung.

"I almost died in this whole deal after my surgery," Willy said.

"And then they did a surgery on me and they put a cage around my spine and they took out a rib to get that cage in there. So then after that I was laid up for quite awhile."

WILLY

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Willy keeps on RIDIN'

photos by RYAN BERGERON

TOP PHOTO--After opening up the chute doors to release a steer, Willy Westman smiles as he watches his cousin Kally Wojciechowski and uncle Keith Wojciechowski ride atop their stallions to chase down and rope this steer at the Wojo Arena located in rural Greenbush. While in the hospital for a couple months, Willy went through a rough time, but he told himself that he needed to get up and stop doing what he was doing. The rodeo life and the Wojciechowski farm provided him one outlet to get out of this rut.

LEFT PHOTO--Willy Westman rides a stallion named "Uno" and his cousin Kally (left) Wojciechowski rides her stallion named "Champ" around the Wojo Arena in rural Greenbush on June 27. Nearly eight months ago, on November 11, 2019, Willy suffered numerous injuries in a car accident, including a break in his spine at the T7 vertebrae leaving him paralyzed from the waist down. This hasn't stopped him, as he has continued to stay involved in an aspect of his life important to him-- rodeos-- aided by the support of family and friends.

Local FCCLA students taking in national trip

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A total of 13 local FCCLA students-- seven from the Badger Chapter and six from the Greenbush-Middle River Chapter-- are currently in Anaheim, Calif., taking in the FCCLA National Leadership Conference, June 30 to July 4. A majority of them advanced there thanks to their efforts on their individual and group projects at the regional level and then state level in Bloomington on March 28-30.

Prior to the end of the school year, these students sat down to discuss their projects, reactions to advancing to nationals, what

they were looking forward to most about their national trip to Anaheim, and words of thanks.

As for the Badger Chapter, led by advisor Gretchen Lee, five students-- Ada Lee, Amelia Wilt, Jordan Lee, Jordan Davy, and Kennedy Truscinski-- advanced to nationals by virtue of their STAR Event project performances.

The two other students-- Emma VonEnde and Hailey VonEnde-- earned their trip to Nationals thanks to being elected to

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photos by GRETCHEN LEE
Badger State Conference attendees posed for a group photo, including: Back (L-R): Tessa Blumer, Kadeyn Keller, *Hailey VonEnde, Alex Ylitalo, Gavin Davy, *Emma VonEnde, and *Kennedy Truscinski; Front: *Amelia Wilt, *Ada Lee, *Jordan Davy, and *Jordan Lee. Those who are currently at the FCCLA National Conference in Anaheim, Calif., are noted by the star symbol before their name.



LifeCare Greenbush Manor hosts family picnic

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Family members and friends joined residents of LifeCare Greenbush Manor for the annual family picnic on Tuesday, June 25, at the Manor location. The warm, sunny afternoon added to the fun of "picnicking" in the flowery courtyard.

Providing the music at the gathering were Aaron and Melissa Weil of Strathcona.

Thanks to Ronna Seydel and her kitchen staff for providing everyone with a delicious meal of barbecue, potato salad, baked beans, chips, homemade cookies and refreshments. LifeCare employees and volunteers assisted with the serving.



photo by MAVIS GONSHOROWSKI
This group of LifeCare employees was in charge of readying the plates of food to be served to residents, families and friends at the LifeCare Greenbush Manor picnic on Tuesday, June 25. More photos back page.