



HUSKIES RALLY FOR WIN

The Jackson County Central baseball team scored three runs in the seventh and 11 in the eighth to beat MCW Saturday. Story, B1



JACKSON COUNTY PILOT

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Adam Sandmeyer of Mankato-based Schwickert's Tecta America works to seal and repaint the leaky dome of the historic Jackson County Courthouse Tuesday morning.

PHOTO BY JUSTIN LESSMAN

THE VERY TIP

Dome repair only the beginning for local courthouse

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN
Publisher

Work on the exterior dome of the historic Jackson County Court-

house this week is just the \$10,000 tip of a potential million-dollar iceberg.

Crews from Mankato-based Schwickert's Tecta America on Tuesday began work to seal and re-coat the exterior dome of the 1909 courthouse building in Jackson. The dome has been leaking

for some time, said Jackson County Coordinator Steve Duncan, and temporary remedies — including placement of a sump pump and kiddie pool in the courthouse tower to collect infiltrating rainwater — were no longer getting the job done.

Expected cost of the

exterior dome work is just short of \$10,000 — half of which, Duncan said, is the cost of the lift necessary for crews to reach the towering dome.

Sealing and recoating the dome is the first on a long list of needs at the courthouse, Duncan said.

See **COURTHOUSE** on A3

Spring storm damage tops \$6.2 million

Estimates key to determination of funding eligibility

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN
Publisher

Damages in Jackson County related to flooding in March and the ice storm in April are estimated at more than \$6 million.

As of now, anyway. Jackson County Emergency Management Director Tawn Hall last Thursday pegged the county-wide damage total from spring storms at \$6.2 million. However, she said that number could well increase

between now and the end of next week as state and federal emergency management agencies continue to compile preliminary damage estimates.

State officials, along with Federal Emergency Management Agency representatives, began conducting preliminary damage assessments last week in Minnesota counties claiming damages from spring storms. Hall said the PDAs assess individual jurisdictions and townships to see if their damage totals meet the financial threshold necessary to receive assistance. Those numbers

See **DAMAGE** on A3



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Of the \$6.2 million in estimated spring storm damages for Jackson County, the vast majority — \$5.9 million — is related to utility damages.

Upcoming MS class to teach students to work hard, feel good

by MIKE JORDAN
Staff Writer

Jackson County Central Middle School math teacher Andrea Sitzman had an experience a few years back that changed her life.

Now she wants to give her students an opportunity to possibly share in a similar experience by leading a special class starting next week as part of the school's second mid-mester class offerings.

"How the idea for this opportunity for my students came about comes

from my own personal experience when I was having a personal issue and feeling really lousy about myself," Sitzman said. "I talked with Sharon Bloom, our administrative secretary, about it and she said I should try volunteering, as it makes her feel good."

So Sitzman did just that and went in search of a volunteer opportunity. That's when she met a local lady who needed her flower garden weeded.

"I did that, and it felt good to be helping her out," Sitzman said. "Then I did other things for her once a week. I took care of things she needed done, and it kept making me feel better about myself. You know, life is not always fair to us.

See **CLASS** on A7



Andrea Sitzman

Recent MnWest grads ripped apart by rollover

by JUSTIN R. LESSMAN
Publisher

Best friends Wyatt Henkels and Mic Ostgaard both graduated from college in Jackson last Thursday evening.

Less than 36 hours later, one was dead and the other was in jail, charged with causing it.

Henkels, 20, of Heron Lake died as a result of injuries he sustained when the vehicle in which he was riding — and which Ostgaard, 19, of Brewster, was reportedly driving — rolled into the ditch off County Road 9 just north of Interstate 90 southwest of Lakefield early Saturday morning.

The Jackson County

Sheriff's Office, Minnesota State Patrol, Lakefield Fire Department and Ambulance Service, Lakefield Police Department and Okabe-na Fire Department responded to the scene of the rollover shortly after 5:45 a.m. Saturday. Results of an initial investigation conducted by the local sheriff's office indicated Ostgaard was driving a 2001 Chevrolet Silverado pickup north on County Road 9 when it entered the west ditch shortly before 5:45 a.m. and rolled mul-



Wyatt Henkels



Mic Ostgaard

tiple times.

Henkels was fatally injured, pronounced dead at 6:11 a.m. Ostgaard sustained what Jackson County Sheriff Shawn Haken termed "non-life-threatening" injuries. The truck was totaled.

According to court documents, results of a preliminary breath test showed Ostgaard's blood alcohol concentration shortly after the rollover was 0.177. Ostgaard was arrested at

See **ROLLOVER** on A3



PHOTO BY MIKE JORDAN

POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE

Claudia Rodriguez shares a big smile with her family and gets an equally big smile and a handshake from Minnesota West Community and Technical College President Terry Gaalswyk during the Jackson campus commencement ceremony last Thursday evening in Jackson.