



Waterville

# Lake Region Life

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*Bucs tie school record with 34-3 season*

## WEM places 2nd in Class A State Tourney

Jay Schneider  
Life/Enterprise

After losing nine seniors from a 2018 team which advanced to the Section 2A Championship it would make any team wonder how good the following season could be.

The WEM volleyball team is now known for not just replacing players, but reloading.

With only a couple of players back from a year ago, the 2019 team looked like a different team. In name only. The talent level was still there.

The Bucs had winning streaks of 16 and 18 straight during the season, which ended in a Class A State Runner-up Finish.

WEM advanced to the State Championship with wins over Henning and Medford (for the 4th time), before losing to No. 1 seed Minneota in the championship Saturday, Nov. 9.

"I'm so proud of these girls and the season they put together. This was a group that trusted the process of building a great team," WEM Section 2A Coach of the Year Crystal Lamont said. "They were willing to work hard and pay attention to the details in order to be successful. Due to this, I felt like this team kept getting better every time they took the court. It was fun to see their progression."

As the program has progressed, with five straight Section 2A Championship appearances and two State place winning performances in those five years, the Buccaneer volleyball teams are now considered as one of the state's finest year in and



The WEM volleyball team placed second in the Class A State Tournament Saturday, Nov. 9. Left to right: Head Coach Crystal Lamont, Allison Rients, Kylie Pittmann, Trista Hering, Megan Schmitz, Delaney Donahue, Toryn Richards, Mikaya Schuster, and Rylee Pelant. Back row, left to right: Manager Mitch Tegmeier, Assistant Coach Ken Trnka, Autumn Taylor, Ella Michael, Ellie Ready, Lindsay Condon, Lily Grohman, Riley Sammon, Assistant Coach Kelsey Bauer, and Alex Heuss.

year out.

This season they put together a schedule of outstanding opponents, including State entrants Belle Plaine, Concordia Academy, and Medford. In the end, this helped prepare the team for big matches. They opened the season against No. 1 rated Kenyon-Wanamingo.

"This was the toughest schedule we've had at WEM. Some of the memorable regular-season games were beating Belle Plaine in 5 sets, beating Medford in conference play, and sweeping Concordia Academy at home," Lamont said.

"The team went into playoffs confident and determined. They were on a mission to beat Mayer Lutheran and make it to the state tournament. I would put the win against Mayer as the second-best win in WEM history only being topped by the 2015 championship win over BA."

Mayer Lutheran and WEM have represented Section 2A with five straight placewinning performances at State, including three State Championships, a runner-up finish, and a consolation title.

Lamont gave kudos not only to her players, managers, and coach-

ing staff, but to the fans.

"Our fans packed the gym and created a phenomenal environment for our team," she said. "The girls rode the support of the fans and the belief in each other to victory. Every single player on the court and on the bench was bound together and doing all they could to contribute to the win."

The State Tournament performance once again showed that WEM volleyball is among the best in the State. Their 34 wins were the most in Class A this season.

"The girls had a great run at the

state tournament just falling short to a Minneota team that played flawlessly," Lamont said. "We had a big win against Henning and the girls rose to the challenge of beating Medford for the 4th time in one season. That is very difficult to do against such a talented team. That was an impressive feat. I felt our girls played their hearts out in the championship match. I was proud of how they stuck together and kept fighting to the very last point. Something this team did all season.

"In reviewing the accomplishments of the season, the Buccaneer team didn't become enamored with stats and honors. They just wanted to win. Winning meant more than any trophy or award they might receive.

"This group of girls built a Buccaneer family that might have been tighter than any I've seen. They truly have a bond of sisters and that was a key factor in their success. This was an unselfish group that was willing to sacrifice individual success for team success," Lamont said. "The Waterville-Elysian-Morristown school and communities should be extremely proud of how these girls represented them at the state tournament and throughout the season. They are amazing young ladies of high character! I'm extremely proud and grateful for the opportunity I had to coach them!"

With only two seniors on the playing roster (Delaney Donahue and Trista Hering) and one as the team manager (Megan Schmitz), the Buccaneers future continues to look bright.



Lisa Ingebrand Photos

Soon-to-be published authors Judy Mielke and Gabe LaCroix of Waterville work on their assignments during a October 30 writing workshop for adults with developmental disabilities at the Waseca Library. Pictured (left to right): Writer Judy Mielke, Mielke's direct support care giver Erica Lee, writer Gabe LaCroix of Waterville, and Gabe's mom, Jen LaCroix.

## 'I never thought I'd be a writer'

Workshop gives adults with developmental disabilities a chance to tell their stories, become published writers

Lisa Ingebrand  
Life/Enterprise

She was born blind and never considered being a writer.

But, that's changing. "Writing is new for me, but I really enjoy it," stated Judy Mielke of Waterville. "My favorite thing I've written so far is a poem about my service dog, Bennie, who's in heaven. I like writing about him... Writing about how much I miss him and how much I love him."

Mielke, age 40, is participating in a special writing workshop for adults with developmental disabilities entitled "Tell Your Story" with the help of direct support caregiver Erica Lee. Lee

writes as Mielke dictates. "Sometimes I have to tell her to slow down because I can't write that fast," Lee laughed. "I've worked with her for a couple of months now and helping her write is helping me learn more about her. It's fun to hear her thoughts and ideas."

The program is put on by Cow Tipping Press in partnership with Waseca Public Library, using grant funding from Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council (appropriated from Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund).

"This is the second time I've taken this class," Mielke excitedly explained. "I really want to learn more about different kinds of writing, and Drew is a good teacher."

On Wednesday night, October 30, Cow Tipping's Drew Cannedy helped the writers construct their own

paragraph-long autobiographies.

"What do you want people to know about you? This is your chance to tell people who you are," he explained as he walked around the room, encouraging his students. "It can be what color you like, your hobbies, your age, or what makes you special."

Cannedy, who also teaches undergraduate courses at Minnesota State University Mankato, has enjoyed teaching the five-week workshop. "It's really fun," he said.

"Compared to my Composition class at MSU, they are really engaged in what we are working on each time and are always willing to share and participate."

The students' short autobiographies will be printed next to the writers' stories in the class book. It's something

Cow Tipping Press' founder Bryan Boyce, who grew up in Waseca, has long requested.

"There are so many books out there about people with developmental disabilities—and there have been for decades. Isn't it time we read something written by people with developmental disabilities?" stated Boyce, who began helping people with disabilities document their stories one summer, 13 years ago, while he was in college.

"My younger brother has disabilities, so you could say that I knew he had his own voice and stories to tell... and no one was asking him to tell it," Boyce shared. "Our mission at Cow Tipping Press is to help change our narrative on disability—change it to become a valuable form of identity, one to connect with

Writer to 8

## Morristown Legion to celebrate 100 years

Jay Schneider  
Life/Enterprise

The Morristown Roy Lieder Post 149 American Legion will be hosting a 100th Anniversary Open House Saturday, Nov. 16.

The event will start at 3 p.m. A free lunch will be served from 4 - 7 p.m. followed by a short program at 7 p.m.

The Morristown Historical Society will display items they have from the past 100 years.

The program will consist of a history on the Legion, how it started, who started it, and how the name was created.

There were a total of 23 members when the charter

was formed in 1919.

The charter members were Clark Smith, Dean Kanne, George Adams, Marten Schwichtenberg, Harry Calkeus, Jesse Miller, James Thayer, George Gudridge, H.L. Bunges, M.A. Murphy, William Coon, Dr. Chester Dargavel, Leo Goar, Ralph Meehl, Harry Downhour, William Hansen, Hilliard Gergen, William Farrington, Harry Mohn, Ralph Soule, Earle Dean, James Pappas, and Ed McMachales.

The post was named after Roy H. Lieder of Morristown, who was killed in action in 1918. Military records have his name as Roy Herman Leader - an Americanized version of Lieder, as

Legion to 8



## Veterans Day Program

Elysian Legion members, left to right, Ted Zwart, Ralph Dyer, Tom Niedick, and Bruce Williams presented the flags during the Veterans Day Program at WEM High School Monday, Nov. 11. See page 8 for more photos.

**EARLY DEADLINES** for Thanksgiving

The following deadlines for ads and news are in place due to the Nov. 28 Thanksgiving holiday

**Nov. 27 Golden Nugget -**  
Deadline is 3 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 20

**Nov. 28 Life/Enterprise -**  
Deadline is noon Friday, Nov. 22

