

January freeze not over yet

Warm weather could soon be replaced by another arctic blast

By Scott Thoma
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KSTP-TV meteorologist Jonathan Yuhas predicts the worst of the cold is still yet to come and we can expect -25 below lows over the last week of January.

"The brutal cold was caused by a strong polar jet stream that literally kept the bitter cold Arctic air enclosed within 800 miles of the North Pole

from September thru December as the winds of the polar jet stream were very strong," said KSTP-TV meteorologist Jonathan Yuhas. "Once the polar jet stream winds became weaker over Alaska in December, this allowed polar air to move as far south as Hawaii in early December, producing a severe blizzard on top of the Hawai-

ian volcanoes and record lows in Honolulu."

"The sub-tropical jet stream which typically runs from Hawaii to California and along the southern United States then combined to form intense winter storms from California to Minnesota in late December, and now the southern and eastern United States. Behind

the storms is arctic air," he said.

There were no record lows set in the Minneota area during the recent January cold spell, but a few record highs were set in November and December.

It warmed to a high of 30 degrees in Minneota on Saturday.

Freeze Continued on Page 8



"I just want to go home." - Casey McCoy

Togo trip takes frustrating turn

McCoy still being detained; now facing fine

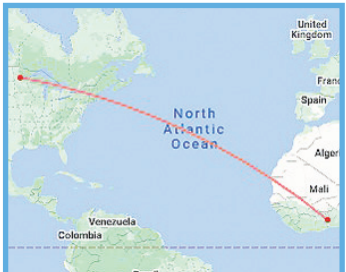
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Casey McCoy remains in Lome, Togo in West Africa following a bizarre turn of events on Monday.

What initially began as a "He-said, They-said" COVID test result and McCoy being quarantined, has now developed into an arrest where he is now facing a possible fine and/or imprisonment.

McCoy, a 2007 Minneota graduate who now lives in Dell Rapids, SD, attended the wedding of his friend and boss, Tyler Grinder, in Lome, where Grinder's new bride is a native and wanted a traditional Togolese wedding.

As McCoy and his girlfriend, Lacie Packard, were set to fly back to the United States on Dec. 22 after each tested negative for COVID as required before boarding a plane, Casey was detained by police who claimed his passport numbers



It is 6,040 miles from the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport to Togo.

were mixed up and he had actually tested positive.

While McCoy insisted Packard return to the United States, he was quarantined in a run-down hotel with little water and food.

Tyler Grinder and his brother, Trevor, both stayed in Togo and rented a house in order to support Casey until he is able to go home.

Several days passed and after more tests, McCoy kept getting no answers to the test results. He was treated poorly by

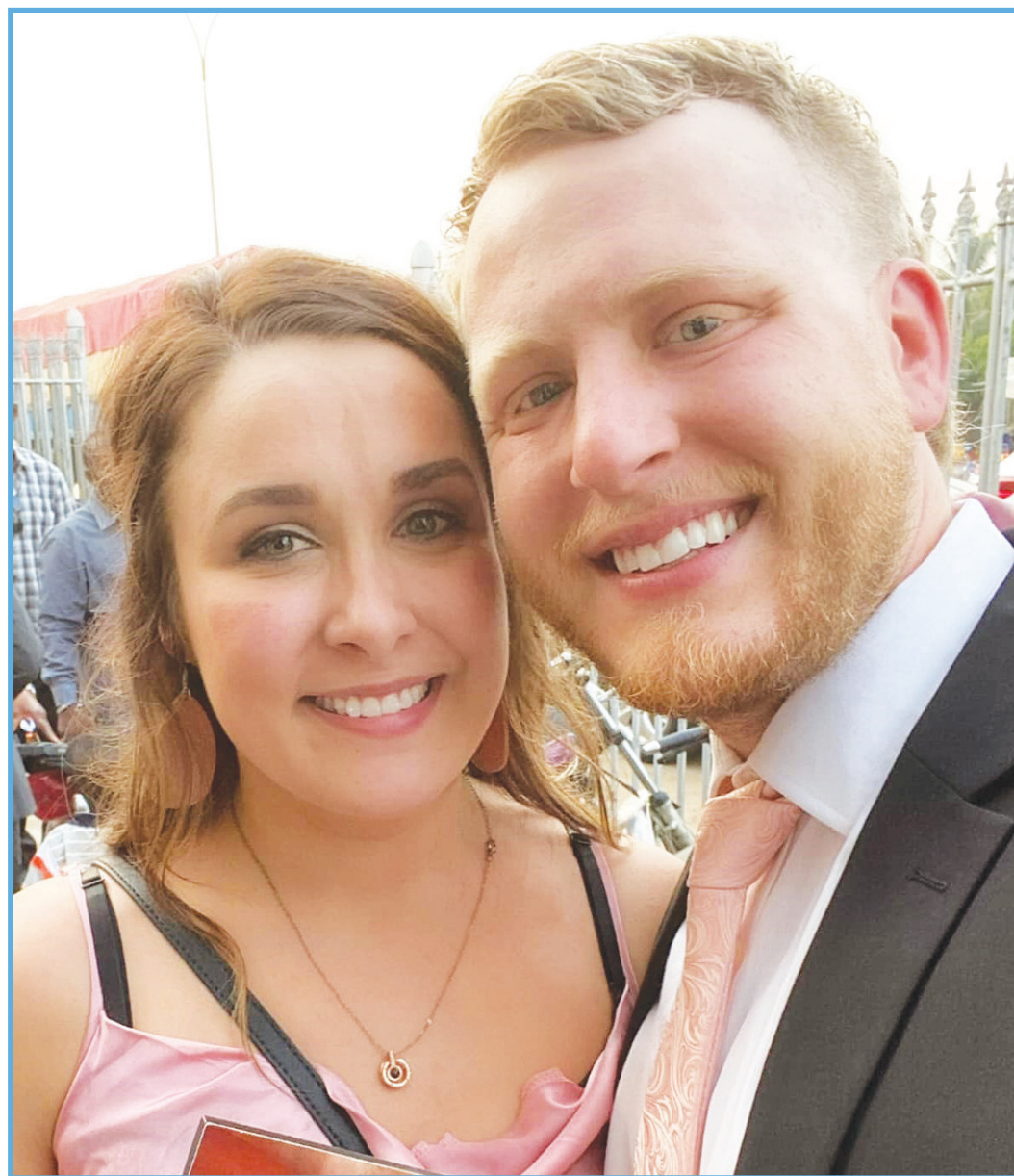
guards at the hotel, where several others from other countries were also being quarantined.

After nearly three weeks quarantined, McCoy was eagerly awaiting test results he took on Tuesday, Jan. 4. Nearly all of the others quarantined in the hotel with him were allowed to leave. He was not allowed to be released after being told his test result was not available, even though the others quarantined had all received their results.

McCoy had been working with the U.S. Embassy based a few miles away, but he was getting mixed signals from them, too.

"I hit a mental wall," McCoy said in an emotional voice. "I just thought that I can't be here another day. I emailed the U.S. Embassy and told them that I just can't be here anymore and I was losing faith in them. I just wanted to be home."

McCoy Continued on Page 8



Casey McCoy, right, and his girlfriend, Lacie Packard, were all smiles at the wedding they attended in Togo in December. Things have been anything but happy since then. Contributed photo



Fier's first

Photo above: Minneota seventh-grader Cael Fier earned his first varsity pin last Thursday. Fier pinned his Fulda/Murray County Central opponent in 5:20 in his 120-pound match in the Minneota Triangular. Photo right: Fier is congratulated by his father, Kris Fier, also an assistant coach of the Vikings, as well as teammates Quinton Anderson, Matthew Gamrak and Kyler Lozinski. Mascot photos by Brian Jeremiason



Bottelberghe learned value of helping others as a child

Minneota native cited for efforts in West Union

Editor's Note: The following article appeared recently in the Dairyland Peach based in central Minnesota. Jim Bottelberghe, a native of Minneota, MN, and works for Schaefer's Market in nearby Sauk Centre. West Union is 125 miles northeast of Minneota and 23 miles east of Alexandria.

By Jennie Zeitler
Dairyland Peach

One of West Union's most active lifelong volunteers is Jim Bottelberghe. He and his wife, Julie, have lived there since 1979, raising their five children. They now enjoy five grandchildren. In addition to that, Jim spends much of his time volunteering and helping others, in many different capacities. He gives credit for his ethic of service to his grandmother.

"She was a big volunteer," he



Minneota native Jim Bottelberghe volunteers for many things in West Union, MN. Contributed photo

said. "She just couldn't say no. She started as a candy striper in Tyler." **Bottelberghe**

Continued on Page 5

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