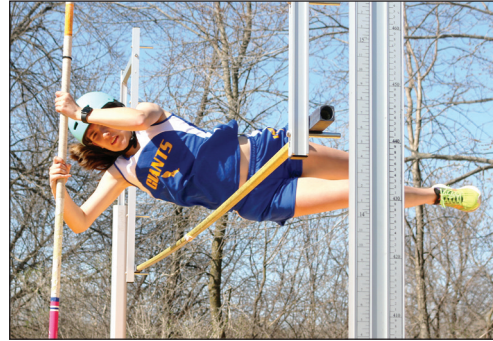




Hollywood Prom

LS-H rolled out the red carpet for a Hollywood-themed Prom on Saturday!
P.2



PR run

The Giants track and field team celebrated 17 PRs at Sibley East last Friday. P. 7



The Henderson Independent

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PHOTO BY RACHEL MILLER

Le Sueur-Henderson senior Emily Sullivan has been able to come into her own this season, as she continues to set new personal bests in the wheelchair shot put, and is aiming to get closer and closer to the state record. Sullivan was born with spina bifida, and wants to be a role model for other children with disabilities.

Giant effort pays off

Emily Sullivan aims to inspire on the field and off

By Rachel Miller
Editor

Le Sueur-Henderson senior and wheelchair athlete Emily Sullivan is preparing to close out her final year as a Giant, but before she does, she is hoping for another chance to leave her mark on the school's track and field program.

Sullivan is the oldest of three children born to Jim and Marsha Sullivan. She was

born with spina bifida, a birth defect that occurs when the spine and spinal cord don't form properly. It resulted in the nerves in her legs being damaged, leaving her paralyzed from the waist down.

As a result, Sullivan has only known life in a wheelchair, but she has not let it hold her back from pursuing her dreams, and hopefully inspiring other individuals with disabilities.

Sullivan has competed with the Giants track and field and tennis teams since seventh grade, and is also part of Knowledge Bowl. The Minnesota State High School League includes a wheelchair division at every track and field meet, and although Sullivan usually is competing for personal records, she has a lot of support from her teammates and coaches.

Sullivan competes in the 100, 200 and shot put events, and has been making big gains in shot put this year. Sullivan has set two new PR's this season, and currently has a personal best of 13 feet, 6.5 inches. She is less than a foot away from the current state record, 14 feet, 6.25 inches throw by Kathryn Lubahn of Pine Island in 2012.

Two years ago, Sullivan's throws were around nine feet. Her gains in the past year are partly due to the fact she was able to borrow a special throwing chair for her senior season. In previous years, she would throw from her regular wheelchair, but this year she was able to borrow a special wheelchair from a friend, which includes a vertical bar on the front that



PHOTO BY RACHEL MILLER

Emily Sullivan powers down the final stretch in the wheelchair 200 meter dash last Friday in Sibley East.

SULLIVAN

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Thanks for the memories

Jessica Manthei leaves legacy of love and loyalty

By Rachel Miller
Editor

On Feb. 14, the Henderson community was rocked by the news that one of their own, Jessica Manthei, 45, had passed away. This Saturday, Manthei's family and friends will be hosting a rocking Celebration of Life to remember the woman with a heart of gold who never stopped thinking or caring for others.

A "Thanks for the Mems Tour" memorial and celebration will be held at North Star Farm Event Center, 34234 322nd St., Le Sueur, this Saturday, May 14 from 6-11 p.m. Johnny's Smokin' BBQ opens at 6 p.m., with a social hour from 6-7:30 p.m. Hollywood BLVD. will open at 7 p.m., and attendees are encouraged to wear their favorite 80s gear in Manthei's honor.

There will be limited parking on site, so attendees are encouraged to take advantage of the shuttles that will be running to and from Home-town Inn & Suites in Belle Plaine, and bars in Henderson and Le Sueur.

Manthei grew up in Henderson, and was in one of the first classes to graduate from the Le Sueur-Henderson School District, in 1994. She had a love of sports, and competed in volleyball, basketball and track and field, as well as band and choir.

She went on to attend Mankato State University and competed in track and field and was a member of the Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority.

After graduating college, she came back to Henderson and worked for TTI, Inc. for a long time. Sister Maria Hernandez described Manthei as "very loyal and caring, and very giving."

"She had a gift for making people laugh," Her-



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Henderson's Jessica Manthei will be remembered for her love for life, 80s music, family and friends. A celebration in her honor is being held this Saturday at North Star Farm Event Center.



Jessica Manthei with Poison frontman Bret Michaels.

MANTHEI

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Aspen Dental offers FREE dental care to veterans on June 11

On Saturday, June 11, Aspen Dental locations nationwide will open their doors to provide free care to military veterans across the country.

Now in its eighth year, the Day of Service provides much-needed dental care for veterans at no cost to honor their service and break down barriers to health care.

Aspen Dental has six participating offices in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area:

- 2860 West Division St STE 102, Saint Cloud, MN 56301
- 3088 White Bear Ave. North, Saint Paul, MN 55109
- 3570 River Rapids Dr NW ST 110, Coon Rapids, MN 55448
- 2370 Fairview Ave. N, Roseville, MN 55113
- 7936 Portland Ave S, Bloomington,

MN 55420

- 9281 Cedar St, Monticello, MN 55362

Since 2014, doctors and their dental care teams from Aspen Dental offices across the country have donated more than \$23 million in dentistry services to more than 30,000 United States military veterans and people in need through the company's Healthy Mouth Movement.

During the Day of Service, Aspen Dental doctors and their dental care teams focus on treating the most urgent dental needs to help get veterans out of pain, from fillings and extractions to hygiene and basic denture repairs.

If you are or know a veteran or military family in need of dental care, call 844-277-3646 to book your free appointment at a participating location. Advance appointments are required.



Riverview Coffee is COMING SOON to Belle Plaine!

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Le Sueur-Henderson glams up for Hollywood Prom



The Le Sueur-Henderson golf team looked stunning. Pictured are (in front) Sofie Wilson, Darbi Dunning, Ava Wagner, Peyton Hartmann and Cooper Vanden Einde, and (in back) Jack Steinborn, Ayden Christ, Beau Becker and Bryson Steinborn.



PHOTOS BY RACHEL MILLER

Friends Grace Hardel, Dylan Kahlow and Keegan Straub before the students were bussed to the dance.



Watch out Hollywood, Justin Terwedo and Naima Bravo strolled with confidence and looked ready to take prom by storm.



Abreeana Reasor and Haydin Klobassa looked ready to rock the Hollywood red carpet.



Chloe Brandt and Sean Kulzer looked stunning in coordinated red outfits.



Gage Bishop and Rhyan Fritz had a classy and timeless look.

SULLIVAN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sullivan can grip for stability and leverage.

"Emily has really grown as an athlete in the past few years, particularly this year," said Track and Field Coach Sue Hynes. "Emily has become more of a competitive athlete this year and she really showed her determination and grit at the St. James meet when she had some competition!"

The other part of Sullivan's success comes from good ol' hard work, including weightlifting and working on proper throwing form. Hynes said her coaching staff has increased the difficulty of Sullivan's workouts this year, and they leave Sullivan with "spaghetti arms."

"Those workouts have definitely paid off as Emily is less than a foot away from breaking the state shot put record. Being so close to the record has made her even more determined," Hynes added.

Sullivan has a special wheelchair for her 100 and 200 sprints, which includes two rear wheels and one in front, with an elongated body that is lower to the ground to be more aerodynamic. The racing chair is on loan to Sullivan from the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute.

Sullivan will warm-up and do stretches and modified drills with the track team, and there is no shortage of support and encouragement from her teammates at both practice and

competition.

As her final weeks and meets come to an end, Sullivan is keeping her eye on that shot put record and a return to the state tournament, and is proud of all that she has accomplished.

In addition to her accomplishments with the Giants, Sullivan has participated in adaptive track and field with the Courage Kenny Blizzard team since seventh grade. In 2019, she set a new national shot put record for her age and disability classification at the Paralympic Junior Nationals in Eden Prairie, with a throw of 14 feet, 0.5 inches.

Sullivan also enjoys attending the National Wheelchair Sports Camp in Stewartville, MN in the summer. The camp was started by Bob Bardwell, who became a paraplegic after a heavy construction accident in 1973. Some of the camp highlights include ziplining, horseback riding, archery, mini-golf, laser tag, an obstacle course and more. More information on the camp can be found at <https://www.ironwoodsprings.com/wheelchair-sports-camp>

Sullivan is also preparing to head to Augustana College this fall, where she plans to double major in Special Education and ASL.

"Because of the wheelchair sports camp, I grew up with a lot of disabled role models, but a lot of kids don't get that chance," Sullivan said. "I want to use my skills to help other disabled kids and give them someone to look up to."



PHOTO BY RACHEL MILLER

Emily Sullivan takes a throw in the shot put competition on Friday in Sibley East. This season, she was able to borrow a special chair from a friend. The throwing chair has a vertical metal bar that Sullivan can hold onto, giving her leverage and stability. Sullivan has PR'd twice this season, and her best throw of 13-6.5 is less than a foot from the state record (14-6.25).

Have a news tip or story idea? Call us at 507-248-3223