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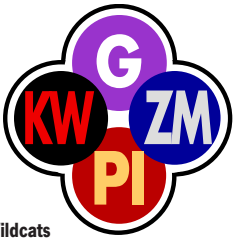
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NEWS-RECORD is a consolidation of:
Goodhue County Tribune, Est. 1896
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Pine Island Record, Est. 1880
Wanamingo Progress, Est. 1910
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Goodhue Wildcats
Kenyon-Wanamingo Knights
Pine Island Panthers
Zumbrota-Mazeppa Cougars

One of Two Sections

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News-Record photo by Faye Haugen

ZM dance advances to the State for 16th straight year

LAKE CITY – The dynasty of Zumbrota-Mazeppa dance continues as the Cougars won their fifth straight Section 1A jazz dance title in Lake City on Saturday, February 12. ZM will advance to the state dance meet on Friday, February 18, for the 16th straight year in jazz. The Cougars will also compete in the State Class A high kick meet on Saturday, February 19. Celebrating their first place finish in jazz competition are, from the left: Emerson Bengtson, Peighton Buck, Kaitlyn Finstuen, Rianne Buck, Madelyn Fredrickson, Rachel Krinke, Isabella Roberts, Olivia Seymour, and Joselyn Stensland. See page 10 for more.

PI principal named head football coach

By Kip Groettum

PINE ISLAND – Pine Island High School principal Mitch Schiltz will be taking on an additional role as the new varsity football coach. The Pine Island School Board voted to hire Schiltz at its meeting on Thursday, February 10.

Schiltz has been the principal at PIHS since 2016. He is married to Angie and is father to three sons: Blake (ninth grade), Cody (seventh grade), and Tyson (fourth grade). He takes over the program from Jon Stapleton, who served as head coach for twelve seasons and resigned to spend more time with his family.

Schiltz was hired after a search committee considered as many as fifteen candidates for the job. Of those candidates three were selected for interviews. In the end, the committee believed Schiltz to be the best man for the position. The board agreed.

Schiltz has been involved with football and youth sports for years. He played football in high school at Caledonia and in college at Winona State. Following college, he coached football for eight years as an assistant at John Marshall High School in Rochester. His professional interests took him away from the sport for a while as he worked toward his ad-



Mitch Schiltz

ministrative degree. Those studies eventually led him to become the principal at Lewiston-Altura High School where he worked for five years before coming to Pine Island. Football took a back seat, but he continued to coach youth sports the whole time. Now he's ready to take on the challenge again. "You never know where life is going to take you" he said, "but from an early age I always thought that I would coach football."

Still, he is also the principal of the high school. How will he manage that?
"It's a balancing act," he said. "The only way you can do it is

to have good people." Schiltz believes that he has a good staff to work with. He also believes his job is to build up and support those strengths. His job, in a manner of speaking, is to help his coaches succeed. They then can help his players succeed. Everyone plays a part. He believes that if he works to build up the strengths and the skills of all the people around

him, then the work will become more manageable for everyone.

It's a concept he wants to apply to his athletes as well. At this point, Schiltz believes that his job is not simply to coach football players but to help to develop young men of character. The key, he believes, is through leadership building. He wants to see his juniors and seniors set an example for the underclassmen. He wants to see

the upperclassmen be more welcoming to the younger players, and to show them a good work ethic and good decision making.

"I am humbled by the opportunity to work with these kids," he said. "And I am thankful to Dr. Champa and the Pine Island Board and community for the honor of being allowed to lead this program."

ZM School considers running its own meal program

By Holly Galbus

ZUMBROTA – Carrie Frank, of Carrie Frank Consulting of Rochester, spoke with the Zumbrota-Mazeppa School Board at its work session on February 7 about operating their own meal program instead of contracting with a food service company. The current contract with Lunchtime Solutions is expiring at the end of the school year, and, instead of immediately sending out requests for proposals from food service companies, the board decided at its January 24 meeting to invite Frank to present her plan for the district to operate its own meal program. The district has contracted with Lunchtime Solutions, Inc., headquartered in South Dakota, since 2013.

Superintendent Michael Harvey said making the change to a self-operational meal program would "provide us with some flexibility and options we don't currently have."

Frank's plan includes a collaborative effort between ZM and the Pine Island School District—the two districts would

See ZM MEALS, page 3

Goodhue School approves track and golf co-op with KW

By Allegra Hoppe

GOODHUE – Goodhue and Kenyon-Wanamingo Schools will be joined together for golf and track this year. At a special meeting in addition to its work session on February 7, the Goodhue School Board approved joining a sports cooperative with KW for grades 7-12 track and golf. Activities director Josh Wieme said that he has asked the Gopher Conference for approval and notified the state and region of the planned partnership which has all been met with no resistance. The board approved this cooperation which will be effective this spring and be binding for two years. Goodhue is in the Hiawatha Valley League, but

the cooperative team will compete in the Gopher Conference.

New gym seating

The board members visited "Gym 3" in the school building to discuss options for bleacher seating. Wieme recommends installing seating on all four sides of the gym to maximize crowd space for larger sporting events such as high school tournaments.

Board members reviewed measurements showing the proposed options for how far the bleachers will reach onto the gym floor, and how tall the top row would be. They also discussed the possibility of adding seat backs to the bleachers either during initial installation or through community fundraising post-install. The board requested more specific cost estimates before coming to a decision.

Wildcat Care/Little Cats

Director Mindy O'Connor gave a brief update on the success of the Wildcat Care and the Little Cats program. Current enrollment for Wildcat Care is approximately 15 students during the morning session and 30 in the afternoon. Enrollment for Little Cats is around eight students.

New rates have been presented to the board for approval at the February 28 meeting in time for the March registration. Rates for Wildcat Care are planned to increase about three percent starting in July and moving into the 2022-23 school year, while the rates for Little Cats will remain the same.

O'Connor concluded her update with an insight into what

a typical day consists of for a preschool student in these programs including group activities, lunch, and open play.

Other business

The special meeting also involved the acceptance of the toilet project bid from W.A.K. Construction Services of Plainview. The bid of \$399,700 will go toward updating the bathrooms throughout the school building.

Superintendent Evan Gough gave a brief budget overview with more details to come at the next regular meeting during the financial report. The construction fund currently has a balance of \$740,000, but after completing several outstanding project items, including the toilet project, it is expected to have approximately \$400,000 remaining. After damage to the domestic water line recently led to an unexpected cancellation of classes, Gough said that he will be looking into estimates for adding a new pipe to the list of projects.

A grant from the Lions Club will help to provide training to two therapy dogs that will service Goodhue Schools. These dogs will be used in instructional and non-instructional settings in order to help students both educationally and emotionally. The board will be looking into how best to collect parent permission regarding the safe use of these dogs with their students.

The next regular school board meeting will be on February 28 at 6:30 p.m. in the Goodhue K3 flex space.

PI student advances to Southeast Minnesota Final Spelling Bee

ROCHESTER – Pine Island seventh-grader Austin Luckey was one of twelve students advancing to the Southeast Minnesota Final Spelling Bee. Two Regional Spelling Bees were held on Tuesday, February 8, at the Wood Lake Meeting Center in Rochester, with fifty-nine students from twenty-nine districts in southeast Minnesota participating. The competitions were coordinated by the Southeast Service Cooperative.

The top twelve spellers (six from each Spelling Bee) now advance to the Final Spelling Bee on Tuesday, March 1, at 9 a.m. at the Wood Lake Meeting Center, 210 Wood Lake Dr SE, Rochester. The event is

anticipated to be done before noon. The Grand Champion of the Final will advance to the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Other students advancing are (name, district, grade):

Ella Hoscheit, Caledonia, 8; Hayden Reed, Caledonia, 6; Johanna Spielman, Owatonna, 7; Addy Kobler, Plainview-Elgin-Millville, 5; Rayna Siwani, Rochester, 5; Igor Vuckovic, Rochester, 7; Eliana Lanners, Rochester, 8; Lillie VanBuskirk, Rochester Catholic, 8; Kolton Nerstad, Spring Grove, 8; Tommy Passe, St. Felix Catholic, 6; Sam Passe, Wabasha-Kellogg, 8.



Austin Luckey

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