

AFTER THE HUNT

See who had success in your neck of the woods in 'After the Hunt' on, PAGE B8

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Pioneer Journal

VOLUME 144, NO. 46 | THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2021 | \$2.00

VETERANS DAY

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COVID SURGE

Wadena County leads again, not in a good way

By Michael Johnson
Wadena Pioneer Journal

The Centers for Disease Control reported this week that Minnesota is among the highest seven-day rate of new COVID-19 infections in the country.

The state's rate of 472 cases per 100,000 is triple the U.S. average. And in one of the most infectious states, the CDC reports that Wadena County has one of the highest case rates for COVID, 1,030 cases per 100,000. More than twice that of the state average. The CDC shows a 15.2% positivity rate in the county for the last seven days out of 965 tests performed.

Coincidentally, Wadena County also has the third lowest vaccination rate in the state, with 43.5% of the total population receiving at least

one dose of the vaccine, according to MDH. They surpassed Todd County this week which sits at 42.5% vaccinated.

As of Tuesday, Nov. 16, Wadena County reported two more COVID-related deaths from the previous week bringing the total to 35. They also report a total of 2,850 positive cases since the illness struck in spring 2020.

Despite illness being around every corner, Tri-County Health Care President and CEO Joel Beiswenger noted at a Wadena County Commission meeting Tuesday morning that it is still abundantly clear that some just don't believe there is a problem.

"There is still a sense that COVID isn't real," he said speaking to the

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Level of Community Transmission of All Counties in US

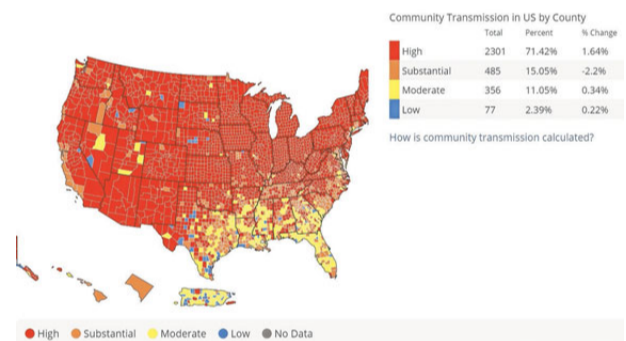


Image courtesy the Centers for Disease Control
The Centers for Disease Control shows all but one of Minnesota's counties are currently experiencing a high rate of COVID-19 transmission.



Rebecca Mitchell / Pioneer Journal

Shell Tornquist, who served in the Vietnam War, receives a big hug from his great-great niece Sydney Jorgenson at the Bertha-Hewitt Schools' Veterans Day program on Nov. 11.

EMBRACING HONOR

Community members honor the legacy of veterans' sacrifices

By Rebecca Mitchell
Wadena Pioneer Journal

On a day celebrating what veterans have given to each of us, community members at Bertha-Hewitt Schools gathered to pause and remember the sacrifices made by veterans in our communities, state and country.

While thanking members of the United States military who served, are serving and those who have

passed away, veterans and school members spoke about the courage veterans have in defending honor, duty and country.

"Give us the freedom to walk, to breathe, to love, to cherish," said Butch Rice, Bertha American Legion William Larson Post 366 member, in prayer about veterans. "When we look at veterans, what do we see? Lord Jesus, we see you in them because first you were

the one that was sent to serve every human being. And now we are still called to serve, as veterans, our brothers and sisters."

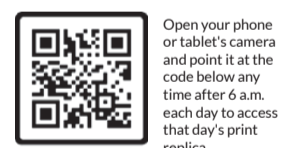
Students from seventh to 12th grade also participated in the Veterans of Foreign Wars Elmer Goche Post 3922 Patriot's Pen and Voice of Democracy essay contests along with students from Wadena-Deer Creek, Verndale, Staples-Motley and Sebeka.

Seventh grader Gabrielle Knoll placed first amongst Bertha-Hewitt students and first amongst area schools, which moves her onto the next competition for the VFW's sixth district.

In her essay, Knoll noted responsible independence, respectful diversity and reverent patriotism as the ways to be a good American. She said depending on one another, respecting

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VETERANS DAY

Verndale celebrates those who answered the call

By Michael Johnson
Wadena Pioneer Journal

VERNDALE — Veterans were honored with patriotic music, special readings and the attention of hundreds of students during the Veterans Day program at Verndale Public School on Thursday, Nov. 11.

Verndale Superintendent Paul Brownlow thanked all veterans for attending the event and gave a brief overview of the history of Veterans Day.

Catching the ears of

elementary students in the school gymnasium, was veteran Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Mark Anson, a Wadena resident. He described his time in the Navy including his opportunity to do a backflip off a helicopter as a helicopter rescue swimmer. Not something everyone can say they did.

Anson enlisted in the military as someone who wanted to serve his country. He served from 2010-2016, where he was part of a helicopter com-

bat squadron and completed one eight-month deployment to the Persian Gulf.

While serving in that capacity was important, he described how military service requires sacrifice whether the veteran had to serve in combat or not.

"The act of service itself is being part of something bigger than yourself," Anson said. He described being a part of the raising of

VERNDALE: Page A7



Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal
Madison Schmitz (left) and Abigail Ervasti were recognized for their first and second place award winning essays for the Voice of Democracy contest.

Birch Lake Counseling grows in former Wadena Methodist Church

By Michael Johnson
Wadena Pioneer Journal

Birch Lake Counseling has completed a remodel of the 1992 portion of the former United Methodist Church in Wadena and is now providing therapy and counseling services at that location on Dayton

Avenue. "We are about providing hope and healing to individuals, couples and families," Carol Horsager, lead therapist said of their work in counseling. They serve a roughly 30-mile radius around Wadena at this location.

The business is co-owned and operated by Carol and Chuck Horsager, offering therapy for children and adults, as well as families, couples and groups. Carol is a licensed marriage and family therapist;

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WEEKEND WEATHER

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Wadena County

Level 3 sex offender to be released in Wadena

Staff reports

Patrick L. Walker, 31, is returning to Wadena, this time as a Level 3 sex offender when he's expected to be released from prison Monday, Nov. 22.



Walker

from prison or a secure treatment facility when the Wadena Police Department believes that the release of information will enhance public safety and protection.

Walker has served the sentence imposed on him by the court and is transitioning into the community. This notification is not intended to increase fear but rather raise awareness. Law enforcement believes that an informed public is a safer public.

The Wadena Police Department may not direct where this individual does or does not reside, nor can this agency direct where he/she works or goes to school.

Those convicted of sexual and predatory offenses have always been released to live in our communities. It was not until the passage of the Registration Act that law enforcement had an ability to track movement of these individuals after their initial release. With the passage of the Community Notification Act law enforcement may now share information about many of these individuals with the public. Abuse of this information to threaten, harass or intimidate a registered person is unacceptable and such acts could be charged as a crime. Such abuses could potentially end the ability of law enforcement to provide these notifications.

More information about Walker and the sex offender program can be found at the Minnesota Department of Corrections offender locator.

The city of Wadena has four other registrants subject to public notification, according to the Department of Corrections: Paul T. Bright, Terrance L. Lindmarck, Christopher A. Sharp and Davis E. Whitaker.

WDC drama presents 'Wizard of Oz'

By Rebecca Mitchell
Wadena Pioneer Journal

"We're off to see the Wizard, the wonderful Wizard of Oz!" You can catch the songs, dances and fun scenes at Wadena-Deer Creek's Memorial Auditorium on Nov. 18-20 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5.

You can follow your favorite characters from Kansas to the Land of Oz as they adventure to the Emerald City and learn about themselves on their journey home. The large cast and crew includes Lily Adkins as Dorothy, Maggie Hegarty as Aunt Em/Glinda, Kylee Collins as Uncle Henry/Oz Guard, Maddie Gallant as Zeke/Cowardly Lion, Eshetu Loer as Hickory/Tinman, Kellanie Oldakowski as Hunk/Scarecrow, Ashley Pavek as the Wizard of Oz and Ryann Schmidt as Miss Gulch/Wicked Witch.

The cast said some of their favorite scenes are anything in Kansas, meeting the wizard, screaming at one another's characters, dancing and travelling along the yellow brick road. Over the weeks of practicing, which have been just about a month, Loer said the energy clicked recently. Adkins added watching Oldakowski become the Scarecrow, Gallant the Cowardly Lion and Loer the Tinman came in small moments that shone their character.

"The energy on the stage and the energy between everybody it's just comforting even during a stressful day or a stressful performance. I just feel like everyone is supporting each other and that's great," Oldakowski said.

While rehearsing the musical, the cast and crew love laughing with their friends.

"A lot of us are coming together and no matter how many lines you have or if you're just a munchkin or someone with no lines or someone in tech, we're all super



Rebecca Mitchell / Pioneer Journal

Glinda (Maggie Hegarty) explains to the Cowardly Lion (Maddie Gallant) how Dorothy had the ability to go home all along.

important and even without one minor role or anything the whole thing falls apart. So that's really nice knowing that we're all equals here," Adkins said. "We all need each other," Oldakowski added.

Hegarty and Adkins hope audiences will find the musical as funny as they do.

"The dances they bring up the moods because they're just really simple, really little dances, and it's one thing you can tell you really need to have fun with it. You need to be smiling and bouncing all over the place," Adkins said.

The ensemble includes Lily Parker, Kaylee

Endres, Isabelle Lehmkuhl, Isabella Larson, Amaya Walker, Levyn Rousslang, Makayla Clark, Phoenix Gray, Abigail Ames, Addie Ames, Alexis Randall, Kaylin Lupkes, Grace Gallant, Anna Church and Lauryn Gravelle.

The crew includes Hannah Plautz, Chloe Kaphahn, Zooney Rousslang, Alexis Rousslang, Corra

Endres, Katie Fieymeyer, Anna Fiemeyer, Megan Hamelau, Lydia Helmbrecht, Adam Plautz, Hannah Dodsall, Brayden Lenk, McKenna Dunbar, Katy Muckala, Emma Weniger, Kiyanne Maxwell and Kaylee Lehman.

The doors open at 6:15 p.m. on Nov. 18-20 with the show starting at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 at the door.

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A visit to a virtual classroom had me saying 'I can do that'

I'm not saying I am looking for a new job, but a visit to a virtual reality learning lab recently has me thinking I might be ok at welding. Maybe even good at it. Ok, that may be a stretch and I am not quite ready to give up on informing readers about things that matter, so what can I do? I can't just toss away my new found gift. I'll start by telling you about how I found my hidden skill. I got a phone call Tuesday, Nov. 2, about an amazing opportunity coming to Wadena the very next morning. It was Evelyn Fowler, team leader of the Rural Minnesota CEP in Wadena. She shared that Wednesday morning a semi truck and trailer would be coming to their parking lot loaded with big ideas. Literally the semi trailer is filled with virtual reality equipment and is named Big Ideas. It's a non-profit that travels from town to town teaching people about trade skills that they may have no opportunity to take part in otherwise. So of course I was curious about it. I showed up the next day and was sent straight to the trailer to go to work. At first I thought I would just watch others learn how to drive an excavator or paint industrial parts. When I saw someone using a virtual reality MIG welder, I was intrigued. The training device has you put on what looks like an actual welding face shield and hold what looks and feels like an actual welding gun. The technology is even wired to a device that looks exactly like a real welder. This was as close as I could get to using a real welder without actually burning a hole through



MICHAEL JOHNSON



Photos by Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal
A conference room full of students try their hand at different trades using virtual reality goggles and wands during a visit from Big Ideas on Nov. 3 in Wadena.

my pants or wasting hundreds of dollars in high priced equipment. So there I was shield adjusted, gun in hand, finger on the trigger and my trainer Joe Schotzko giving me directions on how to start my first weld. He explained exactly how far to hold the tip of the welder from my joint. The virtual screen I was watching gave me indicators too, lighting up green when I was positioned just right to begin my weld. Then with a pull of the trigger I was welding. The noise, bright light and smoke emitting from my weld showed I was actually doing it. Arrows indicated how quickly to move along the joint to make a smooth weld and red lines let you know if you were moving off the target. At the end of my 3-4 inch weld, I got to see my weld closely. Not great looking, but it was a weld that would hold up, at least in the virtual world. I scored in the low 90s. Not bad I thought. I thought that was fun, but I'll move on. Joe thought otherwise. My instructor had me start a new weld and this time I was more consistent yet my read out at the end showed precisely where I was going wrong. Where I went too slow or too fast, when my hand went slightly off track. The critique was very detailed. I was impressed. Now a new group

of students came in behind me and I was ready to move on, but Schotzko wasn't done with me yet. He had me weld once again, except this time I was to demonstrate a weld for others. No pressure right? This time I knew right where to start. I knew where to hold my hands. I knew how to operate this thing without explanation. When I finished my weld, it was a thing of beauty. I scored a 99. I didn't ask, but I am going to assume that was out of 100. Am I that good? Should I deny the world of my natural ability? Now I am not going to say that you can hand me a real welder and I will now weld a perfect roll of quarters or create a weld that you could bet your car axle on. That I am sure takes much time behind an actual welder. What this virtual reality device did is show me the basics of what welding feels like. It can build your confidence enough to make the user say, "Maybe I could really do this?" That's exactly the hope of the Big Ideas trailer and those who bring it to their locations all over Minnesota. It offers a free opportunity to try out the trades without the fear of breaking something or the high cost of using actual materials. "It kind of takes the fear away," Andrew Kish, mobile learning



lab coordinator for Big Ideas Inc., shares how the skilled trades industry needs more young people and that virtual reality may be just the right tool to get them on their way down that path.

lab coordinator for Big Ideas, said. He explained how the paint simulator shows exactly how much paint you used and how much you wasted. It even translates that to a dollar amount. That way when you go to the real deal chances are you will understand how to avoid waste. Kish said the Big Ideas trailer is close to visiting 100 sites. It all began in March 2021 in New Ulm, Minn. They are working on adding more simulators and bringing on a second trailer soon. He was inside the Career Force center watching students work with virtual reality goggles doing painting and woodworking. Watching a room full of people with VR goggles painting and



Joe Schotzko (holding a welding gun) instructs an interested student in the proper use of a MIG welder on Nov. 3, in the Big Ideas mobile classroom.

lifting objects was quite hysterical. "It's always easier to try something and say you don't like it than to never try it," Kish said. Kish comes from a welding background and has traveled 49 states and to Europe thanks to his jobs. He loves his work. The lack of skilled workers like him drove him to do something to change that. He was 27 when he was in need of taking on more employees for his business. He could not find anyone under age 30 to apply for a job. "That was the hardest thing to realize is, where are we going to go from here," Kish said. He shared that the industry desperately needs young people to enter skilled trades. Skilled trades may not be for everyone, but neither is a four-year degree. "Trades kind of make the world go round," Kish said. "Skilled trades are always going to be there."

give it a try. Most were laughing through the experiences. The Big Ideas website even lists sewing as one of their classroom learning opportunities. Their goal is to have people walk away from this saying "I did that!" That's how I felt. Fowler said she was thrilled to have the Big Ideas trailer come as it was one more tool they could use to try to get people into a career. The Detroit Lakes office got the trailer to come and they then brought it to all their Rural CEP locations. "Just trying to spark interest in getting a job and how we might be able to help with that," Fowler said of the reason for bringing it to Wadena. Unsurprisingly, the career center has far more jobs available than people seeking them. "If they are looking to change a career or get a different job or need help with job search or resume, those are free services that we can help them with," Fowler said of the Rural CEP office services. Following the experience Rural CEP staff had us take a survey. I have to say this was a five-star experience for me. Getting this mobile classroom and staff to your location is not free. Fowler mentioned schools can seek a Perkins grant to pay to have this mobile trailer come to their location to get more students trying these careers out. No harm in giving it a try.

Tri-County hosting virtual Auxiliary Auction

Staff reports
Tri-County Health Care will again host their Auxiliary Auction virtually. During the auction, community members bid on baskets filled with holiday themed items prepared by area businesses, community organizations and Tri-County departments. All funds go to the TCHC Auxiliary to make an impact for patients and staff, according to a news release from Tri-County. Due to the continued prevalence of COVID-19 and space restrictions, the auction will be held virtually in 2021. Website bidding will begin on Nov. 26. Final bids need to be placed by 8:30 p.m. on Nov. 30. Tri-County encourages everyone to participate.

The deadline for baskets is Nov. 24. Baskets can be dropped off at the information desk in the Wadena Clinic. A live remote showcase of the auction items will take place on Nov. 30 at 6 p.m. Additionally, participants will be able to purchase raffle tickets to enter them in a drawing for a prize basket. The value of the prize basket ranges from \$100 to \$300. The auction will also feature a wine pull where participants can purchase a random bottle of wine for \$10. The randomly selected wine bottle can have a value from \$3 to \$18. The Holiday Auxiliary Auction is a free event. Participants will be able to view the baskets and watch the live showcase



Contributed / Tri-County Health Care
Tri-County Health Care will have a virtual Holiday Auxiliary Auction.

at no cost. The auction site can be accessed at one.bidpal.net/tchc/welcome. The TCHC Auxiliary focuses on community health and education. Funds raised help provide equipment and tools for facilities across the region.

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OBITUARIES

DEATHS

Melva Ament



Memorial Services were held for Melva Ament, age 80 of Wadena, Minnesota on Thursday, November 11, 2021 at Karvonen Funeral Home in Wadena with Pastor Laurie Albertson officiating. Honorary Pallbearers were all of Melva's grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Melva Marie Ament (Denny) was born on March 11, 1941 to Benjamin and Florence Denny (Andersen) in Staples, Minnesota. She attended Staples High School in Staples, graduating with the class of 1959.

On March 8, 1960, Melva was united in marriage to John Ament. Their marriage was blessed with 9 children. Together they made their home in Wadena, Minnesota. Melva worked for Peterson-Biddick Seed Company, the Uptown Café, and provided childcare for numerous families.

Melva enjoyed reading, baking, canning, and cooking. She spent time outdoors gardening often and liked to travel. She loved attending all of her children and grandchildren's activities and events. She had a contagious smile and giggle and was loved by all.

On November 5, 2021 Melva passed away at her home in Wadena. She will be dearly missed by her family and friends. Preceding Melva in death are her parents: Benjamin and Florence; infant son: Scott Timothy Ament; grandson: Jesse Michael Pickar; sister: Freida Franks; and daughter-in-law: Robin Ament.

Surviving Melva is her husband of 61 years: John Ament; children: Cheryl (Dennis) Pickar; John D. Ament; Nadine (Dan) Wegscheid; Brenda (Matt) Peterson; Cindy (Collin) Suhl; Kevin (Nancy) Ament; Michael (Rhonda) Ament; and Jeremy (Angie) Ament; 23 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; siblings: Lawrence Denny; Laura Trana; Walter (Zela) Denny; Gladys (Gordon) Anderson; LeRoy (Tracy) Denny; Darrell (Jackie) Denny; and Gary Denny; many other relatives and a host of friends.

Please visit www.karvonenfuneralhome.com to leave memorials and condolences on Melva's Tribute Wall.

Arrangements provided by Karvonen Funeral & Cremation Service of Wadena, Minnesota.

Joyce Kovar



Funeral Services for Joyce Kovar, age 77, of Deer Creek, were held on Tuesday November 16, 2021, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Deer Creek with Pastor Donald Wagner officiating. Pallbearers were Tim Johnson, Jeff Stevens, Ed Wegscheid, Rick Wegscheid, Dave Guse, Darren Guse,

Dan Kovar, Don Melz, and Rick Garrels. Honorary Pallbearers were Andrew Bendlen, Kim Bendlen, Ryan Leaderbrand, Terance Kovar, Travis Kovar, Trina Kovar, Ashley Kovar, Stephanie Kovar, and Ana Cline. Joyce was laid to rest in Compton Cemetery, Deer Creek, Minnesota.

Joyce Ann Riemer was born on October 25, 1944, in Pipestone, Minnesota. Her parents were the late Richard John and Esther Elsie (Buchholz) Riemer. She was baptized on November 19, 1944, in Pipestone and was confirmed on May 17, 1959, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Deer Creek. Joyce attended Country School in Ruthton, Minnesota and graduated from the Wadena High School with the class of 1962.

Joyce was united in marriage with Joseph Kovar on August 24, 1963, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Deer Creek. Their marriage was blessed with 6 children: Joseph Jr, Kelly, Kristy, Jeff, Jason, and James.

Joyce's first job was at the A&W Rootbeer Drive-In in Wadena. She was also employed as a telephone operator for Northwestern Bell. Joyce left the workplace in favor of being a stay-at-home mom but would still cook at the Deer Creek School for 10 years. She was also a part time waitress at the Eagles Café.

Joyce was very active in her community. She was an event coordinator for Seder Meal for 30 years, a vacation Bible School Coordinator for several years. Joyce was also a Sunday School teacher for many years. Joyce enjoyed cooking and baking, hunting, fishing, bird watching, and spending time with her friends and family.

Joyce passed away on November 9, 2021, at the Tri-County Hospital in Wadena. She will be dearly missed by her friends and family. Preceding Joyce in death are her parents, Richard and Esther Riemer, father and mother-in-law, Ed and Elsie Kovar and sister-in-law: Cleone Riemer.

Joyce is survived by her loving husband Joseph; children: Joseph Kovar Jr, Kelly (Wayne) Leaderbrand, Kristy (Tom) Bendlen, Jeff (Beth Kirchenwitz Cline) Kovar, Jason (LaRae) Kovar, James (Krista) Kovar; 9 grandchildren; siblings: Richard "Bud" (Pauline) Riemer, Jean (Don) Kassube, Carol (Jim) Guse, Randy (Deb) Riemer; many other relatives and a host of friends.

Please visit www.karvonenfuneralhome.com to leave a message of comfort and support for Joyce's family.

Arrangements provided by Karvonen Funeral & Cremation Service of Wadena, Minnesota.

Ralph Knudson



A Celebration of Life was held for Ralph Knudson, age 90 of Bluffton, Minnesota, on Tuesday, November 16, 2021, at Karvonen Funeral Home in Wadena, Minnesota with Pastor Dave Seaton officiating. Ralph was laid to rest at Wadena City Cemetery, Wadena, Minnesota.

Ralph Guy Knudson was born on June 4, 1931, in Wadena, Minnesota. His parents are Gerald and Luella (Erckenbrack) Knudson. Ralph grew up in Wadena where he attended Wadena High School.

He spent the years combining in the Dakotas and into Wyoming. Ralph drove for Coca-Cola at the Wadena bottling company.

Ralph was married to Bernice Grewe on June 10, 1951. Ralph and Bernice were married 17 years and blessed with 3 children: Bart, Pam, and Sharon.

He also was employed in the mines in Hibbing for several years, Knight & Gail Motors, and Goetz-Everson Motors in Wadena. After being semi-retired Ralph enjoyed working part-time at Tom's body shop.

Ralph met Carolyn Schwartz they were together for 12 years, and a daughter Carmen was born.

In life Ralph enjoyed going to the casinos, coffee at Powerhouse, hunting in Minnesota and out west. He also enjoyed spending any free time with family and friends.

On November 2, 2021, Ralph passed away at Tri-County Health in Wadena, MN at 90 years of age. He will be dearly missed by his family and friends. Preceding Ralph in death is his parents, stepmother: Isabel, daughter: Sharon, brother: Darrell (MaryJane) Knudson, granddaughter: Jennifer, great-grandson: Kyle, First wife: Bernice, and companion: Carolyn Schwartz.

Surviving Ralph are his children: Bart (Linda) Knudson; Pam (Dave) Irlbeck; and Carmen (Dale) Robinson; 15 grandchildren; several great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, and a host of friends.

Please visit www.karvonenfuneralhome.com to leave memorials and condolences on Ralph's Tribute Wall.

Arrangements provided by Karvonen Funeral & Cremation Services of Wadena, Minnesota.

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Marlene Curtis

Nov. 28, 1940 - Nov. 14, 2021 PERHAM, Minn. - Marlene Curtis, 80, Perham, Minn., died Sunday, Nov. 14, in her home.

Visitation will be from 4-7 p.m., with parish prayers at 4 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 18, at Karvonen Funeral Home in New York Mills, Minn. Visitation will continue from 12:30-1:30 p.m., followed by a funeral Mass at Friday, Nov. 19, at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Rush Lake near Perham.

Arrangements by Karvonen Funeral Home.

Gerald Gorentz

Dec. 14, 1934 - Feb. 20, 2021 PERHAM, Minn. - Gerald Gorentz, 86, Vergas, Minn., died Saturday, Feb. 20, in Perham Living.

Visitation will be from noon to 1 p.m., followed by a memorial service at 1 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 18, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Perham.

Arrangements by Karvonen Funeral Home.

Joyce Kovar

Oct. 25, 1944 - Nov. 9, 2021 WADENA, Minn. - Joyce Kovar, 77, Deer Creek, Minn., died Tuesday, Nov. 9, in Tri-County Hospital.

Services were previously held.

Arrangements by Karvonen Funeral Home.

POLICE BLOTTER

Wadena County Sheriff's Office

Nov. 4
2:06 a.m.: A woman beat up the reporting party during a domestic. Caller was possibly impaired.

4:21 a.m.: Caller stated the power was shut off on him. Then called back that someone was threatening him.

8:28 a.m.: Caller spotted a wounded deer at Hwy 23 and 7.

9:14 a.m.: Loose cattle were reported. Officer met with the owner and located the open fence area. They were advised to contain cattle.

10:26 a.m.: Caller's wife was driving slow looking at deer when a male drove up and started yelling at her, then tried to back into her vehicle. The woman drove away and was not followed.

10:50 a.m.: A car killed deer was picked up south of Wadena.

2:06 p.m.: Caller reported someone trespassed on his property. He found fresh bulldozer tracks.

3:41 p.m.: Caller reported a neighbors goats were in his yard again. Officer made contact and sheep were put back in.

Nov. 5
12:46 a.m.: Daughter and mother got into fight over homework. Daughter claims mother hit her and locked her out of the house.

7:43 a.m.: Truck vs. deer reported. The deer did not survive.

5:23 p.m.: Reporting party claims they were hit and spit in the face. Claims they were knocked out.

7:32 p.m.: A man on his own property said he was threatened by a neighbor. The man said the neighbor came up to him when he was on his own property and started yelling and saying he was "lucky you still have your teeth." The man was advised to keep his distance from the neighbor.

8:52 p.m.: Caller struck deer with his vehicle. The deer was dispatched and a permit was issued to take the deer.

Nov. 7
6:28 p.m.: A man hit two deer and wanted to claim them. He was issued permits for the vehicle killed deer.

Nov. 8
6:27 p.m.: Squad vs. deer was reported.

9:41 p.m.: Truck vs. buck was reported. Caller wanted a permit to take the deer home.

Nov. 10
A car vs. semi crash occurred on Hwy 10 in front of Todd-Wadena Electric Cooperative. No injuries reported.

David Reese

Jan. 9, 1937 - Nov. 6, 2021 VINING, Minn. - David Reese, 84, Vining, Minn., died Saturday, Nov. 6, in his home.

Visitation will be from 4-7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 18, at St. Edward's Catholic Church in Henning, Minn. Visitation will continue from 10-11 a.m., followed by a funeral Mass at 11 a.m., Friday, Nov. 19, at the church.

Arrangements by Karvonen Funeral Home.

Elaine McCormick

Feb. 15, 1931 - Nov. 11, 2021 MENAHTA, Minn. - Elaine McCormick, 90, Sebek, Minn., died Thursday, Nov. 11, in Rose Haven Assisted Living.

Visitation will be from 10-11:30 a.m., followed by a memorial service at 11:30 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 20, at Karvonen Funeral Home in Wadena, Minn.

Arrangements by Karvonen Funeral Home.

Laura Jacobson

April 24, 1954 - Nov. 10, 2021 NEW YORK MILLS, Minn. - Laura Jacobson, 67, New York Mills, Minn., died Wednesday, Nov. 10, in her home.

Services were previously held.

Arrangements by Karvonen Funeral Home.

NEW ARRIVAL



Jaya Lynn

Baby girl Jaya Lynn was born on October 20, 2021, to Mackenzie and Kyle. She weighed 7 pounds, 7 ounces and was 21 inches long. She was delivered by Dr. Bobbi Adams at Tri-County Health Care in Wadena. Proud grandparents are Matt and Darcy; and Kris and Ribsby.

Thank You

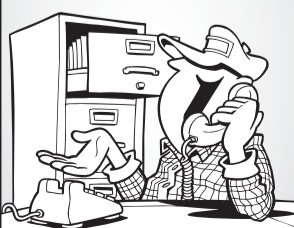
The family of Jim Peters would like to thank everyone for the love & support shown to us during the loss of Jim.

Thanking the doctors facilities and doctors who have taken care of Jim over the past years and the assistance from Knute Nelson Hospice the final months.

Thanks to Karvonen Funeral Home, Father Aaron, Bluffton Choir and the ladies who prepared & served the meal for Jim's service.

The family of Jim Peters

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OPINION

W-DC students share why they're proud to be American

Fifth and sixth graders from Wadena-Deer Creek School were asked the question, "Why are you proud to be an American?" Their answers were varied, but it's clear a level of pride exists among these young writers.

Top essayists in the fifth and sixth grade essay contest include:

Fifth grade

First place: Bristol Wynn, Cayden Clark, Aubree VanRoekel and Teeghan Robinson.

Second place: Danielle Lorentz, Faylynn Juare, Adam Phillipy and Jadeyn Malisheske

Sixth grade

First place: Hudson Hathaway, Emma Betterman, Addison Hilluka and Avery Flath

Second place: LilyMae Johnson, Lily Stroeing, Abigail Worden and Ralieg Parker

Some ran in last week issue, here are the remaining:

By Emma Betterman

I am proud to be an American because I have an amazing family and friends and also the best teachers. I love how many people sacrificed for us to have freedom and rights for women and men to be equal. I am also proud to be an American because we have rights to go to school and buy food so we can feed our family. In a book my teacher read to my classmates and me, this girl didn't have a right to go to school and speak up about how it is unfair for girls and women. She finally spoke up about it and she got hurt badly but her book and her words are traveling around the world and giving people hope. When I grow up I want to join the army to fight and protect America and everyone in it. If I can't, I will be happy that I am free and honor those who lost their lives for us.

By Lily Stroeing

I'm proud to be an American because I can live where I want, work where I want, go where I want, go to church whenever and believe in what I want. Another reason America

is great is because we have clean and safe water to drink. We have lots of special places like the Statue of Liberty that represents freedom. Another special place is the Grand Canyon and Niagara Falls. These places represent the beautiful nature in America. Another place that represent our country is Mount Rushmore that was made in memory of some presidents.

A final reason that America is great are the men and women who died for me to be here on this day. I know it took a lot, so I thank them all. I also want to thank the people that served our country like my great-grandpa George and grandpa John. That's why I'm proud to be an American.

By Addison Hillukka

This is a question that could be answered in many ways, but to me America is the place I call home. It is where I was born and has shaped me into the person I am today. There are so many things that make up my idea of why I am proud to be an American.

America is about opportunity, individuals can do great things in America that they may not have been able to do elsewhere. America is about fulfilling the ultimate dream. It's about equality no matter what they may look like on the outside. It's about democracy lending a hand to those in need and selflessness and coming together as one. Many others making sacrifices for America and their loved ones.

And that is why I am proud to be an American.

By Abigail Worden

I am proud to be an American because of all the freedom and liberty. There are kind, caring, gentle, sweet and helpful people. We remember those who lost their lives to save ours and for our freedom. We honor the Navy, Army, Coast Guard, Air Force and Marines. We'll keep our freedom no matter what the world throws our way. When we go to school, we learn

about freedom and liberty and learn what it's like to be an American. Our opportunities are endless and we hope to keep it that way. Everyone should be glad to be an American. These are the reasons I'm proud to be an American.

By Avery Flath

I am proud to be an American because of all the rights that we have. We get to go to school, wear what we want, and get to choose what job we want to have instead of having one picked for us. I am thankful for all the sacrifices that were made so that we can live free. I want to remember all the lives that were lost. They had to stare, be cold and miss their families. And we get to do sports and hang out with our friends. I am proud to be an American because of all the unselfish people who got us this freedom. Saying thank you is not enough. We should donate things to them and also have suppers with them. There are so many things we can do to show gratitude. I feel bad for the families who had to go through loss and other sacrifices. We should always be thankful and give appreciation.

By Raleigh Parker

I'm proud to be an American because we are free because of brave men and women. We also have free public education so that everyone can learn. We have so many opportunities to do things we love, like sports. Also, we have freedom of speech so that we can say what we believe. We have freedom of religion so that we can believe in what we think about our religion. I'm proud because we have the strongest army in the whole entire world. We wrote the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. These documents are part of why I'm proud to be an American.



LETTERS

Impressed by respect for veterans Shirley and Bob Anderson, Ruth and Larry Clark VFW Post 3922

Dear Editor,
As members of VFW Post 3922 and its Auxiliary, we attended the Veterans Day program at Verndale Public Schools on November 11, and we were so impressed with the program.

Perhaps even more impressive was the excellent behavior and respect shown by the K-12 students to the veterans and the guest speakers—students and adults alike. Unfortunately, respect and respectful behavior seem to be missing in many situations these days; therefore, the gratifying display of reverence and respect from the staff and students at Verndale Public Schools is to be commended. Keep up the good work!

ASK A TROOPER

Your life and others depend on safe driving

Minnesota State Patrol

Question: I heard something about "Crash Responder Safety Week," can you talk about that?

Answer: Crash Responder Safety Week runs November 8-14. The goal is to reach out to every emergency responder, driver, and passenger to educate them in how to play their part in ensuring safe responses at crash scenes. Crash scenes can be dangerous, and it's in everyone's best interest, from emergency responders to passing motorists, to have the scene cleared quickly and safely.

Whether you are responding to a crash, involved in a crash, or passing by a crash, we all need to do our part to be sure that everyone makes it home safely. For those working on or along the road:

- ▶ WEAR your high visibility vest or apparel.
- ▶ IMPLEMENT traffic control.
- ▶ WORK in the shadow of the blocking vehicle.
- ▶ NEVER turn your back to traffic.
- ▶ MAINTAIN situational awareness.

For those of you behind the wheel, slow down and move over. Your life and the lives of others depend on it. The days are getting shorter and the nights longer as we approach winter, but throughout the year this has been a dark year when it

comes to traffic deaths on Minnesota roads. We've surpassed 415 deaths on our roads and are on pace to have the most fatalities since 2007. The numbers aren't just statistics. Each of those deaths represents someone who is a spouse, a child, a brother, sister, friend, co-worker, and neighbor. Lives are forever shattered by their loss. For employers, crash fatalities and serious injuries mean not only the loss of a friend and colleague, but of loss of valued talent and expertise.

We're not alone here in Minnesota. Across the U.S. and even around the world, we've seen a startling increase in traffic crashes, resulting in injuries and fatalities, particularly due to excessive speed and lack of seat belt use. Help keep emergency responders safe and help keep yourself and other motorists safe. Don't become a statistic. YOU are important – to your families, friends, colleagues and everyone. If you drive, your time on the road is the most dangerous part of your day. Drive smart and live.

If you have any questions concerning traffic related laws in Minnesota, please send your questions to: Trooper Jesse Grabow - Minnesota State Patrol at 1000 Highway 10 West, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501. Or reach me at jesse.grabow@state.mn.us



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HONOR

From Page A1

the government, embracing different ethnicities and people's strengths and showing patriotism without being harmful toward other countries is important.

"I think showing these attributes will make you and I great Americans," Knoll said. "I believe if we do this we can change the world for the better."

With 24 entries from Bertha-Hewitt for the Patriot's Pen contest, Eva Blashack received a quilt, Emery Winkler placed third and Miette Hansel second; Hansel also placed third amongst area schools. From the 11 Voice of Democracy audio-essay entries, Destiny Bartels received a quilt, Emma Bobick placed third,



Rebecca Mitchell / Pioneer Journal

Students and community members stand as American Legion William Larson Post 366 members present the flags at Bertha-Hewitt Schools' Veterans Day program on Nov. 11. The Color Guard members include Bill Kern, Gordy Barthels, Dale Mueller, Art Packard, Walt Packard, Mike VanHeel, John Vavra and Cindy Goepferd.

Stetson Guderjahn second and Taylor Lloyd first.

Veterans from World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam War and

the wars in the Middle East were represented. Lieutenant Colonel

(retired) David Goetze said service members continue their vigilance to protect Americans. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves and transferred to the Minnesota National Guard, and had many leader and instructor positions. Goetze lives in the Hewitt area, is a Wadena Veterans Park committee member and works as a substitute teacher at the Bertha-Hewitt schools.

With a range of duties, Goetze said military members serve on planes, ships and on the ground as infantrymen, tankers, engineers, mechanics and personnel support. "It is to them, the ones that set aside their personal wants and ambitions, who made the sacrifices, endured the heat, the cold, the time without family in foreign lands, away

to ensure our life and liberty, this sacrifice we celebrate on Veterans Day," Goetze said. "We do not fight for ourselves, we fight for the people that cannot fight for themselves and the freedoms and the opportunities we have here are not by choice or by chance."

Today, service members are volunteers, and what makes the United States military incredible, as Goetze said. He added that people don't have to enlist in the military to serve the country, people can serve and volunteer in the community.

"So here's to our country's heroes; they're a cut above the rest," sixth grader Aislinn Brown recited from a poem by Joanna Fuchs. "Let's give the honor that is due to our country's very best."

VERNDALE

From Page A1

the American flag every morning and night while on base. Everyone within earshot of the playing of "Colors" stopped in their tracks to watch the raising and lowering of the flag.

Anson shared that while he was pulled to serve in the military, it's not for everyone. He asked the crowd of students present to stand if they had committed to serve. None stood.

"Military service isn't for everybody," Anson continued. "But service is for everybody. And if you haven't thought

about how you can serve, where you can serve and in what capacity you can serve, I encourage you to do so. Service is a beautiful thing. It makes us better people and it makes us better citizens."

Two Verndale students also read their Voice of Democracy essays, which spoke to the question, "America: Where do we go from here?"

First place winner Madison Schmitz shared in her essay that we need to be honest with ourselves and each other. She suggested we not hide past failures from youth, instead we learn from them.

"Do not shelter our youth any longer; help them see the light at the

end of a tunnel through all the dark our past may contain," Schmitz said. "Prepare them to avoid the mistakes we have made and preach on the importance of teamwork and coming together despite the adversity and division that they may face."

She said what the current generation can do is be better listeners.

"Take the time to listen to one another," Schmitz said. "We all have our own beliefs and opinions, but attacking one another is only destroying our country and dividing us."

Second place winner Abigail Ervasti walked the audience through some history from the beginning of the Unit-

ed States of America, through the Civil War.

What she drew from this tumultuous time period is that the country remains divided.

"We need to reach compromise and common ground with others that are different from us," Ervasti said. "We have the most diverse population on the planet

and we should celebrate that and use it to our advantage, not rebuke those are not like us personally."

Ervasti, like Schmitz, agreed that we can learn from our past, not to let it haunt us, but to shape us.

Those attending heard songs from both the Verndale choir and band.

During the playing of the different military branch songs, veterans were asked to stand and be recognized. Surrounded by students, the veterans were showered with claps and shown respect by the student body. The entrance to the school was also covered in messages thanking veterans for their service.

Take a break with us!

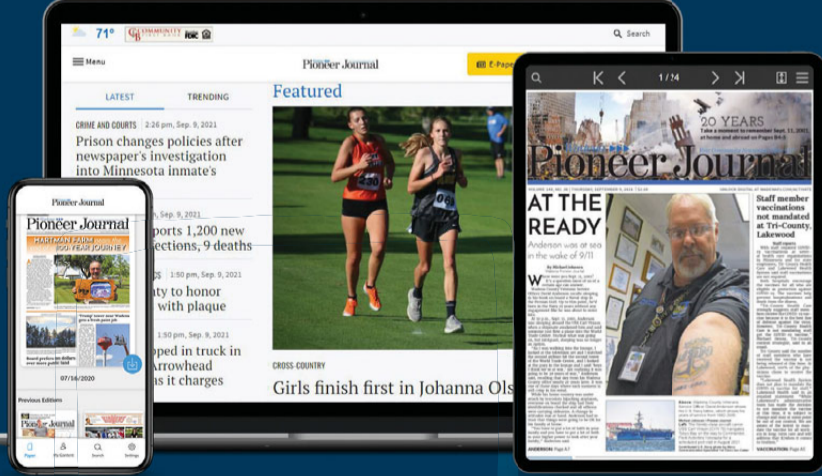


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COVID

From Page A1

group remotely by video. Meanwhile, hospital staff are dealing with full beds, working to find places for ill people to go and, yes, watching people die.

"I can't overemphasize, we are in our biggest surge to date," Beiswenger said of the increase in COVID patients.

While the illness spreads out throughout the country, hospitals and staff are feeling the urgency in the situation.

Beiswenger delivered a plea to the county board and those present to take the situation seriously. He described a situation last week where TCHC was using every oxygen device in the facility. Had they had one more person admitted in need of that life saving device, they would have had to pull their ethics group together and make the difficult decision of who would get the care they need.

"Nobody wants to make that decision," Beiswenger said. The hospital has since been able to add three more oxygen devices to help fulfill a need for

patients.

Even before Beiswenger spoke, COVID's touch could be felt within the board meeting. County commissioner Jon Kangas was absent for the second meeting in a row. He provided a short letter, read by Wadena County Coordinator Ryan Odden. In the letter Kangas explained why he was gone, including 14 days he spent hospitalized with COVID. Kangas was now at home recovering, still on oxygen.

He's not alone as Beiswenger expressed rural hospitals are full.

"My people are tired," Beiswenger said of the

hospital and clinic staff. "They are stressed. We just don't see an end in sight over the next few weeks."

Beiswenger backed up his talk with graphs the hospital staff utilizes to watch trends in illness. It showed an upward trend in COVID cases and COVID hospitalizations.

While the trend did not appear to be dropping, staffing numbers have dropped, which he said was comparable to all industries experiencing a worker shortage and with the vaccine mandates coming soon, Beiswenger had no doubt that more staff

would be lost.

"Almost certainly we will lose staff," Beiswenger said. "We hope to minimize that. In a situation that is already full — it is probably going to get worse."

So what's to be done?

"Vaccine is the best tool we have available to us," Beiswenger said.

Beiswenger asked again for people to get vaccinated and added that the mortality rate for the unvaccinated is far higher than those who are vaccinated. He said he understood that people may make

the personal choice to not be vaccinated but emphasized that other mitigation tactics should be put to use in those situations, like masking and social distancing or staying home if you are sick.

COVID in the state

As of Tuesday, Nov. 16, the Minnesota Department of Health reported 857,791 confirmed cases, 9,047 deaths and 816,736 now released from isolation.

3,330,128 people have completed the vaccine series. For those 18 and older, that's about 79.8% of the state's population.

CHURCH

From Page A1

has a master of education degree in parent education and family relations; is licensed in emotionally focused therapy; and is a somatic experiencing professional. Chuck is a former Wadena County Commissioner and former pastor of Central United Methodist Church near Verndale. He now serves as business manager for the therapy business.

The couple moved into the new location in Wadena in June 2021. Prior to that they had a location in the Erik Olson CPA office on Jefferson Street in Wadena. The new site includes four counseling offices with room for more. There's even a play therapy room suited for serving children and families. This is in the former music room of the church.

Birch Lake Counseling also offers counseling at their other locations including Hackensack, Crosslake and Remer and Bemidji. Telehealth options are also available.



Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal

Chuck and Carol Horsager are co-owners of Birch Lake Counseling in Wadena.

Carol recognizes that finding the right therapist for your mental health needs is very important in achieving positive results. She remembers having to travel several hours to seek help years ago. She recommends talking with friends and family about who has helped them, looking at websites for therapist profiles or just calling counseling offices to find out what therapist may best fit your unique needs.

This business has five therapists and two children's therapeutic services and supports throughout their five locations. Carol said the business offers in-home services and family peer support services. She has specific training in trauma.

"I feel like as a counseling center, marriage is probably one of the things we do very well," Carol added.

One thing about Birch Lake Counseling

that stands out is that the therapists themselves are the ones doing intake. Based on the clients needs, the therapist best qualified to help will reach out to determine a time to meet and begin counseling.

"That's what makes the difference, we as therapists contact a client. We don't do a middle person," Carol explained.

The Horsager's grew up in this region and Carol recognizes that there is a significant

need in this underserved area of the state. In seeking out counselors to join Birch Lake Counseling, Carol notes that they have to have a heart for this population of people.

One thing Carol said she is pleased to see these days is that people are less afraid of getting help. When parents see their child is in need, it is much more accepting to seek help.

The Wadena location was the perfect fit for the counseling office as each counseling room has a window. Each one has cozy seating in a relaxing environment. Extra emphasis is put on making clients feel totally comfortable because Horsager recognizes many are coming in with anxiety and stress. The hallways are covered in Carol's handiwork, numerous quilts.

"We try to be a real professional, caring, cordial, comfortable environment," Chuck said.

While the Horsagers have backgrounds in Biblical training, their counseling is not specifically billed as Christian counseling. They recognize that their beliefs

may not be the same as those they are serving. Carol said she seeks to serve the whole body. The couple is formerly of Sebekka but now lives on a hobby farm in Clearwater County.

With the counseling center only taking up the west annex of the former UMC church building, it begs the question. What of the rest of that 111 year old church? The options are nearly endless, according to Chuck. He's hopeful to find the right group to make use of that portion of the historic building.

Find out more by calling Birch Lake Counseling at 218-632-2220. If you have ideas about how to use the other portion of the former church building, Chuck is open to ideas. You can reach him at 218-639-4225.

Open house

To see the place for yourself and to speak with staff, plan to attend their open house from 1-6 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 18 at the office at 15 Dayton Ave. SE in Wadena. Refreshments, music and tours will be part of the open house.



Keeping you safe

After creating thousands of family-sustaining construction jobs, and millions of dollars in local spending and tax revenue, Line 3 has been replaced across Minnesota. The replaced Line 3, now known as Line 93, is safely delivering the reliable and low-cost energy people in the Midwest depend on every day.

In some communities, work is still taking place—with activities such as right-of-way reclamation and deactivation of legacy Line 3 segments.

Keeping communities, our employees and contractors safe is our top priority.

As this end-of-project work continues, you may still see truck traffic and heavy equipment in and around town. For your safety, and for the safety of others, please use caution when driving near construction activities and do not enter our work areas.

As a precautionary measure, our employees and contractors continue to follow local COVID-19 guidelines while in your community.

We thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

For more information, visit enbridge.com/line3US.

New York Mills headed to U.S. Bank Stadium after Class A quarterfinal victory

By Aaron Young
Perham Focus

The New York Mills football team punched its ticket to U.S. Bank Stadium on Friday night in defeating the previously undefeated Deer River Warriors 20-6. "We're excited," New York Mills head coach Matt Radniecki said. "We beat a very good football team. We believe we're a good football team, but we (put up a) heck of a fight here."

Deer River's (11-1) Sean Drotts recovered a fumble on the opening kickoff. The Warriors moved chains several times but were turned away at the goal line. The Eagles (10-1) forced a turnover on downs at the three-yard line.

New York Mills' Ethan Ruther broke the scoreless stalemate when he ran the ball in for a three-yard touchdown four minutes into the second quarter. However, the extra point was blocked, leaving the score at 6-0.

The Warriors were pinned deep in their own territory after a block in the back infraction on the ensuing kickoff. The New York Mills defense came up big once again when linebacker Brayden Ehner took an interception on third-and-long to the house. The Eagles punched in the two-point conversion and took a commanding 14-0 lead.

In the third quarter, the Warriors found a spark on offense. Josiah Herfindahl broke free for a 99-yard rushing touchdown to pull



Aaron Young / Perham Focus

New York Mills defeats Deer River in the Class A state quarterfinal at Brainerd High School on Nov. 12.

within eight points.

New York Mills' Jonah Johnson pulled down a 43-yard catch with under seven minutes in the third. This led to Bren Salo's 13-yard rushing touchdown to put the Eagles up 20-6 a few plays later.

Late in the fourth quarter, Deer River's fourth-and-six pass fell incomplete, leading to victory formation for the Eagles. Radniecki was impressed to see his defense step up in the biggest game of the season so far.

"They've done it all year long, and this is no different," Radniecki

said, "We keep saying every week, but we made big plays."

"This is unbelievable," Salo said. "We've been talking about this since we were kids, and this is the goal. The goal is to make it to state. We didn't doubt ourselves. Being the (third seed), people doubted us. But we knew."

The Eagles are headed to Minneapolis on Saturday, Nov. 20, for an 11:30 a.m. kickoff against Mayer Lutheran (11-1). Mayer Lutheran, the Section 2A champion, beat Murray County Central 34-18 in Jordan on Friday night.

Wolverines football team looks back on winning season

By Aaron Young
Wadena Pioneer Journal

The Wadena-Deer Creek football team made history on the individual level and team in their third year under head coach Kyle Petermeier. From the first five-win season since 1999, to a plethora of passing yards, this year was a fun one.

"Our goal was to win some games in the playoffs. I know we only won one but we lost to a good team last Saturday," Petermeier said. "We knew that Staples was the team that ended our season (in 2019) so we didn't want them to do that for a third time."

The Wolverines defeated Staples-Motley in the first round 23-12, advancing to the semifinals to face No. 1 Osakis. Osakis beat W-DC 34-15 on Oct. 30, putting an end to their season.

Senior wide receiver Josh Dykhoff is thankful for the support of the fans and their role in the team's performance this year.

"They helped us play that game hard (in Osakis) and play until the last minute we stepped on the field," Dykhoff said.

It is the end of an era for the Wolverines as their quarterback Payton Rondestvedt is graduating this year. He will miss the camaraderie of the team.

"Being with all the guys and all the time able to spend with them," Rondestvedt said of his high school football career.

For Payton, he will finish eighth all-time in passing yards for the blue and yellow with 4,652, 29 yards ahead of ninth place. In his final season he threw for 1,800 yards, more than double of any team in the district!

He wants to be remembered for the character he



Michael Johnson / Pioneer Journal

The Wolverine football team takes a break from running drills to load up on water during preseason practice on Aug. 18.

showed both on and off the field.

"Somebody that somebody can look up to and be a good role model for the rest of the team or as a student and anybody that's around me," he said.

One wide receiver he had a connection with is Dykhoff, and it traces back to their childhood.

"Being good buddies and always being around each other. Just that connection kind of comes with that, he said, "We've been around each other since freshman year. We've been buddies since (childhood)," Rondestvedt said.

"It's kind of weird because we know where each other are on the field all the time," Dykhoff said.

As a captain, Payton became a leader through courage and being around his teammates.

When reflecting on what he is most proud of, he said grit.

"The way the team always fought and never quit any game," he said. His future is still up in the air, but he has left a mark on Wolverine football.

Josh Dykhoff is one of Payton's top targets, and has at least six receiving TD's on the year. That

is in part due to the way they set up schemes.

"Big part is actually how we run our routes together," Dykhoff.

On the defensive side of the ball, senior defensive end Isaac Christianson made an impact this year. Leading the team with sacks, he has a way of getting to the QB.

"First you got to read that it's a pass, and then go all out. Go get him," he said.

As the third captain for the Wolverines, he communicates with his players by pushing their limits and having them stay alert. Being a defensive end, it's easier to track the ball.

"Mostly about being at the right spot and the right time," Christianson said. "Being able to break down and make that tackle."

Coach Petermeier likes the way Christianson carries himself.

"He understood the schemes and he understood what we're trying to do, but he also brought a mentality that it doesn't matter how big I am, how big you are. I'm going to bring it to you."

Christianson plans on attending Central Lakes College for heavy equipment.

With these seniors graduating, and six overall, Coach Petermeier is confident in the future of WDC football.

"Having some experience coming back is going to be important for next year especially with eight starters (returning)," he said, "They're going to have to kind of band together, and teach the younger kids who are coming up the ropes."

For Petermeier, the key to being on the team is the love of the game.

"I'd say the biggest thing is they love coming to practice and love football," Petermeier said.

As for who will step up as the next quarterback, he has one name in mind.

"We had a guy last year, Josiah Kallevig, who threw some touchdowns and threw some passes in the games when we took Payton out towards the end."

For those looking to be on the team, what does Kyle look for in an athlete?

"We want people to be committed to the weight room," Petermeier said. From power lifts to olympic lifts, hitting the gym is priority No. 1.

Following that is the passion to be there, and love of the game.

"We want guys who want to be there," Petermeier said. "We want guys who like football, and enjoy football and want to come to practice every day."

In Petermeier's first year with the WDC football team, they went 0-9. In their second year, the Wolverines went 3-3 and were denied a playoff game due to COVID-19.

The Wolverines will have to find a way to continue their momentum that looks to continue to swing in their favor.



Contributed / Wadena-Deer Creek Schools
Wadena-Deer Creek senior volleyball players include Lauryn Gravelle (left), Ashley Lepinski, Summer Pettit and Kaylin Lupkes.

WDC volleyball seniors are academic all-stars

By Aaron Young

The Wadena-Deer Creek girls volleyball team finished 10-14 this year and in their conference had a 4-3 record.

Their season ended against Foley (8-9-1) in the first round of the Section 6AA tournament, with a 3-1 final set.

Four girls will be graduating this year: setter Summer Pettit, opposite hitter Lauryn Gravelle, defensive specialist Kaylin Lupkes, and libero Ashley Lepinski. All four received academic all-state.

In end of season awards, Kaylin Lupkes was honored for best serve with a 98% success rate, while Summer Pettit recorded the most aces with 22.

Addyson Gravelle was named as a member of the Section 6AA All-Tournament team, and the Park Region All-Conference. She is joined by Ashley Lepinski for All-Conference. Three Wolverines were also given honorable mentions: Summer Pettit, Payton Gravelle and Lauryn Gravelle.

Looking forward to the 2022 season, Payton Gravelle and Jenna Dykhoff are likely to make a big impact on the court.

Meanwhile, head coach Sue Volkmann ended her 34th year with a 592-318 record.



Contributed / University of Crookston

The University of Minnesota Crookston women's basketball team recently announced the signing of Menahga senior Janie Tormanen (F/C, 6-0.) to a National Letter of Intent. Tormanen is the first signee for the Golden Eagles for the 2022 graduating class.

Menahga senior signs with Minnesota Crookston basketball team

The University of Minnesota Crookston women's basketball team announced the signing of Janie Tormanen (F/C, 6-0, Menahga, Minn./Menahga H.S.) to a National Letter of Intent. Tormanen is the first signee for the Golden Eagles for the 2022 graduating class, according to a news release from the University of Minnesota Crookston.

"Janie a long athletic player that can stretch the floor with her ability to shoot the three, as well as playing inside," said Head Coach Mike Roysland. "Because of her versatility she can cause a lot of mismatch problems for teams. We're excited to have her as a part of Golden Eagle women's basketball."

Tormanen has competed in girl's basketball and volleyball at Menahga H.S. Tormanen tallied 13.2 points and 5.0 rebounds per game for Menahga H.S. as a junior. Tormanen had a double-double of 30 points and 13 rebounds in a 70-31 victory against Sebeka H.S. Feb. 16, 2021. In volleyball, Menahga missed a chance at the Section 8AA North championship with a loss in the semifinals to Thief River Falls H.S. Tormanen had 10 kills in the match, playing as a middle hitter for the squad. Tormanen had 15 kills and three blocks in a 3-0 win over Bertha-Hewitt H.S. Sept. 27, 2021.

Visit the Cultural Center's Artist Bazaar

News Staff

The New York Mills Regional Cultural Center will be hosting its 12th Annual Artist Bazaar Nov. 17-20. Attendees can purchase gifts from local artists for the holiday season.

Featured artists will include Aryn Lill, Cheryl Bannes, Gen Keranen, Joy Cooley, Kari Briscoe, Missy Sundheim, Pam Robinson, Sandra Shaughnessy and Sue Kalseim. Items for sale will include mittens, pottery, jewelry,

fiber arts, weavings and more.

The Stock-Up Sale will be Friday, Nov. 19 and Saturday, Nov. 20. Hours at the cultural center, located at 24 North Main Avenue, are 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. on Friday, and 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Saturday. The annual Stock-Up Sale will include the following deals: Spend \$50 to get 5% off; spend \$75 to get 10% off; spend \$150 to get 15% off; spend \$175 to get 20% off. Cultural Center members get an additional 10%

off their purchases.

There will also be a special kids-only shopping area with items from \$1 - \$5 to allow kids the chance to shop for the holidays.

All are invited to the event. The center continues to follow COVID-19 safety guidelines and asks people to stay home if sick.

Perham Focus / File photo

The Regional Cultural Center in New York Mills.



Thomsen hired as Menahga's interim city administrator

By Shannon Geisen
Park Rapids Enterprise

The Menahga City Council voted 4-1 to hire Betty Thomsen as interim city administrator at their Monday, Nov. 8 meeting.

Council member Art Huebner was opposed.

Thomsen has 20 years of experience in city management. She served as Park Rapids' interim city administrator from Sept. 2020 through mid-January 2021. She was city administrator from Feb. 2000 through Feb. 2004 in Park Rapids and from Dec. 1986 through Feb. 2000 in Minnetonka, Minn.

Mayor Liz Olson and Durwin Tomperi, meeting as the hiring committee, scored four candidates for the interim position. Tomperi reported that three did not meet the minimum requirements, based on a League of Minnesota Cities rating sheet.

After interviewing Thomsen over the phone, Tomperi said the committee recommends hiring her at \$45 per hour, with no benefits, for the position of temporary city administrator-clerk-treasurer.

Huebner objected to not getting a chance to ask Thomsen questions.

After the meeting, temporary administrative support technician Jensine Kurtti clarified that the hiring committee was put in place at

a meeting in early September when Kurtti was hired. "The process of how the administrator's hire was going to happen was also stated at last Friday's budget meeting. All the council was there," she reported.

Intent to terminate Kreklau

According to the minutes of the Oct. 20 meeting, it is the council's intent to terminate City Administrator Curt Kreklau upon expiration of his veterans' preference timeline or hearings, whichever is later, based upon these six findings:

► The council has not received any accurate financial data, causing the auditor and the council to work with unreliable numbers. Specifically, a motion was made on Feb. 4 requiring financial data to be provided to the council by Feb. 22. This was not completed and still has not been provided as of the date of the complaint.

► Minutes are not being provided in a timely manner. To date, the council had not received minutes for July 26, Aug. 2 and Aug. 20 meetings.

► Agendas are not being provided as per the bylaws, which call for delivery at least six days prior to the meeting.

► The council asked Kreklau on April 12 to have PMA assist with

city investments. This had not been done.

► The council asked Kreklau on May 10 to have a debt study completed, and that had not been completed.

► The city of Menahga has had to expend additional dollars in order to complete both a bank reconciliation and an audit for the city, which is the responsibility of the city administrator. More than \$35,000 was expended for the 2020 audit, and, to date, another \$16,000 expended for forensic auditors, who were unable to reconcile the city's accounts as of Oct. 20.

GoToMeeting suspension

Huebner asked why GoToMeeting was no longer being used for remote council meetings. The council suspended its use on Oct. 22 - two days after Huebner called a "special meeting" that only he and Keranen were able to attend. Huebner then used GoToMeeting to hold a two-hour "public forum," in which he spouted numerous allegations against fellow council members.

On Monday, Huebner handed out copies of a Nov. 4 letter he sent to the state auditor, claiming "evidence of malfeasance and misfeasance" on the part of Olson, Tomperi and council member Daniel Warm-

bold. He also complained of receiving the agenda only four days prior to council meetings, not giving him enough time to prepare. Finally, he claimed the Oct. 20 meeting to consider preliminary allegations or charges against an employee should not have been closed. However, Minnesota Statute allows public meetings to be closed for this reason. The minutes also state that City Administrator Curt Kreklau requested that the meeting be closed.

At Monday's meeting, two Menahga residents requested the resumption of GoToMeeting, citing health concerns about attending in person due to COVID-19.

Another resident expressed dismay that the council could not get along.

Meeting minutes

Approval of the minutes is normally a technicality, but Huebner ransacked it to reiterate his objections to any motion that passed during the Oct. 12, Oct. 20, Oct. 22 and Oct. 25 council meetings.

Olson reminded Huebner that he was at these meetings, with the

exception of Oct. 25 and Oct. 29. Huebner stated he was under a 10-day quarantine at that time.

Olson called two five-minute recesses in an attempt to thwart Huebner's interruptions. He opposed approval of the minutes.

Vaccine mandate for nursing home

Greenwood Connections Administrator Laura Ahlf reported there were three positive COVID-19 cases among residents between Oct. 28 and Nov. 2.

Staff testing continues daily, Ahlf said.

Assisted living residents received the Moderna COVID booster on Nov. 2 and nursing home residents on Nov. 3.

Ahlf noted that Greenwood Connections will be required to implement a federal COVID vaccine mandate for health care workers. All staff will need to have at least their first vaccine by Dec. 4. Some exceptions will be allowed. Ahlf said she would like to set up a committee to review exception requests.

Council member Durwin Tomperi inquired how many staff are vaccinated.

About 50 percent,

Ahlf replied.

Tomperi asked, "What is your contingency plan if these people walk?"

Ahlf said they would need to drop their census and admissions.

After the meeting, Ahlf issued this statement: "As care providers for older people in our community, we pledge to take all possible precautions to keep those we serve safe from COVID-19. The severe shortage of employees in long-term care makes this vaccine mandate very difficult to implement and also adds more burden on facilities from an administrative standpoint regarding receiving exemptions and additional policies and procedures we must have in place.

"While we are concerned that some individuals may leave our setting rather than becoming vaccinated, providing safe, quality care to the seniors in our community is our highest priority. Our intent is to retain our staff if they are eligible to apply for a religious or medical exemption and we are hoping that those who do not have a sincerely held religious belief or a medical exemption will be vaccinated."

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CAPTURING LIFE: Nestled in the trees

By Rebecca Mitchell
Wadena Pioneer Journal

As we say goodbye to fall, I can't help thinking how grateful I am that we have this season. The trees come alive in fiery passion and the brilliant blue sky makes every bit more beautiful. We're reminded to slow down and look up, and soak in every second we can in nature. And this happens every year—even though it was different with this year's drought.

Fall is my favorite season to take photos. Pink shoelaces and camera strapped to the side, I'm ready to experience every moment. It reminds me of my nature photography-rooted start in journalism and the simple prompting to capture life.

Sometimes it's frustrating because I know exactly how I'd like the photo to look, or what my eyes are able to see, but I can't capture it quite right. In these moments, I have to remember to take photos with joy instead of expectation. To let it help me enjoy the journey instead of only the results. To remember the adventure, and the excitement of seeing the fall leaves. So, like the kid who cheered at Blacks Grove Park, "Let's go find more color!"

Let's take a few moments when we're out for a walk to slowly take in the sights and sounds, and we'll find a smile bursting right out of us. I love trying to remember it all,



Photos by Rebecca Mitchell / Pioneer Journal

A quick photo of a bird feels like a magnificent gift.

whether my camera is strapped alongside or not, because there is so much beauty right here. Maybe you can look out your window and spot a bird nestled in the snow. And if you're hoping to take a picture of the beauty, remember how we have to pause to enjoy it and that photos take patience. You'll get blurry wings, way too bright sunshine, colors that simply don't live up to the real deal, birds will get spooked, dark splotches will ruin the background and they'll be far too many ones to delete. But at least we will be enjoying this gift of creation.

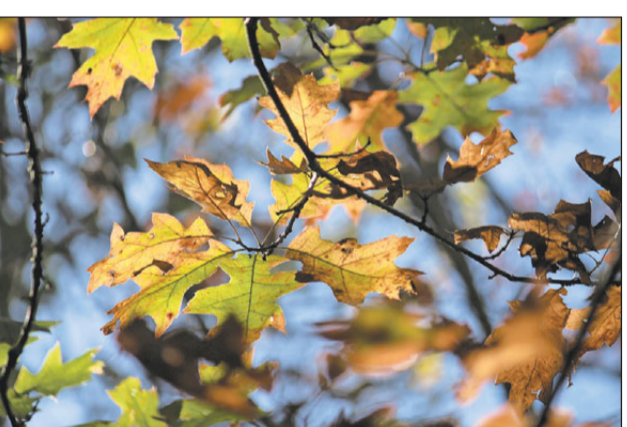
Even with the cold arriving, I hope you have fun and enjoy nature!

Got a park or trail recommendation? Feel free to send them to rmitchell@wadenapj.com.

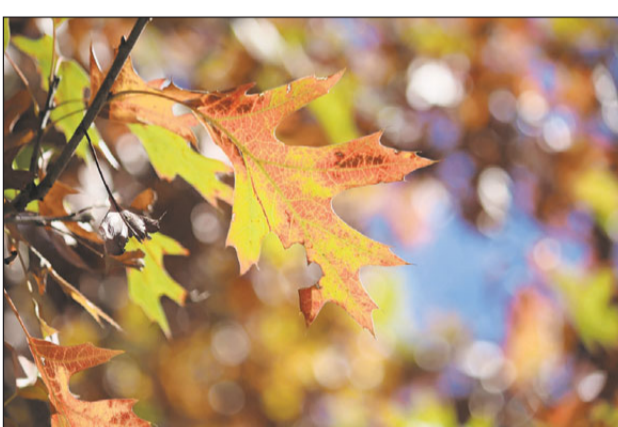
Rebecca Mitchell is a reporter with the Wadena Pioneer Journal and Perham Focus.



A tree exploding with golden leaves in Blacks Grove Park greets visitors on one of the opening trails.



These sun-lit leaves are great to search for in the trees to show the array of fall colors.



Leaves burst in an array of colors at Blacks Grove Park in October 2021.

LOCAL BRIEF

Tri-County receives CALS certification

Staff reports
Tri-County Health Care recently renewed its comprehensive advanced life support certification. Tri-County has been a CALS hospital for over two decades. CALS training honors rural healthcare facilities and the communities they serve by teaching advanced lifesaving techniques, according to a news release from Tri-County. This special training benefits every hospital department serving patients in critical situations. "CALS focuses on a multidisciplinary team approach to the stabilization and management of critically ill or injured patients," explained Tom Krueger, EMS education coordinator at Tri-County. "There is pre-course work involved as well as a substantial classroom and skills component over a three-day period." Sever-



Contributed / Tri-County Health Care

Tri-County Health Care staff were awarded a certificate of recognition for hosting and completing their 2021 CALS training.

all staff members underwent the extensive training in October. Tri-County has hosted 16 different CALS courses thus far. For more information on CALS, please visit calsprogram.org.



File photo

The St. Ann's Catholic Church choir performs during a past Empty Stocking fundraiser. The group joins an upcoming concert April 28 in Wadena.

Prepare to fill an 'Empty Stocking'

The time of year has come once again to consider how the community can help those less fortunate have a plentiful Christmas.

The Empty Stocking Fund helped 246 families receive a Christmas meal and 626 children received Christmas gifts from funds raised by the Empty Stocking Fund. This fund reaches families in Menahga, Sebeka, Verndale, Bertha-Hewitt and the Wadena area.

The 95th annual Wadena Empty Stocking Talent Program will be held from 7-10 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 8, at the Wadena-Deer Creek Middle/High School commons area. Come see it in person or listen to local radio station 920 KWAD.

Donations are accepted during the event. They can also be mailed to Wadena Empty Stocking Fund, PO Box 543, Wadena, MN 56482 or drop off at any of the Tree Trimmer sites.

Tree Trimmer sites include: Central Minnesota Credit Union, 1776 Clothing Company, Hometown Crafts, Merickel's Ace Hardware, West Central Telephone in Sebeka and Menahga, Wadena Pioneer Journal and Wadena State Bank in Wadena, Bluffton and Deer Creek.

Truck collides with car near Menahga Saturday

MENAHGA — A truck full of occupants were taken to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries following a collision with another vehicle Saturday, Nov. 13, near Menahga.

A 2013 Chevy Impala driven by 18-year-old Anita B. Lehto, was headed east on County Road 16 and failed to stop at the intersection of Hwy 71, according to a Minnesota State Patrol incident report. Her car hit a 2020 GMC Sierra headed north on Hwy 71. The driver of the Sierra, Robert A. Overmoe, 62 and passengers Rebecca M. Overmoe, 60, Carla L. Vasilakes, 61, and Michael J. Vasilakes, 63, were all of Menahga. All the occupants of the Sierra were taken to North Memorial Hospital.

All were wearing seat belts and alcohol was not considered a factor in the crash. Road conditions were snowy and icy at the time of the crash. The Wadena County Sheriff's Office, Menahga Police Department, Menahga Fire, Tri-County Ambulance and North Memorial Ambulance assisted the state patrol at the crash.

EARLY DEADLINES

Due to early printing for the Thanksgiving Holiday the deadline for the November 25th Pioneer Journal will be 2:00pm on Friday, November 19th.

OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
Thursday, Nov. 25th and Friday, Nov. 26th

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An online application and job description are available at: www.co.wadena.mn.us, the Human Resources Office in the Wadena County Courthouse, 415 Jefferson Street S, Wadena, MN 56482. Posting will close on Friday, December 3rd, 2021.

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Delta variant drives big increase in breakthrough infections

Health officials: Trend shows importance of boosters

By Christopher Magan
St. Paul Pioneer Press

ST. PAUL — Minnesota is seeing dramatic growth in breakthrough cases of the coronavirus, adding to evidence that vaccines wear off over time and may be less effective against the now dominant delta strain.

In early May, fewer than 5 percent of new cases in the state were among fully vaccinated residents, according to data first released Friday by the state Department of Health. By early October, fully vaccinated people accounted for nearly 40 percent of new infections and similar shares of hospitalizations and deaths.

For health officials, the trends highlight the importance of booster shots, which soon may be available to nearly every adult, as well as continued preventive steps like social distancing and wearing masks in public.

“We want to make sure people are aware of the fact that the landscape has really changed since last spring,” said Kris Ehresmann, director of infectious disease prevention for the Minnesota Department of Health.

Ehresmann acknowledged she was among many public health officials who “naively” thought last spring that vaccines would control the pandemic. But vaccine skepticism and the emergence of variants changed that.

“We are seeing the impact of delta,” she said. “I think we are in a very different place right now.”

For the year in Minnesota, 16 percent of coronavirus infections, 15% of hospitalizations and 14% of deaths from COVID-19 have been among vaccinated residents, a Pioneer Press analysis found.

Despite their limitations, vaccines remain the best way to avoid a severe infection and to



Traci Westcott / Post Bulletin

COVID-19 booster shots may soon be available to nearly every adult.

slow the spread of the coronavirus, health officials say.

“You are 15 times more likely to be hospitalized or to die of COVID if you are unvaccinated,” Ehresmann said.

What we know about breakthroughs

Minnesota has been tracking breakthroughs since January, soon after vaccinations began. The health department first reported them publicly Aug. 10 when there were only about 5,600 cases out of 2.9 million people who were fully vaccinated.

Since then, the number of breakthroughs has jumped to nearly 65,000 cases out of 3.2 million vaccinated residents. Of those, 2,956 have been hospitalized and 483 have died.

Health officials released weekly rates of vaccine breakthroughs for the first time last Friday. While they show a considerable increase in not only breakthrough cases but also hospitalizations and deaths, the vast majority of the most severe cases are among older residents.

Further, even with the dramatic growth, only

about 2% of fully vaccinated Minnesotans have tested positive. Overall, 14 percent of Minnesota’s 5.8 million residents have tested positive for the coronavirus since March 2020.

Dr. Andrew Badley, who leads the Mayo Clinic’s COVID task force, said the overall rate of breakthrough cases is in line with expectations of vaccine efficacy. No vaccine is 100% effective, he said.

Badley acknowledged growing evidence that protection from the vaccines decreases over time, especially in seniors and people with conditions that suppress their immune systems’ response to vaccines.

“Their immune response to the vaccine is not perfect. It’s also not zero,” Badley said.

State health department data support that view. Ehresmann says that while the average age of a Minnesotan with a breakthrough case is 49, those who end up in the hospital are 74 on average, and those who die are 81 on average.

What the latest research suggests

A study on the midterm effectiveness of vaccines, published Nov. 4 in the journal Science, exam-

ined health care data from 780,000 veterans. It found the efficacy of all three vaccines dropped dramatically six months after people received their last dose — especially for the one-shot Johnson & Johnson.

After six months, the Moderna vaccine’s effectiveness had dropped from 89% effective to 58%; Pfizer’s from 87% to 43%; and the Johnson & Johnson from 86% to just 13%, researchers from the Public Health Institute, the University of Texas and Veterans Affairs found.

One of the study’s authors, Barbara Cohen, said their study adds to the mounting evidence that the pandemic is far from over. She hopes the new information will help people better protect themselves and their families against more dangerous variants.

“It is very clear that vaccines are protective,” said Cohen, a director and senior researcher at the Public Health Institute.

However, “the vaccines have declined in their ability to protect you fully from breakthrough infections. Our data shows that it looks like that’s because delta overwhelmed the vaccine,” she said.

Vaccine makers have not challenged these

assertions. In fact, they’ve used similar evidence to strengthen their cases for providing booster shots to all adults.

A recent study of Israeli hospital data found booster doses refortified the protection vaccines initially provided — even against the delta variant.

Finally, while the vaccines and prior infection both protect against future disease, there’s growing evidence that vaccines give the immune system an added boost.

A recent report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found patients who had previously tested positive for COVID-19 were 5.5 times more likely to catch the coronavirus again compared to those who were fully vaccinated.

Being vaccinated after recovering from a COVID infection provides even stronger protection, the report said.

What remains unclear

Despite the ongoing research into vaccine effectiveness and the impact of coronavirus variants, there’s a lot that remains unknown.

The delta variant is more contagious, but some uncertainty remains about whether it always

causes more severe illness in both the vaccinated and the unvaccinated.

A lot of evidence points to yes.

Minnesota is more than three months into its fourth wave of coronavirus cases, and the current rate of infections, hospitalizations and deaths is the highest it’s been all year. Nearly all new infections are caused by delta.

Dr. Hannah Lichtsinn, who works at a Minneapolis clinic, said she’s regularly seeing fully vaccinated patients with breakthrough cases that “don’t just have the sniffles.”

Patients are complaining of fever, body aches and other serious symptoms typical of COVID-19 infection.

“My reaction when I see them is, thank god these people are vaccinated,” Lichtsinn said. “If they are this sick with the protection from the vaccine, I can’t imagine how sick they could be without it.”

There also are ongoing questions about how long the renewed immunity from a booster shot will last. There’s growing talk that COVID-19 will become endemic.

Badley, of the Mayo Clinic’s COVID task force, thinks regular boosters may be necessary. “It’s too soon to tell how often that’s going to be,” he said.

Finally, delta may be the variant getting all the attention now, but coronaviruses constantly are evolving. With well under half the global population fully vaccinated, it’s apparent new variants will emerge.

That’s why health officials will continue to push vaccine holdouts to get the shot, even as more and more people who already are inoculated get boosters.

“We need to continue to emphasize the importance of primary vaccination, because although there’s definitely evidence of waning immunity, people who have been vaccinated have some protection,” Ehresmann said. “People who have not been vaccinated have zero protection.”

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Wadena Library Board Vacancies

Interested in matters involving the Wadena Library? Serve on the Library Board. There is currently one vacancy on the Wadena Library Board, with three-year term ending January 31, 2024. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday, every other month. Special meetings are held as needed. Please submit your letter of interest by December 31, 2021, to Interim City Administrator David Evans, PO Box 30, Wadena, MN 56482. 11/18, 11/25 2911152

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THIS WILL AFFECT YOUR 2022 PROPERTY TAXES AND ELIGIBILITY FOR PROPERTY TAX REFUND

Have you purchased or moved into a property in the past year?
Contact your county assessor to file a homestead application if you or a qualifying relative occupy the property as a homestead on or before December 31, 2021.

What is a qualifying relative?
For unoccupied agricultural property, a qualifying relative includes the child, grandchild, sibling, or parent of the owner or owner’s spouse. For occupied agricultural or residential property, a qualifying relative also includes the owner’s uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece.

When do I apply?
You must apply on or before December 31, 2021.

Once homestead is granted, annual applications are not necessary unless they are requested by the county assessor. Contact the assessor by December 31, 2021 if the use of the property you own or occupy as a qualifying relative has changed during the past year.

If you sell, move, or for any reason no longer qualify for the homestead classification, you are required to notify the county assessor within 30 days of the change in homestead status.

218-631-7628

2021 DEER HUNT A SUCCESS FOR THESE SKILLED HUNTERS

Tyson Barthel, 16 of Wadena, caught a glimpse of a deer during the opening weekend of the Minnesota deer rifle season that was headed for the neighbor. Lucky for Tyson, the neighbor missed and the buck, still chasing a doe, headed back towards Tyson and his stand west of Sebeka.

When the buck stopped at 50 yards and gave Tyson a look at his rack he fired a shot killing the big deer. Little did he know this was the deer "the big one" his cousin had been watching for three years. The 19-point buck weighed 233-pounds dressed. An unofficial score on the deer shows 216 6/8 inches. It's likely one of the largest deer racks we've seen this year of those who submitted their deer photos to the Pioneer Journal. Great job to all that found success this year!



Tyson Barthel, age 16 of Wadena, shot this 19-point buck that weighed 233-pounds dressed. He shot it opening morning west of Sebeka.



Shawn Beversluis shot this 8-point buck Monday morning. It's the first buck he's harvested in 21 years, his first being a small 9 point when he was 12. Pictured with him is his son Lance, age 5.



Logan Meyer of Wadena shot two bucks within 15 minutes.



Lex Tucker, 11, from Wadena, shot his first deer, a 9-point buck, Saturday evening south of Deer Creek.



Brittney Ewert with her 11-point, 169.9 pound buck shot south of Sebeka.



Kyle Camacho dropped this 14-point buck near Wadena on opening morning. Kyle is pictured with his son Kayden.



Angie Moats harvested this 13-point buck by Deer Creek.



Dominic Pete, age 14, with his first deer shot during the youth weekend.



Logan Meyer of Wadena shot two big bucks within 15 minutes.



Kristy Helmbrecht shot this 9-point buck weighing 190 pounds on opening weekend near Henning.



Travis and Jake Roggenkamp both shot at this deer and one or both hit it.

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