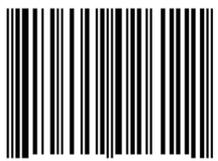


THE Jamesville Journal

No.44 Vol.7 \$1.50

SERVING THE JANESVILLE-WALDORF-PEMBERTON-ST. CLAIR AREA

Wednesday, October 29, 2025



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5 DAY FORECAST

Wed 29 | 52°
 Rain 11%
 Wind NNE 10 mph
 Cloudy early with partial sunshine expected late. High 52F. Winds NNE at 10 to 15 mph.

Thu 30 | 51°
 Rain 9%
 Wind WNW 8 mph
 Cloudy skies. High 51F. Winds WNW at 5 to 10 mph.

Fri 31 | 43°
 Rain 22%
 Wind NW 13 mph
 Mostly cloudy. High 43F. Winds NW at 10 to 15 mph.

Sat 1 | 44°
 Rain 15%
 Wind NW 9 mph
 Mainly cloudy. High 44F. Winds NW at 5 to 10 mph.

Sun 2 | 54°
 Rain 23%
 Wind SW 16 mph
 Mostly cloudy skies. High 54F. Winds SW at 10 to 20 mph.

JWP's Theater Production of "Mamma Mia!" Set to Thrill Audiences November 6-8

By JORDAN CARRILLO
 Staff Writer

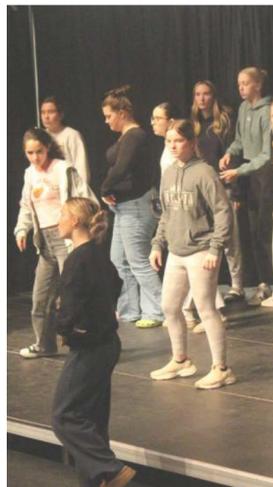
The JWP High School theater program is buzzing with energy as they prepare to take on their largest production yet: the global phenomenon, Mamma Mia! Led by Director Teagan Knoblich, the program has hit a new milestone with a record 32 students in the cast and about 20 on the tech crew, signaling significant growth and enthusiasm within the school and community.

Knoblich, who has been involved with JWP theater since 2019 and stepped up as lead director for last year's Newsies!, has her work cut out for her with Mamma Mia—a demanding musical filled with elaborate dance numbers and catchy tunes. "It is the biggest production that I've ever been a part of at JWP, which is pretty exciting! It means the program is growing!"

Putting on such a massive show in a limited time frame is no small feat. With a lack of a permanent stage, the team had to carefully schedule rehearsals around sports practices and other school activities, leaving them with just over two months to prepare.

Additionally, many of the cast and crew take part in these extracurriculars themselves, requiring a highly flexible and dedicated schedule. Rehearsals have included dance practices as early as 7:30 in the morning, late into the night, and even on Saturdays and MEA Break... all in the pursuit of putting on a fantastic set of performances November 6-8. Most excitingly, the JWP theater is turning their 2 pm matinee performance on November 8 into a full-fledged family event with disco photo ops with Donna and the Dynamos an hour before curtain call.

Mamma Mia! is particularly demanding due to its sheer number of dance numbers, requiring extensive



choreography and even a live band performing iconic songs like "Honey, Honey", "SOS", "Gimme, Gimme" and more.

The production is truly a group effort with Becky Borneke as Music Director, Erich Dascher as Dance Director, Melanie Morrow as Tech Director, and a Live Band featured Borneke on piano, Josh Berndt on drums, Eric Kehoe, and Janesville Journal's own Michael Roy on bass.

Though the production behind the scenes is extensive, the on-stage performers are a unique blend of veteran actors and first-timers learning new tricks. Two phenomenal seniors, Katie Olson & Chloe Kaiser (Miss Janesville) star as the pivotal mother/daughter duo in Donna & Sophie, respectively. This is actually Kaiser's first time under the spotlight, transitioning from the backstage to be front and center as the desperately father-seeking Sophie. Knoblich credited both of them during the audition phase of rehearsals, praising their singing and acting ability.

The program's growth has

Musical cont to pg 4

A "Spooktacular" Trail for all at Elysian



By MICHAEL ROY
 Editor

With the spooky season of "Halloween" coming around the corner, many have already chosen their costumes and have looked to cash in on some early opportunities to stash away some candy. Those who wanted that early sugar rush had a chance to stuff their bags full of pre-Halloween candy at Elysian's Spooky Trail on Saturday, October 25, from 5-7 p.m.

This reporter made the same mistake as last year and went against the flow of the crowd. Many started their journey on the Sakatah Trail near the intersection of Main Street and 4th Street NW. There were several stops along the way for the children to receive their candy.

As they made their way to NE 2nd Street, they were corralled toward the Fire Hall, where they could either stop for a break and enjoy a hot dog meal served by the Elysian Fire Department or add to their candy stash with stops at Main Street businesses.

It couldn't have been a more typical fall day: sunny, yet a bit



chilly due to the wind. Several costumes were perfect for the temperatures. One thing this reporter noticed that was missing this year was the giant Frankenstein near the Elysian Welcome Center. However, there was a scary blow-up tree that made many kids gawk in awe and, for some, terror.

The Elysian Spooky Trail is

an annual event organized by the Elysian Chamber of Commerce and sponsored in part by the Elysian Fire Department. It never fails to bring in several hundreds of families from the local area, as it's one of the first of many Halloween events to come up throughout the next week.

Quote of the Week

Don't allow your past or present condition to control you. It's just a process that you're going through to get you to the next level.

- T.D. Jakes

MSU student dies in crash with semi at junction of Hwys 14 & 60 near Eagle Lake

Eagle Lake, Minn. (KEYC) -

One person has died following a crash at the intersection of Highways 14 and 60 near Eagle Lake Friday morning.

The sedan was attempting to go north bound from 14 to 60 when it was hit by a semi traveling west bound on highway 14.

Authorities on the scene say the crash resulted in one fatality, the driver of the sedan. The semi driver did not sustain any injuries.

20-year-old Valerie Caven of Farmington was turning to go north from 14 to 60 when she was hit by a semi traveling west on highway 14.

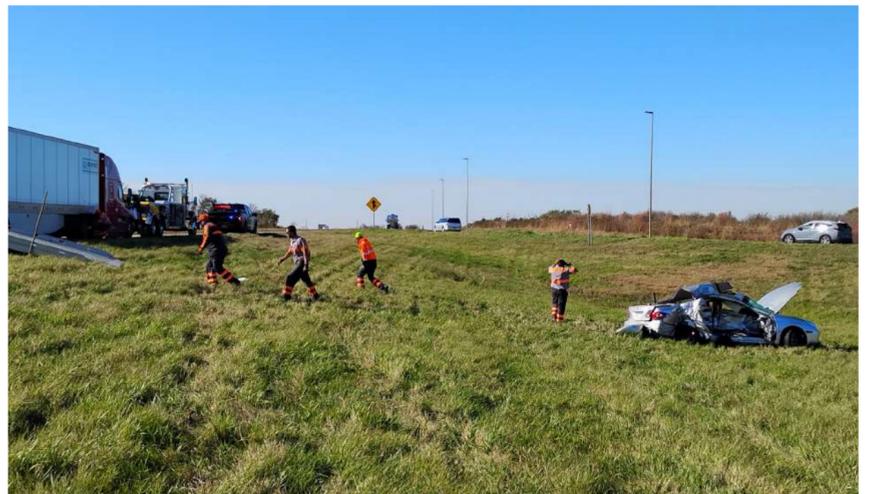


She died of her injuries at the scene.

Assisting in the crash was the Minnesota State Patrol and the Blue Earth County Sheriff's Department.

UPDATE: An online fundraiser has been started for a Minnesota State Mankato student who died following a crash at the intersection of Highways 14 and 60 near Eagle Lake Friday morning.

A GoFund Me campaign has already raised more than \$50-thousand for her family.



Pictured above is the scene of the accident last week.

(Journal Photos by Suzy Haberman)

Community Happenings

Trick or Treat on Main St
Janesville
Oct 30 4-6pm

City Council Mtg
St. Clair
Nov 4

“Mamma Mia” Musical
JWP School
Nov 6-8

Catholic Order of
Foresters Fundraiser
St. Ann Catholic Church
Nov 9 9:30-11am

Janesville Food Shelf
Hours:
Thursdays 1-3 p.m.
Second Thurs. of month
6-7 p.m.
First & Third Sat. of
month 1-3 p.m.



Upcoming Events
WASECA-LE SUEUR REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM
408 N STATE ST WASECA, MN 56093
507-835-2910

TBR (To Be Read) Jars

Fill a jar with book title prompts—from specific genres to themes to quirky reading challenges at **Janesville Public Library on Monday, November 3rd at 5 pm.** Your TBR jar will help you discover new books and spark your reading adventure. Free and geared for adults. Register at the library or at wasecalesueurlibraries.com/getregistered

Level Up: Kano Fandoms

Use the force (of motion sensing) to levitate Yoda, swing a lightsaber, transfigure toads with an Ollivander’s wand, and conjure an ice palace with Elsa’s powers at **Elysian Area Library on Monday, November 3rd at 6 pm.** This free event is geared for ages 7-12.

Charcuterie Board Workshop

The Board Loon will share how prepare a charcuterie board at this virtual event on **Tuesday, October 28th at 6 pm.** She’ll also suggest perfect pairing and provide tips on how to take Instagram-worthy photos. Limited registration. Register early at the library or at wasecalesueurlibraries.com/getregistered. Supplies will need to be picked up before the event.

The Northfield Bank Robbery

In late August-early September of 1876, the James-Younger Gang rode into Minnesota intent on robbing a number of prosperous banks in the southern part of the state. The gang was made up of eight or nine of the most infamous desperadoes in the world of banditry. Hear and see the events play out before you as Living History presenter Arn Kind brings these exciting historical events to life on at **1 pm on Tuesday, November 4th at Waseca Public Library.**

TID-BITS OF TRIVIA

1. The Darien Gap, the only break in the highway system that runs from Alaska to Chile, lies between what two countries?
2. The dating site Scientific-Match.com differs from other sites because it makes matches with the aid of what?
3. The deliciously wicked TV drama “Revenge” is set among the wealthy elite of what seaside town?
4. The dinar is the official currency of several countries in what region of the world?
5. The director of what 2010 film has said in interviews that he often gets asked, “Does the top ever stop spinning?”

6. The expression “Perfect Storm” is widely believed to have been coined by what bestselling author?
7. The expression “top brass” originally referred to the decorative gold braids worn by whom?
8. The fantastical lands of Gondor, Mordor, and the Shire feature prominently in what author’s fiction?
9. The Federal Pell Grant Program is a financial program that provides government money to fund what?
10. The feel-good adjective “Cabraesque” is derived from the last name of a famous what?

The answers to today’s Trivia questions can be found on the Archives Page of the Janesville Journal.

Echoes from a Loafers’ Club Meeting

I have three chickens in my backyard. One hen lays brown eggs.
That’s not unusual.
Oh, no? Could you do it?

Driving by Bruce’s drive

I have a wonderful neighbor named Bruce. Whenever I pass his drive, thoughts occur to me. Another wonderful neighbor, Jared Knutson, sent me a video of an eastern cottontail trying to hide in a harvested cornfield. What was it hiding from? It feared the two adult bald eagles that had a hankering for a bunny meal. The rabbit didn’t initiate the attack. Those two eagles, with white heads and white tails, made several attempts at capturing the rabbit, but were unsuccessful. The eagles have been followers of Jared’s harvest activities for several years, knowing that Jared would roost rabbits from their hiding places.

Years ago, a red-tailed hawk followed my farm equipment around the field, hankering to take the voles and mice I’d exposed out to lunch. Farm equipment is much larger today, necessitating Jared’s upgrade from a hawk to two eagles.

Cornelius Rooster

As I drove through Northfield, the smell of toasting grain wafted my way. Post owns the MOM (Malt-O-Meal) Brands of cereals produced in Northfield, but it’s Battle Creek, Michigan, that’s known as the “Cereal Capital of the World”

One of the things I’ve been trying to work out in the past few months is how to get more involved in the community by utilizing my passion for music. My main instrument was the guitar—specifically, the standard six-string. However, a purchase I made about a year and a half ago turned out to be the key to using my talents locally: the bass.

Being a musician, I’ve always been interested in learning multiple instruments. I was a baritone singer in choir, played French horn in the concert band and orchestra, and always considered the guitar my primary instrument. We also had a piano around the house for a few years, at least when I lived in Mankato.

I wanted to initially join the Waseca Chorale. But at the time, I was just getting started with the Mankato Free Press. If you read last week’s column, you’d remember that I’d wake up at about 3 a.m. for that job. I believe the chorale had practices on Tuesday at about 6:30 p.m. Not only do I usually count on covering a sporting event on Tuesdays, but I also would not have been home until at least 8 p.m., leaving me with at most six hours of sleep if I fell asleep within ten minutes of going to bed, which I rarely do.

Instead, I decided to try to get some gigs with the bass. It turns out there are several guitar players in the area, but not many bassists, at least from what I have analyzed. I joined the choir at St. Ann over the summer and reached out about playing bass. Before I knew it, I was jamming to hymns from my own little

Age isn’t just a number



Compostings

by Al Batt
copyright © 2019 by Al Batt

because it’s the birthplace of two major cereal companies, Post and Kellogg’s.

A mascot for Kellogg’s, Cornelius “Corny” Rooster, has a green body, red comb, yellow beak and multicolored tail. He promotes the advantages of a Kellogg’s breakfast with his friendly attitude and healthy appearance. “Nothing gets you crowing in the morning like Kellogg’s Corn Flakes!”

Wheaties was invented in 1921 when a clinician for the Washburn Crosby Company (Minneapolis) accidentally spilled wheat bran onto a hot stove. After many attempts to fortify the cereal to withstand shipping, Gold Medal Whole Wheat Flakes were released in 1924. A contest led to the name Wheaties. In 1926, Wheaties was featured in the first prerecorded radio jingle, “Have You Tried Wheaties?” on station WCCO (named for Washburn-Crosby Company). Washburn-Crosby merged with three other mills and was renamed General Mills in 1928. The cereal was featured on a billboard, with the tagline “The Breakfast of Champions,” for the Minneapolis Millers baseball team and sponsored that team’s broadcasts on WCCO.

I’ve learned

Our clocks go back soon, but I don’t remember where I bought them.

If you want a dollar’s worth of gas, buy a few radishes.

If you see lions, tigers and bears, you’re at an animal sanctuary or a zoo.

I needed a twist tie. I found one in the junk drawer next to the broken pliers and an ancient, floppy, round piece of textured rubber meant to help open jars while promoting a funeral home.

Dr. Frankenstein found the brain for his monster in the junk drawer.

Age isn’t just a number. It’s a word.

We need conspiracy theories that promote joy and optimism.

Bad jokes department

Robert E. Lee had a brother who was never late. His name was Earl Lee.

My neighbor was fired from his job at a dairy farm because he was a danger to himself and udders.

What’s the difference between a pickpocket and an umpire? One steals watches and the other watches steals.

Whoever came up with “a penny for your thoughts” and “I’m being nickel-and-dimed to death” certainly knew how to

coin a phrase.

Singing in the shower is great until you get shampoo in your mouth. Then it’s a soap opera.

Nature notes

A monarch butterfly was in my yard on October 24. Monarchs migrate between 50-100 miles a day; it can take up to two months to complete the journey. The farthest-ranging monarch butterfly recorded traveled 265 miles in one day. Their arrival in Mexico coincides with the celebration of the Day of the Dead on November 1 and 2. Monarch butterflies cluster in the treetops of sacred fir at the El Rosario Sanctuary, Michoacan, in central Mexico. My yard butterfly is unlikely to join that gathering.

Four young opossums (joesys) fed under the bird feeders. They were cute, and they had 50 teeth each, more than any other American mammal. Opossums are omnivores and eat just about anything, even mustard and sugar sandwiches. I don’t know for sure that they’d eat those sandwiches, but I bet they would. The Virginia opossum is the only marsupial native to North America. Playing possum is an involuntary response to potential predators. An adult opossum weighs 4-14 pounds, and opossums are found from Costa Rica to Ontario and British Columbia.

Meeting adjourned

If we judge others, it reveals more about ourselves than others. Be kind.

Passion for music



Mikes Corner

by Michael Roy
Staff writer

Copyright © 2019 by Michael Roy

space in the choir balcony.

I also decided to take a chance and reach out to Becky Borneke about maybe playing some bass for JWP’s musical, “Mamma Mia.” She was in the office one day while I was preparing to look through yearbooks for photos of past homecoming courts. I don’t know if I’ve seen anyone more thrilled about the idea of me playing music.

I’ve been jamming along with the cast and Borneke this past week, and I’ve been absolutely loving every second of it. I haven’t heard any comments from the kids. I did get approval from the lead director, though, so I must be doing something right.

I’m also working on potentially releasing more music. I have a studio album’s worth of rock songs I’ve yet to put out. Part of that is because some songs aren’t up to my personal standards, and I haven’t gotten to remix or fix them. I might just put up the demos as they are on YouTube.

I also found a website that lets you self-publish music scores. I have several pieces of music that I worked on from junior year of high school throughout my college years that I’d like to release soon.

technical and would probably be better suited to a college ensemble, but “Steed,” I feel, would be much more doable for a high school band while still challenging the players. I also have another in the works called “Midnight Mare.” I’d like to finish the “horse” series of pieces with something that a middle school band could perform.

We’ll see what the future brings. But I’ve gained more confidence as a performing musician. Now, I need to gain more confidence as a composer. God gave me these gifts for a reason. I want to start using them more often. Perhaps I’ll even serenade someone with my music. Goodness knows I’ve heard my fair share of jokes about how I need to get myself a lady.

THE Janesville Journal

SERVING THE JANESVILLE-WALDORF-PEMBERTON & ST CLAIR AREA

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Motor Works Auto launches "Repair It Forward" — helping neighbors get back on the road

Central Minnesota — Life happens, and car troubles can put even the strongest people in a tough spot. That's why Motor Works Auto Repair is proud to announce the launch of its Repair It Forward Campaign — a community effort to give back by providing \$1,000 in free car repairs from each of the company's nine locations, totaling \$9,000 in repairs donated to people right here in Minnesota. "This isn't about cars — it's about people," said Adam Preusser, Co-Owner of Motor Works Auto. "We meet so many folks doing their best to make ends meet, and sometimes a car repair is the one thing standing between them and getting to work, school, or medical appointments. This is our way of lending a hand." Motor Works Auto is inviting the community to nominate someone who could

really use some help with their vehicle — whether it's a friend, neighbor, coworker, or family member. Nominations can be submitted online at <https://motorworksauto.com/repair-itforward/>

The campaign runs through December 1, 2025 and winners will be selected from each shop's local nominations.

For over 20 years, Motor Works Auto has been proud to serve Sartell, Big Lake, Sauk Rapids, Waite Park, St. Augusta/St. Cloud, Bemidji, Park Rapids, Blaine and Elysian with honest, dependable auto repair — and just as proud to be part of the communities that have supported them along the way.

For more details reach out to Kris Nelson, Marketing Director, 320-761-3880 or for more details reach out to Kris Nelson, Marketing Director, 320-761-3880 or kris@motorworksauto.com

Janesville Friends of the Library Book Sale

The Janesville Friends of the Library will be holding a book sale at the Janesville City Hall on **Saturday, November 8, from 8:30 am until 1:00 pm.**

Proceeds from the sale will go toward reading promotions, craft activities and other programs for children and adults.

If you have books, gently used games or puzzles which you would like to donate to the sale, you may drop them off at the library before **Thursday, November 6.**

Please no encyclopedias, textbooks or video tapes.

Senior Unity Day at St. Clair is making memories

By JORDAN CARRILLO
Staff Writer

When it comes to a student's Senior Year, making memories that will endure far beyond their time at school is what makes the end of their journey so bittersweet. As the Class of 2026 approaches their third month of final year here at St. Clair, these seniors took part in an annual tradition that has been ongoing for over two decades—Senior Unity Day.

Now, back in my day, the "Senior Skip Day" was the universal act of Unity amongst graduating seniors; however, St. Clair has repurposed a once informal tradition into a day of bonding between classmates. Over the two decades, the Class has traveled to a variety of locations like the Mall of America, Camp Dels, Valley Fair, or Bray Park for a day of grilling and hanging by the lake.

This year the seniors, along with advisors Makela and Altomari, ventured to Whirlyball in Bloomington on October 21. Whirlyball is an activity center packed full of games and attractions that can keep anyone entertained for hours, and the chance to "get in the game" keeps these seniors playing for hours. The most common attraction is also the place's namesake, Whirlyball which is a one-of-a-kind experience that blends bumper cars and lacrosse into one action-packed team sport. There were other fun-filled things to do like laser tag, bowling, escape rooms, and a full-fledged arcade that had these Cyclones spinning just to be able to play them all in



(Journal Photos by Jordan Carrillo)



time. By the looks on their faces, everyone had radiant smiles and looks of determination as

some played to win while others played for the satisfaction of a good time.

After a few hours of high-octane fun, the seniors enjoyed a hearty lunch at a nearby Pizza Ranch, and shared their thoughts about this day of unity. It's not often the entire class spends time together, so this was a unique experience to get to know classmates that may fly under the radar. As they returned home with happy hearts and full bellies, these seniors appreciated the impact Senior Unity Day brings to a class embarking on the final leg of their 12 year-journey at St. Clair. The memories made on the Whirlyball court or laser tag arena, the laughter shared amongst friends, and the stories shared at lunch will stick with these seniors long after they receive their diploma.

Check us out ONLINE! www.janesvillejournal.com

Decreased enrollment makes for tight budget for 2026 school year

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

With a playoff game for the JWP volleyball team on the minds of the school board members, they didn't waste much time going through their agenda, needing less than half an hour to discuss and vote on items on Monday, October 20.

The most pressing issue was passing the policy for overdose medication, concerning the distribution of Narcan. The policy was previously tabled due to the school board seeking clarification from Superintendent Jeremy Erler on when and how students in grades 9-12 can act as an antagonist (or a distributor in emergencies) and give Narcan to a fellow student in need. As

Erler pointed out, it's been a hot topic in the state, with the Edina school district making headlines on TV over the issue.

"I talked to Laura [Hoffman] about this," Erler said, referring to the school nurse. "She said there's no issue with students in grades 9-12 possessing it."

He clarified that the school wasn't providing Narcan to students as antagonists; Narcan is already readily available to the public, whether at law enforcement agencies or stores like Target. He also assured the school board that there were no negative effects to those who receive Narcan, even if it turns out it's not needed.

The other question the school board had at the last meeting was whether Narcan would be on buses or readily available during field trips. Erler claimed that Hoffman didn't feel "it was necessary," but it would be available on-site at school. The board unanimously approved the policy.

The school board then greenlit the contract service agreement with the Minnesota Valley Education District for

JWP School Board

a teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing out of St. Peter. The teacher will cost the district \$4,500.

Board member Monica Erickson, who has a background in special education, asked how many students used that service.

"I know of one for sure off the top of my head," Erler replied.

Erickson also asked if the service was "special ed reimbursable," to which Erler answered that it was.

Business Manager Wendy Dieker warned that 2026 would be a tight budget. Much of that was attributed to decreased enrollment throughout the past few years. The peak of enrollment for JWP since the 2019-20 school year was around 683 students. This year is projected to be about 586, the district's lowest since 2019-20.

She shared some interesting statistics, including how open enrollment has affected the numbers. As of 2024-25, 79 students within the JWP district boundaries attended St. Clair, with 31 attending public schools in

Mankato, 20 opting for Maple River, and 18 going to New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva; 95 students in the district were attending private schools.

Comparatively, 33 students in the Waterville-Elysian-Morristown district attend JWP, with 15 in Waseca choosing to go to Janesville, and the district has 19 students from Mankato and only five from St. Clair.

Erler shared in his reports that there has been a "good start" in the elementary school's reading curriculum, with the staff looking to the future in math. The 4th grade teachers will join Elementary Principal Jeff Adams at the South Central Service Cooperative to look at different math curriculum vendors to see what they have to offer.

Although it was insinuated that the LETRS training (focused on the reading curriculum) was off to a rough start, Erler claimed things were going much more smoothly this year. Staff members Stephanie Watts and Liz Winters were running the training at JWP,

with a few staff looking to finish the week of the school board meeting.

Erler reported that Representative Keith Allen will be in the school building on November 7. "He will be here all day to chat with the principals," he said. "He'll also be in a couple of high school classrooms. We might have another representative come in on another week."

In addition to numerous other updates, he informed the school board that representatives of the student council will attend meetings starting in November. Three juniors and three sophomores will be prepping the

council this year.

The only other items approved were the appointments of Jonathan Daschner as junior high boys' basketball coach and Emily Olson as assistant girls' basketball coach. To avoid any conflict of interest, Sherri Daschner abstained when it came to voting on her son's position, with Joan Olson abstaining on approval of her daughter's coaching position. The other members unanimously approved the two coaches.

The meeting adjourned at 5:54 p.m. The next meeting is November 17.

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PULLED PORK DRIVE-THRU DINNER

ELECTION Day
November 4th
4:30-7:00pm

Dinner includes: Wiste's Pulled Pork, Baked Beans, Bun, Chips, & Rice Krispy Bar \$10

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234 - 6463

Trinity brings a touch of Halloween to Nursing Home



By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

Many may have noticed a ton of scarecrows decorating the lawns of Whispering Creek Nursing Home. Trinity Lutheran

School's 4th graders have been doing this for years as part of a collaboration with the nursing home. This year was no different, as about a dozen 4th-grade students presented their artistic skills by making the best scarecrows their minds and

hands could craft. Trinity Lutheran makes it a habit to visit the nursing home about twice a month. Each 4th grader has a resident they socialize with as their way of bringing the community together, whether that's having

pizza parties, playing games, or just sitting down to talk. It's always a joy for the 4th grade class at Trinity to make the days of the residents of Whispering Creek Nursing Home whenever they visit.



Musical cont from pg 1

also brought in a slew of enthusiastic first-timers, including seniors Dylan Hood and Daulton Bauer, who led the charge in recruiting many underclassmen from the football team. Audiences won't want to miss the men's ensemble floundering around in flippers while performing "Lay All Your Love on Me"! Rounding out the powerful female vocals are the "Dynamos," played by Claire Miller and Kayle Langford.

With nearly half the cast experiencing musical theater for the first time, the excitement and collaborative spirits are high. As one of the largest groups of boys in the program's history is involved, Knoblich noted their "great energy" and how the show offers a chance for "sanctioned goofiness." The entire process, from auditions at the start of school to putting up the stage last week, has been a labor of love for this dedicated theater community. Will JWP pull off this demanding dance musical? With a dedicated team and a growing cast, all signs point to a disco triumph!

Board fills vacancy with Westphal selection; Work force review

JORDAN CARRILLO
Staff Writer

Following a series of interviews with three potential candidates, the St. Clair School Board nominated Doug Westphal to fill the vacancy Board seat at the October 20 meeting.

Stover thanked all candidates for their participation, noting all three were "highly qualified, showed promise, and would continue to engage with the community." The Board sought nominations for the vacancy and Rasmussen appointed Doug Westphal and the Board followed all in favor. Westphal will be sworn in officially during the November 17 meeting.

Positive Recognition: Replacing the "Cyclone Ticket" program of the past, Holland announced a new initiative called the Cyclone Spotlight which is staff-nominated recognition for elementary students who go "above and beyond" in the classroom. The Cyclone Spotlights are as presented: Lindsey Regnier, Briggs Roseberry, Myley Yokiel, Nora Seys, Chance McCone, Lucy Gerardy, Alivia Andreoff, Avery Zellmer, Arya Yingst, Jack Regnier, Baizyl Anderegg, Landon Ulrich, Harper Gilman, Maeve McCone, Everly Corrigan, Kurtney Pantorilla, Gracelyn Pedersen, Liam Westphal, Rylie Cedergren, Sheldon Arndt, Oliver Brekke.

The Purple Cheereeos, consisting of Charles Wicks, Eli Elston, Chael Holtz, Tobias Wakefield, Bearet Meerbeek, & Jaden Quach. St. Clair had two teams that placed in the top 5 at the same meet: White Clouds—Mack Stover, Charlie Topp, George Depuydt, Finley Quast, Owen Isebrand, Jasper Frantum; Green Grass—Liam Quast, Maddie Hasse, Mia Coleman, Dani Schendel, Reese Ritter, Leah Martin, Brynlee Bakken.

Congratulations to Payton Blount on breaking the school record for kills in a single match—twice—with the current record standing at 26; Blount was also named KEYC's Prep Athlete of the Week on October 8. Thank you to the Student Council and their advisors Carrie Altomari & Ashley Miller for a successful Homecoming week. Thank you to Nicole Ruhland, Jason Anderson, James Stenzel, Ethan Byrne, Cody Wiederhoeft, Jaxon Phillips, Austin Ward, Ryder Mastin, Brayden Oachs, and Laura Boening for planting trees on campus.

Donations: Athletic Backers—\$25,495.77 for baseball/softball concession and storage building, JP Fitness training sessions, concession stand equipment, state wrestling shirts, senior awards, state track & field shirts; Eagle Lake Fire Department—\$1,000.00 for Percussion Instruction for St. Clair Band; St. Clair American Legion—\$750.00 for the St. Clair Speech team; Katie VanErdewyk donated a trombone with a value of \$200.00; Martha Witte donated four library books with a value of \$30.00.

The Board moved to accept the resignation of Social Studies teacher Kevin Cumberland. To fill the vacant teaching position, the Board approved the appointment of Thomas Chapulnik; Guentzel noted Cumberland would complete

St. Clair School Board

his grading assessments for the quarter while also assisting Chapulnik to "make the transition seamless." Additionally, the Board also approved appointments for a Custodian and a Paraprofessional.

Two resolutions requesting grant funds from MSHSL were introduced and approved. The funding provides support for Minnesota's high school youth to participate in athletics and fine arts programs and required a resolution each for Form A & Form B. Both forms presented similar language, but Form A centered around extracurricular program activity fees while Form B focused on seminars, training opportunities, and additional support. A thank you was provided to Activities Director O'Donnell for organizing the presentations for the grants.

Two annual reports, the Community Education Annual Report & Assurance of Compliance, were reviewed and approved...the latter report refers to the District's compliance with state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination. A resolution to establish a uniform signature block for District employees' outgoing emails for the District was presented then later approved. In an effort to "standardize communications" between the District and the public, the signature block would "strengthen the District's brand recognition" as well as decrease the likelihood of potential copyright violations by employees who include quotes, sayings, or pictures by email signature.

Principals Holland and Guentzel presented the World's Best Work Force report. This annual report reflects data from the 2024-2025 school year and centers around six required "goal areas." Each goal area targets a specific grade level and charts their readiness or comprehension on a subject.

Goal 1 is Kindergarten Readiness which is based on Early Childhood Screening of known 3-year olds in the District. Holland reported the

District has experienced a significant drop in percentage (35%) since the pre-Covid years (50%) though she spoke on certain "misconceptions" that children must pass the screening to be considered for enrollment. In response, the District actively plans to push accurate information about the screening process to families.

Goal 2 focused on third grade students achieving grade-level reading comprehension and literacy. Following a series of MCA standardized testing, Holland reported 68.3% of third grade students either met or exceeded expectations, showing a "steady climb" toward pre-Covid numbers at just under 80%. Stover pondered if MCA testing provided the most "accurate representation" of grade-level literacy. Holland acknowledged the endurance and focus required to complete the MCA testing was important to consider, noting standardized exams can last from 45 minutes up to two hours, which presents a "major challenge" for students to stay focused on one specific task.

Keeping with the third grade portion of the WBWF, Goal 5 revealed MCA testing data for lower socioeconomic students. On the surface, the percentages from this group (67.1) nearly matched the mass percentage; however, Holland elaborated that only 10 students made up this specific demographic, causing a "fluctuation" in the results. She furthered that due to the small sample size, the State "may not even consider these findings."

Goal areas 3, 4, & 6 shifted focus to Guentzel's findings for high school students. Goal 3 charted the "career and/or college readiness" for students, most notably seniors, after graduation. With the use of an MCIS career plan, St. Clair maintained a 100% achievement in this goal area though Guentzel hinted at potential expansions to better mold a student's schedule to their plans. Suggestions made by School Counselor Joe Stauffer included a Personal Finance course and adjustments to the junior class' career plans.

Goal area 4 presented the graduation rate (94%) for the 2024-2025 school year. All eligible seniors at St. Clair (55) graduated though Guentzel remarked that two students who had transferred earlier in the year were unable to because of a "lack of graduation credits" upon transfer; therefore, affecting the overall rate.

Finally, Goal area 6 reflected the preparedness of graduating seniors for life beyond high school. Of the 55 students surveyed, 38 (74%) felt confident and prepared for their futures...this was a minor increase from the previous year, and Guentzel vocalized a lofty goal of 100% participation for the Class of 2025-2026.

In addition to the Goal Areas, the WBWF Report highlighted a few District-specific initiatives at St. Clair, the first being Core Processes of Teaching and Instruction.

Teachers are expected to maintain up-to-date curriculum maps that include current content standards laid by the State. This process provides a set standard for substitutes/new hires and allows teachers to "defend what you're teaching" by matching instruction to standards, ensuring consistency. Furthermore, the course maps provide a sense of protection for the District and minimizes "shooting from the hip" in regards to instruction. Guentzel used the previously mentioned Cumberland resignation as the leading example of this process: The core curriculum provided by Cumberland will be available for Chapulnik to use as a guide for coursework.

The final initiative is to increase Student Engagement at St. Clair for grades 9-12. Guentzel reported an approximate 80% of students participating in two more school-sponsored activities in 2024, but expressed a lofty goal of 100% for this year. He was impressed at the amount of coordination it takes for students to be involved in a combination of athletics, arts, and academics throughout the school year.

Holland presented her Elementary Report. Early

Childhood screening was completed on October 10 with 13 potential toddlers screened... Holland extended a huge thank you to Kristina Schemmel for organizing this "big day" for the District. Year Two of LETRS training has begun and the primary focus has been on reading comprehension whereas Year One centered around word recognition.

Holland noted this particular portion of the training was a "bit more familiar" to the staff. The structuring of the courses has changed with only four face-to-face lessons with instructor Christy Iles instruction compared to the eight sessions last year. A notable change would mandate all paraprofessionals to be trained though this would be more of a "crash course" according to Holland.

Guentzel presented his High School Report. The outlines for a potential Career and Technical Education (CTE) program were currently being reviewed for approval by the Minnesota Department of Education. Guentzel extended a thank you to Mr. Torkkola for leading the charge on this program which would bring opportunities for students seeking to learn a trade in agriculture, shop, or industrial tech with possible expansion into aviation. The District expects to receive approximately 50,000 dollars in funding to offset cost. MHS inductions are scheduled for November 3rd at 18:00. Guentzel noted a "large number" of applications for MHS this year and they were currently being reviewed by a committee.

Collins was not present for the meeting and had no official report. Board reports featured Johns recapping the St. Clair City Council meeting on October 7. The Board nominated Hauser to attend MVED meetings and report back in November. Despite two students attending the meeting, they did speak up during Open Forum—no extra credit for you two.

With nothing further on the agenda, the School Board adjourned the meeting at 18:45. The next St. Clair School Board meeting to be held on November 17 at 18:00.



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Personable vs. Complicated

Mother Knows BEST

By Kathy Richardson

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It has been brought to my attention that I should be a little more personable in my column. (by my daughter) The problem is that I'm not a very personable person. In fact, I am a very complicated person, and have been since a very young age. Sometimes people tend to think that I preach too much, but I don't try to.

I like people to think about every aspect of life and especially their own. I want people to really look at a sunrise or sunset, truly enjoy the beauty of flowers or just a single flower, the smell of fresh cut grass, or the neighbor waving hello to you from across the street.

I appreciate it when people have a real conversation instead of gossiping about others, and not arguing when a person should just be listening to what is truly being said.

Ask yourself, and the other person, if what they are disagreeing on is worth having an argument about?

Ask yourself if a person is mad at the world or just having a bad day.

Why do these things happen in this world? Like waking up crabby and out of sorts. Are they getting enough quality sleep or did they just toss and turn?

Why do some people refuse to listen to reason, or is it that they figure if they argue long enough that they will get their way?

In a previous column, I wrote about a list of why things are done the way they are. In mentioning that a landing at your doorstep coming into your house is only large enough for the door to open whereas needing to step backwards to get into your house.

Well karma hits close to home! My elderly lady friend, age 82, from across the street, did just that. She stepped backwards upon opening her outside door, slipped on the step, and fell on the cement steps. She broke her pelvis in two places, spent a week in the hospital, and must spend six to eight weeks in the nursing home now. Seeing as she was of small stature that was all that happened, but a person of my size would have been a lot worse. I'm so thankful that when my son did my front steps, he left room to step to the side instead of backwards on the step. Plus, he built a railing, so I don't fall off the edge. My neighbor didn't have a railing to catch when she fell. Since the incident with my neighbor, her son has now put a railing on the steps.

What I'm asking, though, is why did this happen now after living in that house for forty years? Karma I guess. I find myself asking why about everything. It is a quest of mine, and I mean *everything*, in life. Sometimes when I have some of the answers, I marvel at it and think why didn't I think of that in the first place.

When listening to conversations I prefer to listen instead of joining in the conversation. One can get an insight into who the person really is by the way they talk or the tone of how they talk. Watch their mannerism and listen to their language.

Well that is about as personable as I get. I like to think of this column as to what life is in general, the joys and laughter. The good times and bad, other than writing about me personally.

MSU Hockey players share their faith with St. Clair's Fellowship of Christian Athletes

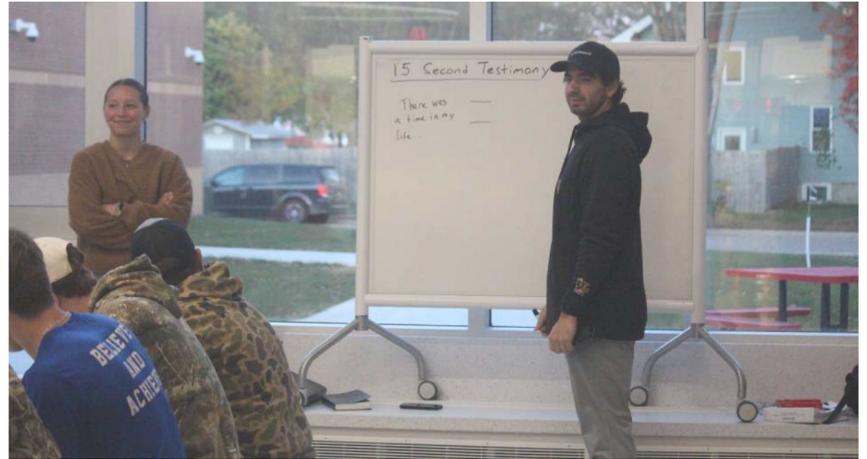
By JORDAN CARRILLO Staff Writer

Before the sun could rise on a brisk October 23rd morning, St. Clair students flocked to the West Commons for the second session of FCA. Though attendance seemed slightly lower compared to the first meeting, the tradition of a warm welcome of donuts and pleasantries had students eager to practice their faith. One of the group's leaders, Sarah Rossi, thanked all for coming and promised that future meetings could see opportunities for the group to break off into smaller, more intimate study groups.

This particular session was more significant than usual as it marked the first time St. Clair FCA hosted their first-ever guest speakers, a result of certain students knowing the right people to talk to about sharing their faith. Gracing the lesson were three MSU hockey players, Evan Murr, Kianna Roeske, and Alex Tracy, who traded slap shots and body checks to share testimonials about their faith and spread wisdom of the Lord. Each speaker had a unique perspective in regards to their spiritual journeys.

Roeske grew up in a strong, supportive family who attended church for a long time; however, as she entered college, finding the right community to practice her faith proved to be a challenge. She drew motivation from her loved ones and later decided to re-baptize herself in August 2025 as a way of revitalizing her faith.

Murr had a vastly different upbringing in a family of non-believers though their primary philosophy was to "be a good person." Once he entered college, his curiosity actually led him to Roeske and Tracy



challenging him to learn every day...that led to him pursuing faith and being baptized in April 2025.

Tracy had similar origins to his teammate, Murr, though he once held the belief that "religion was a hoax."

freshman year at MSU, and Tracy admitted to some "dark moments" during this time. In his darkest hour, close friends to him approached him with the hope and reality of Christ's sacrifice, which he states "ultimately saved my life." He

stories. They then led an activity called The 15-second Testimony in which asks what life was like before meeting Christ and how meeting Him redefined one's life. It was important to note that the activity is meant as a "guideline, not a mold" and acts as a quick and effective way to initiate conversations about Christ.

As the lesson concluded, Rossi asked how the inclusion of faith has impacted an athlete's perspective about competition. Tracy affirmed that he remains competitive on the ice, but winning is no longer his singular purpose, but "playing for God and to complete, no matter the end result." Murr echoed his teammate's sentiment, describing the relief as "lifting a big weight off my shoulders." Roeske followed with these opportunities to play for MSU as "something provided to us by the Lord."

The three speakers hung around to take photos with cheery-eye Cyclones who were elated to hear live testimony about how one's faith has no predetermined route, but instead is a journey of discovery and truth.



Growing up in Chicago, hockey was his passion and winning soon became his driving motivator; however, upon achieving his lifelong dream—winning the Clark Cup—Tracy soon found a feeling of emptiness which spurred an identity crisis. That confusion only built as he sat out his entire

was baptized a few months later. Following their testimonies, the three speakers instructed the students to read along John Chapter 9 which recalls the story of Jesus restoring a blind man's eyesight by rubbing mud on his eyes...the passage illustrates that "seeing is believing" and how God's will works through our



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Community rallies to offer Flicek a fighting chance against Cancer

A life interrupted

By JORDAN CARRILLO Staff Writer

In the face of insurmountable odds, a small town community offered what they could to give a neighbor, a friend, even a loved one a fighting chance against cancer.

Over the past few months, Jeff Flicek, a Mankato graduate, long-time maintenance worker at Mayo Clinic, avid fisher and hunter, and a fixture in the St. Clair community has been battling a rare case of Leukemia B-ALL or Biphentotypic Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, a rare form of blood cancer that causes bone marrow to produce abnormal white blood cells to fight infection. The prognosis for this variation is less favorable compared to other strains of Leukemia, but Jeff is currently undergoing chemotherapy treatment and remains hopeful he will receive a bone marrow transplant to prolong his life.

The discovery of Flicek's condition came as an absolute surprise to both he and his wife of seven years, Tina. Rarely experiencing any unusual health issues, Jeff spent most of his free time outdoors in nature,

venturing out early in the morning to hunt or fish as often as he could. However, things took a sudden turn in early July 2025 when Jeff began experiencing shortness of breath and intense fatigue. Initially, the Fliceks suspected asthma incited by simply getting older, but a July 7th visit to the doctor delivered a devastating diagnosis: Leukemia B-ALL, a rare form of blood cancer.

Leukemia B-ALL, unlike many other forms of cancer, is not categorized by stages, instead the path to recovery is physically and mentally draining for the patient and their caregivers. Flicek immediately began intensive treatment at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, starting with several months of back-to-back chemotherapy.

Unfortunately, the chemo regimen did not achieve remission which led to another form of treatment known as a Car-T or Chimeric Antigen Receptor Transfusion. Essentially, this immunotherapy procedure would use Flicek's own modified T-Cells to target and kill the cancer cells. This particular process takes up to seven weeks of careful and complex monitoring to hopefully result in remission; Flicek's cancer must be in remission for him to qualify for the most vital, life-saving step: a bone marrow transplant. Jeff's journey is, simply put,



a test of endurance, but he has maintained a positive attitude throughout this grueling recovery stage. Despite the immense physical and emotional challenge by chemotherapy and the CAR-T therapy, both Jeff and Tina have maintained a remarkably positive outlook. Jeff has remained his normal self, joking and keeping spirits high. Though she is determined to match that positivity, Tina acknowledges the stressors that come with a situation like this, but remains refocused on the complex path that lay ahead, "It's incredibly hard some days, but watching

him joke and laugh keeps me going. We all have to be very strong throughout this process... we're going to keep fighting this."

In a show of overwhelming support, Flicek's close friends like Jon & Brandi Hubner, Dave & Joan Ivers, Mick Rasmussen, and many others banded together to hold a burger basket benefit for Jeff's recovery efforts. The proceeds went toward covering medical costs, transportation, and, when that day comes, a bone marrow transplant.

A dedicated community gathered at the St. Clair Legion on October 25 to offer what

they could to support this noble cause. The St. Clair Fire Department fried up nearly 100 pounds worth of hamburger patties and there were plenty of hungry bellies to fill. Raffle drawings for 50/50 payouts, designer purses, and even a few firearms had vendors scrambling and eager enthusiasts purchasing tickets.

Upstairs in the bingo hall, the space had been transformed into a silent auction with well over 100+ items to bid; one side of the hall featured a variety of bundle baskets for holiday decorations, puppy treats, wine and spirits, even a cheeky one

filled with toilet paper and other accessories. Local businesses like Mankato Motors and Mister Wash contributed coupons for free services or gift cards, and there were some neat sports memorabilia like a signed Vikings jersey, a signed hockey puck, and a framed photo of Babe Ruth's World Series homerun.

Though he was not physically present at the benefit, Jeff zoomed in on the event and many were thrilled to see his beaming smile through the screen and his closest buddies shared recent stories of small town drama in St. Clair which got a hearty laugh out of him on occasion.

It was a heartfelt evening of support for the Fliceks, and there were times Tina was overcome with emotion over the outpouring of love and generosity, "I'm incredibly moved by this community's support during this difficult time for Jeff. We can't thank people enough."

These past few months for the Fliceks have had their share of ups and downs, but they continue to hold onto hope that Jeff will soon move into remission and move one step closer to a life-saving bone marrow transplant. With that transplant, Jeff's life could be extended another five or so years...years that may most definitely be spent on the water.

Eagle Lake group provides "Helping Hands" to rake yards

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

In the spirit of giving back to the community, about 40 Eagle Lake volunteers braved the cold, wet, and chilly Saturday, put on their work gloves, grabbed a rake, and cleaned up about 14 yards throughout the morning on October 26, from 9:30 to about noon. The event was known as "Eagle Lake Helping Hands."

Most of the volunteers were kids, with additional help from the Blue Earth County Sheriff's Department, the Eagle Lake Lions Club, and several members of the Mankato Youth Hockey program.

The effort to bring together volunteers was made possible through a collaborative effort between the city of Eagle Lake and the Blue Earth County Sheriff's Department. Lieutenant Mitch Gahler explained, "We wanted to put on an event to give back to the community, mainly to those who may not have the resources to receive the help they need. The older generation...they might not have



the ability to go out and rake their yard. So that's what we decided to do to help."

It only took a couple of months to put together the plans for this event. "It was an idea we talked about with the City of Eagle Lake and the Lions Club," Gahler said. "We partnered together to see how many volunteers we can get to lend a helping hand."

The main purposes of this event were to promote youth volunteering, strengthen community spirit, and build positive connections between the youth and law enforcement. "Eagle Lake is such a tight-knit

community, and we want to build off of that," Gahler explained. "Our youth are very involved with community events."

With 40 volunteers on standby, the process of raking 14 yards throughout the city of Eagle Lake went smoothly. Volunteers enjoyed donuts, juice, and coffee in the morning under the Lake Eagle Pavilion near the city's baseball field. Once they were finished with the cleanup, they returned to the pavilion and had pizza as a reward.

Jennifer Bromeland, Eagle Lake City Administrator, was thrilled with the number of

children and other volunteers who attended the event.

"The best part is that I think it's going to grow," she said. "I hope we can make this an annual event."

"Word of mouth travels fast," Gahler added. "The kids talk about it, and they get excited. It's a cool thing to see."

Although the conditions were admittedly not favorable for work, the volunteers powered through and took pride in doing something productive and helpful to their community. But also, who wouldn't enjoy free pizza?

Know when to hold'em, fold'em, and when to walk away

Now, I can't speak for the readers of Jay's Way, but the final few weeks of October bring a particular sense of delight that no other time of year can bring me. No, it's not the spooky spirit of Halloween or even my birthday on November 2nd... although feel free to leave gifts, tator tot casserole, or carrot cake at my front door this coming Sunday. Just don't put raisins in the carrot cake, I mean, what are we even doing here?

What excites me the most during this time of the year is the start of the NBA season. Basketball is leaps and bounds my favorite sport to watch ever since the days of Michael Jordan flying through the air with a level of grace that many great athletes have rarely matched. Although I can admit that recent years have their fair share of disappointments like botched All Star weekends and devastating injuries or isolated incidents to perennial stars like Victor Wembanyama last season or Tyrese Haliburton in the last NBA Finals.

Entering Week 2 of a marathonesque NBA schedule that lasts until mid-June, it's far too early to make predictions on which team will rise above the rest. The reigning champions, the Oklahoma City Thunder, are still a formidable team, but there hasn't been a repeat champion since the Golden State Warriors own back-to-back with the triumvirate of NBA greats Curry, Thompson, and Durant scorching the nets. It will be a tough road for the Thunder to repeat, and the level of parity in the Western Conference doesn't make their odds of hoisting a

Jay's Way

By Jordan Carrillo



second straight Larry O'Brien any easier.

Not to mention the absolute freight train that Wembanyama—returning for a blood clot in his shoulder—appears to have become in these first few games. After training in the offseason with NBA legends Kevin Garnett and Hakeem Olajuwon, Wemby has been a dominant force on the court with his unicorn-like blend of imposing defense and unstoppable offense. Frankly, he looks like a maxed out 2K creation every time he's on the floor and as long as he remains healthy and able, the San Antonio Spurs are primed to contend, but again, it's far too early to make these declarations on such a small sample size.

These opening weeks have shown a lot of promise; however, a recent gambling scandal involving two players and a head coach casts a dark shadow over the league right as their season starts.

Admittedly, these investigations are still ongoing and more details may be revealed soon after this Jay's Way is printed, so my thoughts will center around the facts already reported. On the morning of Thursday,

October 23, the FBI carried out the arrests of 30+ associates involved in a potential sports-betting conspiracy. Among them were current Miami Heat player Terry Rozier and former player Damon Jones for their alleged roles in the conspiracy; Rozier specifically was accused of purposely underperforming to hedge bets while Jones dealt out private information regarding lineups to influence betting.

Additionally, Chauncey Billups, NBA Champion and current HC of the Portland Trailblazers was arrested for his alleged role in a scheme to rig illegal poker games that had ties to organized crime. I'm sorry, what? Any time you hear the mafia is involved with anything, you have to raise an eyebrow and simply back away. I'm not gonna swim with fishes today, sonny.

There is so much to unpack with these recent allegations that there aren't enough column inches to do so effectively. Obviously, these gambling allegations are serious and the NBA was swift to suspend both Rozier and Billups while the FBI completed their investigations. It should be noted the league had

done their own investigation into Rozier's case in 2024, but eventually cleared him of any wrongdoing...which only makes his arrest that much more peculiar. Either the NBA didn't do their due diligence or Rozier played a longer game than suspected.

Though there is still more investigation to be done with these allegations, it's clear that if Billups or Rozier played significant roles in these scandals, they would not only face punitive measures with the law, but face indefinite suspension from the NBA as well as tarnishing their legacies. This wouldn't be the first time the league has dropped a severe punishment for a gambling scandal as they banished Jontay Porter for similar offenses in 2024.

It's a shame this particular scandal flared up right as the NBA season began, but this is the unfortunate reality of the league partnering with these gambling entities. The NBA has a responsibility to preserve the integrity of its sport and the outcome of the games; however, as long as the league has gambling sites like FanDuel, DraftKings, and BetMGM, instances like these will unfortunately continue to rise up. It's the double-edged blade that will occasionally slice both the user and handler, but take solace that this regulation exists to ensure incidents like these are found and those responsible are prosecuted.

Without that safety net, who knows how deep these wounds really are.

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SPORTS

Conference and Section CHAMPIONS! Loyola runners qualify for state after capturing section titles

By JORDAN CARRILLO
Staff Writer

In a unique twist for the final stretch of their season, the Loyola Crusaders competed in not one but two highly competitive meets within the span of three days.

Due to inclement weather, the Valley Conference Championship was postponed to Monday, October 20, but the delay didn't seem to rain on any of the racer's parades as both the boys and girls took first place in dominant fashion. Three days later at the Section 2A Championships, both squads once again led the pack to punch their tickets to the Class A State tournament held on November 1. The Lady Crusaders claimed their second consecutive Section championship and their third straight trip to State while the Boys have advanced to State eight out of the last nine years.

Valley Conference Championship
The weather delay granted each team a few extra days to prepare for the Winthrop Golf Course, but Loyola capitalized on fairer conditions to sweep the Varsity competition in dominant fashion. Soren Kelly has been the top dog for the Crusader men all season, and he stood atop the Valley Conference leaderboard with a convincing 54-second victory. Mitchell Buboltz relied on a late push to secure third while Francis Bierer & Griffin Rutz engaged in some friendly warfare down the final stretch to place fourth & sixth, respectively.

Four Crusader boys placed in the top with nine total rounding out the top 25...Loyola took first place as a team with 27 points, outranking second place Madelia by 34 points.



The Loyola-Cleveland-St. Clair cross country teams have been on a dominant run this season. They captured both the Valley Conference and Section 2A titles on their way to state this past week. (Photo provided by Will Goosen)

In addition to his individual success, Kelly received top honors as the male Valley Conference Athlete of the Year; awarded to a senior, Charlotte Meyer and Valerie Quast took the top two positions, respectively, although it was a narrow finish between these two. Quast was also awarded the Valley Conference Athlete of the Year as one of the premier runners in the region.

Trailing behind the dynamic duo was the younger and, by all measure, rookie Lila Quast who has steadily improved over the season...taking the third place mark is a promising sign for years to come. The Lady Crusaders flooded the top

Valley Conference Championship. As has been tradition this year, Charlotte Meyer and Valerie Quast took the top two positions, respectively, although it was a narrow finish between these two. Quast was also awarded the Valley Conference Athlete of the Year as one of the premier runners in the region.

Trailing behind the dynamic duo was the younger and, by all measure, rookie Lila Quast who has steadily improved over the season...taking the third place mark is a promising sign for years to come. The Lady Crusaders flooded the top

25 with nine runners and notched one more top 10 finish than the boys with five: Maddy Siewert took seventh and Riley Quigley placed 10th. As a team, the Lady Crusaders claimed first place with 21 points, outranking Springfield/Cedar Mountain by 43 points.

Section 2A Championships
Despite a moderate disadvantage of running a race a few days prior, the Crusader teams rose to the challenge to take home the Section 2A title. This marked the second consecutive title for the Ladies and they did so with one of their best team performances on the year.

When the competition is at its most elite, the great ones dig deep... Quast and Meyer flipped the script of every other meet this season with the former taking the top spot and the latter trailing close behind. L. Quast and Rigley rounded out the top 10 in ninth and tenth place, respectively. Siewert and Kate Daly rounded out the top 25 with 16th and 25th finishes, respectively. That collective greatness led to an insurmountable 70 point victory for the Lady Crusaders with 35 points.

The Crusader Boys had to battle two teams, Sibley East and Glencoe-Silver Lake, from

nipping at their heels during the race. Kelly continued his historic season with another first place finish by 25 seconds...it was a considerably tight race for second place as a pack of eight or so runners, including Buboltz, paced for position. Buboltz took sixth. Providing the necessary points to clinch the Section title would be Rollie Matejcek and Bjerer with a 20th and 23rd place finish, respectively. Those positions provided enough of a cushion for Loyola to seize the top spot with a slim 16 point victory over Sibley East.

It's no secret that Loyola is simply a cut above the rest in the XC circuit, and their recent performances at Conference and Section Championships solidify their presence as a premier program in the region. However, their work isn't done yet as they now prepare for the Class A State Championships at Les Bolstadt Golf Course on November 1.

Coach Olson had overwhelming praise for both of his teams, congratulating them for their hard work during Conference and Sections. Many of the runners on these teams have competed at State over the past few seasons, so there is a level of confidence flowing, but Olson is still determined to help these incredible athletes achieve their goals. "We have four girls and three boys returning to State, so we have a lot of experience with this level of competition, but we're not ruling anything out. We've worked very hard to put ourselves in this position, and we're excited to see what we can do with one more week."

Cyclones dominate pair of opponents to start playoff run

By JORDAN CARRILLO
Staff Writer

As the pressure of the playoffs intensifies, the St. Clair Cyclones have not only stormed past two opponents to reach the semi-finals, they've yet to even drop a set in doing so.

On October 20, the Lady Cyclones channeled the kinetic energy from the home crowd to kennel the JWP Bulldogs in straight sets (25-21, 25-13, and 25-16). Though many of the athletes were on a first-name basis before tipoff, those friendly faces were soon wiped away in anticipation for supremacy on the court. St. Clair utilized a spirited message of BTB or "Beat the Bulldogs" as a rallying cry throughout the match.

The opening set brought immediate tension as JWP built an early 8-3 lead, catching St. Clair off guard; however, their resilience kept them within striking distance. The demolition duo of Blount and DeMartini helped erase the deficit with a series of crucial kills to tie the set at 12. The two strikers combined for 23 kills on the night. St. Clair soon took control of the set with a four-point run sparked by the incredible defensive efforts of Blount and Mathiowetz. Credit to the Bulldogs for an opening salvo to stagger the Cyclones, but they failed to withstand the returning haymakers by DeMartini, who capped off the 25-20 victory in Set 1 with thudding finality.

Set 2 had the Cyclones hitting their stride, transforming their attack into a relentless yet balanced onslaught that the Bulldogs struggled to contain. Despite JWP's efforts to establish a counterattack, St. Clair deployed kills from all angles to ignite a devastating 13-2 run. DeMartini stood out with her blend of power and control at the net, but Jobe, Hinze, Blount, and St. Peter recorded kills as well. The momentum was fully on the Cyclones' side, and they cruised to a dominant 25-13 win.

Leading two sets to none, the Cyclones' relied on the continued barrage by Blount and DeMartini to ensure the sweep was completed. Blount was particularly dominant, recording multiple kills in rapid suc-

cession to reach 10 on the night and a total of 13 for the match. Strong serving—including aces by Meng and Quast—pushed the lead past ten points. Up by 12, Breezee, Oachs, & Ireland entered the fray, leaving a full squad of seniors in to end the match. The Bulldogs battled to stay alive late, but a service error ended the set 25-16, giving the Cyclones a clean sweep.

Though the start of the match had its dramatic moments, the Cyclones quickly persevered to implement their overwhelming offensive attack toward victory. Their Quarterfinal matchup had them face off against the four-seed Waterville-Elysian-Morristown Buccaneers which coincidentally kept the BTB (Beat Those Bucs) battle cry alive for another go on the court.

On October 23rd, the Lady Cyclones delivered a captivating performance in hostile territory to pull off the road upset against the WEM Buccaneers in straight sets (25-14, 27-25, 25-18). Though some may not call a five-seed defeating a four-seed an "upset." Despite both teams entering the contest on a hot streak, it was the Cyclones who executed a high-intensity game plan, capitalizing on early momentum and relying on clutch senior leadership to close out the thriller.

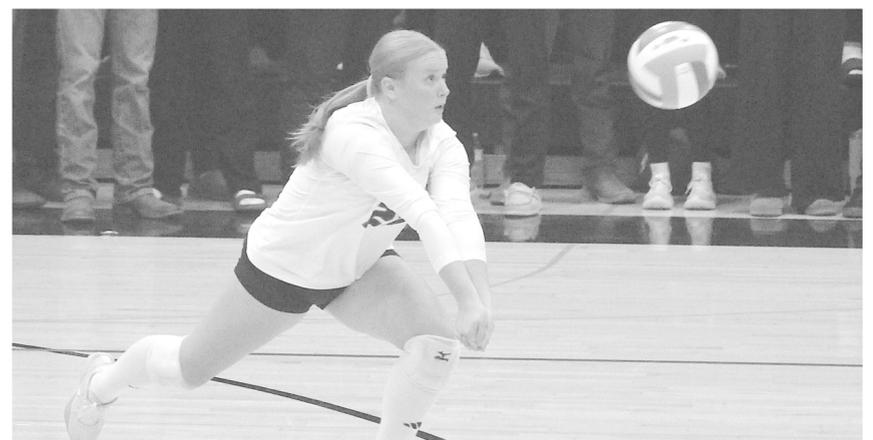
Starting out the match slow and sluggish had been a recurring problem for the Cyclones throughout the season; however, they silenced any concerns early, beginning the match with arguably their best first set of the season. St. Clair executed a perfect start, immediately establishing a four-point swing and rolling to an 11-3 lead, forcing two quick WEM timeouts. The combination of Blount's fury on the attack (5 kills in the set) and the impenetrable wall of Meng and St. Peter created a fast and furious formula for a convincing 25-14 victory.

After getting cold-cooked in the first set, the Buccaneers adjusted their strategy and exploited several unforced errors by the Cyclones to force a tightly contested battle in the second set. Multiple ties and lead changes constantly put each team on the defensive and each fan section brought a sense of urgency



with each point. The WEM section had a particular knack for highlighting St. Clair's mistakes with cleverly-worded taunts. Blount and DeMartini were once again formidable firepower as their explosive kills broke through the Buccaneer's defense, and even caused a corner official to scuttle out of the way. Blount in particular was a near unstoppable force with 20 kills on the night. Tied 25-all, her 13th kill followed by a block by St. Peter clinched an exhaustingly hard-fought 27-25 win for the Cyclones.

Despite the fatigue of the nail-biting second set, St. Clair dug deep to close out the match in Set 3. Blount continued her relentless assault, breaking the 20-kill mark while St. Peter and Meng soared high to deny and deflect shots at the net...the former even solo-ed a few attacks herself. A late run by WEM kept the set interesting at 19-18; however, St. Clair refused to allow another point and a perfectly placed corner shot by Hinze capped off a



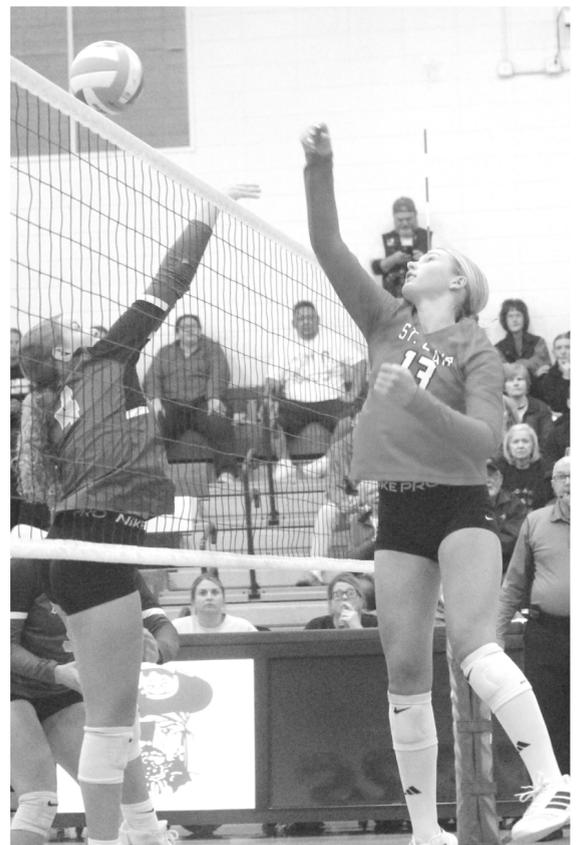
St. Clair has been nothing short of spectacular in their first two games in the playoffs, sweeping both Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton and Waterville-Elysian-Morristown this past week.

Top Left: Payton Blount winds up for the kill near the front of the net. Top Right: Aubree Mathiowetz handles a speedy spike with a dig. Right: Brooklyn Meng gets a volley over the hands of WEM defenders up front.

(Journal photos by Jordan Carrillo)

7-point run to decide the set and the match 25-18. As the home crowd hung their heads in defeat, the visitors roared with excitement and many Cyclones wiped away tears of joy as they searched for their loved ones.

A stunning set of performances by the Cyclones has them primed for a semi-final matchup against the top seeded Southwest Christian Stars on October 28. It's important to note that St. Clair (5 seed) has disrupted the expected "chalk" result of seeds 1-4 making the semi-finals, making their presence known to any who dares to challenge them. Their high-powered offense, persistent defense, and unwavering will has brought them to tremendous success in this 2025 campaign; however, there is still work to be done before they may rest.



SPORTS

Up and down season for the Lady Dawgs ends in St. Clair

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

2025 has undoubtedly been an up-and-down year for the JWP Bulldogs volleyball team. With a whole new coaching staff and only five players from 2024 – all of them seniors – returning to the lineup, it was an interesting time that served as a transition year for the program. After a 0-6 start, the team turned things around and didn't quite end the year with a positive record, going 10-13 into the playoffs.

Despite their best efforts, the Lady Dawgs were swept by an exceptional St. Clair Cyclones squad that stormed past several opponents en route to an 18-4 record on Monday, October 20. Cyclones were denied a championship title in the South Central Conference, and they made sure to take their fury out on JWP.

Well...not right away.

Senior Lilly Ewert sadly couldn't play due to a foot injury. Despite that, JWP had the jump on them right away, sprinting to a 9-3 start. Despite St. Clair doing a good job playing catch-up, the Bulldogs reached the halfway point of the set with a 13-10 lead.

"We came into this matchup excited," Head Coach Toryn Richards said. "We were definitely a bit hyper."

However, the Cyclones recovered, and a short four-point run saw JWP go from a three-point lead to being behind. Richards had preached aggressiveness to the team all season, but aggression can be a double-edged sword.

"I appreciated the effort, but I think we ended up getting over-aggressive," she explained. "They took advantage of that."

JWP called a timeout when St. Clair went up 18-15. Despite a comeback attempt, Cyclone sophomore Payton Blount – who broke the single-game kills school record earlier this season – ended the first set by placing a well-aimed shot that was too low for the Bulldog players in front of the net to handle.

St. Clair was much more dominant in the second set. JWP kept things interesting for a bit, with Katie Olson striking on a rocket, Ashlynn Wolff blocking a Cyclones' missile from Brooklyn Hinze, and Mikayla Wheelock finding the one spot that St. Clair didn't cover. However, Richards credited St. Clair for how they played down the middle. "They were really good at mixing up their attackers," she elaborated. "Their hitters knew when there wasn't a block that could slow them down."

Despite another rocket sent over the net by Brielle James, St. Clair started putting some distance between them and JWP, turning a 12-7 lead into an 18-8 contest with a 6-1 run. Senior Nevaeh Weimert tried to spark with an ace, but St. Clair had a mix of skill and a touch of luck on their side. Hey, you have to be good to be lucky, and lucky to be good. A few bounces went their way, but the real story was how they were able to capitalize on some hard-fought volleys that went back and forth, ultimately taking the second set 25-13.

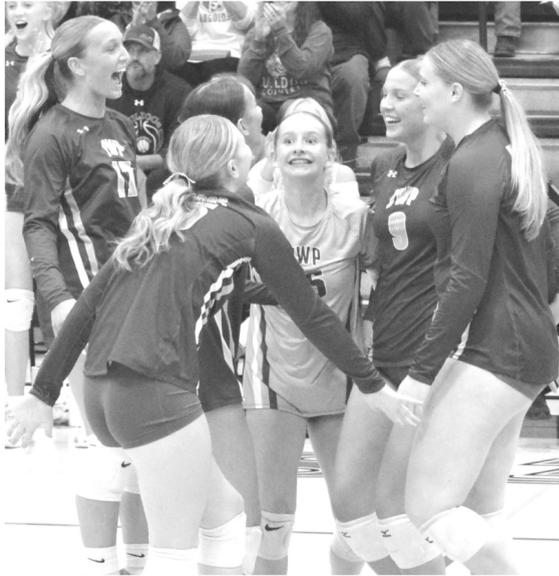
The third set started the same as the second; St. Clair got a point, and JWP responded. Olson supplied two aces to provide a boost of offense, but the Cyclones finished the final set and the game on a dominant note with a 25-16 finish.

While there were times this season that JWP certainly had their fair share of bad nights, this wasn't one of those, despite how the second set score may look. St. Clair was just the better team.

With that loss, the team finished 10-14. It was definitely a learning curve for Richards since it was her first year coaching a high school football team. When asked what her favorite memory was of this season, she chose JWP's first victory against Bethlehem Academy, a close one, but a win nonetheless.

"I think that was the match where the girls finally showed who they are," she commented.

She added that practices with them were always fun. "They are such determined girls, and they're



The JWP Bulldogs had plenty of reason to celebrate here, as they stunned St. Clair to take a 9-3 lead early in the first set of the game. Sadly, they couldn't keep the momentum as they were swept 3-0. Despite how the season went, this team stayed optimistic. (Journal photos by Michael Roy)

funny and they like to have fun. I'm going to miss having practices a lot."

The team will be seeing nine seniors leave the roster this year: Aubrey Adams, Victoria Blomstrom, Lilly Ewert, Brielle James, Ellie Morsching, Katie Olson, Lily Quast, Nevaeh Weimert, and Mikayla Wheelock. Ewert, Weimert, and Olson were this year's captains.

"They really gave me grace," Richards said about the seniors. "I made mistakes, and they were so forgiving. They shared their ideas, and sometimes I took them, sometimes I didn't. They just...let me coach. You don't see that a lot."

She'll miss their determination, which helped drive the team even when they had a rough start to the season. When asked what advice she'd give them, she simply responded, "Just have fun."

We got a chance to talk to captains Ewert, Olson, and Weimert about the season. Here's what we asked them and their answers.

What did St. Clair do well against this team?

Weimert: They were very aggressive overall. They played smart volleyball.

Olson: They're scrappy. They wouldn't let the ball touch the ground. It was hard to find a spot for us.

You had a rough start to the year with that five-game losing streak, but you overcame that. Many other teams would throw in the towel. What kept you determined throughout the season?

Weimert: We knew we were a whole new team with new coaches, and we put our trust in them. We knew we'd figure it out eventually. That helped us keep going.

Ewert: Sticking together as a team and uplifting each other really helped us.

Olson: Everyone on our team is best friends. That makes it easy to come into practice. We also wanted to put in the effort that we could since the coaches were doing that for us.

What was it like having a new coach step in your senior year?

Weimert: Honestly, she's been really amazing. Since she played college volleyball last year, it's been a bit easier for her. She challenged us a lot, and that helped us.

Ewert: She opened us up to a lot of new things we haven't done before. It was like a breath of fresh air to have a new team and coach. We all knew that she came off a great season at MSU. We knew she would coach us well.

Olson: I think it's one of the best things that could have happened to us, having a fresh start. We needed that as a group.

Favorite memory from this season?

Weimert: Beating BA. We went to five sets, and the final set was 18-16. That was my favorite memory.

Ewert: Honestly, just having someone who finally saw the potential I had and was able to see me for who I am.

Olson: Just getting to play my



Aubrey Adams leaps up toward the ball for the kill.

first game of the season. I had a lot of ups and downs with injury this season. The support I felt from everyone helped me get back on the court.

What's one thing you'll miss about this season?

Weimert: I'm going to miss all my friends. We play other sports with them, but I'll miss going to volleyball practice with them every day.

Ewert: Volleyball has the best atmosphere. It's really the most fun sport. I'll miss having my only year on varsity. I wish I could have had three more.

Olson: I would say the bonds we made. I know I'll be in basketball and track with the same people. But it will never be the same group altogether again. I'll miss the chemistry this group had.

Advice you'd give to the underclassmen?

Weimert: Stick with it, work in the offseason for sure, and just have fun. Volleyball's about having fun. Don't worry about anything else.

Ewert: Work on yourself and bring everyone up. Be a fun person to be around. It will make the good moments last longer.

Olson: Play for the person to your right and to your left. Be a good teammate to be around.

That wraps up the 2025 volleyball season for Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton. With the seniors from this year leaving, they are the final remnants of the 2024 team that got the volleyball program its first positive record in many years. It will be interesting to see how the "veterans" of the team do with one year of varsity experience under their belts and how they perform in a second season under Coach Richards in 2026.

Spartans sink one Bucs team; shut out by another in playoffs



Quarterback Sam Freitag breaks free for a run with Avery Anderson (#52) preventing a WEM defender from breaking through for a tackle. (Journal photos by Jordan Carrillo)

By JORDAN CARRILLO
Staff Writer

In the first year under a new regime, the St. Clair Loyola Spartans exceeded expectations for the 2025 season with a commanding victory in the opening round of Section playoffs; however, these battle-hardened warriors met their end on the battleground against a superior squad on Saturday, October 25.

SCL's opening showdown against the Blue Earth Buccaneers highlighted the apex of the Spartan's strength—their defense—as they forced four turnovers in a dominant 34-0 win to advance to the semi-finals. Steven Loeffler was the standout Spartan with a dozen tackles, two interceptions, and a blocked punt returned for a touchdown. McClinton also returned a fumble for a touchdown.

The SCL defensive front heeded Coach Willaert's advice throughout the week to "control the trenches" and along with Loeffler, Anderson, Barker, Youngerberg, and Hansen wreaked havoc in the Bucs' backfield, leaving some choppy waters for them to travel through all night. Smash mouth defense is part of the Spartan culture and this performance provided plenty of highlights and a brief return to former glory.

On the other side of the ball, Ward returned to the huddle from nursing a shoulder injury, and his presence brought a sense of urgency to his teammates with each drive. Ward's playmaking ability was on full display during the Spartan's opening drive as he shook off a defender to cap off a strong nine-yard run for a touchdown. The Bucs attempted to answer back with a score of their own and their QB withstood some punishment to pick up a first down; however, Barker and Loeffler broke through to halt any further momentum to force a fourth and long. As the Bucs prepared to punt the ball away, Loeffler surged past his blocker, leapt, and blocked the punt, scooped up the ball, and scored on a miraculous 40-yard return. His teammates and home fans erupted in celebration at one of the key highlights of the season; as Loeffler returned to the sideline exasperated, he received a fist bump from Coach Willaert and a well-deserved swig of Gatorade.

As the Spartans entered the second half up 14-0, the second half revealed the full potential this team possesses when firing on all cylinders. SCL defenders maintained their dominance over BEA, holding a desperate Bucs team to only 20 yards passing, 3-10 on third down, and 0-4 on fourth down. Offensively, the Freitag to Ward connection blossomed on the team's opening drive with three completions, the third being a dramatic heave on fourth down that somehow fell in the receiver's lap for a 31-yard bomb. The Spartans continued their balanced run game with five backs sharing the rock for 113 yards; Youngerberg led the

pack with 44 yards. Wilmes used his slipperiness inside the five-yard line to bring the score 28-0.

With the game well in hand, both team's reserves took to the field to finish the contest. It had been a rough night for the BEA Bucs, and their final drive started deep into their own territory. Going from bad to worse in a flash, pressure by Youngerberg forced the Bucs QB to drop the ball in the endzone, and McClinton fell on it to secure the Spartan's decisive score to mark the final 34-0.

A resounding victory for the SCL Spartans in their first year under new HC Willaert. The perfect blend of punishing defense, savvy special teams, and a bruising run game that found its stride in the second half. The cold and windy night could not contain the fiery nature of the Spartan's play, and they looked to keep that flame burning bright against WEM—another pair of Bucs.

Unfortunately, the SCL Spartans' valiant run in the section playoffs came to an end on a muddy, gloomy surface Saturday, as the WEM Bucs' relentless running attack overwhelmed in a 36-0 shutout. The two squads faced off a few weeks prior and this playoff match proved why WEM is the undisputed juggernaut of the section.

Despite the Buccaneers' opening drive starting deep in their own territory, they quickly asserted dominance over the Spartans with a series of punishing runs out of the three-back set. The blend of sweeps, dives, and QB draws created a lethal ground game that SCL struggled to contain...Ward laid a devastating hit to hold the line and McClinton delivered two big plays to force a 3rd and 12; however, WEM would convert to reset the downs and then later not only capped off the drive with a touchdown, they nearly took up the entire first quarter to do so.

Bruised and battered, the Spartans were determined to respond as they took the field. Freitag connected with Ward on two straight plays then threaded the needle to find Cumberland for a first down; the SCL QB scrambled for a huge gain, but a holding call forced them to retreat until Youngerberg shook and baked his way to a critical first down as the quarter expired. The Spartan sideline began to rally behind the offense; however, a desperate throw away by Freitag would be flagged for intentional grounding, halting all momentum and forcing a punt. The Bucs continued their relentless running attack throughout the second quarter as their blend of speed and elusiveness dominated the trenches, resulting in three more touchdowns to bring the score 30-0.

Despite the overwhelming deficit before them, the Spartans played their most effective football in the third quarter. The defense, after struggling early to stop the Bucs, forced WEM's first punt of the game, thanks to strong interior line play, by Barker, Loeffler, Hansen, and Anderson. In fact,

Anderson delivered one of the sole defensive highlights for SCL with a blocked punt, giving his team excellent field position; however, the Spartans failed to capitalize and were stuffed on a 4th and 1 run. WEM quickly responded with a play-action touchdown pass, cementing the final score at 36-0.

With the result well in hand, both teams allowed their reserves to close this Section semi-final out. Sieberg and Bryant had notable runs for good gains; however, a botched snap on third down was the proverbial nail in the coffin of the contest, and the Bucs assumed the victory formation to seal their playoff victory.

Emotions were high as the Spartans embraced in what would be their final huddle of the season. Coach Willaert shared a message filled with immense pride, praising his team's heart, leadership, and commitment; he reminded his squad that despite the day's final score, reaching the section semi-final was a major step in bringing this once revered program "back to where we used to be." 10 seniors laced up their cleats for the last time with SCL. The Journal spoke to two of the most impactful Spartans this season—Ward and Hansen—and they reflected on their journeys and offered wisdom to the next generation of Spartans.

Ward may have been sidelined with a shoulder injury halfway through the season, but his impact as the program's leader in all-time receptions places him amongst the pantheon of Spartan greats. His tenacity on every snap hopes to inspire his teammates in future seasons. "You don't get many chances to play this game with your best friends, so you have to give it your all every time you step on the field, like it's your last play."

Hansen was the bruising swiss-army knife for the Spartans as one of the team's leading rushers as well as one of hardest-hitting linemen. What stands out the most about him is his unwavering toughness—a given for any Spartan warrior—even when he could barely stay on his feet with an ankle injury...nothing more athletic tape can't fix. As he remembered his time with SCL, he echoed similar sentiments on enjoying the journey of a senior season, before reminding his teammates to hit the gym early and often. "The season goes by fast, so you just have to enjoy the moments with your teammates and friends. For the younger guys, if you want to take the next step, you have to get in the weight room and get big."

Though this 2025 campaign for the SCL Spartans ended in defeat, the program proved it is capable of bouncing back, securing their first playoff win since 2022. As they head into the offseason, there is still room for improvement and a long road ahead of them; however, their success this season can be the catalyst toward reclaiming their warrior's spirit.

SPORTS

JWP football ends best season since 2019

Bulldogs put up a fight in 36-20 loss to Eagles in second round of Section 2AA playoffs



Although Maple River won the rematch between them and JWP 36-20 on Saturday, October 26, the Bulldogs put in a much better effort. Here, Chase Gerdts (left) blasts through the Eagles D-Line to get JWP the 7-0 advantage early in the first quarter. (Journal photos by Michael Roy)

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

This week was a bit of déjà vu for the JWP football team. They finished the last stretch of the season against Blooming Prairie and Maple River, and they played those two teams again in the Section 2AA playoffs.

While things didn't start out the best for the Bulldogs when they hosted the Awesome Blossoms on Tuesday, October 21, they took care of business when they sent Blooming Prairie packing with a 22-6 victory. They put up a much better fight against Maple River than in their last meeting, even holding a halftime lead. But penalties in the second half cost them a win, as they fell 36-20 to the Eagles on Saturday, October 25.

The team finished its season 5-5, its best record since 2019, when that squad finished with the same record, defeating New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva before losing to Blue Earth.

Bulldogs 22, Blossoms 6

It was a cold, windy night when JWP hosted their conference rival in the first round of the playoffs. Despite the wind, the Bulldogs were adamant about implementing their passing game, which has frustrated many defenses throughout the season.

The first drive made them consider rethinking their strategy for a minute. On 3rd and 9, quarterback Daulton Bauer tried to throw a screen pass; some may blame the wind, but either way, Blooming Prairie's David Clennon read the play perfectly for an easy interception. With nothing but an open field ahead of him, he took it to the house for a pick-six.

That ended up being the only score of the night for the Awesome Blossoms, and the only "Awesome" moment for them.

Credit should be given to the JWP defense in this one. They held their own all night and didn't allow a single point, holding the Blooming Prairie offense to only 93 yards. Their play meant that the offense didn't have to score much in the not-so-favorable conditions, especially for passing.

The first touchdown for JWP came with less than three minutes left in the first half. It was fourth and goal, and Bauer's pass found Chase Gerdts at the six-yard line, and he was able to take it in for six. Ayden Peterson's extra point gave JWP the 7-6 lead before halftime.

It was plain to see that the game plan from here was to dominate time of possession. The team seemed to adjust to the conditions, opting to run more instead of pass. Still, they were determined to get Caleb Quast — one of their most versatile offensive weapons — the ball in some way. So, they opted to pitch the ball to him here and there. He found the end zone halfway into the third quarter for a 42-yard

touchdown. Another extra point by Peterson extended the Bulldogs' lead to 14-6.

JWP's final touchdown of the game came from yet another fourth and goal. A flip to Quast and a shimmy between a defender and the Blooming Prairie sideline allowed him enough room to get the three-yard touchdown. From there, JWP's defense closed things out, and with Bauer taking one knee and senior O-Lineman Aiden Cummins taking the other knee, the team took the 22-6 victory.

Eagles 36, Bulldogs 20

The Bulldogs entered Maple River unsure of themselves. They ended the regular season against the Eagles in Mapleton, and it ended up being arguably their worst loss of the year as they were blown out 55-6.

This game was very different, and JWP was arguably the better team throughout most, if not all, of the game. The Bulldogs used some trickery on their opening drive, putting O-Lineman Aiden Cummins in at quarterback with running back Chase Gerdts taking the direct snap for two plays. The first featured a 43-yard gain and caught Maple River off guard. The boys drove down the field from there, and Gerdts found a hole straight down the middle for the running touchdown. Ayden Peterson's extra point attempt put JWP at a 7-0 advantage.

Maple River was quick to respond, starting at midfield and only needing four plays to score. The Eagles' running attack that made the Bulldog defense struggle in the last game helped them, and was capped off by a 30-yard rushing touchdown. The two-point conversion via run gave them the slight 8-7 edge.

The rest of the first half was a defensive battle. The Bulldog D-line was much better at preventing chunk plays upfront, and junior Jason Wheelock recovered a fumble at the Bulldogs' 35-yard line. While the offense couldn't capitalize on the turnover, it found its stride in the winding seconds of the second half, as a dart by quarterback Daulton Bauer found brother Gavin in stride for a 37-yard receiving touchdown. Although Peterson just missed the extra point attempt, the boys were feeling good going into halftime with a 13-8 lead.

This editor isn't afraid to admit having a personal bias toward JWP. To be as impartial as possible, let's just say that the Bulldogs lost the momentum they had coming out of halftime due to several penalties. On their opening drive of the second half alone, they had three straight penalties called on them, one for a false start followed by two for holding. It seemed like whenever they had a play for a big gain throughout the second half, a penalty negated it.

The JWP sideline and the crowd took exception to this, especially when Maple River broke free for a



The JWP football team had some tricks up their sleeve against Maple River, starting with Aiden Cummins in at runningback with Chase Gerdts taking a direct snap, helping set up a touchdown in the opening drive.

92-yard rushing touchdown. Many felt there was holding not called against the Eagles on that drive. When asked what he saw on the holding calls against JWP, Luedtke was hesitant to respond. "We can only control what we can control," he replied. "We can't let those decisions affect how we play the rest of the game."

He did credit the team for not letting the penalties get to them. "In past years, we'd let it frustrate us, and we'd start pushing the opponents around or grabbing at facemasks. I think that goes back to how the seniors led this team all season. I'm proud of the way we handled it."

Despite being down 13-36 in the fourth quarter, JWP didn't stop trying at all. Senior Rocco Scholl, who had worked to be in the lineup the past few years, scored the final touchdown of the game when Bauer found him for a 76-yard score. An offside kick that went to perfection allowed JWP one last possession, but Bauer's throw was intercepted by Eagles' Zach Trio, essentially icing the game at 36-20.

It was a tough ending to what was a fantastic game between the two former conference opponents and section foes. As mentioned at the beginning of this write-up, JWP ended the season with a 5-5 record, their best in years. "We had a great season," Luedtke commented. "I feel there were a couple of games we could have won to have 6 or 7 wins on the season, but a couple got away from us. I think this season showed how you keep working at it, regardless of how one game went."

Ten seniors will leave this team after this season: Daulton Bauer, Dylan Hood, Caleb Quast, Rocco

Scholl, Michael Walker, Chase Gerdts, Travyn Shultz, Rylan Rolfsen, Aiden Cummins, and Zach Blasing. Bauer, Quast, Gerdts, and Scholl were the captains this year. There are so many things all of us, especially Luedtke, could say about this group of seniors. Shultz didn't get much time to play this year, but he led the team in prayer after each game, strengthening the team's culture. Scholl earned his time this year as well.

Advice he'd give to the seniors? "If they play the game of life like they play football, they will be successful."

We asked three of the four captains questions after the game about the season and their careers. Sadly, we missed the chance to talk to Rocco Scholl.

The first time you played Maple River, you lost 55-6. This rematch was different. Thoughts?

Gerdts: I think we started fast and caught them off-guard in the first half.

Quast: Everyone thought it would be the same as last time, but we started strong.

Bauer: Our coaches put a good word in for us. We were all down on ourselves before today. Today, they gave us a chance.

This season is the best one since 2019. Thoughts on that?

Gerdts: It's a feel-good story to have that happen in your senior year. I hope the team can continue that for years to come.

Quast: We started slow, won a couple, and then WEM destroyed us. But I think it was a good thing that they did, because we learned from it.

Bauer: This has been my

favorite season of football I've played. It's always good not to have a losing record like previous years. I count it as a win in my books. We really improved as a team, and this game showed it.

Favorite memory from this year?

Gerdts: Beating St. Clair. We competed with them in all four quarters and found a way to win by one.

Quast: Winning our playoff game, especially after Daulton threw that pick-six.

Bauer: I'd say that's one of mine, too. Especially after starting like that, it felt good to get a win at home. I like hanging out with everyone at practice. I thought practices went well every day.

Advice to underclassmen?

Gerdts: Take everything the coaches tell you seriously, and take every practice seriously.

Quast: Work hard during the offseason and put in the same amount of work during the season.

Bauer: Give 100 percent the entire time. Whatever happens, keep your head up. And know that your family will love you no matter what.

That's a wrap on this sports season. This football team showed massive improvement from last season, even if they only had one more win to show for it. They were competitive in most games, which helped them stay in ones they'd feel they had no business being in in years past. With a four-year varsity quarterback out of the picture, along with some stellar veterans throughout the rest of the roster, it will be interesting to see how the team does in 2026.

Jans named All-Section athlete in Grizzlies' final meet

By MICHAEL ROY
Editor

The WEM-JWP Grizzlies have had a great season. The boys entered the Section 2A tournament on Thursday, October 23, with a Gopher Conference title under their belts, while the girls were runners-up. There were hopes that they would get a bit of momentum from that. However, they were one of 20 teams in the Section 2A meet, so they had their work cut out for them.

From what we understand, none of the Grizzly athletes qualified for the state tournament. However, Wyatt Jans received All-Section honors at this meet. He had the best finish out of the boys, taking 15th out of the 117 runners in the meet with a time of 17:17.84 to earn his All-Section nod. Norah Welvaert was the lone Grizzly girl to crack the top 20, taking 19th out of 105 at 21:12.01. To give our readers an idea of how tight the competition was, Teagan Mulder, usually a lock for a top 20 spot, took 52nd with a time of 18:57.69, less than two minutes slower than Jans, yet nearly 40 places behind him. Lydia Couley and Madalyn Miller took 43rd and 44th, respectively.

It may come as a shock to only a select few, but Loyola-Cleveland-St. Clair, a program that's dominated at just about every meet this season, did so again. The boys had some competition with Sibley East, but they took the Section 2A

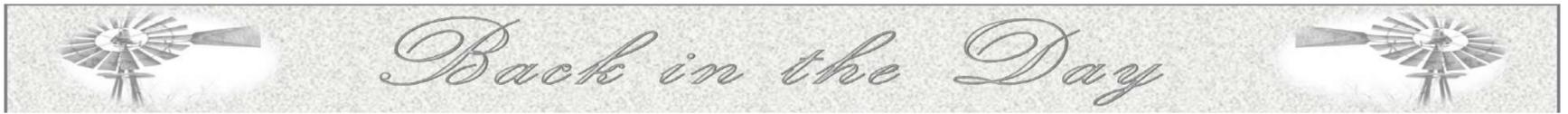


Wyatt Jans

title with 76 points to Sibley East's 92. The girls' competition was much less competitive. Loyola easily took it with 35 points; Mountain Lake-Comfrey, the second-place team, had 104 points. WEM-JWP's boys were in 11th place, while the girls were in 7th.

While many may not have wanted the season to end, that meet was a wrap for WEM-JWP. Co-head coaches Liz Kvebak and Skyler Petry were proud of the work the two teams put into this season. "The Grizzly girls continued to show why they are a force to be reckoned with in the section," Kvebak commented. "The boys continued to push themselves, improving each race, and demonstrating the same determination and spirit that make this program competitive and resilient."

The Grizzlies' section rival, Loyola, will advance to the state tournament at the Les Bolstad Golf Course in Falcon Heights/St. Paul on Saturday, November 1. For more details on how the Crusaders did in this meet, check out our report on them on page 5.



St. Clair Archives

This is a continuation of St. Clair's history found in the book, "Years of Memories: St. Clair, MN - 1855-2005."

1953 (continued)
- St. Clair to Erect Building for Doctor and Dentist. The village of St. Clair, like many another Minnesota community,

is without a doctor or a dentist, but has decided to do something about the situation. The village, under the leadership of its Commercial Club and city officers, has begun a campaign to raise funds to put up a building for the practitioners.

A large part of the money already has been raised, but according to Jack Fitzloff, president of the St. Clair Commercial Club, an effort will be made to gain further backing for the project in a public meeting Monday. Fitzloff said

that community leaders have already secured a young doctor who will locate in the community of 4000 and feels sure that once permanent, adequate quarters are assured there will be little trouble getting a dentist to locate there. A home is now being built for the doctor.

Civic leader feel that the community has much to offer, stressing the fact it is surrounded by a rich farming community., it has good travel facilities to Mankato where more serious medical cases can be referred. Among other leaders in the drive and taking care of the legal aspects are Mayor George Hubmer and Atty. Nick Juliar.

- Jerome Webster, Superintendent at St. Clair, leaves for similar post at Winnebago, Minnesota.
- A medical center for both a doctor and a dentist was built in St. Clair for \$18,000. Dr. John Wohlrahe, MD was the doctor and Dr. Richard Hall, DDS was the dentist.
- Ralph Hilton dies suddenly.

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Pastor Kathy King
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(507)384-2483
Pastor Kathy King
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Janesville, MN
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Father Rob Schneider
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Father Swaminatha (Swamy) Pothireddy
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Janesville Archives

Editor's note: One of the excerpts from this week's "Back in the Day" involves a murder case. The article in question does go into some details that readers may potentially find unpleasant. Reader's discretion is advised.

1925
- The Argus subscription campaign is just getting under way. On Saturday, November 28, someone is going to be the owner of a brand new Ford Tudor Sedan, one of the late models, the model with the new body and all the up-to-the-minute changes. And that someone is going to have a \$675 automobile for one month's work - and not the hardest kind of work at that. If you think that \$675 is pretty fair pay for about a month's effort, you had better call at the Arugs office now, get a receipt book and start out getting subscribers for this paper from your friends. The person who turns in the most subscriptions for one, two-three, four or five years gets the car - that's all.

- The Janesville Band organization is again underway, following a rather abrupt stop when our recent director "blew up" because of his inability to pick out the right thing to drink. This time, the committee has succeeded in securing a man who brings with him a reputation for squareness, musical ability and all-around stability and we feel certain that now Janesville is on the right road to development of a real band.

- Frank Kratz was acquitted Saturday of the charge of murder. The jury deliberated seven hours, and at 8:30 p.m. announced that they had arrived at a decision. Clerk of Court Brisbane read the finding of the jury - Not Guilty. Kratz, who had been confined to the county jail for several months awaiting trial and had gone through the grueling experience of facing the charge of murder, naturally was highly elated and hastened to the jury box to shake hands with the men who had declared him innocent. The evidence against Kratz was entirely circumstantial. Louis Minske was found dead in his dooryard last spring, a blood stained neckyoke beside the body showing that the Isosco recluse had been confronted by the murderer on his arrival at his farm home, clubbed to death and left lying where he fell under the blows.

1950
- Mrs. Bertha Kopischke of Janesville Route 2, passed away Monday morning, October 23, at her home in Alton township at 7:35 o'clock. She had been in poor health for the past four and one-half years, and critically ill the past week, death being caused from a stroke. She was 81 years, eight months, and 14 days old at the time of her death. Bertha Krause was born February 9, 1869, in Germany and was a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Krause. She came to this country with her parents in 1882 and lived in Wilton township.



Back in 1975, Arlene Pooley, president of the Janesville Mrs. Jaycees, presented Waseca County Day Activity Center director Stuart Miller with a \$1,200 check. That check represented 75 percent of the proceeds from the Jaycees Bike Hike fundraising event.

- The junior class of the Waldorf high school will present "Galloping Ghosts," a three act comedy Friday and Saturday of this week, beginning at 8:00 p.m. The action takes place at the home of Elizabeth Barton, whose grandfather hid some gold on the place before he died. Miss Barton's nephew hires a fake clairvoyant to spend a weekend at the home, during which time the medium is to contact the spirits during the séance. Ghosts and spirits rule supreme!

1975
- Emma Stearns was born in Janesville in 1884 and spent most of her 91 years here. Her father, John Janke, was section foreman on the railroad. When Emma was quite young, he was moved to Nicollet for a time. Emma started school in Nicollet. Her parents were German. Her father learned to speak English well but could not read or write English. Emma did all his writing and bookkeeping for him. It was interesting to hear

her talk of her parents. Her moth could understand English, but never learned to speak it. Emma told of her school days - she said she wore woolen dressed with a long-sleeved "Mother Hubbard" apron over them. Her home knit stockings were always black and she wore long underwear. She said her mother would wash out her things after school and dry them by the fire so they would be ready for the next day.
- "Hail masters, those about to be initiated salute you!" This was the password for the 1975 Latin Initiation, held Monday, October 20. Eight freshmen were initiated into the Latin Club by eighteen sophomores. When those to be initiated arrived, they were promptly plastered with lipstick, mascara and anything those devilish sophomores could find. After that, it was nothing but torture for the eight boys. They included Paul Bartelt, Dan Sjoquist, John Schewe, Gary Lochner, Terry Johnson, Steve Witt, Scott Zimmerman and Mike Scott.
- The Janesville Police Department is investigating vandalism which occurred at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Hering, 419 West Allyn Street, Sunday night. According to Deputy Jerry Splett, the Herings' front picture window was broken out when a rock was thrown Sunday.

2000
Senior stand-out, Sara Blegen of Janesville-Waldorf-Pemberton, will cap a successful running career for the Bulldogs with an appearance at the State Cross Country Meet. Blegen, who also qualified for state as a sophomore, was the only JWP runner to survive Thursday's Section 2A competition at Montgomery.
- To the editor: As a long time friend of Connie Ruth, I am proud to endorse her candidacy for State Representative. Connie has always been an energetic worker in our community. Whether it be our schools, our church, the business community or community projects, Connie has accepted these challenges with enthusiasm and a goal to succeed. From my experience with Connie, I know that Connie has and will continue to listen to the concerns of all residents in our district. Connie is an energetic person who has balanced a business career, family life and community service, along with continuing her education. I encourage you to vote for Connie Ruth for Representative on Nov. 7. Gail Arnfelt, Janesville.

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Some thrills, some treats, and a couple of neat costumes at St. Clair's Halloween Party October 24

By JORDAN CARRILLO
Staff Writer

The St. Clair Community Education department hosted a successful Halloween Party on October 24, offering an evening of thrilling frights, fun activities, and delicious themed treats for costumed students and families.

The event successfully set a spooky, immersive atmosphere right from the start with a grand entrance featuring a candlelit path, ghastly ghouls, decorative gourds, and even a cutesy spider adorned with a witch's hat. Inside the Commons area was a transformed space ideal for an evening of terror and entertainment.

A bake sale offered sweet treats with a scary twist as all horror-themed bags held creatively clever Halloween creations like "witch's fingers" and "fudgy brain" brownies. A small set of tables was reserved for more hands-on activities to get the kooky creative juices flowing with a cookie-icing station, arts and crafts centered around classic Halloween characters, and a chance at either a prize or a slimy surprise with the "Pick Em" Ghost.

A little further down the path would be the standout Haunted Mansion which



An assortment of creepy costumes filled the Commons area of St. Clair School last Friday. The creative costumes were worn by both children and the adults. (Journal Photos by Jordan Carrillo) featured a hallway filled with devilish tricks creeping around every corner designed to elicit blood-curdling screams for anyone passing through. Both



gyms served as the central hubs for Halloween-themed activities and instead of terrifying tricks, sweet treats could be earned after successfully completing a

variety of games like a spooky roulette wheel, pin the leg on the spider, deep sea candy fishing, or picking Frankenstein's grotesque and goopy nose. The small gym also featured exciting activities like mini golf, plinko, a limbo station, and a high-paced potato sack race.

Of course, with any Halloween-themed event, the highlight of the night would be the assortment of creative costumes worn by both children and adults, alike. The main organizers with Community Ed have made it a goal to coordinate their costumes...past years they have been butterflies or the Village People, but this year they took

a literal colorful approach by dressing as Crayola crayons. They were a color or two short from the perfect rainbow, but they were easy to spot as they maintained order throughout the party.

There were plenty of the traditional costumes like Disney princesses, Marvel or DC superheroes, witches & wizards, skeletons and zombies; however, there were certain unique and memorable additions like the Lorax, a pack of zombie cheerleaders, urban commandos, a pint-sized version of the Village People, aliens and T-rexes, a spiked log from the mobile game Clash Royale—whatever that is—and an

unorthodox pair of a grilled hot dog and a bottle of ranch. Not sure those two go together in real life, but Halloween is meant to subvert reality. These past few years had invited a towering woodland beast to lurch about the halls and send kids scurrying, but his appearance this year was brief...perhaps more important targets to terrify.

By all measures, the St. Clair Halloween Party was another successful endeavor into the realm of horror hijinks. It's a unique time for students and parents to let loose and embrace the spooky nature that Halloween brings, and engage enough candy to satisfy any sweet tooth.



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