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Local tot wins regional cute baby contest, Page 14A



Somerset celebrates
graduation of Class of 2006, Page 16A & 4C



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THURSDAY
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'Obviously they have problems'

Fill-in head of schools did his job quietly... until the end

By Karl Puckett
News staff reporter

During his six months as interim administrator of New Richmond schools, Mike Williams was a good soldier.

He said very little at board meetings and promptly did what board members directed him to do.

But on June 5, the low-key Williams, in front of more than 200 people at a community meeting, abandoned the outsider's reluctance to meddle. At a meeting, called to clear the air as a result of growing tension between some board members, administrators and teachers, Williams calmly told the school board that "something's not working right." The controversy in the district, he added, "isn't normal." If

everybody pulls together, he said, and puts kids first, the details will work themselves out.

The final day on the job for Williams was last Thursday, three days after he, in effect, told the school board it was heading a dysfunctional family.

"Obviously, they have some problems there and I think they are trying to pull together and solve some problems," Williams said in an interview Friday, summing up his time in New Richmond. "The community and school system has a tremendous amount of potential and I think Mr. Veilleux will do a nice job in leading the district forward."

On July 1, Morrie Veilleux, who has served as head of Clayton schools, takes over the New Richmond administrator job permanently.

Williams was hired six months ago to temporarily fill the district's top post until it found a replacement for Craig Hitchens, who took early retirement Oct. 31, 2005 after the district bought out the remaining eight months of his contract.

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Relay For Life launch

Rainfall did not deter New Richmond cancer survivors (l-r) Henri Olson and Richard Swanson and Richard Rademaker of Woodville, from launching balloons during the 2006 Relay for Life opening ceremonies Friday. See more photos on page 12A

Photo by Andrea Geddes

Motorists get early peak at highway

Motorists appear to be a little too anxious to have the new four-lane Highway 64 opened.

New Richmond Police Chief Mark Samelstad said his officers have been writing "a lot of tickets" for drivers who have been discovered on the roadway.

"We have people drive through there all the time," Samelstad said. "We need people to stay off the new road construction. I'm asking for the public's cooperation in this"

Motorists are driving past barricades to access the new section of highway, and many are driving into the ditch to get through, he said.

"We even had someone get stuck and then use a bulldozer to get themselves out," Samelstad reported.

For those caught driving on the road and ticketed, the cost is \$78.80 per violation.



Nancy and Jeff Schroeder enjoyed lunch two weeks ago in downtown New Richmond prior to the teacher leaving for assignment in Afghanistan.

Teacher deployed to Afghanistan

By Jeff Holmquist
Managing Editor

Students in Jeff Schroeder's first grade class learned a real life civics and geography lesson this year.

When the youngsters returned from Christmas break in January, they found out their beloved teacher would soon leave for an 18-month military deployment to Afghanistan.

Schroeder, a captain in the Minnesota Army National Guard, knew he'd be deployed overseas eventually.

He just didn't expect it to happen until later this year, however.

In the days leading up to his departure from his teaching job, Schroeder used many "teachable moments" to prepare his students.

"My goal was to be so matter of fact about it," said Schroeder, who was home on leave in late May prior to being shipped off to Afghanistan. "I gave it a lot of thought."

"I gave them a hug and let them know it's OK. I didn't know if I was going to be able to get up to speak."

- Jeff Schroeder

He sent a letter home to parents about his mid-year departure. Schroeder would often use a map to show students where he was heading. During sharing time, students were also able to ask questions and share their feelings about their teacher's deployment.

"They heard me say it enough times, and we talked about it in so many different ways, that they weren't shocked by it," he said. "They were ready for it."

Schroeder was given a hero's send-

off at West Elementary at the end of February. Fellow teachers and students were involved in the emotional goodbye.

"That was a wonderful highlight," Schroeder recalled. "There was a whole range of emotions there. Some kids were crying profusely. I gave them a hug and let them know it's OK. I didn't know if I was going to be able to get up to speak."

Schroeder did address the crowd and presented an American flag, given to him by his grandfather, to the school. The flag will be on display during the 18 months the teacher is gone.

"I tried to share information in a way the kids could understand," he said. "We told them how I was going to be gone for a long time. My first graders will be starting third grade by the time I get back."

Schroeder is being assigned to the Afghan National Army as an embedded

See **Deployed**/Page 3A

Job Center to close

By Andrea Geddes
and Phil Pfuehler

Wisconsin Job Center, part of a state network of one-stop employment agencies, is merging and relocating two offices in New Richmond and Ellsworth to one office in River Falls.

Starting Sept. 1, the seven employees from the current New Richmond facility, located at 240 Wisconsin Dr., will work in River Falls.

Wisconsin Job Centers provide scores of services for both workers and employers, including career planning, job-search assistance, vocational rehabilitation, training for employment, business recruiting assistance, hiring and tax incentives and labor market information.

Last fall, the local Job Center office was instrumental in helping Wal-Mart screen, interview and hire

See **Job Center**/Page 3A

Research facility could create cure for diabetes

By Jeff Holmquist
Managing Editor

Construction is underway on a hyper-clean building that will eventually house 88 special pigs in New Richmond.

This is not your typical farming operation, however. These pigs could help researchers find a cure for diabetes.

The industrial facility, located on the edge of the New Richmond Airport, will be the focal point of Spring Point Project's research and development efforts for the next four or five years.

The local facility will carry the non-profit organization through the Federal Drug Administration's approval process. Once they get the necessary stamp of approval, Spring Point will begin mass production of pigs that will be used for islet transplantation into humans.

Researchers claim that pig islets have been successfully transplanted in monkeys and cured diabetes.

In order to begin pig islet transplantation in humans, Spring Point must adhere to strict federal regulations in

preparing for the clinical trial process.

Pigs born by c-section and cared for at the New Richmond site will eventually be used in those first human transplants.

Officials with Spring Point, construction contractor Ryan Companies and diabetes researchers were on hand Wednesday afternoon, June 7, for an official groundbreaking ceremony in New Richmond. In reality, site work had been occurring at the site for about three weeks.

Bernard Hering, associate director of the University of Minnesota Diabetes Institute for Immunology and Transplantation, called the groundbreaking "a very, very special day."

Now that the science has been proven, Hering said Spring Point backers are anxious to start curing diabetes. "Now it's about implementation and not so much about the science," he said.

Because the project is being spearheaded by a non-profit organization, Hering said he's excited that the cure

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Photo by Jeff Holmquist

Researcher Bernard Hering, with work proceeding behind him, said the New Richmond facility will change the landscape of diabetes worldwide.

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Obituaries

Envor E. Johnson, 88

Oct. 17, 1917 - June 10, 2006

Envor E. Johnson, age 88, of New Richmond, died on Saturday, June 10, 2006 at the Signet Health & Rehabilitation Center.

He was born in Hilland, S.D. on Oct. 17, 1917 to Oscar and Elsie (Johanson) Johnson, the third of seven children.

Envor served four years in the Air Force during World War II, two years of which were in India. He worked at Bernard's Northtown for more than 40 years.

During his retirement, Envor drove school bus and worked at the New Richmond Cemetery for more than 10 years. He was active in First Lutheran Church, the American Legion and drove ambulance for many years.

Envor is survived by his devoted wife Frances; one sister Margie; one son Brian; one daughter Eris (Bob) Hyrkas; four grandchildren, Jodi Johnson, Blake Hausladen, Jason (Jill) Johnson, Julie (Zak) Lakovic; and five great-grandchildren, Matthew, Alyssa, Jason Jr., Brandon, and Theodor.

Visitation for Envor will be held on Saturday at the Beebe Mortuary from 1 until 4 p.m. fol-



Envor Johnson

lowed by a graveside service at the New Richmond Cemetery at 4:30 p.m. Military honors will be conducted by the New Richmond American Legion Post 80.

Pallbearers are David Jensen, Ken Jenderny, Chuck Pitzen, Ron Siegersma, Jason Johnson and Matthew Johnson.

A gathering of family and friends will be held at the American Legion on High Street following the service.

Envor loved his family and all the kids on the school bus who called him "John". He was deeply loved and will be sadly missed.

Shaun A. Johnson, 39

Oct. 12, 1966 - June 12, 2006

Shaun A. Johnson, age 39 of St. Croix County, Wis., died Monday, June 12, 2006 at the Red Cedar Medical Center in Menomonie, Wis.

Shaun was born on Oct. 12, 1966 in New Richmond, Wis. On Aug. 24, 1993 he was married to Michele Hammond.

Shaun is survived by his wife, Michele; children, Vincent, Dolton, Thomas and Angela Johnson; parents, Ronald Johnson and Barbara Viellieux; siblings, Anita Caroon, Melline Wagner, Tammie Raska, Tom Raska and wife, Faith, Harold Johnson and wife, Theresa, and Nikki Johnson and husband, Jeff; and

many nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

Preceding Shaun in death were his grandparents; sister, Wanita Johnson; and best friend, Joseph Danille.

A Memorial Service will be held on Wednesday, June 21, 2006 at 3 p.m. at the Bakken-Young Funeral Home in Baldwin with the Rev. Stephen Allison officiating. Visitation will be from 1-3 p.m. on Wednesday, June 21, 2006 at the funeral home. Arrangements are with Bakken-Young Funeral & Cremation Services of Baldwin.

Edward John Kirby, 86

Nov. 1, 1919 - June 5, 2006

Edward John Kirby, age 86 of Hudson and formerly of New Richmond, died on Monday, June 5, 2006 at the Christian Community Home in Hudson.

Edward was born on Nov. 1, 1919 in St. Paul, Minn. to Edward and Cecelis (Eagan) Kirby. Edward attended schools in St. Paul and worked as a pipefitter before enlisting in the Army.

Edward's first marriage was to Alyce Wolf, and their union was blessed with two children, Pat and Alyce. Edward was later married to Ruth Bostetter, and their union was blessed with a daughter, Kathy.

Edward worked for many years doing many different jobs in the area. In his spare time, Edward enjoyed golfing and collecting items of Americana, patriotic things with eagles and American flags. Edward was proud of his military service, and also volunteered his time to the 'Wednesday Squad' of the Fort Snelling National Cemetery Memorial Rifle Squad.

Edward is survived by his son, Pat (Marti) Kirby of Comstock, Wis.; daughters, Alyce Denny of Jones, OK, and Kathy (Ken) Sycks of Hudson; sister, Ellen Mellum of North Dakota; grandchildren, Robert Rosewitz, Dawn Jennings, Shannon Kirby, Michael Kirby and Kamren Sycks; seven great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Edward was preceded in death by his first wife Alyce, his second wife Ruth; son-in-law, Sam Denny; many siblings, and his parents.

Funeral Services for Edward John Kirby were held at 1 p.m. Thursday, June 8, at the Historic Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel located at Fort Snelling Minn. (Minneapolis). Interment with full military honors immediately followed at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Visitation took place one hour prior to the service at the Historic Fort Snelling Memorial Chapel. Arrangements were entrusted to the O'Connell Family Funeral Home of Hudson.

Joseph Patrick Kelly, 49

Joseph Patrick Kelly, age 49, of New Richmond, died Friday, June 9 at Regions Hospital in St. Paul. A memorial service will be held on June 24 at the First Lutheran Church in New Richmond.

A full obituary will appear next week.



Joseph Kelly

Irene E. Brochman, 78

Sept. 27, 1927 - June 11, 2006

Irene E. Brochman, age 78, of Rice Lake, formerly of Oakdale, Minn. died Sunday, June 11, 2006 at Heritage Manor in Rice Lake.

She was born Sept. 27, 1927 in St. Paul, Minn. to Mathias and Julia (Neudauer) Geretschlaeger. Irene graduated from the Washington High School in St. Paul in 1946. She was married to Charles Brochman on June 5, 1948 in St. Paul. Irene was a resident of Oakdale for 54 years. She worked at Dayton's in the St. Paul Store as a retail clerk for over 30 years. Irene loved to garden and enjoyed being with her family.

Irene Brochman is survived by two daughters and sons-in-law, Coleen and Dennis Hillskotter of Cameron, Wis. and Kathleen and Curtis Merchant of Crystal, Minn.; two sons and a daughter-in-law, Clifton and Joan Brochman of Cottage Grove, Minn. and Daniel Brochman of West St. Paul, Minn.; four grandchildren, Melissa (Jason) Shatley,

Kristine (Jesse) Hamble and Grace and Brian Merchant; two great-grandchildren, Brooke and Benjamin Shatley; two sisters and a brother-in-law, Helen Tuffs of Mahtomedi, Minn. and Rose and William Solnitsky of Roseville, Minn.; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Charles H. Brochman of 35 years, her parents, Mathias & Julia Geretschlaeger, two brothers, George and John Geretschlaeger and a sister, Marcella Truen.

Funeral services will be held 1 p.m. Friday, June 16, 2006 at the Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Maplewood, Minn., with the Rev. Ester Dant officiating, with interment in the Union Cemetery in Maplewood. Friends may call from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday at the church. Arrangements have been entrusted to the care of Appleyard's Home for Funerals in Rice Lake.

A special thank you to the staff at Heritage Manor for taking care of our mother.

res store in St. Croix Falls and WESTconsin Credit Union, Joshua caught this 42" musky which was leased. Although they did not win their tournament, thanks to their sponsors, they were able to capture his moment for a lifetime.

PS: Net man was my dad this time.



DIABETES:

Continued from page 1A

will eventually be "widely available and affordable."

Construction crews behind him were busy changing the landscape of western Wisconsin, Hering noted.

"We are changing the landscape of diabetes as well," he said. "I'm so happy and so proud to participate in this groundbreaking research."

Spring Point and Ryan Companies officials applauded efforts by the city of New Richmond in bringing the facility to the region, noting that the expected success of the research will bring notoriety to the region.

"New Richmond ... you are going to be known worldwide," said Tom Cartier, president of the Spring Point Project. "In the history books, they are going to know where you are."

Several speakers singled out Mayor David Schnitzler for his unwavering support.

"It's not that easy to locate a pig facility," said Pat Ryan, president of Ryan Companies. "Mayor, you embraced us when other communities didn't necessarily do that. Mayor, you have a vision and are a visionary person. This will hopefully be the proudest day of your legacy."

Schnitzler informed the crowd that finding a cure for diabetes is near to his heart. The mayor is a Type 2 diabetic, his mother had diabetes and his sister has diabetes.

"By golly, when we can get a facility here to find a cure, I'm 100 percent behind it," he said. "Anything you need, we'll work with you."

Officials expect to occupy the building by Feb. 1, 2007.

The building will be the first

WITC names administrator

By Jeff Holmquist
Managing Editor

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College New Richmond has named Joseph Huftel as its new campus administrator.

"The time was right for me to make this move," Huftel said in a telephone interview Monday, as he began wrapping up his duties as principal at Phillips High School. "I knew at some point in time I wanted to be part of the technical college system."

The fact that he landed in an administrative role with WITC was an added bonus, Huftel said, because the New Richmond campus has a great reputation across the state.

"It's a first-class operation," he said. "Everything they do is well done and professional. They have the best interest of the students at heart."

Huftel will replace John Hackbarth, who has served as interim campus administrator since October 2004.

The New Richmond campus has been through a long process of identifying its new administrator.

The educational facility offered the post to a candidate last fall, but that person eventually withdrew from the process. Hackbarth said it took WITC four job postings and interviewing rounds before finally hiring

Huftel.

"It's becoming more and more normal that interims serve much longer," Hackbarth said in an interview Friday. "It's a long process, because we have a lot of people involved. And timing is sometimes difficult because people have contracts they have to fulfill."

Huftel plans to begin his new position at WITC New Richmond in early July.

Huftel has a master's degree in Educational Administration from UW-Madison, a bachelor's degree in Technology Education, and a Vocational-Technical Associate degree in Heating/Air Conditioning Technology. He is a 1978 graduate of Menomonie High School, Menomonie, Wis.

His professional work experience includes five years with the Dunn County Highway Department, five years as a technology education teacher, and 13 years (1989-2002) as a teacher and assistant principal at the Rice Lake High School, Rice Lake, Wis. Huftel has been principal at Phillips High School, Phillips, Wis., since 2003.

Huftel admitted that it will be a challenge to shift from his role as principal to the role of campus administrator.

"But I'm looking forward to it," he said.



Joseph Huftel

Jail inmate dies of injuries

A woman who was transported to a St. Paul hospital following a suicide attempt in the St. Croix County Jail last week died Sunday afternoon.

Sheriff Dennis Hillstead said Thawra Mohammad Al-Waraq, 26, 207 Barron Ave., Star Prairie, died in Regions Hospital about 3:20 p.m. "She was taken off of a life support system at about 3 p.m.," he said.

Al-Waraq, who had been held in jail since late November, was scheduled to appear in court for a 3:30 p.m. hearing before Judge Eric J. Lundell last Wednesday. She attempted to hang herself with a bed sheet in

a bathroom at the jail about 3 p.m.

"She was in a dorm room with another female inmate who left to speak with a mental health worker. Thawra was scheduled to meet with the counselor next but when the roommate returned she wasn't in their room," Hillstead said. The roommate was gone about 20 minutes.

Jail staff cut Al-Waraq down and administered CPR. She had a pulse when an ambulance arrived and was immediately transported to Regions Hospital, the sheriff said.

of its kind, according to senior project manager Kaymarie Colaizy. Air handling and water systems will be extremely controlled in order to eliminate any contamination of the pigs.

"The building will meet the needs of our clientele," Colaizy said, "which is what we call them. They will have better

water and heating and cooling systems than the areas that are reserved for people."

The facility will also have a state-of-the-art septic system.

If all goes according to plan, officials hope to gain the necessary FDA approvals by 2008-09, with the first human clinical trials starting shortly thereafter.

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