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Weekend Warriors

Tomah's Jayden Brieske and Bangor's Chase Horstman



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Land Stewardship Awards Banquet around the corner



Bill and Tana Johnson will receive the Land Stewardship award for Tree Farmer of the Year for 2022. Their land is used by many, for studying and learning about many different types of trees. Contributed photo.

By BENNY MAILMAN Editor

- Conservation Farmer of the Year – Brueggen Family Dairy Farm, Inc.
- Tree Farmer of the Year – Tana & Bill Johnson. Bill and Tana Johnson, nominated for Tree Farmer of the Year, live in Pardeeville, Wisconsin. They were nominated by Clint Gilman.

On January 28th, the Monroe County Land Conservation Department will be hosting a Land Stewardship Awards Banquet, to recognize and celebrate the 2022 Conservation Farmer, Conservationist and Tree Farmer of the Year. The celebration starts at 5 p.m. and will be held at the American Legion in Sparta, located at 1116 Angelo Road. The registration deadline is January 23rd. The banquet is open to the public. There will be a meal, youth poster contest winners recognition and award presentations. The winners being celebrated for 2022 are as follows:

William (Bill) and Tana Johnson purchased 150 acres in Ontario, Wisconsin, back in 2001 and built a cabin on the property, back in 2003. Further down the line, they added acreage and their current property total now stands at 187 acres, of which, 65 acres are enrolled in Managed Forest Law and in the American Tree Farm System.

Bill was active in 4-H and 'STEWARDSHIP' cont. on pg. 4



Members of the Sparta Area Fire District work to tame the shed fire. Herald photo by Kyle Evans.

Sparta Area Fire District fights two fires Saturday

By KYLE EVANS Staff Writer

The Sparta Area Fire District was paged to a reported structure fire, at 7013 Hamlet Ave., west of Sparta, on Saturday afternoon, at 12:37 p.m.. Upon arrival, the outbuilding was fully engulfed in flames and was spreading to other structures that had been added on to the main building. The smoke was billowing as it reached the carport, which is attached to the house, but the residents got their vehicles out and the fire never actually reached to the carport. The structure sustained heavy fire damage and the outbuilding was a total loss. The cause of the fire remains under investigation.



The vehicle in Leon was reported as a total loss, according to Fire Chief Mike Arnold. No one was report hurt in the incident. Contributed photo.

The Sparta Area Fire District was on the scene for about four hours and they were assisted by the Sparta Ambulance Service and Fort McCoy Fire Department and

Monroe County 911 Center. Crews were extinguishing the shed fire, when a second call came for a reported vehicle on fire, off Kale Road, in the town of Leon, at 1:17 p.m.

The vehicle was reported to be some distance back into the woods. Only 4-wheel drive and the Departments all-wheel drive Engine were able to get back to the vehicle fire. Fire Chief, Mike Arnold, said the people were going out in the woods to cut wood and take their kids sledding, when they smelled smoke coming from the engine compartment. Chief Arnold said, "The vehicle was fully engulfed when we got there."

The Sparta Area Fire District extinguished the fire and Chief Mike Arnold reported the vehicle was a total loss. No injuries were reported in either fire. The department was assisted by the Monroe County Sheriff's Department and Sparta Ambulance Service and Monroe County 911 Center.

Sparta Varsity Show Choir celebrates 2023 debut

Miss America awards Spartans with special honor

By BENNY MAILMAN Editor

On Saturday, the Sparta Varsity Show Choir had quite a successful day, as they travelled to Onalaska High School, for their 2023 debut performance. They set off for the competition in the early morning hours, set to battle with ten other varsity ensembles. It was a tough competition, but when the smoke cleared and the points

were tallied, Sparta's varsity group was among those still standing tall in the finals.

They finished 5th in their first competition of the year and it was cause for celebration, but there were also a few stand-out performances that drew an award, called the Show-Stopper award. It is an award that goes to a performer or performers that excel in exuberance during the show. In laymen terms, it is someone who catches your eye during the performance, amongst the entire group they are performing with. Saturday's

'DEBUT' cont. on pg. 4



RIGHT Show Stopper Award winners, Tristan Chapman and Natalia Campos, pose with their medals. LEFT The Sparta Varsity Show Choir surrounds Miss America, Grace Stanke, as they celebrate their first performance of 2023. The ensemble made it to the finals, fighting against 10 other varsity teams. Contributed photo.

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