

## 2023 Snoball Senior Royalty Selected



RHS students chosen to represent the senior class in the Snoball court are, from left, Logan Blumer, Michael Wendling, Justin Kugler, Kenadi Carlsrud, Hayden Emery and Sydnie Molter.

**By Michael Wendling**

Snoball week is being held February 6th through the 10th. The senior candidates this year are Logan Blumer, Justin Kugler, Michael Wendling, Sydnie Molter, Kenadi Carlsrud, and Hayden Emery. The junior candidates are Hunter Marquardt and Madi Tollerud. The sophomore candidates are AnnaBella Poitra and Curtis Opsahl. The freshmen candidates are Grace Carlsrud and Easton Kort. Finally, the first-grade attendants are Wylan Rosenthal and Raylaynd Brandt.

On Monday, the dress up day was Athlete vs. Mathlete for the high school and favorite color day in the elementary. The seventh and eighth grade boys are at Breckenridge with their games starting at 4:00 p.m. and the second game to follow. Then boys' varsity and JV will host Benson starting at 6:00 p.m.

On Tuesday, the dress up day is Adam Sandler Day for the high school and Crazy Sock and Hat Day for the elementary. The seventh and eighth graders are home at the REC against Brandon-Evansville starting at 4:00 p.m. The C-team,

JV and varsity boys basketball will be at home hosting Brandon-Evansville. The girls varsity and JV teams will travel to Hancock with games starting at 6:00 p.m.

On Wednesday, the dress up day for high school is Barbeque Dad vs. Soccer Mom so pick which one you think is better and dress up your best version that day. The elementary dress up day is Mismatched Day.

On Thursday, the dress up theme is Blue Out. It's "Fill the Bill" night, so everyone should come to pack the gym full to cheer on our school and watch the boys versus the girls' basketball teams compete to raise money for the Bill Rose Scholarship fund. The girls will host the Hillcrest Comets starting at 5:00 p.m., with the JV starting at 6:00 p.m. and varsity starting at 7:15 p.m. The PTO chili cook-off is also happening at the game, so come out and support them.

On Friday, it's Spirit Day, so you know what that means! Dress up in all gold and royal blue attire to show your Tiger spirit. The coronation is at 2:15 p.m. to crown the 2023 Snoball King and Queen. The Prom Committee is also hosting their

third Annual Soup Fundraiser at the basketball game. Come out and eat supper at the game. The boys basketball team will host the Hancock Owls starting at 5:00 p.m. Kenadi Carlsrud said, "I'm excited for the boys basketball game this Friday, there are a lot of things going on." The Snoball dance will follow the basketball game. The dress code is casual, but students are encouraged to dress up.

Many things are being planned by the student council to make the week exciting for all students. "Student council has been planning a fun week for Snoball 2023. Several activities are planned for our students, including dress up days, student events, and the Coronation Ceremony on Friday, as well as a dance after the basketball game on Friday night.

It will be a great week for our students and community," said Mrs. Phillips, the student council advisor. The MCs for Coronation have been putting in a lot of practice time in the hopes of being the best we have seen. "I'm looking forward to the fun at Snoball just like how exciting last year was," said Katie Reber.

## Be Thankful The Sub-Zero Temps Were Only Temporary

The New Year started out much better than last year ended. Over the Christmas holiday weekend the region experienced a winter storm. As the New Year began, the temperatures were a little chilly. Not too far into January the warmth hit and we had a few weeks of sunshine and 20ish degree weather.

Not to disappoint, January hit hard last week and ended the month with below zero temps. It was reported to have hit one or two degrees above zero on January 31, but honestly it still felt below zero. The "real feel" temperature never broke the line, keeping all of us misled by the sunshine throughout most of the day.

As February lured everyone into another month of winter, the thermometer began to rise into the 20s, almost threatening a heat wave.



## Cyril & Louis Owned Rothsay Machine Shop In '50s...

# Keller Brothers Named To Inventors Hall Of Fame

**By Michael Stein**

Cyril and Louis Keller, the west-central Minnesota brothers who invented the world's first compact loader, have been selected for 2023 posthumous induction in the National Inventors Hall of Fame (NIHF). The NIHF annually recognizes inventors, promotes creativity and advances the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The brothers were two of 14 children who grew up on a farm near Tintah, Minn. Cyril was born in 1922, Louis in 1923. They attended country school through the eighth grade, their highest level of formal education.

"Our dad, Joe, had a blacksmith shop," said younger sister Mary Carlson, who now divides her time between Elbow Lake and Arizona. "Cyril and Louis helped out with blade sharpening and fixing machinery."

Carlson said the boys demonstrated their skills early on. "They were often making things on wheels," she said. "One time they made us kids a little motorized cart to ride on."

Both served in the military, seeing active duty during World War II. Cyril joined the U.S. Navy at age 20. He served on a ship and on the island of Saipan during the war.

Louis served at the Army Air Corps base in Manila. He received five decorations for his service.

In the 1950s, the Keller brothers founded Keller Manufacturing, a machine and blacksmith shop, in Rothsay. They built and repaired machinery for those in the area ag community, and their reputation for innovation spread.



The Keller brothers, Louis, left, and Cyril, are remembered for their self-propelled loader that evolved into the Bobcat.

One day in 1956, an area turkey farmer, Eddie Velo, approached the Kellers with a need for a self-propelled loader.

Velo was moving up to larger production, and he needed a machine light enough to be lifted to the second floor of a turkey barn and small enough to clean manure around the barn's upright poles.

Other loaders on the market at that time were too large and had limited maneuverability.

The Kellers came through for Velo. They sketched out and later built six loaders with two drive wheels in front and a caster wheel in the rear—the precursor to the modern skid-steer loader.

"It took a little time to work out the design," Cyril Keller said years later. "Eddie agreed to pay a fair price if the loader worked, and if it didn't work, he would just pay for the materials and we were out our time."

Over the next few months, they

developed a three-wheeled machine powered by pulleys and belts. It included a rear caster wheel, two drive wheels, control levers and a 5-HP engine.

The brothers used steel bars from the old Rothsay jailhouse on a hydraulic loader arm so their machine could easily scoop out the turkey manure.

Over the next couple years, the brothers made minor changes to their loader, such as a clutch drive transmission. Six more Keller loaders were built by late 1958 and quickly sold to area customers.

"We didn't have money back then to even put the parts in that first machine," Cyril recalled. "We were slow but sure in getting the first one built."

"That shop the boys had in Rothsay was pretty small," Carlson said. "They didn't have the resources to mass produce loaders on their own."

The loader came to the attention

of Melroe Manufacturing Company (now Bobcat Company), which invited the Kellers to demonstrate their invention in their booth at the Minnesota State Fair in 1958.

After a successful demonstration at the fair, the Melroe Manufacturing Company was awarded exclusive manufacturing rights to the machine on a royalty basis and hired the Keller brothers to refine the design and put the machine into production.

Carlson said that although each had outstanding mechanical engineering abilities, "Louis was the designer and Cy was the salesman."

To improve on the design of the loader, a second set of drive wheels was added to the back of the loader in 1960. With this four-wheel drive, it became the world's first true skid-steer loader (although that term wasn't widely used until the 1970s).

"Skid-steer" describes the unique steering system, which enables the machine to turn within its own length. Later, the Bobcat brand name was established because of the machine's toughness, quickness and agility.

This early mass-produced loader wasn't without its issues. For example, the exposed drive system led to dust and debris clogging the drive chains.

Melroe ended production in 1961. But customers who came to rely on the loaders urged the company to keep it going.

The improved model, introduced in 1962 as the M440, became the skid steer loader blueprint that would be used for many years. It remains a basic design element in today's skid steer equipment.



From 1962, Louis Keller tests out the M440 prototype.



In his late 90s, Cyril Keller poses with a Bobcat T76.