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Naming an animal and later slaughtering it necessitates learning how to grieve, says farmer Jess D'Souza. She is shown feeding pigs on harvest day at Wonderfarm in Klevenville on April 29. PATRICIO CROOKER FOR WISCONSIN WATCH

Coping with a broken promise

Wisconsin pig farmer holds on as Washington breaks a vow

Bennet Goldstein Wisconsin Watch

Two piglets jostled in the barnyard as Jess D'Souza stepped outside. Neither youngster seemed to be winning their morning game of tug-of-war over an empty feed bag. Jess approached the chicken coop. She swung open the weathered door. The flood of fowl scampered up a hill to a cluster of empty food bowls. Groans resembling bassoons and didgeridoos leaked from the hog house as groggy pigs stirred. Jess often greets them in a singsong as she completes chores. Hi Mama! Hi babies! She asks if she can get them some hay. Or perhaps something to drink? The swine respond with raspy snorts and spine-rattling squeals. Jess unfurled the hose from the water pump as pigs trudged outdoors into their muddy pen. "Is everybody thirsty? Are you all thirsty? Is that what's going on?" That morning, Jess slipped a Wisconsin Farmers Union beanie over her dark brown hair and stepped into comfy gray Dovetail overalls — "Workwear for Women by Women." The spring wind was still crisp. Bare tree branches swayed across the 80-acre farm. She filled a plastic bucket, then heaved the water over a board fence into a trough. Growing up, the Chicago native never imagined a career rearing dozens of Gloucestershire Old Spots pigs in Klevenville, Wisconsin — an agricultural enclave surrounded by creeping neighborhoods of the state's capital and surrounding communities.



Jess D'Souza, a farmer raising heritage pigs at Wonderfarm in Klevenville, delivers a speech on April 5 at the "Hands off!" protest in downtown Madison. She is one of nearly 300 Wisconsin growers who over two years participated in the Local Food Purchase Assistance program, which the Trump administration canceled. BENNET GOLDSTEIN/WISCONSIN WATCH

She can watch the precociously curious creatures from her bedroom window much of the year. Their skin is pale, dotted with splotchy ink stains. Floppy ears shade their eyes from the sun like an old-time bank teller's visor. Jess spends her days tending to the swine, hoisting 40-pound organic feed bags across her shoulder and under an arm. Some pigs lumber after her, seeking scratches, belly rubs and lunch. Juveniles dart through gaps in the electric netting she uses to cordon off the barnyard, woods and pastures up a nearby hill. She knows she shouldn't view her pigs like pet dogs, but she coos at them when she works. Right until the last minute. Jess hadn't anticipated politics would so dramatically

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WASHINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Bongle to serve as associate principal

Patti Zarling Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

MANITOWOC – Dana Bongle has been named Washington Middle School associate principal. He joins Lainey Longmeyer, who was named Washington Middle School principal in May and began her role July 1. Both previously served at Lincoln High School. Bongle was a teacher, department head and coach. Longmeyer was a Lincoln associate principal.

The duo will help Washington students grow through their academic and social-emotional transition from elementary to high school, according to a news release from the Manitowoc Public School District.

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ROAD AMERICA

Vintage races, Concours and Adam Carolla this week

Brandon Reid Sheboygan Press USA TODAY NETWORK – WISCONSIN

ELKHART LAKE – The Weather-Tech Vintage Weekend with Brian Redman returns to Road America July 17-20. The event is one of the largest and most celebrated vintage racing events in the United States. It will feature more than 400 vintage and historic race cars competing on the 4-mile, 14-turn course. Concours d'Elegance events will be featured in downtown Elkhart Lake July 18-19 with vintage race cars on

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