



# THE BEAR

Graduation Edition

May 16, 2024 WBHS Volume 27 Issue 7  
900 W. Main St., West Branch, IA 52358

## THE BEAR STAFF EARNS 25 IHSPA SPRING CONTEST AWARDS

Newspaper becomes 2x All-Iowa finalist; Naber, Nash first-ever IHSPA Scholars

Larkin Brown  
Staff Writer  
Olivia Naber  
Head Editor-in-Chief

For the second year running, The Bear is in the running for All-Iowa News Team status.

After earning the designation from the Iowa High School Press Association for 2023, the staff members set out to prove themselves once more, putting their noses to the grindstone for volume 27. Over the seven issues that make up a year's worth of the journalism program, the students set out to produce high quality, award-winning stories, page designs, photographs, and graphics.

These efforts were not in vain.

The Iowa High School Press Association (IHSPA) announced the paper's finalist status to Adviser Karina Krall after determining individual awards from the IHSPA spring journalism contest. In total, the paper earned 25 individual awards in Class A, including five first place awards, seven second place awards, seven third place awards, and six honorable mentions.

Head Editor-in-Chief Olivia Naber reflected on The Bear's continued success and the work that was put in to better the West Branch journalism program

"I'm completely over the moon that The Bear has racked up even more awards this year," Naber said. "It's a testament to our staff's hard work over the past couple of years, and I'm so proud of each and every one of them."

She also reflected on her own awards and growth, saying, "Having won 14 awards individually is a huge accom-

plishment for me... What I find especially impressive is that it's not just my writing, but also my infographics and even a page design. These are areas that I wasn't very strong in when I first joined

The Bear, but I've worked really hard to improve these skills over the past couple of

years and it definitely shows." Sophomore Caitlyn Harrison, an award-winning staff member, commented, "I am super happy to get a second-place award as a sophomore, and can't wait to see what comes in the next two years."

The 25 individual awards earned marked The Bear as one of the top five publications in class A alongside Atlantic, Mount Vernon, ADM, and Clear Creek Amana, all of which are nearly double (or in one case, nearly triple) the enrollment size of West Branch, making The Bear the smallest program to be an All-Iowa News Team finalist this year and pitting it against tough competition.

But The Bear is no stranger to tough competition. Having won the status of All-Iowa News Team the previous year, the program is ready to fight for the title once more.

For the first time ever, the IHSPA also offered the status of IHSPA Scholar to the

state's first class of scholars. Of the 25 students selected for the honor, Naber and Nash are the only two hailing from a 1A school. In fact, the rest of the selected students are all from 4A schools. Krall said, "I am unbelievably proud of these two as well as the entire staff."

### IHSPA Spring Contest Awards

#### First place awards:

School News Story - Olivia Naber  
Infographic - Olivia Naber  
Illustration or Art - Ava Hazelwood  
News Photo - Brooklyn Nash  
Social Media Promotion - Ashlynn Nash and Katey Noble

#### Second place awards:

School News Story - Olivia Naber  
Infographic - Olivia Naber  
Column/Opinion - Olivia Naber  
Social Justice Reporting - Olivia Naber  
Illustration or Art - Ava Hazelwood  
News Photo - Keaton Norfleet  
Health/Science - Peyton Braddock and Caitlyn Harrison

#### Third Place awards:

Social Justice Reporting - Olivia Naber  
Newspaper - One Page Design - Olivia Naber  
In-Depth News Story - Olivia Naber  
Illustration or Art - Ava Hazelwood  
Feature Photo - Keaton Norfleet  
Entertainment - Kya Montgomery and Brooklyn Nash

#### Honorable Mentions:

School News Story - Olivia Naber x2  
Infographic - Olivia Naber x2  
Personality Profile - Olivia Naber  
Feature Story - Sullivan Bucknell, Finley Rushton, and Lyla Popkes

nalism students in addition to the annual Spring Journalism Contest. Requirements to apply included at least two semesters of high school journalism, a minimum 3.0 GPA, 5 hours of journalism-based community service, and a 500 word essay about less on s learned as a high school journalist.

Naber and Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief Ashlynn Nash applied for and earned the designation of IHSPA Scholar, becoming two of 25 of the

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## FIFTEEN STUDENTS INDUCTED INTO NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

NHS says goodbye to senior members, presents first-ever individual awards

Keaton Norfleet  
Staff Writer

Fifteen new student members signed the National Honor Society scroll at the NHS induction ceremony.

The induction ceremony took place in the Performing Arts Center on May 8 at 6:30 before the high school senior awards. The 2024 list of inductees includes:

Juniors Elliot Hinkhouse, Miley Shields, Keaton Norfleet, and Keegan Hansen.

Sophomores: Lexi Skay, Ewan Arlen, Naber, Nolan Staker, Lillian Waters, Aizlyn Marsh, Caitlyn Harrison, Saylee Gingerich, Maddie Neuberger, Addison Schultes, and Madelynn Tygrett.

Kristen Westpheling, the current NHS advisor explained, "During the ceremony, the officer team and myself go over what NHS is, the four pillars (scholarship, character, leadership, and service), and then we have everyone, including the new members recite a pledge. Once they do that, the new members are called up one at a time to receive their membership card and pin, and they also sign a scroll. The scroll goes back to the 90's with the signatures of all the new members."

"I'm pretty excited. It's a pretty big deal," Sophomore inductee Naber said before the event.

During the application process, many qualities are looked at for consideration in the organization, all of which align with the four pillars.

A cumulative GPA of 3.75 or higher for junior applicants or a cumulative GPA of 3.9 or higher for sophomore applicants, and a displaying of

scholarship: the students grades, character: the students behavior, leadership: the students skills as a leader, and service: how the student has given back to the community.

Many inductees are excited to join the program's storied history and make a difference in the lives of others.

"I'm looking forward to adding

tever we will be doing in NHS."

Waters said, "One thing that I am looking forward to in the NHS is the roses that we had out during valentine's day."

Arlen said, "I'm looking forward to helping out my school and the community."

For the first time ever, the NHS

positions. It should recognize a person who rarely receives recognition for their work "behind the scenes". This award went to junior member Joshua Kroemer.

The second award given was the Rising Star award. This award is for a first-year member who has made great contributions to the organization. This award went to junior Layla Samuelson.

The third award given was the Spirit of Service award. This award honors a student who has participated in community service with vigor, devotion, and an unshakable positive attitude. This student serves with an inspirational and infectious optimism and leads the way for others through their actions and involvement. This award went to senior Kaylee Kettler.

The final award given was the MVP award. This award recognizes a student who has gone above and beyond to support this organization. This person has provided immeasurable amounts of leadership, service, dedication, and excellence within the National Honor Society. This award went to senior Olivia Naber.

For the 2024-2025 school year, Matt Cain, STEM teacher and robotics senior mentor, will take over as the new NHS advisor after current advisor Kristen Westpheling decided to step down from the position.

Cain said, "The need was there for someone who could invest time in it, and it had a very synergistic overlap with programs that I already did. Plus, I think the NHS has value as an organization that points to an academic and leadership merit that I want to maintain a level of quality for who was in the program and what the program represents."



The 2024 National Honor Society inductees celebrate their acceptance into the organization. Back row: Lexi Skay, Ewan Arlen, Lincoln Naber, Nolan Staker, Keaton Norfleet, Elliot Hinkhouse. Front row: Lillian Waters, Aizlyn Marsh, Caitlyn Harrison, Saylee Gingerich, Maddie Neuberger, Maddie Tygrett, Miley Shields, Keegan Hansen, Addison Schultes. Photo contributed by Tracy Schutte.

on to what's already going on and helping out around the community," Naber said.

"I'm looking forward to being in the National Honor Society," Staker said, "I'm excited to do the projects that we have in store and to help out the community and the school district with wha-

induction ceremony also included four individual awards for current members of the group.

The first award given was the Unsung Champion award. This award is presented to a student who has been involved in a variety of activities but has not necessarily held formal leadership





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## PIERCE BREAKS SHOT PUT RECORD

Maryam Martin  
Staff Writer

Junior Alyssa Pierce broke the WBHS shot put record that was previously 38'11" and held by Shannon Laing. Pierce threw a 39'5" on April 13 at Iowa City West and then later broke her own record on April 23 at Cedar Rapids Xavier with a 40'0" throw. This gave her a bid for Drake to compete with the top 24 throwers in the state, regardless of class.

She saw breaking the school record that was held since 2013 as a large achievement. Pierce said, "It was a very big accomplishment for me, and I knew I was very close to breaking the record. I threw a half inch off the last meet."

For the Drake Relays honor, Pierce said, "To prepare, I practiced with the men's shot put because it's heavier and

I also had a meet before Drake."

The extra work paid off for Pierce, and she ended up making it to finals. Pierce said, "I received ninth place, and I felt pretty good about it. It was my first time at Drake, and I placed higher than my ranking."

The hardest part about competing for Pierce is the nerves. She said, "The hardest challenge for me was shaking off the nerves because competing with the top 24 is nerve racking."

Pierce will continue to challenge herself till the end of the year with hopes of making it to state. To prepare, Pierce said, "I will be using the men's shot put and keep practicing hard for the District and Conference meets to earn a spot at State."



Junior Alyssa Pierce throws shot put at a meet in Lisbon. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.

## WBHS BOYS & GIRLS CURRENT TRACK RECORDS

### Oldest Track School Records

#### Still on the Books

**GIRLS: 1977 - 4x400m Relay: 3:58.30 - Vicky Elliott, Connie Heid, Betty Davis, Carol Davis & 1977 - 400 Meters: 57.25 - Carol Davis**  
**BOYS: 1956 - Dick Krall - Shot Put - 50'1" & 1977 - 800 Meters: 1:54.74 - Mike Elliot**

### WBHS School Records:

#### Boys Track & Field

- 1.) Shot Put: 50'1" Dick Krall (1956)
- 2.) Discus: 172'2" David English (2006)
- 3.) High Jump: 6'11" Bill McConnaha (2001)
- 4.) Long Jump: 22'10.5" Cooper Koenig (2015)
- 5.) 4x100m Relay: 43.75 - Ricky Riley, Adam Sheyko, Jimmy Motchal, Matt Clismar (2005)
- 6.) 4x200m Relay: 1:30.86 - Evan Lenton, Brian Hamer, Michael Jennings, Eric Heid (2003)
- 7.) 4x400m Relay: 3:23.61 - Evan Lenton, Brian Hamer, Michael Jennings, Eric Heid (2003)
- 8.) 4x800m Relay: 8:04.89 - Marvin Cook, Mark Jensen, Dave Arensdorf, Mark Heid (1983)
- 9.) 1600 Medley Relay: 3:33.84 - Jess Lumpa, Bo Bower, Sid Thompson, Michael Hart (2012)
- 10.) 100 Meters: 10.99 - Matt Cismar (2005)
- 11.) 200 Meters: 10.99 - Matt Cismar (2005)
- 12.) 400 Meters: 48.73 - Brad Bartelt (1984)
- 13.) 800 Meters: 1:54.74 - Mike Elliot (1977)
- 14.) 1600 Meters: 4:27.13 - Brent Behrens (1998)
- 15.) 3200 Meters: 9:39.29 - Brent Behrens (1998)
- 16.) Shuttle Hurdle Relay: 1:00.09 - Cooper Koenig, Cooper Kabela, Matt Shawver, Hunter Wargo (2016)
- 17.) 110m High Hurdles: 15.04 - Hunter Wargo (2015)

- 18.) 400m Hurdles: 53.91 - Eric Heid (2003)

### WBHS School Records:

#### Girls Track & Field

- 1.) Shot Put: 40'0" Alyssa Pierce (2024)
- 2.) Discus: 121'4" Shannon Laing (2013)
- 3.) High Jump: 5'6 Melissa Yearous (1996)
- 4.) Long Jump: 17'4.75" Betty Davis (1979)
- 5.) 4x100m Relay: 50.78 Jen Pohlman, Mariah Elliott, Kelli Vaughn, Maddy Russell (2012)
- 6.) 4x200m Relay: 1:45.80 Jen Pohlman, Mariah Elliott, Heather Poula, Maddy Russell (2012)
- 7.) 4x400m Relay: 3:58.30 Vicky Elliott, Connie Heid, Betty Davis, Carol Davis (1977)
- 8.) 4x800m Relay: 9:44.68 Katie Lumpa, Megan Smith, Jess Stull, Brittney Dhly (2005)
- 9.) Sprint Medley Relay: 1:50.26 Jen Pohlman, Kelli Vaughan, Maddy Russell, Mariah Elliott (2012)
- 10.) Distance Medley Relay: 4:15.32 Kassie Stoolman, Emily Slach, Megan Smith, Brittney Dhly (2006)
- 11.) 100 Meters: 12.20 Betty Davis (1978)
- 12.) 200 Meters: 24.89 Betty Davis (1978)
- 13.) 400 Meters: 57.25 Carol Davis (1977)
- 14.) 800 Meters: 2:15.31 Brittney Dhly (2008)
- 15.) 1600 Meters: 4:53.93 Lindsey Bruns (2012)
- 16.) 3200 Meters: 10:12.49 Courtney Bruns (2012)
- 17.) Shuttle Hurdle Relay: 1:05.48 Paige Miller, Maddy Russell, Abby Knoop, Megan Tadlock (2015)
- 18.) 100m High Hurdles: 15.37 Abby Knoop (2015)
- 19.) 400m Hurdles: 1:05.10 Tiffany Perkins (2001)

## SENIOR HEAD EDITOR-IN-CHIEF NABER SAYS GOOD-BYE TO *THE BEAR*

Olivia Naber  
Head Editor-in-Chief

Writing this doesn't seem real. I'm not a fool; I knew what was coming from seeing editors before me leave their final inky mark on *The Bear*. But that doesn't mean that I'm ready for it.

After all, how do you even begin to summarize four years of memories—stressful, triumphant, frustrating, blissful memories—into a single goodbye? I'll try my best (and if you know me, you know it won't be concise), but believe me when I say it's nothing short of agonizing to know that this is my final hoo-rah.

If I'm being honest, I never pegged myself as a journalist. The only reason I decided to try out Journalism I was because I had already taken every other English-related elective, but still had one last slot to fill.

At this point, I knew that I wanted to study English and creative writing and that nonfiction writing was not for me. Nonetheless, I enrolled in the class, and what started as nothing more than another high school credit became an entirely new passion.

I found that nonfiction writing didn't have to be like the tedious, mind-numbing essays I typed up in English class. Instead, journalism gave me an avenue to dig deeper into the issues I cared about and present them to my peers and the community. Even if I wasn't a stellar photographer or page designer, I knew that I could bring quality work to *The Bear's* pages as a staff writer.

And so I did. My first year as a staff member was the most difficult—I worked with people I ordinarily wouldn't and continued to develop certain skills to be a successful journalist. But, I pushed through and kept grinding out story after story, taking pride in producing stellar work. I even built on the photography and page design skills I had previously lacked, making myself a journalistic jack of all trades.

By the end of my sophomore year, I was poised and ready to take on the role of head editor-in-chief. Since then, I'm proud to say that our staff members and paper as a whole have blossomed, becoming more vibrant and polished than ever before.

Of course, I can't take full responsibility for this. The class of 2024 is

host to a plethora of hardworking, dedicated journalists that grew our staff and allowed us to produce more high-quality content than ever before.

This in turn led to our status as an award-winning newspaper through the IHSPA Spring Journalism contest and, crazily enough, the designation of All-Iowa News Team.

The fact that I was a part of our newfound success is one of my greatest high school accomplishments.

Going into this year, we hoped to build on last year's progress. Looking back through this year's issues, I'm inclined to believe that we did just that. As of writing this I'm not sure what we've won contest-wise, but no matter what happens, I'm exceptionally proud of the staff for their

efforts and unendingly grateful for the community's unwavering support of student journalism at WBHS.

I'll be completely honest; we don't know what the future holds for *The Bear*. Between the loss of 10 senior staff members and switching hands to a new adviser, journalism at WBHS could look a little different next year.

What I do know is that journalism at WBHS will not die. No matter what form it takes—a full-length physical paper, a web page, or anything else in between—it will survive. How do I know this? I know this because we have so many people in our corner backing us and helping us succeed. Our administration, our sponsors, and every single reader (that means you) helps ensure the success of our journalism program, and this support is going to be more important than ever in the coming years.

From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank each person who has contributed to *The Bear's* success over the years, paving the way for student journalism to thrive at WBHS. I can truly say that journalism has changed my life for the better.

Even though I'm not leaving writing behind me as I transition to life at The University of Iowa, saying goodbye to *The Bear* is one of the most difficult things I'm faced with at the end of my high school career. Sure, I won't miss editing sessions in the wee hours of the night, sacrificing my sleep and my sanity to hit a deadline, but I'll miss just about everything else.

## WBHS BOYS & GIRLS GOLF: WALL OF HONOR & CURRENT RECORDS

### WBHS Boys Golf: Wall of Honor

- 1.) Dave Pedersen - State Class 1A Champion (1974)
- 2.) Dave Rummells - State Class 1A Champion (1975 & 1976)
- 3.) Sean McCarty - State Class 2A Runner-up (1988)
- 4.) Sean McCarty - State Class 2A Champion (1989, 1990 & 1991)
- 5.) JD Grimm - State Class 2A Runner-up (1991)
- 6.) David Scott - State Class 2A Champion (1993)
- 7.) Dylan Countryman - State Class 2A Runner-up (2019)

### School Records: Boys Golf

- 1.) *Low 18-Holes Team Total:* 282  
*Team Members:* Sean McCarty, 67; JD Grimm, 71; Chad McCarty, 73; JJ Smith, 73. (1971) *State Medalist*
- 2.) *State Medalist Champions*  
Sean McCarty (1989-91)  
Dave Rummells (1975-76)  
Dave Pedersen (1974)  
David Scott (1993)

### WBHS Girls Golf: Wall of Honor

- 1.) Claire Jarrett - All-State Golf - 2024

### School Records: Girls Golf

- 1.) *Low 18-Holes Team Total:* 345  
*Team Members:* Teri Kober, 79; Penny Stach, 86; Cindy Lathrop, 87; Robin Wheeler, 93. (1979)
- 2.) *State Medalist Champions*  
Penny Stach (1979)  
Suzi Kober (1984)  
Jan Scott (1985 & 1987)  
Angie Hills (1988-89)

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# Student Orgs

# 4

May 16, 2024

## WBHS PROM 2024: “A STARRY NIGHT” TO REMEMBER

Caitlyn Harrison  
Staff Writer

On April 20, WBHS students and their dates took to the high school for this year's, “A Starry Night” themed prom.

Students began preparing their looks early in the day. For some, it was a time consuming process. Ellie Walsh-Blindt said, “I woke up at 8 to detangle my hair and then went to get my hair done at 9 and was there till about 12. Then, I did my makeup until 3:30.”

For others, getting ready didn't take long at all. Kellen Dykstra said, “I didn't have much to prepare for prom, it took about thirty minutes to get dressed and then around five to fix my hair.”

Before gathering for the senior class photo at Herbert Hoover Historic site and the junior class photo at The Little Rose Bowl at 4:30 p.m., groups of students took their own photos at other destinations. Some of these included Cedar Valley Park and Hancher Auditorium.

After taking photos, students headed to Crestview for a walkthrough to show off their outfits to the residents.

Promenade began at 5:30 p.m. in the PAC. The stage reflected the “A Starry Night” theme very nicely, with a large crescent moon prop, which sat upon lots of fluffy clouds. Students and their dates took to the stage and struck a pose for the crowd.

While some chose to just stand and smile for the cameras, others took a more creative approach. Elliot Hinkhouse and Addi Schultes posed for a .5 picture, Max Lodge and Maddie Neuberger did a piggy-back ride, and Eli Hansen and Katey Lenocho bowed for the audience.

Country Catering. Entrees included grilled chicken and smoked pork chops.

Joe Hamann said, “The food was really good, those ham balls were fire.”

Some students seemed to like the sides more than the entrees. Maddie Neuberger said, “The chicken was dry,

the dance. Some stopped to take a few more pictures, as there were several photo-ops, backdrops, and props available.

Students had mixed feedback on the DJ last year. There was someone new this time around, Tim Frazier from Energy Wave Entertainment.

Layla Samuelson said, “The music was really good at the beginning and the end of the night, but in the middle it wasn't the best.”

After the dance ended at 10:30 p.m. students quickly changed into more comfortable clothes and made their way to North Dodge Athletic Club for the After Prom Party from 10:45 p.m. to 2:30 a.m.

Some of the activities that were available at the Athletic Club included: swimming, pickleball, tennis, volleyball, basketball, bingo, black jack, cash cube, water bottle painting, and more.

Addi Schultes said, “My favorite part of After Prom was definitely playing tennis and volleyball with my friends.”

Just for attending After Prom, every guest was guaranteed to walk away with a gift of some kind. Every guest got one gift card, juniors got two gift cards, and seniors got a gift card and a gift of their choosing. For the seniors, there were many gifts to choose from. Some gifts included: suitcases, televisions, luggage, airpods, pots and pans, projectors, and heated blankets.



Miley Shields, Peyton Braddock, and Maddie Reed groove to the music.  
Photo by Karina Krall.

After group photos in the PAC, students made their way to the gym for the meal, which was catered by Kalona

but I really liked the salad.”

After students had finished eating, they headed into the Bear-Den for



Lilly Koch, Olivia Naher, Katey Lenocho, Keaton Norfleet, Kellen Dykstra, Jade Gongora, Eli Hansen.



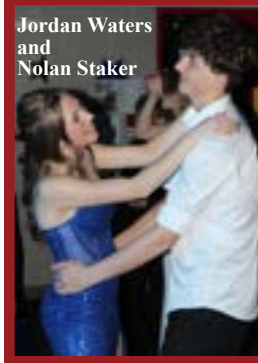
Addison Schultes, Lexi Skay, Katey Noble, Claire Jarrett.



Raynin Huber and Juliana Laing.



Miley Shields.




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## STUDENT GOVERNMENT HONORS TEACHERS

Madelyn Stout  
Staff Writer

West Branch Student Government committee of Caitlyn Harrison, Anthony Heitzman, Larkin Brown, Julia Herring, Lyla Popkes, and Keegan Hansen planned events for National Teacher Appreciation Week.

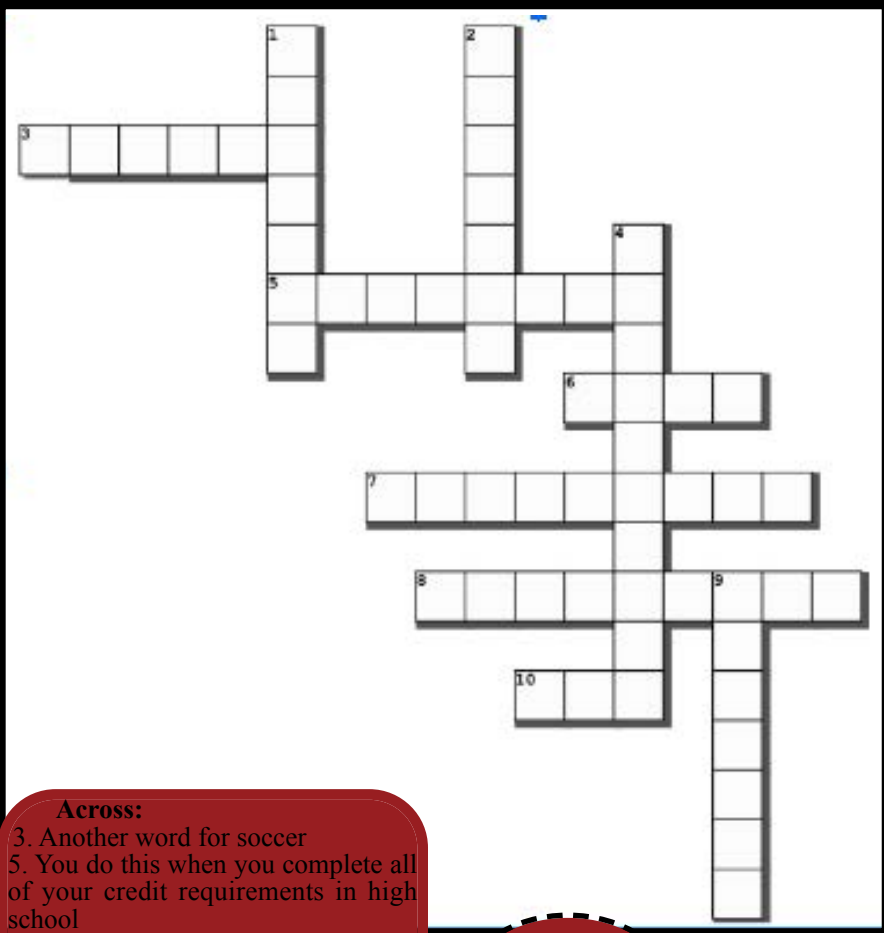
They kicked off the week with a donut breakfast, which was donated by Hy-Vee. They also hung posters around the school and in the windows supporting them, decorated a bulletin board,

and made gift bags for each teacher, a candy bar in the lounge was put together, and they also have sent a form to all students to pick their favorite teacher and explain why; to which was framed and given to each teacher.

Head of the committee, Harrison said, "We held a bake sale to raise money to be able to provide this for the teachers."

All of this happened the week May 6-10.

The community also planned to provide things like gift bags and meals for the teachers as well!



### Across:

3. Another word for soccer  
5. You do this when you complete all of your credit requirements in high school  
6. Another name for a 1600m run in track  
7. A sweet, frozen treat; best enjoyed on a hot day  
8. Three strokes under par in golf  
10. Acronym, Society that creates leaders in the school and community

### Down:

1. Somewhere you might go after you graduate high school  
2. Alyssa Pierce now holds the school record in this event  
4. A "disease" that plagues all 12th graders across the country  
9. A city in Iowa; a popular lake destination as well

### Key:

Down:  
1. College  
2. Shot Put  
4. Seniors  
9. Okoboji

Across:  
3. Football  
6. Graduate  
8. Ice Cream  
10. Albatross

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT PLANS EXTRAORDINARY HEALTH WEEK

Madelyn Stout  
Staff Writer

West Branch High School held a health week April 29 through May 3. This was planned by the Student Government committee of Kaylee Kettler, Jay Cantrell, Elliot Hinkhouse, Whitney Spratt, and Will Tidrick.

They had many healthy activities planned. On Monday there was a Zumba class in I.S. led by their advisor Srta. Noelck.

Tuesday, during lunch there was an informational booth led by Chains Interrupted. Chains Interrupted is a group that spreads awareness, prevention, advocacy, and freedom for youth human trafficking.

On Wednesday, there was a blood drive from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for those 16 and older. There were also "sunshine notes" where the committee wrote notes for all students and put them on their cars.

All week, there were snacks and water available to students, which were provided by Hy-Vee.

Senior Kaylee Kettler, head of the committee said, "The past two years I've been the head of the Health Week Committee. For these past two years we've been trying to express the importance of both physical and mental health. This year, we're also trying to implement the student council state project, preventing violence through spreading awareness and advocacy. Health Week isn't quite as big of a project this year as last year, but is still important nonetheless. Health Week is also the time every year where we host our annual blood drive, helping people around the world with our contributions! I'm hoping the tradition will continue on after I leave and be a nice way for students to end the year!"



Sara Oswald smiles for the camera after donating her blood. Photo by Olivia Naber.



## SENIORS TAKE ON THE SEAL OF BILITERACY TEST

Caleb Pedersen  
Staff Writer

Students of WBHS were recently provided the opportunity to take the Seal of Biliteracy test. If passed, students will receive the Seal of Biliteracy, which recognizes students who have studied and learned two or more languages before their HS graduation. Seniors who decided to participate in this opportunity are Ashlynn Nash, Olivia Naber, Emily Coleman, Nina Torkelson, and Diego Carrillo.

After taking the reading portion of the test, Coleman stated, "I think I did pretty well because the questions got harder as I went on, which means I was doing decent."

She goes on to say, "I think I'm prepared for the rest, except the listening. I haven't heard the speaker and don't

know how fast it will be or how heavy the accent is. I'll really have to focus on words that I know."

Torkelson had the same thought process. She explained, "I think I did well on the reading part since the questions kept getting harder so I assumed that meant I was getting them right!"

This test can be challenging and requires one to have obtained a lot of Spanish knowledge. Torkelson noted, "The most challenging part so far has been trying to find specific vocabulary words that are relevant to the writing prompt, and remembering all of the verb tenses!"

This test is split up into four parts. Each part can be taken separately and does not need to be taken at any specific time. Although, the test-taking window closes on May 3. Results for the test are typically released two to three weeks after finishing the test.

## WHAT ARE WBHS STUDENTS DOING THIS SUMMER?

"Throwing the greatest pool parties of all time." - Lincoln Naber

"Going on the Ireland trip, and also doing some obstacle mud runs with my dad." - Lillian Waters

"Going to Michigan with my best friends for our senior trip." - Maryam Martin

"Fishing, hanging out with my friends and preparing for electrical school by working with my dad." - Joe Hamann

"Shipping out for Basic Combat Training!" - Keaton Norfleet

"Kicking some butt at my last Roller Derby playoffs!" - Olivia Naber



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## SPRING SPORTS CONTINUE STRONG WITH MUCH SUCCESS



ABOVE: Freshman Grace Hamann pushes to finish the race. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.



Boys golf finished 2nd with a score of 329 at the RVC tournament in Muscatine on May 1. Bears led by Reece Druecker, McGavin Smith, Bryce Anderson, Paxton Tisinger, Saqyer Jeffries, and Bradyn Sexton. Photo contributed by Katie Sexton.



Girls Golf placed 2nd to advance to the Regional Final on May 15 at Monticello. Bears were led by Claire Jarrett, Julia Herring, Olivia Thomas, McKenna Worrell, Adelyn Hetrick, and Joelle Haas, with coaches Angie Miller and Jan O'Neil. Photo contributed By Tara Thomas.



Senior Joseph Hamann aims to pass to a teammate down the field. Photo By Brooklyn Nash.



ABOVE: Junior Christian Scire dribbles the ball through his defenders. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.

ABOVE AND TO THE RIGHT: Senior JaLynn Falco wins the race against her opponent to get the ball. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.



Junior Katelyn Essington winds up to launch the soccer ball. Photo By Brooklyn Nash.



## GIRLS AND BOYS TRACK ADVANCE MULTIPLE MEMBERS TO STATE

Kya Montgomery  
Staff Writer

The boys and girls track teams have had a great season. Alyssa Pierce was the only person on the track team to qualify for the Drake meet. She was seeded 14th, however, she ended up placing 9th.

The girls and boys conference meet took place in Monticello, Iowa. At the conference meet Freshman, Grace Hamman broke the West Branch record for the 1500 meter, running a 4:53, breaking Lindsey Bruns' previous time.

At the conference meet Junior Alyssa Pierce placed first in shot put, throwing a 38'-9". Alyssa Pierce said, "this was a very big accomplishment for me, I had some tough competition."

Many of the girls have broken their previous records at the conference meet. Grace had two personal bests in the 1500

meter and the 800 meter. Amber Wolf had a personal best in the 400 meter hurdles. The distance medley and 4x800 meter teams also got new personal bests.

At the conference meet, for the boys, senior Auron Marsh placed second in long jump. Senior Joe Hamman and sophomore Lincoln Naber both hit season bests in the 800 meter race. Sophomore Lynden MacGillivray ran the 3200 meter race and also got a personal record.

The following track members have automatically qualified for the state track meet: Grace Hamman, Alyssa Pierce, Lexi Skay, Kennedy Simpson, Addi Schultes, Connor Capper, Brandon Pedersen, Lincoln Naber, Joe Hamman, and Auron Marsh.

"I'm really excited, very nervous to run in front of a lot of people and don't want to mess up this opportunity," said sophomore Kennedy Simpson.

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# Sports

May 16, 2024

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## SOFTBALL AND BASEBALL TEAMS BEGIN PRACTICE WITH HIGH HOPES FOR SEASON

Ashlynn Nash  
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief

As practice began on Monday, April 29, softball and baseball players officially started their respective seasons. With the 22-23 season finishing 7-25 for the softball team and 6-20 for the baseball team, players are looking to improve in the upcoming season.

"I'm working on getting better at hitting off faster pitchers and hitting inside pitches. I struggle with both of those," said incoming freshman Kendra Rarick, who plays catcher, third base, first base, and outfield for the softball team.

"As a team, I want to win some games and play our best—try to make it state," said incoming softball team freshman Lander Malloy. She plans on playing first base, pitcher, and right field.

As for the baseball team, Senior Cale Seydel, who plays third base, said, "I want to hit bombs and go to state."

"Regina is our hardest opponent. I just feel like they are one of our biggest opponents usually and they are pretty good," Malloy said, looking at the schedule.

Rarick agreed, and commented, "Regina is definitely our toughest, they won state the last 2 years."

With big goals in mind, many players started preparing before the season had begun.

"I take private lessons and play travel ball," said Karly Shelton, an incoming freshman.

"I've been doing lots of practice. I also play with a Club team," said Rarick.

Garrett Sotzen, a freshman shortstop, third baseman, and catcher said, "Get in all the reps I can during the off-season."

Weather permitting, the tentative schedule for the varsity softball and baseball teams is listed here:

**BASEBALL:**  
May 20, Double Header at 5:00 away vs. Mid-Prairie  
May 23, Game at 7:00 home vs. West Liberty  
May 24, Game at 7:00 away vs. Lisbon  
May 31, Game at 7:00 home vs. Mid-Prairie  
June 3, Double Header at 5:00 home vs. Tipton  
June 5, Game at 7:00 away vs. Camanche  
June 6, Game at 7:00 away vs. Tipton  
June 7, Game at 7:00 away vs.

Washington  
June 10, Double Header at 5:00 away vs. Durant  
June 13, Game at 7:00 home vs. Durant  
June 14, Game at 7:00 home vs. Benton Community  
June 17, Double Header at 5:00 away vs. Regina  
June 19, Game at 7:00 home vs. Monticello  
June 20, Game at 7:00 home vs. Regina  
June 21, Double Header at 5:00 away vs. Central City  
June 24, Double Header at 5:00 home vs. Wilton  
June 26, Game at 7:00 home vs. Mediapolis  
June 27, Game at 7:00 away vs. Wilton  
July 1, Double Header at 5:00 away vs. West Liberty  
**SOFTBALL:**  
May 20, Double Header at 5:00 away vs. West Liberty  
May 21, Game at 7:00 home vs. BGM  
May 22, Game at 7:00 away vs. Central City  
May 23, Game at 7:00 away vs. Wilton  
May 30, Game at 7:00 home vs. Regina  
May 31, Double Header at 5:00 home vs. Camanche  
June 3, Double Header at 5:00 home vs. Tipton  
June 5, Game at 7:00 away vs. Camanche  
June 6, Game at 7:00 home vs. Durant  
June 8, Tournament at 9:00 (AM) home vs. Multiple Schools  
June 10, Double Header at 5:00 away vs. Durant  
June 13, Game at 7:00 away vs. Tipton  
June 15, Tournament at 9:00 (AM) away vs. Central City  
June 17, Double Header at 5:00 away vs. Regina  
June 19, Game at 7:00 home vs. Monticello  
June 20, Game at 7:00 away vs. Mid-Prairie  
June 21, Game at 5:00 away vs. Midland  
June 24, Double Header at 5:00 home vs. Wilton  
June 26, Double Header at 5:00 home vs. Clinton  
June 27, Game at 7:00 home vs. West Liberty  
July 1, Double Header at 7:00 away vs. Mid-Prairie

### SOFTBALL ROSTER:

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Tori Vikel  
Finley Rushton  
Emalyn Poe  
Lyla Popkes  
Kalynn Stein  
Juliana Laing  
Sulli Bucknell  
Cameron Waters  
Piper Maxwell  
Kendra Rarick  
Lander Malloy  
Karly Shelton  
Ava Burnett

### BASEBALL ROSTER:

Cale Seydel  
Noah pedersen  
Max Lodge  
Garrett Sotzen  
Cam Gingerich  
Ian Nelson  
Griffen Seydel  
Jericho Hobbs  
Reese Gingerich  
Drew Wilcox  
Reese Trepanier  
Connor Rios  
Nolan Staker  
Shay Kinsinger  
Kaleb Rios  
Reid Hansen  
Logan Christoffel  
Eli Klinkkammer  
Brennan Dale  
Brandon Pickett  
Hunter Christoffel

## NABER TAKES HOME MVP BLOCKING AWARDS, PLAYS HARD IN ROLLER DERBY TOURNAMENTS

Keaton Norfleet  
Staff Writer

Along with a black eye, senior Olivia Naber, A.K.A Stitches #668, brought home the "Most Valuable Blocker" award two times in the current roller derby season.

On April 14, Naber's roller derby team, the Misfits, part of the Iowa City Bruisers roller derby league, faced off against the Sioux Falls Junior Roller Derby at the MidAmerican RecPlex in Des Moines, IA, for the Des Moines tournament. The Misfits emerged triumphant with a score of 216-172.

After the match, the Sioux Falls Junior Roller Derby selected Naber as the most valuable blocker, earning her the Most Valuable Blocker award.

Naber said, "After every game that we play in a tournament, both teams come together and vote for the most valuable blocker and the most valuable jammer from the other team. I won that during our very last game with the Sioux Falls team, which was very gratifying."

At the Des Moines tournament, the Misfits also played against the Minnesota Frostbite Roller Derby, winning with a score of 42-459, and the Des Moines Derby Brats, losing with a score of 278-51.

On April 27, the Misfits faced their first opponents, Wasatch Roller Derby, and won with a score of 120-228.

The next day, the Misfits faced off against the Spokane, Washington, Cherry Bomb Brawlers at the Lincoln Sports Foundation, in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The Misfits won the match with a score of 507-46. For the second time, Naber received the Most Valuable Blocker award.

Finally the team went against No Coast Junior Roller Derby. In the last few seconds of this match, a member of the No Coast Derby struck Naber in the face, leaving her with a black eye.

"That game was rough. In the last couple seconds of the last game I got whacked in the face," Naber said. "It probably would have been called out if it hadn't been the end of the game, but since it was the end, they just called it off."

The Misfits lost the match with a score of 300-177.

"We were hoping to pull out a win against them," Naber said, "But their program has grown a lot over the last couple years. I think they are a team that we can beat in the future, but we just have to put our nose to the grindstone and work at it."

To open their season, The Misfits played the Des Moines Derby Brats in Cedar Rapids in January and lost with a score of 79-257.

In February, the Iowa City Bruisers also competed in a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania tournament. Conflicting schedules with the show choir season did not allow Naber to make it to these bouts.

In Philadelphia, the Misfits played against the BlackNBluegrass Junior Roller Derby, losing with a score of 187-177. Second, they played the Philly Roller Derby Juniors, losing with a score of 112-430. Lastly, they played Southside Revolution Derby, losing with a score of 117-504.

The Iowa City Bruisers will compete in Iowa City on May 18 at 1:00 p.m. at the Mercer Aquatic Center before the playoffs begin in June.



Braced by teammate Error #404, Stitches #668 (Olivia Naber) holds off the Sioux Falls jammer during the Bruisers' last game of the Des Moines Spring Brawl tournament. Photo Contributed by Jenni Jahnke.

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## NHS HOSTS 8TH ANNUAL SERVICE DAY

Brooklyn Nash  
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief

The students of WBHS participated in Service Day on Wednesday, April 24. Service Day is a day that students travel to locations in West Branch, Iowa City and Tipton to help with projects and give back to the communities. This is the National Honor Society’s 8th year organizing the event.

Every year, each grade level is given a few options to choose from for Service Day.

Freshmen could choose one of three locations: Harvest Preserve in Iowa City, Mercer Park in Iowa City, and Herbert Hoover National Park. All of these provided outdoor experiences for the groups.

Freshman Lizzy Eckert said, “I think service day was okay. It was pretty fun; we got to paint and put mulch on the ground. I would say my favorite part was painting with other people because I wasn’t alone, and we had free time at the end where we got to hangout on the playground.” Eckert went to Mercer Park.

Freshman Eli Farmer said, “It was a lot of fun. I got a lot of paint on myself and got my clothes dirty, but it was fun.” Farmer also participated at Mercer Park.

Freshman Evan Highly said, “I think it’s a good day to give

back to the community and a day where we can throw everything behind us, go out, and help out the Earth and community and connect with each other. I think my favorite part was probably cutting the roots of the trees.” Highly participated at the Herbert Hoover National Park.

Sophomore choices this year included doing garden work outside at Backyard Abundance in Iowa City, making bed mats for the homeless at the West Branch Methodist Church, picking up garbage on Herbert Hoover highway, and helping with different tasks on Main Street in West Branch.

Sophomore Rena Holmes said, “We cut up plastic bags then we tied them up and wove them into a bed mat. I really liked cutting up the plastic bags.” Holmes participated in bed mat making at the Methodist Church.

Sophomore Sabree Depoorter said, “Service day was very very fun even though I got poison ivy.” Depoorter participated in Backyard Abundance.

Juniors were given the options to help clean livestock barns and the stage area at the Cedar County Fairgrounds or help the West Branch Parks and Recreation pull weeds and lay mulch

Cubby Park.

Junior Garrett Spevacek said, “We raked garbage and cleaned up the fairgrounds for three hours. I enjoyed helping out my community and giving back.” Spevacek participated at the Cedar County Fairgrounds.

Seniors were given the choice to participate in making cards for the military, make tie blankets to donate to the Ronald McDonald house, make survival bracelets out of paracord, drive through neighborhoods in WB to collect cans and boxes of food for a canned food drive, or lay mulch and pick up waste around the buildings in the WB district.

Senior JaLynn Falco said, “We went around town to collect bags of cans for the food pantry and it was fun.” Falco participated in the canned food drive.

Senior Jade Gongora said, “What I’d miss the most about Service Day is having a full day to help others. I know it’s something that individually we could all set up, but there’s something really special about seeing the whole school come together for community projects, be it picking up trash, cleaning, or making new materials for others to use. What I enjoy most about Service Day is that each year it’s something different. You have a different project you help out with each year at a different location. With each year you’re also with a different group of students. The variety is nice.” Gongora partic-

ipated in making tie blankets for the Ronald McDonald house.

Finally, the FFA students had their own project that they do every year. This year the FFA students helped plant flowers downtown WB, build a trench for the high school greenhouse, and plant new flowers in beds by the high school entrance.

Freshman Shay Kinsinger said, “It was good to help out with things around the school and town and planting new things.”

Sophomore Maddie Neuberger said, “We did a lot of root removal in the main beds by the stairs in the front of the high school and then we planted pretty flowers so they’ll look good on graduation day. It’s a lot of work and kind of hard but it was worth it in the end.”

Freshman Melayna Burmeister said, “We planted flowers and it was fun, and we got to ride around on a golf cart. It helped the school grow plants and look beautiful. It went by quickly because we had a lot of people.”

Next year, the NHS Service Day will be in the hands of Matt Cain, new NHS sponsor, and his members.



Lincoln Naber



Addison Rocha



Brisa Carillo



Caitlyn Harrison, Claire Jarrett, and Katey Noble



McGavin Smith

All photos by Brooklyn Nash.



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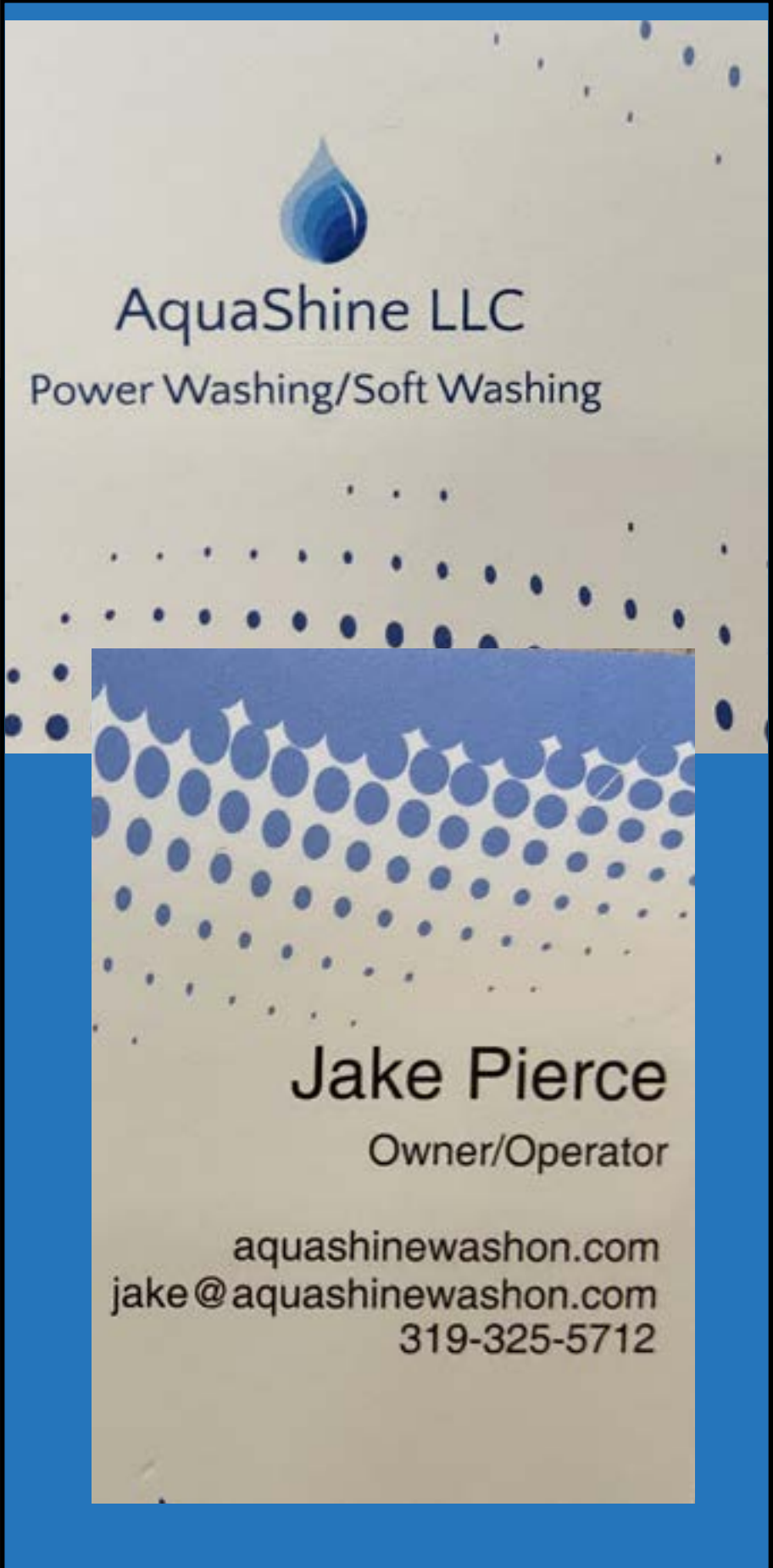
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# Clubs & Orgs.

May 16, 2024

# 10



## NOELCK RUNS FOR AMERICA'S FAVORITE TEACHER, PLACES 5TH

**Peyton Braddock**  
*Co-Editor-in-Chief*

This spring, Abby Noelck ran in a contest for America's Favorite Teacher. The goal of America's Favorite Teacher is to celebrate the impact teachers have on their students, as well as their leadership they have shown during their time as educators.

To apply, each teacher had to nominate themselves for the award. Noelck said, "I was scrolling through Facebook and it just popped up on my feed, so I decided to apply."

Peers are able to vote one time each day for the teacher of their choosing. One vote is free, but there is an option to vote multiple times if a donation is provided. To get 10 votes, individuals would have to donate \$10. Personal donations are an option as well of any amount. Each dollar is equivalent to one vote.

Only one educator will be granted \$25,000, a trip to Hawaii and appear in the Reader's Digest if they win. America's Favorite Teacher provides these awards to celebrate an educator's leadership and give them recognition for

all of their hard work.

Noelck said, "I honestly entered myself on a whim. I am currently in the process of buying my first home, so the potential \$25,000 prize appealed to me."

The Reader's Digest is a series of novels that recognize teachers by sharing their personal stories and educational experiences. It will be heading into its 100th anniversary and is considered as America's fourth-largest circulation magazine brand.

When asked what she would do with \$25,000, Noelck said, "I would use it towards down payment on a house or

start classes to earn my master's degree."

Voting for group finalists ended on May 2. Noelck sadly did not advance to the finals, but ended up placing 5th overall in her group. She said, "I am so overwhelmed and touched by the amount of support I've gotten. I really didn't think much about it when I entered, as I was just doing it for fun, but so many people have told me they have voted or shared the link to vote. It means a lot to me!"

## FFA ATTENDS 96TH ANNUAL FFA CONFERENCE

**Lauren Keeler**  
*Staff Writer*

From April 14 to April 16, members of the West Branch FFA chapter traveled to Ames for the 96th Iowa FFA leadership conference. The FFA chapter travels around the conventions with Mid-Prairie's chapter every year, making for a good way to connect with another chapter.

Leadership conventions are an event where participants partake in different contests, go to the career fair, and are required to attend general sessions.

The first day, the convention kicked off with the talent show which consisted of 20 entries from chapters across the state.

Member Lillian Waters stated, "My favorite act had to be the first place winner. It was a dance routine and it was really cool because she had a chain with her."

All of the sessions had two or more retiring addresses from the retiring state officers. Adviser Mrs. Thompson has heard many retiring addresses during her time as an Agriculture teacher. One of her favorite parts of conventions are the retiring addresses. She believes that listening to speeches from influential people helps her students know what to look for in speeches they may give in the future.

Thompson stated, "At this point, I've heard so many retiring addresses and public speakers that I'm a little hard to please. So the ones that

stick out to me, are either naturally funny in nature with a good message, or truly very real and something you can feel connected to."

During the second session the chapter display group was recognized for placing 2nd in the state out of 138 other groups. This contest consisted of creating a display that shows one of the chapter's activities that gets put on throughout the year. This year the chapter's group chose to create the Ag in the Lot event. The group consisted of Layla Samuelson, Amber Wolf, Lexie Isabel, Lauren Keeler, and Maddie Neuberger.

When asked about the group's placement, Isabel said, "I'm very excited, and just happy that we made the top 10."

Members Max Lodge and Saylee Gingerich delegated and helped elect the 2024-2025 state officers. Gingerich also participated in the nominating committee which chooses what officers get put onto the ballot.

Lillian Waters participated in the State FFA Band which is an audition-only group. The band played the Clapping song, Lexington March, the Iowa Corn Song, and Shake It Off.

Freshmen Melayna Burmister and Shay Kinsinger participated in the Greenhand Quiz.

McKenna Worrell, Allison Tygrett, and Maddie Tygrett represented the chapter in the poultry judging contest.

Sophomore Larkin Brown was a part of the Auditing Committee.

## OLIVIA NABER CHOSEN AS NHS SEMI-FINALIST

**Larkin Brown**  
*Staff Writer*

With one minute to spare, senior NHS President Olivia Naber sent in her National Honor Society scholarship application last fall.

Despite her extreme procrastination, Naber was chosen as an NHS Semi-Finalist this spring, earning a \$3200 scholarship. Naber said, "Even though I put it off until the last minute, I was so happy to be able to get this award."

Naber is the third West Branch NHS member to be chosen for the NHS scholarship, joining a strong tradition of West Branch NHS scholars.

According to Naber, the NHS Scholarship application was a lengthy, but fairly simple, application process. It included listing all volunteer hours completed, the most important organizations and extracurricular activities one has

been a part of, and awards/honors achieved.

The final piece to complete was an essay in which students selected one pillar of NHS and explained how it has impacted their life. Naber chose the scholarship pillar in her essay, detailing the ways in which her academic career has shaped and will continue to shape her life.

Even though the process is long, Naber encourages others to try their hand at winning an award.

Naber said, "I believe that every senior should apply for this award. It's a great opportunity to get more scholarship money for school and show how dedicated our school is to service."

With this being Naber's last year in NHS, she said, "It was amazing being a part of this organization. It's a very fun and good learning experience. I love being able to help out the community here in West Branch."



Olivia Naber proudly displays her NHS Scholar banner while donning her West Branch NHS apparel. Photo by Keaton Norfleet.

## SKILLSUSA PARTICIPATES IN STATE CONFERENCE

**Larkin Brown**  
*Staff Writer*

On April 25-26, Randy Robertson took his SkillsUSA students to the SkillsUSA State Conference in Ankeny. Members participated in various contests against other chapters throughout the state.

The chapter display group made up of Kaylynn Stein, Allison

Tygerett, and Alison Gade placed second. Other contests included two welding fabrication groups, job interview, and architectural drafting.

He also took 7 HS students and 28 MS students to the "Build My Future" competition. The HS students built a picnic table and scored a 67/75 against 12 schools. The MS students went to the Career Fair and were able to participate in interactive activities.



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## NASH'S EDITOR GOODBYE

**Ashlynn Nash**  
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief

Oh boy, where do I even start. Over the past four years, this newspaper has brought me endless opportunities, and not just the typical things you'd expect such as writing certain articles or designing a page. While I have fully gotten the typical newspaper experience, I have also gotten the chance to attend the Iowa Summer Journalism Workshop, listen to and learn at IHSPA Conferences year to year, and the ability to meet so many influential leaders.

When I took newspaper my sophomore year, I didn't really know what to expect. I mostly took it because I enjoyed English classes, and really got along with the advisor, Ms. Krall. But I didn't really know a whole lot about journalism. I was in for a treat, because soon, I learned many things about journalistic writing, QuarkXpress (our design program), and how to use a camera. Krall was quick to help me find my strengths, and make sure I was able to enjoy her class.

As my sophomore year went by, I found myself wanting to be a bigger part of The Bear. I applied for a leadership position, and got to hear my name being called for the role of 'Co-Photo-Editor-in-Chief'. I was so proud of myself, and excited to be a part of the 22-23 leadership team. Alongside my fellow editors Olivia Naber, Katey Noble, Ava Hazelwood, Rylee Shimon, Peyton Braddock, Claire Jarrett, and Brooklyn Nash, we were inspired and ready for the year ahead of us.

During this year, we built the program into something much bigger. We brought more color, more creativity, and more life to the paper. We went out on a limb and grew the paper to new heights. This year brought awards such as Top 5 News Teams in Iowa, and many awards on writings, artworks, graphics, designs, and photography. We were on cloud nine to hear that our hard work had paid off!

You can imagine that we did not slow down any when the 23-24 school year came. Many editors stayed,

as most of us were just juniors or sophomores the year before. We lost Shimon and Hazelwood, but the rest of us kept chugging along. This year, I can say, has brought rough changes and challenges but many more learning moments and breakthroughs. The whole staff has a lot to be proud of.

If you're thinking about joining something new, or giving something a try, please don't short yourself a chance at finding something you love. Newspaper showed this to me, and I was given a chance to better myself by leadership and extend my personal interests. I have grown my creative self, become more outgoing, and made so many meaningful connections. Truly, I cannot thank my peers and mentors enough for showing me this experience and doing it with me.

Thanks to The Bear and all of my newspaper classmates throughout the years. To the staff that will be here next year - I believe in you and am so delighted to see what you will make of it! To Ms. Krall - thank you for being an encouragement to join and for all of the support with everything. It means a lot to me. To Mr. Vos - thanks for doing your best being put in a hard situation, thanks for learning, and most of all - thanks for caring! To Olivia - thanks for being a strong head editor. You and your great leadership abilities have really led this class to new horizons.



## BRADDOCK'S EDITOR GOODBYE

**Peyton Braddock**  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

As my time in newspaper is finally closing, it feels surreal to say goodbye to a group that has provided me with so much. I have gained so many opportunities, new skills, and life-long friendships from this organization.

Reflecting on my journey, newspaper has made me extremely proud of our work that we have done as a whole. This year has been our best publication yet. Our designs have improved immensely, as well as our stories. Last year, we were an award-winning newspaper, which was extremely fulfilling. There is no doubt that we will receive more awards this year, including award-winning stories, photos, and designs as well. We have all contributed tremendously to all the awards we have won as a staff, and I am confident that more will come in the upcoming years.

Something that I have been the most proud of this year is the implementation of social media use. We have our newspaper issues published on the school website, as well as on our Instagram page. This has allowed for a more wide-spread audience. We have created a TikTok and Instagram page and have displayed more of the fun side of newspaper. We have done interviews, vlogs, and other miscellaneous fun things like creating our own candy salad. The candy salad Instagram reel has over 8,000 likes on our page. It is incredible how many people enjoyed that video, and I wish for more social media success and viewership in the upcoming years.

I would also like to thank my fellow editors and staff members for their hard work, support, and dedication to this program. In newspaper, there are a lot of strict deadlines. This means that this group needed a bunch of trust in one another to get things done. Even when there were obstacles, everyone on the staff team was willing to lend a helping hand if needed. For each issue, we always relied on each other to put our best work forward, and because of that, we grew together as a group.

Although me and my fellow

senior editors will be leaving this team, I am confident that the rest of the staff will continue to strive. We have much talent from the sophomores and juniors, and I know they will continue to step up and create amazing newspaper publications. They all have amazing leadership skills, and I know they will help new-coming staff members. The memories we have shared as a staff will not be forgotten, and I feel very grateful to have had these moments in my high school years.

As we, the senior editors, pass on our title to the next generation of editors, I am filled with anticipation for the future of our student newspaper. I am confident that the staff will continue to raise the bar with their stories and designs, creating a legacy that will inspire future generations.



## BAND MEMBERS CONCLUDE A MEANINGFUL SEASON

**Claire Jarrett**  
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief

Band members held their annual POPS Concert followed by the State Large Group Festival at Mid-Prairie on May 4. They scored 9 points higher than last year, and received a 2 rating.

The band director, Samuel Ogilvie said, "The scores were very high - all 4s and 5s. In fact, we were only 1 point away from a 1 rating. While our score was very good, I try not to emphasize it too much with the band, because that's not where our program gets value. We go to Large Group to represent our school at the State Level, share our program with the world of Band outside of West Branch, and end our year with a meaningful and musical performance."

He added, "I chose to focus my efforts on creating a concert with a diverse set of music, using rehearsal time to have student-led chamber groups, and I programmed A LOT of music. I'd rather do that than pick a few safe tunes and focus all of our rehearsals on our Large Group rating. I think our May concert was incredibly fulfilling because of our philosophy and approach to the end of the year."

The Large Group Band Festival

was a major success as students gave their best performance of the music. They were well focused over the two days they had to prepare for Large Group. Ogilvie enjoys bringing WB students to other places because of how they represent themselves. He knew two of the judges that were at Large Group and he was very happy to be able to share that performance with his colleagues.

Regarding the Large Group Festival, Nate Hills said, "I thought it went really well and it was definitely our best performance yet. The pops concert went well and it was really fun to hear everyone's small group and solos."



The WBHS Band performs in the PAC (Performing Arts Center) during the Pops Concert. Photo contributed by Marcy Willier.

At the POPS Concert and at State Large Group, the band played "Palatte" by Randall Standridge, "Chasing Sunlight" by Cait Nishimura, and "Epic Gaming Themes" arr. Paul Murtha.

Multiple solos were also performed: Oliv Schlitz with "Gigue" by Corelli, Wyatt Chapman and Dawn Johnson with "Jurassic Park" by Williams, Nora Ziehr with "Sonata in C Minor" by Telemann, Lincoln Naber with "Sonata" by Eccles, Logan Christoffel with "Concertino" by Weber, and a chamber group (consisting of Elliot Hinkhouse, Jordan Waters, Josh Kroemer, Nate Hills, Nina Torkelson, Nora Ziehr, and Olivia Naber) with

"Road to Hell" by Mitchell.

The brass choir performed "A New Day" by Meeboer, the percussion ensemble performed "Trashin' the Camp" arr. Rapp, and the woodwind choir performed "Gods of Egypt" by Meeboer. The Optional Jazz Band played "Tank!", arr. Mutha; "Backatown," arr. Wason; and "Dance the Night," arr. Murtha.

Multiple additions were created to add more entertainment and enjoyable elements to the end of the year concert.

Ogilvie said, "The concert was a hit. My wife created theatrical lighting to go with some of the band pieces, which helped add some fun to our end of the year concert. Next year, I'd like students to design the lighting."

He added, This was also the first time that we've featured soloists at our concert, and the audience LOVED them. I am still receiving compliments about our soloists. We started the brass choir, woodwind choir, and percussion ensemble last year. They are student-taught and our students did a fantastic job preparing those pieces. Our program was beefy, but the students handled it well and made an excellent night of music."

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# Clubs & Orgs.

May 16, 2024

# 12

## JARRETT'S EDITOR GOODBYE:

Newspaper started for me my sophomore year of high school where I decided to join Journalism 11, of course after taking Journalism 1 with Ms. Krall. I initially heard positive thoughts regarding the Journalism class and what students accomplish when writing and designing. Ever since my freshman year, I knew I wanted to be a part of either Yearbook or Newspaper, as creating a piece for students and the community to enjoy was something I knew I wanted to do during my time in high school. As an elective, this was an easy choice for me and I decided to continue with it after enjoying Journalism 1.

For the newspaper staff, the transition from COVID wasn't smooth and nor was it for many others. It was definitely hard to stay invested and focused on writing stories in class and learning how to design a page as we were getting back into the "norm." Soon later, I was claimed as the designer of the "Sports" page of The Bear, where I designed collages of students playing in their activities while also following up with updates and short stories regarding their seasons. This was enjoyable for me and I had fun being able to use my imagination and create pages to contribute to the overall paper.

Today, as an editor for The Bear writing my goodbye I have cherished the time and connections I have made with the staff and advisor throughout the past three years. This year, we have made several changes to how we execute our pages each month, add more student involvement, and make the most of our time. I'm honored to have worked with incredible people who have taught me more about time management, producing quality work, recognizing mistakes, the importance of communication, and cooperation. These are traits that will help guide me in college and beyond. There are many behind the scenes components that I have not been involved in that have contributed to all the success we have had in the past two years specifically. I'm proud to say that I have been able to be a small part of that creation and enjoyed the celebrations we have had to recognize our accomplishments. Choosing to join the Newspaper was the right decision for me and I'm pleased to have made an impact on The Bear.

## NOBLE'S EDITOR GOODBYE:

While I have always enjoyed writing, as a freshman I only took Journalism 1 as a way to fill up my schedule. I then realized that I was actually really interested in the subject, when Ms. Krall told me that the first story I wrote as a Journalism 1 guest writer, made the front page of the issue that the staff at the time was working on. I had waited until the last minute to finish that story, so hearing that it was going on the front page was so shocking.

Soon, second semester rolled around and I was thrilled to be one of the two freshmen that Ms. Krall had invited to join The Bear. I remember Ms. Krall was so supportive and proud of my work, I think that is when I knew that I would enjoy the class for years to come.

During my sophomore year, Ms. Krall had those who were interested fill out applications for leadership positions for the following school year. I applied to be a Co-Editor-in-Chief and have had the role for two years now. It can be pretty stressful but there are quite a few of us that have big roles and we all help each other out. (Shout out to Ashlynn Nash and Olivia Naber! They do so much that goes unnoticed outside of the classroom!)

In all honesty, I wasn't as passionate about Newspaper until last school year and this year. I am proud of the changes that have been made within the last two years, we have brought so much more creativity to the paper and I think that is something that has motivated me to be even more involved. Last year we accomplished so much as a staff, and were named one of the Top 5 22-23 All Iowa News Teams. This gave us so much more confidence in our work, especially going up against 4a and 5a schools.

Another thing that has made me more passionate about The Bear is being a Co-Social Media Editor. Ashlynn Nash and I started @thebearstudentnews Instagram page at the beginning of this school year. (Go follow us!) The account has given us so much more creative freedom, being able to record in-person interviews to highlight sports and other activities has been such a good way to reach a larger part of the community.

I would like to thank my fellow editors, Olivia Naber, Ashlynn Nash, Peyton Braddock, Claire Jarrett, Brooklyn Nash and each staff member. Even though we have struggled agreeing on things, fixing spelling mistakes (oops) and meeting deadlines (sorry Ms. Krall) I can genuinely say that Newspaper was my favorite highschool class, and I am glad I got to do it with all of you.

Ms. Krall, although this year has been tough, I am so grateful for the support you have given me throughout the years. You always made it a point to say something if I made an accomplishment, that means so much!

To Mr. Vos, thank you for dealing with all of our crazy! I can just imagine how difficult it was to take on this role without much knowledge of how things worked. It means a lot that you were willing to try and you showed each staff member that you genuinely cared!



Senior Claire Jarrett, Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief. Photo contributed by Claire Jarrett.



Senior Katey Noble, Co-Editor-in-Chief and Co-Social Media Editor. Photo contributed by Katey Noble.



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# SENIORS

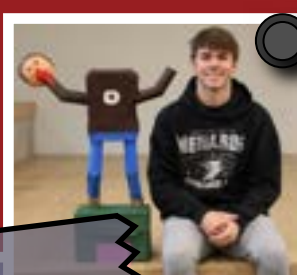
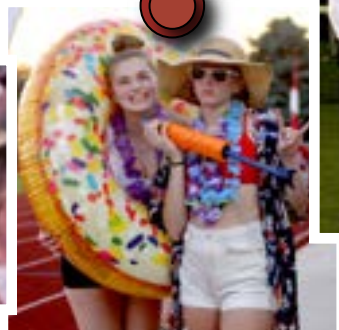
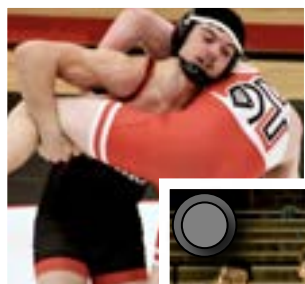
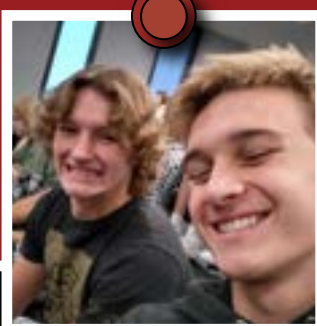
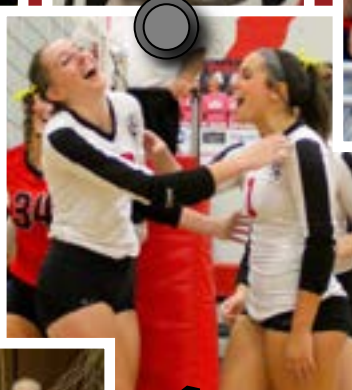
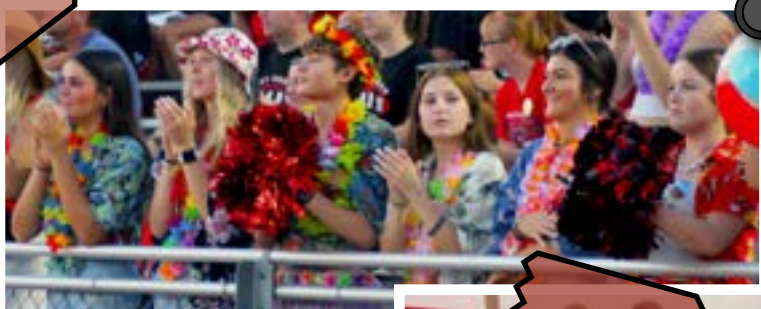
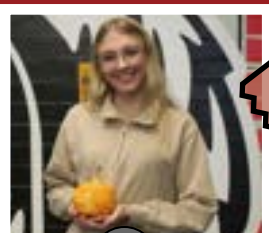


# 13

May 16, 2024



CONGRATS TO THE  
CLASS OF 2024







May 16, 2024

## Holden Arnaman



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Winning a conference championship in basketball.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Work harder.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Don't give up. Don't ever give up." - Jim Valvano  
**What are your future plans?** Play basketball at Minnesota State.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Coach Kern and Coach Duwa. Mrs. Gallagher for always being a great teacher and believing in me.

Son of Stefanie and Anthony Arnaman

## Hunter Michl Blakey



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Talking with my friends about what's going to happen at the end of the school year.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Just do your work and school will get over quick.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try one more time." - Thomas Edison.  
**What are your future plans?** I plan to work and help my mom in her dire time.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I give thanks to my older brother and the teachers.



Son of Bobbi K. Semler

## Peyton Braddock



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Going to Disneyland my sophomore year with the show choir and cheering at the UNI-Dome my junior year in the quarterfinal football game.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Take advantage of taking Kirkwood classes and join as many clubs or sports as you can your freshman year to meet new people!  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always try just one more time." - Thomas A. Edison.  
**What are your future plans?** Attending the University of Iowa majoring in radiation science.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to thank Ms. Schwickerath for being extremely helpful with my college and career readiness plans throughout my junior and senior year. She was extremely helpful with knowing which Kirkwood classes to take to help me further advance my education past high school.

Daughter of Kevin and Lisa Braddock

## Cooper Burger



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Going to State in soccer my junior year.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Keep up on your school work.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "You have to be able to accept failure to get better." - LeBron James  
**What are your future plans?** Going to the University of Iowa.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** My family and friends.



Son of Tom and Jess Burger

## Zach Capper



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Beating Regina in football.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** To keep working.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Tough times never last, but tough people do." - Dr. Robert Schuller.  
**What are your future plans?** To be a pilot.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to thank my parents.

Son of Angela and Dwayne Capper

## Diego Carillo



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Costa Rica and school dances.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Keep on going even when it all feels hard.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places." - Ernest Hemingway  
**What are your future plans?** Enlist into the National Guard and attend Kirkwood Community College for culinary arts.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to thank Margaret. Through of my years in high school, I have seen many people, but she stood out the most by being who she is and always being the most influential person in WBHS. Thank you Margaret for being there for me and giving me those pep talks for those days that I would be down.



Son of Sergio Carrillo & Edith Rios

## Emily Marie Coleman



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Show Choir as a whole and the Costa Rica trip. Also winning the Mid-Prairie volleyball game and the Regina and Lisbon games. Those felt surreal.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** You're going to feel like it's the end of the world sometimes, but it's not. Your friends will change but it's usually for the better. Nothing is embarrassing unless you make it embarrassing, and in the end nobody's opinion matters but yours. Find happiness in YOURSELF not other people.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Going to therapy is the same as going to the choir room." - Me & Nina Torkelson  
**What are your future plans?** Attend Aveda Arts & Science Institute in Des Moines and get my cosmetology license.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Mr. Reed for always being someone I could go to for help with school or personal reasons. I looked forward to seeing him every single day.

Daughter of Courtney Harkins and Kyle Coleman

## Asa Dingbaum



**What is your favorite HS memory?** The Costa Rica trip.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Go on as many trips/activities as you can.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." - Mahatma Gandhi.  
**What are your future plans?** Undecided.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** My friends and family.



Son of Beth and Bob Dingbaum

## Reece Druecker



**What is your favorite HS memory?** State soccer.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Do enough to pass with a solid grade.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "When you're good at something, you'll tell everyone. When you're great at something, they'll tell you." - Walter Payton  
**What are your future plans?** Attend the University of Iowa.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Friends and family.

Son of Amy and Kip Druecker

## Lincoln Edwards



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Sports.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Don't take school so seriously. Have fun, get in some trouble...unless it's wrestling season.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Well I'm the best there is. Plain and simple, when I wake up in the morning I piss excellence." - Ricky Bobby.  
**What are your future plans?** Make money.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** My dad. He has given me the best advice and life lessons.



Son of Keith Edwards and Mackenzie Krob





# SENIORS



# 15

May 16, 2024



## JaLynn Falco



*What is your favorite HS memory?* State Track 2022 when we got pulled over.... IFYKYK  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Just be yourself!! Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and try new things and make new friends.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "Life can always change, you have to adjust." - Drake  
*What are your future plans?* I plan to attend Kirkwood and major in criminal justice and later on attend the police academy.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* I would like to give thanks to all of my family for always believing in me and supporting me every step of the way. I also would like to thank Ms. S. for always being there for me and believing in me even when I didn't believe in myself at times.

*Daughter of Jennifer Long*



## Shae Farmer



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Junior pranks with Austin.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Just have fun and don't worry about what other people think.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "If you can say it, I can say it." - Sketch  
*What are your future plans?* University of Iowa.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* ChatGPT

*Son of Amanda and Chauncy Farmer*



## Avery Gardner



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Prom 2023 because party hardy.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Don't worry, you are almost there.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "Do the impossible, and you'll never doubt yourself ever again." - Unknown  
*What are your future plans?* Go to Kirkwood trade school for HVAC/plumbing.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* The people who helped me a lot in high school are Dawson Ryner and Jodee Culver. They helped me with my work.

*Son of Shannon and Nathan Gardner*



## Cameron Gingerich



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Making state for soccer my junior year, that experience with that group of guys was amazing. We have played together since we were very little and to make it to that big stage was a huge accomplishment.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Just get stuff done the first time, I know that nap or down time during class seems like it's awesome but just do the work and you'll have free time later.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "Fight your coach when he calls for a sacrifice bunt"- Kent Murphy.  
*What are your future plans?* Going to kirkwood to study wildlife conservation  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* My mom did a lot for me through high school and all the other years of my life. Whatever I needed for either sports or school she would get and help me through anything.

*Son of Megan Duwa and Nick Gingerich*



## Jade A. Gongora



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Marching has always had its adventures...each year new people but still the same fun activities scattered between the marching. I'll always remember our lobster adventures and the chaos that came with corn.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Do all that you can. No matter how nervous or scared you are, there is nothing that can go wrong with trying.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "When you're going to change the world, don't ask for permission." - (Viktor)  
*What are your future plans?* I plan to attend the University of Iowa as an art major.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* Thank you to all of our fine arts teachers who have pushed me to do more, not only with my art, but with trying to do more in activities. I will never forget how you made band fun or the new styles of printing I was taught or the moments running behind stage. Thank you for pushing me to do what you knew I wouldn't on my own.

*Daughter of Laura and Jose Gongora*



## Logan Graves



*What is your favorite HS memory?* When I went to Costa Rica for a week with my friends. The swimming pool Olympics was a thing we did that was a fun time.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Don't give up on your dreams or goals and to stay focused in school.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "You, me, or nobody is gonna hit as hard as life. But, it ain't about how hard ya hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward." - Rocky Balboa  
*What are your future plans?* I will spend my first year after high school taking a break to think about trade schools and work as much as possible to stay busy.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* I would like to thank all the school staff that's helped me throughout the years learn and grow in life.

*Son of Sheila Graves and Keenan Graves*



## Joe Hamann

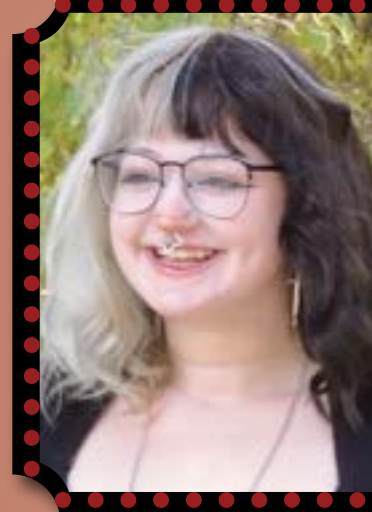


*What is your favorite HS memory?* Junior State track hotel room.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Make friends with the teachers.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "Listen to Mrs. Donovan; she is always right!" - Mrs. Donovan  
*What are your future plans?* Quad City Electrical Training Center.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* Mrs. Donovan. She helped me on all kinds of school work, including this.

*Son of Carrie Hamann and Kyle Hamann*



## Ava Hazelwood



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Graduating early.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Just be nice to everyone. You never know what someone is going through outside of school.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "I just let the emotion dictate what the arrangement is." - Jeff Buckley  
*What are your future plans?* Continuing working my two jobs now and selling art.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* My nephew, Harvey.

*Daughter of Teresa Hazelwood and Nathan Hazelwood*



## Alex Heithoff



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Just messing around in all my classes with my friends and teachers.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Don't slack off like I did.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "It's not about how hard you can hit, but how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward." - Rocky Balboa  
*What are your future plans?* Attend the University of Iowa for an undecided major.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* My parents for making sure I did my work and to my friends for making school bearable.

*Son of Brad and Laura Heithoff*



## Joelle Haas

Foreign Exchange



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Cheering on the volleyball girls, sports, and dance marathon.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Try new things.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "One day we shall die. But, all the other days we shall be alive." - Per Olov  
*What are your future plans?* Go to college and focus on Spanish and/or biology. Go to the university and study medicine.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* Nina Torkelson, Jordan Walters, Nora Ziehr, and Cassie Swisher for getting me involved in things and answering a lot of my questions. They just were so nice to me and made me feel like I belong here. Olivia Thomas for helping me out with lots of things and making me feel comfortable.

*Daughter of Barbara Haas, Guido Haas/Chad and Tracy Schutte*





May 16, 2024

## Brianne Hudson



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Messing around in the wrestling room when we were supposed to be in photography class freshmen year.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Don't be afraid to try new things.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Whatever you must do today, do it with the confidence of a 4-year old in a Batman cape." - Hello Lovely Studio  
**What are your future plans?** I am planning on going to KCC to get my AAS (Associates of Applied Science) Degree.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I want to thank my teachers for being helpful and understanding and my friends for always being there when I needed them most.

*Daughter of Jess Hudson and Matt Hudson*

## Justice Hurd



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Gabes. All I gotta say.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Get past the immaturity of middle school and grow up. These underclassmen would rather drink lava than enlist in the military.  
**What is your favorite quote?** I chose a quote I wrote for my final paper of my junior year. "There are many things that I put too much effort in or things that I take for granted; in a sense, putting my effort into things that don't show up on my list of necessities. FFBB." - me  
**What are your future plans?** To pursue a career in the stock exchange, have business and personal assets, and the goal of not working past 40. I'd like to prove one with such a demeaning background can row back and thrive in what they know and love most.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I'd love to thank Mrs. Pinnell, Mrs. Gallagher, Miss Noeleck, and Mrs. Westpheling. Mrs. Pinnell has always had a supportive mindset when it comes to her students. She helped me get through a lot. Mrs. G Because she helped me out a lot last year. Miss Noeleck because she works with me a lot if I have something out that needs turned in, and it's a blessing people like her exist. Same point follows for Mrs. Westpheling. I would have failed my sophomore year if she had not let me turn in the final the first Monday of summer break. Much love goes out to anyone who has genuinely tried to help me through high school.



*Son of My hardworking, 61 year old father.*

## Claire Jarrett



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Making it to the State golf tournament back to back years as a team and individually!  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Deadlines and due dates are important. It's easy to fall behind so try to stay ahead when you can throughout high school.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Focus on the good."  
**What are your future plans?** Attend a 4-year university and major in business.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** My mom and dad. They are the most encouraging and supportive people I've had with me throughout my life.

*Daughter of Jeff and Brenda Jarrett*

## Dilan Aloyzas Kazlauskas



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Being in an advanced art class when I have no art experience.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Get involved with school activities and the community. You'll make great memories and friendships.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "A lot of legends, a lot of people came before me. But, this is my time." - Usain Bolt  
**What are your future plans?** Going into the workforce and attending Kirkwood in 1-2 years.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Misti Donovan. She was always there if I need to talk to someone or help me with anything I need.



*Son of Dalius and Suzanna Kazlauskas*

## Kaylee Kettler



**What is your favorite HS memory?** When I was at a show choir competition in my sophomore year of high school, we found a Spiderman toy. This toy grew...an interesting story, to say the least, but we started incorporating him into the rest of our performances, and it ended up being a staple for that year and the time we spent together. It was silly, but it also helped bring us together.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Please, please show respect to your teachers. They're trying to get through the day just like you; school is so much easier when you have a good relationship with your teachers. Furthermore, they're going to be the ones writing college recommendations for you some days.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "What we have done for ourselves alone, dies with us; what we have done for others and the world, remains and is immortal." - Albert Pike.  
**What are your future plans?** I will be majoring in political science and then going to law school afterwards to pursue a career in civil rights.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I want to give thanks to Mr. Ogilvie and Senorita Noeleck. These two teachers always encouraged me when I wasn't feeling so great or faced rejection, which I've now learned is redirection. I'm very grateful for the relationships I formed with these two people, and I will forever be thankful for their impact on me.

*Daughter of Keith & Laura Kettler Special Thanks to Emile Walsh & Amanda Rushton*

## Alyse Rae Klinkkammer



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Iowa State Volleyball Camp sophomore year.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Branch out and try everything. Try every sport, club, or activity that comes your way.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Try to be a rainbow in someone else's cloud." - Maya Angelou  
**What are your future plans?** Attend the University of Iowa.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** My family for supporting me through everything. Coaches for pushing my to be the best version of myself. Teachers and staff for guidance and mentorship.



*Daughter of Angie and Mike Klinkkammer*

## Lucas Al Lacina



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Times with the FFA.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** To join FFA.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Do your best."  
**What are your future plans?** To work for my dad on the farm.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Mrs. Thompson taught me a lot and took me on field trips.

*Son of Jill Lacina and Al Lacina*

## Max Lodge



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Going to State FFA Convention my junior year.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Be respectful and work hard.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "If you got a dream, chase it 'cause a dream won't chase you back." - Cody Johnson  
**What are your future plans?** Kirkwood for ag. science.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** My parents and sisters for always being there for me and helping me with school work, Mrs. Thompson for taking me on field trips, Mrs. Gallagher for always making my first period enjoyable, even when I'm still trying to wake up.



*Son of Mike and Mindy Lodge*

## Maxwell Marcy



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Being in class with friends and Adaptive PE my senior year.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Always accept help if it's given, and enjoy the time you spend with your friends.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Everybody is a genius. But, if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid." -Albert Einstein  
**What are your future plans?** Continue schooling.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Thank you to all of the teachers, para-professionals, and any other staff members that helped me learn and grow during high school.

*Son of Marcy and Peter Marcy*

## Auron Marsh



**What is your favorite HS memory?** The Costa Rica trip.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Take advantage of free Kirkwood classes. You can potentially get a free full year of college.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified or discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9  
**What are your future plans?** Attend Kirkwood for a year, followed by Iowa, and eventually end up at Palmer College of Chiropractic.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to thank Mrs. S. because she has to deal with a lot of stuff, and she has helped with any questions I've had.



*Son of Scott and Amber Marsh*





# SENIORS



# 17

May 16, 2024



## Maryam Martin



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Exploring Costa Rica with my best friends during spring break of 2023.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Stay true to your beliefs and values as a person.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "A mind is like a parachute. It doesn't work if it is not open." - Frank Zappa  
**What are your future plans?** I plan to attend UNI with an interest in becoming a secondary history education teacher.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to thank my friends for making HS fun and my cool brother Keegan.

*Daughter of Alecia Esbeck and Nick Martin*



## Kya Montgomery



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Going to Costa Rica with my friends.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Try new things, join clubs, and make new friends.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Imma be misunderstood til I die, might as well have a good time" - SZA.  
**What are your future plans?** Attend UNI.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to give a thanks to my parents for always supporting me through my high school years.

*Daughter of Lori and David Montgomery*



## Olivia Naber



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Crashing a quinceañera in Costa Rica and getting absolutely no sleep because of it.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Put your heart into everything you do, but be careful not to split it into too many pieces.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "It may help to understand human affairs to be clear that most of the great triumphs and tragedies of history are caused, not by people being fundamentally good or fundamentally bad, but by people being fundamentally people." - Neil Gaiman and Sir Terry Pratchett  
**What are your future plans?** I plan to attend the University of Iowa, majoring in English and Creative Writing and continuing my involvement with the Iowa City Bruisers as a volunteer coach or referee.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Thank you to all the friends I've made (at WBHS or otherwise), the teachers who brought out the best in me, and the family that have been beside me since day one.

*Daughter of Marcy Willier and Jake Naber*



## Ashlynnne Nash



**What is your favorite HS memory?** I think my favorite HS memory would have to be going to Costa Rica with my best friends during junior year spring break!  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Stay true to you!  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Fall in love with taking care of yourself. Fall in love with the path of deep healing. Fall in love with becoming the best version of yourself but with patience, with compassion and respect to your own journey." - S. McNutt  
**What are your future plans?** Attend the University of Iowa and major in English.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to give thanks to all of my teachers because they each made their own meaningful impact on me, whether it was significant or small!

*Daughter of Katie Kaplan and Nate Nash*



## Katey Noble



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Going to girls State golf in 2022! So much fun!  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Show respect to everyone!  
**What is your favorite quote?** "I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of the stars makes me dream." - Vincent Van Gogh  
**What are your future plans?** I plan to major in Secondary Education at the University of Iowa.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to thank my mom and grandparents! My grandparents have always had words of encouragement to motivate me through anything. The belief they have had in my potential has always been encouraging, and I appreciate that so much! My mom has given so much support. I am so grateful for her love and motivation throughout HS! She has always had confidence in me, even if I doubted myself, and has never hesitated to step up in a rough situation. Thank you mom!

*Daughter of Jodi Albrecht and Anthony Noble*



## Caleb Pedersen



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Traveling to Costa Rica with my friends during spring break.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Respect everyone.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Life is a movie, but there will never be a sequel." - Nicki Minaj  
**What are your future plans?** Attend the University of Iowa and major in nursing.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** My friends and family.

*Son of Molly and Josh Pedersen*



## Noah Pedersen



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Baseball.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** The world doesn't revolve around you.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Pablo escaped in 5 years; it only took me 4." - Unknown  
**What are your future plans?** Go to college for Swine & Ag. business and take over the family farm.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Mrs. Thompson for all the opportunities we've had throughout FFA.

*Son of Jake and Kenzie Pedersen*



## Kylie Pickett



**What is your favorite HS memory?** State Basketball 2020-2021.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Be okay with being uncomfortable and ask for help!!  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Your future is only as good as the work you put into it." - Unknown  
**What are your future plans?** Attend the University of Northern Iowa.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** My family, teachers, and my friends. I appreciate all the help they have given me and all the good memories I've had!

*Daughter of Josh and Ann Pickett*



## Alexis Randall



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Making new friends.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** To never give up.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world." - Robin Williams  
**What are your future plans?** Keeping it open.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Mrs. Gallagher because she has been understanding.

*Daughter of Veronica and Michael Holtman*



## Maddie Reed



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Show choir competitions and going out with my friends.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Take Kirkwood classes, be nice to everyone, and involve yourself in many things.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Allow yourself to shine, without the desire to be seen." - Anonymous  
**What are your future plans?** Attend the University of Iowa.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** I would like to thank my dad for always helping me through the hard times.

*Daughter of Christopher Reed and Andrea Mahoney*





May 16, 2024



## Quintyn Rocha



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Having fun during Earth Day.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Show up for yourself everyday.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are." - E.E. Cummings  
*What are your future plans?* Attend Kirkwood.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* My parents for always motivating me to try my hardest.

Son of Amber McFarland Rocha and Gavino Rocha



## Trenton Schutte



*What is your favorite HS memory?* The time I spent with friends, all the laughs, and getting to State in multiple sports.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Don't be shy, go ahead and be an extrovert, and don't live everyday thinking about what others think of you.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "Why the hell we walking, tempo tempo tempo, hurry up, buddy boy." - Butch Pedersen  
*What are your future plans?* To attend a college to play a sport, or I will just end up going to Kirkwood.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* Friends and family.

Son of Chad and Tracy Schutte



## Bradyn Sexton



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Staying at the hotel for State soccer.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Take Kirkwood classes to save money in your future.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "If you're not first, you're last." - Ricky Bobby  
*What are your future plans?* Attend the University of Iowa for physical therapy.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* I would like to thank my parents for being supportive in both academics and athletics.

Son of Randy and Katie Sexton



## Cale Seydel



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Football.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Have fun.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "If you obey all the rules, you'll miss all the fun." - Cale Seydel  
*What are your future plans?* Join the workforce.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* Mrs. Thompson for helping me pass classes.

Son of Lindsay and Randy Seydel



## Madelyn Stout



*What is your favorite HS memory?* My trip to Florida with all my friends.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Be respectful!  
*What is your favorite quote?* "You don't have to like everyone, but you have to be kind to everyone." - Grandpa Lyle  
*What are your future plans?* I plan to attend the University of Iowa and major in radiation sciences.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* Over the course of my high school years, I would like to first give thanks to my parents for always being there. I would also like to thank my coaches and teammates for teaching me many life lessons, along with countless memories. Lastly, I would like to thank Ms. Noelck, Ms. S. and Mrs. Taylor. These staff members were always there and helped me with so much throughout my four years. All of these people were an important and helpful part of my HS years.

Daughter of Marisa and Kevin Stout



## Fern Stubbs



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Thompson classes.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* To try new things, explore the extracurriculars.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "All endings are also beginnings. We just don't know it at the time." - Mitch Albom, *The Five People You Meet In Heaven*  
*What are your future plans?* Undecided.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* I would like to thank Mrs. Cummings, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Donovan, and my friends.

Daughter of John and Amber Stubbs



## Jacob Swisher



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Playing in the Dome in football.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Make the most of now, responsibility is right around the corner.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it." - Ferris Bueller, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*.  
*What are your future plans?* Attend Kirkwood for prerequisite classes.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* My parents for pushing me to do Show Choir, supporting me through athletics, and help me become the best version of me.

Son of Pete and Karin Swisher



## Nina Torkelson



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Going to Hy-Vee at 11:00 p.m. after show choir competitions my sophomore year.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Try out everything that you can! The worst that can happen is you find out you don't like it, but the best memories I've made have come from trying all sorts of different activities and sports.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "I don't know the words, but I know the vibes." - Summer Saylor  
*What are your future plans?* Attend Kirkwood and earn an Associate of Arts, then move to Washington state to work and travel for a year.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* My parents for supporting me through everything, my teachers for always believing in me, and my friends for always being a light in my life.

Daughter of Mike Torkelson and Mary Denmead



## Reese Trepanier



*What is your favorite HS memory?* All the sports I have played.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Get your stuff done and you have more time to mess around. Have fun; high school isn't that serious.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "I'm not a snack. I'm a whole picnic."  
*What are your future plans?* To play football at Wartburg and get my degree in education.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* Ms. S. has been a big help and all my teachers in general.

Son of Jessie and Moe Trepanier



## Cheyenne Waite



*What is your favorite HS memory?* Marching band and pep band.  
*What is your advice to underclassmen?* Listen to your teachers.  
*What is your favorite quote?* "I will try my hardest and best."  
*What are your future plans?* To work at a pet store.  
*To whom would you like to give thanks?* Mr. Ogilvie.

Daughter of Marc Waite





# SENIORS



# 19

May 16, 2024



## Ellison Elizabeth Walsh



**What is your favorite HS memory?** My favorite high school memory would have to be after school play rehearsals for the plays put on by Mrs. McCarthy.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** My advice would be to maintain good relationships with your teachers.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "When people show you who they are, believe them." - My mom  
**What are your future plans?** I hope to have a career where I can help people.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Ms. S. She has helped me through so much throughout high school. I would also like to give a thank you to Mrs. Taylor for helping me keep myself on track when I was really struggling to keep up with classes. I wouldn't have been able to do it without their support.

*Daughter of Emilie Walsh, Eric Starbuck, & Richard Blindt*



## Drew Wilcox



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Making State for baseball 8th grade year.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Work hard and don't care about others' negative opinions.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Watching someone else live your dream while you're not should motivate you." - James Karinchak  
**What are your future plans?** Attend Kirkwood for baseball.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Coach Kevin Miller (Solon) and my family.

*Son of Brittany Willman and Tony Wilcox*



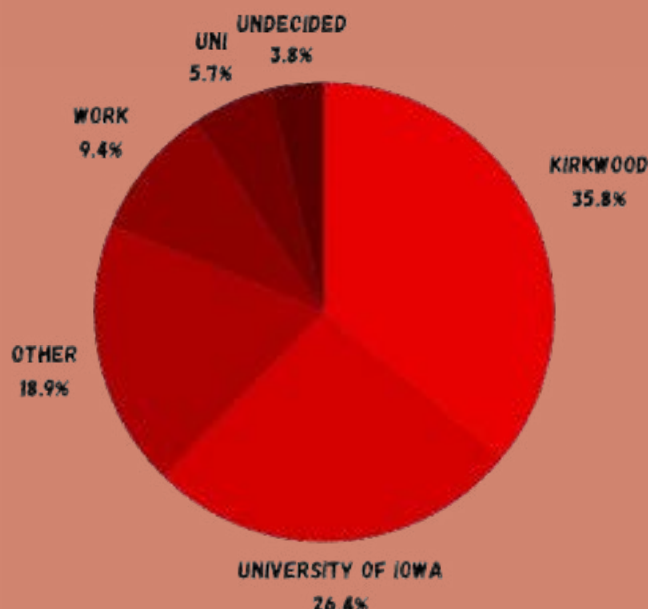
## Logan Wright



**What is your favorite HS memory?** Second place at State wrestling.  
**What is your advice to underclassmen?** Don't be rude to teachers.  
**What is your favorite quote?** "Don't count the days, make the days count." - Muhammad Ali  
**What are your future plans?** Go to Upper Iowa to play football.  
**To whom would you like to give thanks?** Friends and family.

*Son of Jeff and Joy Wright*

## The Bear Asks: Where is the class of 2024 headed?



## CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024

### BRANCH OUT NUTRITION

ELEMENTS SALON

Meridith Coleman, Owner/Stylist  
109 N. Downey St., West Branch, IA 52358  
meridith\_moores@hotmail.com  
(515) 835-9420



Herbert Hoover Hwy.  
Turn North on Johnson Cedar Rd.  
Turn right 1/3 Mile

Jerry & Tammy Sexton,  
Owners

319.643.EDGE (3343)  
19 Greenview Lane  
West Branch, IA 52358

west branch public library  
**at wbpl**

**All Ages! SUMMER LIBRARY PROGRAM**

Registration begins **May 28th!**

- prizes
- games
- events
- movies
- crafts
- & more!

**Kickoff Party!**  
Friday, June 7 at 5 pm  
at the library

[wbpl.org/SLP](http://wbpl.org/SLP)



20



SENIORS



May 16, 2024

MATCH THE CLUES TO YOUR FAVORITE 2024 SENIORS!

- A \_\_\_\_\_ My name is also a flower.  
B \_\_\_\_\_ I love snakes.  
C \_\_\_\_\_ I wear camo.  
D \_\_\_\_\_ West Branch's most elite sandwich artist.  
E \_\_\_\_\_ I played Marty in *GREASE*.  
F \_\_\_\_\_ I may or may not have consumed a plant in Mrs. Arlen's class.  
G \_\_\_\_\_ My car tire fell off while driving to school.  
H \_\_\_\_\_ Pigs.  
I \_\_\_\_\_ I helped out with the wrestling team with Ben.  
J \_\_\_\_\_ I teach swim lessons to children in the summer.  
K \_\_\_\_\_ I own my two birds.  
L \_\_\_\_\_ I eat Jello everyday.  
M \_\_\_\_\_ I have been golf captain for the last two years.  
N \_\_\_\_\_ I almost drove my car into a lake.  
O \_\_\_\_\_ Has broken shoulders.  
P \_\_\_\_\_ I have had the biggest hair change in the high school this year.  
Q \_\_\_\_\_ I was a captain for football and basketball.  
R \_\_\_\_\_ Not from the USA.  
S \_\_\_\_\_ People always pronounce my name wrong.  
T \_\_\_\_\_ Individually placed twice at State golf .  
U \_\_\_\_\_ The man that goes by Lucky.  
V \_\_\_\_\_ Graduating early with this class.  
W \_\_\_\_\_ I work at Short's Burgers East Side  
X \_\_\_\_\_ I've been a vegetarian for the past 5 years.  
Y \_\_\_\_\_ I transferred my junior year.  
Z \_\_\_\_\_ I used to be famous.  
AA \_\_\_\_\_ Hair.  
BB \_\_\_\_\_ I go by Cardi-j  
CC \_\_\_\_\_ I'm tt.  
DD \_\_\_\_\_ loves plants, cats, and taking photos!  
EE \_\_\_\_\_ I love theater more than most things, and my dream role on broadway would be to play as Ms. Hannigan from Annie. I constantly get told I look like Annie.  
FF \_\_\_\_\_ I have been showing pigs since I was 10.  
GG \_\_\_\_\_ Could beat you up on roller skates.  
HH \_\_\_\_\_ loves cats and is left handed.  
II \_\_\_\_\_ I am very tall.  
JJ \_\_\_\_\_ Professional Sender.  
KK \_\_\_\_\_ I crochet, draw, & play guitar.  
LL \_\_\_\_\_ Max Lodge is my birthday twin.  
MM \_\_\_\_\_ Grew up in the mountains in the middle of nowhere.  
NN \_\_\_\_\_ Initials add up to 20, and I played 5 sports throughout school.  
OO \_\_\_\_\_ foetwehni.  
PP \_\_\_\_\_ Play basketball.  
QQ \_\_\_\_\_ Last name is a food item.  
RR \_\_\_\_\_ First name is three letters.  
SS \_\_\_\_\_ My brother and I have the same exact initials (first, middle, last).  
TT \_\_\_\_\_ I backed into a garage door.  
UU \_\_\_\_\_ Best goalie in West Branch history.  
VV \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ PBeast.  
WW \_\_\_\_\_ Want to be a chef.  
XX \_\_\_\_\_ Born in Illinois.  
YY \_\_\_\_\_ You won't see this senior without a blue plaid jacket.  
ZZ \_\_\_\_\_ Always mysterious.  
AAA \_\_\_\_\_ I am only 130 pounds, but I guarantee I got bigger biceps than you.

1. Kya Montgomery  
2. Jake Swisher  
3. Peyton Braddock  
4. Noah Pedersen  
5. Joe Hamann  
6. Drew Wilcox  
7. Reece Druecker  
8. Diego Carrillo  
9. Lincoln Edwards  
10. Hunter Michl Blakey  
11. Zach Capper  
12. Maurice Trepanier III  
13. Fern Stubbs  
14. Alexis Randall  
15. Cheyanne Waite  
16. Kylie Pickett  
17. Cooper Burger  
18. Maryam Martin  
19. Cameron Gingerich  
20. Katey Noble  
21. Avery Gardner  
22. Trenton Schutte  
23. Cale Seydel  
24. Jade A. Gongora  
25. Maxwell Marcy  
26. Max Lodge  
27. Kaylee Kettler  
28. Bradyn Sexton  
29. Maddie Reed  
30. Caleb Pedersen  
31. Ellison Elizabeth Walsh  
32. Dilan Aloyzas Kazlauskas  
33. Logan Graves  
34. Emily Coleman  
35. Asa Dingbaum  
36. Olivia Naber  
37. Ashlynn Nash  
38. Claire Jarrett  
39. Brianne Hudson  
40. Shae Farmer  
41. Madelyn Jae Stout  
42. Quintyn Rocha  
43. Joelle Haas  
44. Lucas Lacina  
45. Holden Arnaman  
46. Alyse Rae Klinkkammer  
47. JaLynn Falco  
48. Logan Wright  
49. Alex Heithoff  
50. Auron Marsh  
51. Ava Hazelwood  
52. Nina Torkelson  
53. Justice Hurd

Key: (A,13) (B,14) (C,23) (D,2) (E,29) (F,34) (G,1) (H,4) (I,44) (J,3) (K,15) (L,25) (M,28) (N,39) (O,22) (P,50) (Q,12) (R,49) (S,43) (T,38) (U,33) (V,32) (W,21) (X,27) (Y,11) (Z,48) (AA,5) (BB,47) (CC,20) (DD,37) (EE,31) (FF,26) (GG,36) (HH,18) (II,6) (JJ,42) (KK,51) (LL,46) (MM,52) (NN,19) (OO,53) (PP,45) (QQ,17) (RR,35) (SS,7) (TT,41) (UU,40) (VV,30) (WW,8) (XX,16) (YY,24) (ZZ,10) (AAA,9)