



THE BEAR

Student Newspaper

January 9, 2025 WBHS Volume 28 Issue 3

900 W. Main St., West Branch, IA 52358

NEW PERFORMANCE PE STRIKES DISCORD BETWEEN WBHS ATHLETES

Caitlyn Harrison
Co-Editor-in-Chief

This school year, WBHS introduced a new strength and conditioning program that is required for all athletes.

This change came following the departure of longtime strength and conditioning coach Bryan Rorbach, who left to pursue a coaching job with a professional hockey team in Des Moines.

This news prompted a multiple month long search for another strength coach to fill his shoes. In search of a solution, the athletic department explored several options, eventually finding inspiration in a program from Mount Vernon High School. By working closely with their strength and conditioning coach, WBHS adopted a new model of "Performance P.E."

Athletic Director Jake Stenberg said, "Mount Vernon's strength and conditioning coach is now presenting this program all over the state and over 25 schools statewide have implemented it just like us. It has become one of the more sought-after programs statewide and I think in a few years there will be over 100 schools doing it."

This new approach to lifting leaves students divided. For some, it raises concerns about balancing athletics with academics.

Athlete Shay Kisinger said, "Having to lift during school makes it seem like our school is now prioritizing sports over academics. My academics are having to suffer because I had to get rid of some elective classes that would have benefited me after high school."

However, some students believe their academic performance is positively impacted by the program.

Athlete Katlynn Waite said, "It has improved my academic goals. I feel like it makes me more awake so I learn better during my next period and get my work done."

The lifting classes are randomly assigned, so there are students of all different sports, athletic abilities, and ages lifting together. Many students express a dislike of the new program for this reason.

Athlete Nolan Staker said, "I prefer how lifting used to be because there was more team chemistry built in the weight room and that gave us a competitive push to work harder." For some, the



motivation and drive from lifting with teammates is difficult to recreate due to now being in mixed groups.

Athlete Lilah Pedersen said, "Lifting as a team encouraged people to try more and not be worried about what other people were thinking. It made the team more of a team."

Despite some students' frustration, lifting during the school day gives athletes more time in their day.

Stenberg said, "The elimination of before-school and after-school lifts means that students get more sleep and get home sooner. Practices start right after school and can finish earlier giving the students more time on both ends outside of the school."

Athlete James Haak agreed saying, "I like that it gives me more time to get school work done at home and to get to practices on time."

Performance P.E. requires athletes to engage in strength training throughout the whole school year, regardless of how many sports they participate in. This year-round approach is a significant shift from previous years, when many athletes only lifted during their specific sports season.

Jackson Marcy, a golfer at WBHS said, "I feel like it is excessive for some people, like myself, to be lifting all year round, especially only being in one sport. But on the other hand it allows students to be consistent and stay in shape."

The class is required for all who participate in sports, with some exceptions.

Students with full academic schedules must complete their lifting and speed sessions during the morning middle school time slot.

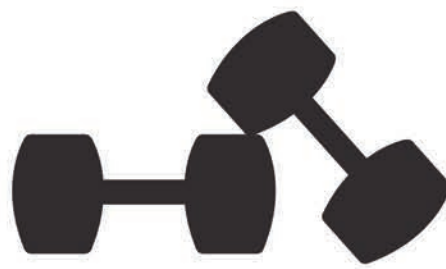
Following the switch to lifting during the school day, the middle school lifting attendance skyrocketed, rising over 200% when compared to last year. This creates challenges for the high school athletes who must also lift in the morning.

Logan Christoffel, an athlete who attends morning lifts, expressed his frustration: "The morning lifts feel very overcrowded with all of the middle schoolers and it's hard to get much done at all in there."

Since the program's implementation, some coaches report visible improvements in their teams.

Justin Little, the varsity girls' basketball coach shared his perspective on how the new program is benefiting his team: "I think Performance PE has benefited our team so far this year. It is a more consistent lifting program and is beneficial that athletes have been lifting since the beginning of the year. I believe I have seen a lot of improvements. It is a little subjective, but I feel we are in better shape, stronger, and quicker than we were last year."

PE teacher and coach, Grant Meth, said, "Our new program focuses on the overall development of West Branch athletes instead of sport-specific. I believe this approach will ensure that all of our athletes become stronger, more explosive, and durable in the long run."



Students participate in performance PE. Photos taken by Miley Shields.



These perceived improvements can be backed up by numerical evidence. Frequently, students record values like their one-rep-max on exercises such as: bench press, back squat, and hang clean. They are also tested on speed and agility with measures like the ten-yard dash, "flying 10," vertical jump, "pro-agility", and broad jump.

Stenberg, along with coaches Meth, Kaleb Dua, and Jason Kern, analyzed the results of these tests. This revealed impressive school-wide improvement.

A decrease in 10-yard dash times is one of the most notable of these improvements. These times improved by .08 seconds school-wide. While .08 seconds doesn't seem like much, in the world of sprinting, every fraction of a second counts.

Strength development improved drastically, also. On average, students increased their core lift numbers by 12 lbs.

Agility testing also saw some large growth. In pro-agility, athletes' lateral speed and quickness are put to the test. Students shaved an average of a half of a second off of their times from the beginning of the year.

All of these improvements leave Stenberg optimistic.

He said, "I think the goal of any strength and conditioning program should be to push each athlete to be their best, giving them the best chance at success. This doesn't always translate to more success in games right away as there are multiple factors but it does give us the best shot."

While the Performance PE program yielded positive results in terms of athlete performance and participation, Stenberg understands the need for ongoing evaluation and adaptation.

He said, "The coaches and I meet regularly to look at the program and discuss how it's been going. At the end of each semester, we will evaluate what changes need to be made, if any, and what we can do better. I think long term this program can be something that helps shape the culture of our athletics and helps take us to the next level."

While Performance PE demonstrated promising results in terms of athletic development, students remain divided in their reactions. Some athletes welcome the change and its benefits, while others feel frustrated, saying it takes away from the team atmosphere lifting used to offer.





Spotlights

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January 9, 2025

WRESTLING

Q. What was your favorite memory?

A. Making it to state.

Q. What advice would you give to incoming freshmen about your sport?

A. Don't let people tell you that you're bad.

Q. What was your biggest struggle with this sport?

A. Cutting weight.



TEAGYN HARTZ

BASKETBALL

Q. How old were you when you started playing basketball?

A. 2nd grade

Q. Last year you had 124 rebounds, do you have a goal for this year?

A. 130 rebounds

Q. What was your favorite memory?

A. Summer Wartburg camps



ADDI SCHULTES

Winter Sports Spotlights

JAYDEN HARRIS



BASKETBALL

Q. How old were you when you started playing basketball?

A. 5 when I first started playing.

Q. What advice would you give to incoming freshmen about your sport?

A. Work hard even in the off season, make goals, and get good grades.

Q. What was your favorite memory?

A. 8th grade year, we did not lose a game and Butch was our coach.

LOGAN CHRISTOFFEL



WRESTLING

Q. How old were you when you started wrestling?

A. 6.

Q. What was your biggest struggle with this sport?

A. Keeping weight down and staying motivated to keep wrestling.

Q. If you could be one age for the rest of your life what age would it be and why?

A. 12, that's when I won state and dominated everyone

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HONOR CHEER: A CELEBRATION OF TALENT AT THE UNI DOME

Miley Shields
Head-Editor-in-Chief

Seniors Jordan Waters and Miley Shields joined over 300 cheerleaders in Iowa Honor Cheer. Over 100 different schools across Iowa could bring up to 3 cheerleaders.

This event took place at the halftime of the 2A and 4A state football games in the UNI Dome. Leading up to the performance on Nov. 22 the girls partook in two practices to learn their halftime performance.

Practices were held and taught by the Trident Cheer team of Central Iowa. Trident is a co-ed cheer team that performs and competes with other college-level teams.

Along with this year, the Central Iowa cheer team has been holding this event for many years. Girls from all over Iowa look forward to attending Iowa Honor Cheer.

The first practice was on Nov. 17. For the first day of practice, they traveled to Ames, Iowa. Check-in for all cheerleaders was 8:00-8:30 am After check-in the cheerleaders gathered in the gym to begin their practicing.

The practice consisted of learning two dances and a cheer in only six hours together to perform on the date of Nov. 22. After the girls had learned the dances and cheer it wasn't until Nov. 21 that they would practice again.

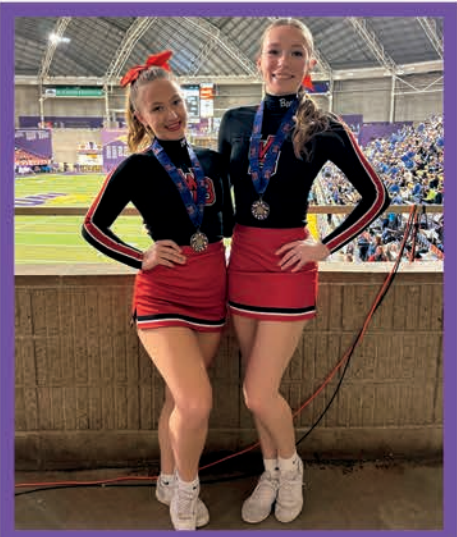
At the second practice of Nov. 21 all of the cheerleaders met in Cedar

Falls, IA at 10:00 am to put everything together. Putting everything together consisted of running both dances to ensure that all girls were prepared, moving formations, calling the cheer, and adding the stunts and tumblers.

After the practice, coach Jordan Ellyson and cheerleaders Waters and Shields explored the town of Cedar Falls. They visited small shops downtown and ended with dinner before going back to their hotel to prepare for the next day at the Dome.

The day of the performance was more than just performing. It consisted of getting ready in the morning and meeting at the Dome at 7:30am. At the Dome, all cheerleaders took individual

pictures as well as a group picture. Following pictures, cheerleaders practiced one more time before showtime.



Miley Shields and Jordan Waters pose in front of the UNI Dome. Photo contributed by Jordan Ellyson.



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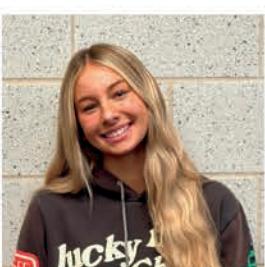
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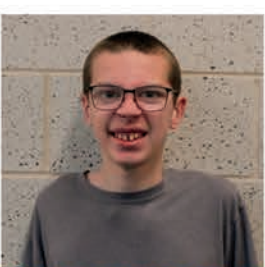
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Student Interest

January 9, 2025

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BROADWAY ORIGINAL: WICKED TAKES FLIGHT AS A NEW THEATRICAL SPIN ON SCREEN

Wyatt Chapman
Guest Writer

Wicked originated as a Broadway musical, and the movie is just an adaptation of the Broadway version. Wicked explains what caused the Wicked Witch of the West to become “wicked” in The Wizard of Oz.

The movie shows the lives of Elphaba, the wicked witch, and Glinda, the good witch. The audience sees how the two interact with each other, Glinda being the popular girl at Shiz while Elphaba was seen as the outcast until later in the movie.

The film includes a hefty mix of songs throughout the movie. After all, it’s a Broadway adaptation. Wicked shows the behind-the-scenes moments of Glinda’s and Elphaba’s lives before the events of The Wizard of Oz. We see how the two interacted with each other at Shiz, the school in Oz. Wicked, both the movie and the musical, are where one gets the songs “Popular” and “Defying Gravity”, the two most iconic songs from Wicked.

There are a few fun facts about the films. The ruby slippers are only in *The Wizard of Oz* because they are specific to that movie. The red slippers contrasted well with the yellow for

the yellow brick road. The creators also wanted a significant object.

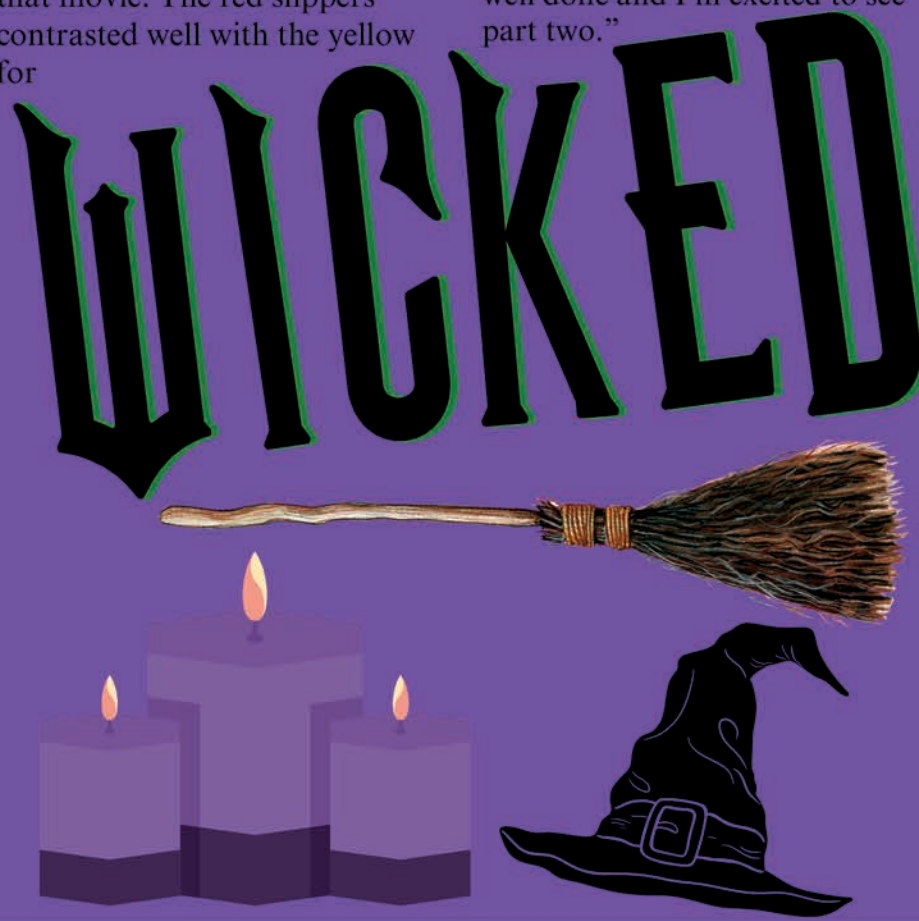
In Wicked, there is no CGI. Everything on screen, like the Emerald City, is done practically. Cynthia Erivo, the actress for Elphaba, performed her own stunts, meaning she sang “Defying Gravity” in a corset while also being tossed around by a crane.

Now here is what I think of Wicked: I loved the movie, definitely something to watch if you love The Wizard of Oz or the Broadway musical. I loved Wicked because of how much I enjoyed The Wizard of Oz, but even then it was just spectacular. Ariana Grande as Glinda and Cynthia Erivo as Elphaba was such perfect casting and they spoke true to their characters.

I have not seen the musical besides the bits and pieces that would show up on my TikTok page, but *Wicked* was amazing. Those who like seeing a different side of a story so many people know and love would really enjoy *Wicked* because it gives just that.

I honestly don’t think there are any bad qualities of the movie, other than it ending on a cliffhanger.

Junior Rey Watt said, “I loved the movie, it was really well done and I’m excited to see part two.”



MOANA 2 REVIEW

Madeline Euolliqui
Staff Writer

Moana 2 is an amazing and interesting movie. The first movie is about a girl named Moana, who lives on an island called Motunui, with a lot of people and her family. She sails out on a dangerous mission to save her Kakamora people. During her journey, Moana meets the once-mighty demigod Maui, who guides her in her journey to become a master wayfinder.

They both sail together across the open ocean on an exciting journey, encountering enormous monsters and impossible odds. Along the way, Moana fulfills the ancient quest of her ancestors and discovers the one thing she always sought, her own identity.

In the second movie, Moana journeys to the far seas of Oceania after receiving an unexpected call from her way of finding ancestors. Maui tries to raise the island out of the water but is stripped of his powers by the movie’s villain Nalo before he can do so.

The sound track wasn’t really good in the new movie, a lot of other students said that it wasn’t as good as the first movie. They weren’t fans of the new songs. It shows a lot of the history and stories about the Oceanic people, it shows their culture and their religion. People could learn something or a lot about the movie. The people, what their culture is about, and what they do on and off of the island.

They can learn more about the ocean, or also how to sail a boat. Moana learned a lot on how to sail a boat in the first movie, but now in the second movie, she has improved a lot. Maui taught her how, and now Moana is teaching her people on how to sail a boat.

In the movie, Moana is a character that I think some people can relate to.

She is a very adventurous, and independent person. She really cares about her family, the people around her, and her friends. Moana is the daughter of the chief of her tribe and comes from a long line of navigators.

The movie could have a deeper meaning to what it is right now, the watchers could put themselves in their shoes and could understand what is going on for them, the people in the movie.



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NEW FOUR-WAY STOP PROMOTES SAFETY

Halia Gade
Staff Writer

On Nov. 18, 2024, a new four-way stop took effect at the intersection of Dawson Dr. and W. Main St. These stop signs, located in front of West Branch Middle School and High School are only used two hours before and after the school day.

Superintendent Marty Jimmerson explained his reasoning and previous solution to this issue before implementing the new stop signs.

He said, “We had some near accidents with people not paying attention while driving and almost hitting our students and crossing guards, so we knew we needed to do something. We had tried an alternative option (using a sign in the middle of the road to slow people down and remind them that people were crossing there) before the city put stop signs in, but that did not work.”

“After hearing about these incidents, I went to a city council meeting to talk with them about the need for something to slow or stop people at that intersection so our students and crossing guards would be safe. We then had a smaller group that met and came up with the idea of the stop signs that are



New stop sign slows traffic in front of the school. Photo by Halia Gade

only active at the beginning and end of the school day.”

Many students at West Branch High School have strong opinions about this new addition. A poll sent to students in the high school asked if they did or didn’t like the new intersection. 26 people answered. The vote, split 50-50, received 13 votes for the stop signs and 13 votes against them.

Voters against the stop signs agreed it takes longer to leave school, traffic gets backed up, and causes them to be late for jobs and other activities. Some say it is less safe due to a previous crash and when all the cars are backed up it can be hard to see.

Students claim the time frames for when stop signs are up or down also can be confusing. Since they are up for a total of around four hours a day it is inconsistent, causing people to not stop, or accidentally stop depending on the time they are driving through.

Voters for the stop signs agreed it is less stressful now because they don’t have to turn into traffic when coming to and leaving school.

Crossing guard Mark Waite said, “When there are two stop signs it’s more dangerous. With four stop signs, you know that they have to stop no matter what. Overall it’s pretty similar.

There’s not that much of a difference but it’s still beneficial.”

Crossing guard Deb Cooper says, “It is working, but people are still running it since they aren’t used to it yet. Once people get used to it being there, it will be super beneficial, and way safer.”

Others say it is safer because it is controlled and pedestrians can cross more easily.

The West Branch School Board and Superintendent Marty Jimmerson suggested the idea to the West Branch City Council and Mayor Laughlin. The city expressed concerns, but safety eventually overruled any other decisions.

Laughlin said, “Initially, there was resistance from the city as adding a stop sign at that point on Main Street may lead to traffic backing up as people try to enter and exit the school during “rush hour.” The key reason, safety, however, overrode potential congestion. The city then passed a resolution allowing the stop sign. It’s allowed for two hours before and two hours after school. I think it’s a good compromise of providing pedestrian safety and smooth traffic flow.”

Jimmerson said, “The city plans to do a traffic study in the future to help them decide on a more permanent solution.”

FFA HOSTS FIFTH ANNUAL HARVEST DINNER FOR LOCAL FARMERS AND FAMILY

Anthony Heitzman
Staff Writer

The West Branch FFA chapter welcomed local farmers and their families to their fifth annual Harvest Dinner.

The event took place at the West Branch United Methodist Church on Saturday, Nov. 23, 2024. The Human Resources committee led by FFA Reporter Larkin Brown and members MaryAnn Stubbs, Chason Maier, Emma Wolf, Sulli Bucknell, Melayna Burmeister, and Addi Schultes planned the event. Chapter members volunteered to bring various food items and sign up to work in shifts doing various tasks such as welcoming, serving, or cleaning.

Guests arrived at the church starting at 5 p.m. to sign in and could donate money to the chapter if they wanted to. After signing in, guests sat down and selected their meal from a buffet.

Food served included different types of soups and stews such as chili, potato, and chicken noodle; veggies with homemade dip; rolls and butter donated by Texas Roadhouse; and different types of desserts such as muffins, cookies, brownies, and pie. FFA members cleaned and shut down the venue after dismissing guests at 7 p.m.

In total, 150 guests attended the event. FFA Advisor Renee Thompson said, “It was a very good turnout, good conversations, warm atmosphere, and we had more people than in years past.”

The Harvest Dinner started in 2019 when discussion about mental health in the agriculture industry began. According to the American Farm Bureau Federation, suicide rates among farmers are two to three times higher than the national average.

As a gesture of appreciation to local farmers and their contributions to the community, West Branch FFA created this event.

Thompson said, “We thought an event celebrating the ag community was a positive way to give back and to say thank you to farmers for their hard work and dedication.”

JINGLE BELL ROCKIN’ NIGHT OF MUSIC; “MEGA BAND” CONCLUDES EVENING OF BACK-TO-BACK JAZZ AND CONCERT BAND PERFORMANCES

Keaton Norfleet
Co-Editor-in-Chief

The West Branch middle and high school bands united as one “Mega Band” to close out the Fine Arts winter concert.

The Mega Band, led by middle school band director Beth Wirtanen-Obernotle and high school band director Samuel Ogilvie, performed Jingle Bell Rock- Arr. by Doug Adams.

The piece served as the finale of the jazz band and concert band performances on Wednesday, Dec. 11.

The jazz band performance featured the two groups, the Jazz Band, and the Jazz Ensemble, both led by Ogilvie. The performance took place on the “Stairway of Learning” in the Bear Den.

Ogilvie said, “ I was worried about the logistics of the Bear Den since it’s been a while since we had performed there, and I didn’t want anybody to have an unpleasant experience because they didn’t have a seat.”

The jazz band performed Two-Lip Blues by Steve Shanley and Jumpin’ Jack Jive by Carl Strommen.

After the Jazz Band finished their set, the Jazz Ensemble joined the Jazz Band to perform Ritmo Cristal by Michele

Fernández, a piece that the Jazz Band will perform at the Lisbon Jazz Festival on January 23, 2025.

The Jazz Ensemble performed Don’t Get Sassy by Thad Jones, Comfort Zone by Paul Clark, and Nueva Vida by Steve Shanley.

Junior trombone player Nolan Staker said, “Don’t Get Sassy was a little rough. We had an issue with the piano amp and Mr. Ogilvie went to fix it like the true soldier he is, but then we lost direction in the solo section and we never really got back together. That was the toughest part of the jazz performance”

The concert band performance took place in the Performing Arts Center.

The concert band performed Voice of America March by Karl L. King, Arranged by James Swearingen, Polar Vortex by Gene Milford, and Imminent Danger by Jennifer Rose.

Ogilvie said, “This was a chaotic night for me as a person. I felt like I was kind of frazzle-brained, but when we were making music we were doing well. Was each group perfect? No, but I’m really happy with the product we put out because I know how much we’ve grown.”





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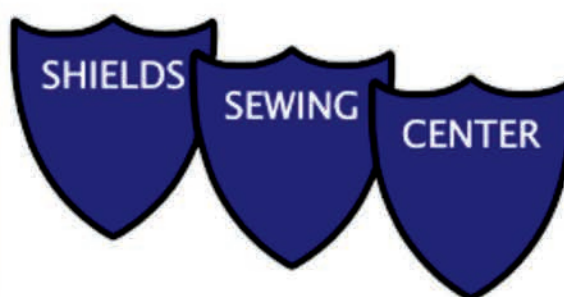
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BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: HOW WBHS STUDENTS ARE SHAPING THEIR FUTURES

Cassie Swisher
Staff Writer

West Branch High School shows huge promise with several students who go above and beyond when committing to an athletic or personal responsibility.

Signing up for a school activity requires commitment and dedication from students who like to get involved. These commitments require time, grade stability, passion, and more. However, some decided to reach even further for their goals. Several students at WBHS are largely involved with activities not affiliated with the high school at all. These activities vary from competing in a club sport to contributing to the community in a positive way.

Research shows several of the students involved in activities outside of the district also are largely involved with their school as well, between the fine arts and athletics. This means not only are they committing themselves to their school,

but they are also participating in more on top of that.

Some reasons these students supplied towards joining this activity include West Branch not offering it, the want to compete at a higher level, or having been involved with the activity for an extended time.

These activities vary from competing in a club sport to contributing.

Freshman Kendra Rarick competes in club softball and is in her fourth year. She states it differs from West Branch softball because the teams are assorted girls from several towns around the state.

Competing and dancing with the West Liberty Dance Center since Preschool, sophomore Grace Vincent shares about the challenge of later practice times.

Often her dance practices start later with times varying from 5pm-9pm.

Junior Addi Schultes is involved with the non-profit organization 4-H, which is a youth development organization standing for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

She reflects on how she wanted to join from a young age because of her sister's involvement.

Appreciating that it is part of his culture, Lynden MacGillivray competes in club hockey and first learned the sport at 3 years old.

Senior Josh Kroemer competes in men's club volleyball and has played volleyball since 6th grade. He chose to join this sport because West Branch does not offer men's volleyball and he enjoys the sport.

Senior Keaton Norfleet volunteers at the West Branch Fire Department and the Iowa Army National Guard. He shares his main values include helping other people however he can.



LEGO LEAGUE TAKES FORTH AND FIFTH AT QUALIFIER COMPETITION

Keaton Norfleet
Co-Editor-In-Chief

West Branch Lego League teams place in the top four and five ranks at a competition.

The fifth grade team, 65634 Aqua Bears finished in the fourth rank with a final score of 210 points. The team nearly tied with team 7418 RoboDogs Black which would earn the Aqua Bears an opportunity to compete at a second competition.

Close behind, team 65635 Starfish Stars ranked fifth with a final score of 200 points. Team 64899 The Krakens and 65633 Big Boys placed in Ranks 10 and 15. The Quad City Qualifier, a FIRST Lego League qualifying competition held on December 7, took place at the Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa.

A total of 23 teams participating made the qualifier the largest Lego League qualifier in the West Branch Lego League program's existence.

Matt Cain, the Lego League senior mentor and adviser said, "We were punching outside our weight in terms of representation which I think is great." Each team played in three matches, and the final scores of each round would determine the team's rank at the end of the robot games.

Livia Mueller, a member of the Starfish Stars said, "The most exciting part had to be our last round of the robot competition. It was our final chance to get the most points possible, so there was a lot of pressure on the four operating the robot, me included. It was so tense, but the team as a whole, with the others' enthusiasm, pulled through and got our best score to finish! It was fun, kind of scary, and exciting."

Cain said, "On the last robot game with three of the four teams, one of the fifth grade teams, the fourth grade team, and the eighth grade team, they all played out on three of the four tables together, it was all of their last games, and all three of them got almost every single mission on that same game at the same time.

It was really crazy awesome. That was a really incredible moment for all the teams."

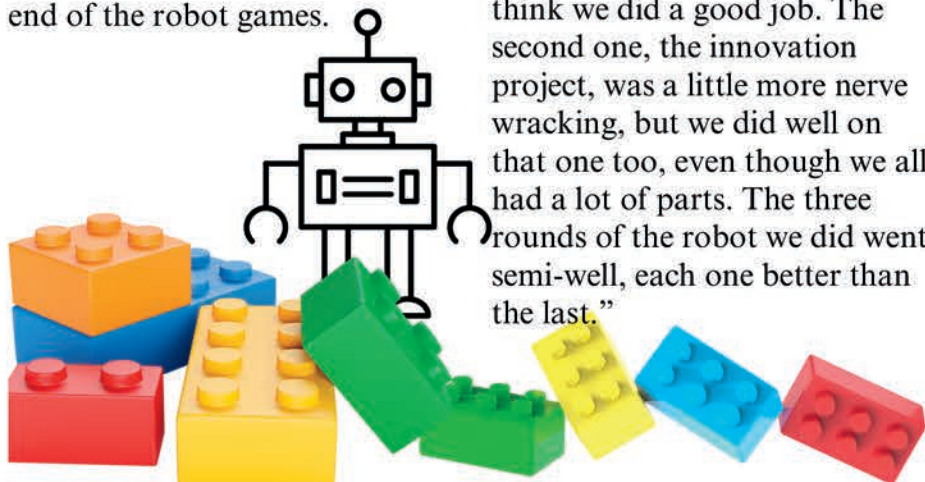
After robot matches concluded, each team met with the judges to display their robot and present their innovation project.

Mueller said, "There were a lot of teams this year, each and every one of them being unique and nice. The first presentation, on the robot, went surprisingly well considering we didn't practice that one as much, and think we did a good job. The second one, the innovation project, was a little more nerve wracking, but we did well on that one too, even though we all had a lot of parts. The three rounds of the robot we did went semi-well, each one better than the last."



Fifth graders and parents pose with their robot.

Photo contributed by Matt Cain.





TRIVIA NIGHT

COMING SOON!!
(AFTER WINTER BREAK)

IN THE BEAR DEN

Are you ready to test your knowledge and challenge your friends?
Join us for Trivia Night in the Bear Den!

Have some fun, and show off your smarts! Bring your friends and your brain power for an night of trivia.

Date to be determined, ask Ms. Noelck or a student council member for more info!!



Heitzman Family Biscotti

Biscotti (Or Cantucci as they're called in Italy) have been a holiday classic in my family for generations. Growing up I would always bake these with my Grandma over Winter Break and now you can too with this recipe.

Steps:

- Preheat the oven to 350°F
- Mix all wet ingredients in a bowl with a large mixer
- Slowly add sifted flour a couple spoonfuls at a time
- Use the leftover flour on the board when you knead the dough
- Make sure that the dough is sticky enough that it doesn't stick to you but you can still hold it
- Spray a large baking pan with cooking oil
- Roll the dough into a large ball and cut it into two equal parts
- Roll the two hemispheres into balls and cut them into four pieces
- Roll each ball into a long tube the length of the pan
- Bake for 20 minutes
- After they're done baking take them out and cut at a slant
- Carefully flip them over and bake for another ten minutes.
- Repeat two more times until they're completely dry



Ingredients:

- 2 sticks of soft room temperature butter
- 2 cups of white sugar
- 6 large eggs
- 2 tbs of baking powder
- 6 1/2 - 7 cups of all purpose flour
- 1 cup of slivered pecans
- 2 tbs of Tones Pure Anise Extract
- 2 tbs lemon juice
- 1 tbs of Tones Pure Vanilla Extract



BISCOTTI

Recipe provided by Anthony Heitzman

COMIC CORNER TREE TROUBLES

Designed by Sabree Depoorter



SNICKER SALAD

Recipe provided by Karlee Hansen



SNICKER SALAD

This easy Snicker Salad recipe is a fall favorite, packed with assortments of delicious sweets and the perfect balance between apples and snickers. It has a caramel drizzle to really top it off, and is perfect for a Thanksgiving dessert or an after school snack!

PREP TIME 20 MIN CHILL FOR 1 HOUR SERVINGS 10 SERVINGS

Instructions

Mix together cool whip and pudding mix until smooth.

Chop the snickers and apples up into bite-sized pieces.

Add them to whipped topping mixture and stir in.

Drizzle with caramel sauce and chocolate syrup and sprinkle with chopped peanuts.

Chill at least 1 hour before serving. Enjoy!

Notes: Freeze or Refrigerate the candy bar before adding it in. Keep your apples cool in the refrigerator until ready to use as well. Try butterscotch pudding instead of vanilla pudding mix for extra depth of flavor.

ALYSSA RIVERS, "SNICKERS SALAD," THE RECIPE CRITIC: TRIED & TRUE (BLOG), AUGUST 3, 2022, [HTTPS://THERECIPECRITIC.COM/SNICKERS-CARAMEL-APPLE-SALAD/](https://therecipecritic.com/snickers-caramel-apple-salad/)

Ingredients

- 2 green apples chopped into 1-inch pieces
- 2 red apples chopped into 1-inch pieces
- 6 king size Snickers bars OR 12 snack size Snickers bars
- 1 container instant vanilla pudding mix 5 ounces, not prepared
- 1 2 ounces cool whip thawed
- 1/3 cup caramel ice cream topping
- 1/4 cup peanuts chopped
- 2 tablespoons chocolate syrup

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Winter Highlights

January 9, 2025

10

WEST BRANCH STUDENTS FILL THE TOWN WITH CAROLING MUSIC

Staff Writer
Evan Highly

On Dec 6 and 7, West Branch students went caroling in Herbert Hoover National Park for Christmas Past. Choir director Chris Reed said, "Caroling was Friday, December 6. That was for middle school. We played and sang from 5:30pm to roughly 8:15pm. Saturday December 7th, same time, was High School."

Unfortunately, no high school students could sing for caroling due to scheduling conflicts. The songs sung were "Deck the Halls," "God Rest you Merry Gentlemen,"

"Hark Now Hear the Angels Sing," "Joy to the World," "Oh Come All Ye Faithful," "Silent Night," and "The First Noel."

Miley Shields gives her opinion on the caroling, saying, "I really enjoyed it, it sounded really great, they worked together. It got me into the holiday spirit, it was short and sweet, which also helped."

Reed worked with the middle school students in class to help prepare them for caroling. Reed said, "The seventh and eighth graders, I worked with them in class. We worked on all the carols in class,

and with the high schoolers, we are so busy with Show Choir, that I left caroling books for them to choose and learn songs from."

Samuel Ogilvie, the band director prepared the band by uploading digital copies, so people had access through their Chromebooks. For the music books, Ogilvie arranged the music so every instrument could play every part. Students would switch between each part to get them prepared. Ogilvie plans to change how he prepares the music next year.

Rylee Grace shared the

hardest struggle she faced while playing in the band. She said, "We did not have enough time

The high school students who participated in the band were Hunter Christoffel, Eli Farmer, Dawn Johnson, Hunter Mast, Kay Garret, Lizzy Eckert, Cassie Swisher, Rylee Gracer, Grace Vincent, Addi Shultes, Oliv Schlitz, and Elliot Hinkhouse.

Cassie Swisher claims that one of the best moments was during one of the performances, when she forgot how the song went, so she started playing Mariah Carey's "All I want for Christmas is you."

WBS STUDENTS AND STAFF SHARE HOLIDAY TRADITIONS

"Every year after Christmas, my grandparents take me, my siblings, and my cousins to see a play!"
- Nora Ziehr

"Making Stollen bread"
-Cora Hernandez

" Making or buying a special ornament for each year."
- Kara Heick

"We have crab legs for our Christmas dinner"
-Christina Reynolds



Eli Klinkhammer, Eli Farmer, Cody Mizejewski, Katlynn Waite, and Ellie Olmstead dress up for "A Winter Wonderland White Out" day.
Photo by Kara Heick



Briley Kaalberg and Alyssa Vargason dress up as bumble bee and Christmas tree for "Christmas Rhyme Without a Reason" day. Photo contributed by Briley Kaalberg



Alison Gade and Kiley Pierce pose for pajama day.
Photo by Cameron Waters



Cameron Waters and Halia Gade show school spirit with P.J's.
Photo by Kendra Ravick