



THE BEAR

Student Newspaper

November 6, 2025 WBHS Volume 29 Issue 2
900 W. Main St., West Branch, IA 52358

WBHS SENDS **FOUR** STUDENTS TO THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS



Alex Moss, Kohry Curtis, Brayden Depoorter, and Connor Davidson pose outside of the bowling alley. Photo contributed by Cohen Huber.



Kendra Rarick
Staff Writer

For the first time, West Branch High School sent a Special Olympics team to compete in bowling. On Oct. 9 2025, Senior Alex Moss, juniors Connor Davidson and Brayden Depoorter, and freshman Kohry Curtis all competed.

The competition took place at the Cedar Rapids Bowling Center.

Special education teacher, Dawson Ryner said, “The atmosphere was so cool to see all the kids getting to compete, the vibes were awesome,

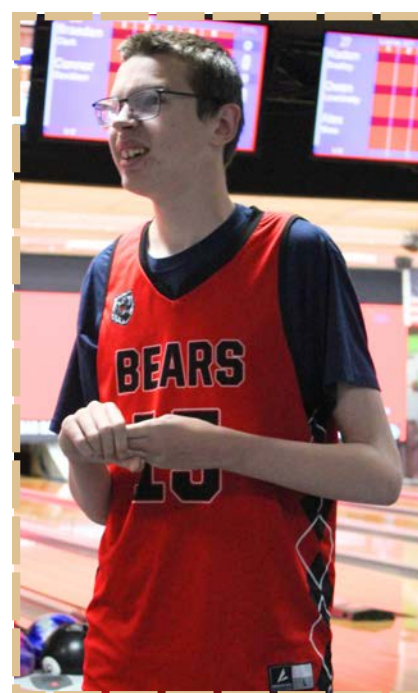
everyone was happy for everyone.” The students each bowled two games and Davidson advanced to the state competition.

State will take place on Nov. 22, 2025, at the Cedar Rapids Bowling Center. To practice, students would bowl at Colonial Lanes in Iowa City during the day with paraeducator Jodi Byrd. Ryner would also go with them. Davidson will continue to practice leading up to the state competition.

“I was not sure what to expect,” Ryner stated in an interview, “it was a surprise, it kind of just made me feel like I could gasp.”

The Special Olympics team will be participating in the track and field competition in the spring. They will also be looking into other sports for next year.

“I SCORED A 149 AND AM LOOKING FORWARD TO HAVING FUN AT STATE. I’M NOT NERVOUS, I’M EXCITED!” - CONNOR DAVIDSON



HAMANN PAVES NEW ROAD AND BREAKS NEW BARRIERS

Cassie Swisher
Photography Editor

Grace Hamann attended the 2025 Iowa High School Cross Country Championships with City High again this year as she continues to cut down her running time and out run her opponents.

On Oct. 9, Hamann earned a 5k personal record of 18:41, placing as City High’s second Varsity runner and fifth overall in the MVC Super Meet held at Kickers Soccer Park in Iowa City.

With a three-year streak for appearances at state, and coming off of a successful track and field season, Hamann is no stranger to these competitive environments. She is ranked 22nd in the state for 4A as of Oct. 28.

Hamann has learned many lessons through running in cross country and track.

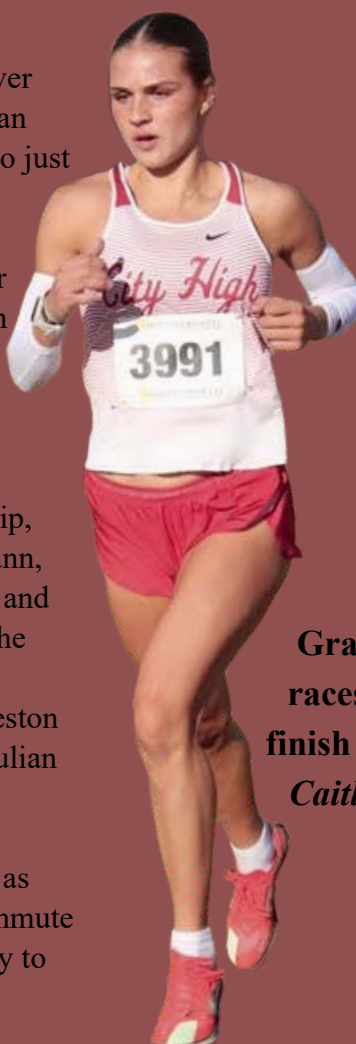
Hamann said, “You’re never going to be able to replicate an exact race or an exact team so just be in the moment and give it your all.”

Hamann, along with other West Branch students, all run with City High in a collaboration that’s held fast for multiple decades.

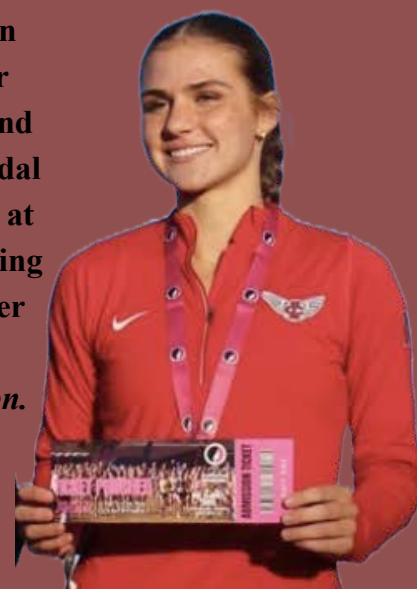
Caitlyn Harrison, Addi Schultes, Maria Monfort-Felip, Cassie Swisher, Grace Hamann, Olivia Becker, Sydney Nash and Clancy Trepanier comprise the girls' Bearhawks team.

Lynden MacGillivray, Preston Mayhew, Cash Staker, and Julian Trepanier make up the boys' Bearhawks team.

These runners are known as Bearhawks because they commute to City High nearly every day to run and participate in the established program.



Grace Hamann poses with her ticket to state and her 4th place medal that she earned at the state qualifying meet on October 22. Photo by Caitlyn Harrison.



Grace Hamann races toward the finish line. Photo by Caitlyn Harrison

From the annual West Branch long run to team dinners post-practice, City High has provided a warm and welcoming atmosphere to West Branch runners.

The annual MVC Super Meet was hosted by City High this year at the Iowa City Kickers Soccer Park on Oct. 9, where many runners found personal bests.

In the JV girls race, Swisher placed 26th with a time of 23:41(PR). Felip followed in 44th with 25:05(PR). Harrison with 25:19 placed 48th. In the Fresh/Soph girls race Nash placed 56th with 24:17(PR). C. Trepanier finished in 62nd with a time of 24:37(PR). Becker finished with 26:34 at 86th.

For the Fresh/Soph boys race, J. Trepanier placed 202nd at 22:33.



Follow our Instagram!

Read this issue online!



THEBEARSTUDENTNEWS



Class of 2024 Spotlights

2

November 6, 2025

JOE HAMANN



AT WBHS, HAMANN WAS INVOLVED IN TRACK, SOCCER, FOOTBALL, AND FFA. HE WAS A THREE-TIME STATE QUALIFIER IN TRACK AND A TWO-TIME QUALIFIER IN SOCCER.

LOOKING BACK, WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL DAYS?

I miss getting to see my friends every day.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DON'T MISS ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL?

Having to fill out a form to go to the bathroom.

WHAT'S ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'D GIVE TO STUDENTS CURRENTLY IN HIGH SCHOOL?

Don't stress about high school! Real life begins once you graduate.

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW? ARE YOU IN COLLEGE, WORKING, TRAVELING, OR DOING SOMETHING ELSE?

I am working as an electrical apprentice in the Muscatine area.

HAVE YOUR GOALS OR PLANS CHANGED SINCE GRADUATION? IF SO, HOW? IF NOT, HOW HAVE YOU STAYED FOCUSED?

Everything is going according to my plan. I stay focused because I need money to save for future things like a house and retirement.

WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST PRIORITY IN LIFE RIGHT NOW? IS IT BUILDING YOUR CAREER, MAKING MEMORIES, FINISHING SCHOOL, SAVING MONEY, OR SOMETHING TOTALLY DIFFERENT?

My biggest priority as of right now is building my career as an electrician.

JUST FOR FUN: WHAT IS YOUR GO-TO COMFORT SHOW OR MOVIE?

Duck Dynasty.

LOOKING BACK, WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL DAYS?

I honestly miss the people I surrounded myself with. My biggest motivation for school was my friends and being social, whether that be sports, class, or fine arts. I also miss the freedom of responsibility.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DON'T MISS ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL?

I don't miss the toxicity of some people, it was really draining to be around negative people while we're all trying to survive it.

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW? ARE YOU IN COLLEGE, WORKING, TRAVELING, OR DOING SOMETHING ELSE?

I currently work a full time salon job and a part time serving job. I love going out with my friends and really being an adult on my own.

HAVE YOUR GOALS OR PLANS CHANGED SINCE GRADUATION? IF SO, HOW? IF NOT, HOW HAVE YOU STAYED FOCUSED?

My goals have improved rather than changed as I want to be the best version of myself and a true one.

WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST PRIORITY IN LIFE RIGHT NOW? IS IT BUILDING YOUR CAREER, MAKING MEMORIES, FINISHING SCHOOL, SAVING MONEY, OR SOMETHING TOTALLY DIFFERENT?

My biggest focus right now is my mental health and also making sure to save that money. I also make enough time for my friends because your friends can be as serious as your family.

JUST FOR FUN: WHAT IS YOUR GO-TO COMFORT SHOW OR MOVIE?

SpongeBob!

EMILY COLEMAN



AT WBHS, COLEMAN WAS A SOCCER CAPTAIN, AND WAS INVOLVED IN SHOW CHOIR, VOLLEYBALL, THE PLAY, NATIONAL ANTHEM, NEWSPAPER, AND SPANISH CLUB.

WHAT'S ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'D GIVE TO STUDENTS CURRENTLY IN HIGH SCHOOL?

Be excited for the future, but don't forget to enjoy the moment you're living in. It may sound cliché, but high school will be over before you know it, so take the time to get involved with your school and community and really take advantage of the spaces and people available to you.

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW? ARE YOU IN COLLEGE, WORKING, TRAVELING, OR DOING SOMETHING ELSE?

I'm currently a second-year student at the University of Iowa studying English and creative writing on the publishing track with a minor in Anthropology, but I'm also considering adding a minor in media management or a certificate in event management. I work on the staff of New Moon Magazine and Earthwords magazine, serve as a Dance Marathon captain, and hold student employment as a Tour Guide and Orientation Services Executive Team Member. I'm as busy as ever, but does that really surprise anyone?

HAVE YOUR GOALS OR PLANS CHANGED SINCE GRADUATION? IF SO, HOW? IF NOT, HOW HAVE YOU STAYED FOCUSED?

When I graduated from West Branch, all I knew about my plans was that I wanted to go to Iowa for English and creative writing and eventually go on to the writer's workshop. I think that initially I wanted to be an author or an editor, but I can now see myself in all sorts of different areas. I'm keeping my options open!

OLIVIA NABER



AT WBHS, NABER WAS IN BAND, JAZZ BAND, SHOW CHOIR, CONCERT CHOIR, NEWSPAPER, STUDENT GOVERNMENT, NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, LITERARY CIRCLE, BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, THEATER, MUSICAL THEATER, TAG, ROLLER DERBY.

LOOKING BACK, WHAT DO YOU MISS MOST ABOUT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL DAYS?

I miss not having to pay rent, but I also miss Show Choir competitions with Nora.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU DON'T MISS ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL?

I don't miss the state testing week, those were never fun.

WHAT'S ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'D GIVE TO STUDENTS CURRENTLY IN HIGH SCHOOL?

My best advice is to do Show Choir, not only is it fun, it gets you a girl and improves your coordination for sports.

WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW? ARE YOU IN COLLEGE, WORKING, TRAVELING, OR DOING SOMETHING ELSE?

Currently I am finishing my prerequisite classes at Kirkwood where I will continue my studies at Iowa to study to become a Physical Therapist.

HAVE YOUR GOALS OR PLANS CHANGED SINCE GRADUATION? IF SO, HOW? IF NOT, HOW HAVE YOU STAYED FOCUSED?

My plans have not really changed since leaving high school.

JUST FOR FUN: WHAT IS YOUR GO-TO COMFORT SHOW OR MOVIE?

I don't really have a comfort show or movie, but I suppose I do consistently watch football on Sundays.

JAKE SWISHER



AT WBHS, SWISHER WAS INVOLVED WITH FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL, TRACK, SOCCER, SHOW CHOIR, AND CHOIR.



Student Works



November 6, 2025

AUTUMN

Ava Lacina
Freshman Poetry Submission

Faceless eyes
meet mine
and I realize
it is time.

The fleeting whispers of your
honey-like voice
Leave not me with a clue
but one thing will remain true.
Fall is you.

Your touch is frozen
like dry ice on my lips.
My tongue
stuck.

In my throat
awaiting your beckon
and I reckon it will appear
but just as soon will bid farewell

You
are the evanescent orange
in the trees
are the crisp apple breeze.

The musk shall befall
as snow descends anew
one thing above all;
Fall is but you.



FIVE MINUTES TO SUNRISE

Peyton Owens
Freshman Creative Writing Submission

The sun is a beautiful and delicate piece of the earth, yet it doesn't shine—yet. The first minutes before the rise of the divine light are calm and peaceful. The smell of morning, the light that dusts lightly. A mix worth getting up for. Yet, getting up isn't the most easy thing for some, and it is normal.

The next four minutes before the rise are for you—to prepare for the upcoming day.

One that can be indefinitely beautiful or at times not the most colorful. However, find peace in

the dark color.

Find light in the dark. Yet getting up isn't the most easy thing for some, and it is normal.

Breathe because your body is a darling vessel that needs it, not just because you're alive. Admire your goals and ones you get close to. Look back and smile without a care.

One or two minutes are for getting dressed and taking one last breather. Get dressed in a way that is unique to you—beautiful because it shows who you are, not someone else. Dress under the style you feel amazing with. One

that shows you're different.

The last breather is a moment before stepping into the unknown day. Step into it knowing you'll make it. Walk with your head up and smile gently. The same smile you keep without a care for judgment.

The sun is up and you made it. Made it so far it's admirable, something to be proud of—even if it has been hard. Even if you don't see it as a massive win. Rise with the sun positively. Keep being yourself and light up a room, not negativity. Relish in the light you have found.

COMIC CORNER

THE VISIT FROM THE CAROLINA REAPER

Sabree Depoorter
Senior Comic Submission





NOEL
AUTOMOTIVE
REPAIR + RESTORATION

700 Leonard Ln
West Branch, IA

noelautomotive.org

319-643-5088



THE
Serving
CAFÉ

Jennifer Walker
Owner

(319) 643 -5484
(319) 631 - 8615 cell
theservingcafe@gmail.com
theservingcafe.com

209 E Main St
West Branch, IA 52358

Financial & Retirement Planning



Michael V. Sexton, CLU, ChFC, AFIS
319.643.4128
agentmichaelsexton.com

 **FARM BUREAU
FINANCIAL SERVICES**

Registered Representative/Securities & services offered through FBL Marketing Services, LLC,* 5400 University Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50266, 877/860-2904, Member SIPC. Advisory services offered through FBL Wealth Management, LLC.* Farm Bureau Property & Casualty Insurance Company,** Western Agricultural Insurance Company,** Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company**/West Des Moines, IA. *Affiliates. *Company providers of Farm Bureau Financial Services. PR-WMA-D (3-25)



Academics



November 6, 2025

A CHANGE IN THE SYSTEM

Cameron Waters
Staff Writer

West Branch middle and high school students experienced a change in the grading system this semester in an effort to make grading more balanced. West Branch currently uses a standards-based grading system. This means students are graded based on their ability to show their skills. Before the change, an E equalled 100%,

an S equalled 85%, a C equalled 75%, an N equalled 65%, and an I equalled zero percent. West Branch standards grading must be converted to a percentage and letter grade for students who want to attend post-high school training or schooling.

Principal Sara Oswald said, “Building Leadership Teams have decided to implement a different calculation 'behind the scenes' in

Powerschool.” Now, the new grading scale is E equals four, S equals three, C equals two, N equals one, and I equals zero.

The past scale created a problem with zero as a grade because it did not accurately reflect the student's knowledge and skills of understanding. Earning an I, or a zero, means students showed no work or didn't turn anything in.

“The Case Against the Zero,”

an article shared by Oswald, claims, “People have argued that a traditional 100-point grading scale is unfair and ultimately counterproductive for students to learn.”

WBHS hopes that using the 4-3-2-1-0 scale on the back end of PowerSchool will help to combat the issues with zero.



Photos contributed by Wyatt Chapman

SIX EASTERN IOWA CORRIDOR SCHOOLS PERFORM AT CMC

Wyatt Chapman
Writing Editor

The West Branch Marching Bears attended the Corridor Marching Classic on Oct. 15 along with five other schools: West High, City High, Liberty High, West Liberty, and the host Clear Creek Amana. The UNI Panthers Marching Band made a guest appearance and performed their pregame and halftime show for the schools at CMC.

CMC is the final performance of the marching band season.

“I feel like we ended on a really good note. I'm really proud of our performance during the Corridor Marching Classic and our final football game halftime show,” said

senior Kellen Dykstra.

The week of the event, the band ran their show during their morning fixing any problems they ran into during the day.

The Marching Bears performed four songs from the movie “Frozen.” The theme “Frozen” is a nod to the fact that the band will be going to Disney World in the spring.

For the past four years, the Marching Bears wore track suits while the other schools wore the traditional marching uniforms. This is typically comprised of a hat with a plume, a long-sleeved jacket, bibed overalls that go under the jacket, and marching shoes. The uniform traditionally is in a

school's respective colors.

This year, the new band director, Jamie Flanagan, brought the West Branch traditional uniforms back. In a poll about the excitement of uniforms being brought back, 10 out of 20 seniors rated an 8.7 out of 10 for their excitement level.

The Marching Bears performed at 6:05 PM as the first school of the evening. The band members then viewed each school that attended as they performed their halftime shows. Flanagan hopes to have the Marching Bears compete instead of just performing next year.

THE BEAR EARNS TOP 15 IN IOWA

Ava Lacina & Sydney Nash
Staff Writers

The Bear Newspaper earned the honor of being in the top 15 student newspapers in Iowa. The Iowa High School Press Association runs a competition for Iowa high school news teams each spring where advisors can submit student work for awards. Then out of the top 15, five schools are picked for the All Iowa News Team, which is announced at the annual fall IHSPA conference.

The IHSPA conference is an event in which both newspaper and yearbook teams from across Iowa can attend as a way to grow as staff through breakout sessions where students can select to learn new skills.

For a school to enter the IHSPA spring journalism contests, the advisor must submit student work. The application process consists of a cost of two dollars per entry for each category you enter. There are 40 different available categories, such as art

and design, social media promotion, photography, online, and writing. Each school is allowed to enter five pieces per category. Categorical rankings are based on the school population and are sorted into three classifications: small, medium, and large.

The winning rankings are first, second, third, and honorable mention. Points are given to each school by entry per their ranking, which are then used to determine the total amount of points a school wins and its overall ranking. Every school is eligible to receive a banner if they reach the top 15 and proceed to the top five. Each school must submit three issues to be judged, and those must be mailed by the deadline of June 2. The top five schools will be picked from those submissions by a panel of judges through the IHSPA.

For the 2024-2025 school year, The Bear won 19 awards, putting them in the running for the All-Iowa News Team of the Year.



Pictured back to front, left to right- Raelyn Wilcher, Karlee Hansen, Cameron Waters, Ava Lacina, Sydney Nash, Connor Davidson, Chloe Kleinmeier, Kendra Rarick, Sabree Deporter, Emma Revis, Kara Heick, Evan Highly, Wyatt Chapman, Cassie Swisher, Caitlyn Harrison, Halia Gade. Photo Contributed by Rex Connor.



WILDWOOD
Open Daily 11am-9pm
\$10 DAILY LUNCH SPECIALS!
Kids 12 & under eat FREE on Tuesday! (excludes show nights)

WE CATER!
Birthdays
Graduations
Team Dinners
Pre-Dance Dinners
Holiday Parties
Fundraisers
etc!

WILDWOOD
(319) 333-1750
4919 WALLEYE DR. SE
IOWA CITY, IA

North Dodge
HyVee
Fresh. Fast. Friendly.
Right Here in Your Neighborhood.







November 6, 2025

MICHAEL MONTGOMERY COMMITS D1 FOR FOOTBALL

Raelyn Wilcher
Staff Writer

WBHS Senior, Michael Montgomery, recently committed to Ohio University for football.

Montgomery has played football since the age of four. Throughout his high school career, he played left guard and left tackle on offense, as well as defensive tackle and defensive end.

When someone starts a sport, it might not always be something they wanted to do, but over time, love for the sport can be gained. Montgomery’s freshman year is when he really developed a love for football.

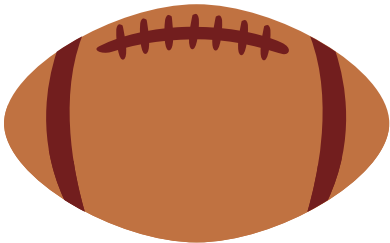
“After that year, I built confidence in myself and started believing that I could play in college.”

It was a turning point for Montgomery. It is important to note that having confidence and a love for the game can make the progress (and wins) feel even better.

“Beating MFL MarMac my freshman year was my favorite memory,” said Montgomery.



Coach Jarod Tylee gives Michael Montgomery a pep talk on the sideline.
Photo by Raelyn Wilcher.



“I also enjoyed winning close games.”

Leaving West Branch will be difficult for Montgomery for multiple reasons. He has played football with some of his classmates for most of his life, making many memories and friendships along the way.

Montgomery says, “It’s definitely going to be hard leaving my friends and family, especially since Athens is a 9-hour drive. I won’t get to see them much.” Despite that, he is

excited about moving into the university and getting to be surrounded by a new environment.

The process of committing to a D1 school like Ohio, or any college, can be a lot of pressure, depending on the number of offers and everything an athlete has to consider.

Montgomery said, “One thing that helped me pick Ohio was its size. It’s in a somewhat small town, but it still has things to do.”

Ohio University is known for its

strong competitiveness in athletics and being third in the Mid American Conference this season for football. Last year, they won the Mid American Conference championship.

A piece of advice Montgomery would give to freshmen is to, “Trust the process. If you take your coaches seriously and buy into what they are teaching you, then you will start to see progress,” said Montgomery “My time at West Branch consisted of all sorts of ups and downs.”

WBHS HONORS 38 FALL ACTIVITY SENIORS

Raelyn Wilcher
Staff Writer

On Friday, Oct. 10, WBHS honored 38 seniors involved in fall activities. Between the second and third quarter of the JV game, football seniors walked down the center of the field.

The announcers called out over the microphone information about each senior, the sports they played, and the extracurricular activities they participated in over the years.

Each player walked with their parents to Coach Matt Hughes, who congratulated each senior. The seniors then received their football

banner and took pictures with their families.

The football seniors included: Bodee Morehead, Brandon Pedersen, Brennen Dale, Carter Hetrick, Conner Capper, Cooper Gates, Finn McCullough, Griffin Seydel, Jerricho Hobbs, Lincoln Naber, Logan Christoffel, Maddux Rushton, Michael Montgomery, Nolan Staker, Oliver Trepanier, Reese Gingerich, and Wesley Strong.

Senior cheerleaders and band members were recognized before the varsity football game. Each senior walked down the sidelines with their

families while the announcer shared their highlights and accomplishments.

As they walked, they were handed their banners by underclassmen in cheerleading or band. Seniors then took pictures with their banner and family.

The cheer seniors included: Lauren Keeler, Kiley Pierce, Maria Monfort Felip, and Whitney Spratt.

The band seniors included: Addi Schultes, Adelyn Hetrick, Aizlyn Marsh, Draven Ladehoff, Drew Niles, Ewan Arlen, Kellen Dykstra, Lillian Waters, Logan Heick, Lynden MacGillivray, Maddie



Tygrett, Porter Steele, Rey Watt, Sophie Oaks, Wyatt Chapman. Fans showed their support with loud cheers for every senior.

2 LOCATIONS!

200 Scott Ct.
Iowa City, IA
319-351-9303

1069 Hwy. 1 West
Iowa City, IA
319-351-9323

www.midtownfamily.com

YOUR VISION. OUR PASSION.

www.COTTONCREEKMILL.COM

Shop with us **ONLINE!**

3000+ BOLTS OF FABRIC • CLASSES • FREE OPEN SEW GIFTS • BOOKS • NOTIONS • PATTERNS • KITS
BLOCK OF THE MONTHS • SEW ALONGS • SEW RETREATS

113 W. MAIN STREET • WEST BRANCH, IA 52358 | 319.643.3554
www.CottonCreekMill.com

HOURS: TUESDAY - FRIDAY 10 - 5 PM • SATURDAY 10 - 2 PM

LYNCH'S PLUMBING, INC.
Wayne & Steve Lynch, owners

Residential and Commercial
New construction - Remodels
Boilers - Waterheaters - Softeners
Licensed - Insured - Bonded

115 S. 2nd Street
West Branch, IA 52358
Office: 319-643-2022 Email: Lynchsplumbing@Lcom.net

Gabe Waters 319-631-1210

New Construction - Additions - Remodels - Siding
Roofing - Porches/Decks - Screening - Snow Removal



Sponsors



November 6, 2025



• Auto Repair • Tires • Custom Accessories

319-643-2509

West Branch, IA

**JACK & JILL
GROCERY
STORE**

115 E Main St
West Branch, IA
319-643-2611



**FAMILY PET
VETERINARY**

West Branch, IA • 319-643-3555

THE GROOM STATION



Where you can feel at home.

(319) 643-5099
(563) 886-4546

Groomstation@aol.com

620 Division St.
West Branch, IA 52358

info@familypetveterinary.com

WBR

WEST BRANCH ROOFING

GO BEARS!

(319) 643-2435

westbranchroofing@gmail.com

PO Box 100
West Branch, IA 52358



Sponsors



November 6, 2025

For the connections
that matter most...

THERE'S LIBERTY



INTERNET

Get the speed you need to download music, stream 4k, play online games and more! With fast, reliable speeds up to a Gig, Liberty Communications is proud to be your local internet provider.

DOWNLOAD / UPLOAD SPEED	YOUR PRICE
1Gbps / 500Mbps	\$149.95
500Mbps / 500Mbps	\$99.95
250Mbps / 125Mbps	\$79.95
100Mbps / 50Mbps	\$59.95



MANAGED WIFI \$8.95

With Liberty's Managed WiFi service, our friendly technicians are here to optimize your WiFi experience. They will:

- Provide a premium WiFi router
- Set up your network
- Troubleshoot for you
- Ensure your WiFi is up and running

Expand your wireless coverage with a wireless extender for just **\$3.95/month**



PHONE \$29.95

Clear connections and no dropped calls mean you can keep in touch with loved ones and manage your busy lives.

Included FREE with your package:

- Unlimited Nationwide Calling to the 48 Contiguous United States
- Caller ID
- Call Waiting and Call Waiting ID
- Call Forwarding
- 3-Way Calling
- Speed Dial

DIRECTV



TELEVISION

Watch what you want, when you want with a DIRECTV Device, developed exclusively for DIRECTV. Enjoy our complete entertainment experience:

- Unlimited hours of Cloud DVR
- Stream your favorite shows anywhere in your home
- A package designed just for you
- Easy set up

CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE!



[in](#) [f](#) [@](#) libertycommunications.com | 319.627.2145
413 North Calhoun, West Liberty, IA 52776 | 117 1st St, West Branch IA 52358

THE

ENCOUNTER

Café



Ultimate Encounter Skillet

376 Clinton Street, Iowa City, IA
(319)-530-9285
encountercafe2017@gmail.com
www.theencountercafe.com

Open Monday - Saturday
7:00 - 2:30
Closed Sunday

EST. 2016

CEDARS EDGE

Golf Course

WEST BRANCH, IOWA

3 Ember Lane
West Branch, IA 52358
(319) 643-3343

EATS & DRINKS

Birdies

EST. 2022

WEST BRANCH, IA

(319) 643-3287

Enjoy a round of golf
or grab a bite to eat
in West Branch!

FIDELITY

BANK & TRUST

www.bankfidelity.bank

Member FDIC

MAIN

STREET

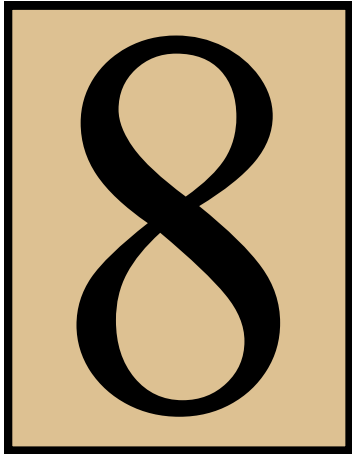
Sweets

104-1/2 E. Main St.
319-643-5001
www.mainstreetsweetswb.com

Open Year round!
Serving Sandwiches, appetizers, soft serve ice cream, slushies,
and hot & cold drinks!
Hot plate lunches served Friday
Homemade Pie every Thursday!



Clubs & Orgs



November 6, 2025

CYBEARS WELCOME NEW MEMBERS AT CLASH IN THE CORN TOURNAMENT



CyBear members Rey Watt, Wyatt Chapman, Katey Lenocho, and Ewan Arlen pose with their robot. *Photo by Anthony Heitzman.*

Anthony Heitzman
Business Editor

WBHS's robotics team, 5041 CyBears, competed at the second annual Clash In The Corn competition in West Des Moines on October 17 and 18 as part of the 2025 offseason for the FIRST Robotics Competition. The team welcomed several new members this season.

The team started off with technical difficulties when they first arrived at the competition and had to work to overcome them and eventually got the robot working again. Team members also attended various seminars on topics such as robot automation, control systems, and programming.

After fixing the robot, the team participated in several practice rounds in which new members got to try driving the robot around the field while learning from senior

members.

During day two of the competition the team competed in qualifying matches with mixed results, winning four matches and losing five. After qualifying matches, CyBears ended up ranking ninth out of 17 teams.

During selection, alliance five team captain, 648 QC Elite Flaming Squirrels, chose Cybears and 967 Iron Lions to compete in the playoffs.

CyBears competed in three playoff matches, winning match two against alliance four 81-79, and losing matches seven and 12 to alliances one and four, resulting in the team being eliminated from playoffs.

After finals were over, CyBears competed in the "Mentor's Match" in which coaches and mentors drive their team's robots in a scrimmage-like match. CyBear mentors Matt Cain, Jerome Garrett, and Katey Lenocho drove the team robot and won the match 102-83.

ART CLUB ELECTS NEW OFFICERS

Emma Revis
Staff Writer

On the date of Sept.16 2025, the art club members of West Branch High School elected their new leadership positions. New leaders include: President Evan Highly, Vice President Chloe Kleinmeyer, and Treasurer Adelyn Hetrick.

Many members returned this year. Some returning members would like to see the club

participate in activities like painting a mural for mental health awareness, creating apparel to fund new art supplies, and other initiatives.

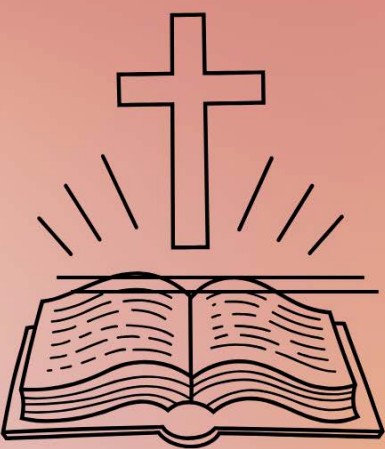
Kleinmeyer said that in art club, "I get to explore new media and projects I've never gotten to do before."

Rarick said she wants to, "Get better at art, specifically painting." Both students use art club to expand and explore new skills.

NEW STUDENT-LED BIBLE STUDY MEETS WEEKLY

WBHS BIBLE STUDY

GET TO KNOW GOD



THROUGH HIS WORD

WE MEET EVERY THURSDAY AT 7:40 AM IN MR.VOS'S ROOM

REACH OUT TO NOLAN STAKER OR CAITLYN HARRISON WITH QUESTIONS



Hours:

Mon-Fri (11-8)

Sat & Sun(11-10)

503 Westbury Dr, Ste 1, Iowa City, IA 52245



management@blackstone-ic.com

319-338-1770



MEXICO LINDO
GRILL & CANTINA

711 S Downey St
West Branch, IA

(319) 877-8025



WBHS WISHES SUPPORT TO CARSON RYAN FAMILY AND WCSD




After the loss of student Carson Ryan, West Branch High School students wear black and orange to support the Washington Community School District and Carson Ryan's family.



WB GIRLS SOCCER TEAM BONDING

ON SUNDAY OCT. 12, MEMBERS OF THE GIRLS SOCCER TEAM TRAVELED TO THE IOWA SOCCER COMPLEX IN IOWA CITY FOR A DAY OF TEAM BONDING. THEY CHEERED ON THE NO. 7-RANKED IOWA WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM AS THEY FACED NO. 18 MICHIGAN STATE IN AN EXCITING MATCH. THE HIGH-SCORING GAME KEPT EVERYONE ON THEIR TOES UNTIL THE FINAL WHISTLE. THE HAWKEYES OUTSCORED THE SPARTANS 5-3 TO SECURE THE WIN ON THEIR HOME TURF.



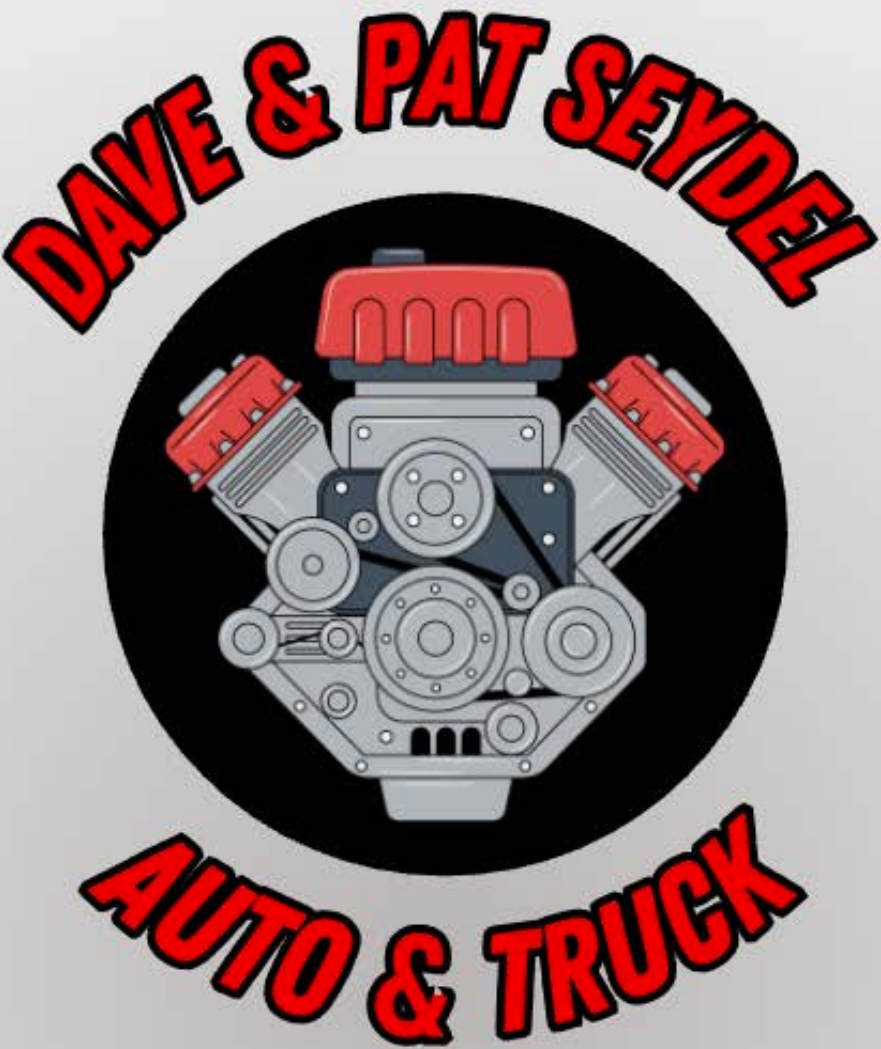
Back row: Grace Hamann, Clancy Trepanier, Caitlyn Harrison, Holly Woody, Melayna Burmeister, Sydney Nash, Maria Monfort, Madeline Eulloqui. Front row: Cassie Swisher, Lexie Isabel, Addy Rocha, Brisa Carillo, Chloe Albrecht, Brenna Benskin, Jenie Gomez, Kiley Pierce, Katlynn Waite.
Photo contributed by Anthony Cappel.

West Branch Animal Clinic

Providing quality health care to our small animal, large animal and equine patients with efficient, effective and practical animal care services and products.



508 N. 4th St.
West Branch, IA 52358 (319) 643-2127
westbranchanimalclinic.com



"THE BEST FRIEND YOUR CAR EVER HAD"

917 MAIDEN LANE
IOWA CITY, IA 52240

319-351-6805



BARNHART'S
CUSTOM SERVICES
WEST BRANCH, IA
319-643-7230
412 E. Main St
West Branch



Student Life



November 6, 2025

BURNING QUESTIONS: WBHS STUDENT BOAZ SERVES AS WBFD FIRE CADET

Anthony Heitzman
Business Editor

The United States celebrated its 100th annual Fire Prevention Week from Oct. 6 to Oct. 10, 2025. The theme this year is “Charge into Safety,” which aims to educate people on the fire hazards posed by batteries and other electronics.

As part of Fire Prevention Week, members of the West Branch Fire Department visited students at Hoover Elementary to teach them about fire safety.

During the visit, fire cadet Robby Boaz talked to kids about how to escape a building and demonstrated their bunker gear. Boaz has been a member of WBFD since early 2025, and he

initially joined because he wanted to serve a greater purpose in his community.

Boaz serves as a member of the fire cadet program in which high schoolers over the age of 16 can join as volunteer firefighters in-training. The various duties of cadets like him are more limited than that of more senior members.

Cadets are not allowed to enter active fires or do certain EMS jobs like administering medications, but can perform basic tasks like CPR or assist with rescues.

Boaz initially found these limitations challenging and had to work on not overstepping them.

Boaz also noted that he and many others in the firefighting profession struggle with mental

health due to the dangers associated with the job.

“It never gets easier,” said Boaz.

However, despite the challenges, Boaz enjoys many aspects of the job, the main one being a strong sense of camaraderie with other firefighters.

Boaz also said, “Several other cadets and I plan on studying fire science at DMACC and other schools in the future.”

The West Branch fire cadet program teaches responsibility, gives students a greater sense of purpose and community, and allows them to be a part of something bigger than themselves.

Ultimately, Boaz said, “I would recommend that other interested students join WBFD.”



Fire cadets Eli Farmer and Robby Boaz stand in their gear. Photo by Cassie Swisher.

SUSPECT UNKNOWN

Chloe Kleinmeyer
Staff Writer

Unknown Number is a new, well made, Netflix documentary that included amazing suspense.

Unknown Number follows two teenagers and their families as they face what seems like an endless stream of online harassment.

Lauryn Licardi, a student at Beal High School, was living contentedly with healthy relationships with both her parents and her boyfriend, Owen McKenny. They spent lots of time together and were extremely important in each other's lives.

The world seemed to stop when Lauryn got a message from an unknown sender. She didn't recognize the number, and neither did her boyfriend. The messages were vulgar and took an extreme toll on both of the teen's mental health.

I thought the editing in the film was amazing. It gave so much life to the story. I especially liked the voice distortion when the text messages were narrated. I thought it gave a much-needed eerie effect. I also really liked how they edited in pictures throughout the movie.

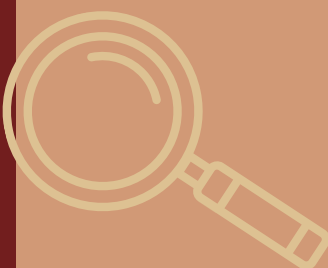
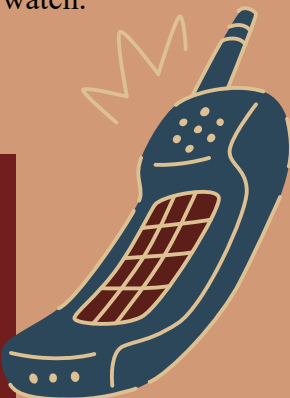
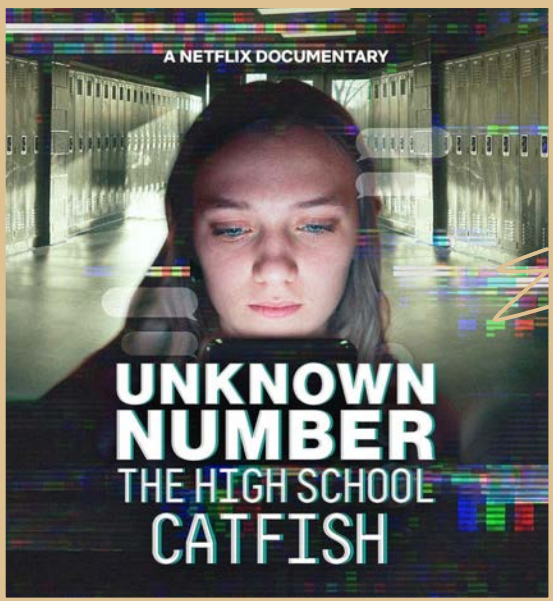
It gave me something to look at and understand on a visual level, rather than picturing it in my mind. For example, there were many pictures of the messages that would come up as they were talked about on screen.

The documentary featured the real-world victims as "actors" in the film. I feel like it would have looked odd if they had put in a random actor to play them. It gave the perfect balance between a documentary and a normal movie.

If they had made it classic documentary style, I feel like people would be less interested. Instead of having the entirety of the movie talking with pictures on the screen, we got to hear from the real victims and their families. It really made me feel like I was a part of the situation.

I watched *Unknown Number* over the span of a few days. Whenever I wasn't watching it, I was thinking about it. It just felt like there was always something I wanted to learn more about. For me, I never found a dull moment while I was watching it.

Overall, I really enjoyed this documentary. It was very impactful and made me think about my own life. Sometimes I have to stop and think about the fact that this can happen to anyone, not just people in documentaries like this one. It was such an interesting film, and my rating would be at least four out of five stars. It was beautifully made, and a great piece of media. I would definitely recommend this film for your next watch.



UNITED STATES FACES GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

Evan Highly
Design Editor



On Wednesday, Oct 1, America faced a nationwide government shutdown that left federally funded agencies closed.

Government shutdowns occur when Congress is unable to agree on passing funding bills. Oct 1 is the day that federal funding begins. If federal funding is not available, the government shuts down.

When the government shuts down, some employees might still have to have to work but will not get paid.

Federal workers are classified as essential or non-essential workers. Essential workers are required to continue working despite not being paid. Agents with the FBI, TSA, military personnel, and many more fall under the classification of essential workers.

Non-essential workers are put on unpaid furlough. Unpaid furlough means these federal workers will not be able to work and will not be paid until the shutdown ends.

There are some exceptions to this and some federal employees continue working and being paid during a shutdown.

This includes the U.S. Postal Service, members of Congress, teachers, and employees with non-appropriated funding.

Though a government shutdown may not affect you directly, some people rely on the services provided by the government. National parks and museums typically close down entirely during a government shutdown. New loan applications for small businesses, federal housing, and student aid could be put on hold. Routine inspections by the FDA could also be put on hold, leading to health risks.

Taxpayer services could be delayed. The processing of new applications and requests to programs like Social Security, Medicare, and WIC could be delayed.

Government shutdowns do not have a set date of when they end due to Congress having to agree; in the past, they have varied anywhere from five days to thirty-five days.

The 2018-2019 shutdown lasted for 35 days. If this government shutdown continues, this could mean programs, like SNAP, funded by the government, could run out of funds



ATRIUM VILLAGE

HILLS, IOWA 52235

Committed to Caring since 1981

Independent Living

WAITLIST Available

Care Center

Semi-Private Female Room
Semi-Private Male Room
Private Suite

Give us a call at 319-679-2224 or check out our website:
atriumvillagehills.com, Facebook Page (Atrium Village Hills) or in-person at Atrium Village,
117 S. Third Street, Hills, Iowa 52235



Open Tue-Fri
10am-5pm
Sat 10am-4pm
Manda Frauenholz
izzystreasureswb@gmail.com
f @izzystreasureswb

Classes. Hemming. Jewelry Repair
Fresh Flowers. Bears Gear & More