



THE BEAR

Student Newspaper

November 16, 2023 WBHS Volume 27 Issue 2
900 W. Main St., West Branch, IA 52358

THE BEAR RECOGNIZED AS ALL-IOWA NEWS TEAM

Publication competes with 3A, 4A schools to make top five across state

Connor Davidson
Journalism 1 Guest Writer

On October 19, students from the Journalism 1, newspaper, and yearbook classes went to the Iowa High School Press Association Fall Journalism Conference at the Iowa Memorial Union. During the conference, *The Bear* newspaper crew was awarded the #5 slot in the state of Iowa for All Iowa News Team 2023. They came in behind Iowa City High, Iowa City West, Waterloo East, and Pleasant Valley.

Newspaper Adviser Karina Krall said, "It was amazing! We were all kind of stunned. At the end of last year, we knew we had been selected as one of the top 15 newspapers in the state of Iowa. This included all classes of schools, and we were basically the smallest school on the list. When we found out that they were going to narrow it down to the top 5, we weren't sure if we had a chance. We were up against 3A and 4A schools. We're 1A."

She added, "We had to choose three more complete editions of *The Bear* to send in and be evaluated, and then all we could do was wait for about six months to find out if we made it. When we were called as #5, we were so excited and honored. I'm so proud of my staff! They have been working hard to make *The Bear* a newspaper to be proud of, and I'm very pleased that this hard work has been rewarded."

The newspaper team was awarded an All-Iowa news team banner to hang on display at their school. However, there was confusion about what was printed on it. Head editor-in-chief Olivia Naber said, "Our banner and name on the presentation when we were awarded the distinction of All Iowa News Team was incorrect, which was slightly frustrating. On the other hand, I get to keep our incorrect 'Warrior Watch' banner when we get the new one, so I can't complain too much."

The conference had a record-high attendance of 868 students from 44 different Iowa high schools, all there to learn how to better their own publications.

Yearbook teacher Rex Connor said, "At the IHSPA Conference, students have the opportunity to pursue their interests through breakout sessions with peers from all across the state. Several students mentioned that hearing fresh perspectives from people doing the same work inspired them to approach our publications in new ways."

The event started with keynote speaker Brandee Britt, who is the director



Feeling elated after a big win for the WBHS journalism program, *The Bear* Newspaper staff shows off its newly-earned (yet wrongly-printed) banner. The Bear student newspaper was named #5 in the top 5 student newspapers in the state of Iowa at the IHSPA Fall Conference on Oct. 19. Back row: Keaton Norfleet, Lauren Keeler, Caitlyn Harrison, Miley Shields, Maryam Martin, Kya Montgomery, Larkin Brown. Front Row: Brooklyn Nash, Peyton Braddock, Olivia Naber, Ashlynn Nash, Katey Noble, Claire Jarrett. Not Pictured: Rylee Shimon, Anna Waterman, Will Tidrick, Nora Ziehr. Photo By Karina Krall.

of social media and digital strategy for Hawkeye Athletics. Over the past few years, she has been instrumental in getting more media coverage for the Iowa women's basketball team, which has helped to increase attendance.

Connor said Britt "did an awesome job getting students engaged in the process of journalism. She connected with the audience by talking about something for which she has a passion, Iowa Hawkeyes women's basketball, which has been such a source of inspiration to Iowans recently."

After the keynote speaker, students were able to go to a variety of sessions to learn skills and tools to help them enhance their journalism and yearbook programs back home. Some of the many session opportunities included: Covering the Election Primer, Video Storytelling 101, Sports Journalism and Politics, Publication Critique Session, and So You Want to Be in Broadcast? Studio Workshop.

Head Newspaper Editor-in-Chief Olivia Naber said, "I thought that



the breakout sessions were really interesting. I always enjoy the sessions because of the people I get to meet and the things I learn.

"I may be alone in saying this, but my only wish is that it was even longer! I really enjoyed the breakout sessions and would have loved to have been able to attend more of them and get more

valuable information."

Newspaper Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief Claire Jarrett said, "I enjoyed learning about how we can better our paper. It was also fun to see that we won All-Iowa News Team of the Year! It's a huge accomplishment for *The Bear*."

The Bear Asks: What do you do on Black Friday?

"Stay home while my mom fights for her life at the mall."

"Stay home by the fire and decorate the house for Christmas!"

"Sleep."

"Kiss my money goodbye."

"Go Shopping."

Lincoln Naber

Jessica Taylor

Cassie Swisher

Oliv Schlitz

Kiley Pierce

Poll by Larkin Brown
Graphics by Olivia Naber

THE BEAR COMIC CORNER



- By Art Editor Ava Hazelwood.



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WBHS PERFORMS THE MUSICAL *GREASE*



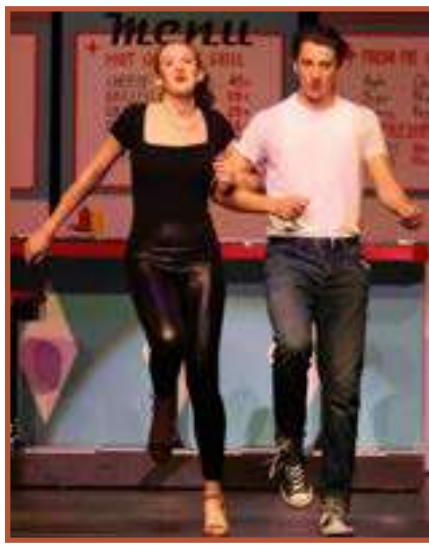
Grease Main Cast. *Back Row:* Nolan Staker, Nina Torkelson. *Middle Row:* Kaylee Kettler, Miley Shields, Josh Kroemer, Olivia Naber, Nate Hills, Maddie Reed, Eli Farmer. *Front Row:* Robby Boaz. *Not Pictured:* Diego Carrillo, Jenie Gomez, Lynden MacGillivray, Ellie Walsh, Lincoln Naber, Peyton Braddock. *Photo contributed by Carrie Arlen.*



Grease Orchestra: Nora Ziehr, Keaton Norfleet, Ewan Arlen, alumni Baylee Picgors, Eli Hansen. *Photo by Brooklyn Nash.*



Grease Crew: Head Jade Gongora, Kellen Dykstra, Audrey Watt, Wyatt Chapman, Aizlyn Marsh, Sulli Bucknell, Joelle Haas, Lexi Skay, Addi Finley. *Photo by Brooklyn Nash.*



Nina Torkelson (Sandy) and Nolan Staker (Danny) dance together in the restaurant. *Photo by Tracy Schutte.*



Jenie Gomez (Cha Cha) and Lynden MacGillivray (Eugene) boogie together at the school dance. *Photo by Dawn Johnson.*



The Pink Ladies and Patty sing about "Summer Nights." Pictured are Olivia Naber, Kaylee Kettler, Peyton Braddock, Nina Torkelson, Miley Shields, Maddie Reed. *Photo by Brooklyn Nash.*



Diego Carrillo (Vince Fontaine) announces the dance on the radio. *Photo by Tracy Schutte.*



Kaylee Kettler (Frenchie) sings about how she wants to go to beauty school. *Photo by Tracy Schutte.*



Nina Torkelson (Sandy) fields a phone call. *Photo by Tracy Schutte.*



Maddie Reed (Marty) sings "Freddy, my Love." *Photo by Tracy Schutte.*



Pink Ladies (Miley Shields, Olivia Naber, Nina Torkelson, Kaylee Kettler and Maddie Reed) have a sleepover. *Photo by Tracy Schutte.*



Josh Kroemer (Roger) gets "depanted." *Photo by Dawn Johnson.*



Layla Samuelson works at the restaurant counter as a student. *Photo by Tracy Schutte.*

What was your favorite scene/musical number?

"I honestly really liked 'Freddy, my Love' just because I thought it was fun. It was like a girly number, and I got a solo, and I've never had one." - Maddie Reed.

What did you think of the musical?

"Oh, my goodness, it was awesome! I loved how many people were part of it because it's easy to look at the leads, like Nolan [Staker] and Nina [Torkelson] standing up there, but whenever they had the full cast come out for a chorus or a dance number, you just love to see it and how many people participate. They did a bang up job!" - English teacher Rex Connor.

"Grease is the word!"

Did you enjoy playing your character?

"I did. I really thought that even though I was in the background, I thought that all the background characters really added to the scenes and made it more enjoyable to watch rather than just the named characters making it enjoyable." - Layla Samuelson.

What will be your favorite memory?

"When we were redoing the car, I took the old car with a bunch of cardboard on it, and I just rode it over to the recycling bin just by myself." - Aizlyn Marsh.

Did everything go as planned?

On Saturday, Aizlyn [Marsh] forgot to turn the triangle, so in the bedroom scene, there were two pink walls and one locker wall. - Kellen Dykstra.

Nooo. My part did, and Mary [Director Denmead] sometimes scared me by showing up a little too late on curtain cue. So, there was one cue that I did not know. It was right after intermission. I pulled the rope, and it came off of the wheel." - Audrey Watt.

"We completely forgot about the tree. There was a tree near the band stand. We completely forgot about it until we looked directly at it." - Wyatt Chapman.

Would you like to participate in another musical? If so, which one?

"I would definitely do another musical again, and I think it would be really fun to do *Mama Mia*." - Maddie Reed.

Oh, yes. I would really love to do *Heathers*. - Kellen Dykstra.

"I would love to participate in the musical again if possible. Despite the busy schedule and late rehearsals, I had a wonderful time working with the band and the performers. If we are to do another musical next year, I'm not sure what I would want to perform. Though, on our choice board that Mr. [Chris] Reed put up last year, we did have *West Side Story* as an option." - Keaton Norfleet.



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Student Life

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PEDERSEN SHARES BONE-CHILLING HORROR MOVIE FAVORITES

Caleb Pedersen
Staff Writer

1 *The Conjuring* (2013) is by far the best horror movie in my opinion. This movie includes multiple aspects of horror including thrill, horror, suspense, and many jump scares. The storyline is very easy to follow and very attention-grabbing. My favorite scene from *The Conjuring* is when Lorraine, a paranormal demonologist with clairvoyant abilities, accesses the Conjuring Universe, seeking to help the Perron family after they had just moved to a farmhouse in 1970's.

2 *Run* (2020) is a thrilling and dramatic film. Dianne Sherman, a bereaved parent, kidnaps a baby and

forces her to consume a drug which is paralyzing her. In this movie, Chloe, the daughter, does everything in her power to run from her psychotic mother. My favorite scene is when Chloe goes to the movie theatre with her mother, but escapes by taking a restroom break. She goes to the pharmacy to try and figure out what drug her mother has been giving her ever since birth.

3 *Hush* (2016) is also a very thrilling and suspenseful movie. This movie is set in the middle of the woods with a young woman named Maddie who is deaf and living alone. One night, a man stalks and attempts to kill this woman. Although he thought it would be an easy kill, Maddie is a very smart and quick thinking woman. She gives him a hard time at what he hopes to accomplish. My

favorite scene from this movie is when Maddie uses lipstick on the sliding glass door to converse with the killer.

4 *A Quiet Place* (2018) is a very popular and well-known horror movie. This movie is more recent and is about a family living in Pawling, a deserted town where no sound can be made. The world has been invested with aliens who do not like noise. Any sound that is made is heard by aliens that come to kill you immediately. The Abbott family tries their hardest to make their day-to-day life easier to not make noise. My favorite scene in this movie is when the son sets off fireworks to distract the aliens from hearing their mother giving birth in their house basement.

5 *Truth or Dare* (2017) is not your typical horror movie. This movie is quite unique. *Truth or Dare* is set in an old house that is known to be haunted. A group of college students rent the house for a night to have a good time. This expected good time turned out to be a dreadful and unfortunate night. The house requires the students to do a truth or a dare, these truths are hard to spit out and the dares are deadly. My favorite scene in this movie is when they are sitting in the living room playing a regular game of truth or dare. The students all put in truths and dares into a hat, but the truth and dares that the students wrote, quickly changed to whatever the house wanted.

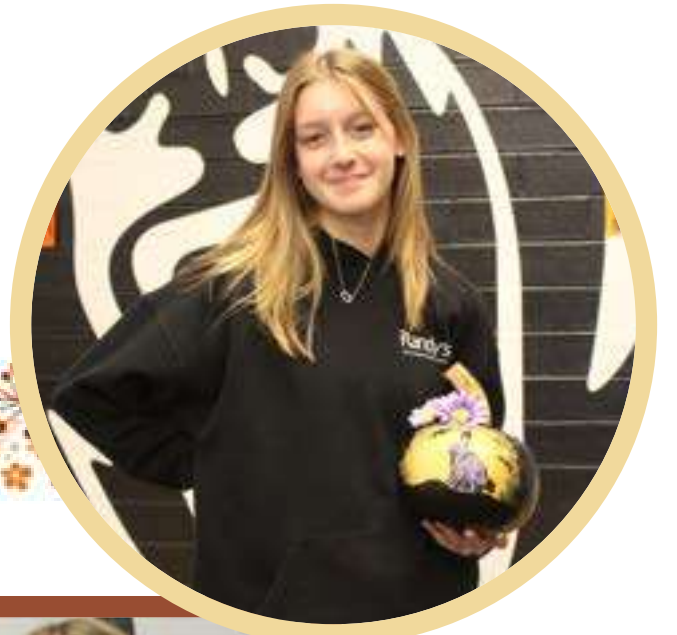
NHS holds Pumpkin Carving Contest

WBHS National Honor Society put together a pumpkin carving contest and had students vote on which pumpkin they thought was most creative, most challenging, and the overall winner. Sophomore Caitlyn Harrison won most creative, foreign exchange student Joelle Haas won most challenging, and freshman Cassie Swisher won #1 overall.

NHS Trick-or-Treats, raises money for St. Jude's

On Halloween, NHS members went door to door asking the public if they would be interested in donating to St. Jude's Childrens Hospital. Last year, about \$1,900 was raised, but this year totalled to around \$1,400.

At right,
Cassie
Swisher holds her
#1 overall pump-
kin. Photo by
Olivia Naber.



At left,
Joelle Haas pres-
ents her most chal-
lenging awarded
pumpkin. Photo by
Olivia Naber.



At right, Cait-
lyn Harrison sits
with her most creative
pumpkin, "Eddie's
House." Photo By
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INSTAGRAM “GOSSIP PAGES” HARASS STUDENTS IN TARGETED POSTS

Olivia Naber
Head Editor-in-Chief

The days of stuffing students in lockers and lunch-money bullies may be behind WBHS, but a more sinister mode of degradation has emerged instead.

Earlier this fall, three Instagram accounts targeting WBHS students in harassing posts circulated the internet. Each account focused on a different subset of Iowa students. The first, *wbhs.gossip*, was meant solely for WBHS students.

The second account, *rvc_gossip_page*, targeted students from River Valley Conference schools. Finally, *iowa_exposing* covered students from across the state of Iowa.

While the first couple of posts to each account seemed light-hearted, the content quickly spiraled out of control.

“I honestly didn’t know what to think at first,” an anonymous student commented. “I had just heard about a funny Instagram account that people were obsessing over. After I requested to follow them and got access to the posts, I started looking through them. The posts at first were kind of weird, but nothing too graphic or dark. Then the latest posts got really detailed and specific.”

“At first I thought it was just going to be something stupid and funny like the Iowa Chill account,” said another. “but it got taken way too far way too fast.”

The accounts had been in existence already, but on September 18th, the posts got out of hand.

One student who was targeted by a post on the WBHS account brought it up to Athletic Director Jake Stenberg and Principal Sara Oswald, who told the student to be on the lookout for people boasting about their posts.

“Keep asking around, see if you hear anything,” Oswald said she advised the student. “Because usually if someone’s doing that, then they brag about it.”

By the time lunch rolled around, the pages were at the forefront of the school’s attention. Another student brought the page up to her, where several more posts had been sent out in rapid succession. The frequency and sensitivity of content had caught the student body’s attention.

“New posts would go up about every

two minutes, which is why I thought it must be more than one person. How could somebody do all that that fast?” speculated one student.

It was like a bolt of gossip lightning had struck the school—striking hard before disappearing, leaving destruction in its place. The page was taken down almost immediately after the numerous incriminating posts.

“It honestly made me really mad,” commented a student who was targeted by the page. “I felt somewhat attacked but I just kind of brushed it off when everyone asked me because I knew I couldn’t do anything about it. I was upset and really confused why someone would actually make up big rumors that could ruin the way people looked at me.”

They appealed to the account to take down the post, but the owner refused the request.

The student said about the gossip page, “I think that it’s really low and pathetic. I honestly think that it hurts people so much and there really isn’t a need for it.

The very next day, WBHS administration learned of a new RVC page when another RVC principal reached out to ask whether any school had been successful in figuring out who was responsible or in getting the account shut down.

One principal drafted an informational letter to the community, declaring that this RVC gossip account was disrupting schools. Several schools sent it that day, but WBHS did not.

By the end of the school day, the RVC account had also been taken down, and the administration deemed it unnecessary to send out the letter if the accounts were now gone. Oswald explained that they didn’t want to sow confusion or fear that the accounts were still an ongoing trouble.

Eventually, Oswald rewrote the initial letter, intending to make it clear that the accounts were taken down and no longer a threat to students. But the cyberbullying wasn’t over.

That night, the statewide page put up posts about WBHS students. While this account was short-lived, it prompted Oswald to take action. On October 2nd, Oswald rewrote the previous letter and sent it out to parents and students.

In the letter, she implored parents and students not to interact with pages like these. “No student or school deserves to be targeted in this way. We are asking for your help to end this trend. Please

talk to your student about not following these disruptive pages and to avoid associating with social media accounts that are created for similar purposes moving forward.”

As of this time, WBHS administration hasn’t figured out who was responsible for any of the accounts. The only account that they’re certain was from a WBHS student is the *wbhs.gossip* account.

“In my heart of hearts, I do not think this (RVC account) was a West Branch student account,” said Oswald. When a staff member attempted to join the account to test whether the account owners would recognize a WBHS staff member, the account owners let them in, meaning that it’s unlikely it was run by WBHS students.

There’s even less of an idea of where to go with the statewide page and even more certainty that it’s not run by WBHS students.

Many students felt frustrated that they’ve seen a lack of consequence for those in charge of the accounts and held hope that the school would take action.

“I hope that the people who were involved in (the account) could get a detention for targeting, bullying, and harassing countless amounts of people,” commented one anonymous student.

Oswald affirmed that the students responsible will receive consequences when caught.

When deciding on disciplinary actions, WBHS uses a “behavior matrix.” Typically, the severity of consequences increases depending on how many offenses a student has committed. However, in the case of an event that causes school-wide disruption, the level of consequence jumps higher for a first offense.

When it comes to staying on top of potential cyberbullying, WBHS administration relies mainly on word of mouth.

“Unless it’s absolutely dire, we don’t want to see our students in compromising positions,” said Oswald. “So I don’t go hunting... We let kids tell us what they want to tell us and we get the gist.”

What’s special about these instances of cyberbullying is the utter anonymity of the account holders. Oswald explained that in most cases of cyberbullying brought to administration, students know who’s responsible. “The stuff that we deal with the most commonly is Snapchat arguments and

name calling, but people know who they’re talking to. Typically, it’s not disrupting the entire school.”

Oswald theorized that this was the appeal of using Instagram in particular. “You can be very brave behind your phone. And depending on how brave you are and who you talk to about it, no one may ever know.”

Indeed, hiding behind a screen name emboldens students and makes it easier than ever for them to harass their peers.

Oswald wishes to impart a final message to students: everyone should feel safe and welcomed at school, and instances like this do not reflect the values of a Bear.

She said, “If people don’t want to come to school, then it’s gone too far. This should be a safe place.”



MONTGOMERY REVIEWS DRAKE'S ALBUM *FOR ALL THE DOGS*

Kya Montgomery
Staff Writer

Famous Canadian rapper and singer Drake released a new album titled *For All the Dogs* on October 6, 2023. Drake is also the first rapper to surpass 80 million monthly Spotify listeners. Clocking in at 84 minutes long, there are 23 songs on the album. After listening to the album, I would give the entire album 5/5 stars. I hardly ranked any songs below 3 stars. Overall, I believe that this album is very good. However, the album is long. My favorite songs are “Rich Baby Daddy,” “First Person Shooter,” “IDGAF,” and “Slime You Out.” I feel as if Drake did a good job with this album compared to his other recent albums.

“Virginia Beach” - Drake
★★★★☆ - This is a very good song. I liked the lyrics. However this is just the start of the album and it is not my favorite song out of the entire album.

“Amen” - Drake (feat. Teezo Touchdown)
★★★★☆ - The tempo and rhythm of this song is very enjoyable. The melody is pretty, and so is the harmonizing. I was expecting it to have a faster beat.

“Calling for you” - Drake (feat. 21 Savage)
★★★★★ - I really enjoy the 21’s verse in this song. Probably one of my favorite songs on the album. I like the tempo, slow but fast at the same time.

“Fear Of Heights” - Drake
★★★★☆ - I think this is one of Drake’s better songs in the album without a feature. I especially like the lyrics of this song

“Daylight” - Drake
★★★★☆ - Nothing stood out to me. It was a good song but nothing special. Didn’t really like where there was like a kid speaking towards the end.

“First Person Shooter” - Drake (feat. J. Cole)
★★★★★ - I think this is my favorite song on the album. J. Cole’s verse is my favorite. The lyrics, tempo, and beat just flow really well. My favorite!

“IDGAF” - Drake (feat. Yeat)
★★★★★ - I like how it started off slow, but when Yeat’s verse began the beat started to pick up. The intro is very long but I think it is worth it. One of my favorites.

“7969 Santa” - Drake
★★★★☆ - It’s more of a R&B type song compared to the rest of the songs. It is slower, the beat is nice, it is a nice set up for the next song.



“For All The Dogs” album cover

“Slime You Out” - Drake (feat. SZA)
★★★★★ - I love SZA’s verse in the song. Probably one of my favorite songs on the album. Everything about this song is perfect.

“Bahamas Promises” - Drake
★★★☆☆ - This song didn’t stick out to me. This song was pretty mid.

“Tried Our Best” - Drake
★★★★☆ - The tempo is slower. I liked the song but some of the lyrics are repetitive.

“Screw The World - Interlude” - Drake
★★★☆☆ - I didn’t really like the beat on this song. Not very good in my opinion. The beat was pretty loud compared to the lyrics, I couldn’t really tell what was being said.

“Drew A Picasso” - Drake
★★★★☆ - I like this song because the tempo is slow but sped up at the same time. The rhythm, the way the lyrics match the beat, is satisfying. The song is a little long for my liking.

“Members Only” - Drake (feat. PARTY-NEXTDOOR)
★★★★☆ - I liked this, however, it was not my favorite. I think the beat and lyrics are pretty good. The song was a little too long, I got bored towards the end.

“What Would Pluto Do” - Drake
★★★★☆ - The beginning was really good and kept me invested. The beat is very good, definite head bopper. I really like the rhythm.

“All The Parties” - Drake (feat. Chief Keef)
★★★★☆ - It just didn’t really stand out to me. I thought Chief Keef’s verse was nothing special. The beat was good, some of the lyrics were repetitive.

“8am In Charlotte” - Drake
★★★★☆ - The rhymes in the lyrics are good. Again I think that the song is a little long.

“BBL Love - Interlude” - Drake
★★★☆☆ - I’m not really a fan of the lyrics. The rhythm and beat was good.

“Gently” - Drake (feat. Bad Bunny)
★★★★☆ - This song is mostly sung in Spanish, which I don’t listen to very much. However, I really enjoyed this song. The beat is really good. Wish I understood the lyrics better.

“Rich Baby Daddy” - Drake (feat. Sexxy Red & SZA)
★★★★ - SZA is a GOAT, her verse in this song is my favorite out of everything in this song. Sexxy Red’s lyrics are repetitive but I think it works for this song. One of my favorite songs.

“Another Late Night” - Drake (feat. Lil Yachty)
★★★★☆ - I think Drake’s part is good, but I am not really a fan of Lil Yachty. Everything except for Lil Yachty’s part was good. I thought the harmony sounded nice.

“Away From Home” - Drake
★★★★☆ - It’s an R&B slower type song. I like the beat and the tempo.

“Polar Opposites” - Drake
★★★★☆ - I think it was a good way to end the album. It’s very similar to the song before. The rhythm is very good, so I added this song to my playlist.



Olivia Naber. Photo by Ashlynn Nash.

NABER NAMED COMMENDED STUDENT IN NATIONAL MERIT CONTEST

Ashlynn Nash
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief

Olivia Naber, a senior at WBHS has been named a 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program Commended Student. Every year, only 34,000 students receive this title. Students who achieve this usually score within the 97 and 98th percentile.

To accomplish this, Naber took the PSAT in 2022. Her scores on this assessment placed her into this range of Commended Students.

Naber exclaimed, “I was definitely surprised at first because I took the PSAT back in the fall of last year, and I didn’t really hear much about it for a while. Then just all of a sudden Mrs. Oswald pulls me into her office and says, ‘We’ve got something really cool to tell you.’ She pulls out this certificate and shows me that I was a commended student, and I was just over the moon.”

Principal Sara Oswald said, “We know that it is extremely competitive because there’s so many people taking it. It’s not just Iowa... it’s even bigger than the ACT because it’s more national than the ACT is, so... having never had anyone get this level of recognition was pretty impressive. There’s another level—most people who take it are aiming to become a National Merit Scholar, and we’re not quite to that point.”

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& Finley Rushton
Journalism 1 Guest Writers

There are many football community volunteers that people may not know of but that have a huge impact on the team. These people spend many hours working to prepare the team and field for games and/or attend every practice or game to help make them go smoothly.

Assistant Head Varsity Coach John Hierseman said, "There are so many valuable volunteers that help keep things running for the program. It would be impossible to do everything that this Program does without help."

Now, who are all these valuable volunteers? Jodee Culver has been the manager coordinator for the football program for seven years.

Culver spends countless hours during the season and the offseason preparing for FB. She organizes all the jerseys, pants, girdles, bags, helmets, and shoulder pads. She also assigns, hands out, and collects the jerseys for the military and throw back games; this can be hard for her to get these numbers to line up with their home/away numbers. Heather Davidson is also a volunteer manager for the football program.

Culver also oversees many student managers that help out the team, including Dawn Johnson, Rylee Grace, Connor Davidson, Harper Driscoll, Madelynn Tygrett, and Katey Lenoch. These managers spend their afternoons helping the football team by holding water, grabbing any equipment, setting up practices and games, and tearing them down. They also play important roles during games.

Dawn Johnson has been a manager for three years. Johnson said, "We have a lot of fun and I feel as if we helped out the players."

Scott Thoma and Brad Heithoff are the medical helpers for the football team. Thoma has been a medical support staff for five years, and Heithoff has been the team physician for 14 years.

Heithoff said, "My role with the support staff is one small piece of the overall puzzle."

Thoma said, "I enjoy being able to help injured athletes get back on the field, as well as playing a part in making sure everyone stays as healthy and safe as possible."

Chad Schutte, Pete Swisher, and Matt Hudson take stats for the football games. Schutte has been keeping stats for 10 years. In his 10 years, he has only

Craig Cochran, Steve O'neil, and Kent Kaufman.

The ball boys, Kason Zuniga, Braxton Thomas, and Beckett Lewis run up and down the field grabbing the tee, they also hold the footballs for the games. Tony Senior volunteers his expertise to make the field ready to go. He spray painted on the big mural of Butch Pedersen. He also just gets the field ready for any game.

One big volunteer that helped

make it to the games rely on these announcers to keep them in the FB loop. Quinlan said his favorite part of announcing for the Bears is simply "the game of football itself and the players and coaches."

Matt Chinander plays a very important role in the football community. He manages and runs all of the technology, which includes filming games, BearCast video and audio broadcasts, Hudl, and the football website and social media.

He's been a part of the support staff since 2008, and he said, "My favorite part about being a part of the football team is staying connected to the community I grew up in and having a creative outlet to try out new technology and other things I wouldn't otherwise have an opportunity to do in my day job or other side projects."

The press box staff includes Jason Miller (PA Announcer), Ron Ewald (Spotter), Steve Kabela (Clock), Amanda Whaley (Music Coordinator) and Nick Goodweiler (Scoreboard). Miller has been a volunteer PA announcer for 18 years.

Miller said, "It has been one of the true joys of my life. Coach Butch Pedersen always made sure the program was more than the game on the field. I was and still am honored and humbled to play a small role."

Kabela has been a volunteer for the clock and play clock for 10 years. He enjoys the view from the press box and chose to be a part of the support staff because he wanted to still be a part of the team.

Eli Klinkkammer and Dalton Kaalberg are up in the press box taking film of the games. All in all, the FB community wouldn't be the same without its many volunteers.

According to Head JV Coach Steven Grace, "Each volunteer has a monumental rule, and each one has a great impact for us."



Athletic Trainer Scott Thoma tapes up Max Lodge during a game. Photo By Finley Rushton.

missed one game, JV or Varsity.

Swisher has been helping with the stats crew for three years. His job is to watch the players and report their progress on the field. Swisher was asked to help out by Schutte.

You may see these volunteers working every play on the field. These are the chain gang volunteers. This chain gang includes Andy Corr, Mike Owen,

plan a very important night was David McIlrath. He planned Throwback night and Military night.

There are many volunteers not on the field that still have a huge impact on the football community. For example, there is the BearCast.

Mike Quinlan, Jarod Tylee, and Jerry Fleagle are a part of the BearCast. Many community members who can't



WB ball boys
this year helped
in numerous
ways on the field
during the season.
Photo By Olivia Naber.



Dawn Johnson
carries
water for
players on
and off the
field
throughout
every game.
Photo By Sulli Bucknell.

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Sports

November 16, 2023

8

MFL MARMAC PREVAILS

Miley Shields
Staff Writer

The 2023 football season came to an end with a loss against MFL MarMac in the second round district play with a score of 21-0. Some of the team leaders for the season were quarterback Brennen Dale in passing and rushing yards; Joe Hamann in receiving, kickoff return, and punt return; Cooper Gates in sacks; Cale Seydel in interceptions; and Shae Farmer in tackles.

Although the season may not have ended the way most had hoped, senior Farmer said, "I thought it was an amazing season, and we had to face a lot of challenges that we pushed through together. I'm now feeling sad, but I can also appreciate how much football helped and will continue to help me throughout life, and I'm very grateful I got to be a part of it."

The Bears had eight selections to the All-District team: Reese Trepanier, offensive line; Trenton Schutte, wide receiver/tight end; Reese Gingerich, kicker; Dale, utility; Hamann, return specialist; Seydel, defensive back; Nolan Staker, punter; and Logan Wright, Defensive MVP.

Honorable mentions for All-District were Farmer, linebacker; Quin Rocha,

Defensive Lineman; and Connor Capper.

This was the first year senior Hamann played football in high school, and he said, "I was very surprised that I was listed. It took a lot of work to get somewhat caught up with my peers who have played all four years."

Sophomore Dale said, "I feel great about being selected. It gives me some momentum and gets me excited for next year. I'm also a little sad and disappointed. I think we did great, but this was a special group, and I feel bad for the seniors. They were great leaders and teammates, and I wish we could've done better and gotten farther for them."

Difficulties this season included playing larger and stonger teams, the loss of Head Coach Butch Pedersen in his fight against cancer, the loss of last year's seniors, and players having to take over positions they may not have played before.

Sophomore Staker said, "I'm upset that the season is over, and I want to say thank you to all the seniors. Our team has potential for next year. I'm hoping that our guys will stay out and work hard in the off-season, so we can have a successful season next year."

Just as Staker said, it seems many others are looking toward that future potential as well.



FB CHEER WRAPS IT UP

Peyton Braddock
Co-Editor-in-Chief

On Oct. 27, the 2023 cheer season came to an end after the football team lost in the second round of district play against No. 4 rated MFL MarMac.

To prepare for the season, the cheer team worked to make new improvements. This year, the cheer team wanted to have more cheers involving the student section and to advance their stunting abilities. The team also started lifting early during summer mornings at 5:30 am to improve on strength for bigger stunts. On July 29, the cheer team hosted a car wash at the Iowa City Hy-Vee. This car wash was to help gain money for the cheer team to attend stunting clinics and provide meals for the team on Fridays. The car wash also helped the team purchase new poms for the season. They are also hoping to buy new cheer uniforms next year with the leftover donations.

On Aug. 13, the team traveled to Sigourney to attend a stunt clinic. The clinician Trisha Black is the owner and head coach of KC Elite Cheer and Dance Company in Sigourney. During the clinic, she taught them the basics of stunting but also some advanced stunting.

Little Bear Cheer Camp was on Aug. 15 and Aug. 17. During those days, the cheerleaders taught the little Bears a dance and a couple cheers. The older little Bears performed to "Barbie Girl" and the younger Bears performed to "You've Got a Friend in Me." On Aug. 17, the cheerleaders and the little Bears performed on Meet the Teams Night at the Little Rose Bowl.

On Sep. 29, the cheer team helped pump up the homecoming week at the end with a pep rally for the high school. They performed the fight song with the high school band as well as a dance performance that included tumbling

and stunts. The pep rally closed out with a fan favorite cheer to get students pumped up for the awaited Regina game.

The pep rally dance consisted of a mash-up of three different songs: "Move Shake Drop," "On the Floor," and "Bang Bang." Captains Peyton Braddock and Jenie Gomez choreographed the routine.

Cheerleader Miley Shields said, "It was a really fun pep rally. We had only one week

to prepare, but I think it went really well! It was really exciting, and I think the crowd really enjoyed the dance and the pep rally as a whole!"

On Oct. 20, the cheer team closed out their last performance at the half-time football game against Pleasantville. The dance consisted of three songs sung by Michael Jackson. The songs

included "Beat It," "Bad," and finally, "Thriller."

Alexis Wolfe stepped in to help the cheerleaders choreograph their halftime routine. She said, "I am very proud of these girls. They worked really hard on this dance, and it was very fun to work with them another year."

The dance also consisted of a lot of tumbling passes from cheerleaders Peyton Braddock and Rena Holmes. There were also a lot of new and different stunts that the cheerleaders executed that struck a lot of interest during the performance.

Lauren Keeler said, "We had to do many different stunts. I tried a basket for the first time, and it was really fun. We nailed our final stunt at the end, which felt pretty good!"

Although the season came to an end, seniors Kaylee Kettler, Maddie Reed, and Braddock will be cheering at the UNI dome on the All Iowa Honor Cheer Squad on Nov. 17 to conclude their season. During this performance, they will learn a dance routine that involves stunting and tumbling, and they will also learn a new cheer.



G. HAMANN EARNS TRIP TO STATE XC

Caitlyn Harrison
Staff Writer

This cross country season, 11 WBHS students traveled to Iowa City High School to run with the Little Hawks. This year marks the 31st year that this co-op agreement has been going on. The co-op runners are referred to as "BearHawks."

City High is a 4A school, which is much larger than WBHS. This means more competition and more runners. This atmosphere is very different from what WBHS students are used to.

The number of BearHawks for the boys team still looked small this year. After losing seniors Phillip MacGillivray, Lu Guetzko, and Oliver Palmer, WBHS had four boys go out for cross country this year. There was also four out last year.

The only returning runner for the 2023 season was Lynden MacGillivray. Newcomers Timmy Hosier, Preston Mayhew, and Joe Schlitz joined MacGillivray for the 2023 season. Mayhew and Schlitz ran cross country with South East before high school.

Last year, the boys team placed 7th at the state meet. This year was different, as they lost six of their senior varsity runners. They did not qualify for state as a team, with only senior Owyn Noble qualifying individually. Owyn placed 60th with a time of 16:34.

All of the BearHawks for the boys team ran with the junior varsity or freshman/sophomore teams. MacGillivray

and Hosier were strong contributors to those teams. MacGillivray said, "It was a season of ups and downs, battling injuries, but ended in a positive with a PR."

For the girls, there were seven BearHawks this year: Nina Torkelson, Joelle Haas, Nora Ziehr, Addi Schultes, Caitlyn Harrison, Cassie Swisher, and Grace Hamann.

Earning a varsity spot after time trials in June was Hamann. Coming off a stellar 8th grade track season, but new to cross country, Hamann was looking to just "figure things out" this first season. The rest of the girls ran with the JV or F/S teams, depending on their grade.

The Mississippi Valley Conference meet was the last for those running on JV or F/S. The BearHawks performed well with Hamann placing 13th and being named 2nd Team All-MVC for the varsity race. Nina Torkelson was Honorable Mention All-MVC for JV, placing 17th. Addi Schultes placed 11th for 2nd Team All-MVC in the F/S race.

This was the last cross country race for seniors Haas and Torkelson. The City High cross country program and environment left an impact on the BearHawks.

Torkelson said, "I'm very glad that I decided to go out for cross country as a sophomore. I'm so incredibly grateful for the friends that I've made and amazing people that I've met on the City High cross country team during my three years on it. I'm definitely going to miss all of the practices, meets, team traditions, wonderful people, and the

team atmosphere. This season definitely felt like it went by fast but our team made so many memories and accomplished so much during it. I can definitely say that cross country was one of the best parts of high school."

The girls varsity team made leaps this 2023 season. Head Coach Ryan Ahlers said, "This team was focused throughout the season and pursued excellence."

Coming off a strong regular season, it was time for the state qualifying meet. Leading the varsity team and being crowned district champion was Ani Wedemyer with a time of 18:39. Hamann finished 24th in 20:51, helping City High to a 3rd place finish, qualifying for the state championship meet.

The City High girls qualified for state last year and finished 15th. This year, they made a huge jump to 8th place. Ahlers said, "We set a goal as a team to finish top 10 this season, and it feels so good to accomplish that goal!"

Leading the Little Hawks, with a 12th place podium finish in a time of 18:21 was Wedemyer. Hamann was the 5th scorer for City High, placing 80th in a time of 19:55.

Hamann said, "It was cold and windy, but it was a really fun experience, especially being a freshman."

She added that she's ready for track season and to be back racing 2A schools, saying, "Racing with the big schools is a little bit scary."



Some WB friends cheer on Grace Hamann at state. Photo contributed by Caitlyn Harrison.

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MEET THE TEAMS: WINTER SPORTS NOW IN SEASON

Maryam Martin
Staff Writer

Girls Basketball

New Head Coach Justin Liddle

Q: What past experience do you have in coaching? Why did you choose to come to West Branch?

A: This will be my 11th year coaching high school basketball. The past six years I was at Benton Community with the Girl's Basketball team. My family and I have been looking to move closer to the Iowa City area for the past few years. I also know the athletic director, Jake Stenberg, and have heard great things about the athletic programs at West Branch. I'm very excited to be able to coach at a school that prides itself in academic and athletic excellence.

Q: Have the girls adapted well to your coaching style and having a new coach this season thus far?

A: I accepted the job in the early spring, and was able to meet a lot of the girls this past spring, and this summer. While practice hasn't officially started, I was able to

spend a lot of time with the girls during summer open gyms, the Wartburg Team Camp, and team bonding activities. I've really enjoyed getting to the girls, and I'm looking forward to the season.

Q: What are your primary goals for the upcoming season?

A: My goal is to be able to create a culture that incorporates our core values, the 3 C's. 1. Connect- every athlete experiences a sense of belonging. They have a positive connection with their teammates, coaches, school and community. 2. Compete- the team competes at a high level regardless of the opponent. Athletes have a great attitude and effort, and are able to overcome adversity. 3. Contribute- Each player has a valued role on the team, and use their talents to contribute something positive to the team.

Alyse Klinkkammer

Q: What are your personal goals for this season? How will you work to achieve them?

A: My personal goal for this season is to improve every game. To do everything I can personally to make the team better and succeed.

Q: If you could be any basketball player in the world who would you be and why?

A: Caitlin Clark because she is from Iowa and is one of the top players in the country.

Q: What is the most boring sport to watch and why?

A: Hockey because I don't understand it at all.

Kya Montgomery

Q: What are your personal goals for this season? How will you work to achieve them?

A: I want to become a better shooter this season. I will shoot as much as I can in practice.

Q: If you could be any basketball player in the world who would you be and why?

A: Caitlin Clark, because she is the GOAT.

Q: What is the most boring sport to watch and why?

A: Golf, because nothing exciting is happening.

Miley Shields
Staff Writer

Boys Basketball

Reese Trepanier

Q: What's your personal goal for the season?

A: Average a 20 point double double

Lincoln Naber

Q: What's your personal goal for the season?

A: My goal this season is to get my first in-game dunk. I've been dunking all summer and I'm so ready to finally show it off.

Trenton Schutte

Q: What team do you want to beat the most and why?

A: All of them because I like winning.

Nate Hills

Q: What team do you want to beat the most and why?

A: Beckman because they beat us last year.

Cameron Gingerich

Q: What's at the top of your bucketlist and why?

A: Just making it to state, and when we make it we might as well just win the whole thing. We have a ton of talent this year. A lot of guys worked hard this off-season and got a lot better. I'm excited to see us put it all together.

Brennen Dale

Q: What's at the top of your bucketlist and why?

A: Playing varsity and making a positive difference no act and helping the team because I want to win games and go far into the playoffs.



Maryam Martin
Staff Writer

Girls Wrestling

Head Coach Brian Driscoll

Q: How does it feel to finally be able to have a girls team with a designated coach?

A: I think having a designated coach is a huge step in growing the program.

Q: Has your program grown in numbers this year from previous years? How have you recruited girls?

A: We had 5 wrestlers last year and 1 graduated. We have all 4 back plus 5 new additions to give us 9 wrestlers.

Q: What are your primary goals for the upcoming season?

A: Our goals are to keep improving and peak at the end of the season. One of our goals is to win the conference tournament. We also want to have multiple wrestlers qualify for and place at the state tournament. December 19th is our 1st ever and only home competition this season. We will be trying to fill the gym for this event. Please come support us.

Lauren Keeler

Q: What are your personal goals for the team this season?

A: I hope we get more conditioned this year because I know last year a lot of us would get gassed quickly because our conditioning wasn't very good.

Q: If you could be any superhero, who would you be and why?

A: I would be an Elastigirl because I usually bend weird in matches.

Q: Would you rather try to wrestle with no legs or no arms? Why?

A: No legs because girls wouldn't be able to shoot on legs that aren't there.

Finley Rushton

Q: What are your personal goals for the team this season?

A: My personal goal for the season is to have a winning record at the end and learn a lot more moves and technique.

Q: If you could be any superhero, who would you be and why?

A: Batman because he's good at fighting.

Q: Would you rather try to wrestle with no legs or no arms? Why?

A: No legs because the other girls can't shoot and we use our arms for a lot.

Logan Wright

Q: What are your personal goals for the team this season?

A: To place at state and have a good record.

Q: If you could be any superhero, who

would you be and why?

A: Batman because he is the shadows.

Q: Would you rather try to wrestle with no legs or no arms? Why?

A: No arms because legs are the strongest muscles on your body.



Lauren Keeler
Staff Writer

Boys Wrestling

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Op. Ed.

November 16, 2023



STUDENT GOVERNMENT SHARES KNOWLEDGE WITH STUDENTS IN IOWA

Ashlynn Nash
Photography Editor-in-Chief

On October 30, student government members were given the option to attend the annual Iowa Student Leadership Conference in Johnston, Iowa. Usually, the conference lands on a school day, and all of the student government would attend. However, this year was a bit different because the conference landed on a WBCSD professional development day.

Therefore, attendance was optional for Bear students. Students who went include:

Olivia Naber
Lincoln Naber
Nina Torkelson
Jordan Waters
Nora Ziehr
Anthony Heitzman
Kaylee Kettler

The conference began by inviting students to be present for a keynote speaker which was Brandon Lee White. White is an author, public speaker, and youth motivator who has traveled all across the US on a journey to inspire people. He's been on TV's TLC and shows like *Wheel of Fortune*.

Lincoln Naber, sophomore class p, said, "I thought he did very good. He had a great message and didn't draw out any points. His main message was Own It. If you do something good you should celebrate it, and if you make a mistake also own it and improve."

After that, they went to four 25 minute sessions of their choice bestowed by other student council members and schools across the state. Topics of sessions varied from stress relief to dancing. Jordan Waters, junior student government social media officer, said, "I attended a session about mindfulness and things you can do to improve mindfulness. There is a whole card pack about many different ways to be able to calm yourself in stressful situations, like presenting or sports."

However, one complaint about the conference was that the keynote speaker went a bit over time constraints. This caused the rest of the day to become a bit problematic. Kaylee Kettler, senior, said,

"The keynote speaker went a little long, which ended up affecting our schedule and cutting sessions short. It was very confusing."

WB Student Gov. members were able to present their own breakout session. The goal of their session was to highlight the School Betterment Committee and explain what they do throughout the year. A majority of the presentation was about Health Week.

Anthony Heitzman, freshman class president, said, "Our presentation included information about our Health Week project last year, what it was, why we did it, and how other student governments could implement it in their schools as well. We had a lot of people come to our presentation, and they all really enjoyed it. I really enjoyed presenting at the conference because it was a really fun and exciting new experience for me and my fellow student government members."

After sessions concluded, all participants were brought back into the gym for the ending piece of the puzzle. Awards were presented, students and their groups were congratulated for cer-

tain work done throughout the year, and an ending speech was given.

WBHS Student Government received the Honor Council Award. WBHS Student Government Officers along with Advisor Abby Noelck are tasked with creating a portfolio of their work over the course of a year to submit in hopes of getting this award. This being the third year in a row that they have gotten this award.

Noelck said, "It is such an honor to receive it and for our hard work to be acknowledged. The award recognizes Student Councils who present evidence of having an effective and progressive council organization in various areas."

After a full day of inspiring chitchat, members of WBHS Student Government were sent back home with valuable information from the conference and their award.

Waters said, "I was hoping to just learn some things from other schools, how they run their own events, and also some more leadership. I think I did achieve this!"



Iowa Student Leadership Conference attendees were Lincoln Naber, Olivia Naber, Jordan Waters, Nora Ziehr, Nina Torkelson, Kaylee Kettler, Anthony Heitzman. *Photo contributed by Abby Noelck.*



Anthony Heitzman, Kaylee Kettler, and Olivia Naber present their annual Health Week program to other schools. *Photo contributed by Abby Noelck.*

ADVENTURES IN IOWA THEATRE: LIT. CIRCLE SEES *MACBETH*



Olivia Naber
Head Editor-in-Chief

A Friday the 13th that lands in October is spooky enough without adding theatrical murder to the mix. But, the literary circle has a flair for the dramatic.

On that gruesome date, the club visited the University of Iowa to take part in its annual High School Theater Workshop and Performance Day, consisting of theater-related workshop sessions and a free performance of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

Advisor Elizabeth Gallagher first heard about the event when trying to come up with a field trip for her English classes. The University of Iowa Department of Theater Arts' *Macbeth* ran from October 6 to October 14, and Gallagher, who teaches several Shakespeare works in her classes, thought it would benefit her students to see Shakespeare in action. Unfortunately, none of the performances were during school hours, but she was made aware of the workshop and the subsequent performance.

Because of the Iowa auditorium's limited capacity, Gallagher knew she wouldn't be able to bring every English student to the event. Instead, she turned to the Literary Circle, who had recently read *If We Were Villains* by M.L. Rio, a novel focusing on Shakespearean actors.

Gallagher thought it would be more up the club's alley, saying, "I

thought they would appreciate it more anyways."

WBHS is not unfamiliar with the day of workshops. Recently retired art teacher and drama director Molly McCarthy has taken drama students to the event in the past.

Ashlynn Nash, the Literary Circle Social Media Manager, didn't know quite what she was getting into, but felt enthusiastic about spending time with the club. "I chose to attend mainly because it was a Book Club thing," said Nash, "and I just like spending time with everyone in Book Club. It's kind of out of my comfort zone, but it sounded interesting to me, so I chose to just give it a try and hope for the best."

Students in attendance had the choice of two theater workshop sessions: screenwriting and acting. A majority of the literary circle went with the acting session, while a few split off into screenwriting.

Senior member Jade Gongora, attended the acting session, which consisted of several acting games designed to loosen up the students. The session culminated in collaborating with another student to produce a scene after being given only a script and a relationship between the two characters.

"Between the script and the relationship, we got to come up with the situation and how to show that relationship without outright saying it," said Gongora, "So I think that it was fun to

show and not tell. I thought that was really cool."

Nash, on the other hand, took up the screenwriting workshop.

"When we got there, I didn't even know that we were going to be in these sessions at all," she laughed. "I never have done anything with acting and I thought there'd be a lot of really good people, so I went into the screenwriting [session] because I like writing more. It sounded more comfortable."

Despite not knowing what to expect, Nash made connections with others in her session through the writing exercises offered and found the highlight of her experience to be finding new friends.

She said, "Well, I always love meeting new people. And like every time we do these types of things at the University of Iowa, I always enjoy it so much because there's so many different people with all different perspectives on life and different interests. It always just expands me out of my West Branch bubble."

Gallagher didn't sit in on any of the sessions, instead opting to meet with the other teachers who had brought in students. The teacher cohorts discussed the fine arts programs at their respective schools and the importance of connecting with fine arts students from other schools.

"Especially for rural schools like ours, it's really important to be able to see the bigger picture, that there are a

lot of people out in the world who are interested in art and music and play and all those things, even though maybe at your school, there's not that many," mused Gallagher.

The trip concluded with *Macbeth*. While many students found the story difficult to follow at times due to Shakespeare's way with words, this iteration included a feature that students felt enhanced their understanding of *Macbeth*'s inner turmoil: two "shadows"—characters that served as *Macbeth*'s inner consciousness—that sauntered about the stage in mysterious ways.

"I've never seen *Macbeth* like that," commented Gallagher. "Usually, there are a lot of soliloquies where he's just talking about how bad he feels about things and how anxious and guilty he feels. But, this was the first time I've ever seen it put into, like, real action and physically showing his angst."

Nash agreed, "They were distracting me the whole time from everything else because they were just so talented and interesting on their own."

If given the opportunity, Gallagher wants to take students to the event again next year because of its accessibility. "If we get invited and they do it again, I definitely want to jump in there," she said. "There were schools who came from as far away as five hours... they got up at 4:30 in the morning to be there. So, we were very lucky to be able to just go right down the street."



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NINE STUDENTS SELECTED FOR RVC HONOR BAND

Keaton Norfleet
Staff Writer

Nine selected West Branch Fine Arts students performed at the 2023 River Valley Conference Honor Band.

The River Valley Conference Honor Band took place at Northeast Goose Lake High School in Goose Lake, IA, on Thursday, November 9.

Directing the band was guest conductor Carl Collins. Collins is a music educator at North Scott High School in Eldridge, Iowa, and served as the chair of the Iowa Bandmasters Association Concert Band Affairs Committee.

Collins said, "These honor bands are always a challenge that are half a day long. It's not a lot of time to put all of that music together, it's a lot of playing in a row for those students, and then to have to turn around and perform at the concert. I think all of that combined is a unique challenge for them, but they always step it up, and they always do a great job."

The 15 participating high schools arrived around 1 p.m. and rehearsed until around 5 p.m.

Students were given four pieces of music to learn over the course of the fall semester. The pieces were "Mystery On Mena Mountain" by Julie Giroux-West, "The Chimes of Liberty March" by Edwin Franko Goldman, "Halcyon Hearts" by Katahj Copley, and "To Dream In Brushstrokes" by Michael Oare.

Samuel Ogilvie, the West Branch High School band director said, "I think that this year the music is more challenging than it has been in previous years, which really kind of helps drive home the aspect of it being an honor



2023 RVC honor band members. **Back Row:** Keaton Norfleet (bass clarinet), Maddie Reed (alto saxophone), Kaylee Kettler (flute), Oliv Schlitz (flute), Lincoln Naber (bari saxophone). **Front Row:** Logan Christoffel (clarinet), Nora Ziehr (clarinet), Grace Vincent (trombone), Ewan Arlen (percussion). *Photo Contributed by Samuel Ogilvie.*

band, so not your average high schooler would be able to just sit down and play these pieces."

Out of the 103 students who attended, nine of them were West Branch students. These students include freshmen Olivia Schlitz on flute and Grace Vincent on trombone, sophomores Lincoln Naber on bari saxophone, Logan Christoffel on clarinet, and Ewan Arlen as a percussion member, juniors Nora Ziehr on clarinet and Keaton Norfleet on bass clarinet, and seniors Kaylee Kettler on flute and Maddie Reed on alto saxophone.

The high school honor band

performed at 7:30 p.m.

Collins said, "The music that I put in front of them, as I looked back, I thought, 'I asked a lot of those guys.' There was a lot in that music and they pulled it off really well."

"If I had a critique it would be for myself, and I would say, maybe I should've picked something a little bit easier, and made it a little less work, but I thought the students did a really great job. Overall I was really pleased and I hope the students are proud of their efforts too."

Feature: WBHS top picks for fabulous fall fashion

Ashlynn Nash
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief

Seasons come and go, just as style trends do. Last fall the fashion world saw cropped puffer vests, flare pants, and oversized blazers. This year you can expect an assemblage of Uggs, oversized sweaters, and vintage jeans.

But, what may be trending, may not be for you, so take the following guidance as needed. It is up to you if you'd like to take these tips and inspiration into your fall wardrobe.

After doing an extensive amount of research, I've concluded what is in style for this fall. Long denim skirts, Uggs, Adidas Sambas shoes, the color tan and other neutral colors plus burnt orange, puffer vests, New Balances, flannels, claw clips, and slick backs are all the rage.

But, what do students think of them?

"I like long denim skirts, but I would never wear one," said Claire Jarrett, a senior.

"I like wearing sweaters and jeans because it is just an easy way to have a cute fall outfit with minimal effort. I really like UGGs. I own a pair of Tasman Platform Slippers but I also really like the mini boots," Maryam Martin, a senior, said.

"I wear sweaters, jeans and boots, and cropped puffer vests in the fall. I dislike flare jeans with belts, and I don't like Hey Dudes shoes," exclaimed Madelyn Stout, senior. Stout (above) can be seen wearing a pink striped sweater, white mom jeans, and tan boots. She sports this with minimalistic gold hoops and a gold necklace.

What do WBHS staff members think of these trends?

High School Counselor Miranda Schwickerath said, "I miss when scarves were cool. But, I love booties that can go either way, like casual or dressed up, and shackets. I love me a shacket! A shacket with a turtleneck, even better!"

Lastly, what do I think of these trends?

I think that all of these trends are great! I am happy to see fresh ideas in the fashion world, but it also brings me joy to see styles being recycled. What I really like to see is people embracing their true selves, and that mean wearing whatever they want.

liances. These alliances would compete together in finals. The CyBears were not called to join an alliance and could no longer compete.

BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS OF AMERICA BEGIN YEAR STRONG

Claire Jarrett
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief

The Business Professionals of America have started meeting for the 2023-2024 school year. Members this year are seniors Kya Montgomery (Vice President & Social Media), Madelyn Stout (President), Caleb Pedersen, Alyse Klinkkammer, and junior Miley Shields.

They are currently selling meat sticks by Country Meats as a fundraiser. Students can purchase 2 sticks for \$3 during lunch or in Mrs. Hasenbank's room. Flavors include mango habanero, sweet BBQ, pepperoni, and teriyaki. Community members are also encouraged to eat at Short's Eastside for "Community Night" on November 1. 15% of proceeds will go towards BPA. Members are looking forward to possible conferences and events they can attend this winter and spring. Be on the lookout to see what BPA is attending this year with more details to come!



Business Professionals of America. Caleb Pedersen, Miley Shields, Madelyn Stout, Alyse Klinkkammer, and Kya Montgomery. *Photo by Brooklyn Nash.*

ROBOTICS MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN PRE-SEASON COMPETITION

Keaton Norfleet
Staff Writer

Members of 5041 CyBears Robotics participated in an out of state pre-season competition.

On October 28, the Cybears traveled to Tremont High School in Tremont, Illinois to attend the Roboteer Rumble, hosted by FIRST Robotics Competition team 2481 Roboteers, a world championship-winning robotics team.

The team used the same robot built for the 2022-2023 competition, ENERGIZE.

An off-season competition is an informal event, and no inspection is required. These competitions give members new and old a unique opportunity to practice driving the robot, managing their pit, and working as a team.

This year, only five members

participated at the competition. Those members were: Sophomore Lillian Waters and Kharley Mandalke, Juniors Seth Cantrell and Zayden Waite, along with honorary member Eli Garrett who is in 8th grade.

Many members of CyBear Robotics did not get the opportunity to participate at the competition due to the West Branch Fine Arts debut performance of the musical, Grease, on the same day. Several Robotics members played vital roles in the crew, band, and onstage performers.

Junior Kayla Garrett, a member of the ensemble said, "When I learned that I would miss the off-season competition, I was mildly upset right away that I wouldn't be able to go."

"I thought that the fact that many of the people who had been closely involved with the robot in the past that wouldn't be able to go would make a great opportu-

nity for other newer members to get more experience with being on the drive team that they wouldn't likely have gotten otherwise."

Junior Katey Lenocho, a member of the ensemble said, "I've never been to an off season competition. My freshman year I believe I just didn't know about it, and I joined too late. My sophomore year I remember it was in the summer, but I was too nervous to go."

"This year I was actually excited about it since I thought it could refresh me on how things worked and I could be ready for our regional competition that we do later in the year. But upon realizing I had the musical, I was really disappointed since I wanted to prioritize robotics. I wasn't mad, just disappointed."

The CyBears participated in only five matches, and won one.

When the qualification matches were over, all teams gathered to create al-

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THE HONEY DEN CANDY STORE OPENS IN WB

Rylee Grace
Journalism 1 Guest Writer

On October 6, 2023, The Honey Den held its grand opening. The new addition to the West Branch business district is located at 106 Main St. next to Main St. Sweets. (It's the building that previously housed The Serving Cafe.)

Owner Tiffany Frederick wanted to open the store because she wanted to make people happy. She said, "Opening a candy store means bringing joy to everyone that walks through the door."

She also decided to open The Honey Den because when she was little, she loved to walk to the candy store and see everything there. It is one of her favorite childhood memories, and she wanted to recreate it with her own store.

It took her only 70 days to make renovations to the space and move in the necessary furniture she needed to suc-

cessfully open the store. She recommends that "anyone thinking of opening a business should take much more time."

For renovations, she completed several tasks, such as putting in new flooring, taking out the previous kitchen,

meeting the landlord, and ordering merchandise, etc., to get the business started. Frederick sells a wide variety of candies, such as Jelly Belly jelly beans, a wide selection of gummies, several different flavors of saltwater taffy, bulk chocolate, nostalgic candy, and many more items.



Ava Hazelwood stands with the mural she painted outside of WB's new candy store, The Honey Den. Photo by Olivia Naber.

Customers can load their own bags of the chocolate and taffy and weigh them in scales located around the store to know the pounds and the prices. Frederick will bag the gummies according to your choices and pound preference.

The store also sells different types of wall and home decor. There are seasonal items, such as Thanksgiving dinnerware and decorations, as well as many funny plaques and drink coasters to check out. There seems to be a gift for everyone! Gift cards are also available.

Frederick has hired one employee, senior Olivia Naber, so that she can have some time off and spend it with her family on some weeknights and Sundays.

Be sure to stop into the Honey Den in your free time and take a look around. Customer Laney Grace said, "It is very easy to find what you are looking for, especially the jelly bean flavors."

STUDENTS EXPLORE THE WORLD OF AGRICULTURAL CAREERS

Emma Wolf
Journalism 1 Guest Writer

Ag. Career Exploration Day was held on Monday, September 21. A total of 35 ag. ed. students went on a field trip to explore more about possible careers in agriculture.

The students traveled to Crawfordsville to go to the Iowa State Extension Research Farm. The students were split into groups and went to different sessions. There were five total sessions, including meat science, forestry, floraculture/hydroponics, tractor mechanics, and impact of insects.

Thompson said that the overall goal of the field trip was "learning...and getting exposure to industry representatives and collegiate representatives."

Ag. Teacher/FFA Sponsor, Renee Thompson decided to take all of her Ag. students instead of just the FFA members.

She said, "I believe this opportunity to learn about careers in agriculture is a benefit for all Ag. Ed. Students, not just FFA members... Exposure to as many different careers as possible is an excellent way to show students the opportunities available to them."

The most popular session was meat science. During the meat science session, students learned about what meat is good or bad, what some of the wording/markings on the packaging meant, and how to grill two different types of pork chops.

Lillian Waters said, "I liked the

meat session because I got to learn more about meat, and it piqued my interest."

Allison Tygrett said she learned "that people who sell meat put the price by how much fat it has on it."

The second most popular session was floraculture. Sulli Bucknell said that she liked it "because it was cool to learn about different types of flowers."

Overall, students learned how to cook a pork chop, ways to grow plants, that Iowa is one of the top producers of pecans, how different meats are processed, about the aging of trees, that bugs can be beneficial while some can be pests, and that you shouldn't mow right next to a tree.

Adelyn Hetrick said, "We got to do many different hands-on activities. At one of the stations, we collected bugs from a bean field. At another we cooked chicken. The last one I went to we watched a farmer collect crops from his field on a TV."

Most students said they had fun because they got to learn new information and meet new people from different schools.

All students also said they would go on the field trip again in the future. Alissa Vanhall said, "It was a great experience to get out and see jobs in the ag business."

Lexi Isabel said, "Yes, I would go on the field trip again. I had a lot of fun, and it gives you an experience that you may have never done before."

HELP BRUISERS REACH \$6000 FUNDRAISING GOAL

Olivia Naber
Head Editor-in-Chief

The Junior Roller Derby Association competition season is nearly here, and the Iowa City Bruisers are bringing back an old tradition to fund this year's endeavors.

The team is the world's only completely free non-profit league in the world, providing all gear and paying all fees for its members. This is no easy feat, as there are many youths who call the team home. It's crucial for the team to raise funds for its athletes to ensure that the sport of roller derby stays accessible for all.

On December 3 at the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, skaters will take part in a "skate-a-thon." Each skater asks community members to pledge their support for the team by either a flat amount or a "per lap" amount. For one hour, skaters will skate around their home track, building up their lap count to build their donations. It's estimated that a beginner skater will complete 120-160 laps in this time, while more experienced skaters will complete anywhere from 250-300 laps.

If you or someone you know is interested in supporting the Bruisers, please contact The Bear editor-in-chief Olivia Naber (onaber06@gmail.com), also known by the roller derby name "Stitches". Donations are payable through cash, check, Venmo, and Paypal.

Any amount of support helps the team in reaching for its goal of \$6000. It takes a lot to run a non-profit league, and the team wants to make sure that everyone who wants a chance at the world's greatest sport gets a chance to do just that.



The Family Pet

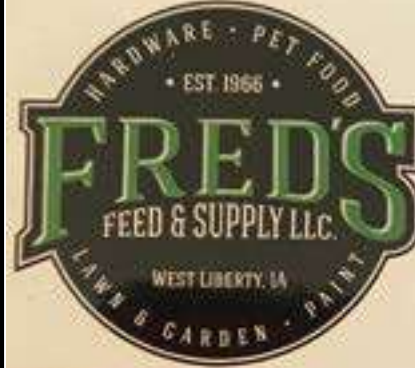
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