



# THE BEAR

*Student Newspaper*

April 18, 2024 WBHS Volume 27 Issue 6  
900 W. Main St., West Branch, IA 52358

## CYBEARS CRESCENDO WAY TO REGIONAL SUCCESS

*Robotics team places second with fifth-ranked Wild Crimson Bears alliance*

Keaton Norfleet  
Staff Writer

For the first time in their 11 years of existence, the CyBear Robotics team not only made it to the finals but also finished second place with their alliance at the Iowa Regional.

The CyBears competed in nine out of 78 qualification matches and finished in rank 17 out of 53.

The fifth ranked team, 4646 Wildcard Robotics, which became the alliance captain, chose teams 2526 Crimson Robotics and 5041 CyBear Robotics to join their alliance. Together, Alliance Five named themselves Wild Crimson Bears.

The CyBears and their alliance competed in three playoff matches and won all three, which put the team into the final rounds.

The Wild Crimson Bears competed with Alliance Two in the final rounds. The champions of the regional competition would be determined by the alliance that won two matches first. Alliance Two took home the gold.

A little bit disappointed but extremely energized, the CyBears took home silver, as well as a couple of other awards.

Kellen Dykstra, a new sophomore member said, "I thought it was super cool that we were able to get that far, especially since I just joined this year."

The CyBears received the Imagery Award in honor of Jack Kamen. This award celebrates aestheticism in engineering and outstanding visuals in branding and team appearance. The team also received the Regional Finalist award, along with silver medals for each team member.

The Iowa Regional took place at the University of Northern Iowa's UNI Dome in Cedar Falls from Wednesday, March 20 to Saturday, March 23.

After arriving on Wednesday, Thursday consisted of all practice matches. This day gives teams a feel of the playing field and allows teams to work out any problems that may arise.

CyBear members Ewan Arlen, Audrey Watt, and Wyatt Chapman line up their robot to score points for the alliance. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.

Qualification matches began on Friday after the opening ceremonies. The CyBears competed in six matches on Friday, ending the day in Rank 22.

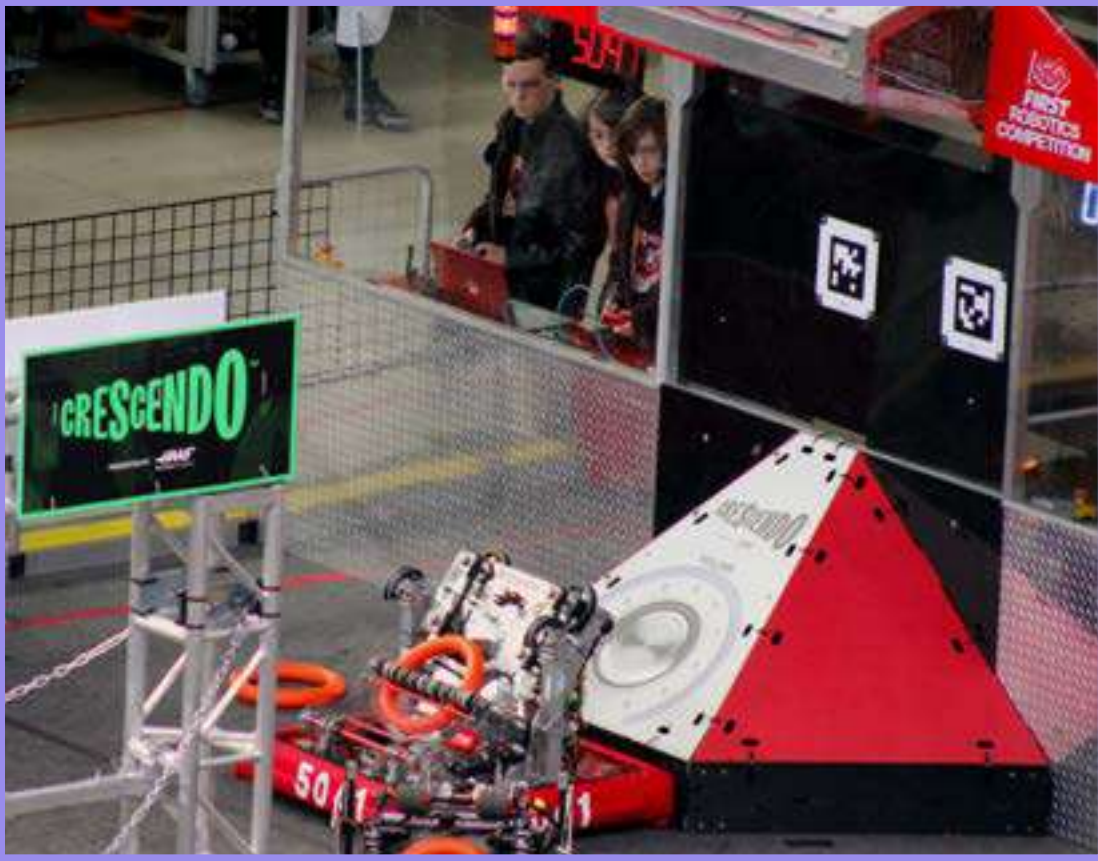
On Saturday, the competition opened for public viewing, and the remaining qualification matches commenced after the opening ceremonies.

The CyBears competed in their final three matches and landed in Rank 17 by the end of qualifications.

At this time, all teams send a student representative down onto the field for alliance selection. The CyBears selected Wyatt Chapman, a sophomore and member of the drive team, to be their representative.

For alliance selection, the top eight ranked teams become alliance captains. These captains will choose a team that they want to join their alliance. A chosen team can graciously accept or respectfully decline the invitation, however, if the team chooses to decline, they can not be selected by another alliance. After the top eight teams selected their first team, the representatives decide together who will be their third choice.

Team 4646 Wildcard Robotics



placed in Rank Five, and invited team 2526 Crimson Robotics to join their alliance. After the first round of selection, the two representatives invited 5041 CyBear Robotics to join their alliance. The CyBears graciously accepted.

With the conclusion of alliance selection, alliances prepared for the playoffs.

Audrey Watt, a drive team coach said, "There were some nerves throughout, and I was scared of messing up, but it was really fun."

In their first playoff match, Match 2, the CyBears and their alliance took on Alliance 4 and won with a score of 78 to 69 which put the CyBears in the upper bracket matches.

In their next match, Match 7, the Wild Crimson Bears went up against Alliance 1, the alliance with the top ranked teams. Alliance 5 pulled through with a score of 89 to 70.

Match 11, the CyBears final playoff match would determine whether or not their alliance would move on to the

finals. Alliance 5 faced off with Alliance 6 for their final playoff match.

As the final score displayed on the screen, an uproar of cheering rocked the stadium. The CyBears narrowly achieved victory with only a two point lead of 103 to 101. Alliance 5 earned their spot in the finals.

The champions of the final matches would be decided by the team that won two matches first. The final two matches, a showdown between Alliance 5 and Alliance 2 ended with a double Alliance 2 victory, placing the CyBears in second place.

"I am immensely proud, overwhelmingly proud, of the work students have put in and the amount of risk taking and going outside of their comfort zone that many of them took on like leadership, going out onto the field, really step-

**Robotics**  
*Continued on page 3*

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## TORKELSON EARNS SPOT IN ALL-STATE JAZZ BAND

Peyton Braddock  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

On March 18, Nina Torkelson earned a place in the prestigious Iowa All-State Jazz Band. The program gives high school jazz students from across the state the opportunity to interact with and learn from America's top jazz educators and other master musicians around the country.

The selection process is very challenging and selective; Torkelson is the first WBHS student selected for an All-State band since 2018. Torkelson will play in the 1A/2A band, which means she competed against every auditioning trombonist from a 1A or 2A school across the entire state of Iowa.

To be selected, auditioning musicians must submit a recording of their audition to the judges by March 1. Each year, there are different required etudes (short songs) that the musicians need to learn. Torkelson had to learn the music not only with good technique, but also demonstrate a strong sense of jazz style in her audition.

This year, the All-State Jazz Band auditions required the musicians to include a rhythm section backtrack to their audio recording. It was also recommended that they submit an improvisation recording of themselves over the chord changes of their choice.

Torkelson began practicing her music in October. She practiced with the materials provided by Jazz Educators of

Iowa and began creating trial recordings in February. With the help of Ogilvie, she refined her performance until it was ready to send.

To help prepare, Torkelson joined band instructor Samuel Ogilvie's Applied Instrumental Music Class, which helped her work towards this goal. Each week, Torkelson worked with Ogilvie on her audition. Sometimes Ogilvie provided direct feedback to Torkelson, and sometimes she was given assignments to record herself and provide her own feedback.

Torkelson said, "My second semester schedule was super helpful in the audition process for All-State. Because I took the Applied Instrumental Music class, I was able to focus on my solo and piece of music for the All-State audition. This also provided me with almost an extra hour of time to practice for my audition."

There are only five trombonist slots available in each band for auditionees. With one spot reserved for a bass trombone and another for lead, Torkelson essentially competed for one of the other three trombone spots. Torkelson was able to secure the second chair in her section. Other musicians in the All-State 1A/2A trombone section include Ethan Feikema from West Lyon (lead), Evan Wham from Tri-Center (third chair), Zach Thoe from Garner-Hayfield-Ventura (fourth chair) and Alex Oswald from Monticello (bass).

The directors for the All-State Jazz Bands this year include Dean Sorensen (1A/2A), Michele Fernández (3A), and Colleen Clark (4A). Torkelson will play under the direction of Sorensen, along with the rest of the 1A/2A all-

state jazz ensemble.

There was a lot of work behind the scenes to make this goal happen. Ogilvie said, "While I can provide feedback on how to improve her etude, it was ultimately Nina who put in the work. If Nina hadn't listened to jazz to build a greater understanding of the style, practiced daily to build technique, evaluated her own performance, and developed good rehearsal technique, she wouldn't have made it in. She put in a lot of hard work to make this dream a reality."

Torkelson has been in band since 5th grade and has played trombone for eight years, but her musical journey didn't begin here; she has been involved with music her entire life. She knows how to play many different instruments including trombone, guitar, violin, and piano. Her high school band experience, however, is extra special for her.

Torkelson said, "My favorite part about being involved in band and music is all of the different opportunities Ogilvie has opened up for me, especially with jazz band. We've recorded for an album, been on the radio, and performed at so many cool venues, including the University of Iowa and the Paramount Theater. We've also gotten to watch so many different schools and get feedback from some pretty acclaimed musicians."

Although any member in the WBHS jazz program can audition for a spot, only Torkelson auditioned this year. Ogilvie added, "We've had students audition for the All-State Concert Band be



Nina Torkelson and Band Director Samuel Ogilvie celebrate a successful jazz season after the group's final performance of the year at Wildwood. The group opened for BYOBrass on March 25. Photo contributed by Cassie Swisher.

**All-State**  
*Continued on page 10*





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April 18, 2024

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## APRIL MARKS 32ND ANNUAL STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

Olivia Naber  
Head Editor-in-Chief

If anyone understands stress, it's high schoolers. From juggling eight academic classes a day to managing extracurricular activities and still finding time for each other and our families, there's a lot on our plates.

The senior class especially may find themselves under pressure as they figure out where life takes them after May 26th. For some, attending college means endless scholarship applications, housing decisions, and figuring out what they want to study. Others may be scouring the area for a job to jump straight into the workforce or even pondering enlisting in the military. Either way, tying up loose ends at the end of one's high school career can be overwhelming.

This busy time in our lives, Stress Awareness Month is more important than ever. Sponsored by non-profit health education organization Health Resource Network (HRN), National Stress Awareness Month began in April 1992 as a push to help more people understand and minimize the stress in their lives. Needless to say, it's crucial to our overall wellbeing to understand and mitigate the effects of stress. But what is stress, exactly?

Stress is the body's response to meeting any kind of challenge. When faced with a difficult task or dangerous situation, the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline kick in. This activates "fight or flight" mode and increases a person's heart rate, blood pressure, and blood sugar to prepare them for a challenge. While originally meant merely to keep humans alive against environmental threats, the stress response can activate in any challenging situation we now encounter.

Not all stress is harmful; short-term stress can be a driving motivator to get important things completed, such as pounding out an essay or pulling an all-nighter on a newspaper deadline (which I most definitely have NO experience with whatsoever).

It is when stress becomes a constant state that the consequences set in. Long-term stress (or chronic stress) can



have a plethora of adverse health effects both physically and mentally.

There are a variety of symptoms that appear in a person burdened by stress; stress isn't just a mental affliction (graphic A).

We all want to reduce our stress levels, but we don't always have the tools and resources to do so. With this in mind, I have four tips and tricks to manage stress as we approach the end of the year.

**Tip 1:** Recognize the signs.

This may seem pretty straightforward, but the first step to alleviating stress is to recognize how you feel it. Stress can show itself in a variety of ways. As mentioned, there are physical, mental, and emotional signs of stress, and each person varies in how they exhibit them.

For example, I can always tell when I'm stressed in my interactions with other people. My words come off clipped and harsh, and I'm generally pretty unpleasant to be around. When I fixate on all of the little tasks and projects

I need to complete, it leaves little room for meaningful socialization. In the moment, it can be hard to pinpoint that stress is the cause, but active self-awareness allows me to recognize the issue sooner rather than later and find ways to lower my stress levels.

Consider the stress symptoms graphic and take a look at the different signs and symptoms of stress. Which of these do you exhibit when faced with a challenge or when feeling stressed? Once you are able to identify how you show stress, it will be easier to know when we need to lower our stress.

**Tip 2:** Understand your limits

I understand the effects of over-extending oneself more than most; as much as I love being so involved at WBHS, there are times that I find myself with too much on my plate. Saying "no" is an area at which I struggle, but over my high school years I have learned the importance of delegating responsibilities. Only you can determine how much you can feasibly take on; as hard as it may be,

trusting others with tasks can demonstrate strong leadership and lessen your stress.

If you still feel the effects of stress weighing you down, it may be time to reconsider your priorities and evaluate which parts of your life make you happiest. Quitting basketball was one of the hardest decisions I've ever made, but recognizing that it just didn't fit into my life anymore and caused me more stress than it was worth helped me realize that it was the right decision for me. Since I made this decision, I've had more time for the things I'm passionate about.

Some important things to consider when considering dropping some of your workload are:

Why did I join? - is this something that I genuinely wanted to be a part of or did I feel obligated to?

Who/what am I doing this for? - what is the purpose of this activity in my life? Is it for fun? Is it to improve a skill? Is it to impress someone else?

**Stress**

Continued on page 11

### Robotics

Continued from page 1

ping outside of the norm of what you would engage in and being successful at it," senior mentor Matt Cain said. "I really hope that it has a positive influence in the future and that's one of the things that I pull most from this."

Only a week before, 5041 CyBear Robotics competed at the Central Illinois Regional at the Bradley University's Renaissance Coliseum, where they made it into the top eight teams, which automatically made the team an alliance captain.

Jade Gongora, a senior and drive team coach, took the role selected as the CyBears' representative.

"It was really cool. It was really amazing to see us go from low ranking to being an alliance captain," Gongora said, "It was one of the most surreal moments that I've had in recent years."

The CyBears took the sixth seat for alliance selection and invited team 2704 Roaring Robotics and team 3488 Eagle Army to join their alliance.

Alliance 6 competed in three playoff matches and lost the last two to Alliance 2 and Alliance 8, knocking them out of the competition.

During the CyBears first practice match on Thursday, their robot suffered a crippling hit to its intake mechanism. Further problems arose throughout the rest of the day.

"We had a lot of robot issues during our first practice match; the robot had gotten quite beaten up, and we had to do constant repairs since then because we kept going wrong from that spot that just kept breaking," Gongora said, "But the fact that we kept going, we kept fixing it and we made it that far, I'm really proud of all of us for that"

On Friday, the qualification matches began. The CyBears competed in nine matches, with minor hiccups with the robot throughout the day.

In their third to last match before the end of the day, the robot took a strong hit from an opposing team. While inspecting the robot after the match, the team found that one of the robot's bumpers snapped in two. The team made a desperate call for a piece of polycarbonate, which a team graciously provided. Repairs on the bumper finished just in time to play in the next match.

Saturday held the remaining qualification matches, as well as the finals. The CyBears competed in their final two matches and finished in Rank 7. They now stood in the top eight teams and as an Alliance Captain.

During alliance selection, the CyBears slid into seat six after the Rank 6 team joined another alliance. After one declined invitation from team 1736 Robot Casserole, teams 2704 Roaring Robotics and team 3488 Eagle Army graciously accepted the CyBears invitation.

In their first playoff match, Match 4, the CyBears and their alliance took on Alliance 3 and won with a score of 74 to 60.

During their second match, Match 8, the robot suffered a technical issue which rendered the robot mostly idle for the match. This technical issue cost Alliance 6 the match, losing to a score of 88 to 62.

One match remained—the CyBears' final shot to push forward. With only a slim lead, their opponents, Alliance 8 took the victory with a score of 79 to 68, knocking the CyBears out of the competition. Alliance 6 took fourth place overall.

The 2024 FIRST Robotics Competition game, "CRESCENDO," part of this year's theme, "FIRST IN SHOW," presented a unique challenge to students.

Students were challenged to build a robot with the capabilities of picking up and shooting foam rings called "notes", as well as climbing a loose hanging chain.

Notes can be picked up on the ground of the playing field, or picked up at the "source", a game element in which a human player can drop notes onto the field or directly into a robot. Notes would be shot into the "speaker" or "amplifier" to score points during a match and shot into the "trap" at the end of the match for additional points.

To build their robot, the CyBears bought parts from robotics vendors such as AndyMark and REV Robotics, or fabricated their own original pieces of hardware.

Builders split into four teams: intake designers, shooter designers, climber designers, and coders. The intake needed to be able to pick up notes from the ground, and then rotate back into back into shooting position. The shooter needed to be angled correctly to be able to shoot notes into the speaker positioned roughly six feet off of the ground. The climber needed to be able to extend upward to reach the chains, and then retract enough to lift the robot off of the ground.

An additional team worked to create bumpers for the robot. Bumpers are required on all robots to prevent damage from hard hits, while also distinguishing a team's number and alliance.

To operate the robot during a match, the CyBears put together two drive teams that would alternate between matches. The drive teams consisted of Gon-

gora and Watt as coaches, sophomores Wyatt Chapman and Lilian Waters as robot system operators, junior Katey Lench and sophomore Ewan Arlen as drive train operators, juniors Elliot Hinkhouse, Eli Hansen, William Hayes, Caleb Reardon, and sophomores Dykstra and Waters as interchanging technicians and human players, and junior Keaton Norfleet as the Safety Captain.

"I had never expected to be a part of the drive team," Gongora said, "I, at first, hadn't wanted to be a coach because I was nervous about messing up, but to have helped and to be a part of the group felt amazing and it was great to have our two teams do so well and to be a part of that and get so far."

Apart from the robot, 5041 CyBear Robotics took on multiple endeavors this year.

Now that the old West Branch Middle School is cleared out, Cain cleared a space in the old middle school library for the team to build a practice field that the drive teams would use for testing the robot's systems. Senior Mentor, Jerome Garrett carried out this project with the help of 8th grader Eli Garrett.

With the robot completed early, along with the new practice space, the CyBears used the extra time to create their first ever robot reveal video. The video showcased the robot's functions and capabilities, as well as the eye catching LED lights attached to the robot. Lench shot and edited the video with the help of E. Garret and freshman Jay Cantrell.

The team also submitted their first Safety Animation. The safety animation is a short, less than 40 seconds animation submitted by teams from all over the nation. The winners of the safety animation have the animation played during competitions and other FIRST Robotics events.

Lenoch and Norfleet began this project in the 2022-2023 season, "ENERGIZED", but did not finish in time to submit the animation to FIRST. This year, Lench changed the whole animation to better fit the "CRESCENDO" theme and also provided a voice over. Norfleet provided original music and voice over.

Norfleet also introduced new safety rules and regulations for the team this year, including an updated safety agreement, hearing protection, and the implementation of a required safety training course. Members would be denied access to power tools and robot work until they finished all courses and provided proof.

This year also saw the creation of a leadership council. The lead-

ership council is composed of Gongora, Waters, Lench, Norfleet, and juniors Zeb Brown and Seth Cantrell. Council members are responsible for keeping specific areas of group work in check and making sure that work is getting done on time.

The CyBears also took a shot at presenting the team with the Impact Award, the most prestigious award in the FIRST Robotics Competition. The award recognizes a team that reflects sustained excellence and impact within the FIRST community, in its own community, and beyond. Gongora, Waters, and sophomore Aizlyn Marsh took on this endeavor. The group presented in front of judges at both regional competitions.

"I want to see the team keep growing and keep having confidence in themselves and each other," Gongora said, "We made it this far, and I know we can go farther now next year as well."

The CyBears are eagerly preparing for the upcoming 2024-2025 season of the FIRST Robotics Competition and plan to continue growing as a team and spreading their outreach into the community.

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# Student Orgs

# 4

April 18, 2024

## NHS PLANS FOR ANNUAL SERVICE DAY

Miley Shields  
Staff Writer

On April 24, WBHS be having its annual school wide Service Day. The National Honor Society is going to be leading this event for the school. During Service Day, both staff and students participate in helping out the community. All students will split into groups and go to their projects until lunch, at lunch everyone will come together and spend the remainder of the day with activities and games.

NHS Sponsor Kristen Westpheling said, "I think it is very important for our students to give back to the community that supports them so much. If you look at any sport, club, event, etc. they are all sponsored by the community. Students need to learn the value of helping out and giving back to the community. Service Day also provides for a break in the regular school schedule at a time where we don't have a lot of breaks. It is generally getting nice outside and spending the day outside can be beneficial to everyone."

This year to go along with Service Day, NHS is also starting Service Week. Service Week is being used to highlight leadership and shine a light on

those that have taken or received a type of leadership. For Service Week, Monday there will be a volunteer fair as well as a student leadership luncheon.

A lot goes into making service day happen for those that are in NHS. Members are put in pairs of two to lead each group of students. The pair of NHS members go and contact sites they've gone to in previous years or even contact new sites as well as making sure they have the materials necessary for their projects.

The available groups for students are different for each grade. Freshman have the option to spend Service Day at the Harvest Preserve, Iowa City

Parks and Rec., and Herbert Hoover National Park. Sophomores have the option of going to, Backyard Abundance, Highway Cleanup, Bed Mats Ministry, and Main Street WB. Juniors can go to WB Parks and Rec. or the Cedar County

Fairgrounds. Seniors are given both an indoor option and an outdoor option. Their indoor options are card making, tie blankets, and survival bracelets. They also have outdoor options such as, food/can drive or district cleanup/mulching. All FFA members will be in downtown WB planting in flower beds.



## FFA STUDENTS COMPETE IN LEADERSHIP COMPETITIONS

Lauren Keeler  
Staff Writer

The 96th Iowa FFA Leadership Conference will take place in Ames from April 14-16. This year 13 members from the West Branch FFA chapter will travel to the conference. Every year for state, convention members are required to participate in a contest.

Members Saylee Gingerich and Max Lodge will be representing our chapter as delegates to choose state officers. Melayna Burmister and Shay

Kinsinger will be taking the greenhand quiz. Lillian Waters was selected to play in the Iowa FFA Band. McKenna Worrell, Allison Tygrett, and Maddie Tygrett will be doing poultry judging. Members Layla Samuelson, Amber Wolf, Maddie Neuberger, Lauren Keeler, and Lexie Isabel will be presenting a chapter display of their chapter's Ag in the Lot. Lexie Isabel will also be massing the flag in the 3rd general session.

Members will attend three general sessions and listen to keynote speaker Nick Tokman from Discovery Channel's Deadliest Catch.

## West Branch FFA

### PLANT SALE

**SATURDAY**  
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**Renee Thompson at [rethompson@west-branch.k12.ia.us](mailto:rethompson@west-branch.k12.ia.us)**  
or 319-643-7216

## FFA MEMBERS COMPETE AT DISTRICTS, DEVELOP SKILLS

Renee Thompson  
FFA Adviser & Guest Writer

Six WB FFA Chapter members were involved in the Southeast District FFA Convention at Louisa-Muscatine High School on Sat., March 9.

Lexie Isabel and Lauren Keeler served as delegates for the chapter in the District Business Session, where they elected the 2024-2025 Southeast District FFA Officer Team.

Shay Kinsinger participated in the "Manual Quiz" contest, where he was asked five call and response questions. He placed second with a silver.

Amber Wolf submitted her Reporter's Scrapbook. The book compiles photos and captions from all chapter activities throughout the year, news articles, member profiles, and thank yous received. She brought home the first place gold for her efforts.

Saylee Gingerich competed with her Treasurer's Book. The book is a complete record of all of the Chapter's transactions for the last year. She received a third place bronze.

Maddie Neuberger turned in her Secretary's Book, a compilation of all meeting agendas and minutes. This included committee meetings, member attendance, and roster. Neuberger earned a second place silver for her submission.



FFA District Competitors Lexie Isabel, Lauren Keeler, Amber Wolf, Shay Kinsinger. Photo contributed by Renee Thompson.

District officer nominees were asked the question, "What is the purpose of FFA?" They had a variety of responses, most of them centered around the building of character and life skills.

"Participating in contests and events beyond the chapter level is one way the members of the WB FFA continue to develop a multitude of skills and make connections with people in preparation for the future," said FFA Adviser Renee Thompson.

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## DAY IN THE LIFE OF A HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALIST: NOBLE DISHES THE INSIDE SCOOP

Katey Noble  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Let's start with planning an issue. First, all staff members brainstorm and claim stories to write. These stories vary from sports updates, to fine arts, to academics, to clubs and orgs. to album reviews and other fun, interactive additions, like crosswords and even a Bingo card (featured in issue five).

Claiming stories usually takes just a day or two, and then we get about a week to two weeks to get our chosen stories finished. Usually there are some events that haven't taken place once the deadline comes around, so those certain stories may not get finished as soon as others. Editors who help organize the stories include: Olivia Naber, Ashlynn Nash, Claire Jarrett, Peyton Braddock, Brooklyn Nash and myself.

Along with stories comes photo assignments. We decide which stories should have pics and what type/how many. An editor types up a photo list and puts it in the shared folder. Photographers claim those and do their best to get them taken before page design time arrives.

Similar to stories, the photos might need to wait until the event occurs.

Once we have passed the story/photo deadline, we begin designing our pages. We usually get a week to two weeks to work on page design as well. When everyone has finished their pages, a couple other editors and I help each other edit the pages, just to make sure there aren't any typos or slight mistakes (even though sometimes we still miss small errors).

Before an issue is published, A. Nash and I work together to make posts on our Instagram page @thebearstudentnews, giving followers a sneak peak into what to look forward to in the upcoming issue. She and I help each other run the account, also posting when a new issue comes out, or just fun things for viewers to see! It can be a struggle to find fun or interactive things to post, but we brainstorm just about every class period with other staff members for new things to post, so stay tuned for some fun stuff!

There does seem to be a lot of procrastination within the staff, so recently we have been trying out a new system to hopefully promote productiv-

ity. There are "section leaders" who check in with the "squad leaders." Then the "squad leaders" check in with individual staff members. Jobs that these leaders have include peer revision of stories, making sure all stories and photos are in our shared google folder, and just checking with all staff members to know that deadlines are being met.

Before we submit our pages to Gregory Norfleet, they are looked over by the previously mentioned editors. The final pages are then emailed to Norfleet at the WB Times, as he prints copies for us. When copies arrive, newspaper staff members place copies around the school for students and staff to enjoy.

Even though it can move quite slowly, I think journalism has become one of my favorite subjects.

I used to think that the only thing "the newspaper kids" did was write stories and take photos, but there is so much more to it than that. I think posting on our

social media has also made me enjoy it more, it gives us a bigger opportunity to be creative and reach more people! So, if you haven't yet followed us on Instagram, start now!



FFA



Animal science students attend a "Pig to Plate" field trip to Iowa State University. Photo contributed by Renee Thompson.

## The Bear asks about class sign-ups

Which of your classes are you looking forward to the most? Why?

"Joining the newspaper. I took a lot of the required classes my freshman year so that I would have space for more electives my sophomore year, and I'm excited to be a part of a creative group." - Cassie Swisher

"Show choir band. Being in the band behind the show choir has been the most fun I have ever had in school. I can't wait to see what the show is like next year!" - Keaton Norfleet

"This year, I am looking forward to animal science the most because I think I will be very interested in that class." - Lillian Waters

If you are taking Kirkwood classes, which ones are you taking? Why?

"I'm taking Intro. to Psychology and Elementary Spanish 1. I'm taking psychology because it was recommended for college, and I'm taking Elementary Spanish 1 because I think taking Spanish is important, and I think it's just a fun class overall." - Miley Shields

"I am taking Anatomy and Physiology 1 so I can learn the medical information I need before going into college, and this class will transfer to make college less stressful." - Maddie Neuberger

"I am taking Intro. to Psych. I want to go into teaching or human sciences, and psychology is a class I need to take." - Kennedy Simpson

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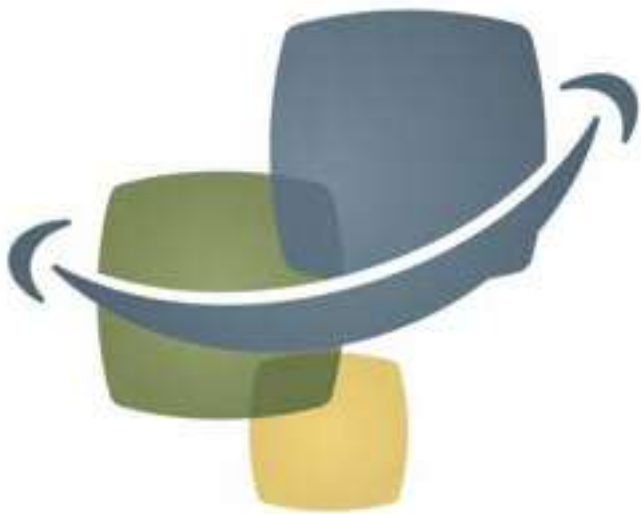




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# WB WOMEN ATHLETES STRIVE TO MAKE POSITIVE IMPACT

Claire Jarrett

What are your goals/team goals for the season?

Personal goals: Make it to the state tournament and place in the top 5. Continue to improve everyday and focus on my game every chance I get.

Team goals: Have fun!! At some point, I want everyone to feel like they had their best meet or tournament this season. Winning some duels and competing with strong teams are also on the list for team goals I have fort this year.

How have you tried to get more girls out for golf?

Just reminded them that Jan if very flexible if you are stressed or are involved in other activities. We all encourage girls to just try it and see if it's something that they could enjoy. Golf can also be a more individual sport so understanding that can help girls feel like they can come out and practice or play when they want.

How many years have you been playing?

I started playing when I was 6 or 7 years old and have continued ever since, so 10-11 years.

How do you plan to lead your team?

Focus on how I can make an impact on the team by performing my best and improving everyday. Be the person that encourages everyone and helps them also be able to accomplish their goals.

What has been the hardest challenge throughout the years of playing this sport?

My mentality. It's very easy to get in your head after a poor shot, bad meet or tournament. It's something that I continue to learn from and hope to be able to overcome by the end of the season. It's definitely improved over the years but still something I tend to struggle with.

What has been your proudest moment



of your sport?

Making it to state and placing in the top 10 both my sophomore and junior year.

How do you stay motivated?

The support I continue to recieve from my coaches, parents, and teammates. They know how I can compete and have always encouraged me reach the standards that I have set for myself.

Who is your role model?

My parents and golf coaches.

What lessons and advice do you have for future WB Women athletes?

Stick to your own personal goals. Focus on what you want to accomplish and go for it. The support you recieve in high school will help you achieve what you want and will leave you with great memories in high school.

Interview and photo by Staff Writer Maryam Martin.

Grace Hamann

What are your goals/team goals for the season?

My goals this year are to improve my times and get done with freshman year in a good spot

How many years have you been playing?

I ran track for west branch sense 6th grade

How do you plan to lead your team?

Try to win and have a positive attitude and something to work towards when I don't

What has been the hardest challenge throughout the years of playing this sport?

Doubting myself and dealing with the pressure put on me by myself and others

What has been your proudest moment of your sport?

When I broke 5 minutes in the 1500 and went to nationals, holding the RVC record for the 800 and 1500.

How do you stay motivated?

I think about the people who are better then me and what I want to be able to do

Who is your role model?

My mom and my middle school track coach

What lessons and advice do you have for future WB Women athletes?

Just find something your good

at and work hard I guess

How does it feel to break records?

It's fun to see my name places I just want to really fast someday so I can't settle for what I already accomplished.

Interview and photo by Staff Writer Miley Shields.



Emily Coleman

What are your goals/team goals for the season?

I would really like to have more goals this season than any of my previous ones, and also have a good amount of assists. With a record of 2-11 last year, our team goals are to obviously try and win more games, but also keep a solid foundation for the program. Another goal would be to stay positive and help each other so we can continue to keep growing and set up a good lineup for the tougher games.

How many years have you been playing?

I've been playing for 4 years.

How do you plan to lead your team?

The best way I can help my team is to stay positive and help teach people the skills that I've learned. With this group of girls, I feel like we can become super cohesive and with some of the skill level we can be a pretty solid team. I want to make it possible for everyone to have-fun at practice and not feel intimidated or pressured to be the best.

What has been the hardest challenge throughout the years of playing this sport?

The hardest challenge is following through with staying positive. Especially to myself. Whenever I have a bad game or practice, it's hard to get out of my head which can sometimes cause my teammates to feed off of that and it puts everyone in a bad mood. I did pretty well with that this past volleyball season though, and I'm looking forward to just making this season a fun and enjoyable game.

What has been your proudest moment of your sport?

My proudest moment was when I got 3 goals my freshman year and then got moved to the forward position. That has solidified my spot there so I was able to improve and keep scoring goals for us.

How do you stay motivated?

I stay motivated because of my teammates and coaches. I know the coaches see me as a leader in some aspects so I want to keep that alive and be a good example for the underclassmen. I also like to stay active because it makes me feel good and I just look

forward to going to practice everyday. I am excited to just play with my friends.

Who is your role model?

My role model is completely unrelated to soccer but it's Nina Torlkeson. We've become super good friends these past few years, and I look up to her even if she's younger than me. Nina is an amazing person who always tries to see the good in people and gives everyone a chance. She's super talented and does what she loves. She's so funny and I want to be like her in so many ways because of how much of a good human she is.

What lessons and advice do you have for future WB Women athletes?

Try things or sports even if you're scared because it could become something you love to do. Don't be embarrassed to try hard when it comes to something you're passionate about. WANT to be better, you can't fake it. The boys are not scary and if anything, they will help you get better whether it's in the weightroom or at a practice, and listen to your coaches. If you don't agree, just give it a chance and stay positive. Enjoy what time you get because it flies.

Interview and photo by Photography-Co-Editor-in-Chief Ashlynn Nash.



## SPRING SPORTS LOOK TO BUILD ON EARLY SEASON PROGRESS

Colby Vos  
Guest Writer

Bear golf is into the swing of things with early competitions against West Liberty High School where the boys lost a tough match, 165-170. Junior Paxton Tisinger was the low scorer for the WB boys shooting a 40 over the nine holes at Cedars Edge. Senior Reece Druecker commented, "We didn't play our best but still kept the match close, and that means we can compete with a lot of teams this year."

Senior Claire Jarrett led the WB girls to a win over WL, shooting the low score of 44, individually, while the team won a close match, 219-221, at West Liberty Country Club. Freshman McKenna Worrell said, "We want to improve as a team and have fun playing the sport, and I want to play courses that I haven't played before."

Boys and girls track are off to a speedy start and look to increase the pace as the season progresses. Senior Reece Trepanier has had some notable finishes in the shot put while the distance medley team of seniors Joe Hamann and Trenton Schutte and sophomores Lincoln Naber and Conner Capper have also put up some impressive results. Sophomore Lincoln Naber recapped the season, saying that "the season has been really good so far, and I have improved a lot from last year. We are still trying to figure out lineups for

the year, but I am confident in my 400m, 800m, and 200m."

Girls track member Lexi Skay noted, "...the indoor season has been more consistent compared to last year. The goal for both myself and the team is to qualify for the state meet and the Drake Relays." Some highlights of the recent events on the girls side include a couple of first place finishes from freshman Grace Hamann, multiple finals qualifications from sophomore Addi Schultes and junior Alyssa Pierce.

Boys and Girls Soccer kick off their seasons, looking to replicate their success and continue their growth from last year. The boys soccer team is off to a hot start beating Solon, 4-0, and Clinton, 7-1.

"The season has started off well, and we won our first two games. The practices have also been good, and our coach thinks we have been working as a team a lot better this year," said senior Bradyn Sexton.

The girls soccer team has dealt with some unfortunate weather, kudos of Iowa, but is looking to "continually improve as the season [begins]. This is my first year playing, so I want to perform as an individual but also be a good teammate," mentioned senior JaLynn Falco.

Junior Miley Shields noted, "As a team, I want to develop our bonds and continue to improve on our inconsistencies from last year."

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# Sports

April 18, 2024

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## ANNUAL FOOTBALL TRIVIA NIGHT RAISES \$6,655

Brooklyn Nash  
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief

The WBHS football team had their 15th annual trivia night fundraiser on Friday, March 22 at Little Lights on the Lane. The football captains' parents had been preparing for this event since January of 2024. The event consisted of trivia, food, drinks, auctions and fun.

The Lively did a happy hour between 5:00pm and 6:00pm to start off the night. Trivia took place at 7:00pm. There were a total of 28 teams that participated. The top 3 placing teams were "Bower Power" and "No Nothing-at-alls" each with 62 points making it a tie and "Leather and Lacies" with 60 points. Member names were unavailable. There were 23 donated items up for bidding during the night. Items

were auctioned off both live and online. A total of \$6,655 was raised for the football team through the auctions. The highest bidden items were a signed Caitlin Clark jersey for \$1,800, Harpers ferry house for \$1,400 and a Strength Love Family golf outing for \$650. By the end of the night a total of \$15,000 was raised for the football team.



Sophomore Oliver Trepanier hustles at the Lisbon track meet. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.



Freshman Grace Hamann runs her relay leg at the Lisbon track meet. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.



Claire Jarrett and Julia Herring push their clubs to their final golf hole. Photo by Ashlynn Nash.



Junior Ethan Miller prepares to swing. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.



Freshman Garrett Sotzen watches his putt. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.



Senior Claire Jarrett poses with her first-place medal after shooting a 44 at the first home golf meet. Photo by Ashlynn Nash.



Senior Kylie Pickett approaches the soccer ball. Photo by Brooklyn Nash.



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## STUDENTS ENJOY MARCH MUSIC MADNESS IN SPANISH CLASS

Claire Jarrett  
Photography Co-Editor-in-chief

The 2024 Manía Musical de Marzo has kicked off where students across the school cast their votes to determine which songs progress each round. While students enrolled in Spanish

classes were able to listen to songs daily, the opportunity to participate in the voting process was open to all. The songs that competed in the final four were "Ella Baila Sola" by Peso Pluma y Eslabón Armado, "Un x100to" by Grupo Frontera y Bad Bunny, "Las Mujeres" by Carlos Vives y

Juanes, and "¿Y si Eras tu?" by Ela Taubert. This then led to the championship round where the student body voted on "Ella Baila Sola" and "Un x100to" to decide their winner.

Ultimately, the winner on March 28 was "Ella Baila Sola" by Peso Pluma y Eslabón Armado. Spanish 1 and 2 teacher Abby Noelck said, "I was not surprised at all. It was far and away the most popular song going into the bracket." (It was the #1 seed and has over a billion listens on Spotify.)

She then mentioned the songs she had hoped would compete in the championship round.

"Mejor que Ayer" by Diego Torres, "Bailando Bachata" by Chayanne, and "Mientras me Curo del Cora" by Karol G were my personal favorites! I was glad to see they all made it past the first round! I would've loved for them to go further, but I wasn't surprised that they didn't. 'Mejor que Ayer' and 'Mientras me Curo del Cora' have such great lyrics, and I love the messages from those songs the most. They are

about how adversity and hardship are a normal part of life but to not give up hope that brighter days are ahead. I have been doing 'Bailando Bachata' in my Zumba classes for a few months now, so it holds a special place for me!" said Noelck.

The Spanish 3 and 4 teacher Annie Popkes commented that she loves doing this in her classes throughout the month of March, and students tend to listen to these songs on their own now. As long as there continues to be interest from students, Noelck plans to keep it going. To vote, those that want to participate fill out a Google Form sent out by Noelck, and she counts which song has the most votes. Around 100 students fill out the bracket everyday; however, more tend to participate during the first and final rounds.

Noelck concluded, "I have been doing this since the spring of 2018. It is one of my favorite things I do in class each year. I'm grateful that students are always willing to give the music a chance!"



Abby Noelck

Photo by Larkin Brown.

## WBHS DISTANCE RUNNERS GO THE EXTRA MILE FOR A FAMILY IN NEED

Caitlyn Harrison  
Staff Writer

On their last practice before spring break, the WBHS boys distance runners had an interesting encounter on their run.

They were running to Little Lights, but instead of turning when they got there, they continued straight after seeing a car stuck at the bottom of the hill on the "minimum maintenance" road ahead of them.

It had been raining all day, so everything was wet and muddy. Nolan Staker said, "We

decided to run down and help them, but we also thought it would be fun to go in the mud."

Once they got closer, they realized that the car was about to slide into the ditch. They acted fast, and all worked together to get the car back to the middle of the road.

Joe Hamann said, "Although we didn't learn their names, it felt good to help a family in distress."

With the family safely on their way, the boys returned to Little Lights for a muddy group photo. Then they finished their run back to WBHS.



Distance Runners & Rescue. Preston Mayhew, Shay Foresse, Jacob Swisher, Lincoln Naber, Oliver Trepanier, Lynden MacGillivray, Nolan Staker, Joe Hamann. Photo contributed by Jim Cunningham.

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# Clubs & Orgs

April 18, 2024

# 10

## JAZZ BAND, ENSEMBLE OPEN FOR BYOBRASS AT WILDWOOD

Caitlyn Harrison  
Staff Writer

The WBHS Jazz Band and Jazz Ensemble performed at Wildwood Smokehouse & Saloon on Monday, March 15. This marked the second year that these groups performed at Wildwood, but a few changes were made to improve upon last year.

Director Samuel Ogilvie said, "We performed on stage instead of in front of it in order to create more space for seating. Because of that change, the band used microphones and the sound system this year."

Two groups represented WBHS: Jazz Band and Jazz Ensemble. Jazz Band performed "Naptown Blues,"

"My Little Suede Shoes," "Stuck in the Rut," and "Beantown Blues Parade." Jazz Ensemble performed "Fat Cat," "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)," and "Indigo Hippo."

After the opening performances, professional group BYOB Brass took to the stage.

Nora Ziehr said, "They were so good. They were much better than I had expected based on the recordings we listened to in class."

Performing at Wildwood was much different than the competitions that these groups performed for throughout their season.

Ogilvie said, "This type of performance is the most important type of performance for Jazz Band. The world of

jazz doesn't revolve around competitions. Jazz is about sharing music with the community. If you look at professional jazz musicians, they gig in restaurants and clubs. If you walk down the street in New Orleans and enter an establishment where a jazz band is playing, it's about community. In many cases, if you bring your horn, you can hop in and join the performance. Jazz is about sharing. As an educator, I want to replicate that to the best of my abilities and give my students the most realistic representation of the world of live music as possible."

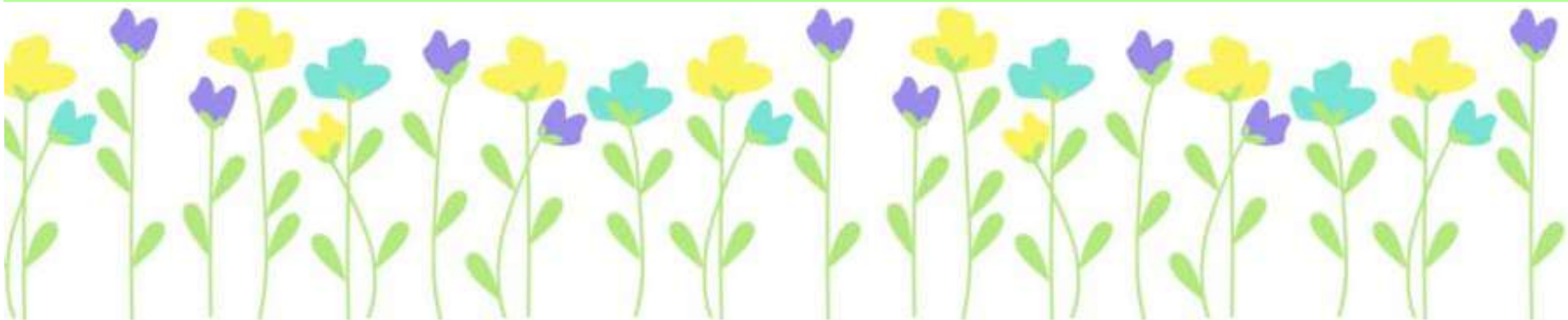
Members of the WBHS Jazz Band enjoyed the low-key setting for a performance. Kellen Dykstra said, "I much prefer a more casual performance because it allows us to have fun rather

than to play for a ranking."

This performance at Wildwood was the end of the regular jazz season.

Ogilvie said, "It's a wonderful way to highlight the end of the season for both groups, gives them an opportunity to share the stage, and allows them both to hear the awesome guest artists!"

Despite the season being over, an optional jazz group started rehearsing on April 2. The group allows members of either jazz group, as well as incoming eighth grade students, to come together and learn new music for the Pops Concert on May 1. At that concert, the Optional Jazz Band will be playing "Tank!" from the anime *Cowboy Bebop* and *Dance the Night* by Dua Lipa.



## THREE JAZZ ENSEMBLE MEMBERS TO BE FEATURED DJs ON JAZZ RADIO STATION

Larkin Brown  
Staff Writer

On April 22, 2024 three WB Jazz Ensemble students will be featured guest DJs on the Iowa jazz radio station, 88.3 KCKK.

The featured Jazz Ensemble students include seniors Olivia Naber and Nina Torkelson as well as sophomore Kellen Dykstra. Naber and Dykstra will be participating for their first time, while Torkelson will be attending for her third year in a row.

"I have watched Nina do it for the past two years, and it looks like so

much fun," Naber said. "I feel like I know a little bit more about jazz now, so that made me want to do it more."

Dykstra said, "I am feeling that too—a little bit nervous but also really excited to do it for the first time"

Torkelson said "I am not nervous since I have done this for the past two years, I'm just excited to play again because it was really fun the first two years. I want to get the school more recognized for the talent that we have."

These three will be on the air at 4 pm on Monday, April 22. Make sure to tune in to Jazz 88.3 KCKK to hear the talented students of the WB Jazz Ensemble.

### All-State Continued from page 1

fore, but nobody has gotten in since 2018. It is awesome that Nina has this opportunity to represent our school."

Since nobody has made it into an All-State band since 2018, it showed Torkelson's ambition and determination to become a stronger jazz musician. She said, "Since it's my senior year I definitely wanted to just go for it since I only really had one chance. The music looked really hard at first, but luckily I started practicing it several months in advance so I was able to break it down into chunks, which really helped me out."

Torkelson continued, "I was honestly quite surprised that I made it in because of how competitive the spots are. I felt super relieved and honored because I had put a lot of practice, time, and work into preparing for the audition, and it paid off. I'm excited because I think it will be a great experience and will definitely challenge me, especially if I decide I want to continue playing trombone in

college."

Ogilvie hopes that more students will audition for All-State ensembles in future years. He said, "If any students choose to audition in the future, they will grow as musicians through the process and help our program perform at a higher level. If any students make it into the All-State Jazz Band, it's the icing on the cake. All the hard work and practice is what helps the jazz program at West Branch. I know Nina has inspired some of our other musicians to try this in the future."

Torkelson added, "I would like to give a huge thank you to Ogilvie for supporting me throughout the whole process and providing me with all of the tools and feedback I needed to succeed."

Torkelson will travel on May 8th to Johnston High School for a rehearsal before her performance with the 1A/2A All-State Jazz Band on May 9th at the annual Iowa Bandmasters Association Conference. The concert will be located at the Downtown Des Moines Marriott, where Torkelson will represent West Branch in front of hundreds of band directors from across the state.



## 34TH ARMY BAND PERFORMS FOR STUDENTS

Olivia Naber  
Head-Editor-in-Chief

High School Band Director Samuel Ogilvie took up the opportunity to host the 34th Army Band's brass quintet on April 5. The band, made up of SGT Kaela VanLeeuwen, SGT Jacob Welper, SPC Jeremy Idler, SPC Justin Smiley Oyen, and SPC Ryan Swedean, played in the Performing Arts Center for the WBHS concert band and other interested students.

Ogilvie welcomed the opportunity for his students to hear how a professional ensemble plays and sounds.

"Some of my brass players were very impressed by getting to hear what their instruments could potentially sound like.... It's always good to hear profes-

sionals on your specific instrument so that you know what you're aiming for," Ogilvie said.

According to Ogilvie, the band students were fully engaged, asking pertinent questions and being eager to learn about opportunities for music after high school in the National Guard.

In the future, he hopes to bring other schools in the area to the PAC for similar events.

Additionally, Ogilvie explained that he is excited to welcome an Air Force band to play during the end of Hoover's Hometown Days.

He enthused, "The army or military groups really try to be engaging for the communities, so I think it'll be a performance people enjoy."



Trumpet player SPC Justin Smiley Oyen explains the merits of being a part of the 34th Army Band as the rest of the band prepares for their next song. Photo by Olivia Naber.



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Care Initiatives





## SHAW ELECTRIC FIELD TRIP PROVIDES STUDENTS HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES



Photo contributed by Randy Robertson.



Garrett Spevacek installs a breaker box. Photo contributed by Randy Robertson.

*ACE students got some hands on experience and learned about lifts, pulling wire, bending conduit, wire connectors, wiring a switch and outlets, fiber optic cable installation, labor and estimating cost and materials, safety harnesses and electrical suites that need to be worn when working on high energy current, stripping wire of all sizes, and wiring a circuit panel with breakers.*

*"We had a group discussion on what it was like to have a career in electricity. Topics included: different levels of skill sets within the certifications, phones on the job site, being able to be trained, tests that you need to pass to get a higher pay scale and all kinds of employability information and much more. This was a great day for students to learn the trade. I had students tell me that they learned a great deal, and it was an excellent experience," said Randy Robertson, ACE sponsor.*



Connor Rios rides the sky welder at Shaw Electric. Photo contributed by Randy Robertson.

## 2024 SERVICE DAY REMINDER

*The annual WBHS Service Day will be held on April 24 and hosted by NHS. Please dress accordingly depending on your host site. Students will get Silver Cord hours for participating in this event!*

## BPA ATTENDS DESIGN DASH CONFERENCE

Madelyn Stout  
Staff Writer

The WBHS Business Professionals of America club traveled to Iowa City to the Design Dash conference.

BPA Vice President Kya Montgomery said, "I'm excited to go to the

Design Dash to learn more about different business skills to gain a better understanding of this field as I'm interested in this path in my future."

The conference was held on Wednesday, April 10. Students were provided donuts for breakfast and pizza for lunch. They also got a free t-shirt for attending the conference.

## Stress Continued from page 3

Is this something I can see myself doing in the long run? - this obviously doesn't apply to every activity (some are high school-only affairs), but for some activities it's worth taking a look at how you can see yourself continuing this after highschool.

Does this make me happy? - this is probably the most important thing to consider. If you don't derive satisfaction or joy from an activity, it is worth reevaluating your involvement.

### Tip 3: Find coping strategies.

Coping strategies come in many different forms and are critical to manage the effects of chronic stress and prevent associated health issues. Some examples of healthy coping strategies include:

Finding a routine that involves frequent exercise, healthy eating, and

plenty of sleep - taking care of your body is incredibly important to both prevent stress and reduce stress when it arises. Exercise can also boost endorphins, or happy hormones, which counteract stress hormones.

Deep breathing exercises - studies show that diaphragmatic breathing exercises can lower both your blood pressure and cortisol levels.

Mindfulness/meditation - one of the most-studied forms of stress-reduction, there are a variety of ways to practice mindfulness and meditation. Several free meditation apps are available on the market for anyone to use.

Journaling - putting pen to paper can be a fantastic way to release the things that have been weighing on you and realign yourself with your thoughts.

Engaging in creative activities - whether you're a music mogul, an astounding artist, a capable crafter, or even a mediocre maker, finding a creative avenue for stress-relief can bring you fun and relaxation at the same time.

Schedule time to unwind - plan a "date" with yourself, even if it's just

half an hour, to let outside distractions and tasks fall away. Mute your phone notifications and do whatever it is that helps you relax. This could be a warm bath with your favorite book/music, a leisurely bike ride through town, or even cooking (or ordering in—no shame) your favorite meal. Mark this time in your calendar to hold yourself accountable for relaxation and maintain self-care consistency.

### Tip 4: Know when you need help

Coping strategies are crucial for maintaining levels of stress, but they aren't always the end-all solution.

As students, there are several resources at our disposal to manage stress. High school counselor Miranda Schwickerath can help students work through challenges and provide support in academic, extracurricular, and personal struggles. Talk with your teachers if you're struggling with classwork; most will be willing to help you or explain difficult topics.

If your stress symptoms won't go away and impacts your daily activities for multiple days in a row, it may be time to speak to a professional. There is no shame in seeking out external help for stress management; coping with stress isn't an easy task, and the weight of stress can oftentimes seem out of our control.

Talk with your healthcare provider about resources available for stress and anxiety; they can recommend the best course of action to take and get you the help you need.

If you are feeling distressed or are considering harming yourself, please call or text 988 to get in contact with the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. They provide completely confidential support 24 hours a day to those struggling with suicidal ideation.

It's important for all aspects of your health to minimize stress where you can. Hopefully, these tips will help you end the school year strong and with as little stress as possible whether you're returning to WBHS next year or moving on.

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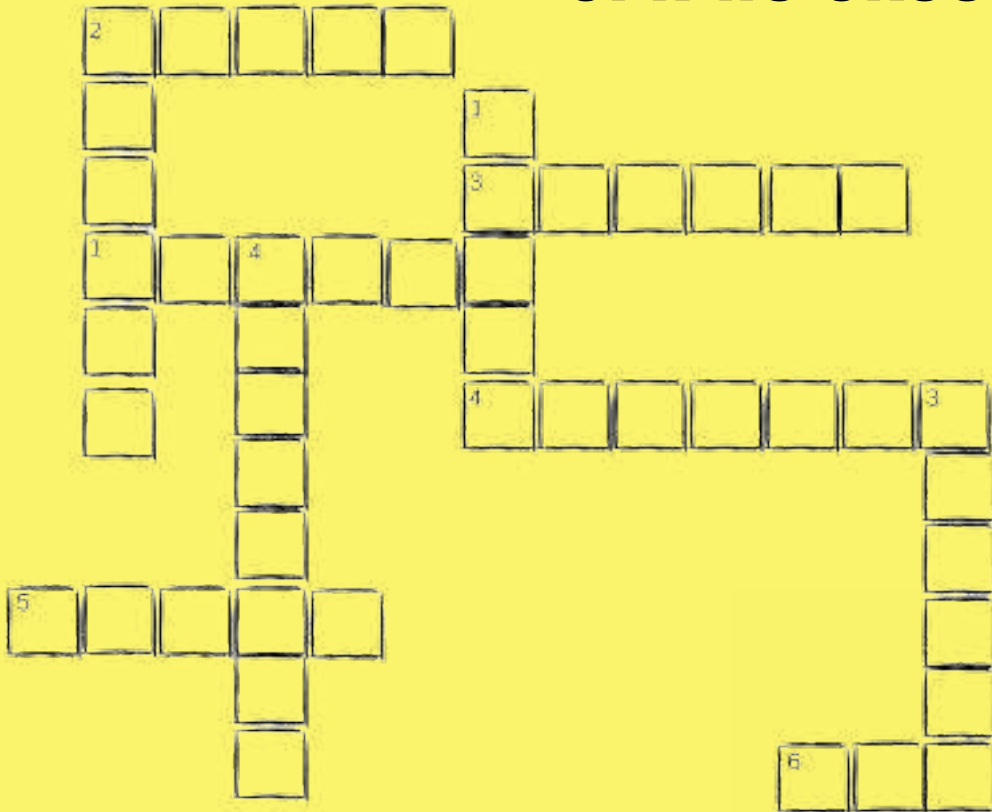


# Clubs & Orgs.

April 18, 2024

# 12

## SPRING CROSSWORD



### Across

1. holiday where you hunt for eggs
2. another word for rabbit
3. small pool of water
4. red and black insect
5. bulbous flower
6. insect that carries pollen

### Down

1. \_\_\_\_\_ showers bring may flowers
2. soft wind
3. where you plant fruit and flower
4. a good way to get vitamin D



## Senior SUNSET

FRIDAY | 10TH MAY

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RAPPERS FUTURE AND METRO BOOMIN DROP NEW ALBUM

Kya Montgomery  
Staff Writer

Future and Metro Boomin released a longly awaited new album, *We Don't Trust You*. This rap album was released March 22 and is 59 minutes long. Some songs listeners might know from these two talented artists are "Too Many Nights" and "Creepin,'" both by Metro Boomin, Future, and Don Toliver. Overall, I would say that this is a good album. My favorite song in this album is "Like That," featuring Kendrick Lamar. For the whole album, I would rate it 5/5 stars. Future and Metro Boomin are really talented; their flow is outstanding. As you will see throughout my review, I rank most of the songs 3 stars and up, so I believe the album deserves the 5 stars. This album will definitely be in my rotation.

**"We Don't Trust You" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- This song is a good start to the album. It has a slower beat or tempo, which I really like.

**"Young Metro" - Future and Metro Boomin & The Weekend**  
★★★★☆- This song also has a slower beat, which makes it very enjoyable. I like The Weekend in the background, it adds a nice smooth something to the song.

**"Ice Attack" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- I like the beat on this song. It starts to pick up the pace towards the middle.

**"Type Shit" - Future and Metro Boomin & Travis Scott and Playboi Carti**  
★★★★★- I enjoyed this song. Travis Scott and Playboi Carti are a great addition to the song. This is also one of my favorite songs. I like the lyrics, this song makes me hyped up.

**"Claustrophobic" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- Intro is kind of long and is also repetitive. I like the flow and beat as well, but for me this song wasn't really my favorite.

**"Like That" - Future and Metro Boomin & Kendrick Lamar**  
★★★★★- This one is my favorite, I like that it is very upbeat. There is something like trumpets and whistles in the background, which is different, but I like it. Kendrick Lamar's verse is probably my favorite but has caused a ruckus in the rap world.

There is rumored to be some beef between rappers, in the song Kendrick Lamar ends his verse of dissing Drake with a bang, "Fore' all your dogs gettin' buried. That's a K with all these nines, he gon' see pet Sematary."

It is very obvious that Kendrick is talking about Drake and J. Cole, he wasn't going to "sneak diss". For all the Dogs is referring to Drake's and J Cole's

latest album. Lamar also refers to their song First Person Shooter. Drake has yet to respond to what Lamar said.

**"Slimed In" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- I really like the flow of this song. I like how he rapped on the beat. I like this song but nothing special stands out to me.

**"Magic Don Juan (Princess Diana)" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- To me I thought this song



was mid. I didn't really like that they stopped rapping and it sounded like someone was talking. This one just wasn't for me.

**"Cinderella" - Future and Metro Boomin & Travis Scott**  
★★★★★- I would say this is my third favorite song in the album. Travis Scott's verse is pretty good. The song is kinda short. Beat and flow are nice.

**"Runnin Outta Time" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- I like this song, I like that it is more chill. The beat is more rhythmic. It gives a nice intro into the next song.

**"Fried (She a Vibe)" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- I think that this song is kind of silly. I love Metro's ad-libs, good beat and flow. Overall, this is a nice

song.

**"Ain't No Love" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- I like the message behind this song, basically saying when people are fake don't show them love. I like the beat but it's a little repetitive.

**"Everyday Hustle" - Future and Metro Boomin & Rick Ross**  
★★★★☆- I like the way this song starts, the way it starts with no beat and then the beat comes in. The ending when

there's like a scratch and then Rick Ross raps is my favorite part.

**"GTA" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- I like the beat, however, it's not my favorite. It was too slow for my liking, to me it was kinda boring.

**"Seen it All" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- I like how the beat would cut out for a few seconds and then come back. The lyrics are kinda catchy. Not really a huge fan of the ending.

**"WTFYM" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- This song is more up beat then the rest. I like the lyrics of this one, when they say "yeah" after each line of rap, at the beginning I liked it.

**"Where My Twin @ - Bonus" - Future and Metro Boomin**  
★★★★☆- I think the flow of this song is pretty good. I liked the lyrics as well, along with the beat.

PEBERSEN RANKS LONG AWAITED ARIANA GRANDE ALBUM

Caleb Pedersen  
Staff Writer

After her pre-release single, "Yes, and?", Ariana Grande has since released her full album, "Eternal Sunshine," containing 13 songs. This is her first full album release since 2020, and Ariana Grande fans are ecstatic. After much listening to this new album, I have picked my top five favorite songs with a short explanation.

- "Bye"**  
★★★★★- I really like this song. I rated it a 5/5 because of the upbeat vocals and catchy chorus. This song is about empowerment and self-confidence. Grande says, "Bye bye, boy bye. Bye bye, it's over, it's over, oh yeah."
- "We Can't Be Friends"**  
★★★★★- This song is also really good. This song is very emotional. Grande is singing about how she still wants to be friends with a past partner, but they were hurt in a way where they aren't able to be friends.
- "Yes, and?"**  
★★★★★- This song is the title track of the album and is one of my favorites. This song is all about self-confidence. It is upbeat and a bouncy song.
- "Supernatural"**  
★★★★☆- Supernatural is very underrated in my opinion. This is one of my favorites in the album. This song is about how bad love can affect someone. Grande sings about how badly she wants another person to love her.
- "True Story"**  
★★★★☆- True story is also good. I gave it a 3/5 stars because I do enjoy the song, but it's not my usual type of music. I like upbeat songs and this one is a little slower. This song is about a past partner's many lies told during a relationship.

Eternal Sunshine

Spring floral feature



All photos by Ashlynne Nash.







# Feature

# 14

April 18, 2024

## TWO NEW STORES JOIN WOMEN-OWNED WB BUSINESSES

*Meat Shack and Tura Lura, Co. add to higher-than-average women-owned business population*

Ashlynn Nash  
Photography Co-Editor-in-Chief  
Olivia Naber  
Head Editor-in-Chief

It's no secret that WB is home to a wide array of businesses. Every weekend, open flags wave in the breeze, beckoning residents and tourists alike to explore the many shops, services, and eateries that call this historical town home. A friendly face waits inside each building, ready to show its customers what they have to offer.

While it's true that WB isn't the only town around with a plethora of businesses, it does stand out in one key aspect. In WB, women dominate the workforce.

Approximately 61.53% of WB businesses are owned by women, blowing both the national (31.9%) and state (43.1%) averages out of the water.

Two new additions to the bunch recently added to this cohort of women-owned businesses. On March 1, the Iowa Meat Shack hosted its grand opening, and just a few weeks prior, on February 24, Tura Lura, Co. opened its doors. The Iowa Meat Shack specializes in providing the community with pasteurized and grass-fed meat and dairy, whereas Tura Lura, Co. focuses on giving its customers new creative experiences, whether that be with florals, candle making, or an artistic studio space.

Jamie Reichert, owner of the Iowa Meat Shack, dreamed of opening a business here for years. Working just across the street at Staker Health Center as a full-time massage therapist, she had her eyes set on the quaint building for a while. After changes in ownership and many negotiations, Reichert finally got what she wanted.

"I have been looking at this shanty for 24 years, wanting it to be something," Reichert said. "It turns out we had to fix it up. We couldn't rebuild it because it is in the floodplain. I wasn't really sure at first what I wanted it to be, but then our meat business, which is kind of full-time because it's online, was tak-

ing off at that time. I thought we needed a retail space so people could come pick up orders or shop if they wanted."

Although it may be small, the shack boasts a mighty selection of meats and other items. The shack provides all cuts of grass-fed beef and lamb, pasture non-gmo-fed pork and chicken, and ice cream from the Ice Cream Factory. The shack also vends Kalona SuperNatural Organic Dairy products, which include milk, cheese curds, sour cream, cottage cheese, and pasture-raised eggs.

Keeping things local and as eco-friendly as possible is important to Reichert. "Everything that's in here, either the meat we raise or the dairy and the eggs, come off of small farms," she explained. "Local food seems to be a pretty popular situation. It takes out a lot of the fossil fuel dependency. I think WB is really ready for global accountability, and if they aren't, we are well supported by Iowa City because we are just that close."

Reichert continued, "I think West Branch needs good sources of food, and with the increasing population it's good to offer them something they maybe won't have otherwise."

Tura Lura, Co., on the other hand, offers a completely different type of business. At Tura Lura Co., customers are offered an imaginative and playful experience. Owner Erika Christiansen described her business goal as "bringing people together through creativity."

Christiansen worked to grow her business over the last two years before finally opening the studio space. "It was a lot of work because it's just me. I'm a solo-prenuer. It was a lot of working with logistics, working with WB, working with Jessi [Simon], getting in here, building furniture, getting things stocked, working with the landlords, and preparing workshops," Christiansen said.

Christiansen works full time at the University of Iowa and has an extensive background in arts and education; in the past, she spent a lot of her life in performing arts as a dancer. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Christiansen spent much time dabbling in different ways to

create and craft. Through the separation that quarantine brought, she realized how much she missed connecting with others.

"I wanted to wait for the right time, and make sure that I had the kind of support that would bring people to me," Christiansen said.

Tura Lura, Co.'s main services are custom candle-making, dried floral arrangements, reed diffusers, and additional retail items.

"I think there's nothing really like it yet," Christiansen said about her business.

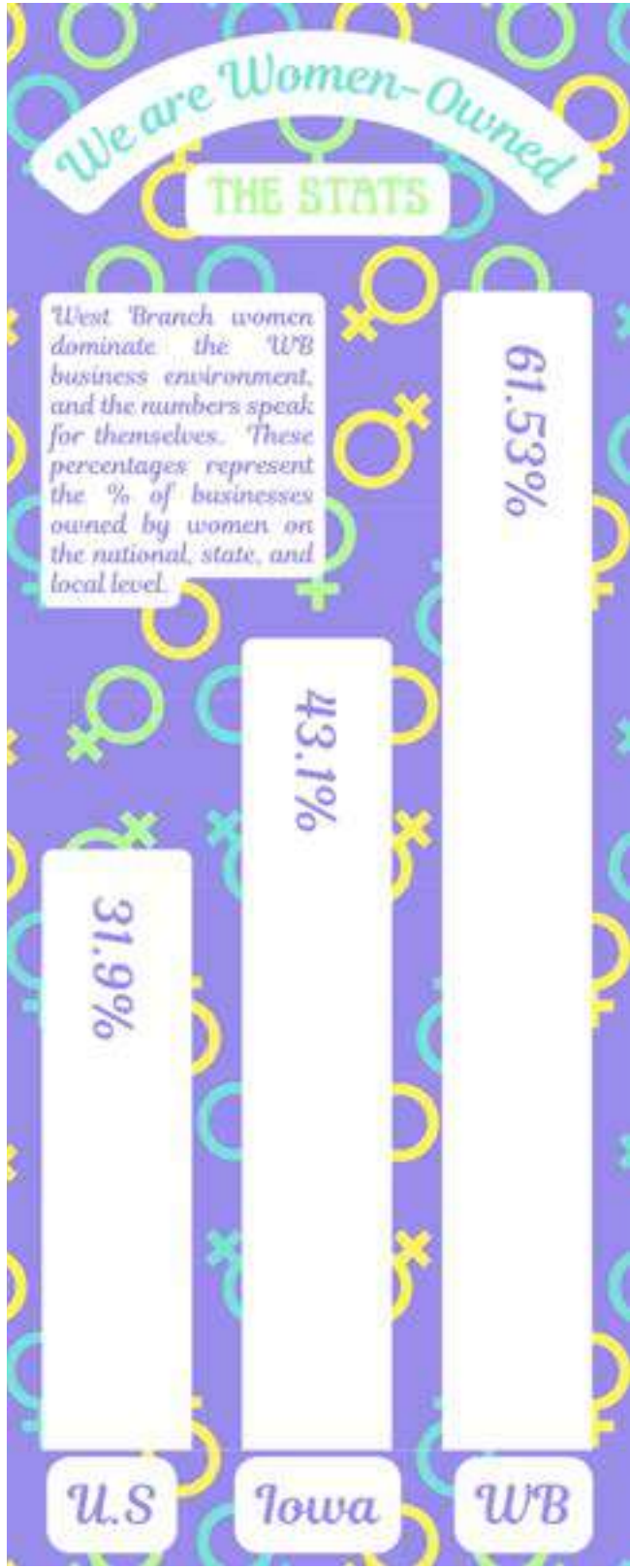
From candle-pour bars to meat shacks and everything in between, women in WB discover their niche and find ways to share it with others.

As demonstrated by the impressive statistics, the WB community welcomes women business owners with open arms, and owners Reichert and Christiansen are embracing it.

"I feel so welcomed by people in WB, and I really appreciate that," said Christiansen.

"I learned not to be afraid to try some things, and I am ready to keep exploring. I see myself staying here for a while."

Reichert shared similar sentiments. She said, "We've really enjoyed this space. It honestly is everything for a small town business community to be supported like this."



### 24 Women - Owned Businesses in WB

Branch Out Nutrition	White Pumpkin Studio	Cotton Creek Mill Quilt Shoppe	Polished & Handcrafted by Jeryl
The Down Under Brew Pub	Izzy's Treasures	223 Vintage, Co.	Gray Goat Tattoo
Main Street Sweets	Graceann Boutique	Touched by Power	The Groom Station
Herb n' Lou's Pizza	Marg's Little Red House Antiques and Uniques	Elements Salon	Guys'n Gals
The Serving Cafe	A Beautiful Purpose	Cornerstone Real Estate Consultants	Iowa Meat Shack
The Honey Den	Tura Lura, Co.	Shear Creations	Roots Salon & Spa



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