

#1 Advertising, Champion: Libby Winn, Yutan

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Hours:

M-F: 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Sat.: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sun.: closed

#2 Newspaper Column Writing Champion: Loganne Barta, Yutan

The Hunger Games? Banned. *The Crucible?* Banned. *Harry Potter?* Banned. In some schools and libraries around the world, countless books are banned due to a parent or adult complaint. When dealing with education, books should not get banned just because of a complaint.

For numerous reasons, banning books in libraries and schools can lead to a negative outcome. For example, this can cause people to feel like they have the power to ban whatever they want, which could have severe consequences as time progresses. Also, there are other ways to limit exposure of negative books to a younger audience. A school library could either implant age restrictions on certain books, or parents could track more precisely what their children are reading. Even if one parent doesn't want their child to read a certain book, this doesn't mean that every parent thinks the same way.

In America, we pride ourselves on our ability to have freedom of speech. This can include saying whatever you want, posting whatever you want and reading whatever you want. If countless books are getting banned in the United States alone, this is arguing against our ability to have freedom of speech as a nation.

In my current English course, we have studied many books that have been banned in different parts of the world. For example, *The Hunger Games* was banned in numerous United States schools after parents complained about this book's content. While this book does describe many acts of violence and war, it also shows the negative effects of having a dictatorship. Since schools are designed to educate students about many different aspects of a problem, the books that are banned are showcasing this topic.

Some people may argue that they want the ability to ban books because of the book's content in comparison to an age group. Recently, this topic has been brought up countless times

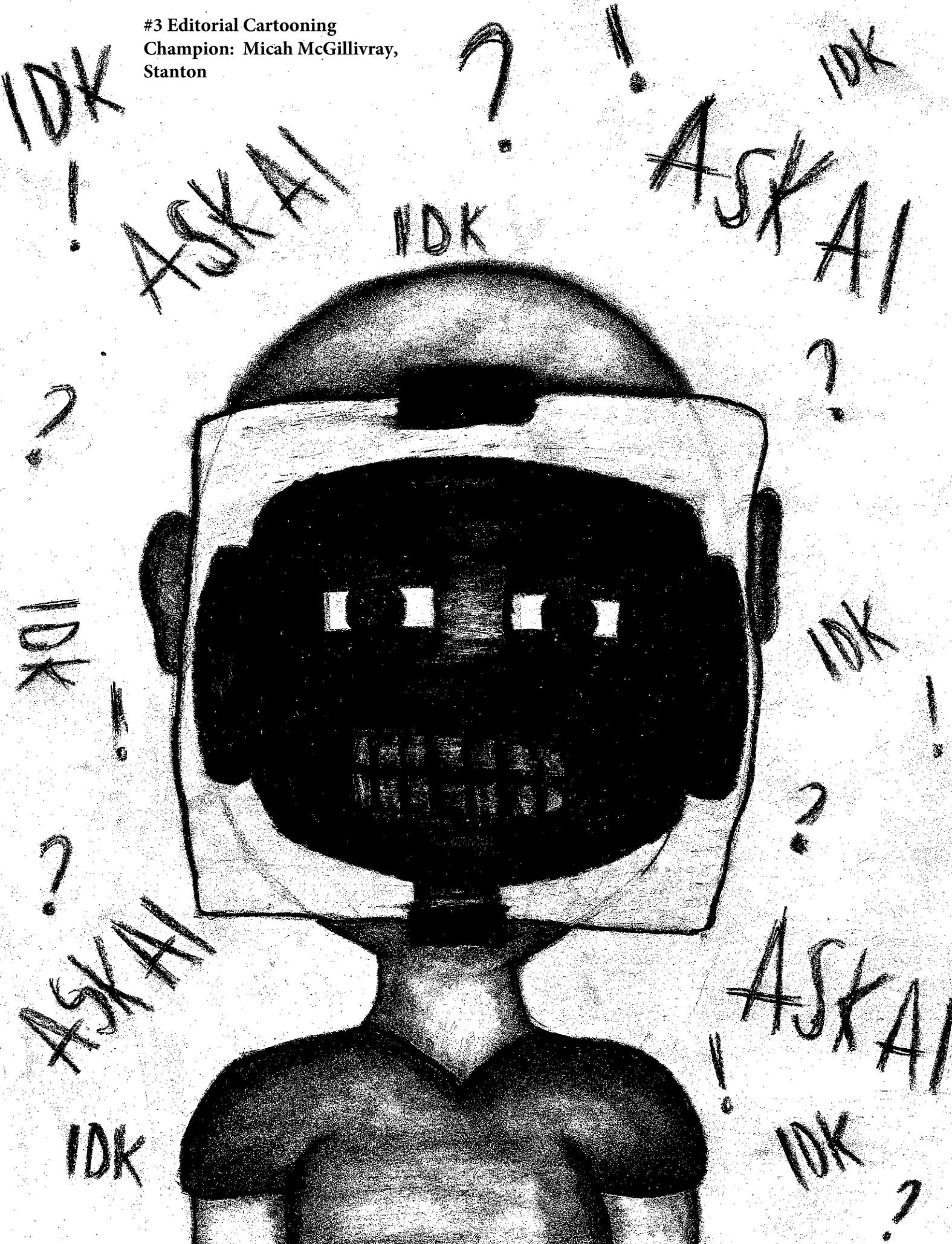
after LGBTQ+ books have been published in elementary school libraries. The same argument is held when books expose children to themes like heavy violence and crime. While I agree that a first grader probably shouldn't be reading books with very heavy topics, these books shouldn't be banned entirely in a library. Instead, a library could impose age restrictions on books to guarantee that these heavy topics are not being exposed to a younger audience.

One question that may arise to the solution of imposing age restrictions instead of bans is, "Why not just ban the book entirely?" To solve this, we could look back in time at the harmful effects of widely banning books. In World War II, the Nazis imposed a wide banning of books that included any topic in correlation with Judaism. While they imposed this as a simple ban at first, they eventually started burning books with "harmful topics" in the middle of Jewish towns. While we don't have the same leadership in the United States today, the idea of banning books could still escalate to a much larger problem.

While banning one book in a library may seem harmless, this gives parents and adults more power to add to their list of banned books. This banning of books in schools and libraries may seem positive at first, but it could cause this issue to get very negative, very quickly. As banning a single book with negative connotations may seem like a good idea, the problem that arises is where to draw the line.

Books should not be banned due to a parental complaint when dealing with education. In schools and libraries worldwide, banning countless books because of a complaint can in turn lead to a more negative outcome, as history has shown.

#3 Editorial Cartooning
Champion: Micah McGillivray,
Stanton



#4 Editorial Writing
Champion: Andrea Pavlish, Dorchester

Andrea Pavlish, Class C Editorial Writing

In an age where cars can drive themselves and robots can deliver food to your door, there are very few things that haven't been made into an app. At Robertson, we type every essay, rarely touch our notebooks, and do most lessons through online programs. The term "A.I." makes English teachers shudder knowing that many students aren't learning anything but how to talk to ChatGPT. Avoiding this "Fahrenheit 451" type digital takeover makes learning to read and write cursive all the more important. In Riverside and all over the world, this necessary skill makes this new graduation requirement extremely important and pertinent.

Our support for this initiative comes from multiple reasons, one being its importance in our social lives. Not only is communication vital to our lives, but multiple ways to communicate are important. If an older relative such as a grandmother were to write a letter celebrating her grandchild's graduation, how would she feel if they weren't capable of reading it? If the only way we were capable of communicating was through text, it would be nearly impossible to live fulfilling lives. It may seem like a dying art due to its popularity in the older generations, but just because it's old doesn't necessarily mean that it's outdated. While computers and phones will die out, our handwriting will never be out of charge, broken, or overheated.

In the age of the technological revolution--although we are all capable of writing stuff down--what makes cursive important when we have regular manuscripts? Cursive, specifically, is important for many reasons. In our era, one's signature is as good as spitting into your palms and shaking another's hand, and in most cases better. Missy Curry, principal at Robertson High, says that there are "students who do not yet know how to sign their names in cursive." We know just on scams alone that one's phone and computer are just bait for scammers to try and steal your information. Nobody buys a house online, sight unseen. Meeting in person and signing a contract is inherently more assuring than without.

Although it might be irrelevant directly to a particular job, this capability builds up fine motor and other critical skills. Just as lifting in the weight room helps athletes on the court or field, practicing cursive helps with penmanship and promotes thinking creatively. Not only is cursive considered an art form, but it is also another way to communicate. A thank-you note written in cursive seems much more formal and appreciative than one without. It shows that the writer cared about what they were writing and wanted the reader to have only the best of the writer's penmanship.

After learning how important cursive is, Riverside parents and guardians should understand how this small portion of their students' time will impact and benefit their students' lives. With the requirement of at least one quarter, refusing this small part of their academic career could be a sign of the creativity diminishing in the rising generation. If our generation isn't capable of simply writing in cursive, how can we be expected to go above and beyond in our world?

#5 Entertainment Review Writing Champion: Libby Winn, Yutan

In midsummer of 2023, American singer-songwriter Lauv released a song that was later used multiple times in the soundtrack of Disney's animated movie "Elemental." The song, going by the name "Steal the Show," was released on June 2 of last year, two weeks before the release of "Elemental."

This song wasn't my cup of tea at the start, or so I thought. In any song, the first thing that appears is the beat leading up to the lyrics. I wasn't entirely sure what to expect with the beat of this song, considering I'm not an avid listener of Lauv, although I've listened to a song or two, but I wasn't disappointed. Especially with the music industry growing at all times, it's good to have differing beats that pull people in, especially since the beat is normally the first thing you hear when clicking play.

As for this song, the beat was something that interested me. It was upbeat and uplifting, which set the tone for the rest of the song and my outlook on it. First impressions are everything, and with this clapping-like beat, "Steal the Show" didn't disappoint.

The lyrics were also a large part of my liking of the song. I know many different songs that honestly don't have good lyrics but can be catchy and get stuck in your head, and it makes me really dislike the song. That wasn't the case with this song, though.

Honestly, I could say a lot about these lyrics and how they spoke to me. "Would you mind if I said I'm into you?" really shows the thought process of someone as they fall in love with another. People are prone to overthinking, as I know I am, so this lyric alone tugs at my heart, making me feel for and with Lauv. "You'll be the sky, I'll be the weather" was also a lyric I couldn't just forget about. I'm a sucker for metaphors, and this lyric shows how two people can fit together so perfectly—as if it was meant to be. Finally, the last lyric that stuck with me was the lyric that says the name of the song—which I'm also a sucker for. "I wouldn't mind if you

steal the show” is probably my favorite lyric out of the entirety of the song because it shows how when you love someone, you don’t mind if they get up and start being dorky, screaming from the rooftops. All that matters to you is that you love them, and I think the lyrics show that feeling exceptionally well.

The lyrics and the beat are both spectacular, but there is one major thing that can make or break a song: the voice. As I said before, I’m not a huge listener of Lauv, but I do know one thing about this artist: he has a beautiful voice. His smooth and clean voice goes perfectly with the music, stringing it together with a big red bow.

This song is a nice, upbeat love song, just as Lauv intended for it to be. In an interview with Rolling Stone, Lauv said how he is “a huge lover” and wanted to craft a song that “had this feeling of someone coming into your life and totally changing everything for you.” Coming from my perspective, it’s safe to say that Lauv accomplished his goal in all aspects, from his voice to the lyrics to the beat. This song shows the process of falling in love with someone that entirely changes your life, just as Lauv wanted. He didn’t want to just show how someone changes everything for another person, but the depth of that. He said he wanted the song to have the in-depth feeling of “changing the way you see yourself” and “the direction you see yourself going in.” Again, he accomplished his goal flawlessly.

Although I would love to talk about how much credit should be given to Lauv for how amazingly he accomplished his goal, which is sometimes hard to do, I can’t just give him the credit. Thomas Newman also had a big part in producing and composing this song, along with Michael Matosic, who was a co-composer. These two, working with Lauv, really set the tone for the song and made it, for all intents and purposes, perfect.

Now, unfortunately, there is always something to critique when looking at any form of media. Media is art, and art always has critiques from people. Although “Steal the Show” was the main focus, something that stumped me was that the music video wasn’t exactly a music video, but instead the same animation of the two characters—Ember Lumen and Wade Ripple—over and over again. As seen in the film, this song is overlaid twice, once in the end credits and another earlier in the movie, covering a montage of Ember and Wade going on dates. I would have liked to see the montage as the music video, or something along the lines, to see more depth. However, I must say that the animation played under the music showed the two characters’ dynamic accordingly.

I’ll be entirely honest, I’m a very avid music listener. I love all sorts of music from ‘80s pop to ‘90s rock to 2010’s pop, so I know when I love songs or when they just aren’t for me. This song spoke to me and gave me respect for Lauv. There wasn’t anything poor for me to say about the song in particular. “Steal the Show” made me want to log into my musical streaming service and listen to more of his songs, as I’m sure it would for everyone else. I urge people, if they aren’t already listeners, to listen to this song at the least, and at best, try out some of his other music. Whether or not this type of music is for you, you should still try it out. Who knows, it might steal the show.

2024 State Journalism Championship

#6 Headline Writing

Champion: Bryce Kolc, Yutan



#6 Headline Writing

Class C

Time Limit 1:15

Directions:

You are a copy editor for your student newspaper. You are being given 6 formatted articles. Write headlines for 3 of the 6 articles using the following conditions:

1. Write at least one 2-line headline which may include a headline with a sub-headline.
2. Write at least one 3-line headline which may include a headline with a sub-headline.
3. You have creative license to write a third headline of any length or line count.

Turn this paper into the proctor when finished.

Name: Bryce Kolc School: Yutan

Write your story number and headline below:

Article # - 2

Headline - Going Without
Americans struggle to afford housing costs

Article # - 4

Headline - Kiss enters a new era
Pophouse Entertainment Group buys the rights to Kiss
Future concerts to be performed by digital avatars

Article # - 6

Headline - Blocking out the light
Explaining the contrast between
Solar and Lunar eclipses

#7 Newspaper Feature Writing Champion: Haley Kube, Yutan

Jeopardy is a game of luck and skill; for many, it takes both to be declared the winner. However, after multiple appearances on the show last spring, Daniel Barker thinks he has just what it takes to make it to the Tournament of Champions.

Edgemont math teacher Daniel Barker received the news that he was invited to participate in the famous show 'Jeopardy!' and again represent his high school in a new game—the Champions Wildcard tournament. There, Barker will be joined by past winners from seasons 37 and 38 along with current winners from the Second Chance tournament in hopes of being one of the four winners selected for the Tournament of Champions.

"I am so proud of Daniel being invited back to the show," Daniel's mom and fellow English teacher Roberta Barker said. "I love that he is able to share his trivia talents with the world."

From an early age, his mom remembers Baker being a "steadfast learner of history and facts," which is how he got into his career as a teacher. It's also why he uses his talents to assist with the school's Quiz Bowl team, who have nothing but admiration for their sponsor.

"Our team will be cheering Mr. Barker on. He does so much for this school and our team," Quiz Bowl president Brittany Beekerman said. "He is going to crush the competition! We are sure of it."

His colleagues are sharing the same support for Barker, who will also be cheering on him from the other side of the screen.

"As the quiz bowl sponsor, you can see why our team is very competitive with Mr. Barker at the helm," Edgemont's principal Mallory Dean said. "His personality is infectious and his love for students apparent. We cheer when we hear him give Edgemont a shoutout!"

With his colleagues and students in mind, Barker has made special arrangements with the game show to host a viewing party at his school. The show will air in the Edgemont's theater on Oct. 6 at 4 p.m. for the whole high school to watch.

“My original plan was to have a viewing party, provided all the students can attend,” Barker said. “The show airs at 7 p.m. when the spring musical takes place, so I was able to ask ‘Jeopardy!’ to give me early access to the episode.”

After the students and staff found out about his plan, they were quick to join in on the excitement and even offered a few ideas of their own.

“My fellow quiz bowlers and myself will be at the theater for the special viewing party. We will be selling Barker Barker t-shirts and desserts. We are just so proud of our teacher,” Beekerman said.

And so, as Barker prepares for his upcoming trivia tournament, he is overly confident and can’t wait to show for his supporters.

“Swing by and it’ll be a good time,” Barker said.

**#8 Newspaper News Writing
Champion: Madison Fenn, Yutan**

Madison Fenn

Imagine you're assigned the specific task of picking out the best candy in a candy store. Your job is to pick the one with the highest level of sugar, the best flavor but also well-liked by others. However, the downside is that you can only pick 20 out of all these amazing candies. This task is a slightly altered version of the job of assistant director of the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) of the Student Advisory Committee (SAC), Colton Wierzbicki.

This job requires Wierzbicki to select 10 juniors and 10 seniors from six districts across Nebraska to be members of SAC. Wierzbicki oversees three different activities; bowling, baseball, and co-directing SAC. The SAC committee is a voice for the students a part of NSAA and teaches leadership skills, integrity, and how to make positive changes. This year, there were 84 applicants.

Being a member of the SAC committee is a long process that requires a good GPA and excellent skills. According to Weierzbicki, the NSAA Student Advisory Committee is looking for good qualities across the board. Not only do you need excellent skills and a high GPA, but also good recommendations.

Once students are approved, they participate in many activities that benefit not only themselves but others as well.

"We did a food drive as well as a Halloween event, and This year we held a coin drive at the state dual championship. If you threw a coin in a bucket we donated that to the Carne food bank," Wierzbicki said.

As well as holding food drives, another important lesson the SAC members learn is to be a leader. One week out of the fall four different locations and they'd (the SAC members) usually present on something leadership-based, Wierzbicki said.

Even though one of the most important parts of SAC is raising money and supporting charities, one activity that all the members benefit from is filling the SAC members filling out resumes for how to help each district they are from.

“The number one is pretty simple, the resume filling piece is a benefit not only for them but for us. Like I mentioned, we have students from all six districts so the issues that are going on at each school are very different. So we look at different ways to help them,” Wierzbicki said.

One of Wierzbickie's favorite parts as an NSAA director is being able to reconnect with the baseball community and showing them important skills that will help them on the feild but also in the future.

“My favorite part is number one I'm a former baseball coach so I can still interact with the baseball community. Being in a school in the last school year and interacting with the team is fulfilling I should say,” Wierzbicki said.

As well as interacting with teammates and teaching life skills, the SAC members also participate in communication skills and service projects for the NSAA State Championships. One of Weirzbicki's goals is that the SAC members will learn from this program and it will impact them for the rest of their lives.

“My goal in life is to make any impact in life that I come in contact with,” Wierzbicki said. “So this job has definitely helped with that.”

#9 Newspaper Sports Feature Writing Champion: Haley Kube, Yutan

Haley Kube

For many athletic programs, achieving their teams' goals is the most important part of any season, and for Bobby Frost, his goal of surpassing expectations is exactly what has led Northeast Community College's Athletics "to staying on top."

Bobby Frost is the Sports Information and Athletic Event Coordinator at Northeast Nebraska Community College and has witnessed much success over the past year including the Men's Soccer team being ranked No.1 in preseason, the Women's Soccer team making their fourth-straight national tournament appearance, and the NECC baseball team being currently ranked No. 20 in the nation as the head into postseason play. With this in mind, Frost humbly contributes all of it to the people around him.

"You don't get to where you are without being lucky in the people you are surrounded by," Frost said. "By doing what you love, being around the people you love, and having the amount of success you do, it makes everything seem so much more worth it."

Frost takes pride in building the college's "brand" and likes to do it all by building connections with people inside and outside of the program.

"My personal goal has to be being an aide for all the coaching staff and the players in our programs," Frost said. "It helps what makes us successful as a school and more attractive to other recruits."

Even with his successful personal goal, Frost has faced his fair share of obstacles along the way. But he explains that it's simply part of his job as a communicator as in the athletic world "you never know what you're going to get."

"Being a Nebraskan resident, I have quite a bit of knowledge of the weather here, and that's one of the things that affect our athletes as well as making sure they are in the classrooms. That is also where I come into play of moving things around and making things comfortable for everyone else," Frost said. "However, it also challenges [my home life] as it leads to long weekends and busy nights."

Despite the struggle to balance his work and home life, Frost ties his responsibility back to his family ideals and being able to connect everyone on campus.

“We have a lot of athletes from different countries come in and have no idea what or where Nebraska is,” Frost said. “We take pride in making our athletes feel at home and connect with other sports’ teammates. It’s nice seeing the baseball team hang out with the volleyball team and the basketball team hang out with the soccer team.”

While building a good family dynamic has been a big part of his role at Northeast, Frost says the ultimate goal as a Junior Community College is “preparing them for what’s ahead.”

“Most of what people don’t know is that a ju-co is supposed to help students look for the next bigger plan. This means eventually that they are going to leave behind what they have built here and move on,” Frost said. “It’s our job to make sure they get there.”

Along with everything else, Frost has done a good job of making sure this happens for his student-athletes as many of the six soccer All-Americans accomplished their dreams of playing at a Division 1 school.

“We’ve had a lot of successful players move on and go to places like Chicago, Lincoln and other surrounding bigger schools,” Frost said. “As we bring more kids in, we hope to do the same for them.”

And so, as Frost looks to expand to what lies ahead of him next, he knows he’ll be at Northeast because it has been “the most rewarding job of his life.”

“As I tell everyone, the hardest jump is the one once you are on top, but as our school and coaches like to say ‘we are always looking to raise the bar,’” Frost said.

#10 Sports News Writing
Champion: Teghan Swenson, Louisville

Teghan Swenson

Sports News Writing

April 22, 2024

The Big Game:

The Jackson High School football team takes a leap for success in the state championship.

Oftentimes the credit and fame of a football team goes to the quarterback, but the kicker can be the unforeseen hero. The 2024 Jackson High School football team completed an amazing season, topping it off in the Class B State Championship game. The Rabbits went 12-1 on their season, sailing through most of their opponents. Their well rounded team brought them consistent success throughout the year.

As the stadium doors opened at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Nebraska, 3,500 fans rushed in to watch Jackson High School take on Summit High School in their very first football state championship. The Rabbits have qualified for the playoffs 12 times in the past, but this was their fifth consecutive year in a row, and they wanted success more than ever.

The game began with a march down the field on Jackson's first possession, resulting in a touchdown from the running back, Dan Smith. Additionally, the extra point was successful, putting them up 7-0. As Summit gained the ball back, they gained some ground by kicking a field goal for three points, closing the score gap by a bit. By the end of first quarter, a championship trophy was still well in sight for both of the teams.

After a water break, the game progressed through the 2nd quarter. The Summit Hawks began with the ball. After a costly fumble and loss of possession, Jackson picked up the football. The Rabbits made their way down the field for another heroic touchdown by Dan Smith. Halftime arrived with a score of 14-3, with Summit trailing. After a disappointing 2nd quarter from the Hawks, the teams flooded into the locker room to discuss strategy for the second half of the football game.

“We were disappointed at halftime, being down 11, but we were still confident,” said Summit quarterback, Larry Brown.

Both teams made their way back onto the field, ready to take control of the second half. Summit’s confidence and perseverance brought them success in the 3rd quarter. The Rabbits had the first opportunity, but gave up a turnover on the first possession. The Hawks were ready to battle as they gained the football. The offensive line moved down the field into Jackson territory, and the kicker sailed the ball through the uprights, scoring them three points. The Rabbits couldn’t get much work done with the ball, as it was quickly turned back over to Summit, where they paraded down the field into another touchdown. The 3rd quarter ended with an unexpected turn, as the score gap was dialed down to 1 point. Jackson led Summit into the 4th quarter with a score of 14-13.

The final 12 minutes of the championship game were about to begin. The players were anxious, the fans were on the edge of their seats, and it was anybody’s game. The Summit Hawks began with possession of the football. The boys drove down the field and settled on the safe option, a field goal, to gain them three points. The Rabbits took the ball back, in a desperate need to score. The Hawks were ready to defend their territory. With the championship on the line, the team fought their way through the Hawk defense to put them in good field position. Jackson reached the 27th yard line on 4th and 1. The Rabbits took a final reach for a first down and were successful. After review from the referees, a holding penalty call was made on the offense and the 1st down was revoked. There was only one option left to keep Jackson in the football game, a field goal. From the sideline came out Dan Smith, the team’s running back, to make the kick.

“I thought that the holding penalty was going to cost us the game. When coach said we were going to kick it, I got a big lump in my throat. I’ve only made a few kicks over 40 yards in practice.” said Smith.

Both teams lined up. Smith measured his angles and positioned himself to kick the ball. As the center snapped the ball, he ran up and made contact. All of the fan’s heads circled slowly, tracking the ball as it sailed through the air. The players on the sidelines closed their eyes, in suspense.

“I just tried to stay focused and keep my eye on that equator on the football. When I hit it, I knew it could be good. I was just hoping it would stay inside the right upright.” said Smith.

As the ball came down, it dropped between the uprights, scoring the Rabbits three points, to put them up 17-16. Many celebratory hugs and high-fives were passed out as the offensive line came off of the field. With 58 seconds left, the Hawks had one last chance to take them to victory, though they could not accomplish that. With four incomplete passes from Summit, the final whistle went off and the Rabbits were victorious. The Jackson football team flooded the field and congratulated their heroic kicker, Dan Smith.

“Wow. What an amazing football game. Summit’s kids played a whale of a game. I can’t say enough about their heart.” said Jackson head coach, Jeff Wittry.

Jeff Wittry has coached the Rabbits for 10 consecutive years, and led them to the playoffs five times. In his final season with his team, they gave him his first state championship.

“We were all so excited to win, and then when Coach Wittry told us he was retiring, we all got teary-eyed. He’s been such a good coach to have.” said Smith.

The Jackson High School football team brought home the gold at their first ever state championship appearance. The Rabbits stood victorious in their hometown, proud of their season’s accomplishments. The Jackson community is so proud of all of their hard work and determination. Reflecting on a good season, Coach Wittry says goodbye to his players. Although the kicker doesn’t make the big plays in a game, the Jackson kicker, Dan Smith, became a hero at Memorial Stadium.

**#11 Yearbook Feature Writing
Champion: Maycee Hays, Yutan**

Maycee Hays

Making a difference whether it be small or large can always make an impact. In just over a week, 14 International Baccalaureate (IB) students at Cornerstone High School used their creativity, activity and service (CAS) skills with hopes of bettering other cultures while in Vietnam over winter break.

This trip started north in Mai Châu, where they refurbished and built additional structures for the village's hospital playground with a focus on social and cultural sustainability.

"In Mai Châu, we were able to offer something that the hospital needed and wouldn't have had an opportunity to redevelop on their own through the playground," CAS Sponsor and history teacher Dr. William Smith said.

While in Mai Châu, the students performed a variety of tasks and provided a helping hand for the local community to appreciate. These tasks included sweeping and cleaning the area, repainting existing structures and more, which ended in a rewarding experience.

"Students have told me that this trip was one of the most transformative events that they had done in their life," CAS parent chaperone Jeffrey VanWesten said. "The trip really helped us to understand and be involved with other cultures."

Additionally, the trip offered various creative experiences like cooking classes, dance classes and a workshop taught by a local master artist in the Xuan La Village. Each of these resulted in memories that the students will remember for the rest of their lives.

"This experience was life-changing," CAS president Benny Chavez said. "I didn't know that there was such a beautiful place in such a small village."

Even though service was the main goal of this trip, the rich experiences of traveling through a variety of destinations around Vietnam were a bonus the students and chaperones were excited to see.

“During our third and final visit to the village, we took an hour and a half hike through the mountain valleys parallel to the rice paddies,” Chavez said. “It was the most beautiful place I’ve ever seen in my life.”

Looking back on the trip, VanWesten is proud to say that it was worth traveling to Vietnam alongside the 14 IB students over winter break.

“I found that it was really an incredibly rewarding experience and unifying trip for everyone who attended,” VanWesten said.

**#12 Yearbook Sports Feature Writing
Champion: Libby Ferguson, Mead**

Bump, set, sandwich?! Yes, you heard that right. At Sage River High School, lunchtime volleyball has taken everyone by storm with a new fun way to enjoy their lunch break.

David Savage, both the PE teacher and the boys Varsity Volleyball coach, had taken it upon himself to utilize the gym during lunch to give the students a way to be active during their break.

“It’s also pretty important because face it, you’re kind of just bored sitting around, doing nothing and kind of being unhealthy,” Savage said, “So it’s nice having something physical to do.”

The students have taken a huge liking to the lunchtime volleyball. They are able to hangout with friends while also learning about volleyball and furthering their skills.

“A lot of the players that are a part of lunch volleyball are really good so sometimes they give me tips to help me improve,” student Amanda Cru said.

The fun filled volleyball games have also given the students a space to make new friends and connections with people they may have not met before.

“Now that I have been in the gym more at lunch, I have made a ton of new friends that share the same interest in volleyball as me,” Cru said.

Newfound friends and better volleyball skills are not the only benefits that are coming from lunchtime volleyball.

“We used to have school issues that would happen over lunch,” Principal Monica Powers said. “Since we started lunch volleyball, we’ve seen a trend of better behavior.”

With lunchtime volleyball, Savage has provided an outlet for students to grow their volleyball skills, meet new friends and keep themselves from being bored. The program has seen huge success with the students and the school as a whole.

“Being able to see them every day, playing with them occasionally, and watching them be joyful every day and be healthy is just a really laid back, fun thing to do at lunch.” Savage said.

**#13 Yearbook Theme Copy Writing
Champion: Emma Rasmussen, Cambridge**

Emma Rasmussen

Opening - Edgar Allan Poe High School is on a mission, a mission to constantly better itself and the lives of the people in it. We strive for excellence in every aspect of our school. Our athletes train harder, our students study rigorously, and our staff aspires to offer the best education possible. In the hallways, Edgar Allan Poe High School aims to constantly improve student life through its implementation of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programs, leading to the creation of the Circle of Friends. Through the various community outreach programs and service projects, the student body is leaving a permanent mark on our area. In return, our community stands behind our school, and shows up for every home game, performance, and activity. Our reputation has earned us local, state, and national recognition for the greatness we have created at our school. This year, our black and white will shine brighter than any color ever could. You could even say that Edgar Allan Poe High School has been “Upgraded.”

Academics - Another way Edgar Allan Poe High School is making its way to the top is through its high end academic opportunities. With eleven advanced placement classes offered this school year, our students are receiving an elevated education that will set them up for success after leaving our halls. Additionally, Edgar Allan Poe High School is in its third year of its Career Academies Program, made possible through generous community donors. These new classes allow students to expand their interest and knowledge in various areas, ranging from healthcare, culinary, and agriculture, to automotive, welding, and construction. Furthermore, Edgar Allan Poe High School offers the only curriculum featuring mental health classes in Central Nebraska. Not only did our education impress, but our Play Production cast and crew outshone the

competition and rose to become the 2023-2024 NSAA State Champions. The students at Edgar Allan Poe High School are setting themselves apart from the rest in every way possible.

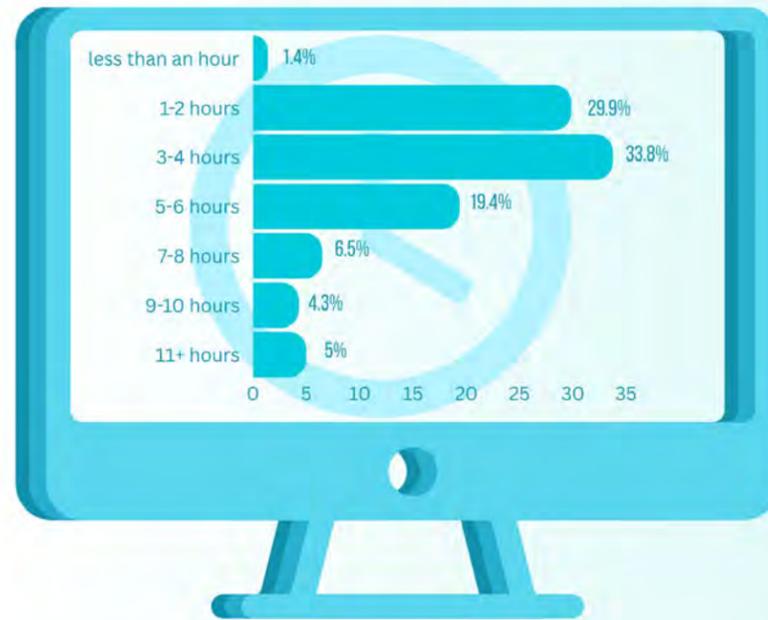
Closing - This year, our students truly left their marks. We spent the last nine months taking every step possible to create a winning atmosphere, both in and out of the classroom. Edgar Allan Poe High School wrote its name into state history, claiming two state championship trophies for the first time in school history. While the world lay dormant throughout the winter, our school was alive, busy, and working towards the next best thing. Come spring, we emerged back into the world with the annual Poe Parade, celebrating our achievements from the year with the people that made them possible. Our staff upgraded everything from the quality of classroom curriculums to the opportunities given to students, and our students took advantage of every opportunity given to them. We sent the Class of 2024 on their next adventures, well equipped with the knowledge and experiences needed to take them far. The students, staff, and community here are moving on and moving up. Our mission here is done.

In high school, especially today, mental health is something that has been stressed. Although mental health is very important, physical health is, too, and is oftentimes forgotten under all of the emphasis on mental health. As the journalism staff, we were inspired by people going the extra mile to make healthy choices as well as people who have to work around certain health conditions or circumstances. We also noticed opportunities for students at Yutan to make improvements to their health habits. Overall, our hope is that you, by reading this, will also be inspired to begin or continue to make healthier choices.

-Gabi Tederman,
written on behalf of the staff

#14 Info Graphic, Champion: Madison Fenn, Yutan

ON AVERAGE HOW MUCH SCREEN TIME DO YOU HAVE PER DAY?



32.6% OF STAFF AND STUDENTS AT YUTAN SUFFER FROM SEASONAL ALLERGIES



59.4% OF STAFF AND STUDENTS HAVE ZERO ALLERGIES

NO LUNCH  5%

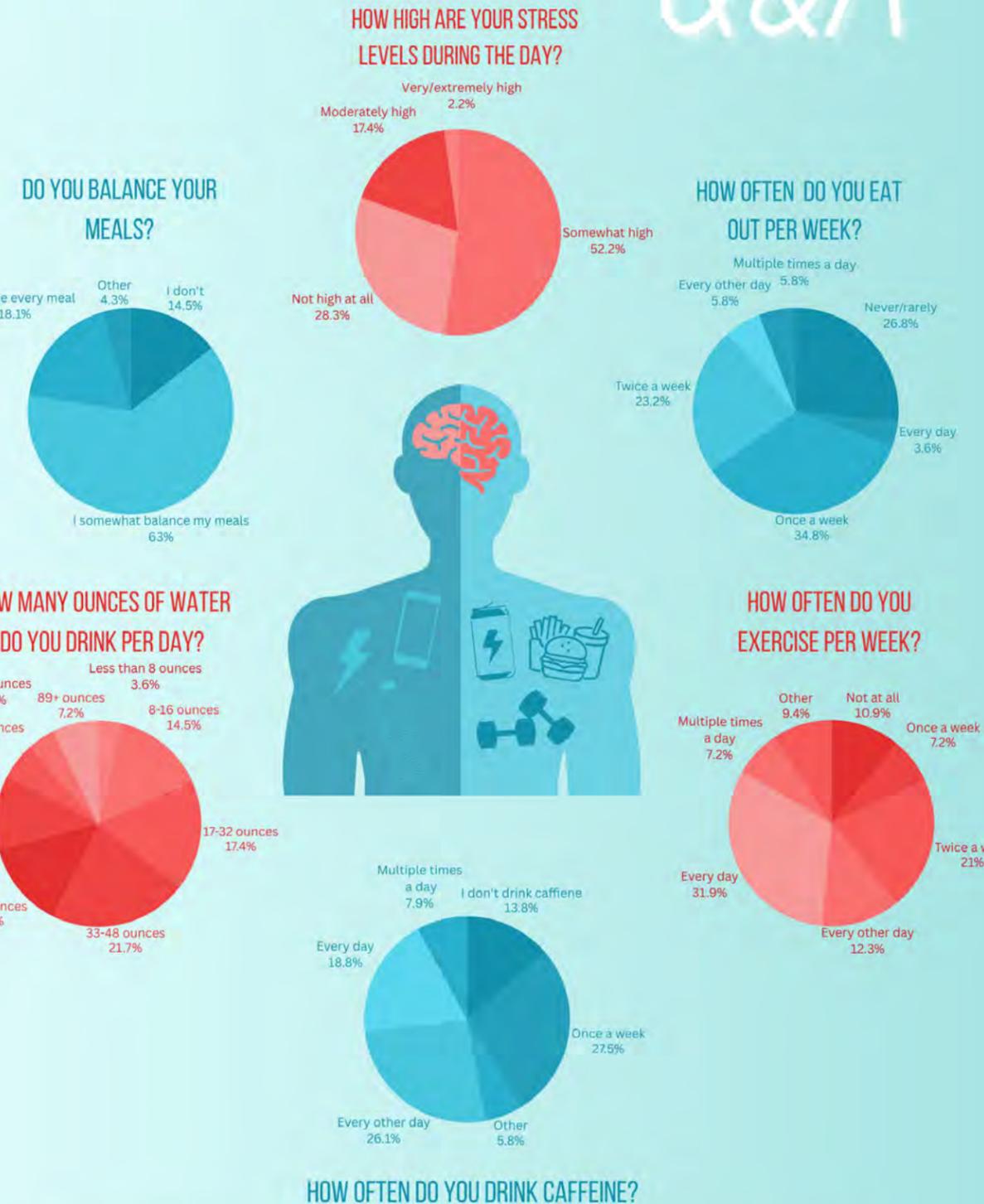
SCHOOL LUNCH  56.8%

LUNCH FROM HOME  38.1%

WHAT KIND OF LUNCH DO YOU EAT?

HEALTH SURVEY

Q&A



Information on both pages was collected by a survey sent to Yutan High School students and staff on January 10, 2024. A total of 139 responses were recorded. Infographics created by Maddie Bailiff.

2023-2024 CHIEFTAIN TIMES STAFF

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THE CHIEFTAIN TIMES STAFF WELCOMES LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND COMMENTS OR CONCERNS ABOUT OUR COVERAGE. PLEASE SUBMIT THEM TO ADVISOR GINGER EIKMEIER AT GEIKMEIER@YUTANPS.ORG. ALL ITEMS MUST BE SIGNED AND APPROPRIATE.

Infographic - Madison Fenn
(she publishes under the preferred name Maddie Bailiff)

Artist's Statement

When I made the Health Survey Q&A infographic, I had to create many things from scratch, such as brainstorming and making the survey, inserting numbers into graphs, and manually creating some graphs and images.

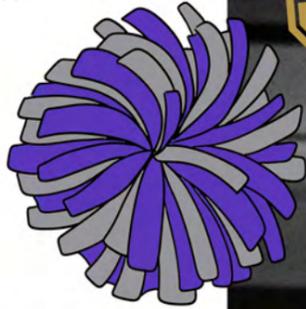
When creating the survey, making sure all questions would be easily understood and properly organized was the main goal, aside from making sure there were plenty of options when answering the questions. As soon as I had a wide range of responses from both staff and students from each grade, I opened a blank page on Canva. I began creating my own layout by typing in the numbers and creating a color scheme for the graphs that represented each question. Surprisingly, creating a color scheme was a drawn out process. At first, it was a muted purple and red, then it was muted red and blue, finally I decided I liked the red and blue but I wanted them to pop out more by making them brighter. After changing the colors of each pie chart, bargraph, and even some custom made graphs, I went through another drawn out process.

Arranging each part of the infographic became a struggle after creating the six pie charts with the person in the middle. Before I decided on the location and organization of this feature, I considered every possible outline. This feature floated around the page and rearranged in structure while also shifting in size many times before deciding on being the main feature on the right side.

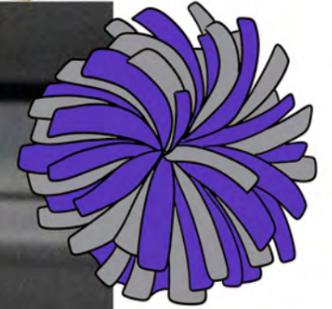
The three custom made graphs were designed specifically for certain questions. Even though I had pulled the images representing the item/person from Canva, I manually recolored, cropped and sized them. The computer outlining the screen time bar graph was made to represent repetition. I colored three different computers then grouped them to create the repetition effect. For the "What kind of lunch do you eat?" graph, I colored each of the items darkest to lightest as the item per answer continued further to the right. For the percentages regarding allergies, I pulled each image from Canva, then cropped them directly in the middle. After I did this, I recolored each half in two different shades then put them together to complete the image. This process was also how I created the person and the brain in the center of the six equally sized pie charts. Although creating this infographic came with a few trial and errors, each decision was carefully and very thoughtfully made. I am ultimately satisfied and proud of how great everything came together.

SPORTSMANSHIP

#15 In-Depth Newspaper
Coverage
Champions: Victoria Bose,
Adeline Hunt, Ashton
Kirkendall, Celia
Zetterberg, Ellora
Whitney, Ehme
Linner, Southern
Valley



*What
sportsmanship
means to
referees,
players,
coaches,
and
fans*



*Improving
sportsmanship
on the
court,
on the
bench,
and in
the stands*





SPORTSMANSHIP



Diane Balcom: a referee's reference

by Adeline Hunt

Diane Balcom is a familiar face around schools in central Nebraska. Balcom has been a devoted referee for over 40 years, reffing junior varsity basketball and all levels of volleyball. Over the years, she has seen high school sports change with new rules, different uniforms, and a variety of coaching strategies, but one constant is that refereeing is a challenging job, especially when it comes to sportsmanship.

As a referee, Balcom is aware of bad sportsmanship, and she works hard to not let it affect her. To not let the poor sportsmanship be taken personally, she reminds herself of a key point. “The biggest thing is they usually don’t know the rules,” said Balcom. She also acknowledges that often fans are just saying things to try to make the event more “interesting” in their eyes.

Balcom sees bad sportsmanship being a problem more with fans and coaches than the competing athletes. She believes bad sportsmanship often starts with a coach's actions, but then moves into the crowd. Balcom said, “The most common unsportsmanlike behavior I see is just being abusive with language.”

Once the atmosphere at an event is negative, sometimes the players are affected and begin acting unsportsmanlike as well. Balcom said, “Out of all of the fans, student sections tend to be the worst.” Since the typical high school student finds it entertaining and amusing to disagree with every possible call they can, it makes it challenging to keep the atmosphere positive.

Over time, Balcom has seen the importance of winning shift. Not only do the athletes want to win, but the parents want them to win at all costs too, and Balcom believes it has a negative impact on sportsmanship. “Parents have put so much money in their athletes to be better. But that does not always give you more wins.” The win at all costs mentality can lead some parents to make negative comments to referees.

Setting an appropriate tone for events begins with school leadership. Balcom believes, “Sportsmanship starts with your AD, and parents can provide positive leadership as well.”

Though bad sportsmanship can be seen at sporting events, Balcom also sees positive behaviors as well. “I have many athletes and coaches come up to me after a game and thank me. Some even will say I did a good job!” These encouraging statements are part of what keeps Balcom going as a referee. Balcom also loves meeting the coaches and school staff that work at events, but mostly it is “being around the athletes. I love athletics and seeing the athletes compete. Athletics can prepare you for life.”



Diane Balcom speaks to coaches and players before the October 19, 2023, volleyball game versus Wilcox-Hildreth held at Southern Valley.





SPORTSMANSHIP



Kamden Bose: a player's perspective

by Ehme Linner

Kamden Bose watches a shot in the holiday tournament game against Arapahoe on December 28, 2023.



In high school athletics, sportsmanship plays an important role, especially for the athletes. From the stands to the court or field, it's imperative for everyone to keep their conduct fair and respectful. Whether good or bad sportsmanship is being displayed, it can influence the course of the game being played, and it most certainly affects student athletes. Three sport senior athlete Kamden Bose said, "Sportsmanship is important because it sustains respect in sports. It makes sure players, opponents, officials, coaches, and fans have respect for the rules of the game and the opposing teams."

In Bose's four years of high school athletics, he has seen many good as well as bad examples of sportsmanship. Bose recalls one of his many positive experiences. "An example of good sportsmanship that I've witnessed in a game was when Sandhills Valley players helped our team up after they would tackle the ball carrier."

While there have been many good examples of sportsmanship, there have also been some bad ones that stand out for Bose. "A common form of bad sportsmanship that I've seen is fans yelling at the referees. Even though they occasionally may make the wrong call, it doesn't give fans the right to yell at the referees."

Displaying good sportsmanship is crucial in maintaining a positive atmosphere for student athletes, but athletes have no control over what goes on in the crowd. Successful athletes are ones that can ignore comments coming from the stands. Bose said, "As I've gotten older, the crowd during my performances has affected me less and less. I have learned how to drown out the noises in the crowd and focus on the game I'm playing."

It is essential for all individuals involved in high school sports to prioritize good sportsmanship to ensure that the values of respect and fairness are upheld so games can be played fairly while also being fun. "Sportsmanship plays a large part in high school athletics. Playing a sport is a privilege, and you should have respect for those who play it," stated Bose.

Without good sportsmanship there would be no sense of fair play, respect, or enjoyment of the game being played. These are what make athletics a positive learning experience for teenagers. Sportsmanship affects everyone involved but has a lasting impact on the athletes. Bose said, "Sportsmanship makes me a better leader and reminds me to be appreciative of the opportunity I have playing high school sports."

SPORTSMANSHIP DOS AND DON'TS

YES
YES
YES  CLAP POLITELY TO ACKNOWLEDGE
A GOOD PLAY BY AN OPPONENT

NEVER POST NEGATIVE CONTENT
ABOUT PLAYERS, REFEREES, OR
COACHES ONLINE  **NO**
NO
NO

YES
YES
YES  CONGRATULATE THE
WINNERS AND ALWAYS
SHOW RESPECT

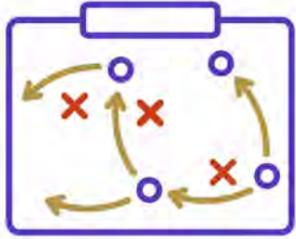
DON'T BE TOO LOUD AND DISTURB
PLAYERS AND REFEREES  **NO**
NO
NO

YES
YES
YES  OFFER OTHER PLAYERS A HAND
WHEN THEY ARE ON THE
FLOOR/GROUND

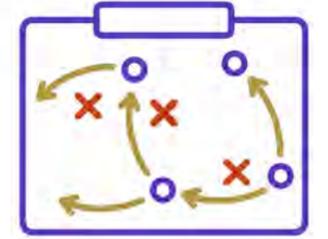
REFRAIN FROM ACCUSING
A PLAYER OF CHEATING  **NO**
NO
NO

REMEMBER!
ALWAYS REPRESENT YOURSELF AND YOUR
SCHOOL IN A POSITIVE MANNER





SPORTSMANSHIP



Richard McDonald: a coach's context

by Victoria Bose

Sportsmanship in high school is shown by many different people. One group that gets a lot of attention are head coaches. Richard McDonald has been the head girls basketball coach at Southern Valley for six years. In his time as a head coach, he has seen both good and bad examples of sportsmanship, but McDonald knows that his actions can set the tone at a competition.

Coach McDonald tries to be proactive in his relationships with other coaches. He said, "There are a few ways I feel I show sportsmanship as a coach. First, I introduce myself and spend a little time talking to the other coach (before the contest starts). The second way is by limiting how much we press bad teams."

Building relationships with other coaches is important to McDonald. "I always let the other coach know that if they ever need anything please let me know. I love helping others out." Sometimes though, other coaches are not as open to communication."

The level of communication can vary from one coach to the next. McDonald said, "Most of the time the other coaches are pretty good with their level of sportmanship, but it bugs me when a coach will not talk before a game. I understand not everyone likes to talk, but a quick 'how are you' and 'good luck' shows some class."

McDonald acknowledges that sportsmanship comes from all over the gym, not just the players and coaches. The crowd plays a big part too. McDonald said, "It is crazy how (the crowd's) interactions can shift players thoughts and actions. Most of the time it is negative: yelling at the players, yelling at the coaches, yelling at refs. If it were positive, I am sure it would have the same effect. Positive yelling, positive results."

Competitions can be intense, and McDonald knows that it can be hard to control emotions, but at the same time adults need to think about how they act. "The crowd is mostly adults and should have an understanding for what it is. Unfortunately, they get wrapped up into the emotions of the game, and that is what drives the behavior. It can be hard to remember that it is a game with teenagers."

McDonald might not be able to control the crowd, but as a coach, he can set the tone with his players. "Over the six years here as a head coach, there have been times with the other coaches too to make sure it is not continuing to happen."

In the end, sportsmanship can not only affect the way the game is played, but also have lasting effects when the clock runs out. McDonald said, "It makes it less about who you are playing and more about you as a person. When I think about sportsmanship, it goes beyond the game. After the buzzer it is awesome to see players talking from both sides. This only happens if your actions in the game respect the other team. People remember how you made them feel. Out of high school someone you played against may become your friend. This would not happen if you treat people poorly during a game."

McDonald wants to have a successful program, but he knows that part of the success is the lasting effects of good sportsmanship. "Teaching your players to be better people will always help them on and off the court. Being a good player is an awesome thing, but sportsmanship goes a lot further in life after sports."

Head girls basketball coach, Richard McDonald, speaks to players during a time out on December 9, 2023 in the game against Overton.





SPORTSMANSHIP



Mark Grove: an administrator's angle

by Celia Zetterberg

When it comes to talking about sportsmanship in schools, administration plays a key role. At Southern Valley, each game or activity has an administrator who supervises the student section and crowd. These individuals provide leadership and guidance, ensuring that the atmosphere at games remains positive. Mark Grove has been a principal at Southern Valley since 2009 and supervises many games and activities in both the elementary and high school.

Having good sportsmanship at a school is not always an easy task. It takes planning and requires consistency when implementing policies. Grove said, "Promoting sportsmanship within a school requires a multifaceted approach that involves creating a positive and inclusive culture around sports. The school, students, and community members must be involved to come up with a well-rounded and acceptable policy. By involving all of these people, knowing what the common goal is, schools can create an environment that fosters a culture of good sportsmanship among fans and students alike."

According to the Southern Valley Activity Handbook, the intent of the activities program "is to provide a wide variety of opportunities for our students to explore their gifts and talents through the arts and competition. The intent is for students to learn the value of teamwork, dedication, determination, goal setting, and sportsmanship. As a district we want our fans and parents to set the example of sportsmanship through respect for the game, opponents, and officials."



Principal Mark Grove supervises the Arapahoe home basketball game on January 18, 2024.

Southern Valley has guidelines if fans or parents are showing bad sportsmanship such as meeting with the activities director and receiving a written warning. If fans are ejected from a game, it is much more serious. Ejections results in a 14 day, 365 day, and then lifetime suspension from Southern Valley Activities and Athletics.

In addition to fans and parents, Grove knows that coaches provide a vital and visual example when it comes to showing good sportsmanship. "The players and the fans feed off the coach. They need to lead by example on how everyone should act during both practices and competitions," said Grove.

Additionally, Grove also has high expectations for players. "We are trying to raise amazing young adults who go on to be successful. It begins by showing and treating others with respect. Anytime we leave a place with our students, we want people to talk about how respectful and well-behaved our students were while visiting."

Supervising students and attending activities and sporting events is a highlight of Grove's job. He said, "My favorite thing about watching any activity is getting the chance to watch students, who were once young elementary students, go on to grow into young adults and then shine in their chosen activity. I just love watching them knowing that students who are involved in activities will know how to handle adversity later in life."

Sportsmanship
It's everyone's responsibility!





SPORTSMANSHIP



What happens in the stands matters

by Ashton Kirkendall

Sportsmanship is one of the main lessons that is taught during high school sports; however, spectators in the stands need to demonstrate this as well. Athletes are not the only people who need to know how to show good sportsmanship. As a part of the crowd, it is exceedingly important that fans contribute to good sportsmanship. Establishing a standard of how fans should act can help create an exciting environment in the crowd to develop the overall culture of a school.

Kristi Bose is the parent of four Southern Valley Eagles. One of them is a senior starter for the football and basketball teams. Bose has noticed, over her many years as a fan, that it is difficult to encourage a positive attitude when the people surrounding you in the stands are negative, and that negativity can affect what is going on in the competition. “Many times I feel like the referees call more fouls when our crowd gets negative,” Bose said. “It absolutely matters how the crowd acts.”

Bad sportsmanship also affects other fans. How one person acts in the crowd can influence the behavior of others. If one person starts saying inappropriate things, the surrounding fans sometimes join in, especially in intense games. Southern Valley community member and supporter, Dave Hunt, said, “I am personally affected by loud, obnoxious fans when I sit with them because I then begin to yell things (at the officials) that are not appropriate. I have learned that I need to be strategic in where I sit so I don’t become a fan with a bad reputation.”

It’s not just the fans that create the atmosphere in a game. “How the coach responds to officials also affects me. I always want to support our coach, so if he is becoming irate at the officials, I tend to get a little more vocal,” Hunt said.

Crowd energy can affect the players too, and not just with bad sportsmanship. It can go the other way. Hunt has noticed that “the crowd can bring positive energy to a game and players usually respond well to a high-energy atmosphere.”

Bose has noticed this trend as well. She said, “Positive comments toward players help give them confidence and they perform better.” That positive energy should be the goal of all fans in the stands.

Learning to display good sportsmanship will benefit student-athletes for much longer than just high school sports. When athletes learn to cooperate and maintain a calm attitude when things go wrong, it will help them when they eventually are in a professional setting. “Showing good sportsmanship is one learning experience that develops character that continues throughout life,” Hunt explains.

Hunt makes it a point to talk to student-athletes about their character. He said, “I have told many high school student-athletes over the years that I (and most fans) will not remember the record of a specific season or even the outstanding play that one athlete makes. However, I will remember the character of the player for many years. I will remember their character both on and off the court which is more important in life than wins and losses.”



Southern Valley supporter, Dave Hunt, watches the Eagles play Bertrand on January 4, 2024.





SPORTSMANSHIP



*When you win, don't rub it in
Raising the bar of sportsmanship at Southern Valley*

Sportsmanship can be looked at from different perspectives; there are good types of sportsmanship and there are bad types. Southern Valley students and athletes have shown both. This year we need to up our game and stay on the positive side of sportsmanship.

A common definition of sportsmanship is fair and generous behavior or treatment of others, especially in sports. Being an athlete is tough, especially when it comes to sportsmanship. Highschool athletes mimic a lot of what they see online or on television. If their favorite NBA player does something good or bad, then they will most likely do it also. High school athletes need to remember that they are representing the school and the community, not trying to gain attention or impress their friends.

There are many different opinions when it comes to sportsmanship. Some students say that others are just way too sensitive about it. At Southern Valley, unsportsmanlike conduct is not a huge problem, but we could be a little bit better at showing good sportsmanship. For example, when an athlete tries to help an opponent up and the opponent doesn't take the help, it can be frustrating. Later in the game, if that same athlete tries helping someone, it can be tempting to not take their hand. To some people, that could be unsportsmanlike while others think it is fine. As athletes, we should just take their hand and move on with the game. As representatives of Southern Valley, our athletes should be doing this more in competitions.

Sportsmanship is essential when it comes to high school sports, and it is not just the athletes that need to improve their conduct. Last year at the NSAA Girls State Basketball Tournament, the student sections of opposing teams would turn around, when the other team's lineups were being announced. The Southern Valley student section did this as well. Students were just trying to be supportive of their schools' teams, but that action is unsportsmanlike. Instead of turning around we can do better. Our student section can clap twice after an athlete is announced to show our respect towards them as competitors. When we are winning games, we need to just celebrate with our fans and players and not do anything to target the other team. Taking the high road is always better. Being unsportsmanlike reflects badly on all of us.

Athletes and fans need to have a better understanding about sportsmanship and pay a bit more attention to it. It's not a huge problem here, but we can still improve and do better. It is a topic that should always be on our minds for every player and every person in the stands. We all need to do our part. Our community needs to demonstrate good sportsmanship throughout the whole year for all sports and activities. We aren't doing too bad, but we can do better.



Built-in Bestfriend

Having a twin means having someone always by your side, whether you want it or not.

By Hailey Schweitzer

Most people know what it is like to grow up with siblings, but only 1 in 250 know what it's like to have a twin, and in our school there were an outstanding total of six pairs of twins ranging from kindergarten to high school. While you are walking down the hallways, you might think you are seeing double or see two students who look a lot alike and about the same age. "I thought I saw Angelina Cornejo walk past me, and then I turned around and a girl that looked just like her was standing by my door." EL teacher Mrs. Burry said. "I was so confused at first, and then realized that Angelina and Isabella were twins. They look so much alike."

Whether they prefer sharing a birthday or not, twins have a special bond with one another. "Isabella is my best friend," eleventh grader Angelina Cornejo said. "How could she not be when I've literally been with her since day one?"

Age seemed to play a big factor on how twins viewed each other. Younger elementary twins were less likely to claim their twin as a friend. "I do not think

Ezra is my friend because we fight a lot," first grader Audric Thalken said. "He even makes me mad on purpose sometimes."

The older the twins were, the deeper the bond between each other seemed to be. They were able to find the good in having a twin. "I would say Myles is a friend but also my best friend because he is always there if I need him," sixth grader Mason Vyhnaek said.

Multiple twins enjoyed doing similar activities in their free time. The activities enjoyed included anything from getting into mischief to playing new games outside. "Audric and I tried to trick my mom into thinking we were each other once," first grader Ezra Thalken said. "We made our hair exactly the same, but she wasn't fooled."

However, with all of these

similarities came many differences that made each twin's individuality stand out. "Loren and I have a lot in common but his favorite colors are blue and red," first grader Elijah Pracheil said. "My favorite colors are green and yellow because those are the colors of John Deere tractors."

Some twins disliked others being confused about who was who. Angelina and Isabella Cornejo made it a point to purposefully look different. "I wear glasses and make sure I'm dressed differently than Angelina because it gets annoying when people can't tell us apart," junior Isabella said. "Angelina wears contacts and for a while she even had highlights in her hair to make it easier."

Having a built-in best friend can make life just a little bit sweeter. "I like having a twin because we can always help each other out," third grader Sullivan Smith said. "I will always have someone by my side."

Sliding down the slide, first grader Elijah Pracheil picks a unique route down the slide to show off to his classmates Angel Gonzalez, his twin Loren Pracheil, and Breckin Barlow.



Running side by side, first graders Ezra and Audric Thalken each try to beat their twin in the close race to the finish line.

"My favorite memory is when my family was stopping at the bank quick on our way home and Sullivan yelled out 'lemonade' like it was a McDonald's drive through. We all laughed.

~ Everly Smith
(3rd)

Sharing the memories

Memories of growing up with a twin

"My favorite memory with Isabella is when we got bunk beds. We were so excited about, it but we fought for who got the top bunk because it had a ladder."

~Angelina Cornejo
(11)

"My favorite memory with Angelina was on our seventh birthday we learned how to ride bikes together."

~Isabella Cornejo
(11)



This VS That

Sullivan and Everly's Favorites

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Food: Taquitos | Food: Macaroni & Cheese |
| Color: Green | Color: Blue |
| Animal: Alligator | Animal: Chicken |
| Activity: Welding | Activity: Reading |
| Drink: Pepsi | Drink: Water |
| Song: Do Right Fear No Man | Song: Mountain Time |
| Movie: The Iron Giant | Movie: Migration |



Posing for a picture, twin sixth graders Mason and Myles Vyhnaek give the camera a smile.

Comparing their favorite stories, twin second graders Chloe and Kenzie Schweitzer share their books with classmate Karson Palky.



Showing their school spirit, twin juniors Angelina and Isabella Cornejo sit with their friends juniors Ariana Tellez and Andrea Pavlish during the pep rally.

#17 Photo/Artistic Illustration
Champion: Shie King, Southwest



Artist's Statement: I created this artistic illustration for the cover of our school's 2024 yearbook. The software I used to create it was IbisPaint X, which is a mobile app used for drawing. Since it is a mobile app, obviously I created the cover on my phone with nothing more than my stylus and finger. To create this artistic illustration, I began with a simple picture of blue lockers that were open, which I acquired through a Google Image Search. Everything else was hand-drawn by me and was inspired by the sports and activities we offer at our school. I created this cover in about two hours and some change, but that time was spread out across 2-3 days. I am new to our school, so I wanted to show them what I could do and what I'm passionate about...Art.

Shie King - Class C - Photo/Artistic Illustration



#19 Feature Photography
Champion: Libby Winn, Yutan



by Andrea Pavlish

Mother Nature being a Britney Spears fanatic wasn't something one would hope for, especially when her favorite song was "Oops, I Did It Again," yet five snow and ice days and two late starts within the span of three weeks was also not something one would entirely desire either. As the second semester rolled in for the 2024 school year, nearly half of the school days in the first few weeks were either canceled or shortened due to the hazardous weather. One week was even cut down to a day and a half because of the sub-zero temperatures and blizzard-like conditions.

With this, many complications and calamities arose from the series of Siberian cold spells and Arctic winds. "I was late to an important appointment because the snow plows hadn't gone

through yet," junior Ariana Tellez said. "It already took long

enough to get an appointment at the specialist I went to, so I was scared we were going to miss it when the snow slowed us down."

From sprinkling salt to scooping with shovels, many students found different ways to shield against the large drifts. "The worst part about the snow days was shoveling snow," seventh grader Faith Sherman said, "because it always got into my boots."

While scooping snow, most students claimed that they were the ones responsible for keeping their ever-filling sidewalks and driveways clear. "The snow reached the top of my shins," seventh grader Troy Dawes said, "but the drifts were about up to my knees."

These substantial drifts not only proved a struggle to scoop, but a struggle to maneuver around. "The drifts were as tall as my dad's truck," eighth grader Hadley Brandt said. "Without the wind, we got around a foot of snow."

Others took advantage of the piling snow. "Me and a few friends went around to neighbors to offer to scoop snow for whatever they were willing to pay," said sophomore Chase Tachovsky. "It was good opportunity to help people and to make some extra money."

Even after the roads had been plowed, wind gusts made it impossible for maintainers to keep up. "On one of the days that we were finally supposed



Courtesy of Baylor Behrens

Chilly winds didn't stop Baylor Behrens(11) and her brother Paxton Behrens(7) from building a snow goat in their backyard.

BRAVING THE COLD



Braving the cold, (clockwise from caption) Rosie Lopez Perez (9), Livia Schweitzer(9), Andrea Pavlish(11), Lily Lehr(9), Jace Yager(9), Briana Tellez(9), Colton Harrison(9), Megan Gordon(10), Mason June(9), and Michael Maldonado(9) climb on top of the massive snow pile at the front of the school.



Courtesy of Caden Axline

High gusts of wind formed drifts that closed roads for days, keeping all snow plows constantly running.



Courtesy of Caden Axline

Temperatures reached record-breaking lows in January during the days off. Visibility was minimal at some times due to the wind, as seen in the view from Caden Axline's(10) window.

to go back to school, I got stuck with my Jeep because all the snow drifted back over my road," senior Hailey Schweitzer said. "My dad and grandpa had to get me out with their offroad driving skills and a tractor."

The dangerous weather conditions also constrained indoor activities. "My internet went out so I just stared at the wall until it turned back on," eighth grader Lindsay Del Toro said.

Others had similar issues. "Our power and internet went out for a little bit," seventh grader Malikhi Gooding said. "I wasn't able to play games or anything."

Feelings of laziness seemed to overcome students as they were stuck indoors. "I don't really like being lazy for too long," seventh grader Brennaly Vazquez said. "I didn't really have anything to do."

Others in basketball and wrestling also felt this tug. "It was boring at home, and we had less basketball practice," junior Baylor Behrens said. "Plus, one game was canceled and another was postponed."

Despite these feelings, there were many great things about getting so much time off within the first month

of school. "The best part of having school off for snow days was the rest and having a break from it all," senior Owen Real said. "We didn't have to go to practice, worry about homework, or anything like that. There was no where to go, so I just enjoyed being at home."

"My favorite part was getting extra time off to do things outdoors like hunting," seventh grader Landon Shaw said. "Without the snow days, I would have never had the chance to do one of my favorite activities."

This seemingly never-ending precipitation may have hindered some activities but encouraged many others, whether that was taking a break or connecting with one's family. It also made people realize the value of human connection and how it affected them without it. "As much as I like having a day off from school, not being able to see my friends was the worst part of snow days because I rely on them," junior Mackenzie Luzum said. "They make me laugh, and they make me happy."





Lawrence/Nelson Public Schools

2022-2023



Lawrence/Nelson Public Schools

we stick together

2022-2023



PORTRAITS

Bonded Together

Throughout the 2022-2023 school year, the Raider family has demonstrated the true meaning of sticking together. From the classrooms to extracurricular activities, students and staff work as one to support each other and make every day successful. Lawrence/Nelson sticks together by being a tight-knit community of staff, students, and parents who share similar core values and who are able to create a family-like culture. Staff and students prioritize caring for each other and putting others' needs ahead of their own.

The students of L/N stick together by bonding and making memories over many years in the same classrooms. Their hard work and determination go beyond the classroom, on the court, and in the community, as it also goes into building relationships with each other. Students work to make every visitor, student, and staff welcome, and they take pride in their abilities to be helpful, respectful, and reliable. They support each other and try to push each other to be better than the day before.

The staff members of L/N stick together by showing respect for each other and their students and collaborating to help students succeed. Their main goals are to help create well-rounded and

"The relationships between staff, students, and parents in our schools and communities stand out. Parents and community members are supportive of the students and their activities, through their involvement in and support of groups that help provide the best opportunities and experiences for our students."

-Mrs. Janda-

kind humans, empowering them to take ownership of and value their education, strengthen their confidence, find their voices, achieve their goals, and promote leadership. Staff members help students engage in their education- and all it offers them. They also encourage students to celebrate their achievements, share ideas, inspire positivity, maximize their strengths, and support others.

The community of L/N sticks together by showing up for the student body. Whether it be a game, concert, banquet, competition, or art show, the community shows up in hordes to support and encourage the student body's hard work and well-earned accomplishments. They share their appreciation for teachers and staff with compliments and thank you's, and are always willing to lend a helping hand in some way or another. Our two small towns even work together to make each other successful. They share school sporting events to promote the small businesses in each community, and each thrives due to this support.

Due to our small towns, everybody knows everybody, and this truly helps create a culture where understanding takes place and relationships are easily forged. The theme of this yearbook, "We Stick Together," is the perfect definition of what our school and small towns exemplify. One could not be successful without the other, and the people within it would not be a family without the support of one another.

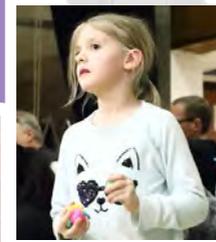


Above: Victoria Koehler (7) is caught off guard by our journalism camera before the start of a junior high basketball game.

Right: After a close student vs. staff game, the senior class members and staff stop to take a picture. The seniors ended up winning by only two points (41-39).



Right: Myla Hubl (2) waits patiently for the Chuck-A-Duck competition to start, which was hosted by the junior parents to raise money for post prom.



Left: Brooklyn DeLong (3) waves to the crowd while showing off her Raider spirit during the homecoming parade. The elementary looks forward to participating in the parade every year.

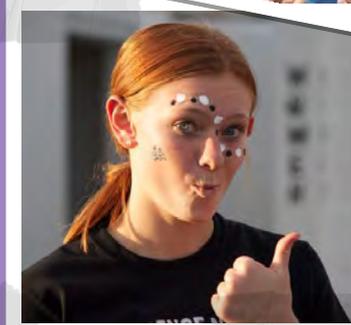


Above: Connor Janda (11) and Bailey Ceder (11) walk out onto the field as the junior class representatives for homecoming.



Above: William Dougherty (12) carries on a conversation with one of the veterans during the Veteran's Day Brunch. He commented that he learned a lot and enjoyed his time with the veterans.

Below: Mrs. Megan Hubl hugs Mrs. Tammy Alber after she received her retirement gift from the staff at the Elementary Awards Ceremony, showing just how much she will be missed next year.



Left: Kara Menke (10) gives the NAHS girls a thumbs up for their face painting skills at a home football game. Kara loves to support the Raiders!

Left: Kindergartener Wesley Herz is all smiles when he gets his turn to participate in Elementary Field Day. With Mr. Nolan Kawata by his side, he makes it to the finish line. He had so much fun, that is all he wanted to do the rest of the afternoon.

Class of 2035

#KINDERGARTEN

"If we were a sticker, we would be a bullhorn because our class, voices, and personalities are big, bold, and loud."

Kimber Bergen
Claire Bondegard
Brantley Buescher
Waverly Fanning
Layla Fox
Oaklyn Haba



Jakub Herbek
Wesley Herz
Breklynn Hofstetter
Dawson Hubl
Connor Kucera
Lane Kucera



Kaci Kutay
Ryker Livgren
Joseph Mazour
Landon Mazour
Kip Musgrave
Knox Schroer



Naomi Simenez
Renee Trinidad
Isabella Vaughn



Left: Layla Fox enjoys her lunch outside. Steak and hot dogs were served by the Beef in Schools Program.

Right: The Kindergarten class gets one last picture together during the awards ceremony before the school year ends.



Above: Oaklyn Haba, Landon Mazour, Joseph Mazour, and Isabella Vaughn sing "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" at the Elementary Christmas Concert.

"If we were a sticker, we would be a big stack of books because we are always full of creative and interesting stories."

Class of 2034

#FIRST GRADE



Logan Blakemore
Briar Davidson
Paisley Faimon
Katherine Hodge
Aldo Leyva
Delaney Mazour



Emmett Oeltjen
Jace Rodriguez
Blaine Schroer
Leah Svoboda



Left: Blaine Schroer flies her cardboard plane in the homecoming parade. Their class theme was Top Gun: Maverick this year. Mrs. Janda always comes up with the best ideas!

Right: Paisley Faimon is handed a Kindness Award from Wesley Herz (Kindergarten) during the awards ceremony for her kind, caring, and inclusive personality.



Above: Emmett Oeltjen and Aldo Leyva run hard against each other in the 50 meter race at Elementary Field Day.



Above: Leah Svoboda sits as still as possible while Mrs. Kylee Haba paints her face during the Elementary End-of-the-Year Carnival.



Above: Mrs. Janda's students take their final picture as first graders after they received their award packets. They are now saying "Hello" to the second grade.

Class of 2023

#SENIORS



Left: The senior class gets together for a group picture on picture day in all their goofy outfits.



William Thor Dougherty

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."



Alexandra Faith Haba

"Don't live someone else's dream."
- Anonymous -



Wyatt Lee Hajny

"Whatever it is, I didn't do it."
- Evan Jacobitz -



Chad Michael Holcomb

"When life shuts a door, open it back up. That's how doors work."



Evan Jeffrey Jacobitz

"Red and blue means freedom, until it's flashing behind you."
- Anonymous -



Toby Joseph Kotinek

"Mental toughness is a lifestyle."
- David Goggins -



Tyson Anthony Kotinek

"The roof is not my son but I will raise it."
- Anonymous -



Krayton Matthew Kucera

"When you wait until the last minute to do something, it only takes a minute."

"We stick together simply because we have all known each other for so long. From day one, we have all created an unbreakable bond."



Katelyn Rae Mazour

"Let the choice you make today be a choice you can live with tomorrow."
- Anonymous -



Keaton John Mazour

"You don't get to go through life only doing the things you want."
- A. Tate -



Kelia Lee Marie McKaskle

"Four years down, four more to go."
- Anonymous -



Trev Allen Mueller

"The thing with me is I am smart, I'm self-smarted, I self-learned myself."
- Erik Wheeland -



Thomas James Safago

"I once failed a calculus test sitting between Toby and Tyson. I just couldn't differentiate between them."



Emily Sue Troutd

"Procrastinator? No. I just wait until the last second to do my work because I will be older, therefore wiser."



Erik John Wheeland

"I have an idea so smart that my head would explode if I even began to know what I was talking about."
- Peter Griffin -



Devyn Wayne Zikmund

"Common sense isn't common."
- Anonymous -



Above: Krayton Kucera, Katelyn Mazour, and Devyn Zikmund get their groove on while dancing at prom.



Left: Chad Holcomb picks up Erik Wheeland as he tries to dunk a basketball during the Student vs. Staff Basketball Game.

Above: Chad Holcomb, Keaton Mazour, William Dougherty, and Wyatt Hajny take a picture with their projects they made for the Veteran's Day Program.

DRAMA

One Act & Dinner Theater



Drama Casts & Crew Members:

Back Row (L to R): Kole Thompson (9), William Schaefer (10), Erik Wheeland (12), Nolan Ost典ick (11), Nathan Ellege (11), Owen Smiley (9), and Riley Cannaday (10). **Middle Row (L to R):** Aidan Zikmund (10), Devyn Zikmund (12), Toby Kotinek (12), Nathan Pofahl (9), Madalyn Kennedy (10), Paisley Lowery (10), and Tyson Kotinek (12). **Front Row (L to R):** Brooklyn Combs-Glebe (10), Valentina Koehler (10), Harley Beale (9), Riley Funk (11), Natalie Jacobitz (9), and One-Act Sponsor Mrs. Alayna Ham. **Not Pictured:** Kelia McKaskle (12), Carter Griffis (10), Chad Holcomb (12), William Dougherty (12), Jessica Sole (11), Carson Vaughn (10), Sponsor Mrs. Jessica Stokes, and Thomas Safago (12).

This year the One-Act students performed "Teachers on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown." This hilarious play visits the lives of several school teachers at their breaking points and the students that finally push them over the edge. The Lawrence/Nelson thespians traveled to Harvard to compete in the TVC competition. The judges enjoyed the show, pointing out the positives and giving feedback on improvements. The cast received seventh place overall, and students who earned an Honorable Mention included Natalie Jacobitz (9), Paisley Lowery (10), Valentina Koehler (10), Tyson Kotinek (12), Erik Wheeland (12), and Devyn Zikmund (12). The students took the feedback and prepared for the district competition. Unfortunately, due to a winter storm encompassing the surrounding area, students were advised not to travel and could not compete at districts. Even though they couldn't finish the season, students were optimistic about what the outcomes could have been. "I think we would've had a decent chance at winning our last competition if we used all that we learned throughout the year," commented Toby Kotinek (12).

In the Spring, the dinner theater cast performed "The Dream Team," which was entirely written by sophomore Paisley Lowery. The play was about a young loner trying to create the perfect team of characters by interviewing pop culture icons in hopes of never feeling alone again. The interviews go as planned until things get out of hand and drama presents itself. In the end, everything works out, and they form a team. The students worked hard to make this play a reality. "I think there was a lot of pressure on some to make sure they did the best they could to make Paisley's play come to life," commented sponsor Mrs. Jessica Stokes. The students performed for the school and the public, where students, staff, and the community offered rare reviews after viewing the play. Students gave all their credit to Lowery, who worked extremely hard to provide the supporters of L/N drama with a new type of play.

Right: Devyn Zikmund (12) tries not to get hit by his complacent teacher, Tyson Kotinek's (12), during the one act play.



Above: Riley Cannaday (10) is annoyed by his teacher's, Valentina Koehler (10), unteacher-like behavior.



Left: In the dinner theater, Paisley Lowery's (10) character tries to decide whether she should let Erik Wheeland's (12) character join the team.



Right: Chad Holcomb (12) shows the audience what it takes to be a heartthrob character during his dinner theater performance.

"Our students worked together to help Paisley see her script become a reality."
—Mrs. Stokes—

JOURN

Journalism

"We stuck it out, supported each other, and worked as one team to get two yearbooks done in one school year."
—Mrs. Haba—

Right: The journalism staff works hard to finish up their spreads before their summer break starts.



Below: Cassidy Huston (10) shows off her medal that she earned at State Journalism. She placed eighth in Advertising.



Journalism Staff Members:

Back Row (L to R): Cassidy Huston (10), Madalyn Kennedy (10), and Paisley Lowery (10). **Front Row (L to R):** Natalie Jacobitz (9), Valentina Koehler (10), and Onja Myers (10). **Not Pictured:** Makena Cordis (10) and Sponsor Mrs. Kylee Haba.

This year's journalism class had their work cut out for them. With no journalism class the previous year and Mrs. Haba gone on maternity leave, they had the challenging task of completing not only the current publication; but last year's book as well. On top of this, they had to prepare pieces for state journalism and update the school's website. It was stressful for some as they had to remember what happened last year for events but it helped the students get familiar with the publication website, making it quicker to navigate when working on the current year's publication.

This year the staff decided on a theme that seems fitting for our school, "We Stick Together. The yearbook theme represents not only the popular trend of water bottle stickers but the environment and family-like feel of the school. Each student worked hard to complete yearbook pages and projects for state journalism. They helped each other and worked hard to make the staff successful. This year, sophomore Cassidy Huston, and technical support Madalyn Kennedy (10) traveled with Mrs. Kylee Haba to compete in the State Journalism competition held in Norfolk. Huston received eighth place in advertising and gained experience for upcoming years. "Though the class is small, it never stopped them from supporting each other and working hard to make a yearbook that holds a year's worth of memories for the Raider family to look back at," commented Mrs. Haba. The staff looks forward to starting fresh next year and creating another successful yearbook for the students, staff, and community to enjoy.

Left: Onja Myers (10) tries to work on her page, despite some of the distractions this class period sometimes had.



Below: Valentina Koehler (10) helps out the class by uploading and putting all the photos into their designated folders.



Left: Madalyn Kennedy (10) and Natalie Jacobitz (9) take time to enjoy their hard work and personalize their yearbooks during the distribution party.

we stick together

A Bond Stronger than Duct Tape

With two towns and two schools working together to make things go smoothly, things can get a little chaotic or confusing. The students and staff of Lawrence/Nelson roll with the punches and find ways to make each day grand. They have created a bond- a family- that sometimes butts heads but always finds their way back to each other.

The students are tested daily through their academics and sports, each overcoming obstacles and sticking to their goals throughout the year. "The upperclassmen were inspiring role models, displaying the hard work and determination that it takes to be a true Raider," commented Mrs. Kylee Haba. The staff members of L/N are constantly pushing through the various extra duties and activities, planning, grading, and balancing work/home life. They do it because they love their students and want to show that they support them in all they do. The students and staff of L/N create bonds stronger than duct tape. The students rely on these relationships for guidance, and the staff members enjoy having that personal connection with individual students.

The glue that holds Lawrence/Nelson together is the respect they have for each other and the notable character each Raider possesses. These characteristics are found in all the students, staff, and community members. They all show up to support each other and encourage positive progress. The bond that they have between each other is unbreakable, and even though it is two towns and two schools- they are still ONE FAMILY.



Above: Mr. Ramsey Hunt, Andrew Koehler (11), and Connor Janda (11) play with electricity and shock each other while attending the UNK Science Camp.

Right: Graduating senior Trev Mueller appreciates the support of his little sister Ashtyn Mueller (6). They will miss each other next year.



Left: Emily Watts (11), Onja Myers (10), Madalyn Kennedy (10), Devyn Zikmund (12), Bayln Bergen (11), and Claire Himmelberg (11) show off their hard work from the Hastings College Mural Competition.



Above: Roy Davidson (11) gets a thank you from Coach Brian Blevins during Parent's and Pink Out Night.

Left: The senior class takes a picture with the entire elementary school after their celebratory walk-through on their last day of high school.



Class C

#22 Broadcast News Story

Champions: Luke Reiter, Aquinas Catholic

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSEI2MKYQ-Q>

#23 Broadcast Sports Story

Champions: Bella Fontenot, Aquinas Catholic

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OyUu4Yq69L8>

#24 Broadcast Feature Story

Champions: Emma Rasmussen & Carson Trompke, Cambridge

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbdZlfW3Sbc>

#25 Broadcast Public Service Announcement

Champions: Adeline Hunt & Kamden Bose, Southern Valley

<https://vcloud.blueframetech.com/broadcast/embed/856368?w=640>