

The Wildcat Echo

A publication by the students of Maquoketa Valley High School

Hoeger, Reth are state champs

by Natalie Ries, FFA Reporter

Maquoketa valley FFA is achieving at the highest levels once again. This past weekend 16 members had their proficiency judged. A proficiency is a multiple-page write-up about the members' specific SAE. An SAE is a Supervised Agricultural Experience. All members have an SAE. Many members work with animals while other members work with mechanics and more amazing topics that interest that member.

Maquoketa Valley FFA had two state champions and three state runner-ups for proficiency rating this year. Eight members received a gold rating, five members received a silver rating, and three members received a bronze rating.

Kelsey Hoeger and Lacy Reth were both awarded for their outstanding work with a gold rating and state champion. Brendin Frasher and Nathan Beitz received a gold rating state runner-up with their proficiencies. Ford Domeyer received a silver rating and state runner-up for his time put into his proficiency.

Other members that received a gold rating were McKayla Weber, Nolan Honkomp, Tyler Hoeger, and Bianka Ronnebaum. Silver ratings were awarded to Leah Reicher, Caden Kremer, Tracy Reth, and Karly Kerch. Caden Ries, Ashton Klaren, and Ryan Beaman received a bronze rating.

Tonight's the night!

by McKayla Weber

Friday, February 28, the Maquoketa Valley High School Choir will present MV's Got Talent. This event features performances from Smooth Harmony, Jazz X-Press, Wildcat staff, and several small groups and solos. Genres of pop, folk, rock, musical theatre, and more! Doors open at 6:30 and start at 7:00, this will take place in the auditorium. Plenty of treats will be available to purchase at intermission! Admission is \$10, as this is a fundraising concert.

Speech team continues 24 year reign as TRC champs

by Taylor Saunders

Individual speech has been in motion for a little while now, battling the harsh weather just to get a couple of practices in. Our team just traveled to East Buchanan on Monday night for this year's Tri-Rivers Individual Speech Conference. We loaded the buses at 3:00pm, filled with nerves, but we came home champions. The participating students are listed below, along with ratings. All of these events did extremely well. Performing from 4:00pm all the way to 8:30pm, everyone did their very best and worked hard. We received 41 district I ratings and 8 district II ratings.

- Abby Nieman: Poetry: I
- Addie Wilson: Prose: I
- Alissa Bush: Prose: I, Public Address: I
- Arianna Nolan: Original Oratory: I, Expository Address: I
- Aubrie Althoff: Public Address: I
- Ella Reicher: Spontaneous Speaking: I
- Emily Hogan: Original Oratory: I, Public Address: I
- Emily Rudd: Improv: II
- Eva Mensen: Storytelling: I
- Ever Botos: Radio News: II
- Gabe Saunders: Prose: I
- Jeanie Teymer: Expository Address: I
- Jocelyn Kelchen: Poetry: I
- Joellen Bietz: Expository Address: I, Literary Program: I
- Lena Lewin: Literary Program: I
- Lucy Hucker: Storytelling: I, Reviewing: I
- Lylah Billmeyer: Storytelling: I
- MaryEllen Smith: Prose: I, Spontaneous Speaking: II
- Matthew Schaul: Spontaneous Speaking: I
- Maya Smith: Original Oratory: I, Public Address: I
- McKayla Weber: Radio News: I
- McKenna Bush: After Dinner: II, Reviewing: I
- Morgan Clemen: Acting: I, Storytelling: I



Aubrie Althoff rehearses her public address with Ms. Crumpton. She earned a division I rating at conference and will compete at districts with the rest of the team Saturday.

- Nicholas Otting: Poetry: I
- Noah Whalen: Improv: II
- Ollie Hunter: Solo Musical Theatre: I
- Preston Salow: Improv: II
- Rylee Reed: Poetry: I
- Sam Howes: Prose: I
- Sebastian Charles: Spontaneous Speaking: I, Literary Program: I
- Sellah Ambundo: Poetry: I, Solo Musical Theatre: I
- Taylor Saunders: Acting: I, Reviewing: I
- Tommie Cole: Poetry: I, Reviewing: II
- Trish Dietiker: Prose: I
- Tristen Flanagan: Radio News: I

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Vocal jazz has final regular season competition

by McKayla Weber

On Wednesday, February 25, 2025, members of Maquoketa Valley Jazz Choirs, Smooth Harmony and Jazz X-Press traveled to Coe College for the Coe College Jazz Summit.

Smooth Harmony performed three pieces, "Bye Bye Blackbird"- arranged by Beth Mueller featuring solos from Owen Boring, Sellah Ambundo, and Brady Eike; "Yesterday" arranged by Ben Parry, with a solo from Tristan Dietz; and their final piece, "Feeling Good" arranged by Jeremy Fox with solos from Sellah Ambundo, Olivia Hunter, Breece Hoisington, and Ryleigh Moriarity.

Jazz X-Press also had three pieces including, "Centerpiece" arranged by Beth Mueller with soloists Shane Wright and Joellen Beitz; "The Luckiest" arranged by Kerry Marsh featuring a solo from Taylor Saunders; and "No Moon At All: arranged by Beth Mueller.

Joellen Beitz and Sellah Ambundo were awarded Outstanding Soloist for their respective groups.

Both groups received great feedback. Recently Smooth Harmony submitted an audition recording to see if they will qualify for state vocal jazz. They will also be performing at tonight's MV's Got Talent.



Sellah Ambundo, part of Smooth Harmony, solos at the Coe Jazz Summit. She was named Outstanding Soloist for the group.

Fine Artists of the Week

Name: Lena Lewin

What event are you in for individual speech?

Literary Program

What do you enjoy most about individual speech?

I was able to have fun not only with my speech but also with my friends!

What have you learned through this event?

That sometimes it's okay to be scared but you can do it.

What other event would you like to try and why?

I think it would be fun to do storytelling, there's so much creativity and fun that goes with it.

How will speech help you in the future?

I believe that speech will help me in the future by being able to speak publicly and not get so nervous.



Name: Jocelyn Kelchen

What event are you in for individual speech?

I am in Poetry.

What do you enjoy most about individual speech?

I enjoy being able to go and watch other performances.

What have you learned through this event?

I have learned how to step out of my comfort zone.

What other event would you like to try and why?

I would possibly try acting because I have seen a lot of good acting and it looks like fun.

How will speech help you in the future?

Speech has helped me be able to talk to people without being nervous.



Speech results, cont.

Not only did we all receive strong ratings, the majority of our events placed high in our centers. We received 18 Best of Center awards as a whole. The students who received these honors are listed below.

Alissa Bush: Prose

Sam Howes: Prose

Jocelyn Kelchen: Poetry

Sellah Ambundo: Poetry

McKayla Weber: Radio News

Arianna Nolan: Original Oratory

Ollie Hunter: Solo Musical Theatre

Morgan Clemen: Acting

Lylah Billmeyer: Storytelling

Morgan Clemen: Storytelling

Alissa Bush: Public Address

Emily Hogan: Public Address

Ella Reicher: Spontaneous Speaking

Matthew Schaul: Spontaneous Speaking

Jeanie Teymer: Expository Address

Joellen Beitz: Expository Address

Lena Lewin: Literary Program

McKenna Bush: Reviewing

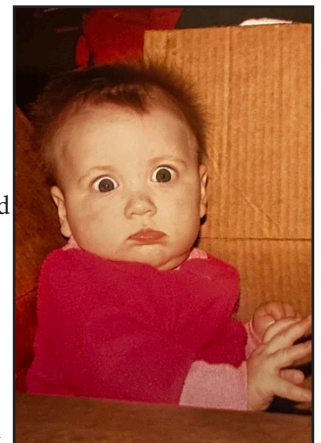
To further show our talent and dedication to speech, we were able to bring home the Eagle as the 2025 Tri-Rivers Conference Individual Speech Champions, a reign we've held since 2002. We greatly appreciate the hard work from our students as well as our beloved coaches. Wish us all the best as we go into this weekend for Districts at Independence this Saturday. We would love for everyone to join us there and cheer us on as we compete to travel to State! As always, go Cats!

Cutie

by Alaina Mead

What a shocked cutie! This cutie

lives outside of Manchester and is a sophomore! She is the youngest in her family and has one older sister. She is also involved in volleyball, dance team, track and speech. A fun fact about her



is that she breeds puppies!

Excitement at state wrestling, Beitz earns third state medal

The state wrestling tournament ended with Nathan Beitz competing in the class 1A 215 finals Saturday night where he took on the undefeated defending state champ Ashton Honnold of Nodaway Valley. Honnold defeated Beitz 7-0 to give Beitz a second-place finish. He had previously finished third twice. (photos courtesy of Jody Hatfield and Madi Kuehns)



Ticket punched! Girls basketball on to state!



After defeating MFL-MarMac 47-19 last Friday night and seventh-ranked Denver 54-36 Wednesday night in the regional finals. The Wildcats are seeded seventh in the eight-team state bracket and will play 23-1 Iowa City Regina next Wednesday at 10am at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines. (photos by Mr. Dunlap)

Comedy Corner

—compiled by Grace Richter

Since boy's basketball ended this week, and our girls are going to state, here are some basketball jokes that will have you giggling!

Why can basketball players go on vacation? Because they would get called for traveling.

How do basketball players stay cool during a game? They stand near the fans.

What rapper plays basketball? Post Malone (and Gelo)

Why do basketball players love astronomy? Because they like seeing shooting stars.

What do you call a shrimp that is good at basketball? LePrawn James.

OT loss ends boys' season



Senior Tate Intorf drives to the hoop in the district final game against Don Bosco Wednesday night. MV lost 61-54 in OT.

All-Conference Basketball

First Team

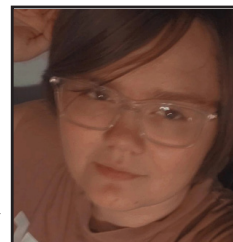
Brady Wall
Bianka Ronnebaum
Audra Burbridge

Second Team

Dylan Knipper
Anderson Holtz
Grace Richter

Honorable Mention

Tate Intorf
Jada Knipper



by Arianna Nolan

I was inspired this week by a speech I read in American Lit. about the importance of valuing life. It's a big problem in the United States today that we do not value life as much as we should, as alcohol and nicotine addictions are very prominent and many people tend to give up as their first option rather than trying. I can't say that I am innocent to this fact either, as I let my mental health take over instead of trying to fight, so I hope this message can not only help everyone here at Maquoketa Valley but also myself.

Why is life valuable? Well, to start you only live once. By some miracle, life on earth was created, and we are all now living proof of that. Every single person on Earth is different in some way, whether it be our appearance or the way that we act. You are only going to exist once, and there is never going to be another person who is exactly the same. You need to create the legacy of who you are and find that motivation to create that legacy. This, in my opinion, is the hardest part of the process. Finding motivation to want to create goals and live your life to the fullest may seem easy, but finding the motivation to put those steps into achieving those goals is a lot harder than you may think. So, you need to find motivation to why you want to achieve those goals besides the obvious answers. For example, instead of having a good job to make a lot of money, try to think outside of the box. Maybe, what do you want to do with that money? Or why are you picking that job specifically? And if you can't find a reason to do it for yourself, try and find someone else who wants you to do that specific thing, and motivate yourself based on that.

Another thing that was brought up in the speech was living life to the fullest. This task may seem daunting to some people at first, but when you look at it in a different, less complex lens, it actually seems possible. The motif used in the speech was the number three: three things you should do to live your life to the fullest, three things you can do today to change your life, three things you should focus on in life, and more. So, I challenge you to come up with the three most important things to you and to keep going so you can either achieve those things or appreciate them. For me, the three most important things would be:

The people I love.
Being successful.
Being my best self.

By establishing these three values, it not only creates a reason to keep going but helps you understand yourself. By understanding yourself, you can create goals for your life more easily and understand why you do certain things. In the end, you are the most important person in your life because you are the reason you can bring happiness into people's lives. This brings me to my final message: I want you to spread the word about the value of life to other people. Whether that be donating to an organization or supporting them in some way, supporting people's lives, or writing messages or telling someone about how you appreciate them being in your life, you can create reasons for someone to keep going in their life. Thank you for reading, and I love you all, and I hope you all know that.

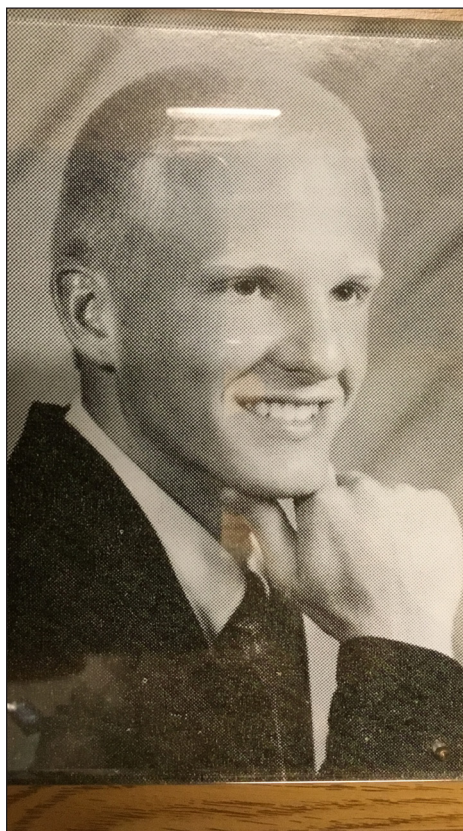


photo by Jaelyn Butikofer

Where in the school can you find this object? Be the first one to correctly name the place to Mrs. Temple face-to-face to win something from the prize box! *Last week's photo was in the wrestling room. The winner was Jaron Hoefler.*

Fantasy Fiction: Trouble in Therapy

We left off in our last installment, Elizabeth and Chris are having car problems and can't get reach Elizabeth's father.

by Abby Nieman

"Hey, it is okay. We can go to the mechanic's shop to get your dad to help. Do you know the number of the mechanic shop?" Chris asked, trying to calm me down. The little flying thingy was there, and it was the fastest it had ever been.

"Yeah, I know the shop's number."

"Okay, take a deep breath and tell me it."

"(800) 432-7591." Chris put the phone on speaker, and we sat there listening to it ring once, twice, three times, and there was a voice from the other line.

"Hello, this is Rusty's Wrench and Ride. How can I help you today?"

"Hello, this is Elizabeth Wilson, and I would like to talk to Andrew Wilson."

"Okay, give me a minute." The line went silent for a second, and then Dad picked up.

"Hello, this is Andrew. How can I help you?"

"Dad, Chris's pickup won't start, and his Dad didn't answer his phone."

"Is his dad, by chance, Mr. Liam Martinez?"

"Yeah, that is my dad," Chris said

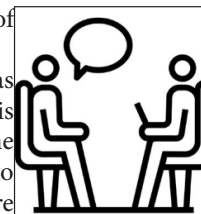
from the driver's side of the pickup.

"Well, he was just in here for his pickup. It did the same thing. I'll come out to look at it, but where are you?" Dad asked over the phone.

"We're in the parking lot down the old feed store alley."

"Okay, I will be there in a second."

"Beep beep beep," went the phone.



Logan Beaman



Activities involved in during high school: Band 1-year Football 2-year golf 4

Which activity affected you the most? How? Golf because I have learned a lot about a sport I had no clue about.

What advice do you have for freshmen? Get a truck and do some burnouts

What do you appreciate most about Maquoketa

Valley? Just an easy environment to get through and easy teachers.

If you could relive any moment in high school, what would it be and why? Probably electricity class and paid more attention so I know more about switches and whatnot.

What classes have you enjoyed most in high school? Engineering, welding, and all art classes.

Who is your most inspirational high school teacher? Why? Mr. Dunlap because his attitude is always great and it never seems he is having a bad day even though he is having one.

Who is your most inspirational elementary or middle school teacher? Why? Mrs. Goldsmith because she was very kind and happy to be there.

What is a favorite elementary/middle school memory? Just talking to my friends

What does your future (college and career) look like? Going to go full-time being a mechanic and a tire flipper.

What's your favorite school lunch? Orange chicken

What song will always remind you of high school? "I Hope" by Jay Lewis

When you're not in school, what are you most likely doing? Flipping tires and milking cows "job" or working on my truck when I am not working.

What event from high school do you hope your classmates still talk about at your five-year class reunion? At the moment I am going to wait until the 10th year before I am going to deal with my classmates again.

Savannah Hoffmann



What advice do you have for freshmen? Don't wait until the last minute to get your assignments done and don't allow yourself to fall behind in class.

What do you appreciate most about Maquoketa Valley? The teachers and staff taking the time to listen and understand the students.

If you could relive any moment in high school, what would it be and why? English 4 with Mrs. Moenck. Because it was a

class of fun and laughter, the kids in this class made the most out of the time there.

What class have you enjoyed most in high school? Being able to have the classes that I wanted to do and not being told that I can only have specific classes

Who is your most inspirational high school teacher? Why? My IEP teacher from sophomore to junior year. Although she was a teacher at a different school, she was the one who made me realize that if I didn't work to get to my goals, I wouldn't make it to them. She was the teacher that got me on the right path.

Who is your most inspirational elementary or middle school teacher? Why? Mr. Engles, although he is a teacher at a different school, he knew how to lighten up the day. And as soon as you walked into his class, you knew that he had something planned that was going to make the class come together and have fun

What is a favorite elementary/middle school memory? About halfway through seventh grade Covid hit. It was March 13th, and everyone thought that we would all go back the following week. But we didn't, and this led to everyone thinking that we wouldn't see the teacher that we all liked. But the following year we all found out that he was able to move up to teach eighth grade.

What does your future (college and career) look like? I plan on going to Capri College to take the nail tech program.

What's your favorite school lunch? My favorite lunch was the school pizza.

What song will always remind you of high school? "Work This Out" from High School Musical

When you're not in school, what are you most likely doing? Spending time with family

What event from high school do you hope your classmates still talk about at your five-year class reunion? The English and government classes from senior year

Tyler Mineart



Activities involved in during high school: Football (freshman), Golf (freshman, sophomore, junior), FFA (sophomore, junior, senior)

Which activity affected you the most? How? FFA because it taught me about friendship and the importance of just having fun in high school.

What advice do you have for freshmen? Don't spend your entire four

years on schoolwork. Find time to have fun with your friends.

What do you appreciate most about Maquoketa Valley? The teachers are always willing to help.

If you could relive any moment in high school, what would it be and why? Junior year at FFA events.

What class have you enjoyed most in high school? Any of Mr. Palmer's classes. They teach you life skills and good lessons.

Who is your most inspirational high school teacher? Why? Mr. Palmer because he isn't a lecture teacher. His classes are hands-on classes and they teach you many valuable lessons.

What is a favorite elementary/middle school memory? Middle school track when basically the entire middle school was doing it that year.

What does your future (college and career) look like? I'm going to lineman school this summer and then an apprenticeship where I have an opportunity to travel 7 states working.

What's your favorite school lunch? Pizza!

What song will always remind you of high school? Any sad song probably

When you're not in school, what are you most likely doing? Work, being with friends or family.

What event from high school do you hope your classmates still talk about at your five-year class reunion? Memories from Prom.

Matthew Schaul



Activities involved in during high school: Cross Country, Track, Baseball, Speech, and Student Council.

Which activity affected you the most? How? Being involved in Cross Country has affected me the most as I have been able to develop strong relationships with teammates and coaches, develop friendships with other runners throughout the state, develop a better work ethic, and develop

healthier habits into my lifestyle.

What advice do you have for freshmen? Learn how to manage your time efficiently and effectively as it will not only help you with school, but also many other things in your life.

What do you appreciate most about Maquoketa Valley? I appreciate the teachers and staff because they are always willing to help set us up for success with anything whether that be academically or just life in general.

If you could relive any moment in high school, what would it be and why? Getting 2nd as a team at the State Cross Country Meet my freshman year with my brother (Michael), Cy, Nolan, George, Toby, and Arion because I miss that team.

What class have you enjoyed most in high school? AP Physics.

Who is your most inspirational high school teacher? Why? Mr. Dunlap. He is always talking to people in the hallways between classes and comes to school every day with a positive attitude.

Who is your most inspirational elementary or middle school teacher? Why? Mrs. George. She always showed care toward her students and we never left the classroom without a laugh.

What is a favorite elementary/middle school memory? Parachute day in P.E.

What does your future (college and career) look like? Attending Mount Mercy for a bachelor's degree in accounting to become an accountant and continuing my athletic careers in Cross Country and Track.

What's your favorite school lunch? Chicken strips with curly fries.

What song will always remind you of high school? "Simple Man" by Lynyrd Skynyrd (shoutout to Mr. Andrews)

When you're not in school, what are you most likely doing? Spending time with friends and family, running for Cross Country or Track, or doing some random sport/hobby.

What event from high school do you hope your classmates still talk about at your five-year class reunion? All of the fun stories from extracurricular activity events such as going to State for Cross Country and Track and going to All-State for Speech.