

# The Wildcat Echo

A publication by the students of Maquoketa Valley High School

## A change in the office: Mr. Mangold and Mrs. Thomas

There's been a change of guard in the high school with Mr. Osterhaus becoming superintendent and Mrs. Lown moving to Madrid, Ia. Let's get to know some new Wildcats!

by Maya Smith



This year, MV welcomes a new Wildcat into our family: Mr. Mangold, our new principal! I asked him some questions so we could all get to know him a little better.

**What did you do before coming to MV?** After graduating from UNI, my career started in Iowa City where I taught and coached for 7 years. I moved to Colorado in 2008 and continued teaching for 8 more years until I transitioned to school administration. In 2016, I became an assistant principal and athletic director before moving back to Iowa in 2018. For the last 7 years I have been the principal for the Hubbard-Radcliffe CSD which is part of South Hardin Schools in central Iowa. My family includes my wife Heather, who is a mental health therapist and our two children. Brinley is in 6th grade and Brooks is in 3rd grade.

**What do you see as strengths of MV?** MV has many strengths but there are two that I would like to highlight from my first weeks of the school year.

1 - Relationships. The staff know the students well and go above and beyond to create a top notch learning environment for each and every student. The relationships help with engagement in the classroom but our educators care about our students' achievements outside the classroom as well. Our activities and athletics are well represented and supported by the community.



2 - Systems. In my experience, great systems make great schools. MV has created systems that will support students in many ways. Students are given the tools they need to take ownership of their learning and protocols are in place to support students in a timely manner when needed.

**What do you enjoy doing outside of school?** This may seem odd but my favorite season is winter. I spent my 30's in the mountains of Colorado and enjoyed all of the activities that come with it, depending on the time of year. My vacations usually consist of snowboarding but I am always open to any outdoor adventure.

**How have you enjoyed this first week and half?** The first couple weeks of school have been amazing! I am trying my best to meet as many students and families as possible. I learn from this amazing staff everyday and truly enjoy the growth mindset that resonates in our school. My goal is to look, listen, and learn as much as possible while building as many relationships as I can. I have been very impressed by the work ethic of the staff and the great manners from the students.

**What are some fun facts about you?** I am

an Iowa Hawkeye fan, and I have ridden my bike in RAGBRAI seven times.

by Taylor Saunders

Mrs. Thomas has joined MV as a high school secretary. She started in June and has a lot to learn in these short few months. Learn more about her!

**What do you enjoy about your job?** I enjoy the people I get to work with every day.

**What did you do previously?** I was the administrative assistant in the high school back in my hometown in Nebraska.

**Tell me a bit about your home life and family.** I am from a small town in Nebraska, where we just moved from the end of May. My husband, Jon, is a graduate from MV. I have two children: my son Jayden in 7th grade and my daughter Anna in 4th grade.

**What are some of your hobbies?** I enjoy spending time with family and watching my kids in all of their sporting events.

**What is one thing you want the students and staff at Maquoketa Valley to know about yourself and your beliefs?** I'm so excited to be here and a part of the Maquoketa Valley family. I love getting to know each and every one of you so please don't be shy and say hi!



# FFA has busy, productive summer

by McKayla Weber, FFA reporter

Maquoketa Valley FFA had a full-to-the-brim summer, and we wouldn't have it any other way. Our first journey of the summer began at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids, where select members participated in State and District-Level Events. Members of State Horse Evaluation include Lacy Reth, third-place individual; Tracy Reth, eighth-place individual; and Kayla Hoeger. As a team, they won State Runner Up. In State Floriculture, members were McKayla Weber, Ella Reich, and Anna Feldmann. They received a silver rating. Participating in District Livestock Judging were Alison Schulte, Tyler Beitz, and Olivia Ronnebaum. They were the 7th-place overall team.

That night, after returning from Cedar Rapids, Ms. Lau and the officer team packed their bags and the van with necessities for four days of hard work, bonding, and creating memories. The officer team traveled to a cabin in Lansing, Iowa, where they worked on planning the next year's worth of activities. Plenty of memories were made and fun was had, including a visit from some local raccoons!

On Monday, June 16th, McKayla Weber had her bags packed and ready before Ms. Lau picked her up and met two advisors, two students, and a parent from local districts at Theisen's in Dyersville. From there, they made their way to the I-80 Truckstop in Walcott, Iowa. McKayla got on a bus with roughly 40 other FFA members from all across Iowa and had a 15-hour trip to Washington, D.C., to attend the Washington Leadership alongside over 350 FFA members from all over the country. While in Washington, D.C., she was allowed to learn the history of the city and some of its great monuments, and the leaders behind the monuments. When she wasn't traveling the city, she spent time in Community Group and Large Group Sessions, where they made a "Living to Serve Plan." An ALTS Plan is an event or community service project you plan to bring back to your community.

On June 18th, the 2024 Dairy Evaluation team, consisting of Ford Domeyer, Ty Hoeger, Caden Kremer, and Bianka Ronnebaum, and their mothers, along with advisor and assistant advisor Ms. Haylee Lau and Mrs. Kristi Willenbring, flew out of Chicago's O'Hare International Airport

for Edinburgh, Scotland. After landing, they spent a day touring some of Scotland's finest attractions. Beginning June 20th, the team took the Royal Highland Show. After judging on the 21st, the team spent the rest of their time overseas traveling through many cities. Along the way, they treated themselves to lots of ice cream; who could blame them? By June 25th, the group had made its way into Ireland, seeing several dairy farms, castles, and a fairly large ferry. On June 28th, the team judged at an agricultural exhibition where they tied for 2nd place. On June 30th, Caden, Bianka, and Ford, along with their moms, departed Ireland while Ms. Lau, Mrs. Willenbring, Ty, and Ty's mom had stayed for another day before leaving on July 2nd. To read more and see what other excursions that weren't mentioned, visit their blog here: <https://sites.google.com/maquoketa-v.k12.ia.us/mvffa/royal-highland-show-tour?authuser=0>

On July 4th, members hosted a pedal pull at Earlville's 4th of July Celebration. The pull began at 1:00 with several classes. Kids who won their classes were given trophies to recognize their win.

This year, Maquoketa Valley FFA had a significant number of members participate in the Delaware County Fair. Exhibiting horses through FFA were Lacy Reth, Tracy Reth, and Khloe Glew. Static Photography Projects were brought in by McKayla Weber and Kayla Hoeger. Lacy and Tracy Reth brought in several chickens and roosters for the poultry show on Tuesday. Showing sheep this year were Karly Kerch, Braden Ronnebaum, and Bianka Ronnebaum. Showing market beef this year was Bryce Vaske. Members who exhibited swine include Emma Brockhohn and Olivia Ronnebaum.

At the Iowa State Fair, we had several exhibitors present their hard work, and needless to say, it paid off. Lacy and Tracy Reth brought poultry and placed very well in their classes. Khloe exhibited horses and showed exceptionally well. Showing swine was Linken Stansberry, who exhibited two well put-together pigs. Showing sheep were Bianka Ronnebaum and Braden Ronnebaum, both of whom did an excellent job.

On August 11th, the news was released that two Maquoketa Valley FFA Alumni had received their ratings on their

National FFA Proficiency Applications. In the area of Dairy Production Placement, Kelsey Hoeger has received a gold rating. In the area of Equine Science Entrepreneurship, Lacy Reth was given a silver rating. These members were recognized this past April at the Iowa FFA State Leadership Convention as the winners in these categories. We couldn't be prouder.

While talking about being proud of our alumni, we gathered more exciting news on August 15th. 2024 graduates, Kody Hoeger, Kaya Knipper, Lainey Knipper, Lucas Knipper, and Harold Mohr earned the honor of receiving their American FFA Degree. The American FFA Degree is the highest degree presented within the National FFA Organization. Several qualifications and speculations must be met before being awarded this degree. These individuals will be recognized at the 98th National FFA Convention & Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana, on November 1st.

August 23rd, members of the State Livestock Evaluation Team traveled to Ames to participate in the state contest. These members include Tyler Beitz, Emma Brockhohn, Alison Schulte, and Linken Stansberry. As a team, they received a silver rating.

As a part of our fall fundraising, our Half-Hog Raffle is back! If you think your freezer could use some local home-grown pork from the family of Joe and Kathy Wessels, it's worth the chance to buy a raffle ticket. You have until October 17th at halftime of the football game to purchase your tickets. Get 1 for \$5 or 5 for \$20 from any FFA member. The hog will be processed at Dan's Locker in Earlville; the winner is responsible for processing fees. Good luck!

Khloe Glew was recognized as the member of the month for the month of June. Linken Stansberry was recognized as the member of the month for the month of August.

The FFA Chapter has a clothing store open online through 1-800-T-Shirts. The store closes September 7th at 11:59 PM. Members can find the link in the weekly newsletter or on Facebook and Instagram.

**The next chapter meeting is on Tuesday, September 9th, gavel drops at 7:15 AM.** Rumor has it, pancakes will be on the griddle around 6:50 AM.



# Sports Connection

## Volleyball team starts off season with busy schedule

by Natalie Ries

The Wildcat volleyball team has had a busy start to the season.

Last Tuesday the Wildcats held a quad hosting North Tama, Wapsie Valley, and Gladbrook-Reinback. On Thursday the Wildcats traveled to Jesup to play Jesup and Clayton Ridge. Saturday was another day full of competition against multiple teams at the Cascade tournament. The Wildcats then had a day of practice before taking on North Fayette Valley.

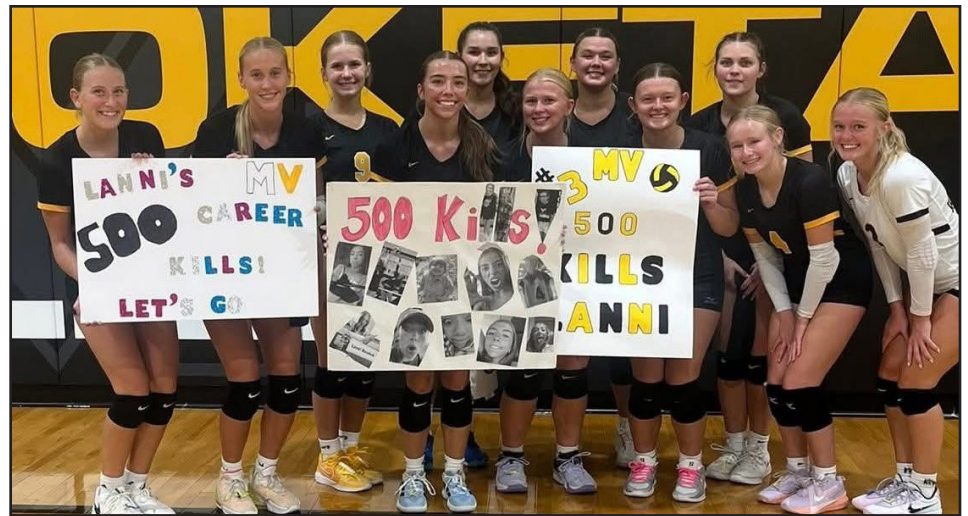
Stats are listed below.

North Tama (25-21 NT, 25-16 NT): The Wildcats had many leaders as they fought a hard battle but fell just short of a win. Camryn Paris was the leader of kills with four. Alaina Leytem helped with 12 assists. Blocks were totaled up by Kallie Freiburger, Leytem, and Ava Knipper all having one. McKenna Mineart led the team with seven digs and Grace Richter had nine successful serves to round out the game.

Wapsie Valley (25-16 WV, 24-26 MV, 15-9 WV): Another game with some good stats led to a close game against Wapsie Valley, but the Wildcats couldn't secure the win. Richter had nine kills to help the Wildcats with Macee Nolan having 21 assists. Paris and Knipper both had two blocks to lead the Wildcats. Lanni Beaman did her job in the back row with 12 digs. Richter and Olivia Ronnebaum both had 10 successful serves against the Warriors.

Gladbrook-Reinback (17-25 MV, 15-25 MV): The Wildcats made the final game a short and sweet one to win the final game of the night against Gladbrook-Reinback. Paris was back on her game with six kills to lead the Wildcats with Nolan helping having 16 assists. The Wildcats had Knipper at the net a lot with three blocks. Mineart was working behind the block working for seven digs. Paris was another leader with 13 successful serves to help the Wildcats get a win.

Traveling to Jesup, the Wildcats



**Lanni Beaman and Grace Richter have both reached an impressive volleyball milestone this season: 500 career kills.**

went 1-1 winning against Clayton Ridge (25-10 MV, 25-11 MV).

Beaman, Freiburger, Paris, Nolan, and Mineart held the Wildcats to high standards against the Eagles. Beaman was the leader for kills with adding seven to her total. Freiburger had one block to help the Wildcats. Paris had one block and 21 successful serves to secure the win. Mineart was another leader with ten digs out of the back row.

The Wildcats had tough competition on Saturday, but put up the toughest

fight against Cascade. The scores show the determination (21-17 MV, 17-21 C, 12-15 C). The Wildcats had four leaders against the Cougars. Beaman had seven kills with three blocks, and five digs to help the team. Nolan racked up 20 assists and five digs. Richter had five digs. Paris had 15 successful serves against the Cougars.

The Wildcats started this week out with games against North Fayette Valley and ended the week yesterday against Marquette Catholic. Those stats will be in next week's issue.

# XC explores new course, tough competition

by Cadence Miller

Get ready, Maquoketa Valley! Our cross country teams brought the fire to the Oelwein meet (a new one for the team), with phenomenal runs and personal bests setting the stage for an exciting season ahead! It was a day of pushing limits and showcasing pure grit as our runners hit the trails!

Varsity girls blazed a trail with some jaw-dropping performances. Audra Burbridge led the charge with an incredible 6th place finish and a blistering time of 20:44! Taryn Burbridge wasn't far behind, putting up a strong run for 29th place at 22:16. The Varsity squad also saw impressive efforts from Anna Fledman, finishing 47th at 23:15, and Breanna Bush, who rounded out her race in 67th with a time of 24:44.

"I thought the girls took a step in the right direction at this meet," stated Coach Kirchoff. "Our top four in the varsity race had better races than they did one week ago. We are looking to keep getting better each meet. By midseason I think this team will be much improved from where they are now. Like the boys they also need to work on better pacing. I like the aggressive mindset, but we need to settle into the race sooner so our 2nd miles are better."

Varsity boys proved their endurance, with Kenyon Baker securing a 32nd place finish at 18:22. Not to be outdone, Owen Smith showed serious speed, claiming 48th with a time of 19:21.

"This meet was definitely a step up in competition from last week's meet," noted Coach Kirchoff. "We raced a lot of highly ranked 2A and 3A schools. Overall I thought for the most part doing a good job of competing and pushing ourselves. One thing we need to work on is pacing. Across the board we got out too fast and we really struggled the 2 mile of the race. That is a big focus of practice the rest of the week."

Our JV girls gave it their all on the course. Kourtney Hatfield pushed through for 59th place at 28:33, and Rylee Reed wasn't far behind in 78th at 30:03. Haydin Flannagan showed determination with a 92nd place finish at 31:03, and Jena Hoefer grabbed 100th place with a time of 32:25.

The JV boys didn't hold back either. Jayden Schwandt sprinted to 54th place with a time of 22:45, while Colt Haas nabbed 85th at 25:11. Shane Wright took 88th place at 25:24, and Gabriel Saunders



Senior Taryn Burbridge keeps her pace at the Oelwein meet Tuesday.

completed the race in 119th at 29:27.

The momentum is building and the Wildcats are ready for their next challenge! The next meet will be hosted by Clayton Ridge at Guttenberg Golf and Country Club on September 9th. Come and show your support and cheer on our Maquoketa Valley Wildcats!

## 2025-26 Class Officers

### Seniors

Grace Richter - President

Preston Salow - Vice President

Maya Smith - Secretary / Treasurer

### Juniors

Alaina Mead - President

Elijah Dougherty - Vice President

Ava Knipper - Secretary / Treasurer

### Sophomores

Lylah Billmeyer - President

Taylor Salow - Vice President

Aubrie Althoff - Secretary / Treasurer

### Freshmen

Owen Salow - President

Colt Haas - Vice President

Billy Krapfl - Secretary / Treasurer

# Athletes of the Week

Name: Owen Smith

**What do you enjoy most about cross country?** The people you run with and meals

**How has cross country changed you?** Cross country has changed me by make me more positive in bad condition because running some days suck but you still have to do it so may as well be happy doing it.

**What has been your favorite memory of cross country?** Breaking my PR the first meet of the year by 30 seconds

**Where would you love to have a meet?** The beach

**If a song could be playing as you crossed the finish line, what song would you like it to be?** "Seventh Heaven" by INOHA



Name: Alaina Connolly

**What do you enjoy most about being part of the cheer team?** I really enjoy the community of the team and how all the girls really are there for one another, which makes being on the team so much

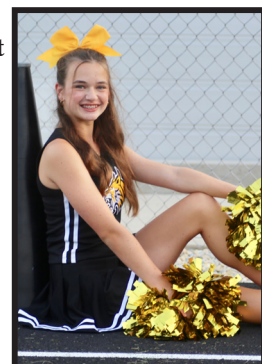
fun. I also really enjoy overall the positive environment that the team provides which is really important for a team to thrive.

**Why is having cheer important at MV?**

I feel that cheer is important to the school because it adds a lot more excitement to the school's sports which are already very large at MV. I also find that with being on the team it helps you with many new life skills like teamwork, discipline, and can help you work better with others. Plus the overall school spirit that cheer can help with can make school more enjoyable.

**What's your favorite cheer?** Hey Fans.

**What's something about cheer that others may not know?** That cheer has you constantly improving on skills like jump and kicks as well as learning and having to remember/perform the cheers.





# 'Cats start off 1-0 with win over Stars



**Preston Salow (55), Kyle Engelken (58) and Gabe Halweg (78) stop the Stars. (photo by Maleah Freiburger)**

**by Maya Smith**

Last Friday, the boys took on Starmont. The boys took away an easy win, 33-0.

Coach Christensen comments: "It was a typical first game, we had a lot of mistakes that we need to fix moving forward. I thought we did a nice job with adapting to what Starmont did when we didn't know exactly what they would do offensively or defensively. I am excited to see how we improve from game one to game two this week. If we want to be the team that we are capable of we need to see improvement in all areas."

Here are some game stats:

Passing: Brady Wall; 78 yards; 2 touchdowns, Trevor Grimm; 36 yards

Rushing: Brady Wall; 21 yards; 1 touchdown

Rogan Heidt; 156 yards; 1 touchdown, Dylan Knipper; 8 yards; 1 touchdown

Receiving: Eli Dougherty; 10 yards; 1 touchdown,

Anderson Holtz; 31 yards; 1 touchdown

Defense: Dylan Knipper; 10.5 tackles; 6 solo, Kyle Engelken; 6 tackles; 2 solo; Lukas Chesnut; 5 tackles; 2 solo; 2 sacks

Tonight, the boys take on North Linn at home.

## what's up?

**by Grace Richter**

### **What are you most excited for this school year?**

Lanni Beaman: Friday night lights and homecoming

Lukas Chesnut: Playoff football

DaShawn Strickland: Graduation

Jeanie Teymer: For basketball season

Khole Glew: Sports to start

Emma Brockhohn: Dance season

Lainey Deutmeyer: Our class hanging out together

Haylee Jones: Senior events

Derrick Mohr: Going to sports events

Braden Gradner: Going to student sections

Meleah Burr: Football games

Karly Kerch: FFA contest

Kallie Freiburger: Softball season

### **Wildcat Star Service Reminders**

•Now's a good time to gather signatures from your summer volunteer work.

•You can pick up a new form in Mrs. Temple's room (207).

•You need to turn in your hours each year in May.

## Cutie

**by Ella Reicher**

This Cutie is a freshman from Hopkinton. He is involved in football, wrestling, baseball, track, and FFA. A fun fact about him is that he shows goats.



## Comedy Corner

—compiled by Grace Richter

**Welcome back, Wildcats! Here are some jokes to start off the school year.**

Why did the teacher wear sunglasses on the first day? Because her students were so bright!

Why was the math book nervous about school starting? It had many problems.

Why was the broom late to school? It overswept!

Why did the student eat homework on the first day? She said it was a piece of cake!

Why was the cafeteria clock always behind? It kept going back four seconds.

# One at a Time

by Arianna Nolan

The sound of the blaring alarms makes your skull pound as you try and reach over to turn it off, and maybe get a few more minutes of sleep.



You have to get up and look somewhat presentable for the day, and make sure that you have everything ready for the thing you had been dreading to some degree all summer. School. Welcome back to school, everybody! As I do every year, I would like to welcome you all back to another year and give you some tips to start your school year off on the right foot.

**Tip #1: Don't fall behind.** Whether this be on homework, studying, or a habit you have been trying to implement, don't fall behind. Once you fall behind, it's very hard to get back on track. This is why it's

important to set a schedule. Set a time to do your homework every day, maybe have some daily studying, or set a time that you have to go to bed every night. According to the Personal Excellence Foundation, teenagers with a consistent routine have found a decrease in the production of the stress hormone, epinephrine. So, set that schedule. Don't fall behind.

**Tip #2: Be active in extracurricular activities.** This tip is more geared to the upcoming freshmen, but it can be applied to anyone a little afraid to try something new, but their interest has piqued. Go join that extracurricular that everyone has been encouraging you to do or that you have been thinking about. By joining extracurricular activities, you will have the motivation to keep your grades up and to do your work since you have something to work towards. Not only that, but you have the opportunity to make new friends that you would have never thought of talking to before. Whether it be in the arts, athletics, or joining a new club, go try something new. You may never know how much you will enjoy it until you

actually try it.

**Tip #3: Create good habits.** We all have a guilty pleasure that we know is bad for us, but we continue to do. For me, it's drinking way too many energy drinks during the week. But that doesn't mean it's impossible for us to quit doing these things, or at least lessen the number of times that we do them. It's important to have a healthy lifestyle because if you have a healthy lifestyle, you have a happier life in general. Whether it be not drinking enough water, not getting enough sleep, consuming too much caffeine, or consuming too much junk food, there is something we can all do to improve our lives.

Although they are simple, I hope my tips are able to help you at least be a little more motivated for the school year. This is my last year writing for the Echo, so I want to be able to help you all for the last year that I am here. I have been writing this column for four years now, and I enjoy being able to create advice that can resonate with all of our students. I love you all, and I will see you next time! Go Cats!

## Fantasy Fiction: The battle of many but few

A series  
by Abby Nieman

The suffocating heat envelops Lyra as she walks into the grungy blacksmith's shop. The rhythmic hammering makes Lyra's heart frantically race as the comment from the king lingers in her mind. An older man, a master at his craft, is working on a perfect blade that is destined for a great warrior, making the sword at Lyra's hip feel heavier than before. Lyra walks in looking for the blacksmith's son. Warin comes from the back room and makes the smoky air feel like it has cleared, walking out in his usual workplace outfit. A leather apron that goes to the ankles is stained from years of the trade, with a short-sleeved shirt that puts a stark difference to what Lyra's wearing. Lyra, on the other hand, is still in her knight uniform, the uniform she had to fight for, which consists of a black leather, tight-to-the-body shirt with matching pants that cover her entire body, adorned with a sheath of arrows and a bow. Her sword sits on her right hip as she is left-handed, the same sword that Warin made when he was first accepted into the blacksmith program. Lyra is the only knight who is a female;

every knight gives her more room when she passes them, and they always separate themselves from her in training. The king is the worst, though he will not let Lyra out in the woods to train or be part of most of the out-of-court training activities. To Lyra's knowledge, being a knight is as far as she can go, as there is a strict no-girl policy in the military. So she gets the lowest grade equipment, though she graduated at the top of her class and is at the top for physicals every year.

"You look like you are ready for battle, though I don't think there is a battle in here," Warin quips as he enters the main room.

"Well, if I am seen in the court without my weapons, I will lose my spot, and they made that very clear for me, like they want me out," Lyra responds as she walks to Warin. They both walk out of the main workshop room and head to the house that is attached to it. The cool air rushes over Lyra and makes her more comfortable. There is a quieter feeling that she has forgotten that she misses, as the scent of the last meal still hangs in the air. As Warin puts a brotherly hand on her shoulder,

Lyra's shoulder relaxes most of the tension that she is holding. "The house hasn't changed much in three years, has it?"

"No, not really... how's your dad doing? Still getting along fine?"

"Yeah, he has his off days, but most of them are good." Lyra gets closer to Warin, but no one is about in the house. "I heard the king talking as he exited the castle earlier today to one of the military advisers about a threat that was sent our way. Do you have any higher demand for weapons from him or anything of that sort?"

"I did notice most of our overflow weapons have been sent to the castle. But not much more, I wonder if you are reading too much into this,"

Lyra lets the last comment hang in the air as she thinks of what the king could really mean. Even though her hand clenches over her sword, she does want to relax and have a good time with Warin.





## Deep Dive by Arianna Nolan



Welcome back to another wonderful school year, Divers! This week, we will be taking a look at one of the most interesting animals that are often seen in aquariums, and can even be petted in little petting areas. This animal happens to be the Southern Stingray. This animal usually swims through the waters of the southern Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean. They are known as bottom dwellers, which means they like to graze along the bottom of the ocean near the sand. These animals tend to get around 79 inches long and weigh about 214 pounds. An interesting fact about the stingray's lifespan is that scientists aren't sure about how long they live on average or how fast they grow.

The average diet for this creature is small creatures that live along the ocean floor. Stingrays spend most of their day eating as they graze along the sand. Some of their predators are larger fish or sharks. You would think that parasites would be a problem for these creatures since they graze on food such as mollusks, but they actually have symbiotic relationships with some parasites, one of them being with cleaner wrasses.

As far as conservation goes, scientists don't actually know the population of the stingray, and not much can be found about their life in general, as mentioned earlier. But, it is always good to be mindful of the plastic and garbage you are throwing away and where. Consider if the things you are planning on putting in the grange can actually be recycled or reused yourself for something better. If you would like to find out more about the Southern Stingray, please check out the website Florida Museum, where all the information was provided for this article. Thank you for swimming with me today! I hope you all have a fantastic weekend and I will see you all next week!

## Looking for Members!!

FCCLA is the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) for young people in Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) education. It serves as part of the FCS curriculum, helping members develop skills in character, communication, and career preparation through projects and competitive events.



Stop in and chat with Mrs. Downs for more details!

## Jaelyn's Journeys



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 to win something from the prize box!