

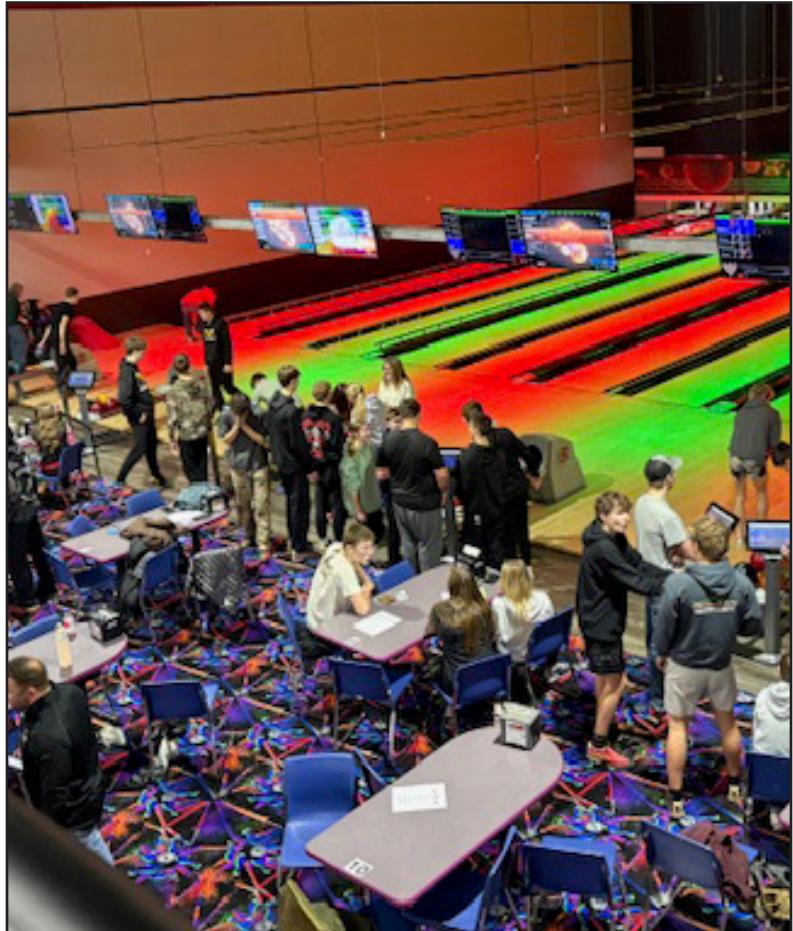
# The Wildcat Echo

A publication by the students of Maquoketa Valley High School

## *Some pre-break fun*

Right: The dance team invited other students to participate in their holiday dance they performed Dec. 22.

Below: MV students enjoyed some camaraderie and competition Dec. 22 at the bowling alley in Manchester. Students rotated among stations that included bowling, bags, coloring and more.



# Sports Connection

## Boys start year with win over Lynx, improve to 8-2

by Maya Smith

The boys are coming back from break with one win under their belt as they face down the Lisbon Lions tonight!

Before break, the boys were handed a tough loss against Marquette Catholic, 36-55. Here are those game stats:

Points: Brady Wall, 21

Rebounds: Dylan Knipper, 7; Lukas Chesnut, 5

Assists: Lukas Chesnut, 2; Anderson Holtz, 2; Dylan Knipper, 2

On Dec. 22, MV defeated Ed-Co 48-35. Wall led in scoring with 15. Holtz added 11, and Hoeger added 10. Knipper had 10 rebounds and 3 assists. Zach Leytem also had three assists.

This week, the boys took on the Lynx of North Linn. They proved no challenge for the boys, winning 57-40.

Here are some game stats:

Points: Brady Wall, 26; Anderson Holtz, 15

Rebounds: Dylan Knipper, 10; Lukas Chesnut, 7; Brady Wall, 6

Assists: Dylan Knipper, 4; Anderson Holtz, 2

Coach Conner says: "It was nice to see our guys come out in the first half and play how we are capable of playing. I thought we were excellent on the defensive end and it led to us being able to build an early lead. We have been working on being more patient on the offensive end and trying to move the ball better to create scoring opportunities rather than forcing shots. It was a major point of emphasis for us over break and I think we proved to ourselves that we are capable of doing that. Our shooting percentage was much higher because of our ability to do that. Reflecting on the game, I was so impressed with Dylan and Lukas for how they defended their matchups and then contributed when they could on the offensive end. Brady had another really nice game scoring and so did Anderson.

"We have a lot to take away from



Dylan Knipper (20) and Trevor Grimm provide some tough defense against Bellevue Marquette Catholic Dec. 19. (photo by Ella Reicher)

this game that we can continue to build off of. I told the guys that I feel like we are just scratching the surface with some of the stuff so we will continue to work away in practice to get better at the fine details so we can be playing our best basketball at the end of the season."



Senior Brady Wall scored his 1000th career point Dec. 19.

# Girls keep it rollin' into 2026



Senior Lanni Beaman brings the ball upcourt in the game against Marquette Catholic. (photo by Ella Reicher)

The Cedar Rapids Gazette has added our Wildcats to the Super 10 area teams, and MV opponents understand why. MV has recently come off of three more conference wins.

Dec. 19 MV hosted (at the time undefeated in the conference) Marquette Catholic and won 57-41. Audra Burbridge had a big night offensively, scoring 29 points. Grace Richter added 13. Burbridge also had nine steals and six rebounds.

MV made up its game with Ed-Co Dec. 22 and won decisively 62-24. MV's defense held the Vikings to only 11 points in the final three quarters. Richter led in scoring with 25 points. Audra Burbridge had 21. She also had nine steals and nine rebounds.

Most recently, MV defeated North Linn 58-35. MV led 37-22 at the half.

Last night, the team traveled to UNI to play St. Ansgar (8-1) on a "big stage." Details will be in next week's Echo.

## Athletes of the Week

Name: Gabe Halweg

**What do you enjoy most about wrestling?**

I enjoy seeing my friends every day and getting better.

**You've cut some weight to be able to wrestle in the 285 weight class. What motivated you to do that?**

The thing that most motivated me to cut all of this weight is to prove all the people that never thought I could do it wrong.

**How do you mentally prepare for a match?** To prepare for a match I listen to music and lock in.

**What's your goal this season?** My goal this season is to win more than 8 matches.

**Who's your wrestling role model?** A role model for me is Aidan Salow.



Name: Audra Burbridge

**What do you enjoy most about playing basketball?**

My favorite thing about basketball is celebrating good plays with my teammates and just playing games.

**What motivates you when you're playing?**

Being a competitor brings a lot of motivation to me so I just want to make as many plays happen as possible, and also most times it's the crowd or student section hyping the team up after a good play.

**What's been a favorite basketball memory?**

My favorite basketball memory from this year so far was when I fell so hard in practice and I was just lying on the ground laughing so hard I started crying and my coaches were yelling at me to keep going.

**Who has been your favorite team to play?**

I look forward to playing every team, but my favorite teams to play are probably the closest rivals to us like North Linn, Springville, or East Buc because we go into the game with more motivation to win.



## Fine Artists of the Week

Name: Aubrie Althoff

**What event are you in for speech?** I am in TV News.

**What do you enjoy most about large group speech?**

I enjoy going to the competitions and seeing all of the other categories compete.

**What have you learned through this event?**

I have learned how to use iMovie better.



**Who is your speech role model?**

My speech role model is Maya Smith because she has done lots of different events and last year she did a lot for our group.

**If you could judge a large group speech event, what would it be?** If I could judge any large group speech event it would have to be group improv because they are so fun to watch and everyone is so creative.

Name: Natalie Ries

**What event are you in for speech?** I am in both readers theater and TV news.



**What do you enjoy most about large group speech?**

In large group speech I enjoy communicating with others and bringing ideas to life.

**What have you learned through this event?** Through both of my events I have learned to keep an open mind. Even though some ideas seem crazy, trying them can create memories.

**Who is your speech role model?** My speech role model is my sister Leah. I watched her in many speech events before I got into high school, knowing I wanted to be in speech.

**If you could judge a large group speech event, what would it be?** If I could judge a large group speech event I would want to judge group improv.

# Deep Dive

by Arianna  
Nolan



Welcome back, divers, to a new year and a new diving session! It's quite cold now that it's January, so I thought it was appropriate to take a look at some of the Arctic sea creatures of the world. This week, we will be taking a look at the walrus! These adorable creatures live in the cold oceans of Russia and Alaska. They can grow up to 5-10 feet long, depending on their gender, and can weigh up to a ton, which is 2000 pounds! They live up to about 40 years old, with a new calf (baby) being born every 2 years. They swim through the shallow waters and relax on the sea ice.

The diet of this sea creature is what you would expect for a large mammal. They eat a wide variety of invertebrates and consume seabirds and seals. A not commonly known fact is that these creatures have canine teeth! They search for food using their whiskers along the sea floor.

Due to climate change, these creatures have been in more danger over the years due to the melting ice and rising temperatures. While they may not be as endangered right now, in a few years to come, they will continue to be more threatened. This is why it's important to keep being cautious of what you are throwing away and being aware of the carbon emissions you are emitting. If you would like to learn more about the walrus, please visit the The Great State of Alaska website. With this in mind, I hope you all have a fintastic weekend and I will sea you all next time!

# 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!

## Fantasy Fiction: The battle of many but few

"So you are the one that is after me?" Warin asks.

"Why would that matter? You won't be here much longer," Knut responds.

"You can try to get in here. I have made some friends who are in here for a reason."

"You think you scare me? You're just a blacksmith's son."

"And the greatest Knight's mentee." Knut tries to fiddle with the lock now that Warin is getting on his nerves.

Click. A bright thud rings

A series  
by Abby Nieman

through the dungeon. The door to the cell swings open as Warin runs out of the cell and into the rest of the castle. Knut's foot steps are heard pounding up the stairs as Warin makes a sharp turn to the weapons room.

Thud. The door closes as Warin runs in the room. But there is only a spear and a shield in the room, every other wall empty. Warin has never used a spear before and does not know what he is doing, but this is his only shot to make it out.

The door swings open with a thud as Knut runs in with his spear out and ready to fight. The door is blocked for Warin to

run out and get in a bigger area to fight.

Knut lunges at Warin, and Warin takes the opportunity to run out of the room, out of the castle to the middle of the courtyard.

Warin feels a sharp pain in his neck as he lets go of his spear and falls to the ground. Knut walks out of the castle to see one of his men taking his kill.



# Meet the Freshmen



## Landon Helmrichs, Gracin Harris, Izzy Cordes & Jaelyn Hadley

Name: Landon Helmrichs

Siblings: Jalynn and Jordan Ross

Activities you plan to be in: Football, Wrestling, and Golf

Favorite subject: History

Career aspirations: Cop or history teacher

Hobbies: Fishing, football, and movies

Something cool about you: I've been to the Mall of America three times.

Name: Izzy Cordes

Siblings: Paisley, Robert, and Blayne

Activities you plan to be in: Speech, Marching Band, Musical, Play, Choir, and Scouts

Favorite subject: Science

Career aspirations: Children therapist

Hobbies: Art, content creation, video games, crafts, and design

Something cool about you: I have a photographic memory.

Name: Jaelyn Hadley

Siblings: Brandon, Kaylee, Luly, and Emy

Activities you plan to be in: Theater, Choir, and Pep Band

Favorite subject: Art and Spanish

Career aspirations: Animator

Hobbies: Drawing and painting

Something cool about you: I memorized the author's code from Gravity Fall and can write it.

Name: Gracin Harris

Siblings: Kadence

Activities you plan to be in: Golf, Vocal

Jazz, Contest Speech, and Jazz Band

Favorite subject: Math or History

Career aspirations: Software Engineering or National Guard

Hobbies: Video games and WW2 history

Something cool about you: I do karate and have a junior black belt.

—typist: MaryEllen Smith

# One at a Time

by Arianna Nolan

After the new year, people often try to set goals or new year resolutions. It's often joked that we never complete these goals. They're empty

words with small intentions of becoming something bigger, but never making it. This is often due to the goals either being unrealistic or too big. This doesn't mean we should give up this tradition of new years resolutions, but instead look at the meaning of goal setting and how to set realistic and meaningful goals.

For students specifically, setting goals can help improve their academic performance, motivation, and time management skills, according to Acacia University. The same source states that setting goals can also help with your self-esteem and confidence when you complete these goals. Setting goals can help students with self-discipline and holding themselves accountable.

So, how do we set goals? This is the question that is very daunting to most people and causes them to give up before they even start. But, by following the acronym "SMART," you can help yourself get on the right track to making smart goals.

## Adding pep



Members of the pep band play at the Marquette Catholic games in December.

The acronym is as follows:

S- Specific: You can directly define the goal.

M- Measurable: You have specific activities in measurable amounts to complete the goal.

A- Attainable: The goal has to be realistic/achievable.

R- Relevant: Make the goal meaningful.

T- Time-bound: Set a deadline.

An example of one of these goals would be: I will earn \$400 dollars by working at the diner for 4 months and save \$10 every week by the end of April.

Other strategies that you can use to make these goals stick is to write it down and put it in a place that you will always see it. Examples would be your bedside table, your bathroom mirror, or your fridge. Or you can break the goal down into steps/a list so you can have small achievements to keep you on track and have mini-rewards for when you do.

In conclusion, although setting goals for the new year may be daunting, setting goals is meaningful, and there are strategies you can use to not only make the goals but to keep you on track. Next week, I want you all to create a goal for yourself by using one of the strategies! I will be following along with you. I hope you all have a wonderful weekend, and I love you all!