

The Wildcat Echo

A publication by the students of Maquoketa Valley High School

Smooth Harmony gains experience, feedback at MoShow festival



Last Friday, Smooth Harmony traveled to Cedar Rapids Washington High School to perform at the MoShow Vocal Jazz Festival. They were able to watch several other groups perform and received a clinic from Duane Davis after their performance.

National FFA week quickly approaching

by Kayla Hoeger, FFA reporter

As many of you may not know, FFA Week is coming up. FFA Week dates all the way back to 1947 when it was made a national week. Fun fact, the week was selected the same week as George Washington's birthday. This was because of the impact that George Washington had on agriculture. National FFA week runs from

Saturday to Saturday in February every year. National FFA Week is celebrated by every chapter in the US in one way or another. It's important to celebrate so we can educate people about agriculture and share the story of FFA. FFA is helping prepare leaders of the future generations. So let's look into how MV FFA is celebrating FFA week!!

Make plans for MV's Got Talent

by Taylor Saunders

This year's MV's Got Talent is right around the corner. This fun-filled night is set to take place on Friday, February 27th at 7 pm in the High School Auditorium. This is our Choir's biggest fundraiser, so there is a \$10 admission fee. Tickets can be purchased on the MV BOUND website ahead

of time or at the door. However, they will only be accepting card payment at the door.

This concert will include four performances from our full choir and house band, as well as nine small group performances, 15 soloists, a song from both Smooth Harmony and Jazz X-Press, and finally a short intermission.

Our choir and band students have so much fun preparing for this concert, and we all hope you'll join us. As always, Go Cats!



FFA Week Dress Up Days!

Monday 2/23	Official Dress (FFA members) Blue & Gold (Students)	
Tuesday 2/24	Camo / Blaze Orange	
Wednesday 2/25	Farmer / Farm Animal	
Thursday 2/26	Future Job	
Friday 2/27	Tractor Battles Case IH, John Deere, New Holland, Allis Chalmers	

National FFA Week Schedule

Sunday 2/22	Chapter Social @ Pinseekers	
Monday 2/23	Sub-Districts @ Starmont Donut Day!	
Tuesday 2/24	Hidden Farm Animal Game Starts (continues all week) *Teacher Tuesday*	
Wednesday 2/25	Popcorn after lunch	
Thursday 2/26	Line Dancing during lunch in the HS gym!	
Friday 2/27	Ag Olympics @ 2:30 in the HS gym	

Sports Connection

It was a 'Cat fight on the court in district play

by Maya Smith

On Monday, the boys competed in the 1st round of the postseason against 6-14, Central City. In the first quarter, the boys trailed by 1, but it soon proved an easy game for the Wildcats, walking away with a win, 61-39.

Here are some games stats:

Points: Brady Wall, 28; Eli Dougherty, 15
Rebounds: Dylan Knipper, 12; Preston Salow, 4

Assists: Dylan Knipper, 7; Brady Wall, 4

Coach Conner remarks: "We had a great team win against Central City. Our goal in any game is to hold teams under 40 points, and I think that is where we were our best. We had a few struggles in the first quarter on the defensive side of the ball, but we adjusted well and played really good team defense the final 3 quarters. Eli was huge for us in the first half knocking down some open 3's. He has been shooting the ball incredibly well these last two weeks and it has been really fun to see his confidence grow. Brady had a big 2nd half which allowed us to build a nice lead late in the game.

"The first postseason game is always the toughest one. Now that we got that one out of the way, I think our guys are playing our best basketball of the season at the right time. We know that Ed-Co is going to give us their best shot. It is up to us to continue to play with the confidence that we have in our last few games to get as much basketball out of the season as we can."

Last night, the Wildcats met up with Ed-Co for the third time this season. During the regular season, MV split with the Vikings, but last night belonged to the Wildcats, 56-30. Brady Wall added 15 points, becoming the #2 all-time scorer at MV.

MV (19-5) will play again Tuesday night. They'll take on Bellevue (20-3) in Bellevue at 7 pm.



Lukas Chesnut powers through to the basket in the district game against Central City Monday night.

Girls sneak past Lisbon with second half surge

by MaryEllen Smith

The Maquoketa Valley girls hosted the first round of the playoffs, playing the Lisbon Lions. They won 47 to 40. When these two teams faced off in conference play in January, MV won 66-38.

In the first quarter our girls led, but only managed 5 points in the second quarter. In the third quarter MV outscored Lisbon 11-7 to chip away at Lisbon's lead. MV continued fighting with Lisbon, going

neck and neck, eventually beating them by 7 points in the fourth quarter.

Leading in points were Audra Burbridge with 25, Grace Richter with 13, and Madison Thompson with 8.

Join the girls tonight as they face off against MFL Mar-Mac at home with a 7:00 tipoff.

The student dress up theme is white-out/white lies.

Engelken returns to state wrestling



Kyle Engelken goes head to head with his AC/GC opponent in his first day of state wrestling.

by Alaina Mead

Last Saturday the wrestling team traveled to MFL Mar-Mac for their final tournament before state. At districts, the team placed 8th with 57 points.

Congratulations to Kyle Engelken for placing 2nd, punching his ticket to the state tournament in the 157-pound bracket! Engelken went 2-1 with no wrestle back.

Sawyer Kemp placed third finishing 3-2, winning his 3 matches with pins. Kipton Thompson and Tyler Beitz both fin-

ished 4th with a record of 2-2!

The state tournament began this Wednesday at the Casey's Center in Des Moines. Engelken wrestled three matches yesterday morning with a record of 2-1. His first match he beat his opponent 20-3 with a tech fall. The second match he lost 4-20 in the 2nd period. And Engelken's final match for the day was won by points, 5-1! Matches will continue on today and tomorrow with final results to come in next week's Echo!

Already planning: Dance and cheer teams announced



Congratulations to the 2026 Cheer Team

- Captain - Natalie Ries
- Captain - Jeanie Teymer
- Captain - Lena Lewin
- Ever Botos
- Cheyenne Eike
- Tristen Flanagan
- Tess Intorf
- Jordyn Koch
- Lylah Billmeyer
- Athena Bradley
- Alaina Connolly
- Maleah Freiburger
- Maggie Recker
- Payton Wilson
- Natalie Zietlow

Congratulations 26-27 MVDT

Competition team-

- Natalie Ries // Captain
- Tess Intorf // Captain
- Alaina Leytem // Captain
- Cheyenne Eike
- Lilly Kraft
- Alaina Mead
- Ella Reicher
- Taylor Salow
- Alaina Connolly
- Maggie Recker
- Natalie Zietlow

State team- Alternate

- Delia McCormack
- #### Dance team-
- Serenity White
 - Gwen Bawers
 - Austen Greenwood
 - Lucy Langel
 - Lucinda Rudd
 - Payton Wilson

Athletes of the Week

Name; Eli Dougherty

What do you enjoy most about playing basketball? Going up and down in practice and shooting threes



How have you evolved as a player from last year?

Being able to make more threes and defensively I have been better than last year

What's been a favorite basketball memory from this season? Our van ride with Coach Kirchoff coming home from the UNI game

What's your favorite warm-up song?

Anything that is made by Kanye

Name: Khloe Glew

What do you enjoy most about playing basketball? The thing I enjoy the most

is being around my teammates and playing with them. We have a lot of fun during practices, team meals, and games because we spend a lot of time together.



How have you evolved as a player from last year? I

have evolved a lot as a player from last year because I am more confident in what I am doing, and now I can just trust myself.

What's been a favorite basketball memory from this season? My favorite basketball memory from this season was going to the Wartburg summer camp and staying in the hotel with my teammates because we always have so much fun and we won the tournament this year.

What's your favorite warm-up song?

My favorite warm-up song is "Fake ID."

Deep Dive

by Arianna Nolan



Welcome back, Divers, to another edition of Deep Dive! This week, we will be taking a look at a spectacular creature with long tentacles and an interesting-looking face: the wunderpus! Despite the name having German origins, this creature lies along the coastal waters of the Indo-Malayan Archipelago, extending all the way to the Philippines. The body of this creature can get up to 9 inches; however, its tentacle arms can expand to 16 inches. When one of the arms is lost, maybe in an attack, they can regenerate it!

The diet of this creature is just as small as it is. They tend to eat small crustaceans and fish. To catch their prey, it extends its tentacles over sand or rubble and traps its prey, or in a similar way, drops its tentacles into burrows or holes to trap them that way. Most of the time, this animal resides in burrows that it digs up or that animals create, and only comes out to hunt at night.

This animal wasn't discovered until the 1980s and was not officially described until 2006, so not much is known about this animal or its conservation status. Despite this, it is important to be aware of what we are putting into our air or into our oceans. If you would like to learn more about this wonderful creature, please visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium website, which is where all the information for this article was provided. I hope you all have a fantastic weekend, and I will see you all next week!



Preston Salow puts one up while Dylan Knipper (20) anticipates his next move.

Jazz band season in full swing, in a good 'funk'



The MV jazz ensemble participated in UNI's Tallcorn Jazz Festival Thursday. They played three charts, including a funk arrangement of "Put It Where You Want It." After the performance, they had a productive clinic, according to Mr. Ford. Ryleigh Moriarity earned the Outstanding Soloist award for MV. Above: Karl Zumbach solos.

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!

Fine Artists of the Week

Name: Cecilia Charles

What events are you in for speech?

Review and Storytelling

What do you enjoy most about individual speech?

I have a lot of fun with my events and I really like my topics.

What have you learned through this event?

I learned how to sound more entertaining when talking and my accents have gotten better.

What other event would you like to try and why?

Musical theater since it sounds fun but I don't think I would try other events other than the ones I do now because I just have so much fun with them.

How will speech help you in the future?

It makes me more confident in my ability to speak and give information



Name: Olivia Begle

You've been nominated because of your outstanding work and commitment to band as well as for picking up an extra instrument this year. How did you learn to go from playing flute to bass?

I originally had some experience on the acoustic guitar. The bass was similar apart from the fact of reading a different clef as the flute.

What do you enjoy most about playing in band? I enjoy the environment of collaborating with so many others.

What life lessons have you learned by being in band? I have learned to have perseverance and time management during individual practices.

If you could join a famous band, which one would it be? Even though there are many, I would have to choose The Beatles.



Name: Abram Nolan

What event are you in for speech? I am in prose.

What do you enjoy most about individual speech?

What I enjoy most about individual speech is listening to Mrs. DeVore laugh from my reading of the story I chose to do as it makes me feel good to know that my readings are able to make others feel happy.

What have you learned through this event?

What I learned through this event is that you should always put some emotion behind your words as it makes it so that you have more impact when you speak to others.

What other event would you like to try and why? Another event I would like to try is acting as I believe I am quite good at it as I think I have decent facial expressions, tone of voice, hand gestures, and passion overall.

How will speech help you in the future? Speech will help me in the future with my confidence while speaking, with any time I am presenting something in the future, and just my communication skills in general. I think everyone in the school should do it at least once.



Name: Gracin Harris

You've been nominated because of your great work in vocal jazz. What do you enjoy most about it?

I mostly enjoy singing my part which is the bass, but I also really enjoy being a walking bass, and basically what that is I get to mimic the sounds of a bass guitar with my voice in order to keep the rhythm going.

How does your vocal jazz participation complement what you do in choir? It allows me to get more singing experience and I get more comfortable working with my peers in concert choir

What song would you love to see arranged for vocal jazz? There are many! But one that I would really like to see a vocal jazz arrangement of would be Just the Two of Us by Bill Withers

What's been a fun vocal jazz memory?

Just recently we went to a Mongolian restaurant called HuHot, and I decided to try a little bit of the spiciest sauce that was there, and boy did I regret it. The waitress even came over several times to ask if I was okay.



One at a Time

by Arianna Nolan

As we discussed before, February is Black History Month, and, as suspected, many historical moments of the civil rights movement also occurred during this month. Today, I want to look at some events from the civil rights movement that happened this month from all decades.

February 22nd, 1956: 80 people participating in the 3-month-long bus boycott were arrested after they voluntarily gave themselves up. Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. were among the people who were arrested. Later in the same year, the desegregation of buses was enforced.

February 1st, 1960: Four African American students were ordered to leave the lunch counter of a Woolworth's store, and they refused and waited at the counter all day despite being refused service. This story kept happening over the next few days and led to a series of protests, which ended up with 1,600 people. This event also created the term sit-ins for this time.

February 3rd, 1870: The 15th Amendment was ratified, which declared that no matter race, color, or previous status of enslavement, people were allowed to vote- in simple terms, African Americans who were slaves were allowed to vote. But it's important to note that many times they didn't get to because of literacy tests or blocking off the polling centers.

February 21st, 1965: A prominent leader during the civil rights movement, Malcolm X, was assassinated while giving a speech in a New York City Ballroom. Malcolm X was known as the more radical civil rights leader compared to Martin Luther King Jr. due to his "radical" ideas about African American rights.

While these are some of the events that happened for the civil rights of African Americans during the decades, it is certainly not all. I would highly recommend looking up more civil rights events that happened, especially during the civil rights movement of the 1950/60s! It is important to remember all of the hardships of these very important people in history who have changed the course of this country forever. I love you all, and I will see you all next week! Go Cats!



February school board minutes

Regular Board Meeting – February 18, 2026 – 5:00 p.m. – High School Library
The regular meeting of the Maquoketa Valley Board of Education was called to order by President Donna Kunde at 5:00 p.m. on February 18, 2026, in the High School Library in Delhi, Iowa. All motions carried unanimously unless otherwise noted.

Board Members Present –Feldmann, Kunde, Overman, Smeins, Zietlow
Board Members Absent – None
Staff Present – Supt. Troy Osterhaus, Erika Vanderloop, and Jackie Moorman
Visitors Present – Mike Putz

Motion was made by Overman, seconded by Feldmann to approve the meeting agenda as present. All ayes. Carried. In a motion by Zietlow, seconded by Smeins the consent items were approved. All ayes. Carried.

Four open enrollment requests in and four open enrollment requests out were approved in a motion by Feldmann, seconded by Overman. All ayes. Carried.

The following personnel recommendation was approved in a motion by Feldmann, seconded by Zietlow:
Ali Scherrman – resignation as Middle School Girls Basketball Coach
Mary Carroll – resignation as High School Business Teacher
Brad Huber – employed as Middle School Baseball Coach
Abby Sheppard – resignation as Kindergarten Teacher
All ayes. Carried.

In a motion by Overman, seconded by Feldmann it was RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors of the Maquoketa Valley Community School District will levy property tax for the fiscal year 2026-2027 for the regular program budget adjustment as allowed under Iowa Code 257.14. Roll call vote was answered as follows: Feldmann, aye; Kunde, aye; Overman, aye; Smeins, aye; Zietlow, aye. Carried.

The Board approved the 2026-2027 At-Risk/DOP Plan in a motion by Zietlow, seconded by Overman. All ayes. Carried. Motion by Overman, to approve the request to the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC) for the Modified Supplemental Amount (MSA) in the amount of \$204,285 for the 2026-2027 At Risk/ Dropout Plan. Seconded by Feldmann. Roll call vote was answered as follows: Feldmann, aye; Kunde, aye; Overman, aye; Smeins, aye; Zietlow, aye. Carried.

In a motion by Feldmann, seconded by Overman the Board approved board policy 802.04 Capital Assets on the first official reading. All ayes. Carried.

Mrs. Vanderloop presented the Board with information regarding revenues, expenditures, solvency ratio, certified enrollment, new money, and salary percentages.

Mrs. Vanderloop also presented the Board with some information regarding the estimated FY27 levy rate. It appears that the District will see a slight decrease in the FY27 levy rate but are waiting for the state to set the final State Supplemental Aid percentage.

The March board meeting will be held on Monday, March 23rd. This date will also be Public Hearing #1 for the 2026-2027 school budget. The April board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 22nd. This will also be Public Hearing #2 for the 2026-2027 school budget.

Supt. Osterhaus shared a draft of the 2026-2027 school calendar.

Pam Overman and Mike Feldmann will serve on the February audit committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m. in a motion by Zietlow, seconded by Feldmann. All ayes. Carried.

Comedy Corner

— compiled by Grace Richter

With the Winter Olympics going on, here are some jokes and puns to get you laughing!

Why did the snowman become a great figure skater? Because he had ice in his veins

How do winter Olympians stay cool under pressure? They chill out.

What's a skier's favorite type of music? Anything with a slope beat.

What do you call a snowman's favorite Olympic event? The brrrr-athlon

What's a speed skater's favorite snack? Ice Krispies.

On Special At Taste Oasis This Week:

Donuts



Freeze Dried Candies



Chocolate Chip Muffins

