

# Thank you, Louisburg!



***Getting to cover so many great kids was an honor for me, including these guys as they were generous enough to let me in their group picture.***

Eleven years ago, I was a nervous wreck.

I had just been laid off from my newspaper job, one where I had spent seven years covering Louisburg. Like so many others in this profession, I suddenly found myself staring at an uncertain future as newspapers continued to disappear. Jobs were scarce. Stability was gone. And I had a family to support.

I knew I was probably going to have to take a job I didn't want – something far from journalism – just to make ends meet.

Then an idea hit me.

With news media shifting more and more online, I wondered: *Would Louisburg support something like this?* Would the community care enough about local sports to follow an independent site dedicated solely to their athletes?

As it turned out, the answer was an overwhelming yes.

Because of the relationships I had built during my first seven years here, there was an appetite from local businesses to support the idea – and many of them never wavered. Eleven years later, a lot of those same businesses were still standing beside Louisburg Sports Zone, believing it was an important piece of the community.

They were right – and I couldn't agree more.

This past decade-plus has been some of the best years of my life. Through Louisburg Sports Zone, I formed incredible relationships with coaches, athletes, administrators, parents and community members. Even as a graduate of rival Paola, the Louisburg community adopted me as one of their own.

For those of you around my age or older, this might resonate.

I often felt like *Norm* from *Cheers*.

Every time I walked into a gym, stadium or field, I'd hear, "Hey Andy!" or "Thanks for coming!" or "We appreciate you." So many people knew my name – even people I didn't know – simply because they appreciated what I did.

Instead of an icy cold glass in my hand, I carried a camera. My barstool wasn't at a counter – it was on the sideline, capturing moments as they happened. And there were plenty of them.

State championships. State tournament appearances. Individual champions and medalists. Record-breaking performances.

I was lucky enough to see it all.

But my favorite part was always watching kids grow – seeing freshmen mature into seniors and leave as confident, capable young adults. That transformation never got old.

My very first event as Louisburg Sports Zone was a home basketball game. I was only a couple months removed from being laid off and still unsure if this idea would work or if anyone would even care.

Those worries disappeared quickly.

As I walked into the gym, Natalie Moore, Kirstin Lowry and Kallie O'Keefe stopped their warmups to smile and wave. Coach Shawn Lowry walked clear across the court to shake my hand and welcome me back.

More than a decade later, I still get those same smiles from athletes and handshakes from coaches and parents alike. Those connections are what made this decision so difficult.





***Was fortunate to interview so many student athletes these last 11 years.***

Six months ago, I was offered a position with KSHSAA Covered and the Kansas High School Activities Association. Honestly, I



never thought I'd have another writing job outside of Louisburg Sports Zone. I fully intended to keep doing this until the appetite for it simply wasn't there anymore.

But the opportunity was too good to pass up – and it was the right move for my family.

I knew the connections wouldn't be the same. Starting over is hard, especially when you know what you're leaving behind. My favorite part of this job was feeling the appreciation from the community and knowing I was giving people something positive to read.

I wasn't perfect. I made mistakes along the way. But this community allowed me to grow – as a writer, photographer and a person. I always tried to do the best I could and to cover every sport as fairly and equally as possible.

The last five or six years put me in an interesting position, as my own kids were playing varsity sports. How do you balance being a supportive dad and a journalist at the same time? I hope I did it right.

One of the biggest perks of this job was getting to write about my kids – their first varsity goal, first basket, first shutout or a big volleyball performance. I know how lucky I was to experience that.

None of this would have been possible without my family – especially my wife, Jennifer. I wasn't home much in the evenings, especially with young kids, and that wasn't easy. She never stopped supporting me.



***It was awesome to have my family with me as I was surprised with Louisburg Citizen of the Year a few years ago.***

To my kids – Jordan, Ally and Carter – thank you for understanding the crazy hours and for supporting me even when

I couldn't be at everything like other parents. I love you more than you know.

I also want to thank all of my advertisers, past and present. Louisburg Sports Zone doesn't exist without you. Craig Holtzen and Edward Jones, Dixon Contracting Services, White's Automotive, Prime Accounting Services, Amborn Stone, Wildcat Vet Clinic, Dr. Andy Hill, Destination Fun Travel, Vance Brothers, Go Brolly, First National Bank, First Option Bank, Landmark Bank, Dr. Laura's Orthodontics, IronHorse Family and Cosmetic Dentistry, Louisburg Family Dental, Vohs Pharmacy, Elliott Insurance, Magnum Equipment, Louisburg Athletic Club, Louisburg Library, Tri-County Pest, Midwest Collision – and so many others along the way.

I also wanted to give a big shoutout to a Louisburg graduate – Kenneth Sweeney. He has been my “web guy” this whole time. He helped design the site and has also been there to help me troubleshoot what problems have come up since then. I couldn't have done it without him.

Thank you to every coach I've worked with. Getting to know you and promote your programs has truly been an honor. I appreciate you enduring my countless emails that I send out every week. You have helped make Louisburg Sports Zone what it is as well. I will miss you all.

And finally, the student-athletes – you are the reason this worked. Thank you for letting me into your lives and giving me so many incredible stories to tell. And consider this a long-overdue apology to anyone I ever did “dirty” with an unfortunate action photo.

So here I am, 11 years later, feeling some of those same nerves as I move into something new. The last six months with KSHSAA Covered have been great, and I've been welcomed with open arms.

Still, walking away from something I built was not easy.



I only hope that Louisburg Sports Zone has been as much of a blessing to you as it has been to me. These have been some of the best times of my life – and I will treasure them always.

Thank you, Louisburg.

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## Top 10 Louisburg Sports Stories of 2025



It was a successful, and eventful, year for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program.

This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and a

few programs made their way to state competition.

Below are the top stories from 2025, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the writeup is the link to the actual story from the event.

When putting the list together, I took a lot of things into account – whether it was team vs. individual, popularity of the sport, historical achievements and the interest it drew on the web site.

Although 2025 will be the last for Louisburg Sports Zone, I am looking forward to seeing, from a distance, what Louisburg athletics can accomplish in the future. Thank you all for the support in these last 11 years. I will never forget it.



***Louisburg senior Sam Frederick carded an 87 during the May 19 regional tournament and earned a top 10 finish and a state***

*bid, along with teammate Derek Frederick.*

## **10. Wildcat golf qualifies two for state**

A year ago, the Louisburg golf team suffered heartbreak when the Wildcats were completely shut out of the state tournament.

Not this year, however.

The Wildcats sent two golfers to the state tournament this past May as senior Sam Frederick and junior Derek Frederick both represented Louisburg after earning a spot following the May 19 regional tournament at the Independence Country Club.

Both players competed in their first state tournament, which was held May 27 at the Sand Creek Station Course in Newton.

Sam Frederick earned a regional medal with a top 10 performance as he led the Wildcat team. The Louisburg senior finished 10th with an 87 on a tough Independence Country Club course. Independence had the top three individual finishers, led by champion Ethan Small, who had a 75.

Derek Frederick was the final individual to qualify for the state tournament as he carded a 91 and took 17th overall.

## **9. Coaching changes as Brown, Crossley, Schoning take over volleyball, wrestling, girls soccer programs**

There were some coaching changes in 2025 as three teams found new leaders to take charge of their respective programs.



Rich Brown (volleyball), Shawn Crossley (wrestling) and Dawson Schoning (girls soccer) were all hired new Louisburg head coaches.

Brown, who took over from Leanna Willer, helped the Wildcats to the sub-state championship game this past season.

Crossley takes over from long-time coach Bobby Bovaird, who resigned following the season earlier this year. Crossley, who is an LHS alum and former Wildcat wrestler, was an assistant coach the last several years.

As for Schoning, he takes over from former coach Jordan Roquemore who helped lead the Wildcats to a fourth-place state finish a year ago. Schoning, who is new to the district this year, was an assistant coach on the boys team this past fall.



***Louisburg senior Sabra Brueggen swims the 200 individual medley on May 24 during the Class 5-1A Kansas State Swim and Dive Championships in Topeka.***

## 8. Brueggen earns pair of state swim medals

TOPEKA – As Sabra Brueggen stepped onto the state swim podium for the final time, a flood of memories came rushing back.

Memories of when it all started, the friends she made and all her successes along the way. Brueggen has been one of the top swimmers in Class 5-1A the last four years and she proved it once again on May 24 during the Kansas State Swim and Dive Championships in Topeka.

The Louisburg senior ended her high school career with two state medals and a lifetime full of memories.

“Ending my high school career was a very sentimental moment for me,” Brueggen said. “It was the last time I would be racing some of the girls I have been swimming against since age six. Being able to share the podium with them one last time made it even more meaningful, making me very proud of how I performed at my final state meet.”

Brueggen had strong swims throughout 2-day meet that began on May 23 at the Capitol Federal Natatorium. In the prelims, she qualified for the finals in fifth in both the 200-yard individual medley and 100 backstroke.

In the finals, Brueggen found her way to the medal stand as she finished sixth in the 200 individual medley in 2 minutes and 14.42 seconds.

The 100 backstroke proved to be much of the same for Brueggen there as she also medaled sixth in a time of 58.81 seconds. It completed a string of four straight years of earning a state medal.





*The Louisburg girls cross country team of (from left) Talen McMurray, Annie Hornberger, Karissa Williamson, Maddox McGhee, Hailey Shelton, Reese Smith and Felicity Allen won the program's first regional title.*

## **7. Wildcat girls make history with first regional cross country title**

NEODESHA – For the first time in program history, the Louisburg girls cross country team left a regional meet as champions.

On a rainy, muddy Saturday at Riverside Park in Neodesha, the Wildcats powered through the slick conditions to win the Class 4A regional championship with 39 points – seven ahead of runner-up Paola. The victory also secured a state berth for the entire Louisburg squad.



“It was awesome and emotional to see the girls leave Neodesha as regional champs,” Louisburg coach John Reece said. “It has been a long time in the making as we have had multiple teams qualify for state but have never won a regional title. The rankings had us winning the meet, but those are just rankings. The girls showed up to compete and that is exactly what they did.”

It was a youthful lineup that led the Wildcats to history, featuring two freshmen, four sophomores and one junior – and the youngest runners set the tone. Freshman Karissa Williamson finished fourth overall in 22:40.26, just ahead of fellow freshman Maddox McGhee, who took fifth in 22:40.46. Sophomore Hailey Shelton placed sixth in 22:57, giving Louisburg three runners in the top 10.

Sophomore Reese Smith finished ninth in 23:50, junior Talen McMurray placed 16th in 24:16, and sophomores Felicity Allen and Annie Hornberger rounded out the lineup in 23rd and 27th, respectively.

The team went on to run at state along with Truman Ellison, Titus Ellison and Spencer Mattison, who qualified for state on the boys side.



*Louisburg senior Ashton Moore wrestles in the 215-pound state championship in Salina. Moore finished second overall.*

## **6. Moore state runner-up in wrestling, Wildcats qualify 7 for state**

SALINA – In the final match of his wrestling career, Ashton Moore found himself competing for a state championship.

It was exactly the place he envisioned himself being, even before the season started. The result, however, was a different story.

Moore's dreams of a state title were dashed Saturday at the Class 4A state wrestling tournament in Salina. Smoky Valley's Parker Gardner ended his run with a 13-5 major decision at 215 pounds.

As disappointing as the loss was for Moore, looking back on his long wrestling career helped ease the pain – as did the second place state medal.

“It was tough taking that loss,” Moore said. “I was pretty down about it, but then I had a moment that put things more into perspective for me. After our practice on Friday, Coach (Bobby) Bovaird took us up to the top of the arena to talk about the tournament. Sitting there I remembered being in that same spot as a sixth grader watching the championship round there. At that age I thought those guys were amazing and the toughest people I’d ever seen.

“So after my loss I thought back to that moment being a sixth grader and I was able to realize how far I’ve come. To see myself at that level now made me very proud I was able to make it to that stage.”

The Wildcat program also had six other wrestlers compete at the state tournament, including two on the girls side.

Seniors Brayden Yoder (215), Canaan Clayton (120), Mika McKitrick (132) and sophomore Levi Cotter (106) each finished the tournament with an 0-2 mark.

On the girls side, Leola Eslinger and Brooklyn DeWeese became the first Wildcat girls to ever qualify for state.





*The Louisburg Jazzy Cats pose with their third place state plaque.*

## 5. Jazzy Cats take third at state dance

The Louisburg High School Jazzy Cats made their mark in program history on Nov. 21, earning a third-place finish in Class 4A at the State Game Day Spirit Showcase at the Stormont-Vail Events Center in Topeka.

In their first-ever trip to state competition, the Jazzy Cats not only reached the finals but left with some hardware.

Coach Sarah Alexander said the entire experience was meaningful, not only because of the results, but because it was all uncharted territory for the program.

"This was the first time the Jazzy Cats had ever attended state, so the entire experience was brand new for all of us," Alexander said. "To come home with a state plaque was absolutely incredible. The girls were thrilled just to have the opportunity to compete, and bringing home a plaque made all of their hard work feel truly rewarding. It was such a special moment for the team and a huge milestone for our program."

Louisburg scored 81.41 in the finals, just enough to edge Holton (81.23) by the slimmest of margins for the final spot on the podium. Ottawa won the state championship with a score of 90.13, while Bishop Miege secured second at 85.77.





*The Louisburg cheer team finished as the state runner-up at the 4A state competition on Nov. 22 in Topeka. It is the sixth top 3 finish for the Wildcats in the last seven years.*

## **4. Louisburg cheer earns Class 4A state runner-up**

TOPEKA – The Louisburg High School cheer team added another trophy to its growing collection on Nov. 22, earning the Class 4A state runner-up title at the Game Day Cheer Championships at Stormont-Vail Events Center.

The Wildcats posted an 87.73 in the finals to take second place behind defending state champion Paola, which won with a 94.27. Holton finished third at 85.

For Louisburg, the return to the podium was nothing new. The Wildcats have now finished in the top three six times in the last seven seasons, cementing themselves as one of the state's



most consistent programs.

Louisburg entered the finals in fourth place, boosted by a Fight Song and Crowd Leading routine that ranked second among all teams. The Wildcats had roughly 20 minutes to review score sheets and adjust before stepping back onto the mat—pressure they handled with poise.

“It was truly a special day for all of us,” head coach Breanna Kostroske said. “From the moment we arrived, the athletes were focused, calm, and determined. They’ve poured so much into this season, so seeing them step onto the mat with confidence and joy made the entire experience incredibly meaningful.”



***Louisburg senior Cooper Wingfield won the Class 4A state pole vault title on May 30 at Wichita State University.***

### **3. Wingfield wins state pole vault title; Meyer, Vohs earn three state medals to lead Wildcat track**

For the last four years, Louisburg has dominated the pole vault on the boys side in Class 4A and had its fair share of success on the girls side.

Caden Caplinger and Maddy Carpenter-Ross earned back-to-back state titles during that span and now it was Cooper Wingfield's opportunity.

Wingfield won gold in the pole vault in 2024 and was the favorite to win again this season – and he did it with ease. The Louisburg senior cleared 15 feet, 6 inches to win his second consecutive state championship during the Class 4A meet on May 30 at Wichita State University.

“It means a lot to win it back to back, not only for myself, but also to continue what Caden and Maddy had done before me,” Wingfield said. “This year made it four in a row that Louisburg had a state champion in the boys pole vault. It also made me the third back to back pole vault state champion for Louisburg in the last four years. I really wanted to continue that legacy and cement the dynasty we had and I am proud that I did.”

It had been a special year already for Wingfield as he broke his own school record earlier in the year with a clearance of 15-7.75 at the Kansas Relays.

Just like a year ago, his teammate Jacob Brown joined Wingfield on the state podium. Brown earned a fifth place medal after he cleared 14 feet as the Louisburg senior ended his Wildcat career as one of the best in the state.

Aidan Meyer and Myles Vohs each recorded three state medals as

they helped the Wildcats to a ninth-place finish with 32 points.

Meyer cemented his place in the Wildcat track history books in one of those events. The Louisburg senior broke a 14-year-old school record in the 400-meter dash as he earned a fourth place finish in 48.83 seconds.

As for Vohs, he opened the state meet with a fifth-place finish in the long jump. Meyer, Vohs, along with Gavin Lohse and Caleb Feldkamp, finished sixth overall in in the 4×100 relay in 43.76 seconds.

Vohs, Meyer, along with Colton Blue and Emmett White, put together an all-senior 4×400-meter relay that took sixth in 3:27.

Another Louisburg senior, Jerynce Brings Plenty, ended his Wildcat track career with a state medal as well. Brings Plenty finished seventh in the 1,600-meter run in 4:39.78.

On the girls' side, the Louisburg 4×100-meter relay, Kendall Crossley (100-meter dash) and McKenna Lohse (shot put) all found their way to the state podium.

Louisburg's 4×100-meter relay team of senior Mackenzie Rooney, along with juniors Kendall Crossley, Addi Mallett and Suzanna Dandel finished fourth at state. The Wildcat group broke the school record during the regional meet and posted another fast time of 49.14 seconds during the prelims, which gave them the second fastest time heading into the finals.

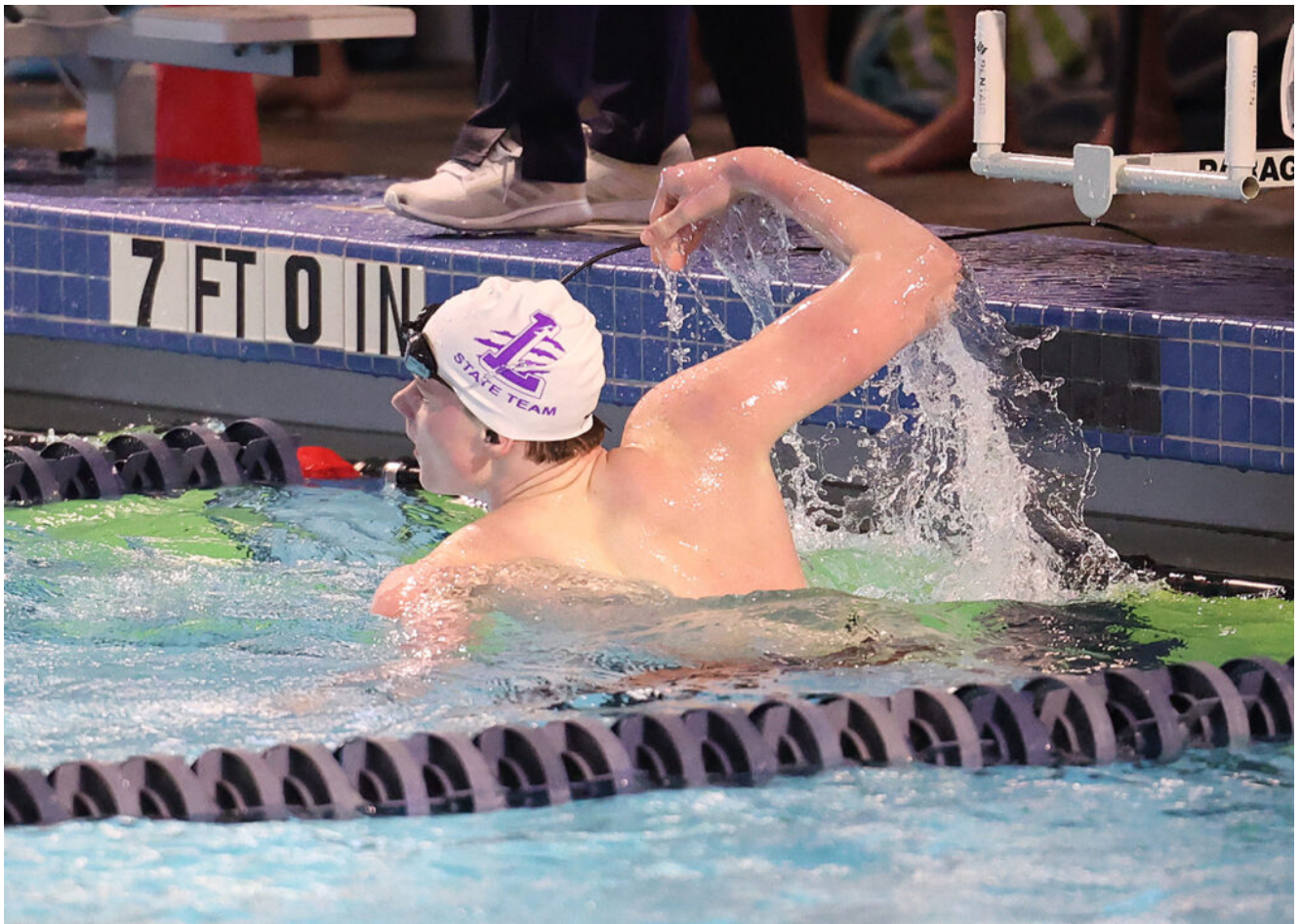
That wouldn't be the only time Crossley found her way to the medal stand.

The Louisburg junior qualified for the finals of the 100-meter dash earlier in the day, and then in the finals, medaled eighth overall in 12.82 seconds.

In the shot put, Lohse put herself in good position in the



prelims. She recorded a throw of 37 feet, 1.25 inches in her first three attempts and was sitting in second place going into the finals, before taking fifth overall.



*Louisburg junior Colin Brown celebrates after winning his prelim of the 100-yard butterfly at the Class 5-1A state championships in Lenexa.*

## **2. Brown first Wildcat to win 2 state swim titles; Wildcats medal in 6 events**

LENEXA – Colin Brown was all about making school history Saturday at the Class 5-1A Kansas State Swim and Dive Championships.

Brown became the first Louisburg swimmer in school history to win a state title and did so by winning the 100-yard butterfly. Some athletes would have been content with just the

one, but not Brown.

The Louisburg junior took to the water again in the 100 backstroke and won his second state title in a matter of minutes. It was also his fourth state medal of the day, which included a pair of relays.

“It was a surreal experience and an incredible honor,” Brown said. “It was really cool to see all of the hard work and countless hours pay off. It also gave me a sense of pride knowing that I was representing the school while doing so.”

That was the some of the success the Louisburg swim team had at the Shawnee Mission School District Aquatic Center. The Wildcats medaled in six events and finished seventh in the team standings with just four swimmers.

Louisburg junior Andrew Jamison also tallied four medals as made his way to the state podium in the 200 individual medley, 100 breaststroke and two relays. Senior Colton Prettyman and sophomore Noah Sharp joined the other Wildcats as state medalists in the relays.





*The Louisburg girls soccer team took fourth at the Class 4-1A state tournament on May 31 in Wichita. Members of the team are (front row, from left) Brinley Ewy, Lila Edwards, Rylee Moore, Baileigh Johnson, Jaden Bentz, Ally Brown, Riley May, Rowan Yows, Merritt McIntire, Faith Sewell; (back row) assistant coach Lily McDaniel, Cortney Johnson, Ellia Gibbons, Sydney York, Caroline Apple, Cora Roche, Kahlan Harris, Juanina Schmidt, Briella Diehl, Mena Fercho, Faith Sewell and head coach Jordan Roquemore.*

## **1. Wildcat soccer takes fourth at state for best finish since 2021**

It may have been wet, muddy and just miserable weather for a day in late May, but for the Louisburg girls soccer team, all that didn't matter.

For the Wildcats, it was a beautiful day. Nothing was going to dampen their spirits.

Louisburg faced off against Eudora in the Class 4-1A state quarterfinal game on May 25 as it played for a spot in the state final four.

For the first time since 2021, the Wildcats got it. Louisburg shutout Eudora, 2-0, to earn its first state quarterfinal win in four years.

"It is an amazing achievement to make it to the state final four and I couldn't be more proud of this team," senior captain Jaden Bentz said. "This really shows the amount of hard work we've all put in throughout the season and it's nice knowing it has paid off. I couldn't ask for a better group of girls to play with. When the final whistle blew we all were filled with excitement and ran to each other, and that shows the tight sisterly bond our team has."

Louisburg head coach Jordan Roquemoire was an assistant the last time the Wildcats were in the state semifinals and he could tell his team wanted this one more than any game this season.

"I have never seen the team so jazzed about anything all season as when the game was over," Roquemoire said. "We are all really excited for the opportunity to compete in the Final Four this year."

Louisburg squared off with Rose Hill in the third-place game of the Class 4-1A Kansas State Soccer Championships on May 31 at Wichita's Stryker Complex. It didn't take long for the Wildcats to get on the board.

The Wildcats struck first in the game's opening minutes, but Rose Hill tied it in the first half and scored late in the second to hand Louisburg a 2-1 loss.

Louisburg was coming off a 2-0 loss in the state semifinals on May 28 as it hosted its first state semifinal game against Topeka-Hayden.



“Honestly, I was really proud of how we played this game,” Louisburg coach Jordan Roquemore said. “Rose Hill is an exceptional squad and we not only kept them at bay defensively, we were very successful in creating attack opportunities. We were nearly even with them for shots on goal and I thought it was a very well-matched game for us.”

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## Louisburg cheer earns state runner-up finish in 4A Game Day showcase



*The Louisburg cheer team finished as the state runner-up at the 4A state competition on Nov. 22 in Topeka. It is the sixth*

***top 3 finish for the Wildcats in the last seven years.***

TOPEKA – The Louisburg High School cheer team added another trophy to its growing collection on Nov. 22, earning the Class 4A state runner-up title at the Game Day Cheer Championships at Stormont-Vail Events Center.

The Wildcats posted an 87.73 in the finals to take second place behind defending state champion Paola, which won with a 94.27. Holton finished third at 85.

For Louisburg, the return to the podium was nothing new. The Wildcats have now finished in the top three six times in the last seven seasons, cementing themselves as one of the state's most consistent programs.

Louisburg entered the finals in fourth place, boosted by a Fight Song and Crowd Leading routine that ranked second among all teams. The Wildcats had roughly 20 minutes to review score sheets and adjust before stepping back onto the mat—pressure they handled with poise.



***Harper Boyle performs during the Class 4A state cheer competition in Topeka. / Photo by Brent Maycock***

"It was truly a special day for all of us," head coach Breanna Kostroske said. "From the moment we arrived, the athletes were focused, calm, and determined. They've poured so much into this season, so seeing them step onto the mat with confidence and joy made the entire experience incredibly meaningful."

Kostroske said the moment resonated deeply for both veterans and newcomers.

"For our seniors, it was a moment they've been working toward for years, and for our younger athletes, it showed what's possible through commitment and teamwork," she said.

When the Wildcats climbed from fourth to second in the finals, the emotions ran high.



“Earning the runner-up title was surreal,” Kostroske said. “We were proud, emotional, and genuinely grateful. The team put out one of their strongest performances of the year at exactly the right time. And being able to keep the top two spots within Miami County made it even more special.”

Their preliminary performance set the stage for a special day for Louisburg as it got out to a great start with its Fight Song and Crowd Leading performance that helped put them in the top six to make the finals.



***(Left to right) Kinsley Rayne, Elle Keating, Lilly Burnett. Kayleigh Ramsey and Addison Bishop perform during the Nov. 22 state cheer competition in Topeka. / Photo by Brent Maycock***

“The team handled prelims really well,” Kostroske said. “Their fight song and crowd-leading felt strong, and they stepped off the mat knowing they had set themselves up for a chance at finals. When we heard our name announced, the reaction was pure joy—cheering, some tears, lots of hugs.”

Louisburg’s finals routine came with the added challenge of competing against a Paola team that has now won four state titles in the last five years.



“The team knew the finals would be tough, especially with a talented Paola squad in the mix, but they went in confident in their preparation,” Kostroske said. “Even with the quick turnaround, they stayed composed and focused. Their ability to adapt and elevate their performance showed just how strong and resilient this group really is.”

Kostroske said this year’s squad has been defined by its dedication.

“This is one of the hardest-working groups I’ve ever coached,” she said. “They train year-round—tryouts in March, the season starts in April, then summer practices, skills camps, and regular practices once school begins. We usually practice two days a week for four hours each, and before state, they were practicing four days a week for four hours to perfect every detail.”

Members of the team are: Laney Stohs, Kayleigh Ramsey, Julia Combs, Wiktorja Sulzc, Harper Boyle, Brooklyn Roney, Kim Pows, Will Leach, Reese Anderson, Addison Bishop, Reece Younggren, Kelsey Shelton, Gretchen Reitz, Lilly Burnett, Elle Keating, Leia Ward, Kinsley Rayne, Brylee Manson, Evalyn Cannon and Saylor Dansel.

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## **Jazzy Cats take third in first-ever state dance appearance**



***The Louisburg Jazzy Cats finished third at the Class 4A State Game Day Dance competition on Nov. 21 in Topeka. / Photo courtesy of Brent Maycock***

The Louisburg High School Jazzy Cats made their mark in program history on Nov. 21, earning a third-place finish in Class 4A at the State Game Day Spirit Showcase at the Stormont-Vail Events Center in Topeka.

In their first-ever trip to state competition, the Jazzy Cats not only reached the finals but left with some hardware.

Coach Sarah Alexander said the entire experience was meaningful, not only because of the results, but because it was all uncharted territory for the program.

“This was the first time the Jazzy Cats had ever attended state, so the entire experience was brand new for all of us,” Alexander said. “To come home with a state plaque was absolutely incredible. The girls were thrilled just to have the opportunity to compete, and bringing home a plaque made all of their hard work feel truly rewarding. It was such a special moment for the team and a huge milestone for our

program.”



***Jocelyn Burk performs during the finals of the Class 4A state dance competition on Nov. 21 in Topeka. / Photo courtesy Brent Maycock***

Louisburg scored 81.41 in the finals, just enough to edge Holton (81.23) by the slimmest of margins for the final spot on the podium. Ottawa won the state championship with a score of 90.13, while Bishop Miege secured second at 85.77.

The Jazzy Cats’ journey to that third-place finish was far from straightforward. After the preliminary round, Louisburg found itself in fifth place but safely inside the cutoff to qualify for the finals. The team’s strong early showing was highlighted by the second-highest Band Dance score in the entire 4A field—a boost that helped solidify their place among the top six.

The State Game Day format requires athletes to perform three routines—Fight Song, Band Chant, and a Dance Routine—back-to-

back with no breaks. Each category must stay under 60 seconds, and the total performance including transitions cannot exceed three minutes. Alexander said the team handled those demands well.

“Overall, their performance was strong, synchronized, and full of energy,” she said. “The girls executed all three with precision, energy, and seamless transitions, which made their performance even more impressive given the tight time constraints.”

Based on practices and their competition prep, Alexander said she felt confident the team would perform well. But at state, the Jazzy Cats elevated their routine even further.

“During their prelims performance, they really kicked it into high gear,” she said. “Going into finals, we didn’t know exactly where we were sitting, only that we were in the top six. In the finals, the girls brought their best dance technique, energy, and crowd engagement. They truly left it all on the dance floor, and it was amazing to watch them perform at such a high level.”





*The Louisburg Jazzy Cats pose with their third place state plaque.*

Alexander also praised the dancers for more than just their technical execution. She said the team's work ethic, spirit, and camaraderie have helped shape the program into what it is today.

"Coaching the Jazzy Cats has been incredibly rewarding and so much fun," she said. "The girls are not only extremely talented but also dedicated to dance. Many of them participate in studio dance as well, which makes their schedules very demanding, yet they manage to balance it all and excel. Beyond their talent, the girls are supportive of one another, creative, and truly a joy to coach."

Members of the 2025-26 Louisburg Jazzy Cats are Hannah Basore, Jocie Burk, Harper Cole, Briella Diehl, Julia Dover, Annelise Finch, Alayna Hays, Logan Heffernon, Makenna Holmes, Brielle Myers, Emma Vickrey, Addy Wiese and Maggie York.

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## **Meet the 2025 Fall Homecoming Candidates**





***The 2025 Louisburg High School fall homecoming candidates (front row, from left) are Julia Dover, Zyleigh Melton, Morgan Latham, McKenna Lohse, (back row) Johnny Hendrickson, Andrew Jamison, Michael Foote and Rickey Giles.***

Homecoming week at Louisburg High School kicked off Monday and events are in full swing. With something going on every day this week, it will be a busy time for students. All of it is, of course, centered around the crowning of the 2025 fall king and queen. Eight students were selected as nominees and here are their names and profiles.

The crowning will take place on Friday during the Wildcats' home football game with Eudora. Kickoff for that game is set for 7 p.m., with the introduction of the candidates and their parents at 6:30 p.m. Crowning will be at halftime. Good luck to all the participants and make sure to come out on Friday to support the Wildcats.





# Julia Dover and Johnny Hendrickson

Julia is the daughter of Steven and Jennifer Dover. Julia has participated in FBLA, band and has been the feature twirler for four years. Jazzy Cats and yearbook for three years, musical for two years and Senior Advisory for one year. Following graduation, she plans to continue her dance/twirling career and major in political science with a minor in news broadcasting, but is undecided on a university.

Johnny is the son of Colby Hendrickson and Elektra Matchette. Johnny has participated in football for four years, select choir and track for three years and musical for two years. After graduation, he plans to attend McPherson College in the Automotive Restoration Program and join the Air National Guard.



## **Morgan Latham and Michael Foote**

Morgan is the daughter of Tim and April Latham. Morgan has participated in volleyball, basketball, softball and student council for four years, National Honor Society for two years, and prom committee and senior advisory for one year. Following graduation, Morgan plans to attend college and major in secondary education history.

Michael is the son of Jim and Dana Foote. Michael has participated in football, track and FFA for four years, shooting club for three years, FBLA for two years and senior advisory for one year. After graduation, Michael plans to attend Kansas State University and major in AgriBusiness.



## **McKenna Lohse and Rickey Giles**

McKenna is the daughter of Jeff and Steph Lohse. McKenna has

participated in volleyball, basketball and track for four years. Following graduation, she plans to attend Johnson County Community College to play volleyball and begin her education to become an Ultrasound Technician.

Rickey is the son of Aaron and Kelly Stohs. Rickey has participated in football for four years and basketball and track for one year. Following graduation, he plans to attend Pittsburg State University and participate in the ROTC program, but is currently undecided on a major.





# Zyleigh Melton and Andrew Jamison

Zyleigh is the daughter of Andy and Meghan Melton. Zyleigh has participated in student council and school mascot for four years, basketball and National Honor Society for two years and senior advisory and prom committee for one year. She has also participated in ballet for 14 years. Following graduation, she plans to attend the Entourage Institute of Beauty and Esthetics to become a licensed esthetician.

Andrew is the son of Aaron and Amy Jo Jamison. Andrew has participated in student council, Interact Club, swim and band for four years, select choir and musical for three years, National Honor Society for two years and senior advisory for one year. Following graduation, Andrew plans to continue swimming and major in psychology, but is undecided on a school.

























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# LHS teachers raising money for charity to run New York City Marathon



***Louisburg High School physical education teachers Joel McGhee and Shelby Suther were selected by Marathon Kids to run in the New York City Marathon this November. Both teachers are currently raising money for the charity in order to run in the event.***

Two physical education teachers from Louisburg High School are taking their passion for health and fitness to the streets of New York City—26.2 miles of them, to be exact.

This November, Shelby Suther and Joel McGhee will lace up



their running shoes to compete in the legendary New York City Marathon. But their goal goes far beyond crossing the finish line. They're running to raise money for Marathon Kids, a nonprofit that empowers children to live active, healthy lives through running programs across the country.

"I always said I would never do a marathon unless it was New York City because the chances to get in are so slim," Suther said. "For me, running has been a big part of my life since middle school and now getting to run and make an impact for a charity is pretty cool. It is harder to give up on yourself when you know you are doing something to raise money for a charity and I think it sets a good example for the kids we teach."

The teachers have launched a fundraising campaign ahead of the race, hoping to raise at least \$4,000 each to support Marathon Kids' programming in schools. The funds will help provide teaching resources, incentives, and tracking tools that encourage kids to run.

Founded in 1995, Marathon Kids is a national nonprofit that empowers children to live healthier lives by running or walking a cumulative marathon, one mile at a time. The organization partners with schools and communities to promote lifelong fitness through goal-setting, tracking, and encouragement.

Both Suther and McGhee applied to run the New York City Marathon for Marathon Kids and were two of more than 70 applicants. The charity picks just 10 to run for them, and as it turned out, both Wildcat teachers were selected.

"It is the biggest marathon in the world," McGhee said. "I think it goes back-and-forth between New York and London in what is the biggest. More than 56,000 people run the New York City Marathon and the odds of me being able to get in it myself are equivalent of me getting into Harvard. Knowing you

submitted something to an organization, they like what you are about, and I match with what they are trying to do, is an amazing feeling. It is such a big event.”

The teachers were asked to share the stories about why they should be selected and both had different reasons for wanting to do it.

For Suther, who recently became a mother for the first time, not only wanted to show her students that it could be done, but wanted to prove it to herself.

“I never wanted to run a marathon before, but after I had Nash (her son), then I decided I wanted to challenge myself and prove that I could do it, even after being a mom,” Suther said. “That was my why for running, plus with being a life-long runner, coach and PE teacher. Marathon Kids’ mission to get more kids active is really important as they believe without movement that it causes more behavioral problems, attention-span problems where movement can help that.

“One of my other big things was I lost both of my grandparents in the last year or so, one to COPD and the other to cancer. They became immobile, which was a punch in the gut for me. Just opened my eyes that I need to do everything I can to keep myself healthy and active. Also, I want to be healthy for my son as well.”

As for McGhee, his journey started more than 8 years ago while as a teacher at Broadmoor Elementary.

“For me, running was always a part of sports and things that I had done,” McGhee said. “It was never a thing I really did after sports until we did a weight loss challenge at Broadmoor back in 2017. I weighed 225 at the time and it was a challenge that lasted for 10 weeks and I lost 50 pounds in that time.

“After that I joined the national guard and fitness played a big part in that. Always having that movement piece has played

a big part and I want to show others what exercise can provide for you. I just want others, especially young people, to have the knowledge of how important this is as you get older.”

One caveat to being selected to run is both teachers must raise \$4,000 for the Marathon Kids charity and they have spent the last several months reaching out trying to raise money for the worthy cause. There are 90 days left to raise those funds.

The teachers started an Instragram account called Louisburg Runs to help bring awareness and show their journey in preparing. Some of the students at the high school even helped get the word out as McGhee and Suther put together friendly competitions.

“We tried to do some competitions and the kids really caught on and helped us out with that,” McGhee said. “We wagered that whoever earned the most, would not have to do the hard yard, which most football guys know is pretty rough. I lost and I ended up doing that. The kids thought it was pretty funny.”

Along with the fundraising, the teachers are responsible for all travel, along with food and lodging. All donations are made online and go straight to Marathon Kids.

Both coaches have been training rigorously for the marathon, juggling early-morning runs, after-school workouts, and their full-time teaching responsibilities.

Back in March, McGhee competed in the Los Angeles Marathon, and both runners have taken part in several half-marathons around the area.

“As a teacher doing this, you are actually living out the mission you are trying to get across to your students and that really does mean a lot,” McGhee said.

To support McGhee’s fundraising efforts, [click here](#).

To support Suther’s fundraising efforts, you can [click here](#).



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# Derr excited to continue rodeo career at Missouri Valley College



***Louisburg graduate Addy Derr signed to join the Missouri Valley College rodeo program earlier this year. Seated next to Addy are her parents Carl and Lisa Derr. Standing is Missouri Valley coach Ken Mason.***

Addy Derr has spent most of her young life rodeoing, and the Louisburg High School graduate doesn't want it to end any time soon.

Derr, who has a lot of experience in the high school circuit, is not ready to put the rodeo life behind her – instead she is

ready to take the next step in college.

Earlier this year, Derr signed to join the rodeo program at Missouri Valley College and at the same time, fulfilled a long-time goal.

“I’ve dreamed of college rodeo since I was in sixth grade,” Derr said. “To see all the hard work I put in throughout high school finally payoff is incredibly rewarding. It’s amazing to know that every practice, every late night, and every rodeo led me to this next chapter of my life.”

It was a chapter that turned out to be an unexpected turn for Derr. As she was looking for a future school, Missouri Valley wasn’t even an option at the time – that was until she heard from its coach.

Missouri Valley’s Ken Mason, who has led the Viking rodeo program since 2006, reached out to Derr to let her know about the school and it turned out to be the perfect spot for her future college home.

“Missouri Valley wasn’t originally on my radar, but that changed when Coach Mason reached out to me,” Derr said. “After touring the campus, I just knew it was the right fit. The facilities are top-notch, and the coaching staff is amazing. They’ve created a welcoming, home-like environment that made my decision easy.”

It has been a busy summer for Derr as she prepares to join the Missouri Valley team. She recently finished 15<sup>th</sup> in the world at Little Britches Nationals and will also compete in the National High School finals and World Champion Junior Rodeo.

She’s no stranger to success as she was the 2024 Missouri High School Rodeo state champion goat tyer and earned the All-Around Cowgirl title. She was also named Rookie of the Year that season.

Derr took sixth in the world at Little Britches Nationals in breakaway roping in 2023 and was seventh at the National High School Rodeo in goat tying in 2024.

It is an exciting to end to a high school career and she hopes to turn this success into a memorable experience at the college level.

“I started rodeoing when I was six years old, and it’s truly shaped me into who I am today,” Derr said. “Rodeo teaches you lessons that other sports often don’t like determination, responsibility, and humility. It’s been a huge part of my life and continues to influence me in the best ways.”

Derr is looking forward to joining a successful Viking team that competed at the College National Finals Rodeo in Wyoming earlier this summer. She will compete in goat tying, breakaway roping and barrel racing and is excited for the next step.

“When I get to campus, my goal is to keep working hard, stay focused, and see where this journey takes me,” Derr said. “I’m looking forward to the new beginning, making the most of every moment, and continuing to grow as both a student and an athlete.”

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**Walton looking forward to  
joining University of St.  
Mary dance team**





***Louisburg's Annmarie Walton (center) signed to join the University of Saint Mary dance team this upcoming school year.***

In her three years on the Jazzy Cats, Annmarie Walton was able to express her love for dance, and at the same time, become a part of a small family.

Walton didn't want that feeling to go away and explored the idea of doing the same in college. The 2025 Louisburg High School graduate found the perfect spot to continue that.

Earlier this year, Walton signed to join the University of Saint Mary dance team this upcoming season. The NAIA program in Leavenworth seemed to check all the boxes.

"I really enjoyed dancing in high school and my senior year is when I first started considering dancing in college," Walton said. "I really liked the idea of dancing on a small team in college to give me a group/family away from home. Out of all possible colleges I could've went to, Saint Mary's campus, team and coach made me feel at home."

Dance has been a big part of Walton's life and it started at a young age. She began with Miami County Dance Movement for several years, then took a break her freshman season, before joining the Louisburg High School dance team.

"Like a lot of kids, I've enjoyed dancing since I can remember," Walton said. "During my sophomore year I tried out for the Jazzy Cat dance team and I've been dancing ever since. Dance has definitely played a big role in more recent years of my life and wouldn't trade that time for anything due to the relationships I was able to grow during my time dancing."

Walton joins a Spire team that has experienced a lot of recent success. Saint Mary won the 2024-25 KCAC Conference Championships and earned a spot in the NAIA Dance National Championships.



***Louisburg graduate Annmarie Walton signed to join the University of Saint Mary dance team. Seated next to Annmarie are her parents Tim and Lindsey Walton. Standing (from left)***

***is Louisburg Jazzy Cats coach Eliza Maloney and St. Mary coach Kinleigh Brecheisen.***

Along with it being a good fit with her Nursing major, she is excited to join the program, which is headed by coach Kinleigh Brecheisen.

“A really big thing that drew me to St. Mary was the smaller campus environment, the nursing program, its dance team, and it not being too far away from home,” Walton said. “Also, I felt really at home and comfortable while visiting the campus. The dance coach was very warm and welcoming from the first time she met me and my family, which all helped me make my decision pretty quick to attend St. Mary.”

As excited as Walton is to start a new dance chapter, she can't help but look back on her high school team with fond memories.

“Being a part of the Jazzy Cats was one of the best experiences of high school,” Walton said. “Jazzy Cats really brought me out of my shell and taught me lots of valuable lessons, such as team building, time management and accountability. Jazzy Cats prepared me for a college level dance team by making sure I hold myself accountable and be the best version of myself that I can be.”

In just a couple months time, Walton will join the Spires dance team and she is excited to get her college career started.

“The expectations I have for myself is to work as hard as I can on my studies and the dance team,” Walton said. “I want to come out of college with my nursing degree and at the same time strive for excellence on a college dance team as I did on my high school dance team. I'm very excited to see how these next four years of my life will play out, both academically and on the dance team.”



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# Meet the 2025 LHS prom candidates



***The 2025 Louisburg High School prom candidates are (front row, from left) Rowan Yows, Annmarie Walton, Sami Lane, Brynley Bauer; (back row) Ben Proctor, Miles Meek, Gavin Lohse and Nate Capuro.***

The Louisburg High School prom is right around the corner as the school will hold its annual event on Saturday, and it is there where prom king and queen will be announced.

Four male and female students were selected to be in the running for LHS Prom King and Queen. The candidates will be introduced during the school's promenade walk-through at 4 on Saturday in the LHS Auditorium.



Pictures can be taken starting at 5 p.m. at First National Bank and then prom will be held at the Haven Event Space beginning at 8 p.m. The crowning will take place at 10:30 p.m. and students who attend prom will be able to vote at the event. LHS post prom will be held from 12 to 3 a.m. at the high school.

Here are the candidates and their bios. Best of luck to all of you and hope everyone has a fun, safe prom weekend.



# **Brynley Bauer and Nate Capuro**

Brynley is the daughter of Aaron and Meka Bauer. Brynley has participated in FFA, student council, band, the musical and softball for four years. She has been a member of select choir for three years, National Honor Society for two years and concert choir for one. Following graduation, Brynley plans to attend Harding University and pursue a degree in Business Management.

Nate is the son of John and Ann Capuro. Nate has participated in football for four years, band, drumline and track for three years and jazz band for two years. After graduation, Nate plans to attend Hutchinson Community College and will major in Fire Science and get his paramedic license.





# **Sami Lane and Gavin Lohse**

Sami is the daughter of Alan and Adrienne Lane. Sami has participated in basketball, FBLA and choir for four years and Interact Club for three years. She has participated in softball, National Honor Society and FCCLA for two years, along with track, senior advisory and football manager for one year. After graduation, Sami plans to attend the University of Kansas to double major in Marketing and Business Management.

Gavin is the son of John and Sarah Lohse. Gavin has participated in basketball for four years and baseball and track and field for two years. After graduation, Gavin plans to go to a 4-year college to pursue a degree in business and continue his track and field career.





# Annmarie Walton and Miles Meek

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Miles is the son of Josh and Jennifer Meek. Miles has participated in football, wrestling and track and field for four years. He has also been a member of National Honor

Society for two years. After graduation, Miles plans to attend the University of Kansas and major in Mechanical Engineering.



## **Rowan Yows and Ben Proctor**

Rowan is the daughter of Greg and Heather Yows. Rowan has participated in soccer and student council for four years, National Honor Society for two years and cross country for one. After graduation, Rowan plans to attend Benedictine College where she will major in Biology on a pre-med track and will play soccer.

Ben is the son of Peter and Jennifer Proctor. Ben has participated in cross country, concert/marching band and Jazz Band for four years, along with track, the musical and National Honor Society for two years. After graduation, Ben plans to attend the University of Kansas to get his bachelor's in music performance with an emphasis in trombone, along with



prerequisite classes for medical school.















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**Meet the 2025 LHS Winter**



# Homecoming Candidates



***The Louisburg High School 2025 Winter Homecoming Candidates are (from left) Reid McCaskill, Ally Brown, Jerynce Brings Plenty, Jaden Bentz, Josh Holtzen, Ashlyn Kuhlman, Brayden Yoder and Presley Yows.***

Homecoming week at Louisburg High School kicked off Monday and events are in full swing. With something going on every day this week, it will be a busy time for students. All of it is, of course, centered around the crowning of the 2025 winter king and queen. Eight students were selected as nominees and here are their names and profiles.

The crowning will take place on Friday during halftime of the Wildcat boys' basketball game with Ottawa. Tipoff for that game is set for approximately 7:30 p.m. Good luck to all the participants and make sure to come out on Friday to support both the Wildcat girls and boys basketball teams.





# **Jaden Bentz and Jerynce Brings Plenty**

Jaden is the daughter of Andy and Kim Bentz. Jaden has participated in volleyball, soccer and Interact Club for four years and National Honor Society for two years. Following graduation, Jaden plans to attend the University of Kansas and major in elementary education.

Jerynce is the son of Moses and Sara Ann Brings Plenty. Jerynce has participated in cross country, track, FBLA and the musical for four years. He has also been in A/V Club, National Honor Society, Interact Club and International Club for two years. Following graduation, Jerynce plans to pursue a degree in film, but is undecided on a university.





# **Ally Brown and Reid McCaskill**

Ally is the daughter of Andy and Jennifer Brown. Ally has participated in basketball, volleyball and FBLA for four years. She has been a member of Student Council and National Honor Society for two years and Interact Club and softball for one year. Following graduation, she plans to attend Northwest Missouri State University and pursue a degree in psychology.

Reid is the son of Scott and Penny McCaskill. Reid has participated in football for four years, along with the musical and select choir for three years. Following graduation, Reid plans to attend the University of Kansas.



# **Ashlyn Kuhlman and Josh Holtzen**

Ashlyn is the daughter of Brian and Holly Kuhlman. Ashlyn has participated in basketball and FBLA for four years, Interact Club and National Honor Society for two years, along with Student Council and FCCLA for one year. Following graduation, Ashlyn plans to attend college to pursue a degree in education while playing basketball, but is undecided on a university.

Josh is the son of Craig and Michelle Holtzen. Josh has participated in football, golf, FBLA, Interact Club and the musical for four years. He has participated in Select Choir for three years and basketball for two. Following graduation, Josh plans to attend the University of Missouri and major in business.





# Presley Yows and Brayden Yoder

Presley is the daughter of Greg and Heather Yows. Presley has participated in Jazzy Cats, Student Council, FFA and Scholar's Bowl for four years. She has been a member of FBLA, Interact Club and the musical for three years, debate and National Honor Society for two years and track for one. Following graduation, Presley plans to attend the United States Naval Academy to study aerospace engineering.

Brayden is the son of Bart and Jennifer Yoder. Brayden has participated in football, wrestling and track for four years and been a member of National Honor Society for two years. After graduation, Brayden plans to attend the University of Kansas and major in mechanical engineering.



























