Wildcat debate makes history with league title



The LHS debate 4-speaker team of (from left) Brooke Talmage, Isabelle Holtzen, Greyson Anderson and McKenzie VanMeerhaeghe won the Frontier League title on Nov. 5 in Spring Hill. The four members finished with a combined record of 10-0 to become Louisburg's first undefeated league champion.

The Louisburg High School debate team has challenged itself this season by competing in tournaments against bigger schools and better competition.

That tougher schedule seems to have paid off in a big way as the Wildcats successfully defended their Frontier League title on Nov. 5 at Spring Hill High School. The 4-team speaker team of Brooke Talmage, McKenzie VanMeerhaeghe, Isabelle Holtzen and Grayson Anderson went undefeated to win the league championship and made a little history in the process.

The Wildcat quartet made a statement as they became the first 4-speaker team in Louisburg history, and just the fourth in league history, to earn an undefeated league crown. Anderson now has back-to-back titles under her belt as she was lone returner from the league championship team a year ago.

"It meant a lot to me to be a part of the league team," Anderson said. "It was a great group of girls and I was super proud of our performance this year. The fact that both teams

went 5-0, making it an historic showing for Louisburg debate, was stellar and I could not have asked for a better end to that day.”

Anderson joined Holtzen as the two argued on the negative side, while Talmage and VanMeerhaeghe debated on the affirmative side. The Wildcats are being led by first-year coach Claire Haflich as both teams earned five victories on the day, but it wasn’t always easy.

Holtzen, who took third at state last season with Anderson in the 2-speaker format, wasn’t used to the 4-speaker setting, but it didn’t show in the final results.

“The toughest part of the day for me was only debating one side of the argument,” Holtzen said. “Normally I debate both sides in 2-speaker. It was a very different experience, but I really enjoyed it.

“I was super excited when (coach) Haflich asked me to go to league to try to defend our league title. It’s super cool to become part of school history and to do it with an extremely talented group of girls beside me.”

Under Haflich, the Wildcat program has decided to compete in tougher tournaments throughout the season, many of which are against Class 6A teams. Although the Wildcats aren’t bringing home as many medals or awards as the year before, they hope this will prepare them for the ultimate prize, which is a state title.

“Competing at challenging tournaments has been very beneficial for the growth and improvement of our team,” Anderson said. “We have had a lot of novice move up to open and had very competitive performances. The higher level competition has given us insight to many different arguments, cases and has taught the team the importance of adaptability. I am very excited to see what the rest of the season has in store.”



Louisburg’s (from left) Amber Pendell and Janae Kuhlman won the 2-speaker competition on Nov. 5 at Spring Hill, while teammates Sydney and Demi VanMeerhaeghe took second.

Although they didn’t compete for a league title, the Wildcats still had several teams who did well in the 2-speaker formats at Spring Hill.

Janae Kuhlman and Amber Pendell finished with a 5-0 record on the day to finish first, while Sydney VanMeerhaeghe and Demi VanMeerhaeghe went 4-1 to take second. Garrett Rolofson and Deven Wieland, who normally compete in the novice division, moved up to the open class and had a 3-2 record to finish third in their first advanced tournament.

The Wildcats have also experienced success throughout the season as Anderson and Nathaniel Mason went 5-0 and finished second at the Spring Hill tournament on Oct. 29.

On Oct. 15, Louisburg traveled to Olathe South where the defending Class 4A 2-speaker state champions Carson Tappan and Curran Conklin went 5-0 to take first, while Skylar Keaton and Holtzen went 4-1 to take fourth. Alex Axmann and Dillon Keegan finished seventh.

The Louisburg novice team went to De Soto on Oct. 8 and finished second overall. Cole Williams and Gabe Rader went 4-1 to finish second, while Calvin Johnson and Sam Kratochvil took eighth.

Louisburg FFA brings home honors from nationals



The Louisburg FFA Milk Quality team finished fifth overall at the 89th Annual FFA National Convention in Indianapolis. Members of the team are (from left) adviser Jim Morgan, Justin Sievert, Wyatt Reece, Georgia Wilde and Paige Buffington.

The Louisburg High School FFA chapter is no stranger to success as the Wildcat students annually bring home awards from the National FFA Convention.

This year was no exception.

Louisburg sent three teams to the 89th Annual National FFA Convention in Indianapolis and all three were among the top in their respective Career Development Events (CDE). Each team received a gold emblem, while 11 of the 12 members who attended received individual gold emblems as well.

Those were just some of the honors bestowed on the Wildcat FFA program at the gathering that wrapped on Oct. 22.

“The FFA members did a tremendous job,” Louisburg advisor Jim Morgan said. “Having all three teams place in the gold division is quite an accomplishment. Louisburg FFA is the only chapter from Kansas to accomplish this and the only single-teacher chapter in the nation.

“Also having 11 out of 12 members achieve gold division is a sign of the student’s academic skills as well as their strong work ethic and desire to do well. We had many hours of practice during the summer and after school in which they worked very hard. I am very proud of this group.”



Members of the Louisburg Poultry team are (from left) adviser Jim Morgan, Faith Seuferling, Hallie Hutsell, Mariah Wrigley and Hattie Harris.

Louisburg has its best showing in the Milk Quality and Product CDE. The Wildcat team Paige Buffington, Wyatt Reece, Georgia Wilde and Justin Sievert finished fifth nationally in the event and all four members earned individual gold emblems.

The Poultry team also earned a top 10 finish nationally as Hattie Harris, Hallie Hutsell, Faith Seuferling and Mariah Wrigley came in seventh overall. Harris, Hutsell and Seuferling were all awarded individual gold emblem, while Wrigley earned a silver emblem.

Madelynn Yalowitz, Bryn O'Meara, Morgan Strumillo and Lexie Reece led the Louisburg Floriculture team to a gold emblem, but were also recognized some individual performances. Yalowitz, a senior, finished eighth individually, along with garnering an individual gold emblem with the rest of her

teammates.



Members of the Louisburg Floriculture team are (from left) adviser Jim Morgan, Morgan Strumillo, Madelynn Yalowitz, Lexie Reece and Bryn O'Meara.

Yalowitz and Wilde also earned $400 in scholarship money for their efforts in their respective events.

The convention made the move from Louisville to Indianapolis this year and Morgan said his students enjoyed their week FFA students from all across the country.

"The FFA members really like Indianapolis because with 65,000 in attendance the whole downtown area is a sea of blue jackets," Morgan said. "The members attended a number of workshops and learned ways to improve themselves as leaders as well as ways to improve the chapter."

Jazzy Cats earn top honors at dance festival



Members of the Louisburg High School Jazzy Cats are (front row, from left) Avery Graham, Lauren Cain, Kira Payton, Bree Christy, Quincy Rice; (back row) Brooklyn Mitchell, Melia Rice, Katie JoRay, Teagan Myers and Shae Murphy.

Most teams will choose to only take one or two routines to a competition, but the Louisburg High School Jazzy Cats dance team decided to take it a step further.

For the Eudora Dance and Cheer Festival, that was held at Eudora High School on Nov. 5, the Jazzy Cats put together three routines. As it turned out, the Louisburg dancers handled the extra work load just fine.

The Jazzy Cats earned a “1” rating for each of their three routines and garnered another honor in the process. They also received a specialty technique award for their hip-hop performance.

“There were several strong dance teams at the competition, but most other teams took one or two routines,” Jazzy Cats coach Kassy Miller said. “We decided to take three to this competition because we knew we could be ready and do a great

job. It is difficult to have three routines strong all at the same time, especially in distinct styles, but the way we have set our team goals this year has allowed us to work on those multiple styles. Even though we might be stronger in some styles than others, practicing multiple styles can enhance the overall abilities of the team.

Dancers Brooklyn Mitchell, Melia Rice, Katie JoRay, Teagan Myers, Shae Murphy, Lauren Cain, Kira Payton, Bree Christy, Quincy Rice and Avery Graham performed well the entire day as they earned top honors in their pom, kick and hip-hop routine.

The hip-hop routine was a crowd favorite and resulted in the technique award, Miller said.

“Hip-hop is a very difficult style to pull together and perform, but the type of focus and concentration they put into this routine really paid off,” she said. “I think they had the most fun working on that one, and it was great that the judges recognized that. They can’t wait to perform it at assemblies and basketball games next semester.”

All the Jazzy Cats’ success hasn’t happened overnight as the dancers have worked with Miller since last summer and continue to try and perfect their craft.

“I am very proud of them and they should be proud of each other,” Miller said. “This team has shown that they really understand how to use teamwork and hard work to their advantage. I feel like they have really set good examples for each other and that is what I am really proud of.

“They have had a very consistent practice schedule since the beginning of summer, and we couldn’t have done this without that dedication.”

Louisburg debate off to good start



Louisburg's Grayson Anderson (left) and Isabelle Holtzen show off their first-place medals following the Shawnee Mission South Invitational last Saturday. The Wildcat duo finished the day with a 5-0 record.

It is just two weeks into the season, but the Louisburg High School debate team is already racking up medals.

Most recently, the Wildcat team divided up and traveled to two tournaments last Saturday and both found success at Shawnee Mission South and Gardner-Edgerton High Schools.

At the Shawnee Mission South Invitational, two Louisburg teams left with medals. Isabelle Holtzen and Grayson Anderson finished the day with a 5-0 record to finish first overall.

Carson Tappan and Curran Conklin also had a nice showing for the Wildcats as they tallied a 4-1 record and finished ninth.

Louisburg sent 22 debaters to the Gardner-Edgerton Invitational and all of them were competing for the first time. It was a good debut for all of them as they combined to finish third overall in the team standings.



Deven Wieland (left) and Garrett Rolofson pose with their third-place trophy.

Deven Wieland and Garrett Rolofson went undefeated with a 4-0 record and the Wildcat duo finished third as well.

Louisburg opened its season on Sept. 17 and the Wildcats split

up again. One group traveled to the Washburn Rural Invitational – a 2-day tournament – and the other ventured to Blue Valley Southwest.



Brooke Talmage (left) and McKenzie Vanmeerhaeghe finished with a 4-1 record at Washburn Rural.

Brooke Talmage and McKenzie VanMeerhaeghe broke into out rounds and finished with a 5-1 record to take fourth place to lead Louisburg.

Calvin Cassida and Flynn Langner competed in the open division at Blue Valley Southwest and left with a 4-1 record. Gabe Rader and Cole Williams, who competed in their first tournament in the novice division, also finished with a 4-1 record.



(From left) Calvin Cassida, Gabe Rader, Cole Williams and Flynn Langner (not pictured) finished 4-1 at Blue Valley Southwest.

The LHS 2016 Fall Homecoming Candidates



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 2016 fall king and queen. Eight students were selected as nominees and here are their names and profiles.

The crowning will take place on Friday at 6:30 p.m. at Wildcat Stadium before kickoff of Louisburg's game with Baldwin.



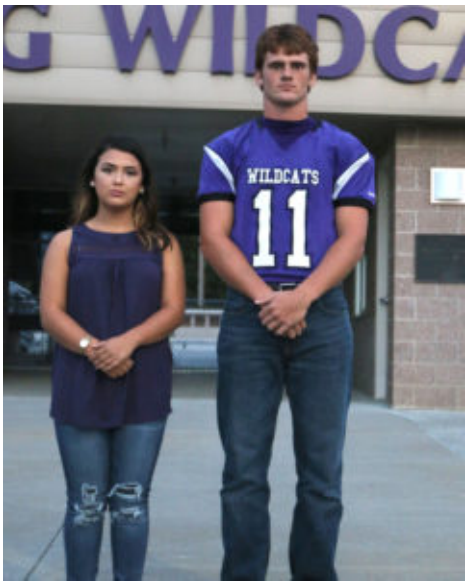
Lauren Becker and T.J. Dover

T.J. Dover

T.J. is the son of Steven and Jenny Dover. T.J. has participated in football for four years, basketball for four years, track for two years, golf for one year and debate for one year. T.J. plans to either play college football or attend Kansas State University and major in marketing.

Lauren Becker

Lauren is the daughter of Brian and Andrea Becker. Lauren has participated in band for four years, cheerleading for four years, choir and select choir for four years, LEO's club for four years, student council for four years, musical for four years, FCA for three years, track for three years, Letterman's Club for three years, Spanish Club for two years, SADD for two years and National Honor Society for two years. Lauren plans to attend the University of Kansas and major in nursing.



Rio Sierra and Grant Harding

Grant Harding

Grant is the son of Ken and Dotty Harding. Grant has participated in football for four years, baseball for four years, basketball for four years, Letterman's Club for three

years and choir for two. Grant is currently undecided on a school, but plans to play college basketball.

Rio Sierra

Rio is the daughter of Fidel Sierra and Veneita Taulbee. Rio has participated in forensics for four years, musical for four years, select choir for three years, cheerleading for two years, Spanish Club for two years and debate for one year. Rio plans to participate in a worship internship through Life Mission Academy Ministry at King's University where she will enroll to study Theology and music. She will concurrently enroll in Johnson County Community College and then will pursue a music degree at the University of Kansas.



Hanna Becker and Carson Tappan

Carson Tappan

Carson is the son of Dave and Jackie Tappan. Carson has participated in debate for four years, forensics for four years, LEO's Club for four years, student council for three years, scholar's bowl for three years and National Honor Society for two years. Carson plans to attend school out-of-state to study film production and television writing.

Hanna Becker

Hanna is the daughter of Brian and Andrea Becker. Hanna has participated in cheerleading for four years, band for four years, choir for four years, Leo's Club for four years, musical for four years, student council for four years, FCA for three years, track for three years, SADD for two years, NHS for two years, Spanish Club for two years and Letterman's Club for one year. Hanna plans to attend the University of Kansas and major in nursing.



Paige Buffington and Jake Hill

Jake Hill

Jake is the son of Andy and Megan Hill. Jake has participate in student council for four years, football for four years, Letterman's Club for four years, LEO's Club for four years, basketball for three years, golf for two years and National Honor Society for two years. Jake plans to attend Kansas State University to dual major in business administration and finances and minor in Spanish.

Paige Buffington

Paige is the daughter of David and Amy Buffington. Paige has participated in FFA for four years, basketball for three years, track for three years, Letterman's Club for three

years, volleyball for two years, select choir for two years and National Honor Society for one year. Paige plans to attend either the University of Kansas or Missouri State to major in nursing.



The 2016 LHS fall homecoming candidates are (front row, from left) Lauren Becker, Rio Sierra, Hanna Becker, Paige Buffington; (back) T.J. Dover, Grant Harding, Carson Tappan and Jake Hill.



Jazzy Cats acquire several honors at dance camp



The Louisburg High School Jazzy Cats dance team recently brought home several awards from the ADTS camp June 9 in Olathe. Members of the Jazzy Cats (front row, from left)

are Melia Rice, Bree Christy, Quincy Rice, Katie JoRay, Shae Murphy; (back row) Avery Graham, Brooklyn Mitchell, Teagan Myers, Kira Payton and Lauren Cain.

The Louisburg High School Jazzy Cats dance team put in hours of hard work prior to attending prior to attending the American Dance/Drill Team (ADTS) camp in Olathe.

All the hard work came to fruition when the camp ended on June 9.

The Jazzy Cats were recognized with several awards as they were chosen as the Gussie Nell Davis Team of the Camp. The Louisburg dancers were also chosen as an All-American team of the third day and were one of three teams recognized for a home routine award.

“The girls put in a lot of hard work into the routine, all starting with this new team’s seniors who spent a lot of time outside of practice helping to choreograph and structure the routine,” Jazzy Cats instructor Kassy Miller said. “The team started learning and rehearsing the dance after tryouts at several April early-morning practices, and also spent time in May and June to work on the dance technique and team performance.”

Louisburg also earned several individual honors as well.

Senior Quincy Rice was chosen as an Outstanding Leader and Performer in dance. Avery Graham, Katie JoRay and Rice were also named as Miss High Kick Finalists.

Bree Christy and Teagan Myers were recognized as All-American honorable mentions. Melia Rice, JoRay and Rice were named Overall All-American Teammates.

It was quite the showing for the Jazzy Cats, who competed against several other schools from across the Kansas City

area.

“This was the first time the Jazzy Cats attended this came, and I think they represented themselves, their school and community very well,” Miller said.

Members of the 2016-17 Jazzy Cats are Quincy Rice, Teagan Myers, Avery Graham, Katie JoRay, Melia Rice, Bree Christy, Lauren Cain, Shae Murphy, Brooklyn Mitchell and Kira Payton.

Holloway earns spot on Jayhawk cheer squad



Louisburg High School recent graduate Maddie Holloway found out in April that she was named to the University of Kansas Cheer Squad. Holloway will cheer at football, basketball, volleyball and other Jayhawk events.

When Maddie Holloway walked into the confines of Allen Fieldhouse for the first time two years ago, she was in a state of euphoria.

She couldn’t believe the atmosphere of the old gymnasium on the University of Kansas campus. Holloway loved every minute of it.

As a sophomore in high school, Holloway attended her first Jayhawk basketball game and it was there she realized what she wanted to do in college.

“I looked down on the sideline and saw the cheerleaders and everything they did during a game,” Holloway said. “I watched the stunts they did and what it was like to be a part of that game atmosphere. I told myself that is what I want to do and this is where I want to be.”

So two years and a lot of hard work later, Holloway achieved her goal.

On April 20, the Louisburg High School senior found out the news via video that she was one of the newest members of the University of Kansas Cheer Squad.

After a 3-day tryout earlier in April, Holloway was nervously anticipating the announcement. So when the team released the video online, she couldn’t help but begin to wonder if it was even going to happen.

“They told us before that they were going to keep 16 or 17 girls and I counted as I watched the video and I saw 14 girls pop up and it was almost over,” Holloway said. “I wasn’t sure if it was going to happen and then I saw my picture come up. I have never been more excited in my life when I saw that.”

It was a long road for Holloway leading up to that announcement.

Once she realized she wanted to cheer in college, Holloway put in the extra work it took to make it happen. Starting her sophomore year, she made the drive to Lawrence every Monday for open gym workouts with members of the Jayhawk cheer squad.

She learned different types of stunts and other things to help her prepare for what life as a college cheerleader would be like.

“It was definitely a commitment on my part and my parents too,” Holloway said. “Either I, or my mom, would drive up there and do that every week. There were no guarantees with anything, but cheering at KU was something that I really wanted and I figured doing this would help my chances. It was a lot of fun and I enjoyed doing it.”

Holloway’s senior season at Louisburg wasn’t exactly a smooth one as she suffered a concussion during football season and was forced to miss the final few weeks. It was a minor setback toward her overall goal of cheering in college.

Once she was cleared, she continued with her workouts in Lawrence along with cheering during the high school basketball season.

As the tryout date neared, Holloway had gotten an offer to cheer at Wichita State and Holloway seriously considered it.

“Wichita State offered me a spot on their team and I wouldn’t have had to do tryouts and all the other things,” Holloway said. “But I really wanted to cheer at KU. So I kind of put all my eggs in one basket and hoped that I would make the team.”

Those hopes were nearly dashed just days before the KU tryout as she hit her head during an open gym workout. Holloway wasn’t sure if she would be healthy enough for the tryout.

“I had worked two years for this moment so I wasn’t about to have this ruin everything so I decided to push on,” Holloway said.

Everything went according to plan in the early part of the tryouts, but later the cheerleaders were asked to run around Allen Fieldhouse as part of a conditioning tryout. It was then Holloway started to feel faint.

“About 10 minutes or so everything just went black, it was

pretty scary," Holloway said. "I got to know the trainer at KU pretty well and everyone on the team came to check up on me. That is what I like about being a part of the team there is everyone there is like family. They were all texting me how I was and making sure I was ok. That really meant a lot to me that they would do that."

Holloway was unable to do anything physical in nature for the final day of tryouts, but she still returned to give her interview.

"I just learned to make the best of a bad situation," she said. "I just went there to kill the interview and hoped it would all work out. That is all I could do."

Then came the waiting and wondering. Holloway then clicked on the 1 minute and 30 second video that showed the newest members of the Jayhawk squad.

It seemed like an hour, but in the end, it all worked out.

"I have never worked so hard for something in my life," Holloway said. "Then to see all that hard work payoff is the best feeling in the world. I am so excited to get started and get down there with my new family."

Louisburg FFA wins three state championships



The Louisburg High School FFA members who competed at the Kansas CDE state competition are (front row, from left) Mariah Wrigley, Hallie Hutsell, Faith Seuferling, Hattie Harris, Wyatt Reece, Georgia Wilde, Lilly Mick, Kaitlyn Urban; (middle) Alex Dunn, Ellie Katzer, Paige Buffington, Bryn O'Meara, Lexie Reece, Morgan Strumillo, Madelynn Yalowitz; (back) Alex Seuferling, Abby Tucker, Megan Eberhart, Katie Reece and Mason Koechner.

The Louisburg High School FFA chapter is no stranger to winning state championships – in fact – it has become expected.

This year was no different as Louisburg won state championships in three Career Development Events when results were released earlier this month. Louisburg was within just a few points of winning more as 32 points separated the Wildcats from having six state champs.

Louisburg won state titles in Floriculture, Dairy Foods and Poultry, while three more teams earned second place honors. It is the fifth year in a row that Louisburg has had multiple state winners and it has had at least one state champion in 12 of the last 13 years.

The three state championship teams will compete at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis in October.

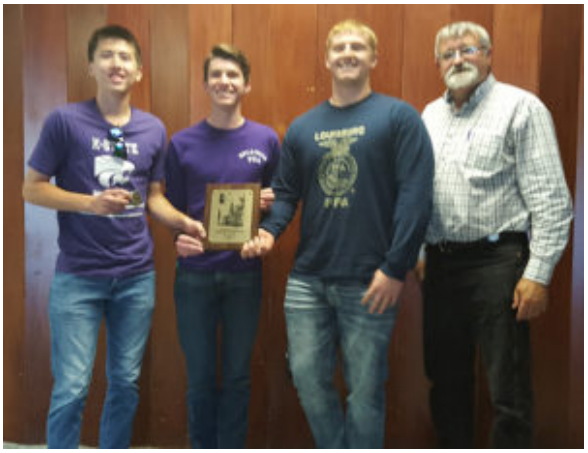


(From left) Madelynn Yalowitz, Morgan Strumillo and Lexie Reece won the state Floriculture CDE. Pictured with the group is adviser Jim Morgan. Not pictured is Bryn O'Meara.

"This only happens because of the great students enrolling in agriculture education classes and then working hard when the opportunity arises," Louisburg FFA adviser Jim Morgan said. "I am really proud of how all the teams did. Having three winning and three runners-up speaks to how hard the kids work."

The Floriculture team of Madelynn Yalowitz, Bryn O'Meara, Morgan Strumillo and Lexie Reece had a strong showing with their first place finish. Yalowitz finished first individually and O'Meara came in fifth.

Georgia Wilde, Justin Sievert, Mason Koechner and Wyatt Reece helped the Dairy Foods team to a state title and got good performances individually from Wilde and Sievert. Wilde took first place individually and Sievert was seventh.



(From left) Justin Sievert, Wyatt Reece and Mason Koechner won the state Dairy Foods CDE. Pictured with the group is adviser Jim Morgan. Not pictured is Georgia Wilde.

Faith Seuferling, Hattie Harris, Hallie Hutsell and Mariah Wrigley won a state championship in the Poultry division and three of them placed individually. Seuferling came in first, Harris was fifth and Hutsell took eighth.

Three more Louisburg teams nearly earned a spot in the national competition, but came up just a few points short.

The Food Science team of Wilde, Lilly Mick, Kaitlyn Urban and Wyatt Reece finished second overall, but Wilde came in first individually. Mick and Urban took ninth and 10th, respectively.

Paige Buffington, Ellie Katzer, Gracie Key and Liz Hildreth led the Veterinary Science team to a runner-up finish. Buffington (sixth), Katzer (ninth) and Key (10th) all placed in the top 10.

The Nursery and Landscape team of Abby Tucker, Megan Eberhart, Kaitlyn Gaza and Katzer was also runner-up. Tucker (third), Eberhart (fifth), Gaza (sixth) and Katzer (ninth) placed individually.



(From left) Mariah Wrigley, Hattie Harris and Faith Seuferling won the state Poultry CDE. Also pictured is FFA adviser Jim Morgan. Not pictured is Hallie Hutsell.

“Because they had set their goal on winning state, the teams that placed second were disappointed and sad,” Morgan said. “They sometimes don’t realize that it is a great accomplishment just to make the top five.

“It is tough to reflect that 32 points total separated Louisburg from having six state winners.”

The Ag Mechanics team of Bradley Trageser, Alex Dunn, Alex Seuferling and Cole Harshaw finished seventh in the team competition. The Ag Business Management team of Dunn, Katie Reece, Megan Roy and Tucker came in eighth to round out the Wildcat teams.

LHS forensics closes regular season strong



Members of the Louisburg High School forensics team pose for a picture with their medals and their sweepstakes trophy following their first place win at Fort Scott last Saturday.

The Louisburg High School forensics team finished the regular season like the way it started it – with a win.

Actually, two to be exact.

Louisburg split the team again last week and the Wildcats brought home titles from tournaments in Fort Scott and Fredonia.

On Saturday, the Wildcats took a smaller team to the Fort Scott Tournament due to district band and choir competition, but they came out on top with the sweepstakes crown.

Senior Abigail Bergman and junior Carson Tappan stole the show for the Wildcats as both qualified for state competition in three events. Bergman took first in Prose and Duet and second in Poetry.

Tappan earned top honors in Oration and Improptu and also finished third in Informative. Senior Spencer Rogers was also a double champion as he teamed with Bergman to win the Duet competition and also took first in Humorous Solo Acting.

The Wildcats also had nine other medalists on the day.

Zach Waite (second, Extemporaneous; fourth, Poetry; fifth, Oration), Ashley Allen (sixth, Oration; fifth, Impromptu), Jordan Shaner (fifth, Humorous Solo; sixth, Impromptu), Eddie Murphy (second, Duet with Jacinda Collins; fourth, Serious Solo), Beckett Rasmussen (second, Humorous Solo), Anthony Strickling (third, Serious Solo), Sam Traffis (fifth, Poetry) and Alyssa Franco (sixth, Poetry).

Louisburg also participated in a mid-week tournament in Fredonia and sent 13 to the finals to capture the sweepstakes title.

McKenzie Vanmeerhaeghe led the way as she won gold in Serious Solo Acting and later took second in Duet with partner Vonnah LaHue, who came in fifth in poetry. Dalton Knipp won the Poetry competition and was fourth in Serious Solo Acting, while Waite took first in Extemporaneous Speaking.

Lexi Shaner (second, Oration; second, Extemporaneous Speaking), Jonathan Ventre (second, Serious Solo), Stephanie Rose (third, Poetry), Andrea Leach (fourth, Poetry), Camdyn Clark (fifth, Serious Solo) and Kallee Bartlett (fifth, Prose) also medaled for Louisburg.

The Wildcats will spend the next three weeks of the year competing in postseason action. Louisburg will compete at the national qualifier, where students must finish in the top two of their event to represent Kansas this summer in Utah.

The following weekend Louisburg will be at the Forensics Coaches Invitational (FCI), which is an elite tournament of all classifications where students must double-state qualify in order to compete. The end of April concludes the season with the Class 4A state tournament in Topeka.

So far this season, the Wildcats have earned 10 top-3 sweepstakes awards, including six championships. They have had

195 medalists, 38 state qualifiers and 21 FCI qualifiers.

For those who would like to see these students in action, you have the opportunity to watch the year’s top performers from 7 to 9 p.m., on Wednesday at Louisburg High School for their annual showcase.

Wildcats win title at Topeka Seaman



The LHS forensics team won several medals and first place honors at Topeka Seaman on April 2.

LHS forensics ventured to the Topeka Seaman tournament on April 2 in its first action back from a three-week layoff and didn’t show any rust.

The Wildcats faced off with 10 other programs and edged out Washburn Rural to earn the sweepstakes honor. Rio Sierra and Carson Tappan earned individual titles.

Sierra came in first in Prose and was second in Serious Solo Acting, while Tappan was first in Oration and took fifth in Impromptu and Informative Speaking.

Chloe Philgreen (second, Humorous Solo Acting; fourth, Prose; third Duet with Kyle Green), Emily Ventre (third, Prose), Nathaniel Mason (second, Poetry), Kallee Bartlett (fifth, Poetry; sixth, Duet with Lexie Hubbard), Alex Richardson (fourth, Informative), and Zach Waite (sixth, Oration).

Louisburg also traveled to a tournament in Ottawa and came away with a fourth-place finish. Julia Walker finished first in Serious Solo Acting and teammate McKenzie Vanmeerhaeghe came in second.

Riley George had a good day as she was runner-up in Poetry and Vonnah LaHue came in sixth. Bryce Kuhlman came in fourth in Humorous Solo Acting and joined Billie Casebeer to take sixth in Duet Acting.

Wildcats finish runner-up at big forensics tourney



The Louisburg High School forensics team poses with its runner-up trophy on March 5 from the Olathe Northwest tournament. Senior Emily Ventre won two individual gold medals and junior Carson Tappan also won gold.

The Louisburg High School forensics team divided up on March 5 and came back to Louisburg with plenty of hardware to show for its efforts.

Louisburg competed in two large tournaments as it traveled to Olathe Northwest for a tournament that featured more than 800 entries, while another group ventured to Paola for a 19-school tournament.

At Olathe Northwest, the Wildcats put together a strong effort as 17 entries made their way to the semifinals and nine more made the finals. Those efforts helped Louisburg to a second-place sweepstakes finish of the 22 competing programs.

“At this point in the year I am looking to see how some of my top performers stack up against great competition and are they consistent enough to get through a large tournament,” Louisburg coach Brian Weilert said. “Class 4A state is the biggest of the state tournaments with 500 entries and it is important to see who can stand out in a crowd. I was very proud of our efforts and to finish top-3 at this tournament is quite an accomplishment.”

The Wildcats had a few that stood out, which included Emily Ventre. The Louisburg senior was a double-gold winner as she won both Prose and Program of Interpretation.

Junior Carson Tappan also had a good day as he finished ahead of 54 others to take first in Orations and later took fourth in Impromptu in front of 88 other competitors.

Louisburg had plenty of other medalists as well. Rio Sierra came in fourth in Prose. Skylar Keaton (Informative), Kyle Green (Humorous Interpretation), Abigail Bergman (Poetry) and Stephanie Rose (Poetry) each finished sixth.

At Paola, the Wildcats finished fifth in the team standings and also had five finalists where many of the events ballooned over 40 entries, including 70 in Prose and Poetry.

Dalton Knipp led the way as he double-broke into the finals as he took fourth in Serious Solo Acting and fifth in Poetry.

Beckett Rasmussen came in third in Humorous Solo Acting, while Jonathan Ventre (Serious Solo Acting) and Jordan Shaner (Tabloid Extemp Speaking) each came in fifth.

“The Paola group had a better day than it looked like by finals counts,” Weilert said. “Many of the students had one bad ballot that kept them from the finals. We had a lot of good scores and many of these competitors were young.”