

Opinion: Rough patch leads to new beginning



I am just going to come right out and say it, "I'm scared."

Yeah, it is an unusual way to start out an opinion piece, but there is no two ways around it – I am petrified. But believe it or not, it is what keeps me going.

We have all had at least one point in our existence where our lives changed for better or worse. I have had more than a few of those in my life, but the latest one came on Jan. 9.

It started out like all the other Fridays over the last seven years. I reported to work, spent a few hours in the office getting ready for what was a busy weekend of prep coverage ahead. It was the first action after Christmas break and I was ready to get back into the swing of things.

That never took place.

My bosses came into my office early that afternoon to inform me I was being let go. The job of covering Louisburg athletics was no longer mine. I packed up my things, turned in my key, went home, punched the wall a couple times and cried.

I was scared.

After all the tears came the questions. How was I going to support my family? What am I going to do for a job? The list went on and on and I couldn't come up with many answers.

As it turned out, one of the worst experiences of my life turned into one of the best.

Thanks to a lot of prayers, and support from family and friends, I decided to start Louisburg Sports Zone. Yep, that's right, I went from being unemployed to starting my own business for the first time in my life.

Not exactly the best way to alleviate fears.

However, when I kicked off the site just a month later, I was overwhelmed with the amount of support from students at Louisburg High School, employees throughout the district, parents and several others who offered encouragement and supported my new venture.

I finished the last half of the winter season and all of the spring doing what I took for granted the previous seven years. I got the chance to cover Louisburg athletics again.

You know, this whole starting your own business thing might not have been a bad idea after all. I would have never had the courage to go out on my own had I not been pushed in that direction.

Fast forward to the present and I am still alive and kicking, ready to start my eighth season of roaming the Wildcat sidelines with camera in hand, waiting to tell that next story.

This fall brings a lot of story lines to the Wildcat programs. The football team is looking to improve off its 3-win season a year ago and find its way back to the playoffs with a veteran group returning.

Volleyball is primed and ready to make its fourth consecutive state tournament this year after placing in the top four in the last three years. The Lady Cats return five seniors that have a lot of state experience and that bodes well for another

trip to Salina.

The Wildcat soccer team returns an experienced group from a year ago as they try to crack the top of the Frontier League standings. The cross country team also has several returning runners who will try and qualify for the state meet.

There is a lot to be excited about when it comes to Louisburg sports, but for me personally, I am just fortunate enough to still be a part of it in a small way.

I take a lot of pride in what I do and I hope that it shows when you read stories or look at pictures on this site. I started this business knowing that I will never be rich, but it gives me an opportunity to continue to do what I love.

Thanks to all those who have supported me and for the more than 23,000 views on the site in the last six months. I have said it before, but I am extremely blessed to live in a community that supports each other through good times and bad.

Every day I am fortunate enough to be able to go to work and support my family doing what I know how to do. That is all I have ever wanted, so thank you Louisburg for allowing me to do it.

I am still scared, though.

It is that fear that drives me to do the best I can in what I do in my job and in life. I don't want what happened on that day in January to happen again and I will do everything to make sure it doesn't.

Right now I am living the good life. I have the opportunity to work for myself, support my family and do what I enjoy. I can't ask for any more.

I am living the American dream.

I just don't want to wake up.

LHS marching band puts in work at camp



Photos courtesy of John Cisetti

Daniel Bell (foreground) and several other members of the Louisburg High School marching band performs a number during its week-long camp last week that was capped off Friday with a performance for their parents.

The Louisburg High School marching band spent a week working and preparing for what is a long season of competitions and performances.

Those Wildcat band members got a lot accomplished.

In just a few short days, the Wildcats memorized nine songs, prepared for the upcoming Labor Day Parade, worked on the pregame show for home football games, worked on music and marching fundamentals, established leadership and fit everyone in new uniforms.

It is a lot to ask for students on summer break, but the Louisburg band came through with shining colors.

"I'm pleased to report that we accomplished all our goals and performed on the field for parents last Friday night," LHS band instructor John Cisetti said. "Our kids have a great work ethic and are determined to succeed."

Succeed they did and no one took a day off.



The Louisburg High School marching band makes it way past the high school during its annual camp last week.

The Louisburg band features 139 students this coming year and everyone was in attendance for the six days that concluded a performance for their parents Friday evening.

"They represent more than one-fourth of the LHS student body," Cisetti said. "The band is huge."

Along with Cisetti, the Wildcats appear in good hands with their three drum majors this season. Spencer Rogers, Parker Cates and Ben Brummel have had a good summer as well as the three attended drum major camp at Platte County High School and walked away with the Grand Champion trophy.

The Wildcats have also put in a lot of time working on their program for this year. "On Broadway" will be the theme and features music from four Broadway shows, including "The Phantom of the Opera," "Wicked," "Hairspray," and "Les

Miserables.”



The band spent part of its week fitting themselves for new uniforms.

“Our theme this year was chosen by the students,” Cisetti said. “The challenge is blending all of these different styles into a unified show. The variety makes it very interesting.”

Another big change for the band is its wardrobe. New uniforms were ordered for everyone thanks to \$71,727 received from USD 416’s Capital Outlay Fund last year that allowed them to purchase 150 uniforms.

The new uniforms will display a purple jacket, black pants and a black plume. ‘Louisburg’ and a white ‘L’ is featured on the front of the jacket.

The band used their previous uniforms for the last 16 years and Cisetti can tell the excitement the new threads have brought to his students.

“You can see the pride on their faces when they see themselves in the mirror wearing new uniforms,” he said. “They don’t want

to take them off.”

Louisburg also has a big season ahead of itself with several performances. The Wildcats will perform in the annual Louisburg Labor Day Parade, all home football games and two marching festivals.

On Oct. 14, they will compete in the Baker University Marching Festival and will also perform at the Central State Marching Festival at Kansas State University on Oct. 24.