

# Frontier League sends proposal to KSHSAA to separate private schools



A big change to the Kansas High School Activities Association (KSHSAA) postseason could be coming sooner rather than later if a proposal, submitted by the Frontier League, passes the KSHSAA Board of Directors and its member schools.

Last month the Frontier League, led by Paola High School principal Jeff Hines and Louisburg superintendent Dr. Brian Biermann, petitioned KSHSAA to separate public and private schools into their own postseason competitions.

In order for it pass, the petition must be signed by 20 percent of the 355 member schools according to KSHSAA bi-laws. The Frontier League got the 71 needed petitions and have now submitted this to appear in front of the KSHSAA Board of Directors for vote in their Sept. 18 meeting.

The board of directors would then have to pass it by simple majority of those in attendance to

bring the proposal  
to a vote from all the member schools.

“Kansas needs to catch up with  
the rest of the country and get this competitive imbalance  
under control in our  
state,” Hines said. “The longer we wait then more students  
will be negatively  
impacted. We have a responsibility as educators to create the best  
opportunities possible for our students. No one can honestly  
say we have  
the best system possible right now. It can definitely be  
improved.”

The proposal submitted by the Frontier League is the same one  
the state of Texas uses that keeps the schools in their same  
classification, but only separates the schools come  
postseason.

Other options were discussed  
before submitting the proposal, such as implementing a  
multiplier on all  
private schools like Missouri currently does. In fact, it is  
the most popular  
proposal among the schools that were surveyed by Hines last  
January.

They also talked about the “Oklahoma  
model” where schools are bumped up a classification based on  
success for  
competitive balance.

Seventy-four percent of the  
schools said they would support a population multiplier, 64  
percent would  
support competitive balance factors and 51 percent would  
support separate

divisions.

However, KSHSAA would not be able to make this change with a multiplier due to state statute K.S.A. 72-130 that states a high school association “must establish a system of classification of member high schools according to student attendance.”

KSHSAA would not be able to pass a new bi-law that goes against state statute, and therefore, the Kansas State Legislature would have reword the statute to allow the association to make those changes.

The Frontier League believes the Texas model, or separate postseason divisions, does not deal with classifications. Also, this model had more support from 5A and 6A schools as neither classification would likely vote for a multiplier.

“We don’t view that as a classification decision as we are not affecting classification, but KSHSAA and their lawyers view that it is,” Biermann said. “5A and 6A schools that we talked to really wanted us to push for the Texas model because they don’t want to play them (private schools) either. The biggest thing for me is if 5 and 6A schools don’t want to play them, then why do we? As a superintendent, I am supposed to create opportunities for kids. We had four teams last year in both soccer teams, football and volleyball that all saw their season end to Bishop Miege. It is not right that we have kids and coaches that work their tails off and they don’t have the opportunity to win.

“Am I all about state championships? Absolutely not. But we also know the reality of it in the current system. Winning state championships is important for

communities and is always a goal. I am not ever going to give up on this idea and neither will the Frontier League.”

The public versus private school debate has been going on for the last several years and Hines has been leading the charge since 2015 when he put together a study that displayed the disparity of state championships won by private schools.

In 2018-19, private schools won 32 percent of the state championships in Classes 5A through 1A. There are currently no private schools in 6A. Twenty-one of those 24 state titles were won by private schools in Class 4A and 5A.

That is a high number considering that out of the 355 member schools, only 27 of them are private.

The Frontier League wanted to see change, so Hines surveyed the 355 member schools late last year and presented his findings to KSHSAA in January. More than 88 percent of the schools responded, that included 22 private institutions, and 87 percent said they want the current system changed.

**Presentation of Public/Private School Survey Results  
to The KSHSAA Executive Board**

January 10, 2019

**Results from Survey**

313 of the 355 KSHSAA Member Schools Responded – 88.2%

291 Public Schools Responded

22 Private Schools Responded

273 Member Schools voted YES to support a change in the current structure

271 Public Schools Voted Yes for Change

2 Private Schools Voted for Change

40 Member Schools voted NO to support a change in the current structure

20 Public Schools Voted No for Change

20 Private Schools Voted No for Change

**87.2% voted that they want the current system changed.**

	<b>Survey Response Rate</b>	<b>Support Change</b>
<b>1A</b>	82.9%	92.8%
<b>2A</b>	89.0%	84.2%
<b>3A</b>	98.4%	85.6%
<b>4A</b>	100.0%	88.9%
<b>5A</b>	88.8%	81.3%
<b>6A</b>	77.7%	82.1%
<b>Total</b>	88.2%	87.2%

**School Superintendent Response Rate**

175 School Superintendents Responded

169 out of 175 Support Change

96.6% Support Change

**Principal Response Rate**

182 Principals Responded

84.6% Support Change

**Activities Director Response Rate**

200 Activities Directors Responded

85% Support Change

Although most schools said they would support the multiplier model more, Hines and the rest of the league schools, believe it is the best way to proceed at this time.

“Our survey indicated that separate divisions was the least popular option among member schools, however as a league we feel like it is the most appropriate option,” Hines said. “A multiplier will pass through and will be our next option if this does not go through. A multiplier will impact many private schools that are not quasi sports academies that are not very successful in athletics. The separate divisions avoids this situation.”

If the proposal does pass the board of directors, KSHSAA will then put it to a vote with all 355 member schools and it must pass by a simple majority and by four of the six classes.

From there, KSHSAA executive director Bill Faflick would take it to the Kansas Legislature before change could be implemented.

“We know it won’t happen overnight,” Biermann said. “Even if this passes, nothing will change this year and probably not the following year. It could be three years out with the way football schedules take shape. We are honestly ok with that if we knew that there was light at the end of the tunnel. If this would not pass, we would turn right around and do the multiplier one.”

Despite what happens at the

upcoming board of directors meeting, Hines believes changes to the system will happen sooner rather than later.

“I am now confident something will get done,” Hines said. “I think it will ultimately take a multiplier to get something done. If the separate divisions fails then we will propose a multiplier for the spring board of directors meeting.”

A lot of obstacles are still in the way for change to happen, whether it has to deal with state statues or member votes, but none of the schools in the nine-member Frontier League are going to stop until they see a more even playing field.

“I am very proud of the Frontier League, and even though we compete against each other, we are very unified on this,” Biermann said. “It is about fairness and equality and I am tired of having my kids at Louisburg High School not having the same opportunity as some others. The throttle is down and it is going to stay down.”

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## **Louisburg Tonics to compete in National Granny Basketball Tournament**



The Louisburg Tonics Granny Basketball team will soon contend for the national championship.

A record-setting field of women basketball players, age 50-87, will trek to Lawrence, KS – known as a legendary basketball town – to play in the 2019 National Granny Basketball Tournament. The six-on-six competition, based on 1920s-style rules, will be held Saturday, July 20, at the Ambler Student Recreation Center on the campus of the University of Kansas.

“This is the largest event in the history of Granny Basketball, and we are proud to host it in Lawrence,” said Dee Bisel, local co-chair of the national tournament committee and player for the Lawrence based Grey Tornadoes. “Sixteen teams and 200 players will compete on four courts at this beautiful facility. We are excited for the players, family members and fans to be a part of this special experience.”

“The Louisburg Tonics always have fun playing Granny Basketball and are looking forward to playing in the national tourney against teams from other states. We probably do more laughing than playing basketball though,” says Jean Carder, Tonics captain.

The team to watch is the



three-peat champion of the national tournament, the Harpers Ferry Fireflies hailing from a small town in northeast Iowa. Players will travel to match their skills against other teams, including contenders from Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Texas, Louisiana and other states.

Granny Basketball is a fun-filled activity that encourages women age 50 and over to stay fit and active in a non-traditional, social environment. The league provides wholesome, nostalgic and sometimes humorous entertainment, as well as an outlet for charitable fundraising.

Players dress in 1920s-inspired uniforms – black bloomers, middy blouses and sailor-style collars displaying each player's number.

The old-style, six-on-six rules call for the court to be divided into three sections, one each for forwards, centers and guards. Players can have up to two dribbles per possession. Running is not allowed, but “hurrying” is. With an emphasis on safety, players are not allowed to jump or have physical contact. Also, only three fouls are allowed. The modified league rules also award three points for underhanded “granny shots.”

The 16 teams will be organized into four pools, where each team will play three games starting at 8 am. The final four teams, the top team from each

pool, will advance to the semi-finals and championship games. The championship game is scheduled for 4 p.m.

The public is invited. Proceeds from the suggested \$5 donation at the door will benefit the local Visiting Nurses Association.

The Granny Basketball League is a non-profit Iowa-based organization founded in 2005. Currently, 37 Granny Basketball teams are active in 9 states: Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin. The league has grown by eight teams in 2019, predominantly in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. The national tournament will return to Lawrence in July 2020, then will travel to Prairie Du Chien, WI in 2021.

Members of the Tonics are: Becky Berg, Louisburg; Lisa Berg, Olathe

Jean Carder, Louisburg; Kathleen Caverty, Louisburg; Ruth Fladung, Louisburg; Wanda Harlow, Bucyrus; Helen McClain, Louisburg; Julie McKinley, Linn Valley; LaVonne Mize, Louisburg; Diana Moore, Louisburg; Ellen Morland, Louisburg; Janet York, Louisburg and Coach Kate Berg Camp, Gardner

For more information, visit [www.grannybasketball.com](http://www.grannybasketball.com) and [www.facebook.com/grannybasketball](http://www.facebook.com/grannybasketball).

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# Stiles, Lohse, Burk and Bowes

# to be inducted into LHS Hall of Fame



**Dennis Stiles (top left), John Lohse (top right), Jason Burk (bottom left) and Krystal (Bowes) Grojean will be inducted into the Louisburg High School Athletic Hall of Fame this fall.**

It has been 11 years since Louisburg High School had inducted a class into its athletic hall of fame, but the wait for a new class is finally over.

The USD 416 Endowment Association, which oversees the LHS Athletic Hall of Fame, has announced a new 4-member class. Dennis Stiles (Class of 1969), John Lohse (1995), Jason Burk (1999) and Krystal (Bowes) Grojean (2001) were the top four vote getters in this year's hall of fame voting and will be honored in an induction ceremony sometime this fall.

"Louisburg has a history of great athletes," said Damon Dennis, a USD 416 Endowment Association board member. "We had a good cross-section of both young and older voters this year that really took their job seriously. The four athletes chosen represent several generations of former Wildcats and each one were dominant in their particular era and sports. The Endowment Association is excited to get the Hall of Fame going again and plan on some big things in the future."

More than two dozen voters, that includes current members of the hall of fame, long-time Louisburg residents, teachers and

coaches, voted on the class in June. Each voter was asked to submit their top four choices for the hall and votes were then tabulated.

To be eligible for the hall of fame, the inductee must wait at least 10 years following graduation to be nominated.

The last class that was inducted was in 2008 and Dennis, and the rest of the Endowment Association, is committed to making this a yearly occurrence moving forward.

Here

are the accomplishments of each of the newest hall of fame inductees. Look for

more information on an induction ceremony in the coming weeks.



**Dennis Stiles**

## **Dennis Stiles – Class of 1969 – Football, Basketball, Track**

Stiles

lettered 4 years in football and

track and 3 years in basketball. His senior year he was named all-league and

all-state in football and was co-captain on the Wildcat team that finished the

year 4-4.

As sophomore, he played on the varsity basketball team which was 12-0 in league play, finished the year 19-3 and were district champions. He earned honorable mention all-state honors his sophomore and junior seasons and was second-team all-state his senior year. Stiles was at one time the school's career scoring leader.

Stiles competed at the state track meet as a junior and senior where he placed fourth in the discus his senior year. He previously held school records in the discus and triple jump. He also received a football scholarship to Kansas State University.



**John Lohse**

## **John Lohse – Class of 1995 – Football, Basketball and Baseball**

Lohse lettered all four years in baseball and was selected to represent Kansas in the all-star baseball classic his senior year. He was an all-league

pitcher and centerfielder for the Wildcats his sophomore through senior years.

He had a .510 average his junior and senior seasons with 10 home runs his junior year and 12 more his senior season.

In football, Lohse was a 3-year letterwinner. He was an all-league wide receiver his junior and senior seasons. In his senior year, he had 850 yards receiving and 11 touchdowns and was later selected to represent Kansas in the Metro Classic All-Star Game.

Lohse was also a 3-year letterwinner in basketball and was an all-league selection his junior and senior seasons. He averaged a double-double his junior and senior years.

Post-graduation, Lohse attended Pittsburg State on a baseball scholarship and played on the Gorilla team for four years. He was selected to the all-MIAA team his sophomore and junior seasons before injuring his shoulder his senior year. He had a .315 average his junior and senior seasons. In his first collegiate at-bat his freshman year, Lohse hit a game-winning grand slam to give Pitt State its first win over Missouri Southern in five years.



**Jason Burk**

## **Jason Burk – Class of 1999 – Track and Football**

Burk was a 4-year letterwinner for the Louisburg track and field team and qualified for state in all four years in four events. He accumulated 12 state medals, 16 regional track medals and 14 Frontier League medals. Burk was selected to the Kansas City All-Metro track team in 1998 and 1999.

During his senior season, Burk was a state champion in both the triple and long jump. He won the triple jump with a leap 48 feet and the long jump with a mark of 22-5. He also finished fifth in the 100-meter dash and sixth in the high jump. As a junior, Burk won a state championship in the triple jump with mark of 46 feet and won three more state medals. He took second long jump, fourth in the 100 dash and sixth in the 200 dash. As a sophomore, Burk won state medals in the triple jump (second), long jump (fourth)

and 4×100 relay

(third). He was a member of the 4×100 team that took second at state as a freshman in 1996.

At one time, Burk held seven school records. He currently holds school records in the triple jump, high jump and long jump. Burk holds the school record for most points in a season with 326.

Burk also played football, where he was a part of bi-district, district and regional championship teams.



**Krystal (Bowes) Grojean**

## **Krystal (Bowes) Grojean – Class of 2001 – Volleyball, Basketball, Track**

Bowes was a 4-year letterwinner in track before she was offered a scholarship on the Wichita State track and field team.



In her senior season at Louisburg, Bowes earned three state medals, including a second-place finish in the javelin with a throw of 145-10. She was also third in the discus with a toss of 126-9 and fifth in the shot put at 37-5. As a sophomore and junior, she finished sixth in the discus at state. In all, Bowes racked up five state medals in her high school career before moving on to Wichita State. She is the current Louisburg record holder in the javelin (146-10) and discus (137-11).

At Wichita State, she earned academic All-American honors and was a team captain all four years. Bowes was a two-time NCAA national qualifier and finished fifth in the javelin and was second in the Missouri Valley Conference in 2006. In 2004, Bowes took first in the MVC in the javelin and fourth in the discus. In 2003, she won the Missouri Valley Conference discus title, was second in the javelin and fourth in the hammer throw. Bowes was also a member two Shocker teams that won conference titles.

In volleyball and basketball at LHS, Bowes was a 3-year letterwinner in each sport and earned first-team all-Frontier League honors each season.

Current members of the LHS Hall of Fame

### **Class of 2005:**

Tom

Stevens – 1934 – Track and Field (High Jump)

1947/48

Undefeated Football Teams

Richard

Meiers – 1949 – Basketball/Football

Don

Meek – 1965-1998 – Coach/Administrator

Larry

Harding – 1976-1994 – Volleyball/Golf Coach

Amy

Dodson Goode – 1986 – Volleyball/Basketball

**Class of 2006:**

Jim

Wells – 1936 – Track and Field (Pole Vault)/Football

Doug

Eaton – 1971 – Wrestling

Sue

Truman Apple – 1974 – Track and Field/Volleyball/Basketball

Mike

Meek – 1985- Football/Wrestling/Track and Field

Jamie

Waite – 1991 – Track and Field (Pole Vault)/Football/Basketball

**Class of 2007**

Alan

Taylor – 1949 – Football

Tim

Dozier – 1987 – Wrestling/Football

Beth

Dodson Dixon – 1989 – Volleyball/Basketball

Jeff

Lohse – 1991 – Baseball/Football/Basketball

### **Class of 2008**

Greg

Kahmann – 1987 – Baseball/Football/Basketball

Mark

Buckingham – 1994 – Basketball

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# **Cunningham wins all-around cowgirl title, qualifies for nationals in 4 events**



**Louisburg High School's Lakin Cunningham recently won the state barrel racing title and will compete at the National High School Rodeo in four events.**

Lakin Cunningham has had a rodeo season to remember – and it isn't even over yet.

Cunningham competed in the Kansas High School Rodeo Finals last month in Mulvane and left with a lot to show for it. She

won the barrel racing state championship and was a reserve champion in goat tying.

That success led to even bigger things as she was named All-Around Cowgirl for the state of Kansas. Cunningham was also crowned the 2019-20 Rodeo Queen for the second consecutive year.

Cunningham, who just finished her sophomore year at Louisburg High School, didn't give much thought on winning the all-around title. As the season went on, however, it became much more of a reality.

"Going into finals I knew I had a pretty good chance at winning the All-Around as I had about a 2,500 point lead on the girls behind me, but still anything can happen at the state finals when there is so many points up for grabs," Cunningham said. "I knew I just had to perform to the best of my ability and whatever happened was in God's hands. Going through the finals I didn't even know what the All-Around standings were, and to be honest I didn't want to know. So when I found out I did end up winning the title I was so happy.

"Going into this season this fall, all-around cowgirl was not even a goal of mine. In fact, it's something I didn't even expect when the season started last August as I thought to be an All Around contender that I needed to be a roper and have a couple more events. But, I had a great fall season in barrel racing and goat tying and led the All-Around standings from that first rodeo and kept my lead throughout the entire season. It was just something that happened and I was so happy that it did. The All-Around title has been won by seniors for the past several years in Kansas High School Rodeo, so I'm so honored to have achieved this award my

sophomore year.”

Cunningham

went up against some tough competition and found herself in a tight race for the barrel racing title with her horse, Precious. Unfortunately, during her runs at state she noticed something wasn't right with Precious.

When

all her rides were complete, Cunningham realized she was hurt. Despite all that, Cunningham was still able to take the barrel racing crown, which was her first event state title.

“We had been doing very well all season and I have learned, when something is up with my horse, that she doesn't turn good,” Cunningham said. “Before the short round, we went back into the practice pen to try and figure out what the problem was. We figured out that my horse was hurting, but there was nothing we could do about it because the short go was that night, so I just told myself just be smooth and get through one last run. We ended up being third in the short round and it was enough to win us the state championship title by 2.5 points. I led that event from the very first rodeo last August and feel so blessed my horse put me in the money so many times and brought me my first event state championship title.”



**Lakin Cunningham finished second in the state in the goat-tying competition.**

Cunningham also stepped it up in the goat-tying competition as she put together some of her best times of the season as the right moment. She was sitting third in the state going into the finals and the top five had been shuffled all year long.

She had a strong performance in the first two rounds with two 7-second times and then had a time of 7.3 seconds in the short-go to cinch the runner-up spot.

"I knew going into finals that I just had to make three smooth and solid goat runs and I would be okay for a spot on the nationals team," Cunningham said. "One mess up might cost me going to nationals since the points were so close between the top 5 girls. Little did I know I would go into finals and blow my expectations of myself way out of proportion. All I was hoping for was a spot on the nationals team and I

ended up being the reserve champion goat tier and landing just a few of points behind the state champion.”

Wyoming is the next stop for Cunningham as she will compete in the National High School Rodeo in Rock Springs. She will compete in four events, including barrel racing, goat tying and reined cow horse, which she took fourth at state.

Along with those, she will also represent Kansas in the royalty pageant. She will be the only competitor from Kansas to compete in four events.

The royalty pageant is something Cunningham is looking forward to and has a better idea of what to expect this time around.



**Lakin Cunningham was crowned the KHSRA Queen for the second consecutive year.**

"Last year was a learning experience for me," Cunningham said. "Going into the Nationals last year I had no idea what to expect. As a freshman, it was a little overwhelming for me as it's the largest rodeo royalty pageant in the world with up to 50 girls (only 5 were freshman last year), but I learned the ropes and am so excited to go and do even better this year. Being a rodeo queen means so much to me. A lot of people think that a rodeo queen is someone who sits on a horse and looks pretty, but to me it's so much more than that.

"Being able to introduce new people to rodeo, as well as be someone for little kids to look up to is just one of the many



things I love about it. I also love all the opportunities and skill it introduces you to. I've been able to meet so many people in the western industry that I never would have met if it weren't for being a rodeo queen. I learn to be so much more responsible, how to talk to people and use better social skills. I also love the fact that I can show people that rodeo queens aren't just girls who sit on a horse and look pretty. They are also tough rodeo athletes."

The soon-to-be LHS junior is looking forward to the competition as nationals and Cunningham knows this is the moment she has been waiting for since the season started last August.

"This is my fifth time representing Kansas on its national team as I made it all three years of middle school and then my freshman year as well," she said. "I've never qualified for nationals in more than two events though, so this year will be an experience."

"When I go into nationals, I don't think to myself, 'Oh I have to go out and win a national title,' I think to myself that I need to go out there and perform to my very best ability and whatever happens, happens. When I think this way it makes it easier for me to control my nerves. Sometimes you have to fail to learn how to overcome things. I learned a lot from my hardships my freshman year and my success at nationals my eighth-grade year. Those lessons made my sophomore year better than I ever could have imagined when I started the season. I left state finals with three saddles, seven belt buckles and many other awards."

All this success isn't new to the

Cunningham family. Lakin's mother, Kara, also won the Kansas High School Rodeo All-Around Cowgirl title in the early 90s and won multiple state titles as well.

Her grandparents, Jim and Sandy Lowe, are also big parts of her rodeo success.

"I'm following in the family's footsteps," Lakin said. "My grandpa is the one that oversaw the breeding program both my horses came from and my grandma is the one that guided me on how to train my barrel horse and my mom on how to train my goat horse. It's so cool that I'm a second generation KHSRA All-Around Cowgirl, State Champion and Queen."

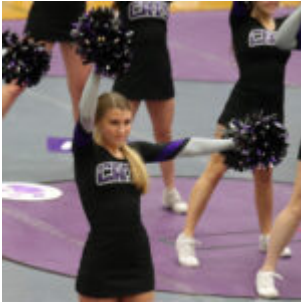
Nationals isn't the only big event that Lakin will compete at this summer as she also qualified for the National Little Britches Finals Rodeo in August in Oklahoma. She will also compete in barrel racing and goat tying.

In December, Cunningham will also travel to Las Vegas to compete in the Vegas Tuffest Junior World Championship in goat tying.

"As you can see, we will travel a lot of miles this year chasing dreams at some big events and competing in the sport I love," Lakin said.

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# Shaffer excited to join Pittsburg State cheer program



Leia Shaffer, a 2019 Louisburg High School graduate, may have left Wildcat cheer behind, but she is ready to take it up a notch as she found out she made the Pittsburg State cheer squad earlier this spring and is excited for what is in store for her.

Cheerleading has always been a big part of Leia Shaffer's life.

Shaffer started cheering in the fourth grade and she has been hooked ever since. However, now that her high school cheer career is over, she wasn't ready to give up the sport.

The recent Louisburg High School graduate decided to try out for the Pittsburg State cheer squad in late March and she got the news she was hoping for. Shaffer earned a spot on the Gorilla cheerleading team after some nerve-racking tryouts.

"I was really surprised because I didn't think I was going to make it," Shaffer said. "I had to wait a while to see if I was going to or not and when I found out I called my mom right away. I was just so happy, but more so I was pretty surprised."

It wasn't the easiest of processes for Shaffer as she had to take part in two days worth of tryouts – some of which as a little unfamiliar to her. Also, it didn't help that she was one of the last to be called on.

"I was actually the very last person to go," Shaffer said. "It was a little nerve-racking cause it is not the same as high school, so I wasn't used to doing some of the things you do in college. It is a little different than high school cause there is less stuff to focus on, but the things you do are a lot harder. All the stunts are co-ed. You get assigned one person to stunt with and you do the best you can with them and then you can pick someone."

Almost a decade worth of cheer helped prepare Shaffer for this moment. Her first year of competitive cheer was with the Football and Cheerleading Club of Johnson County.

Shaffer would then move on to teams at Diamond Academy, Kansas City Athletic Cheer and the Cheer Pit along with four years of cheering for Louisburg High School.

"I have wanted to cheer in college ever since I started cheering in elementary school," Shaffer said. "I wasn't really sure where, I just knew I wanted to cheer somewhere in college. I didn't know how it was going to go, or even if I was going to make it or not, but I just wanted it really bad."

It was a special moment for the entire Shaffer family as Leia's mother, Dana, has been the high school cheerleading coach for the last two seasons. As it turned out, mom wasn't quite as surprised as daughter was.

"She told me that she didn't think I needed to be as worried as I was," Leia said. "She told me she thought I would be fine and that she was happy for me that I made it."

“It was fun having her as a coach,  
but sometimes it is a little stressful because she can’t coach  
me the same as  
everyone else and everyone knows that too. I have had fun with  
it and I am  
happy I was able to share that time with her.”

Shaffer will travel to Pittsburg  
at different times during the summer for workouts, before  
practices really kick  
into high gear in August when school begins. Although cheer is  
going to be a  
big focus for her as freshman, she is excited to begin her  
journey into the  
nursing field as well.

“I just really hope that I have fun and learn a lot of new  
stuff,” Leia said. “I have done this for so long that I have  
learned a lot along the way, but I know there will be new  
things for me to learn. I am really excited to get down there,  
start school and get to work.”

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## Fishing leads Bila to Drury University



Louisburg senior Brock Bila has racked up a lot of

accomplishments in his young fishing career and he is excited to take the next step as he signed his letter of intent to join the bass fishing team at Drury earlier this month.

Fishing has been a big part of Brock Bila's life for as long as he could remember.

So when it came down to figuring out what to do after high school, it only made sense that fishing was involved somehow. For some, deciding what to do after graduation is one of the most stressful decisions they will have to make.

For Bila, it was one of the easiest.

During a signing ceremony in front of family and friends on April 3, Bila signed his letter of intent to join the bass fishing team at Drury University in Springfield, Mo. It was a moment that was a long time coming for the Louisburg High School senior.

"This is a huge step for me," Bila said. "Figuring out where I was going to college and pursue my fishing dreams is a big deal. I didn't know the team I was going to go to and how I was going to go about making the decision. It is a relief knowing that I am going to go to college in Springfield, fish on the Drury team and it just makes me really happy."

Bila, who is a state fishing champion on the high school and adult level, had several choices to choose from, but when it came down to it Drury made the most sense as it is located near the Lake of the Ozarks.

"There were 5-plus schools that I

was considering, but Drury is just the best option for me because of the presence that team has in the fishing industry, their coach and just being able to be around all those lakes,” Bila said.

“Drury is currently 21<sup>st</sup> in the nation in bass fishing and they have a great team. K-State was another option for me, but the reason I didn’t go that route was because Drury has a selected team and you don’t have to fish any qualifiers to be a part of their team. At K-State you have to fish the qualifier to get on the team to be able to fish in the tournament. Drury was just a better fit.”

Bila also hopes fishing in college will open new doors for him and his future. He will be a part of Drury team that will travel all over the country competing in tournaments and will allow him to fish in different climates.

He also has a dream of fishing professionally when he gets out of college, but if that doesn’t work out, Bila plans to major in business and still be involved in the fishing world.



**Louisburg senior Brock Bila signed his letter of intent to fish at Drury University on April 3. Sitting next to Brock (from left) is coach and boat captain Larry Brumley, family friend Richard Neubauer, Brock's mother Rena and Kansas BASS Nation high school director, Richard Heflin.**

"I am really excited to be able to travel," Bila said. "I have traveled to some of the southern states to fish, but in college we are going east, west, north, south – just everywhere. Being able to experience those different lakes and that world is just exciting.

"I want to major in business and marketing. I know if I can't make it professional, then hopefully I can get in the fishing industry. I just love everything about it. Drury's coach is the marketing director for Bass Pro and that is a big thing because he has a lot of connections with the pros and he has pros come talk to us and teach us about different things. Everything about Drury was just the best."

Bila also got a chance to share his special day with all the people that have helped improve in fishing. Along



with his mother, Rena, he was also joined by his fishing coach and boat captain, Larry Brumley.

Family friend Bernard Neubauer, who introduced Bila to the sport, was on hand, as was Kansas BASS high school and college director, Richard Heflin. All of those individuals had a big impact on his fishing career.

“Bernard is who got me into fishing and Larry has been like a dad to me on the water and learning how to fish,” Bila said. “Everywhere we go, whether it was in state or out of state, no matter what time he was always ready to go. Whenever I would fish in team tournaments, I would always have Larry as my boat captain and he was a constant when other teams have random boaters and coaches every single time. No matter where I was going to fish, Larry was always ready to go with me and he means a lot to me.

“Richard Heflin is the high school and college director for Kansas BASS. Since I have grown up, he has been there and he has turned that program around and he has seen a 40 to 50 percent growth, which is really big for Kansas.”

Before he goes to college, he will have one more high school adventure left. Bila, along with Louisburg senior Eli Minster, qualified for nationals on April 7 and will fish in the BASS High School National Championship.

It is an exciting time for Bila and he is ready to take the next step in his fishing journey.

“After I went to Blue Valley Northwest my freshman and sophomore year, I didn’t really know what I was going to do,” Bila said. “When I moved here, and I kept on fishing, I realized that fishing was an actual possibility in college and get a scholarship. That is

when I took it seriously, but I have always loved fishing. I know I just can't wait to do it on the college level."

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## Crossley wins all-around state gymnastics title



Broadmoor Elementary School student Kendall Crossley poses with all her medals following her all-around state gymnastics championship last March in Columbia, Mo.

Kendall Crossley was waiting with bated breath – hoping what happened a year ago wasn't going to repeat itself.

In March of 2018, Kendall was ahead in the standings during the Missouri State Gymnastics Championships with only one competitor remaining. She was forced to wait for the final scores to roll in.

The wait was hard, but the result was even more difficult for Kendall as she lost the all-around state championship by one-tenth of a point. It was a tough setback for Kendall,

despite earning the state championship in the uneven bars and a runner-up finish in the all-around Level 3 competition.

Kendall, who is a student at Broadmoor Elementary, got back to work instead of sulking about her close loss. She used that as motivation.

Not only did Kendall have to get past a difficult loss, she also had to move to a level where she would be competing against older, more experienced competitors. She rose to the challenge and found herself in the exact same spot last month – waiting for the final competitor to finish her routine.

This time, Kendall was all smiles.

On March 22, she became the Missouri Level 4 10D state champion at Columbia College in Columbia, Mo., with a score of 36.85, which turned out to be her highest scoring meet of the season as she led from start to finish.

“When I finally realized I had won the state championship, it made me feel happy and proud of myself,” she said. “I also felt relieved because I didn’t have to worry about being disappointed. I was very nervous waiting for the scores because I didn’t want to lose out on first place again by a tiny amount.”

Kendall performed well in all her events during the state competition as she was a state champion on vault and floor exercise. She was also third on uneven bars and fourth on balance beam.

“I could not be prouder of her,” her father Shawn said. “It is well-deserved,

and saying she  
worked for it doesn't begin to do it justice."

The journey to a state championship has been a long time coming for Kendall, who has given up a lot to focus on her gymnastics. She currently competes at Eagles Gymnastics in Martin City, MO., and has been there since she was 3-years-old.

"Since June she has spent 11-plus hours every week in the gym," Shawn said. "Not only does she do Level 4 gymnastics at Eagles, she also takes Elite Ballet and Jazz/Lyrical dance. She misses out on playing other sports, she misses family outings, she misses birthday parties, she misses father/daughter dances, she misses being at home. It's a life of go, go, go.

"It's straight to the gym after school and she isn't home until after 9 by the time we get food somewhere. She is dedicated to this sport, and it's a level that is hard to explain unless you see it on a daily basis."



**Louisburg's Kendall Crossley stands atop the podium following her all-around state championship last month.**

It is a commitment that has always been there from Kendall, but it was no more tested than last season when she was forced to make a difficult decision.

Kendall had high hopes for herself in her second season as a Level 3 gymnast, but her body was fighting back. She was diagnosed with a pars stress fracture in her back and a spine specialist recommended she end her season prematurely.

After some discussion, and with the blessing of the doctors, she was allowed to continue her season with limitations in practice. Even with the obstacles, Kendall was atop the leaderboard in the state championships in 2018 at Union Station in Kansas City.

She led from the start, but when the final scores came in, that one-tenth of point was the difference between a runner-up and a state championship.

"Last year was very difficult for many reasons," Kendall said. "I had to lead my level 3 team with a hurt back. I felt like I needed to be a good example. I couldn't do the best that I could do. I had to sit out some parts of practice. I felt like I was wasting time and wasn't improving."

Kendall took some time to recover from her injury after the season and then got right back to work. Not only did she have to move up a level, she also had to learn brand new routines for all four of her events.

"A great number of the girls she would compete against this year would have a leg up because they would have had a full year of practicing and performing these routines," Shawn said. "It was supposed to be a down year for Kendall, one with a bit of a learning curve. That was the expectation at least. However, Kendall is very self-motivated and incredibly driven. She set out with the mindset that this would be her year."

The 11-year-old Louisburg resident got her season off to a good start with a pair of all-around runner-up finishes and then took first in the all-around in three of her next four meets that led up to the Missouri State Championships and her state title.

All the success she achieved also saw a jump in competition. Kendall will now be competing in Level 6 gymnastics with the Eagles, which means more of a time commitment for a girl that has school and after-school activities.

"I am still hungry for more," Kendall said. "The more I win, the more other people want to beat me. There may always be someone working harder than me and I don't want that."

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## **Tucker, Ratliff-Becher win state powerlifting titles; Tucker breaks state record**



**Louisburg senior Kiefer Tucker stands atop the podium after winning the Class 4A state powerlifting title at 200 pounds. Tucker also broke a 24-year-old state bench press record.**

BASEHOR – Two Louisburg High

School weightlifters made their way to the top of the podium Saturday during the Class 4A State Powerlifting Meet at Basehor-Linwood High School.

Louisburg senior Kiefer Tucker and junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher both earned state championships in their respective weight class. Senior Jonathan DePriest finished third overall and several other Wildcats also earned individual medals.

Not only did Tucker win a state title in the 220-pound division, he also broke a 24-year state bench press record as he recorded a bench of 375 pounds to surpass the old mark of 365. He also won the squat competition at 505 pounds and had a total of 1,165 pounds to run away with the crown.

Tucker's total was the highest three-lift mark at the entire state meet in all weight classes.

"We had a very successful day," Louisburg weightlifting coach Ty Pfannenstiel said. "I was proud of how our kids competed and represented Louisburg. I am excited for Reilly and Kiefer. Nobody works harder than those two in the weight room. Their consistent effort day in and day out is why they are state champions. For Kiefer to break a 24-year-old state record is an amazing feat."





**Louisburg junior Reilly Ratliff-Becher won the Class 4A state title in the 182-pound women's division Saturday in Basehor.**

As happy as he was with the state title, the state record will stick with Tucker for a long time.

"I had messed around with 375 and 385 before on bench, so I was confident that I could lift it if I had the chance," Tucker said. "I was more worried about my first lifts on bench at 345 and 365 because if I messed up on those attempts then I would not have had the change to even attempt 375. It was definitely a sigh of relief when I finally locked it out.

"It was a great feeling to beat

the state record. To put Louisburg up on the record chart definitely brought a smile to my face.”

Ratliff-Becher had a big day in the women’s division as she won a state crown in the 180-pound weight class. She finished with a three-lift total of 575 pounds.

The Louisburg junior took first in bench press with 155 pounds, first in clean at 150 pounds and second in squat with a 270-pound lift.

“Winning the state title meant a lot to me,” Ratliff-Becher said. “I have put in a lot of time and effort in weights class, so it’s nice to see it has paid off. But, also because I feel as if I put out a message to girls that it’s cool to be strong physically. I know that being sometimes the only girls in a class with a lot of strong guys is intimidating. Weightlifting is all about your own personal growth and seeing how far you can push yourself.

“I was honestly surprised I won because there are lots of very strong girls there and it’s good competition. It’s also fun to meet new people that have the same interests and motivation as you.”



**Louisburg senior Jonathan DePriest finished the 4A state meet in third place at 242 pounds.**

DePriest also had a strong day for the Wildcat lifters as he had a three-lift total of 915 pounds in the 242-pound weight class to take third. The Louisburg senior was second in clean at 265 pounds and third in bench at 245 pounds.

Three other Wildcats also earned state medals for their efforts.

In the 148-pound weight class, Dylan Knipp was first in the bench press with a 235-pound mark on the men's side.

In the women's division, Camdyn

Clark was second in bench in the 132-pound division with a lift of 135 pounds.

In the 140-pound weight class, Melia Rice was third in bench press at 130 pounds.

Louisburg saw a big jump in participants at the state meet this season. The Wildcats took 28 athletes this year compared to just nine last year and Pfannenstiel is excited to see interest in weightlifting grow.

“Last year was our first year of powerlifting so it’s still pretty new to Louisburg,” he said. “We took a van and nine athletes last year. This year we took a bus with 28 athletes. It’s exciting to see how it’s grown in popularity in just one year. Next year we hope to take even more kids.

“Our kids at Louisburg work hard in the weight room. I’m glad there is a sport like powerlifting that allows them to compete and show off their hard work. I was proud of every one of them.”



**A total of 28 Louisburg athletes competed in the Class 4A state meet last Saturday at Basehor.**

Ratliff-Becher, like many of the other competitors, is appreciative of what Pfannenstiel has done to help create a powerlifting culture in Louisburg.

"I'm very thankful to have a weights coach like Mr. Pfannenstiel," she said. "I feel like he doesn't get enough credit sometimes, but he is a big part of why we did so well at the meet. He spends a lot of time giving us workouts every day to become stronger. He always knows what to say to get me believing in myself."

As for the meet itself, it was a great experience for the Wildcat lifters to participate in and is different than most state competitions. It is also a good way to help prepare athletes for different athletic avenues.

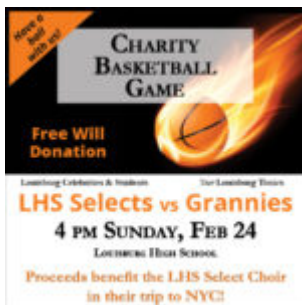
"The whole meet was a great experience overall," Tucker said. "Just to be able to see and go up against other great lifters was a fun time. Everyone there had a great attitude and wanted to see you succeed even if it meant beating them. To be able to win my weight class and lift the highest total out of any weight class was a great feeling."

"It wouldn't be right for me not to give credit where credit is due, so I owe all of this to the football team. The program, the coaches, and my teammates taught me how to not only be physically strong, but more importantly how to be mentally

tough. I owe it all to them and I'm just glad I was able to represent this town in a good manner."

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## Granny basketball game to be held at LHS for choir fundraiser



The gauntlet has been thrown down on the hardwoods of Louisburg.

The LHS Selects, a team that represents the LHS Select Choir, will face off in a basketball game for the ages against Louisburg's own Granny Basketball team, The Tonics.

The showdown is set for 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 24 at the Louisburg High School gym. The free-will admission charity fund-raiser will help the Select Choir raise the last bit of money it needs to travel to New York in April to perform at the Lincoln Center, the prestigious performing arts center in Manhattan.

The basketball game will feature members of the Tonics going up against the Selects playing by the Granny Basketball League rules.



Granny Basketball is similar to the 1920s style of play where the court is divided in three sections and there is no running, no jumping and only two dribbles per possession. Two guards or defenders are in one section, two centers or passers are in the middle section and the two forward or offensive players are in the third section of the court. Granny basketball players wear uniforms from that period.

"I hope that the Louisburg community knows how much our choir has appreciated their support. We are so proud to have the opportunity to represent our town," Alison Moore, choir director, said.

"The Tonics are really excited for the opportunity to help out the Select Choir. One of the foundations of the Granny Basketball League is to assist with charity opportunities and we are excited to get on the court and show the Selects how to play basketball," Jean Carder, captain of the Tonics, said.

"Oh, and for those players that are males or younger than 50, there will be a surprise handicap but my lips are sealed until game time. We hope the community comes out for a fun and novel event that supports the Select Choir."

Local celebrities, school staff and students will make up the Selects team with choir members and current LHS basketball players Brayden Gage, Maddon Rutherford, Dylan Deshazer, Andy Hupp, Carson Buffington and Alyse Moore serving as Selects captains. Team members include Moore, Dr. Damon Dennis; Robert

Ebenstein, LHS head football coach; Drew Harding; LHS football and basketball coach; and students Austin Moore, Blue Caplinger, Kody Lowry, Lauren Vincent and others.

The Tonics include Carder, Janet York, Ellen Morland, Diana Moore, Becky Berg, LaVonne Mize, Ruth Fladung, Helen McClain, Jayne Schommer, Cathy Hadley, Kathleen Caverty all from Louisburg; Wanda Harlow, Bucyrus; Susan McKeever, Drexel; Julie McKinley, Linn Valley; Jan Berg, Edgerton; Lisa Berg, Olathe; and Tonics coach Kate Berg Camp, Gardner.

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## Meet the 2019 LHS Winter Homecoming Candidates



The 2019 LHS Winter Homecoming candidates are (front row, from left) Leia Shaffer, Camdyn Clark, Riley Vohs, Bailey Kern; (back row) Jakob Krause, Kiefer Tucker, Beckett Rasmussen and James Foote.

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 2019 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



**Leia Shaffer and Jakob Krause**

## **Leia Shaffer**

Leia is the daughter of Ryan and Dana Shaffer. Leia has participated in cheerleading and girls soccer for four years, debate for one year and Spanish Club. Following graduation, Leia plans to attend Pittsburg State University and get a degree in nursing.

## **Jakob Krause**

Jakob is the son of Kraig and Trisha Krause. Jakob has participated in baseball for four years, basketball, football, FCA, Choir and National Honor Society for two years. Following graduation, Jakob plans to attend the University of Nebraska and study civil engineering.



**Camdyn Clark and Kiefer Tucker**

## **Camdyn Clark**

Camdyn is the daughter of

Kelly and Jennifer Clark. Camdyn has participated in band, girls soccer and the musical for four years, select choir, debate and boys soccer manager for two years and mixed choir and forensics for one year. Following graduation, Camdyn plans to attend Johnson County Community College and then transfer to a university to major in physical therapy.

### **Kiefer Tucker**

Kiefer is the son of David Tucker and Debbie Hardy. Kiefer has participated in football and track and field for four years, Model UN for three years, National Honor Society for two years and wrestling, musical and boys basketball manager for one year. Following graduation, Kiefer plans to play football in college and is undecided on his destination.



**Riley Vohs and Beckett Rasmussen**

## **Riley Vohs**

Riley is the daughter of Jason and Shava Vohs. Riley has participated in FFA for four years, volleyball for three years and softball for two years. Following graduation, Riley plans to attend Missouri State University to major in nursing.

## **Beckett Rasmussen**

Beckett is the son of Mike and Mercedes Rasmussen. Beckett has participated in baseball, football, student council, musical, choir and forensics for four years, National Honor Society and broadcasting club for two years and debate for one year.



Following graduation, Beckett plans to attend Rockhurst University to play baseball and major in communications.



**Bailey Kern and James Foote**

## **Bailey Kern**

Bailey is the daughter of Matthew and Veronica Kern. Bailey has participated in softball for four years, volleyball manager and choir for three years, basketball and FFA for two years and National Honor Society for one year. Bailey is currently undecided on her post-graduation plans.

## **James Foote**

James is the son of Jim and Dana Foote. James has participated in football and FFA for four years, basketball for one year and choir for one year. Following graduation, James plans to

attend Kansas State University to major in agribusiness and minor in finance.





