

# Top 10 Stories of 2017



It was a successful, and eventful, 2017 for Louisburg High School athletics and for those who are connected to the Wildcat program. This past year created a lot of school history for LHS and several programs brought back state hardware to Louisburg.

Below are the Top 10 stories from 2017, along with a brief explanation of each. Included in the explanation is the link to the actual story from the event.

This year was a blast to cover and I was blessed to have the opportunity to go along for the ride with many of these. As much fun as it was, I can't wait for 2018 to begin. Looking forward to it!



**Louisburg's Calvin Dillon earns his first state golf medal as a freshman as he took 10th at the state meet.**

## **10. Dillon medals at state golf**

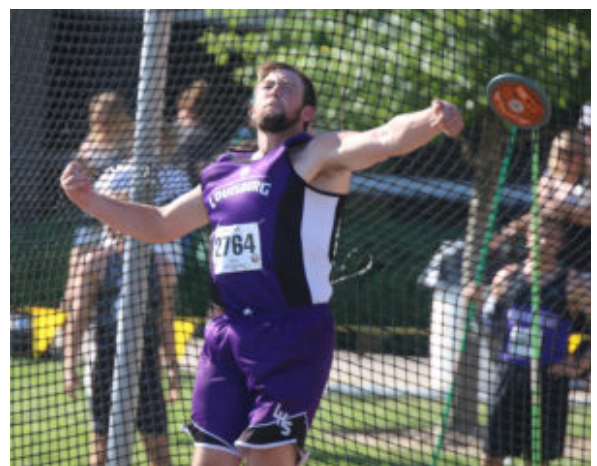
Louisburg freshman Calvin Dillon certainly didn't play like a first-year varsity player as he led the Wildcat golf team all season. Dillon finished 10<sup>th</sup> at the Class 4A state tournament in Wamego and became the first Wildcat golfer to earn a state medal in several years.

Dillon made the state tournament alongside senior Ty Martin, who finished in 28<sup>th</sup> place overall after he earned his second straight state appearance.



Isabelle Holtzen earned her first state medal in the pole vault as she took seventh back in May.

## 9. Holtzen, Dover earn first state track medals



T.J. Dover finished eighth

**in the discus at the Class  
4A Kansas State Track and  
Field Championships in  
Wichita.**

Junior Isabelle Holtzen and senior T.J. Dover both ended their track and field seasons on a good note as they earned state medals in late May at the Class 4A state meet in Wichita.

Holtzen had a big season in the pole vault as she ended seventh in the state after she cleared 10 feet. Earlier in the year, Holtzen broke a 15-year old school record in the pole vault as she topped 11-1.

Dover made his second consecutive trip to the state meet and finished strong in his final high school performance. He took eighth with a throw of 143-4.

The Wildcats qualified for the state meet in 10 events and had two regional champions in junior Quinn Rigney (100-meter dash) and sophomore Chris Williams (400 dash).



## **8. Frontier League adds three schools, says goodbye to another**

For the Frontier League, 2017 brought a lot of changes to a league that has featured seven schools for the last several years.

Starting in the 2018-19 season, the Frontier League will add three new schools. Piper, Tonganoxie and Bonner Springs each accepted invitations to join the league last April to create a 10-team league.

It is didn't stay 10 teams for long as De Soto will make the move to a different league during the same season. The current league will be made up of nine schools: Louisburg, Paola, Ottawa, Spring Hill, Baldwin, Eudora, Piper, Tonganoxie and Bonner Springs.





## **7. Louisburg boys soccer wins regional crown**

The Louisburg High School boys soccer team was trying to make its second consecutive trip to the state tournament this past season and the Wildcats almost got there.

Although the Wildcats fell to McPherson in the state quarterfinal game in late October, Louisburg put together another successful season that included a 1-0 victory over Independence in the regional championship game.

The Wildcats finished the season with a 13-6 record and earned the school's first Frontier League championship since 2010.



**Junior Ryan Adams celebrates after he earned a state medal at 138 pounds.**

## **6. Wildcat wrestling qualifies eight for state, Adams picks up medal**

The Louisburg High School wrestling team had an historic season as it qualified eight for the Class 4A state wrestling tournament, which tied for the most in school history, during the regional tournament in February at Frontenac High School

Thad Hendrix (106 pounds), Nathan Keegan (120), Kyle Allen (126), Ryan Adams (138), Dylan Meyer (145), Austin Moore (170), Austin Raetzel (195) and Mason Koechner (285) all competed at the state tournament in Salina.

Adams earned the school's lone state medal on the season as he finished sixth overall at 138 pounds.



**Louisburg head football and boys track and field coach Gary Griffin retired from the district after 32 years. It was one of many changes for the LHS athletic department.**

## **5. LHS goes through staff/coaching changes**

The 2017-18 school year looked a lot of different than in previous years for Louisburg High School athletics.

LHS saw a lot of changes in its coaching staff and in the administration as well. Activities director Darin Gagnebin stepped down and was replaced by current director Jeremy Holloway.

In the coaching department, former head and assistant football Gary Griffin retired from the district after 32 years with the high school and Louisburg promoted assistant Robert Ebenstein



as the new Wildcat head football coach.

Jason Nelson resigned his post as the Wildcat head boys basketball coach and he was replaced with Ty Pfannenstiel. Griffin and Greg Darrington also resigned as the boys and girls track and field coaches, and were replaced by Andy Wright (boys) and John Reece (girls).



Louisburg cross country runners (from left) Tim Smith, Trinity Moore and Wyatt Reece each ended the season with a state medal.

#### **4. LHS cross country earns three state medals, qualifies girls team**

The Louisburg High School cross country team might have had

its best season in its 19-year history in 2017.

The Wildcats thrived against some of the state's best competition as seniors Wyatt Reece, Tim Smith and sophomore Trinity Moore all earned state medals at the Class 4A meet in Wamego.

Moore recorded the highest finish for a female runner in school history as she finished fifth in the state and broke her own school record in the process with a time of 19 minutes and 47 seconds.

In the boys race, Reece picked up his first state medal with a time of 17 minutes and finished 11<sup>th</sup> overall. Smith, who won a regional title the week before, came in 15<sup>th</sup> with a time of 17:05. Smith was the first Wildcat to win a regional title in school history.

Louisburg also made history as the Wildcat girls team qualified for the state meet for the first time after they finished third at their regional in Burlington. Moore joined Isabelle Holtzen, Reilly Alexander, Carlee Gassman, Kaitlyn Lewer, Payton Shaffer and Emily Williams to make up the seven-member squad that finished 10<sup>th</sup> in the team standings at state.

Earlier in the year, Moore became the school's first Frontier League champion, while Reece recorded the highest league finish in boys history as he took second at the league meet.



### **3. Louisburg boys basketball earns first state tournament berth in 12 years**

The season may not have started out the way the Louisburg boys basketball team would have liked, but it certainly finished on a positive note.

Louisburg knocked off rival Paola in the sub-state semifinals and then defeated Fort Scott in the championship game in early March to earn its first sub-state championship since 2005.

The Wildcats earned the No. 6 seed and squared off with eventual champion Bishop Miege at the Class 4A state tournament in Salina. The Stags ended the Wildcats' season with an 81-47 loss.





## **2. LHS girls soccer finishes fourth at state tournament**

Louisburg's girls soccer program has only been around for two years, but the Wildcats have set high expectations from the beginning and that continued in 2017.

The Wildcats advanced to the Class 4-1A state semifinals for the first time in school history as they defeated Piper with a 2-1 victory in overtime. This victory came off their second consecutive regional title as they knocked off Bonner Springs.

At the state tournament, Louisburg faced off with Thomas More Prep and suffered a heart-breaking 1-0 loss in the semifinals. The Wildcats moved on to the third-place game against Maize South and eventually finished fourth overall.





## **1. Lady Cat volleyball ends season as state runner-up**

The Louisburg High School volleyball team was just one point away from not only becoming the school's first state volleyball champion – but also the first female team to win a state title in Louisburg history.

As close as the Lady Cats got, they came up just short against defending state champion Rose Hill in late October at the Class 4A-Division I state championship. Louisburg fell 23-25, 25-10 and 29-27 in heartbreaking fashion to finish as the state runner-up.

Still, it was an impressive season for Louisburg volleyball as it finished with a 34-10 record. The Lady Cats reeled off wins over Basehor-Linwood, Bishop Miege and Rose Hill in pool play and then downed Wellington in the state semifinals.

The Lady Cats received several accolades as junior Anna Dixon

and senior Sophie McMullen earned first team all-state and all-league honors. Dixon was also named as the Co-Player of the Year in Class 4A-Division I.

Junior Carson Buffington was also named to the all-state tournament team with Dixon and McMullen.

---

## **KSHSAA releases 2017-18 classifications**



The Kansas High School Activities Association released the classifications for the 2017-18 season on Tuesday morning, and for Louisburg High School, much remains the same.

The Wildcats are currently a Class 4A-Division I program with 532 students, but after this season the classification system will change. Class 4A will get rid of the divisions and 4A will have just 36 schools. Louisburg is still expected to be in 4A for the foreseeable future.

However, several schools across the state made classification changes.



**Kansas State High School Activities Association**  
 401 West Commercial Street, Suite 100 • Topeka, KS 66604 • Phone: 785.233.6100 • Fax: 785.233.6101 • Email: kshsaa@ksaer.net • Website: www.kshsaa.org  
 1000 West Commercial Street, Suite 100 • Topeka, KS 66604 • Phone: 785.233.6100 • Fax: 785.233.6101 • Email: kshsaa@ksaer.net • Website: www.kshsaa.org

September 28, 2017  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
 The 2017-18 KSHSAA senior high membership is 354 schools. Wichita-Haskell Magnet school is an unclassified member school.

School classification changes with enrollment ranges are as follows:  
 1. Each year's 2016-2017 classification is shown in parentheses.

| Class | Number of Schools | Range       | Schools Changing Class  |
|-------|-------------------|-------------|---|
| 5A    | 32                | 2424 - 1389 | Kansas City-Oldhamton (5A)  |
| 5A    | 32                | 1363 - 919  | Kansas City-Whitette (5A)<br>Maize South (4A)<br>Olathe West (4A)   |
| 4A    | 64                | 791 - 282   | Arkansas City (5A)<br>Garden City (5A)<br>Kansas City-Summer Academy (5A)<br>Marysville (5A)  |
| 3A    | 64                | 280 - 136   | Colby (4A)<br>Goodland (4A)<br>Haven (4A)<br>Hugoton (4A)<br>Maysville (4A)<br>North Community (4A)   |
| 2A    | 64                | 136 - 92    | Bullington (1A)<br>Bessemer (1A)<br>Jefferson-Jackson County (1A)<br>Lawrence (1A)<br>Marian (2A)<br>St. Francis (1A)<br>St. Joseph's Military Academy (1A)<br>Syracuse (3A)                          |
| 1A    | 67                | 92 - 23     | Abbeville-Rowley County (2A)<br>Collinsworth-Falls-Chase County (2A)<br>Horton-Marian Valley (2A)<br>Kawitka-Ford (2A)<br>St. John's (2A)<br>Troy (2A)<br>Valley Falls (2A)<br>Washington County (2A) |

**Kansas State High School Activities Association**  
**2017-2018**  
**Classifications and**  
**Enrollments**  
 Enrollment figures as of September 26, 2017  
 based on sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth grades.  
 Note: Schools are listed in ascending order.

| Class | Number of Schools | Range       | Schools Changing Class  |
|-------|-------------------|-------------|---|
| 5A    | 32                | 2424 - 1389 | Arkansas City (5A)<br>Garden City (5A)<br>Kansas City-Summer Academy (5A)<br>Marysville (5A)  |
| 4A    | 64                | 791 - 282   | Arkansas City (5A)<br>Garden City (5A)<br>Kansas City-Summer Academy (5A)<br>Marysville (5A)  |
| 3A    | 64                | 280 - 136   | Colby (4A)<br>Goodland (4A)<br>Haven (4A)<br>Hugoton (4A)<br>Maysville (4A)<br>North Community (4A)   |
| 2A    | 64                | 136 - 92    | Bullington (1A)<br>Bessemer (1A)<br>Jefferson-Jackson County (1A)<br>Lawrence (1A)<br>Marian (2A)<br>St. Francis (1A)<br>St. Joseph's Military Academy (1A)<br>Syracuse (3A)                          |
| 1A    | 67                | 92 - 23     | Abbeville-Rowley County (2A)<br>Collinsworth-Falls-Chase County (2A)<br>Horton-Marian Valley (2A)<br>Kawitka-Ford (2A)<br>St. John's (2A)<br>Troy (2A)<br>Valley Falls (2A)<br>Washington County (2A) |

| Class | Number of Schools | Range       | Schools Changing Class  |
|-------|-------------------|-------------|---|
| 5A    | 32                | 2424 - 1389 | Arkansas City (5A)<br>Garden City (5A)<br>Kansas City-Summer Academy (5A)<br>Marysville (5A)  |
| 4A    | 64                | 791 - 282   | Arkansas City (5A)<br>Garden City (5A)<br>Kansas City-Summer Academy (5A)<br>Marysville (5A)  |
| 3A    | 64                | 280 - 136   | Colby (4A)<br>Goodland (4A)<br>Haven (4A)<br>Hugoton (4A)<br>Maysville (4A)<br>North Community (4A)   |
| 2A    | 64                | 136 - 92    | Bullington (1A)<br>Bessemer (1A)<br>Jefferson-Jackson County (1A)<br>Lawrence (1A)<br>Marian (2A)<br>St. Francis (1A)<br>St. Joseph's Military Academy (1A)<br>Syracuse (3A)                          |
| 1A    | 67                | 92 - 23     | Abbeville-Rowley County (2A)<br>Collinsworth-Falls-Chase County (2A)<br>Horton-Marian Valley (2A)<br>Kawitka-Ford (2A)<br>St. John's (2A)<br>Troy (2A)<br>Valley Falls (2A)<br>Washington County (2A) |

\* Note: Per classification 5A-2A, enrollment data are based on using the previous classification class event.  
 \* Note: Classes 4A and 3A are divided into two divisions in selected activities. Refer to specific activity pages on the website for more information.

Arkansas City and Sumner Academy dropped from Class 5A to 4A for the upcoming season, while Galena, Hugoton and Marysville all moved up to 4A. Maize South jumped from 4A to 5A.

Colby , Goodland, Scott City and Haven all dropped from 4A to 3A schools, while McLouth moved up from 2A to 3A.

**Income Tax Tax Tax**

913.962.8297  
 Doug Strubbe, owner  
 primeaccounting.net  
 doug@primeaccounting.net

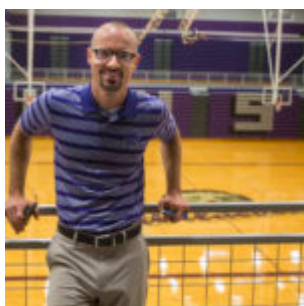
**Prime Accounting Solutions**

Hays is currently the largest 4A school with 791 students, followed by Sumner Academy (782), Andover Central (764), Bonner Springs (762) and Arkansas City (757).

Sub-state and regional assignments for the fall season will be released in the coming days.

---

# Holloway excited for new role as LHS activities director



Louisburg High School activities director Jeremy Holloway is looking forward to his new position as he starts his 17th year in the USD 416 school district.

Growing up, Jeremy Holloway wasn't one to stay in a place for too long.

Holloway spent most of his childhood and young adult life moving from place to place. He wasn't the type of person who envisioned himself putting down roots.

"I was a constant migrant," Holloway said.

That was until he moved to Louisburg with his wife Megan. Now instead of a migrant, Holloway is deep-rooted in a town he loves.

It made his decision, almost two months ago, an easy one.

Back in June, Holloway was hired as the new Louisburg High School activities director and assistant principal, following the resignation of former activities director Darin Gagnebin. Holloway, who has spent the last 16 years as a teacher at Louisburg Middle School, is ready for the new challenge.



"I am really looking forward to it," Holloway said. "I have been here in Louisburg for 17 years. I never lived anywhere for more than four years in my life until I came to Louisburg. I never knew what it was like to be a part of a community and when I got here I just fell in love with the town. I was excited to become a part of it and Louisburg became important to me. The teaching was great and getting to know all the kids and see them grow up all the way through college was fun. Now I see some of my former students teaching in the building here and it is an amazing feeling. It just felt like home to me."

Fate seemed to step in at the right time for Holloway. He entered the summer still planning to teach history at the middle school, but the dominoes quickly started to fall into place.

Holloway was well on his way to getting his administration degree this past school year as he was planning on holding on to it until something in Louisburg came open. He didn't have to wait long.

"I had to get recertified, so I talked with my wife and I said why get an education masters if it is just going to move me on the pay scale," he said. "Why not get an administration degree to have options? There are other places near here that are looking for people, but that isn't what I want. The only move I would make is to stay in Louisburg. I happened to be down in Eureka Springs on vacation and I got a text in middle of night that Gagnebin had resigned. I had just got my diploma the day before we left. I applied and it turned out well and hopefully it was a good thing."

Louisburg USD 416 superintendent Dr. Brian Biermann had to sift through more than 20 different applicants for the job, but he believes Holloway is going to do great things in the position.

"Jeremy has been a loyal and dedicated teacher and coach in

our community for 17 years,” Dr. Biermann said. “Jeremy possesses many strong leadership attributes that will allow him to be a strong, instructional leader at Louisburg High School. He is passionate about education, has a strong work ethic and is committed to our community.

“Jeremy is all about building positive relationships with students, staff and the community. For 17 years he has been building these relationships. Now, he will be able to build upon his unique skill set in a leadership position in our district. I am excited to see the great things Mr. Holloway can contribute to our district and community in this new role.”

One of the first things Holloway wanted to do was to get to know his new coaching staff. Several new coaches were hired this past school year and he wanted to see what they were all about.

“I just want them to feel comfortable with me and let them understand that I am approachable,” Holloway said. “That relationship piece is huge. I am getting to know where they are from, how many kids they have and I want them to feel comfortable coming to me. We do lose some great experience, but we have gained some capable coaches and a lot of enthusiasm. I just want to be a positive impact for them.”

Since he started officially on July 24, Holloway has been hard at work in several different areas, but one of the bigger things going on now is the shuffling of the Frontier League.

The league, which will be at seven schools this year, will move up to nine starting for the 2018-19 school year. Bonner Springs, Tonganoxie and Piper will join the league, while De Soto will depart.

Baldwin, an original league member, is concerned the school will move down to Class 3A starting in 2018-19, thanks to changes in the classification system. If it happens, it will

create scheduling conflicts for football.

“The biggest conflict right now is Baldwin is right on the edge of becoming 3A and they think it will happen,” Holloway said. “If Baldwin is in our league, which is what we plan on, they are required to play five district games for football, which only leaves them three league games. If only three league teams play Baldwin, then the rest of the league teams have to find another team to play. I have schools from Lansing, Independence, Coffeyville, Chanute and other schools calling me trying to lock up games. There are so many different scenarios so we just have to wait and see. That is one thing that I am really working on right now.”

With the activity season fast approaching, Holloway is excited for everything to get underway. He is also looking forward to getting to know the fan base more.

“I have always been highly impressed of Louisburg and the support of its teams and the turnout we will get, especially for football games,” Holloway said. “I encourage Louisburg to continue the tradition of being a class act. I think that every town has its own culture and a lot of it starts with the coaches. If your coaches are harassing refs, your players are probably going to start to learn that they can do that and that will trickle down to the parents and crowd. Without pointing fingers, there are certain places where that is the climate. I think Louisburg has been great. There are always going to be situations, but I would encourage fans and parents to support our coaches and let them coach.

“I am looking forward to an exciting year. We have great coaches, that are experienced and they are very innovative. They are organized and they all seem truly excited about what is going on. The community can rest assured that the coaches that are in place right now have the best interest of the kids and the programs.”

---

# Five Wildcats named to all-state girls soccer team



Louisburg's Bailey Belcher was one of five Wildcats to be named to the Kansas Soccer Coaches Association all-state team Thursday. Belcher earned first team honors for the second consecutive year.

It may have taken a little longer for the all-state girls soccer team honors to be released, but for Louisburg, it was well worth the wait.

The Kansas Soccer Coaches Association unveiled their all-state team Thursday and the Wildcats were well-represented. Louisburg earned five spots on the Class 4-1A squad, including three on the first team.

Bailey Belcher, Mackenzie Scholtz and goalie Shay Whiting were each named to the first team, while Madisen Simpson and Camdyn Clark were selected to the second team.

The Wildcats are coming off a special 2017 campaign as they reached the Class 4-1A state tournament and finished fourth overall in just their second year as a program.

"These young ladies had terrific season and it is a fantastic



honor to receive this acknowledgment from coaches around the state,” Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. “This is just another reason that solidifies how special our program is. The girls that are members of the soccer team are doing big things here in Louisburg and I couldn’t be more proud of these young ladies.

“Also, none of these individual awards could not be possible without their teammates pushing them and then supporting each other throughout the season. Well done ladies and next year can’t get here fast enough.”



Mackenzie Scholtz, first team, forward



Shay Whiting, first team, goalie



Madisen Simpson, second team, midfield



Camdyn Clark, second team, defense

Belcher was selected as a first-team midfielder as she finished the season with 29 goals and 12 assists on the season as a junior. As for Scholtz, she finished her freshman season with 27 goals and a team-high 18 assists to earn a first-team spot as a forward.

In goal, Whiting also had a big year for the Wildcats as she finished the season with nine shutouts.

As for Simpson, she earned her second-team midfield honor as she was responsible for marking some of the opposition's best players and also had a goal and six assists.

Clark was also one of the Wildcats' top defenders as an outside back and made it tough on the opposition.

It is the second straight season that Belcher, Whiting and Clark earned all-state honors.

## First team

Forward—Kayla Crowder, sr., Maranatha Academy; Gaby Crowell, jr., Maize South; Aislinn Hughes, jr., McPherson; **Mackenzie Scholtz, fr., Louisburg**; Berkley Sharp, sr., Basehor-Linwood; Sophia Stram, fr., Bishop Miege; Kayla Vitztum, jr., Thomas More Prep.

Midfielder—Evelyn Alejandre-Olivas, so., Bishop Miege; **Bailey Belcher, jr., Louisburg**; Hayden Burnett, sr., Maize South; Ally Henderson, sr., Trinity Academy; Paige Ledesma, sr., Maize South; Lanie Mannebach, jr., Bishop Miege; Alayna Wallace, sr., McPherson.

Defender—Avery Green, sr., Maize South; Laiken Hein, jr., McPherson; Avery Higginson, so., Bishop Miege; Megan Homoly, jr., Bishop Miege; Mariah Moore, sr., Maize South; Fallon Russell, so., Bishop Miege.

Goalkeeper—Deonna Wellbrock, sr., Thomas More Prep; **Shay Whiting, jr., Louisburg**.

Offensive Player of the Year—Sophia Stram, fr., Bishop Miege.

Defensive Player of the Year—Megan Homoly, jr., Bishop Miege.

Goalkeeper of the Year—Deonna Wellbrock, sr., Thomas More Prep.

Coach of the Year—Nate Huppe, Bishop Miege.

## Second team

Forward—Brooklyn Barclay, sr., Trinity Academy; Anna Burnett, fr., Baldwin; Kaylen Dawson, sr., Spring Hill; Claire Hedlund, fr., McPherson; Ashley Ostrander, jr., Thomas More Prep; Patrica Thomas, jr., KC Piper; Anna Watson, jr., Spring Hill.

Midfielder—Mallory Borgan, jr., Maranatha Academy; Caitlin Countryman, so., Baldwin; Aubrey Koenigsman, jr., Thomas More

Prep; Megan Koenigsman, sr., Thomas More Prep; Gabrielle Rodriguez, jr., KC Piper; **Madisen Simpson, sr., Louisburg**; Mallory Smith, so., Spring Hill; Ana Waren, sr., Maize South; Emily Wilson, jr., KC Piper.

Defender–Josie Boyle, fr., Baldwin; **Camdyn Clark, so., Louisburg**; Heidi Myers, sr., McPherson; Lauren Snodgrass, sr., Trinity Academy; Kassidy Wackerly, sr., Andover Central; Sara Watson, jr., Spring Hill.

Goalkeeper–Anita Eckhardt, fr., Maranatha Academy.

---

## **Opinion: Time to look back and enjoy successes**



**The Louisburg High School football team was one of many bright spots for LHS athletics this past school year.**

We live in a world where, especially in sports, we often don't take time to reflect on our accomplishments – and instead we are in a rush to move on to the next set of obstacles.

In reality, we are in a “what have you done for me lately” society and sometimes don't remember, or enjoy, those special moments where our hard work has paid off.



Yes, I understand you don't want to relish in those accomplishments as that doesn't make you a better athlete, or whatever your specialty may be, but not taking the time to enjoy the ride can be detrimental.

And what a ride it was for Louisburg High School athletics this past season.

The Wildcats had a special year in several sports, and before we focus on the 2017-18 campaign, we should look back at what the 16-17 season brought us. Just take a look at what these Wildcats accomplished.

- There is probably no better place to start than the Louisburg soccer teams. Both the boys and girls teams earned spots in the state semifinals for the first time in program history and both finished fourth. The boys team made it to state for the first time in their 14 years, while the girls advanced to the state tournament in just their second season.

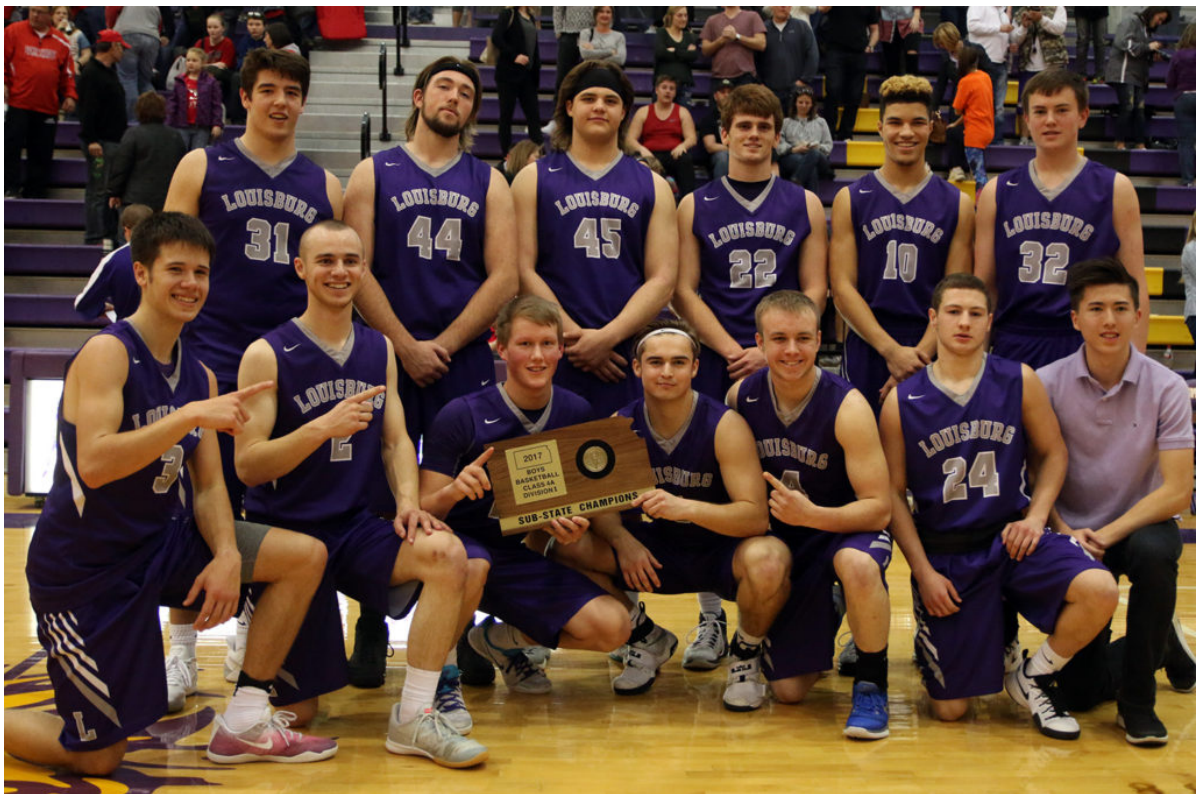


**The Louisburg High School girls soccer team finished**



fourth in the state in just their second season. The Wildcat boys also finished fourth as they advanced to the state semifinals for the first time in program history.

- It was quite the season for the Wildcat boys basketball team as they advanced to the state tournament for the first time since 2005. Louisburg won its sub-state tournament with a 64-52 win over Fort Scott in the championship game.



The Louisburg boys basketball team qualified for state for the first time since 2005.

- The Louisburg football team made quite the run in the 2016 season. The Wildcats won their first playoff game since 2012 and earned a regional title in the process with a win over Independence. Even though their season came to an end in the next round to eventual state champion Bishop Miege, the Wildcats' still finished with an 8-3 record.
- Wrestling had another big season as the Wildcats

qualified eight for the Class 4A state tournament in Salina. Although Ryan Adams was the lone state medalist, as he finished sixth overall at 138 pounds, the Wildcats tied a school record for number of state qualifiers that was set back in 1984.

- In cross country, the Wildcats sent three runners to the state meet and had their first state medalist since 2006 when freshman Trinity Moore finished 19th overall, as she, Wyatt Reece and Tim Smith competed at the Wamego meet. Moore was also the school's first female runner to earn a state medal.
- Freshman golfer Calvin Dillon became the Wildcats' first state medalist in several years as he finished 10th at the Class 4A state tournament and was one of two Wildcats, along with Ty Martin, to qualify for state. Dillon could quite possibly be the first freshman golfer in school history to get a medal, but since golf stats aren't quite as well kept, it is hard to tell for sure.
- T.J. Dover and Isabelle Holtzen came through with state medals of their own following the state track meet. Holtzen finished seventh at the Class 4A meet in the pole vault and Dover was eighth in the discus as both medaled for the first time. Holtzen also broke the school record in the pole vault earlier in the season after she cleared 11 feet, 1 inch.
- The girls basketball and softball teams both had big improvements from a season ago as they each reached 10 wins despite falling in the first round of their sub-state and regional tournaments. Softball doubled their win total from 2016, while the girls basketball team improved by seven victories.
- The Louisburg volleyball team advanced to the sub-state championship game against rival Paola and was just a few points away from advancing to its fifth consecutive state tournament. The Lady Cats also finished the season with 23 victories.

Most schools across the state would love to have the kind of success Louisburg experienced this year and to me that doesn't seem like it is talked about enough.

Sometimes we get caught up in losses or not meeting expectations, when in fact, compared to a lot of schools, Louisburg exceeds expectations – at least it does mine.

Could these programs be better? Sure they could and the coaches would be the first to tell you. At the same time, we all need to take a step back, look at the big picture and enjoy the success we have.

To me, Louisburg athletics is as healthy as it has been in a long time.

A lot has been made about all the coaches that have left recently. Louisburg will have four new head coaches this upcoming school year and several new assistants.

Some people have considered this a mass exodus due problems at the school. It couldn't be further from the truth. A lot of it is just coincidence. For some it was retirement, others wanted to spend more time with family and a few more just wanted a change.

Former activities director Darin Gagenbin left to be closer to his family and work in the town where he lives. I know all about how great of an opportunity that is and it is the same thing I did almost 10 years ago when I moved here with my family. Working in the town you live in is something you can't put a value on.

Louisburg found a great replacement in Jeremy Holloway, who has been with the district for 17 years and is invested in the community. The school has also brought in a lot of new, young coaches that have come in with excitement and new ideas.

It is bittersweet for me as a lot of those coaches I had a

chance to get to know really well are now gone. Although I am mainly a solo operation, I consider a lot them my co-workers and it stinks to see them move on, but I also know they are doing the best for themselves and their families.

The same could be said for the class of 2017. The group of seniors I worked with this past year were great to get to know, just like all the senior classes before them.

I appreciated all their support and what I do could not be done without those kids. It is great to see them grow up and watch them become successful outside the classroom. I am not a teacher or coach, but still appreciate all they accomplish.

With 2016-17 in the rear view mirror, it will soon be time to focus on the upcoming season and I couldn't be more excited to see what accomplishments this group of Wildcats have in store. It has all the makings of a fun and special year.

---

## **Gagnebin steps down as LHS activities director**



Louisburg High School activities director Darin Gagnebin presents the Wildcat girls soccer team with their regional championship trophy last month. Gagnebin resigned his post



**earlier this month to take a similar position in Paola.**

Darin Gagnebin has a fondness for Louisburg High School, his coaches and students.

That made it all the more hard to say goodbye.

Gagnebin resigned his post as LHS assistant principal and activities director earlier this month to tentatively take the same position at Paola High School. His last day in Louisburg was last week.

Gagnebin spent a total of 17 years in the Louisburg school district, with the last six spent as activities director. He was also a teacher and coach for 11 years.

Family was the biggest reason he decided to make the move. Gagnebin and his family currently reside in Paola and his two children attend schools in Paola.

“People have come and gone, but it is still family here,” Gagnebin said. “I am comfortable here and Louisburg has done a lot for me. I just can’t pass up an opportunity to be where my kids are at. I know I could have brought my kids here, but my wife and I made that decision a long time ago of where we were going to live because of where she taught and I taught. I never thought back when we first moved to Paola and when we had kids, that we would be in this position.”

It was a difficult decision for Gagnebin as he leaves behind a group of coaches, several of whom he recently hired. The Louisburg district had a number of new coaches come on board for the upcoming school year.

“We have gone through some trials in the last couple of years and that is with any school,” Gagnebin said. “I told my wife, that if this was going to happen the way it did and I could pick the time, I wish the timing would have happened two years

down the road. I would have loved to see what this young group of teachers and coaches are going to do coming in.

“I told my wife that I was really excited about coming back next year and I felt we made some good hires. We have a passionate coaching staff coming on and they are great people with new ideas. It just happened out of the blue.”

The opening came when former Paola High School principal Phil Bressler took the new principal job at Pittsburg High School. Paola assistant principal and activities director Jeff Hines was elevated to the Paola principal position, which left the Panthers needing an activities director.

It can be traced back even further when the Pittsburg High School journalism class wrote an investigative piece that ousted its newly hired principal, which forced the school to reopen the position and eventually hired Bressler.

“Had Pittsburg’s journalism class not done their job, we wouldn’t be sitting here talking right now,” Gagnebin said.

The Paola position was an opportunity Gagnebin just couldn’t pass up as he will have an opportunity to watch more of his children’s events and work closer to home.

“I have missed a lot of my own kids’ stuff,” he said. “But the people here have been really great, (Principal) Tammy (Thomasson) now and Dave (Tappan) before her, to let me try to get to as much stuff as I can. I still miss things. These opportunities don’t come around very often and I just figured this would be a great fit for me and my family.

“But I couldn’t ask for a better group of coaches here in Louisburg. They are good and passionate about what they do. I really have developed some good bonds over the years. I know some have left and some have stayed on, but the coaches and staff I have had has been great.”

---

# Wildcat girls soccer back to work after state finish



Louisburg's Leia Shaffer works on a passing drill during the Wildcats' team camp on June 15. Approximately 20 kids attended the team camp and the Wildcats have been working hard this month in hopes of improving off their fourth place finish at state.

Sure, the Louisburg High School girls soccer team may have just had its best finish in program history less than a month ago, but the Wildcats were quickly back to work in preparation for next season.

A fourth-place finish at the Class 4-1A state tournament didn't buy the Wildcats much time off as they started their summer conditioning less than two weeks following their final state game and they ramped it up even more when took part in their week-long team camp that began on June 12.

"Camp went well for us," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "We worked on a lot of technique that week. We focused on trying to clean up technique and speed of play. I was pleased with how hard the girls worked and how focused they were. We had anywhere from 18-22 kids there all week."

The Wildcats would have had more, but they had several players out due to injury that they either suffered during the season or shortly after.

All-league defender Camdyn Clark was out with a bad knee injury she sustained in the third-place game at state at the end of May. The team's leading scorer, Bailey Belcher, was also dealing with an injury.



**Louisburg coach Kyle Conley goes over a drill during the Wildcats team's camp on June 15.**

In all, Louisburg has about five or six players that missed time due to ailments, which left the numbers a little down than Conley would want for the other summer workouts.

"Our numbers have been all over the place," he said. "For camp, we had great numbers, but practices we have had 12 to 20-plus. It creates some creative coaching situations, but the



kids do not complain and just work on getting better. The attitude has been extremely productive regardless how many kids we have had come out.”

Throughout the month of June, the Wildcats hit the weight room three times a week and had practices two to three times a week. It is also a good opportunity for Conley to get to know his incoming freshman and vice versa.

“Summer also helps a lot of the newer players and/or freshmen to learn what we do and what our expectations are,” Conley said. “These practices also help our team chemistry come together and develop a bond that will help carry us moving forward.

“This past season was extremely special. It is one for the history books, but we need to always try to keep getting better. Some people question why we have summer practice, but a majority of my kids do not play club soccer and literally play only March 1 to May 27. They do not play other than that. So it is essential that we keep up with everyone else in the state and work on some things. Summer for us is a lot of technique and speed of play. We use this time to clean up some things and improve. We cannot get better sitting on the couch.”



**Bria Jensen was one of approximately 20 kids who attended the Wildcats team camp.**

Conley hopes the hard work over the summer pays off for what the Wildcats believe could be another special season next spring. Louisburg returns most of its team that finished with a 13-7-1 record, including five of its six players that earned all-Frontier League honors.

They hope to turn that fourth-place state medal into something a little bigger next May.

“I am extremely excited when looking ahead to the girls season,” Conley said. “I personally feel we did not play our best soccer the last three games of the year. I feel that we had a great opportunity, but we did not execute as well as we should have. I feel that the girls were a little nervous, but I think it started a fire underneath them and next year could be just as special as this year.

“After all of the adversities and injuries we dealt with this past season, it gave a lot of kids an opportunity to get experience at the varsity level. I expect this season to be extremely competitive and intense.”

---

## Changes to classification system will impact Louisburg



Member schools in the Kansas State High School Activities Association sent ripples across the state last week when they passed two proposals that will affect high school athletics beginning in the 2018-19 season.

For football, the two 4A divisions and Class 2-1A have been eliminated. They have been replaced with 32 team classifications in 4A, 5A and 6A, while 3A and 2A will have 48-team classifications. The remaining schools will play in 1A.

The second proposal was for all other sports. Other than football, classes 4A, 5A and 6A will have 36 teams in each division. Classes 3A and 2A will have 64 schools each, while the remaining schools will be in 1A.

The football proposal passed with a vote of 215-73 and the all-sports proposal passed with a 207-145 majority. All of the classes, except 6A and 1A, were in favor.

With those new proposals comes a different playoff system for many of the sports.

Louisburg High School, which is a Class 4A school, will see changes in five sports programs – football, basketball, baseball, softball and volleyball.

In football, Louisburg will no longer have district play as the playoffs will begin in week nine. Class 4A will play an eight-game regular season and then each side of the state will be seeded in a bracket from 1 through 16, based on their record.

Given the fact the Frontier League currently has nine teams after recently adding three schools in Tonganoxie, Bonner Springs and Piper, the Wildcats will no longer have to play a non-league opponent. De Soto recently chose to leave the Frontier League following the 2017-18 season to join a new league made up of 5A schools.

“Normally we go out in October to Salina, we would redistrict for 2018 and 2019,” Louisburg activities director Darin Gagnebin said. “I don’t even know that we will have to go cause our league has nine teams, so we would play eight league games and the ninth game gets assigned to you for the playoffs. As of right now in football, we will no longer have any out of conference opponents as long as we maintain nine in the league.”

Another change will be in basketball. For the postseason, there will no longer be substates, instead the 18 teams on each side of the state will be bracketed out by record beginning with two play-in games.

From there, the bracket will be sized down to four-team pods, with the higher seed hosting the game. Teams will have to win two games to reach the state tournaments. Pods will be 1-16-8-9 seeds, 4-13-5-12, 2-15-7-10 and 3-14-6-11. The eight pod winners will advance to the state tournament.



“Depending on where we fall, it could increase travel depending on where we are seeded,” Gagnebin said. “We could have to drive down to Coffeyville or drive up to Atchison, you just don’t know until the end of the year.”

Basketball schedules will also be different with the addition of the new league teams in 2018-19. There will no longer be double round-robin schedules. There will be eight league games, six tournament games and athletic directors will have to find a way to fill the other six.

“We will start in August about building the new league schedule and it will be tough,” Gagnebin said. “One thing you will see is we won’t have double round-robin’s anymore because we can’t play everyone twice. I think there will be traditional rivalries that are held to where we would play those twice due to proximity. Quite frankly, it wouldn’t be smart for Louisburg not to play Paola, Ottawa or Spring Hill twice due to higher attendance numbers and proximity. It will probably increase travel costs because you are playing more non-conference opponents.”

Baseball and softball will be similar as there will no longer be regionals. Like basketball, there will be two play-in games with the same pod structure. The top four overall seeds will each host all games in their pod on the same day.

In volleyball, there will be four substates across the state, broken into eight brackets. There will also be nine teams in each substate, which will require a play-in game. Teams will need to win two games to qualify for state.

Postseasons for wrestling, track, soccer, cross country and golf will remain the same.

However, even with the new changes, the proposals don’t address the competitive balance issue between public and private schools that many members have been talking about for the last several years.

Although he likes the new playoff system, the fact these changes don't address the problem is one of the reasons Gagnebin voted no on the new proposals.

"It was a shock because I didn't think it was going to pass," Gagnebin said. "Other than the playoff system, in my opinion, it doesn't do anything for Class 4A. All the work that went into splitting 4A into two divisions is now gone. I feel bad for those schools because they put in a ton of work. It doesn't really affect us because we are locked into 4A and we are right in the middle of the pack.

"I didn't see how it benefited Louisburg or 4A, other than the playoffs system where it should ensure you have more competitive teams at state. Since you are seeding them out now, you shouldn't have a substate of teams with losing records. They could have done that without this."

Although private schools like Bishop Miege, which have won several state titles in the last few years, could find itself moving up a classification with the new measures, it isn't a permanent solution according to Gagnebin.

"Enrollment could bump some private schools up a class, but that doesn't fix the problem," Gagnebin said. "Private schools can control enrollment. According to (Miege) they are losing enrollment and could be back in 4A. It doesn't impact the private issue at all and that is why I didn't vote for it. It is not fixing what the 80 percent of athletic directors polled in Kansas asking what the biggest problems in classifications are. It doesn't address the real problem."

---

# Wildcat girls soccer earns six all-league spots



Louisburg's Madisen Simpson (left), Bailey Belcher (center) and Mackenzie Scholtz were each selected to the all-Frontier League first team. The Wildcats earned six selections overall.

In just its second season, the Louisburg High School girls soccer team took it to the next level as it earned a spot in the Class 4-1A state tournament and finished fourth overall.

So it didn't come as a surprise to anyone that the Wildcats were well-represented when the all-Frontier League teams were released.

Louisburg earned six spots on the all-league team, including three first-team selections as it finished the season with a 13-7-1 record, including a 5-3 mark in the league.

"I think we got a fair representation overall on the all-league team, but as a coach you always want more and feel more kids deserve to be recognized," Louisburg coach Kyle Conley said. "I feel that the kids that received this honor deserved this and earned it. It is nice to have that many kids recognized and to have other coaches tell me how much they like this player or that player. These meetings have been a lot of fun, but the girls' success on the field is a result of that."

Senior Madisen Simpson, junior Bailey Belcher and freshman Mackenzie Scholtz were each named to the first team. Sophomore Camdyn Clark and junior Savannah Reinhart earned second team honors, while junior goalie Shay Whiting was an honorable mention.

For the second year in a row, Belcher found a spot on the first team and for good reason. Belcher led the Wildcats with 29 goals on the season and also had 12 assists from the midfield spot.

“Bailey had a slow start to the year, but she really caught fire in the middle two-thirds of the year,” Conley said. “She was hampered by a leg injury throughout the later part of the season. She did a very nice job with her pace and vision. She had a little bit of a tough time down the stretch because she was the part of the opposing team’s game plan to try to take her away.”

As a freshman, Scholtz made a big impact on the Louisburg attack opposite of Belcher. Scholtz was just behind Belcher with 27 goals on the year and also had a team-high 18 assists.

“Mackenzie really came on strong and she really worked well with the midfielders with give and go’s,” Conley said. “She struggled to learn the expectation of the position at first, but after about the first five games or so she really dominated. She took full advantage of the space teams gave her.

“I honestly do not think teams towards the end of year respected her ability to make plays. She really came on strong and absolutely dominated teams.”

Simpson was a team captain along with Belcher and showed why with her play in the midfield. Simpson was all over the place with her position as a holding midfielder and often marked up against some of the opposition’s best players. She also had a goal to go along with six assists on the year.

“Madisen was our team leader,” Conley said. “She was an absolute workhorse in the middle of the field and at times was everywhere. She did a fantastic job of leading by example and playing at a very high level the entire season. She is an unbelievable young lady that is going to do great things in life because of her work ethic.”



**Camdyn Clark (left) and Savannah Reinhart (middle) were named to the all-league second team and goalie Shay Whiting was an honorable mention.**

Clark was the highest honored defender on the Louisburg team. The Wildcat outside back made things difficult on the opposition and earned second team honors for the second consecutive season.

Reinhart made her way to the all-league squad for the first time in her career as she contributed nine goals and 10 assists from the midfield spot.

“Camdyn is a lock down outside back,” Conley said. “She has only been responsible for three goals all season. She has a great motor and work rate. She has quality skill to be able to connect with our midfielders. She has definitely excelled in this role. Camdyn is an individual who never takes a day off, she is extremely coachable and truly loves the game.

“Savannah had some ups and downs this season, but she really



turned the corner after we lost to Basehor. She responded and became an offensive threat and her execution was fantastic. She is undersized, but compensates by working hard and doing the best she could to hold her ground.”

Whiting was a big part of the Louisburg defense as she finished with nine shutouts on the season in goal, which was good enough to garner honorable mention honors.

“Shay is a hard-nosed kid that never gives in,” Conley said. “She is undersized at 5-2, but she did record nine clean sheets.”

League champion De Soto led the way with 10 selections overall, including five first team honors. Baldwin tied Louisburg with the second-most selections with six.

## **ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE GIRLS SOCCER**

### **FIRST TEAM**

Tarah Phongsavath, De Soto, senior

**Bailey Belcher, Louisburg, junior**

Aly Hargrove, De Soto, senior

Taylor Cawley, Baldwin, senior

Tanith Beal, De Soto, senior

**Mackenzie Scholtz, Louisburg, freshman**

Sara Watson, Spring Hill, junior

**Madisen Simpson, Louisburg, senior**

Josie Boyle, Baldwin, freshman

Maddie Plake, De Soto, senior

Goalie: Taylor Rogers, De Soto, junior

## **SECOND TEAM**

Carmen Rush, De Soto, senior

Kaylen Dawson, Spring Hill, freshman

Anna Burnett, Baldwin, freshman

Mackenzie Mohl, De Soto, freshman

Caitlyn Countryman, Baldwin, sophomore

Anna Watson, Spring Hill, junior

**Camdyn Clark, Louisburg, sophomore**

Mallory Smith, Spring Hill, sophomore

Morgan Laplante, De Soto, sophomore

**Savannah Reinhart, Louisburg, junior**

Goalie: Emery Mounce, Spring Hill, freshman

## **HONORABLE MENTION**

Ashley Panagakis, De Soto, sophomore

Amanda Wray, Ottawa, junior

Clara Cowden, Baldwin, senior

Alex Schemmel, De Soto, junior

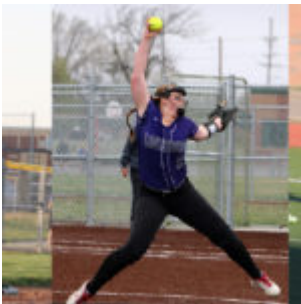
**Goalie: Shay Whiting, Louisburg, junior**

Goalie: Riley O'Rourke, Baldwin, senior

Goalie: Sutton Jung, Ottawa, junior

---

# All-Frontier League baseball, softball and girls soccer



Here are all-Frontier League teams for baseball, softball and girls soccer for the 2016-17 season. Congrats to all the recipients who earned the honors.

## ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE GIRLS SOCCER

### FIRST TEAM

Tarah Phongsavath, De Soto, senior

**Bailey Belcher, Louisburg, junior**

Aly Hargrove, De Soto, senior

Taylor Cawley, Baldwin, senior

Tanith Beal, De Soto, senior

**Mackenzie Scholtz, Louisburg, freshman**

Sara Watson, Spring Hill, junior

**Madisen Simpson, Louisburg, senior**

Josie Boyle, Baldwin, freshman

Maddie Plake, De Soto, senior

**Goalie:** Taylor Rogers, De Soto, junior

### **SECOND TEAM**

Carmen Rush, De Soto, senior

Kaylen Dawson, Spring Hill, freshman

Anna Burnett, Baldwin, freshman

Mackenzie Mohl, De Soto, freshman

Caitlyn Countryman, Baldwin, sophomore

Anna Watson, Spring Hill, junior

**Camdyn Clark, Louisburg, sophomore**

Mallory Smith, Spring Hill, sophomore

Morgan Laplante, De Soto, sophomore

**Savannah Reinhart, Louisburg, junior**

**Goalie:** Emery Mounce, Spring Hill, freshman

### **HONORABLE MENTION**

Ashley Panagakis, De Soto, sophomore

Amanda Wray, Ottawa, junior

Clara Cowden, Baldwin, senior

Alex Schemmel, De Soto, junior

**Goalie:** Shay Whiting, Louisburg, junior

**Goalie:** Riley O'Rourke, Baldwin, senior

**Goalie:** Sutton Jung, Ottawa, junior

## **ALL-FRONTIER LEAGUE BASEBALL**

### **FIRST TEAM**

**Catcher:** Chandler Bloomer, Ottawa, junior

**Pitcher:** Blaine Hanf, Paola, senior; Zach Curry, Ottawa, senior

**Infield:** Donovan Sutti, Paola, senior; Keegan Finch, Ottawa, senior; Adam Carlson, Baldwin, senior; Dalton Rankin, Paola, senior

**Outfield:** Blaine Ray, Ottawa, senior; Josh Craig, Baldwin, senior; Max Barger, De Soto, senior

**Utility/DH:** Jack Barger, De Soto, junior

### **SECOND TEAM**

**Catcher:** Trevor Boehm, Paola, senior

**Pitcher:** Conner Mackey, De Soto, junior; Trenton Ferguson, Ottawa, senior

**Infield:** Nash Dreiling, Paola, junior; Kaleb Shaffer, Ottawa, junior; Chance Montgomery, De Soto, senior; Cody Lucas, Spring Hill, junior

**Outfield:** Khalil Thrasher, Eudora, junior; Peyton Garvin,



Eudora, junior; Jackson Burell, Spring Hill, junior

**Utility/DH: Garrett Caldwell, Louisburg, junior**

### **HONORABLE MENTION**

**Catcher:** Caleb Ostronic, Eudora, junior; Garrett Borth, Baldwin, junior; Tony Slaughter, De Soto, junior

**Pitcher:** Peyton Garvin, Eudora, junior; Connor Quick, Baldwin, freshman; Caden Bressler, Paola, freshman; Nathan Patterson, De Soto, senior

**Infield:** Dalton Stone, Louisburg, senior; Grant Harding, Louisburg, senior; David Hornberger, Eudora, senior

**Outfield:** Korbin Hankinson, Louisburg, senior; Ty Kempf, De Soto, senior; Sean King, Spring Hill, senior; Monti Enriquez, Eudora, senior

**Utility/DH:** Brock Huddlestun, Ottawa, senior; Dylan Sanderson, Spring Hill, senior

## **ALL FRONTIER LEAGUE SOFTBALL**

### **FIRST TEAM**

**Pitcher:** Jordan Johnson, Paola, junior; Sarah Brown, Spring Hill, senior

**Catcher:** Sierra Sanderson, Spring Hill, senior

**Infield:** Allison Daggett, Paola, senior; Jordan Flakus, Eudora, senior; Kamryn Shaffer, Ottawa, junior; Matti Morgan, Paola, senior

**Outfield:** Audrey Flowers, Baldwin, sophomore; Sieana Hall,

Baldwin, sophomore; McKinley Markley, Baldwin, sophomore

**DH/Utility:** Regan Smith, Spring Hill, junior

## **SECOND TEAM**

**Pitcher:** Kayla Etter, Eudora, sophomore; **Allyssa Griggs, Louisburg, senior**

**Catcher:** Amayah LaTessa, Baldwin, senior

**Infield:** **Madison Svoboda, Louisburg, sophomore;** Rian Geere, Baldwin, freshman; Mackenzie Smith, De Soto, senior; Betsy Parmeley, Baldwin, senior

**Outfield:** Elizabeth Hays, Spring Hill, junior; Devon Purcell, Eudora, junior; Jordan Diehl, De Soto, sophomore; Jasmine Thevarajoo, Eudora, senior

**DH/Utility:** Payton Faddis, De Soto, sophomore

## **HONORABLE MENTION**

**Pitcher:** Kinley Burton, Baldwin, senior; Mary Kate Hale, Spring Hill, senior

**Catcher:** Sydney Igert, Paola, junior; **Emalee Overbay, Louisburg, senior**

**Infield:** Jenna DeVore, Ottawa, junior; Kelsey Kroutch, Spring Hill, senior; **Molly Rison, Louisburg, sophomore;** Kellee Wiggins, Baldwin, sophomore; Lydia Brown, Eudora, freshman

**Utility/DH:** **Karson Griggs, Louisburg, sophomore;** Peyton Weatherbie, Paola, senior