

LMS cheer shines at competition



Members of the Louisburg Middle School cheerleading team are (front row, from left) Sidney Wilson, Cecila Bindi, Olivia Chase, Ashlyn McManigal, Lexi Pena, Olivia Barber, Jenna Terry, Andrea Gaza; (middle row) Kira Payton, Brooke Lancaster, Patches Oxford, Aly Traffis, Eleanor Willming, Madison Burgess, Sydney Thornton; (back row) Elizabeth Kratochvil, Shelby Grandon, Gabby Tappan, Kami Geiman, Lauren Vincent, Brooklyn Mitchell, Alyse Moore, Emma Christy, Jadyn Amren and Avery Graham.

BALDWIN CITY – The Louisburg Middle School cheerleading team traveled to Baldwin High School on Saturday in hopes of putting on its best performance of the season.



Members of the one the LMS cheer stunt groups to earn a '1' rating are (clockwise, in front) Sydney Thornton, Lexi Pena, Gabby Tappan, Alyse Moore; (standing) Ashlyn McManigal.

The group of seventh and eighth graders did just that.

In front of the judges and other programs, the LMS team received a '1' rating for their performance during the Baldwin Cheer and Dance Festival. The awards kept coming after that.

Louisburg was one of the top four teams chosen by the judges and earned the overall top choreography honors.

Members of the Louisburg team are Kira Payton, Brooke Lancaster, Aly Traffis, Eleanor Willming, Madison Burgess, Sydney Thornton, Sidney Wilson, Patches Oxford, Cecila Bindi, Olivia Chase, Ashlyn McManigal, Lexi Pena, Olivia Barber, Jenna Terry, Andrea Gaza, Elizabeth Kratochvil, Shelby Grandon, Gabby Tappan, Kami Geiman, Lauren Vincent, Brooklyn

Mitchell, Alyse Moore, Emma Christy, Jadyn Amren, Avery Graham and manager Morgan Messer.

“The girls were awesome,” Louisburg coach Suzanne Reedy said. “I just want to thank our district and community who support, not only cheer but all of our extra-curricular activities. We had the best showing of support and it was incredible.”

Louisburg also entered two groups into the stunt competition and both fared well.



Members of the second LMS cheer stunt group to earn a '1' rating are (clockwise, in front) Jenna Terry, Aly Traffis, Kami Geiman, Patches Oxford; (standing) Cecilia Bindi.

One team that featured Geiman, Bindi, Traffis, Terry and Oxford earned a '1' rating as did the group of Tappan, McManigal, Pena, Moore and Thornton.

Cheerleaders thrive at FCCJC competition



The Louisburg second grade cheerleading squad brought home a first and third place trophy on Nov. 22 following the FCCJC Cheer and Dance Competition at Shawnee Mission West. Members of the team are (front row, from left) Reese Anderson, Jessica Felder, McKinley Harmon, Kimmie Powls; (back row) Shyloh Waite, Kaylee Crooks, Joslyn Burke, Madeline Hughes and Ally Bell.

During the fall football season, a group of second- and fourth-grade Louisburg cheerleaders spent their weekends cheering on Louisburg football teams playing for the Football and Cheerleading Club of Johnson County (FCCJC).

Recently, those same cheerleaders had a chance to move from the sidelines and into the spotlight.

On Nov. 22, the two cheerleading groups made their way to Shawnee Mission West High School for the FCCJC Cheer and Dance Competition and both teams came home with a lot of hardware to show for their efforts.

The second-grade group finished first overall in the cheer competition out of nine teams and came in third in the dance portion of the contest.

Cheering for the Louisburg second-grade team were Reese Anderson, Jessica Felder, McKinley Harmon, Kimmie Powl, Shyloh Waite, Kaylee Crooks, Joslyn Burke, Madeline Hughes and Ally Bell. Mindy Bell served as team's head coach as was assisted by Gracie Waite and Becky Harmon.

"I really couldn't have been prouder of these girls," coach Bell said. "They have all worked really hard and I was very happy for them when they got first. For all but one of the girls, this was their first year in cheerleading so they really accomplished a lot and had a great year."



Members of the Louisburg fourth-grade cheerleading team are (front row, from left) Ashley Bell, Jenna Cauthon, Riley Haas, Taylor Curry, Darci Stone, Brooklyn Harmon, Maggie Madison; (middle row) Madison O'Keefe, Sienna Blancarte, Brinley White, Rylee Hickey, Ali Marie Dubinick; (back row) Anna Poe, Isabel

Bond, Isabella Moreland, Ashleigh Moore, Sophie Katzer and Bronwynn Williams.

The fourth-grade team also fared very well. Louisburg finished third in both the cheer and dance competitions out of eight teams.

Cheering for the fourth-grade team were Ashley Bell, Jenna Cauthon, Riley Haas, Taylor Curry, Darci Stone, Brooklyn Harmon, Maggie Madison, Madison O'Keefe, Sienna Blancarte, Brinley White, Rylee Hickey, Ali Marie Dubinick, Anna Poe, Isabel Bond, Isabella Moreland, Ashleigh Moore, Sophie Katzer and Bronwynn Williams. The team was coached by Jackie Bond and was assisted by Nicole Brunner and Becki Madison.

"They performed their hearts out and did the best performance we have seen them do," coach Bond said. "Coach Becki, Nicole and I are so proud of them."

Certified Life Safety title sponsor for Blazin' the Burg



For the last eight years, Chris and Gail Brown have spent their time and energy helping make sure people and companies around the area stay safe – hence the name of their business.

Chris and Gail started Certified Life Safety out of their small Louisburg office in 2007, and since then it has grown by leaps and bounds. Safety and wellness have always been important to the Louisburg couple, which made their company a perfect fit to team up with one of the area's best 5K races – Blazin' the Burg.

Certified Life Safety is the title sponsor of the event and both are excited to be a part of the Louisburg annual race day.

“We have been a part of the Louisburg and Miami County community for over 20 years,” Gail said. “This community has given so much to our family that we feel it an honor and a blessing to be able to give back.



“We didn't really think about the connection when we spoke with the chamber about being the title sponsor. However, we feel life safety and wellness are related; being prepared in safety and health promotes well-being in people's lives.”

Chris has spent the last 30 years in the fire protection industry, while Gail has 15 years of experience in business administration. Starting their own business seemed like a perfect fit.

Certified Life Safety is a full service fire protection and life safety company providing design, consulting, installation, inspection, testing and maintenance of fire alarm, fire sprinkler, fire extinguisher, emergency lighting, access control and nurse call systems.

The Browns started out with small projects in the Louisburg and Paola areas and very soon saw their business grow. They secured several large clients in Kansas and Oklahoma and eventually they would open two more offices in Greenfield, Mo., and Bartlesville, Okla.

“We feel very fortunate that we have been able to expand and grow into these areas,” Gail said.

As for the race itself, Blazin the Burg is in its fifth year and once again planning for another big crowd to invade downtown Louisburg on Sept. 19.

Registrations for the race are still underway at www.blazintheburg.com and go up until race day. From now until Sept. 17, registration is \$35 and it becomes \$40 on race day. There is also a kids fun run, which is \$15.

Portions of each registration fee will go to benefit the Louisburg Area Recreation Association.

Registered runners and walkers will receive a race T-shirt, chip timing, mile markers, group awards and complimentary refreshments. Festivities on Broadway begin at 4 p.m. and will include live music and local vendors.

On race day, packet pick-up and registration will begin at 4 p.m., and the kids fun run will follow at 5 p.m. The 5K run/walk starts at 6 p.m., with an awards ceremony to follow.

Cunningham, Wright qualify for American Royal



Louisburg Middle School seventh-grader Lakin Cunningham (above) has already had quite the rodeo career and that continued as she, and fellow LMS student Delaney Wright, were recently selected to participate in the American Royal Invitational Youth Rodeo.

The American Royal is one of the oldest and largest professional rodeos in the Midwest.

Every fall, people flock to Kansas City, Mo., to compete against some of the best the nation has to offer. As it turns out, two Louisburg Middle School students will be right in the thick of it.

LMS seventh-grader Lakin Cunningham and sixth-grader Delaney Wright qualified for the American Royal Invitational Youth Rodeo in Hale Arena. Both girls will compete in barrel racing and goat-tying.

This is the fifth time Cunningham has qualified for the American Royal Invitational and this is Wright's first. The girls will take to the arena on Sept. 25 for the competition.

"I am super excited that I get to compete again this year in barrel racing and goat-tying," Cunningham said. "It's been one

of the highlights of my year each year since I've been 8. I'm striving for a top three finish in my events this year."

Wright and Cunningham each submitted applications of their achievements to the American Royal and both received good news.

"I'm so excited about having a chance to compete at the American Royal Youth Rodeo," Wright said. "I know I have been to a lot of rodeos but this is a step up in my career of rodeoing because I was selected by application to compete against some very tough competition."



LMS sixth-grader Delaney Wright earned a spot in her first American Royal Invitational Youth Rodeo.

Cunningham is no stranger to the rodeo as she has a lengthy list of accomplishments on her resume. Most recently, she was named as the 2016 National Little Britches Rodeo Association Princess.

Not only will she be competing in her two events, she will be helping with school agriculture tours before the rodeos begin. Cunningham will also carry in the American Flag during the Grand Entry portions of the rodeo each day and will be signing autographs as part of her duties of being the NLBRA Princess.

Cunningham was the Kansas Junior High School Rodeo Association

Reserve Champion Goat Tier in 2015 and also earned her NLBRA buckle in Barrel Racing. She is a four-time Christian Youth Rodeo Association Barrel Racing Champion, three-time Goat Tying Champion and two-time All-Around Cowgirl and Pole Bending Champion.

She is also a two-time National Barrel Horse Association Kansas Pee Wee 1D Barrel Racing Champion.

Cunningham has competed in barrel races since she was 3 years old and been in youth rodeos since she was 6. Lakin is the daughter of Kara Cunningham and is the granddaughter of Jim and Sandy Lowe of Louisburg.

"I'm also excited that this year I'll be representing the National Little Britches Rodeo Association as its Princess at the American Royal," Lakin said. "I am so glad that I get to carry the American flag and greet the kids as they come in for the tours from all different schools in the area. I look forward to seeing everyone and would like to wish everyone that is competing good luck."

Wright is also racking up accomplishments of her own. In 2013 and 2014, she was an All-Around Reserve champion during her competition in the Midwest Barrel Riders Association (MBRA).

She is also a two-time reserve champion in poles and barrels and was a champion goat-tier in 2013 and 2014 as well. Currently, Wright is in the middle of her third season rodeoing and is currently in the running for All-Around Champion Cowgirl in the Eastern Kansas Timed Event Circuit.

Delaney is the daughter of Andy and Amy Wright of Louisburg.

"I love doing rodeos because it is a sport where you have to rely on a 1,000 pound teammate that doesn't speak the same language in order to win," Wright said. "I'm so lucky to have awesome horses and have so many people support me and helping me reach my dreams in this tough sport."

Opinion: Volunteers make Louisburg a great place



Just as a warning before going forward, this article is full of bias and might be one of the most homerish (if that is a word) pieces I have written.

So, now that I have gotten that out of the way, here it goes. Before starting Louisburg Sports Zone last February, I already knew Louisburg was a great place to live and raise a family.

It became more evident when I lost my job and started out on my own that Louisburg was truly the place for me. Why would I want to go anywhere else?

The support I have received, which I have written about before, has been a blessing and it is something I simply cannot repay. Business is great and I am very excited for what the next school year has in store.

However, this summer also provided me a different perspective on why small towns are the best places to live. It is pretty simple – volunteers.

Those are people who sacrifice their time with their families so that programs can be made available for their children to participate. It is a thankless job and one that usually is filled with countless complaints from people who – let's be

honest – haven't volunteered their time and talents much in their life.

This summer gave me the opportunity to cover many different events from high school camps, Louisburg Area Recreation Association (LARA) activities and the Louisburg Barracudas swim team – among others. What makes most of these things work is the support of volunteers.

LARA is a non-profit organization completely made up of volunteers. Whether it is flag football, basketball, baseball or softball, they do their best to provide the best possible experience for your child.

Living in Louisburg as long as I have, I also know LARA doesn't have the best reputation in the community for one reason or another. For that reason, it has been an uphill climb for this group to earn back the community's trust.

The people with LARA, Heather Burch, Cindy Apple, Shava Vohs, Kalee Smith, Lori Driskell, Molly Strubbe, Ashley Buset, Steve Mungle and Tony Page, actually care about this community and these kids. If they didn't, there is no way they would be donating all their time and energy to the cause.

Listen, I know at times things didn't always go perfectly with one event or another, but nothing can ever be perfect and these volunteers are doing the best they can with what they have. In a perfect world, LARA would be a city-run organization that doesn't rely strictly on volunteers.

For now, residents should be happy that people with big hearts are doing everything they can with your child's best interest in mind.

Then you have the Louisburg Barracudas swim team, which to me, is really a hidden jewel within the community. I guess it can't really be a hidden jewel when so many people know about it, but I don't think it is talked about a lot because

swimming isn't as big of a sport here as others.

What the Barracudas offer are second-to-none in the area. Louisburg residents Kyle and Aimee Farrington are fantastic coaches who give great instructions from toddlers on up through high school. Along with having a competitive environment, it is also gives children a chance to get used to the water and learn how to swim, which is a great tool for them to have.

Just like LARA, it couldn't happen without the help of a countless number of volunteers. Whether it's the numerous people who serve on the board, or the parents who help run the meets, it couldn't be accomplished without their help.

Then you see the amazing accomplishment of the Louisburg Soccer Club and parents from around the community who raised \$39,000 in about 10 months to help form the Louisburg High School girls soccer team that will begin play this coming spring.

No one on that committee got paid for doing this, but people like Karin Olson, Diana Moore and others helped make this possible. All of these people have full-time jobs, and a lot of the committee members used up whatever free time they had left in their lives to make this a possibility for girls young and old in Louisburg.

Year in, and year out, the Louisburg Soccer Club and its volunteers do a fantastic job of putting together their fall and spring seasons and the club has grown a great deal in the last few years.

The same goes for the Louisburg Kids Wrestling Club as coach Matt Blancarte and high school coach Bobby Bovaird also spend a great deal of time trying to get the program to grow and provide a positive outlook for the wrestlers.

These are only a few of the organizations that give up their

time to make our kids' lives better. There are many other organizations that are non-sports related that do the exact same thing and their efforts shouldn't go without our thanks

THANK YOU to everyone who help make these programs possible for our children, because without you our town would be a little less livable.

Flea market aids local students



Terry and Susan Tinich have a fondness for unearthing vintage relics and putting them on display with a more modern look.

They also have a love for helping children in need.

As it turns out, the Tiniches have found a way for those two passions to co-exist and benefit everyone involved, including the Louisburg community.

On June 20, the Louisburg couple organized the Louisburg Flea Market at the West Gym parking lot. They sold approximately 45 spots for vendors to come in and sell their items, and despite some rainy weather, had a big turnout.

It meant a good opening weekend for the Tiniches and the rest of the vendors, but an even better one when it comes to Louisburg students.

You see, the Tiniches sell each parking space to vendors for \$10, not to make money for themselves, but help children and their families who might need a little assistance. All the proceeds from parking space sales go to help create pay to

participate scholarships for students at Louisburg Middle and Louisburg High Schools.

“It really seems like parents just get nickled and dimed to death when it comes to fees for school,” Terry Tinich said. “It is not the district’s fault at all and it is something they have to do, but it is getting to the point where parents can’t afford all this stuff and hopefully this will help a little bit.”

USD 416 charge middle and high school students a pay to participate fee each year. Parents must pay a \$60 fee for each activity they take part in, with a maximum charge of three activities.

Terry, a teacher at Louisburg High School, and Susan, an administrator in the Cass-Midway school district, have seen how the trend is turning and how it has become more difficult for parents to afford everything.

As for the Louisburg district, Terry says it hasn’t gotten to the point where a student hasn’t been able to participate because of the fee, but he and Susan both know it is coming soon.

“If you look at the free and reduced lunch numbers for the Louisburg district, the number has gotten higher every year,” Susan said. “It is only a matter of time when parents are going to have a hard time paying that fee if their kids want to do sports or something like band.”

The Tiniches scheduled three dates over the summer to have the city flea market. The next one is set for 7 a.m. on July 18 and the third will be on Aug. 8.

Terry said he is looking for venders for each date and both are also looking for food venders to participate as well.

“We are looking for something unique, something like a walking

taco booth you would see at the fair or someone selling homemade peach cobbler or something like that,” Terry said. “We wouldn’t charge them a fee to set up, but we do ask that they donate 10 percent of their profits to the scholarship fund.”

The hope for the flea market, according to the Tiniches, is to be able to expand and make it a weekend-type event that would draw others from outside of Louisburg.

As for now, their focus is making it work this summer and helping out the kids. Their goal is to raise enough money for 10 scholarships.

“The community has really responded well so far,” Susan said. “People have been really supportive. Some didn’t come look, but they wanted to donate to the cause, so they just drove up and donated some money which is great as well.”

To reserve a space for one or two of the flea markets, email Terry at kansashuskerfan@hotmail.com for vendor information.

King crowned gymnastics champion



Broadmoor Elementary School fifth-grader Olivia King recently captured an all-around gymnastics state championship. King, a

level 7 gymnast, has qualified for the USA Gymnastics Junior Olympic regional meet in May.

Photos courtesy of Pixel Perfect-Photography

By day, Olivia King is just a normal fifth-grader at Broadmoor Elementary School, but by night, she is something different.

Olivia spends her evenings, not at home like a lot of other kids her age, but at Diamond Academy, where she practices with her gymnastics teammates. It is there the 11-year-old spends 19 hours a week working hard on her craft.

Whether it be the bars, balance beam, floor exercise or the vault, Olivia seems to do it all and she does it well.

“I wouldn’t be able to function without gymnastics,” Olivia said. “It does get tiring especially when I have homework to do when I get home, but my teachers have always been very supportive of my schedule. I wouldn’t change a thing, I look forward to going to practice every day.”

All the practice seemed to pay off in late March when she competed in the Kansas State Championships in Overland Park.

It was there where Olivia was crowned an all-around state champion as a USA Gymnastics Junior Olympic level 7 gymnast. Her score of 37.9 earned top marks and she was also strong in the individual events.

She won the floor exercise with a score of 9.675 and then finished runner up on the balance beam (9.65), bars (9.3) and vault (9.275).



Louisburg's Olivia King goes through her routine on the bars during the March 27 state championship in Overland Park.

“I was really excited that I won,” Olivia said. “I knew I had some really tough competition. I was watching the scores of my top competitor and on my last event, I knew what score I needed to win. It was a goal of mine to win state.”

Olivia will now compete in the Region 3 meet that consists of qualifiers from Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arkansas and Wyoming. The meet will be held May 1 to 3 in Estes Park, Colo.

The meet in May will just be another step in what has been a successful season as a level 7 gymnast.

In her first meet of the year, Olivia competed in the Kansas Judges Cup and won the all-around competition with a 37.75. The top six all-around scores from all age groups in level 7 were selected to represent Team Kansas at the National Judges Cup in Montgomery, Ala., and Olivia was the top qualifier for nationals.

She traveled to the Buckeye Classic in Columbus, Ohio, and was second in the all-around competition and also took first place on the balance beam. Olivia and her family also made trips to San Diego for the California Classic and the SuperStar Meet in Oklahoma, where she finished third in the all-around competitions. She also won the floor exercise at SuperStar with a 9.8.

Olivia would then go on to become an all-around champion at the Diamond Jewels Invitational and the Pink Ribbon Classic.

All those meets have prepared her for what is to come in May at the regional competition.

“My goal is to win,” she said. “It is a great accomplishment to qualify for regionals and I’m very excited to compete. I know it will be tough with the best of Texas and Oklahoma being there as those states are like the powerhouse of gymnastics, but I figure if I’m going to go, I might as well

try to win it.”

Meet The Homecoming Candidates



Here are the 2015 Louisburg High School winter homecoming candidates and their profiles. The winners will be announced Friday at halftime of the boys basketball game.



Andie Buffington

Andie Buffington

Parents: David and Amy Buffington

Activities: Cross country, four years; Basketball, two years; Track, two years; National Honor Society, two years; SADD, two years; LEO's, one year; FFA, four years; Letterman's Club, two years

Plans after high school: Attend the University of Kansas and major in exercise science to become a physical therapist



Nick Blancarte

Nick Blancarte

Parents: Matt and Christina Blancarte

Activities: Football, four years; Baseball, one year

Plans after high school: Attend Fort Scott Community College on a football scholarship. He is currently undecided on a major.



Samantha Davin

Samantha Davin

Parents: Tom and Robin Davin

Activities: Fall Musical, four years; Debate, one year; Cheerleading, one year; Jazzy Cats, one year; Spanish Club,

two years; Select Choir, three years; Letterman's Club, two years; Forensics, three years; Spring Play, one year

Plans after high school: Attend the University of Central Missouri with a double major in theatre and education



Logan Glenn

Logan Glenn

Parents: Susan Glenn and Hank Hyden

Activities: Basketball Manager, one year; Golf, four years; Wrestling, one year; Cross Country, four years; Letterman's Club, one year; Spanish Club, one year; Debate, one year; Choir, three years; Math Club, two years; Spring Play, one year

Plans after high school: Attend Emporia State University



Natalie Moore

Natalie Moore

Parents: Doug and Lynne Moore

Activities: Basketball, four years; Cross Country, one year; Volleyball, one year; Track, two years; FFA, three years; Letterman's Club, two years; Yearbook, one year

Plans after high school: Attend Emporia State University and major in elementary education



Nathan Moore

Nathan Moore

Parents: Doug and Lynne Moore

Activities: Basketball, four years; Golf, four years; Football, one year; Cross Country, one year; FFA, three years; National Honor Society, two years; Letterman's Club, one year; Spanish Club, one year

Plans after high school: Attend Emporia State University and study athletic training



Kirstin Lowry

Kirstin Lowry

Parents: Shawn and Kristine Lowry

Activities: Volleyball, one year; Track, one year; Basketball, four years; FFA, four years; Letterman's Club, two years

Plans after high school: Attend Kansas State University and pursue a health professions degree



Mason Wilde

Mason Wilde

Parents: Rikk and Kelly Wilde

Activities: Football, three years; Basketball, two years; Track, four years; LEO's, four years; Letterman's Club, three years; Spanish Club, three years; National Honor Society, two years; Academic Ambassadors, three years

Plans after high school: Study mechanical engineering and later pursue a doctorate in the same field