

The Wildcat Echo

A publication by the students of Maquoketa Valley High School

Wrap up of the year for FFA in honor of FFA Week

by Natalie Ries, FFA Reporter

Maquoketa Valley FFA is having another successful year. This year the Maquoketa Valley FFA chapter is led by the officer team consisting of President Leah Reicher; Vice Presidents, Nathan Beitz and Tyler Hoeger; Secretary, Kelsey Hoeger; Treasure, Bianka Ronnebaum; Reporters, Natalie Ries and Ella Reicher; and Sentinel, Kyle Engelken.

Maquoketa Valley FFA has had no time to slow down from starting with competitions on Saturday August 24th with state livestock evaluation, and still continuing through April with state convention where many competitions will compete. Members have also competed in soil evaluation, horse evaluation, milk quality and products, dairy handling, and dairy evaluation since the start of the school year. Members have had the opportunity to experience national convention and World Dairy Expo this year as well. At the national convention Bianka Ronnebaum, Caden Kremer, Ford Domeyer, Tyler Hoeger, and Braden Ronnebaum were the main focus. Winning the state competition the dairy judging team made their way to the national convention where they placed 6th representing the state of Iowa. This team consisted of Bianka Ronnebaum, Caden Kremer, Ford Domeyer, and Tyler Hoeger. Lacy Reth, Tracy Reth, Khloe Glew, and Kayla Hoeger all competed in horse evaluation. At the district level competition these four placed first as a team with Lacy Reth also placing first as an individual. Lacy Reth, Tracy Reth, and Kayla Hoeger then traveled to the state horse evaluation competition where as a team these three placed as the 2024 Iowa FFA horse evaluation state runner-up team. Putting attention back on the livestock judging team, Bryce Vaske, Natalie Ries, Olivia Ronnebaum, and Alison Schulte brought back the top goat placement team. 15 new members also enjoyed their day learning about FFA without any competitions at Greenhand Fire-up. Members enjoyed their day spending



This year's FFA officers have been Kyle Engelken, Bianka Ronnebaum, Ty Hoeger, Nathan Beitz, Leah Reicher, Kelsey Hoeger, Ella Reicher and Natalie Ries.

time working together with members from other chapters and getting to learn more about their communication skills as well. Members are now preparing to compete at the sub-district, district, and state competitions. At sub-districts members will participate in Creed Speaking (Abby Nieman), Job Interview (Karly Kerch), Parliamentary Procedure (Lukas Chestnut, Kyle Engelken, Olivia Ronnebaum, McKenna Mineart, and Natalie Ries), Chapter test (Nolan Honkomp, and Ryan Beaman), Greenhand test (Morgan Hoeger, Kayla Hoeger, Alison Schulte, and Khloe Glew), and Ag Broadcasting (McKayla Weber). Other members will join these competitions that make it to districts on March 8th.

Members always look forward to the state convention in Ames at the Iowa State University campus starting on April 13th and ending April 15th this year. Seniors Nathan Beitz, Brendin Frasher, Kelsey Hoeger, Tyler Mineart, Leah Reicher, Bianka Ronnebaum, Caden Ries, Lacy Reth; and juniors Ford Domeyer, Karly Kerch, Ashton Klaren, McKayla Weber, and Alexa Ries are all really looking forward to earning their Iowa Degrees this year.

Maquoketa Valley FFA is always excited for spring and summer. This excitement is caused by the FFA greenhouse. Plants are slowly starting to get planted and starting to grow. Members will have the Maquoketa Valley FFA greenhouse plants for sale at the greenhouse and at the MV Market later this spring.

Sub-district contest held

Members attending the Northeast sub-district competition this past Monday. Members included McKayla Weber in ag broadcasting, she received a silver rating and will be moving on to districts. Karly Kerch received a gold in job interviewing, also moving on to the next level. Abby Nieman participated in creed speaking, and she earned herself a silver rating and worked her way to districts. Lukas Chestnut, Kyle Engelken, McKenna Mineart, Natalie Ries, and Olivia Ronnebaum gave it their best shot at parliamentary procedure, and this group earned a silver rating. Members such as Alison Schulte, Kayla Hoeger, Morgan Hoeger, Khloe Glew, and Shannah Smith took the Greenhand quiz. Districts will take place March 8th at the Waterloo Career Center.

Vocal jazz continues its tour of Iowa shows

This past Friday, Jazz X-Press and Smooth Harmony performed at MOShow Jazz Festival at Cedar Rapids Washington High School! Both groups received a clinic from Michael Engelhardt and learned valuable information to continue to improve their performances.

Next week, we will be performing at Coe College's Vocal Jazz Summit on Wednesday, February 26th. Jazz X-Press will perform at 8:30 am and Smooth Harmony will perform at 10:00 am.

Right: Smooth Harmony performs one of their songs at MOShow.



The jazz band competed in UNI's Tallcorn Jazz Festival Thursday morning. Results for band placement within its class will be announced tonight. Senior saxophonist McKenna Bush earned an Outstanding Musicianship award from the judges. "We had a great performance and continue to improve at every festival. We'll keep the momentum going next week at Coe College!" stated Mr. Ford.

A promotional poster for an event. The background is black with yellow text and graphics. At the top, it says "MAQUOKETA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTS" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below that, "MV'S GOT TALENT" is written in a very large, stylized, serif font, with "2025" underneath it in a large, cursive script. To the right of the main title is a circular badge that says "FREE TREATS". At the bottom left, another circular badge says "DOORS OPEN AT 6:30". In the center bottom, it says "FRIDAY, FEB. 28TH 7:00 PM". At the very bottom, it says "MAQUOKETA VALLEY HS AUDITORIUM". There are several small starburst graphics scattered around the text. On the right side, there is a line-art illustration of a grand piano.

Four Wildcats qualify for state tournament

Districts

by Alaina Mead

Last Saturday, February 15th, the boys wrestling team traveled to MFL Mar-mac for class 1A districts. It was an exciting day for these Wildcats, ending with four boys making it to the state tournament.

Both Nathan Beitz and Clayton Davis made it to the top, placing 1st! Beitz (215), received a bye in the first round and pinned his following two opponents. Davis (190), also won all three of his matches with pins. Dalton Africa and Kyle Engelken had a successful Saturday too, placing second! Both boys won their first two matches and lost their third, resulting in them wrestling back for second. Luckily both Africa (165), and Engelken (144), won the second place match by pin!

This week the wrestling team has been at the State Tournament in Des Moines, working hard to make the podium!

State update

Engelken lost to Jaxon Gordon of Riverside in the first round Wednesday night by fall at 2:40. He received a bye in the first consolation round. In the second con-



Kyle Engelken, Nathan Beitz, Clayton Davis and Dalton Africa have been representing the Wildcats at the state wrestling tournament this week.

solation round, he lost to Cooper Franklin of Alburnett by fall at 3:23.

Africa lost to Owen Milder of Wil-son by fall at 3:19 in the first round Wednes-day night. He also received a bye for the first consolation round. In round two, he lost to Easton Beyer of Sibley-Ocheyedon by fall at 1:43.

Davis scored the first win for the Wildcats in his first round where he pinned River Williams of Alburnett in 5:05. In the

second championship round, he lost to Jayden Dickerson of Shenandoah by fall at 2:40. In Round 3, he lost to Jacoby Peyton of North Linn by an 8-4 decision.

Beitz, ranked second in the state, earned a first round bye. In the second championship round, he pinned Sam Acevedo of Postville in 1:38. In the quarterfi-nals Thursday, he pinned Braxton Plants of Montezuma in 5:03 to earn a spot in the semi-finals Friday.

Boys get two wins, season continues

by Maya Smith

This Monday, the boys took on Ed-Co at home. The Vikings put up a good fight. However, the Cats were able to secure a victory, 66-39.

When asked about the game, Coach Conner says, "We were looking to get our postseason run started off on the right foot on Monday night. Our guys earned the right to host a postseason game, so it was nice to be playing at home in front of our crowd. The first half didn't go quite the way that we wanted to. We rushed our-selves and turned the ball over 8 times and just weren't in sync. I thought when we valued the basketball and didn't turn it over we did some really nice things. Against any team, especially this time of year, you have to value the basketball and make the most out of every possession. That is really the only halftime adjustment that we made and our guys did a much better job of this in the 2nd half, only having 3 turnovers.

"I thought Ty Hoeger was a bright spot early in the game to get us going. Not only did he score our first 6 points but I thought he gained us extra possessions by

attacking the offensive glass as well. Brady has been leading us on offense and Ed-Co did a good job of keeping him in check in the first half. When Anderson started to make shots in the 3rd quarter, I thought we played our best basketball, and you could see us get more comfortable with playing at the pace that we want to on offense. It was a great team win and an excellent way to send Tate out, with it being the last game he will play on our home floor. I am so proud of how far this team has come this season, especially since Christmas."

Here are some game stats:

Points: Brady Wall; 30, Anderson Holtz, 14; Ty Hoeger, 8

Rebounds: Dylan Knipper; 13, Lukas Chesnut; 6, Tate Intorf, 4

Assists: Dylan Knipper; 5, Brady Wall, 5; Lukas Chesnut, 3

Last night the team played South Winneshiek. The Wildcats won 52-30 and will now take on Don Bosco at Sumner-Fredricksburg High School on Tuesday at 7pm.

Another W for the girls



The girls defeated Beckman in their first post-season game Tuesday with a score of 60-33. They will host MFL-Mar-Mac (15-8) tonight. Above: Leah Reicher makes a move at the basket while Alexis Halver-son and Bianca Ronnebaum prepare for defense. (photo by Lilly Kraft)

Schaul will continue running but now as a Mustang



Matthew Schaul has formally committed to run cross country and track at Mount Mercy University in Cedar Rapids. He held his signing earlier this week with his parents and coaches, present and future.



Got the Spirit? Let's Hear it!

CHEER TRYOUTS!!!!

Please email Coach Jennifer Teymer

If you are interested in joining the MVCT.

Please email by 3/1/25

Current 8th - 11th

Cheer team starts Summer -end of Football season

DANCE TEAM TRYOUTS!!!

Do you love to Dance?

*Please email Coach Jennifer Teymer
if you are interested in joining the MVDT.*

Please email by 3/1/25

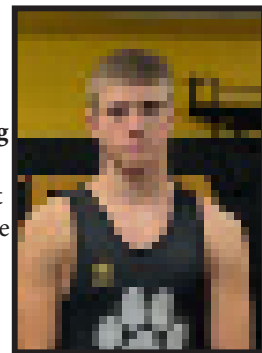
Current 8th - 11th

State Dance team starts with a camp in the Summer -ends February

Athlete of the Week

Name: Dalton Africa

What do you enjoy most about wrestling? The atmosphere after a big win



What's something about wrestling that others might not know? It is the most physically demanding sport

How do you mentally prepare for a match? Listen to music and think about the match

Who's your wrestling role model? A.J. Ferrari

Fine Artist of the Week

Name: Trish Dietiker

What event are you in for speech?

I am in Prose

What do you enjoy most about individual speech? So far, I have enjoyed the story I am telling; it has a very good theme to it.

What have you learned through this event? I

have learned that when telling a story, it is important that you make it easy for your audience to understand the theme, but also that you know what that theme is, so you can bring light to it more easily.

What other event would you like to try and why? I think I might like to try poetry.

How will speech help you in the future? I believe speech, especially individual speech, will help me to be more confident in talking in front of people, especially people I may not know.



Comedy Corner

—compiled by Grace Richter

Since it's State Wrestling this week, here are some wrestling jokes that will have you pinned down laughing!

Why did the wrestler break up with their partner? Because they were tired of all the reversals in the relationship.

What kind of music does a wrestler make? Rock and roll.

The wrestler applied for a job but couldn't get past the interview because he kept wanting to take everyone down.

Why did the heavyweight wrestler go to art school? Because he wanted to master the art of the perfect slam!

Why was the rustling match such a great friend? Because it is always there to catch you when you fall.

Individual speech contests approach



Noah Wallen practices individual improv with Ms. Crumpton. The team will compete in the Tri-Rivers conference contest Monday night at East Buchanan. Next Saturday, they will perform at districts at Independence.

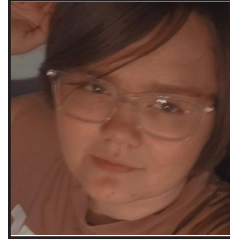
Note: Arianna's column on this page is her script for her expository address.

One at a Time

by Arianna Nolan

Imagine while you're sitting in a room at today's contest listening to an expository speech, an acting piece, or maybe even a public address, a person in the back of the room lets out a shriek. Then another. And another. Within the six minutes of a speech, half the room is convinced that there's a gas leak—except, there isn't. The air is fine. But that fear? It spread faster than a wildfire. This phenomenon is known as mass hysteria. This real, or imagined, fear rears its ugly head and takes on a life of its own. Today, we'll explore what mass hysteria is, look at an interesting example, and discuss how to “stop” this panic before it spirals out of control. Because in the end, the scariest part of mass hysteria isn't the cause—it's how easily we fall for it.

According to Crystal Raypole's article “Mass Hysteria Isn't Just Panic” found on Healthline, mass hysteria is defined as the “mass spread of panic and fear” and is a conversion disorder. Two different types of mass hysteria exist: mass anxiety hysteria and mass motor hysteria. The key difference between these two is how quickly they spread and resolve. Mass anxiety hysteria spreads and resolves quickly; however, mass motor hysteria is when it spreads and resolves slowly. This phenomenon usually spreads when someone tells you something, or you see it on the news. The symptoms for these different types vary as well; mass anxiety hysteria can cause dizziness, headaches, and fainting, while mass motor hysteria has involuntary movements such as twitching and tics, paralysis, or uncontrollable laughing and crying. It is important to note that these symptoms can also vary on the topic of that specific mass hysteria. If you think back to my introduction, it would be the fact that all of you shrieked due to the supposed gas leak. You might be wondering how people can fall for the spreading of mass hysteria because the signs seem obvious that it's not real, but it's not that simple. According to that same Healthline article, anyone can struggle with mass hysteria, and the main factor for it being able to spread is people being stressed.



Now that we know what mass hysteria is and how it spreads, let's dive into some real-life examples. While many of us know about the Salem Witch Trials of the late 1600s, fewer have heard about the June Bug Epidemic of 1962, an intriguing case that took place in a textile factory in the U.S. In this incident, workers reported that they had been bitten by a bug. According to Jessica Pearce Rotondi's article on History.com, 60 workers claimed to experience vomiting, dizziness, and numbness. Further investigation revealed that 90% of them were working the same shift, and 50 of them developed symptoms after seeing news coverage of the outbreak. Entomologists inspected the factory, and no bugs were found. Experts believe the cause was stress from working overtime. Much like the Salem witch trials, this case reminds us how fear and stress trigger mass hysteria. While both of these cases happened in the United States, this is a worldwide phenomenon.

With this in mind, you may be wondering if there is a way to stop mass hysteria from spreading. Scientists have studied this phenomenon for years, yet, no cure exists. However, not all hope is lost – though we may not be able to eliminate mass hysteria, there are ways to lessen its impact. One of the most effective ways is reducing stress from the source. For example, if someone is experiencing a major tragedy in their life, therapy or other coping mechanisms can help manage their anxiety. When supporting someone dealing with this, it is important to acknowledge their symptoms without reinforcing their fears: validate them and guide them toward rational thinking. Another important strategy is to limit exposure to others who are exhibiting the same symptoms and avoid excessive media coverage of the event. Constantly hearing about the symptoms can intensify them, worsening the hysteria. By controlling the spread of information and promoting calm, logical thinking, we can help prevent mass hysteria from escalating.

Mass hysteria isn't a thing of the past—it's a reminder of how powerful fear and suggestion can be. From the Salem witch trials to a workplace illness, history proves that panic spreads faster than reason; however, perspective can change all of that. The next time you hear a wild claim, ask yourself: Am I reacting out of fear or fact? Stopping mass hysteria doesn't require magic or medicine, just a little critical thinking and a deep breath.

Jaelyn's Journeys



photo by Jaelyn Butikofer

Where in the school can you find this object? Be the first one to correctly name the place to Mrs. Temple (this week via email) to win something from the prize box! *Last week's photo was in the fitness room. The winner was Morgan Hoeger.*

Deep Dive by Arianna Nolan

Welcome back, Divers! Today we will be looking at is one on the creepier side, mostly due to its name and looks. It's the dead man's fingers! This sea creature is a type of coral that usually varies in orange or white and has a furry look to them due to them extending their coral out to catch its food, which is how it looks like fingers. The body of the coral has a skeleton, but it is gelatinous and grows up to 20 cm long. The average location that this coral settles in is about 50 cm and they develop on hard places such as rocks. While some coral can live up to thousands of years, Dead Man Fingers can only live up to an average of 20 years.



During the Autumn season, this coral changes color! This is because it retracts itself and turns into a shriveled bunch, and during this period they don't feed themselves at all! During this time they change into a reddish-brown color because other sea creatures start to pile on top of them.

While the conservation status of this coral is fine, there is plenty of coral that are struggling to survive because of the amount of trash and waste in the ocean. Make sure to do your part to reduce the amount of waste you dispose and recycle/reuse whenever possible! I hope you all have a fantastic weekend and I will see you all next time!

Fantasy Fiction: Trouble in Therapy

Chris and Dad were waiting for me out by the main door to the building. "Hey kiddo, is this your friend of yours?" my dad asked as I walked over to him.

"Yeah, this is Chris," I responded.

"Hey he's pretty cool. I like him," Dad commented.

Chris started to reply, "Thank you..."

"You can call me Andrew,"

"Thank you, Andrew,"

All three of us walked out of the building and stopped at the park where Chris and I went our separate ways.

"Well, kids, I have to go back to work you two can do whatever you want. Just be home by 6:00 so that we can have dinner together when I get off work,"

"I love you, Dad. See you later," I responded before directing my attention to Chris. Do you want to hang out at mine or your house or something?"

"If you want to come to my

house you can, but my parents are expecting me at home soon," Chris replied.

"That works for me!"

"Just a warning my parents are very strict. They may seem... a little much."

"That is okay for me. Everyone has a different way of parenting."

We walked down an alley that I never knew was a thing and made it to a parking lot. The lot was filled with two cars both black and both Ford pickups that looked well-used. The one had more mud and rust on it, and the other was just a little dust. Chris walked over to the more rusty pickup and hopped in. I went over to the passenger side and got in. It was a little bit of a mess. There was a roll of wire on the ground and what looked like flags and paddles in the back. "Why does he have blue broken paddles?" "You can drive?"

"Yeah I just liked walking with you so I drove here and then walked the rest of the way. Oh and sorry for the mess. It is a farm pickup. I use it a lot after school."

We left off in our last installment, Elizabeth was asked by her counselor to meet with her one-on-one.

by Abby Nieman and Tommie Cole

"That is no problem. You should see my room. It is not too good."

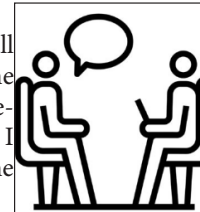
Chris tried to turn on the pickup, but it would not start.

"Shoot I must have left the battery on. I need to call my dad," Chris explained with nerves in his voice. "I hope my dad answers." Chris tried to call his dad three times, but none of them did he pick up.

"I could call my dad to see if he can help. He is a mechanic, you know," I offered seeing how he was frustrated.

"Yeah do that. He will know what to do."

I got my phone out of the back pocket of my jeans and called my dad. "He did not pick up which he never does," I said with a trace amount of panic in my voice.



Logan Clemen



Activities involved in during high school: Baseball, Track, Speech, Marching Band, Jazz Band, Golf

Which activity affected you the most? How? Golf, because it is a great way to spend time with your friends.

What advice do you have for freshmen? Don't wait for your senior year to start trying.

What do you appreciate most about Maquoketa Valley? I appreciate the teachers at Maquoketa Valley. All of the teachers here are willing to go out of their way to help.

If you could relive any moment in high school, what would it be and why? Golfing with Beaman Junior year. There was never a dull moment.

What class have you enjoyed most in high school? I like Electricity with Mr. Palmer because it pushed me into looking for jobs as an electrician.

Who is your most inspirational high school teacher? Why? Mr. Palmer because he pushes that the trades are some of the best jobs even though you don't have to get a 4-year degree.

Who is your most inspirational elementary or middle school teacher? Why? They were all very inspirational and pushed us to be the best we could be.

What is a favorite elementary/middle school memory? When Arion came to school with a perm and looked like a girl.

What does your future (college and career) look like? Go to NICC in Calmar for their Industrial Electrician program.

What's your favorite school lunch? Pizza

What song will always remind you of high school? "Stronger" Kelly Clarkson

When you're not in school, what are you most likely doing? Most likely working on one of mine or my friend's cars.

What event from high school do you hope your classmates still talk about at your five-year class reunion? When Beaman twerked in front of the whole school for our senior dance.

Landyn Haas



What advice do you have for freshmen? Don't let the upperclassmen scare you, and go your own way. Don't follow everyone else.

What do you appreciate most about Maquoketa Valley? Teachers hold you responsible and are always willing to help.

If you could relive any moment in high school, what would it be and why? Mr. Palmer's shop class during Woodwork-

ing 2 building my epoxy table. The table was a fun build and a hassle.

What class have you enjoyed most in high school? Applied Math

Who is your most inspirational high school teacher? Mrs. Lewin. She's a fun teacher to have and keeps everything straight forward.

Who is your most inspirational elementary or middle school teacher? Mr. Cassutt. I got to build a World War II project that was fun.

What is a favorite elementary/middle school memory? Going outside every day for recess and being able to swing.

What does your future (college and career) look like? My future looks like big construction companies and I want to dabble into plumbing.

What's your favorite school lunch? Hamburger gravy

What song will always remind you of high school? "Remind Me" by Kenny Chesney

When you're not in school, what are you most likely doing? Working

What event from high school do you hope your classmates still talk about at your five-year class reunion? Mrs. Lewin's Applied Math class