

Walsworth

Millard West HS

Omaha, NE

Job #: 602072

4-Color Flat Matte Lamination

CLR SS over all white

Emboss title

Deboss Logo on the back

Walsworth Artist: Kyla Swanson

PROWLER

2025

2026

OMAHA
NEBRASKA

MILLARD WEST
high school

VOLUME
31



BETWEEN the LINES



Walsworth®

Standard Namestamping Placement



WITHIN the DETAILS

This year, we chose Between the Lines as our theme because life, and especially our high school journey, is rarely as simple as it seems at first glance. The pages of our yearbook capture the events, the grades, the trophies, and the milestones, but the true story lives in the spaces in between. Millard West isn't black and white. It is way deeper than just a place to learn. Between the Lines represents those moments that don't always make it to the front page. It's a school that runs deeper than how well the football team is doing or when a big test is coming up. It requires you to look deeper and read between our culture to find

the lines that connect us all to Millard West.

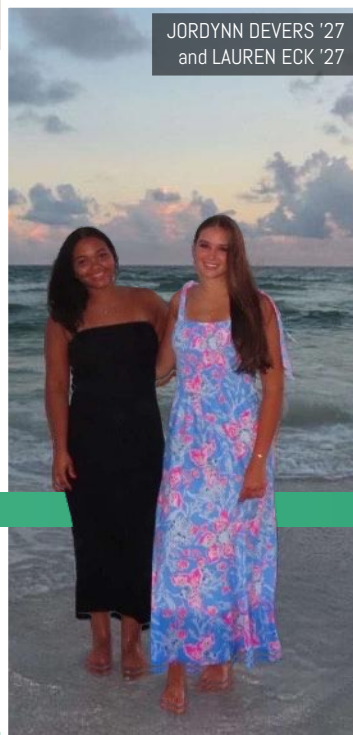
This theme is an invitation to look deeper, to see the beauty in the unnoticed, and to remember that the moments we live between the lines, the moments that feel small at the time, often shape us the most. Our high school story isn't just about the events we experienced; it's about the connections, challenges, and triumphs that happened quietly, yet powerfully. Between the Lines isn't just a theme. It's a reflection of who we are, who we've been, and who we're becoming. And that's what's up, Wildcats. Story by Caden Reynolds & Shibu Sharma



ALL IN Focused and steady, senior **ABIGAL SADLER**, rises with the crowd celebrating kickoff. Finishing her years of high school cheerleading, Sadler bettered herself as a captain and a person. "I think I've learned the importance of being not just a vocal leader, but also someone who leads by example," Sadler said. "And I've learned to do it with compassion for our end goal." Photo by Paige Green



JACK CIRCO '26, IZYAK MILES '26, BECKETT GRABER '26, SAMUEL KUBERT '26, KALE GROVIJOHN '26 and BRODERICK GEMBERLING '26



JORDYNN DEVERS '27 and LAUREN ECK '27

HARPER KNUTSEN '26, CELIA ADDISON '26 and ELLA HELLER '26



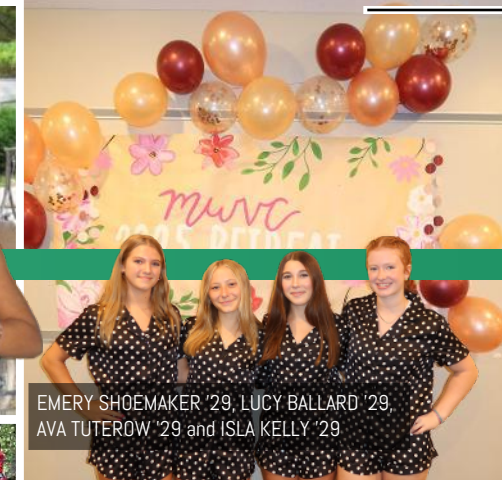
Front row: TAYLOR COURTER '29, URBAN WHITE '29, GABRIEL MURPHY '29, LIAM BARNHART '29, KALE WILSON '29, LIAM RUSSELL '29, KOLAR NEAL '29, LARS KRIZMANICH '29 Middle row: COLIN HEFFELFINGER '29, DECLAN PICKRELL '29 Back row: COLTON WALLS '29, LONDON MEISINGER '29, BRODY CONIGLIO '29, WILLIAM KASTL '29, JANTZEN KNISPEN '29, and HAMADE BELEM '29



RAEGAN LORD '27, CARMEN MAROUSEK '27 and HAVEN DALKE '27



MEREDITH JUNG '28, MADISON HUTTEGER '28, HAYLEIGH ZIMMERMAN '28 and TALA GREEN '28



EMERY SHOEMAKER '29, LUCY BALLARD '29, AVA TUTEROW '29 and ISLA KELLY '29



HAILEY RIESSLAND '28, LAUREN SEIM '28, LILY ADDISON '26 and LYDIA LIER '28

OLIVIA WENZ '28, BROOKLYNN BIVENS '28, GRACE CARMICHAEL '28 and CALLEN AHRENS '28



SUMMER

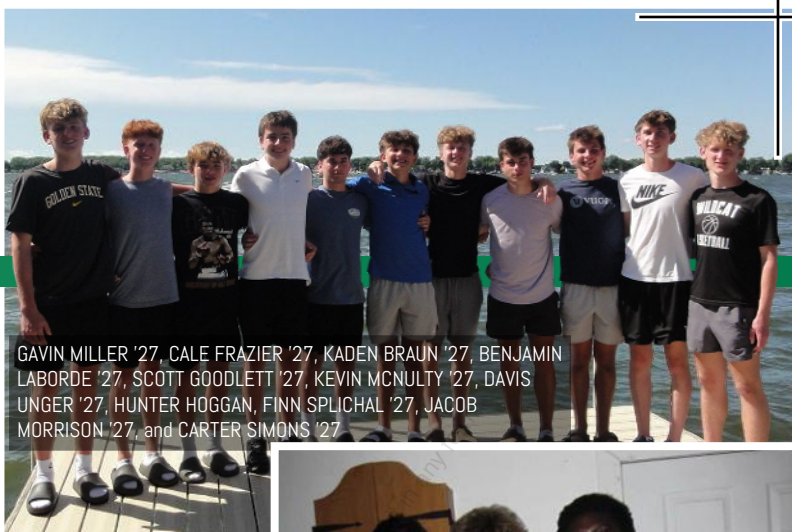
Summer wasn't just a break. It was a time you learned to read between the lines. The details of each late night and bright morning are what made the memories stick around long after August. Stretching dusk into dawn, lingering on porches, catching catching impromptu flights, and drifting into dreams without alarms; the true memories were the quiet moments you realized you held time in your hands. And as the last few snoozes and final moments of freedom snuck up on us, the best stories of the season were the unwritten ones- the ones we knew by heart before the silence would yield the school bells

once again.

Over the summer, seniors CAMBRIA CRUICKSHANK and GRACE FORSMAN traded classrooms for cabins and hallways for hiking trails at Camp Kitaki one last time. As they packed their bags for the final time, they left with memories that will last far longer than the summer sun.

Sometimes summer isn't about where you go, but how you show up. Putting the work in, senior CADE HODGES traveled just under 600 miles with his youth group to trade comfort for calling and step into a line of assignments that changed both themselves and the communities they served.

Each flight taken offered students different opportunities. While some gave back, others were able to show out. Director



Front row: CARSYNNE BECKER '26, AUBREY CARLSTEDT '26, MARIA HAMMOND '26, DYLAN CHESSARECK '26, and IMAN KHALIL '26 Back row: ELLA GORDON '26, MORGAN JOSOFF '26, KATE CAFFERY '26, ABIGAIL SADLER '26, DELANEY SMITS '26, AUTUMN LOZIER '26, AVA CHRISTENSEN '26



BROOKLYN VAUGHN '26



BRIANNA JOCHIMS '27, ERICA LEGBAND '27,
KAILYNN CARLSTEDT '27, LILLIAN TINKER '27,
and LAINEY REYNOLDS '27



ADDISON FRIESEN '27 and MILEY BLUE '27



ZACHARY DICKMEYER '26, BRECK WILLIAMS '26,
and ETHAN AMENYAH '26



ALANNA BAKER '27, BRYNN HOLSTEIN '27,
ANNA JETTER '27 and CHARLEY FISHLER '22



KADYNCE SPIEGEL '28 and MYKENAH LAWRENCE '27

of Theatre, BROOKE PHILLIPS, had the honor of taking students to perform at the International Thespian Festival, but only after they learned the cost of chasing your dreams.

Many stayed within the states, but some made the venture out to cross oceans and borders, stepping into new cultures and experiences that challenged them at every turn. Junior DANAIT GEZU and freshman AMANIT GEZU crossed the Atlantic and spent a month of their summer in Africa. While some nights they focused on soaking in a different view, most nights the sisters focused on spending as much time as they could with their family that they had not seen in eight years.

Even those who steered clear of the boarding lines found ways to make the most of every moment, like seniors ALEXIA LUNA

and MCKENNA KLEPPINGER who found themselves at a rodeo in Lincoln, Neb. Seniors KYLEE PABEN and KODI BARATTA took the saying "work hard, play hard" to another level while they traveled to Florida and Massachusetts to play lacrosse and basketball during their months off of school.

This summer's story isn't just what's seen on the surface, it's everything felt and discovered between the lines. As the season gently closes, so does a chapter full of adventures and rest. As the school bells started to ring and the hallways filled once again, we stepped into a new school year filled with promise and growth. We were ready to make this year's story one we'd never forget.

Copy by Shibu Sharma

ACROSS the ATLANTIC

Two sisters spend most of their summer in Africa

Walking downtown, breathing in the fresh nighttime air, while glancing up at the stars and galaxies the Eritrea sky had to offer, junior **DANAIT GEZU** and freshman **AMANIT GEZU** thought about how lucky they are to be spending a month in the capital city, Asmara.

Their focus remained somewhere special, even though they were in a completely different hemisphere. They made sure to soak in all the hours spent sightseeing and walking downtown, but most importantly visiting their grandma and cousins that they hadn't seen in eight years, who live in the neighboring village Mai-Mine.

"I basically met my cousins on my dad's side for the first time ever this year," Danait Gezu said. "The most memorable times were when I would be walking with them and the neighborhood kids, people my age would constantly stop us and ask me to quiz them on their English and ask me many questions, which I thought was really funny."

Unlike the United States of America, the streets in Asmara offered security and safety, even under the dark covering of the night sky.

"The most memorable part of being there is when me and my cousins would walk around at night," Amanit Gezu said. "We would walk around the villages and it was really nice."

Staying in Africa for so long was no small feat, but the sisters adapted to the differences and challenges it had to offer. Having never before been out of the country, it was different to be in a city with no large super markets, and caused them to feel a little home-sick. However, staying occupied helped them forget that feeling.

"I learned new words," Danait Gezu said. "Especially since not a lot spoke English in Mai-Mine, I had to learn a few extra words because they kinda had an accent and called things differently than they did in Asmara. I also gained a couple new friendships."

Growing up only ever seeing places like Asmara and Mai-Mine on the television, the ability for them to immerse themselves into the views was a surreal experience. Never having been to Africa before, the scenery the country had to offer took their breath away.

"We saw many different places but the most memorable one was the big catholic church that was built by the Italians in downtown Asmara," Danait Gezu said. "I also liked seeing these big mountains in a village called Adi Nifas."

Having reveled themselves in rare lifetime experience that the average person doesn't get, they are both beyond grateful for the time spent in Eritrea with family and new found friends.

Story by Shibu Sharma

WEAVING THROUGH THE RIVER As she views the river, junior **DANAIT GEZU** admires the beautiful scenery. Gezu was excited for this trip for one big reason, seeing her family and friends. "I got to see family and friends that I haven't seen in forever," Gezu said. Photo courtesy of Danait Gezu



EIFFEL FOR PARIS Riding bikes around and watching the Eiffel tower lights go on, sophomore **TAYLOR EPPENBAUGH** feels so lucky to get this experience. Spending her days in France hiking, visiting museums, and sightseeing, she indulged herself in the different culture the country had to offer. "The food there was very different," Eppenbaugh said. "It was very strong, and I didn't really like it, but it wasn't bad." Photo courtesy of Taylor Eppenbaugh



JA-MAKIN' MEMORIES Climbing up the waterfall at Dunnes River Falls, sophomore **DAKOTA SWANSON** enjoys the scenery from 960 feet above the sea. While on vacation in Jamaica, she was able to go tubing and snorkeling. "The water was so clear," Swanson said. "You could literally look off the boat where it wasn't super deep and see the bottom." Photo courtesy of Dakota Swanson



TEA TIME After the long red-eye plane ride, senior **EMILY THAI** finally gets to Vietnam and enjoys a refreshing cup of tea. While in Vietnam, she spent her time visiting family, soaking in the sun on the beaches, and sightseeing. "It was very special to spend a whole month in Vietnam," Thai said. "Getting to see my family was some of my most memorable moments." Photo courtesy of Emily Thai

A MEAL AT SUNSET Dining on his meal at a tavern on an island in Greece,, Social Studies teacher **ALEXANDER FIELDS** enjoys the views of the mountains while laughing with family. While in Greece and Turkey he was able to spend time with his sons. "I was on an island called Corfu," Fields said. "I had first gone there when I was seven and I hadn't been back since '86, so it was really great to walk through the town, which they actually designed so pirates wouldn't know how to get through, and it was really nice to be back." Photo courtesy of Alexander Fields



COST-ING THROUGH The JUNGLE Ziplining through the trees, junior **CAITLYN KIDD** spends her summer in Costa Rica, swimming in the ocean and hiking through the abundance of terrain. While on vacation she decided to eat local and experience as much as she could. "I also saw a ton of cool animals," Kidd said. "Including monkeys, poison dart frogs, and iguanas." Photo courtesy of Caitlyn Kidd



"My favorite parts of Czech were visiting with friends and family, going to my cousins baptism, and playing lacrosse."

GABRIELA BROWN '28

my FAVORITE part was...



"Seeing my distant family and seeing how different people live their everyday lives compared to ours back home."

PARIS TRIHN '26



"The Colosseum in Rome and the palace of Versailles in Paris."

MARC KRUGER, Social Studies



"Living like a local. Going to the market, shopping, taking the bus, and running on the boardwalk."

SARAH KARST, World Language

PUT your RECORDS on



I would choose Noah Kahan [Stick Season] because his songs are perfect for fall.

-ELLA MITCHELL '28

I would put on the Morgan Wallen album. I just love country music.

-AUSTIN BERRY '28

I would pick Billie Eilish because I like what her songs represent and I love her voice.

-RILEY LYNESS '27

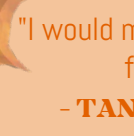
FALL TRENDS

WHAT'S in your BOO BASKET



"I would get my girlfriend a weighted stuffed animal, some candy, and a blanket."

- ABED AFZAL '29



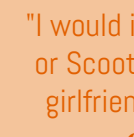
"I would make sure to include her favorite candy."

- TANNER ROBERTS '28



"I got my girlfriend lego flowers that we could make together."

- CASEY DEMBINSKI '27



"I would include either a Starbucks or Scooters gift-card because my girlfriend drinks a lot of coffee."

-COLE OWENS '26

FALL



"This Fall I bought a lot of wide leg jeans. They just fit so much better than skinny jeans."

- AMALIA SCHWISOW '29

"My Tazman Uggs are a staple in my closet for fall."

- AVA CHRISTENSEN '26



"I always reach for my brown COMFORT hoodie. It's just so warm and comfortable and perfect for fall."

- REECE DUNCAN '28

CLOSET



DANCING with the STARS

Who's Your Win



22%



8%



16%



54%

25

Taken from a survey of 114 students

MARCHING to the TOP

Different instruments all playing together created the sound and atmosphere, propelling the Millard West Marching Band to the state championship.

The band's theme this year was "Electric Sunrise." Over their fall season, they traveled to Waukegan, Iowa, placing second place in the BOA regionals then traveled to the US Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minnesota, finishing in 5th place for the youth in music comp. The band then traveled to St Louis, Missouri, where they competed against top bands from around the country and finished 4th in class 4A and 5th overall. Taking this momentum to the state championship, they competed against bands from across the region. After a long season, they were victorious in getting the title of 1st place.

"It is an amazing performing in front of thousands of people; it's honestly surreal," sophomore COLIN PRELL said, "My favorite part of the competitions is torn between

being with friends all day and also performing."

The Millard West Marching Band started their year off strong with band camps in the summer. During camp, they were specifically focused on practicing placements in line, choreographing movements, and building friendships that they hope will last a lifetime. Seasoned veteran Band Director, **JOHN KEITH**, spent time planning activities that built community right off the bat.

"Band camp is a really formative time for the marching band," senior **ADDISON GOEDEKER** said "during those two weeks we learn how to march, play, and spin our show."

With the help of new Assistant Band Director, **JONAH ZIMMERMAN**, Keith was able to take the momentum students gained from summer camp and hone in on the excitement to create an award-winning team.

"I enjoy the entire process of competition," Keith said. "However, I would say my favorite part of the day is seeing the joy and excitement on the students' faces at the end

of their performance, knowing they had a great run."

While competition has proved to ignite a fire within students, both band directors are hopeful that this year's show has left an even bigger impact on all their members, learning real-life skills and lessons that transcend the field.

"I hope that the band takes away the joy of performing music with each other and for other people," Zimmerman said. "This show runs on the joy of performance and the friendship that everyone shares. As they strive to make each repetition, each rehearsal, and each performance better, they learn skills that they can take with them in every facet of their lives."

The band's commitment, energy, and enthusiasm achieved creating an award-winning season, which propelled them to being deemed the best marching band in the state of Nebraska.

Story by Olivia Ward



A female gymnast is captured in mid-air, performing a split leap on a balance beam. She is wearing a yellow leotard with a red starburst design on the chest and red sleeves. Her arms are extended horizontally, and her legs are split wide in a leap. The background is dark, and a blurred image of a landscape is visible on the right.

Photo by Olivia Ward

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black vest over a bright yellow long-sleeved shirt and black trousers, is playing a saxophone. She is captured in a dynamic pose, leaning forward. The image is set against a white background with a large, stylized orange graphic element on the right side.

HERE COMES THE SUN



A vinyl record is shown from a top-down perspective, with its black surface and a small portion of its yellow center label visible. The text "BIRTH OF THE SUN" is arched over the top half of the record in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The background is a solid, light orange color.



HYMN TO THE SUN



ELECTRIC COUNTERPOINT



COLOR WHEEL



Job #: 6020720 Pages: 036-037 16-Nov-2025 (RequestID: yOKMxD4ipjsD9sy4RHjwAd5c SpreadID: 1rozInGdKkcp8tg8QLfXV9OF Type: Preview PDC: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ybsto.walsworthyearbooks.com/a/1-23J-35429/IYIB0ysOW68S327TnjV8D0NA/c/p/1rozInGdKkcp8tg8QLfXV9OF/yOKMxD4ipjsD9sy4RHjwAd5c>)

PASS the RACKET

Senior continues on the family legacy

Starting the year off with exhilarating volleys, the boys varsity tennis team crept their way to victory with backhands and drop shots. With half of the team being seniors, this year was full of experienced and talented players that the underclassmen looked up to. One of the most notable was senior **PATRICK BERRY**.

Ever since he was 10, Berry worked hard to become a crucial player for his team. Following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Berry spent his fall practicing day and night to become the best he could be.

"My family and I always played when we got together," Berry said. "My grandpa was actually a really good player in college and ever since he gifted me his old racket I have felt inspired to play."

He continued to take notes from his grandfather's play-book but his most recent coach, **TOM**

KOZIOL, had also been a huge help to his success.

With this being his 11th year coaching for Millard West, Koziol worked closely with each player on and off the court.

"Patrick has always been a great team player," Koziol said. "But he can get in his head so I remind him that no matter how he plays, me and the boys will always be there for him."

The team really respected Koziol's pep talks and appreciated how close the team had gotten because of team bonding. Helping set up these team dinners was senior **JAKE SMILEY**.

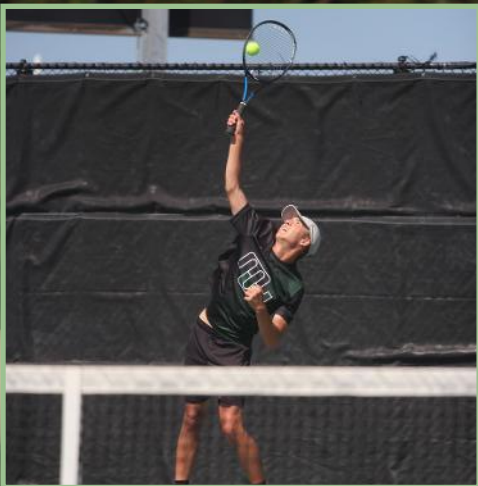
"Me and Patrick help set up bonding," Smiley said. "Which is super fun because I love seeing how much the team connects."

Because of the long practice hours, encouraging leaders, and the numerous fruit snacks shared between matches, the team this year was closer than ever.

Story by Maddie Busted

JUST GETTING STARTED Warming up at state, senior **PATRICK BERRY** brings his A-game. Berry played a good season winning a majority of his matches, and state was no different. He helped his team place sixth breaking a school record. "We just have such a good team," Berry said. "The coaching is top tier and I think that is why we were able to succeed so well at state."

Photo by Maddie Busted



POWER PLAY Reaching high, senior **ALLEN SCHRAM** connects with the ball for a match point win. Schram was new to playing doubles but learned to like it even more than singles and loved the challenge of learning a new side of tennis, one with a partner. "Winning has become so much more rewarding with a partner," Schram said. "We are always hyping each other up and making sure that we laugh through every point just to maintain the positivity." Photo by Haley Amaro

ZEROED IN Taking a moment to collect his thoughts, senior **HAO** prepares to serve. With this being Hao's last year on the team, he constantly tried to make it fun. He loved playing with a partner because he always has someone to talk with on the court. "My partner and I are always having fun," Hao said. "We don't get mad when we screw up and we are always encouraging and joking around with each other." Photo by Haley Amaro



ON GUARD Preparing for his opponent to make a move, junior **JACKSON SKIKO** keeps his eye on the ball, quickly deciding his next move. Warming up for his matches was very important to Skiko because he mentally psyched himself up by listening to music and practicing his swings before his matches. "I make sure to have at least 20 minutes to stretch," Skiko said. "During this time, I create a game plan in my head and think about how to improve from my last match." Photo by Haley Amaro



STARE DOWN Watching closely, freshman **DAVIS SCHULTE** waits to make his move. His first year on the team brought him a whole new community right off the bat. "The team was so welcoming when started," Schulte said. "We all really just connected and have become a family, especially all the new people." Photo by Haley Amaro



IN MOTION About to strike the ball, senior **JAKE SMILEY** gets air to drill the ball onto the other side of the court. With the team being primarily new, they turned to the seniors to help show them the way. "I have gotten really good at being confident in matches and just not giving up," Smiley said. "Although I still have things to work on, I have loved being able to help aid the new players and show them all the tips that I have picked up along the way." Photo by Haley Amaro

SERVING SONGS



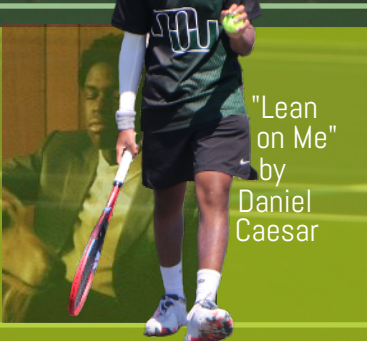
"Time Flies" by Drake

JAKE SMILEY '26



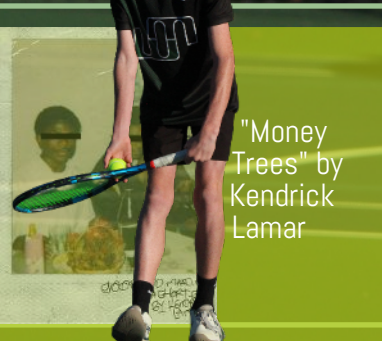
"Guerilla Radio" by Rage Against the Machine

LUCAS ASKEW '26



"Lean on Me" by Daniel Caesar

ISAAC CHANDRAN '29



"Money Trees" by Kendrick Lamar

HENRY FREDRICKS '29

UP IN THE AIR From stunting to spotting, senior **LILY GROVES** gives back to the cheer community and helped some future cheerleaders in her clinic. The clinic was a fundraising and awareness event to help more schools and youth programs access safe, quality equipment. "I really enjoyed helping out the girls," Groves said. "Some were still leaning so being able to help them during their stunts was super fun." Photo by Shibu Sharma

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION! Stepping in front of the camera, senior **MORGAN BEZOUSEK** was recognized and interviewed by KETV, sharing her story and achievements. "I was super nervous because I didn't want to mess anything up," Bezousek said. "But I'm super glad our event got recognition." Photo by Shibu Sharma



RETAIL REFRESH Where business meets renovation, senior **EMILY THAI** organizes the school store. Thai has put in the work all day and night to give the school store an upgrade for the first time in years. "I spend a lot of my off blocks in here organizing the new gear," Thai said. "It allows me to kind of put my input in as an officer and lets me put my creative mind to work." Photo by Shibu Sharma

MILES FOR MIRACLES Encouraging runners, seniors **BROOKLYN BAVARESCO** and **HAYLEE MCILHON** cheer on and motivate the Heart Hero runners. They used hand-painted posters to show their support. "We spent some time after school making a bunch of posters," McIlhon said. "Knowing that something as simple as our posters help them and push them through their run makes me feel good." Photo courtesy of Haylee McIlhon



SERVING with STYLE



∞ I played sand volleyball during the summer a lot so I was pretty ready but serving was a little bit harder than I remembered. ∞

KALE GROVIJOHN '26

∞ It was really cool trying out a new sport that I am not that familiar with, but I'm glad that I only served a couple times because I wasn't that good. ∞

AZIZ ALLAM '26



∞ My favorite part of the DECA Volleyball Fundraiser was getting to experience a real volleyball game and serving at the end of the game. ∞

LOGAN KRACHT '26



CHANGING THE

WORLD One meal at a time, senior **SOPHIA ZHANG** works with Saving Grace Food Rescue at Aldrich Elementary. For Zhang, sharing what it means to prevent food waste with all ages was her focus this year. "Aldrich hosted a multicultural fest, so I thought this would be the best way to inform a big group of people," Zhang said. "This is apart of my Deca project and I have been working with different people and companies to help bring awareness to food waste." Photo by Shibu Sharma





DOUBLE DIAMOND Running the show, seniors **MONTANA CHRONISTER** and **MARWAN ALKHALEEL** helped host their very first competition. Not only did they plan the event, but they also participated. "I'm not going to lie, it was stressful having to balance studying for the competition and helping organize everything," Chronister said. "But I think it turned out good. Some first timers even placed." Photo Courtesy of Montana Chronister

MARKETING MAGIC From classroom to conference room, senior **SHIBU SHARMA** came together with her chapter to help pitch a job for Fun Plex at Creighton University during the Fall Leadership Conference. Two Fun Plex workers made their entrance at FLC and gave advice on different groups and their pitch for the job. "We had an hour to create a marketing campaign to the two workers," Sharma said. "We then went in front of everyone to pitch our idea." Photo courtesy of Brooklyn Bavaresco



PAINTING THE CHANGE Empowering communities one face at a time, senior **PARIS TRINH** helps out at the face painting table at the annual Heart Heroes Fundraiser Run. This was her second year helping out the chapter. "I really like volunteering at Heart Heroes and doing the face paint," Trinh said. "It makes me happy to know that this fundraiser, and even just my station, helps people in our community and I loved seeing how excited the kids got when I finished." Photo courtesy of Shibu Sharma

HOSTED. HUSTLER! HANDLED.

DECA hosts their first competition

As the air turns crisp and the leaves begin their golden descent, one thing is certain: DECA season has arrived and the competition is heating up. This year, the stakes feel even higher because for the first time, the DECA team isn't just competing, they're hosting. While most in the chapter helped plan this event, senior and Vice President of Leadership **MONTANA CHRONISTER**, spent weeks studying, working late nights, and showing relentless ambition, which has led to this moment where they welcomed schools from across the metro to a stage they built themselves to kick off the season with a diamond-sharp focus.

"I prepared for the competition by using Cluster Maxx and practice problems,"

Chronister said. "The day before, I used my open blocks to help get things prepared, like name tags for the invite, and I studied."

While Chronister was making sure everything was smooth sailing for this competition, she couldn't have done it without her right-hand, senior **MARWAN ALKHALEEL**. Although Alkhaleel is not an officer for Millard West's chapter, he is the Vice President of Membership for Nebraska DECA. With one serving as a State Vice President and the other as the school's Vice President, their unique positions allow them to bridge the gap between statewide initiatives and local chapter goals.

"I definitely work a lot with our chapter and kind of get a better idea of what their season will look like," Alkhaleel said. "Montana is also in charge of recording what the chapter does,

reports it back to us so we work together on that."

Business teacher and adviser **ASHLEY DWORAK** encourages her officers to take on new challenges, knowing that with their leadership and dedication, they've helped the team grow as professionals and teammates.

"Having state officers for the last four years has been super helpful," Dworak said. "They push through and help our chapter know how to do things."

This year marked a turning point for the chapter, filled with leadership, innovation, and unforgettable firsts. From hosting their inaugural competition to building stronger connections within the school and state, every milestone was made possible.

Story by Shibu Sharma

Shibu Sharma

LOCKED IN

Senior takes the season to a whole new level

Calm under pressure and focused on the bigger picture, varsity boys basketball captain, senior **VINCENT LONG**, has grown into a steady leader during his final season. Once quiet, he guided the team with confidence, setting the tone through communication, effort, and consistency on the court.

Over four years, Long's role has evolved as his confidence and preparation increased. Long hours of individual work and added strength translated into consistent performances. This included averaging 16 points per game through the first five games, while keeping the team locked in during high-pressure moments. But he has also attributed his success to his teammates, as well.

"I handle distractions by toning them out and keeping everything focused," Long said. "This year everyone has the same goal, and no ego, and we all get along really well."

That leadership is felt by his teammates, especially by sophomore **JACK O'NEILL**, who has watched the captain grow both as a player and as a person. O'Neill has seen first hand

how Long's work ethic and attitude have helped build strong team chemistry.

"Vincent has really become an example for the team," O'Neill said. "We all follow his lead and he has pushed our team to work way harder."

This transformation has not only been felt by the players, but also by head coach **BILL MORRISON**, who has been a key factor in the development of both Long's athletic and personal development.

"Vincent has really taken on the leadership role this year," Morrison said. "He is way more vocal, and gets to practice earlier than everyone else."

Inspired by his dad and driven to master the game, the senior is now preparing for his next chapter at Bellevue University, drawn by the welcoming community and coaching staff. As his high school career comes to a close, the captain hopes young players will remember one thing, "enjoy every moment, because it goes by faster than you think."

Story by Haley Amaro

EYES UP With a steady pace, senior **VINCENT LONG** commands the court. This year was his last year on the team, and he left everything on the court in every single game. "This year, I really stepped into the leadership role," Long said. "Teams are getting better and better, so we are working extra hard to be at the top of the game." Photo by Jacob Larson

LOOKING BACK



"I have been playing basketball since I was either four or five because it looked fun."

**JACK
O'NEILL '28**



"I have been playing since I was in kindergarten because my brother played."

**ATTICUS
ENO '26**



"I have been playing basketball since I was four because I wanted to join a sport."

**JAMESON
MALIK '27**



BRING IT Trying to get around a defender, junior **LEO CAUBLE** makes his way up the court. The Wildcats were up by one and trying to further their lead, proving how Cauble worked tirelessly in practice to perfect his moves on the court. "Our coaches have really pushed focusing on the small stuff in practice," Cauble said. "I've noticed that our attention to detail has really helped us out during games." Photo by Jacob Larson



BREAKIN' ANKLES Putting his skills to use, senior **EVAN WARD** dribbles through defenders on his way to the hoop. With this year being quite the roller coaster for the team, Ward helped the team stay focused and maintained a team oriented atmosphere. "We have had a lot of injuries and sickness this year, which has drawn some setbacks for us and made it difficult to stay motivated," Ward said. "It can be hard to stay focused when this happens, but we have stayed strong and become more united as a team as a result of it." Photo by Jacob Larson



BOUNCING BACK Making a run for it, junior **BENJAMIN LABORDE** stays strong in his effort to get to the basket. After suffering a harsh injury that took him out all of last season, he has come back better and stronger than before. "I was excited to be able to come back and play and help out the team," LaBorde said. "The new coaching, and the good atmosphere of the team, along with being healthy has made my performance skyrocket this year in comparison to other years, even despite the injury." Photo by Jacob Larson

STANDING ON BUSINESS Doubling down on his position, senior **JOSHUA FABRIKANT** looks for an open teammate to pass the ball to. His team worked a lot on pass receive in practice and this was the time to showcase what they had practiced. "Our team this year has done a really good job of knowing our roles and being less selfish with the ball," Fabrikant said. "We have really bonded this year on and off the court and it has drastically improved how we play, and our connection." Photo by Jacob Larson



BREAKTHROUGH Making his way to the hoop, junior **CAGE WALKER** gives the play his all. Although Walker was not able to start this season due to an injury, he came back and become a leader for the team. "I have enjoyed being able to step up this year and create a more positive atmosphere," Walker said. "I think we have created a really good environment this year." Photo by Jacob Larson



SWOOSH Hitting the three, junior **GAVIN OLSEN** continues to rack up points for the team. Having harder coaching this year the players have put in the extra work to deal with the change. "We've had to play against hard teams this year," Olsen said. "But our coaches have given us the tools to be prepared we just had to learn how to use them." Photo by Jacob Larson



SKY HIGH At full extension, junior **JACOB MORRISON** rises above the others as he spots the rim for a slam dunk. Although this was just practice, the team has been trying to incorporate more full scale and high intensity practices in order to prep the team for the season. "Our team has gotten so close this year and we are just way more positive," Morrison said. "We have put in a lot of work at practices and the coaches have really pushed us this year, which I think is part of the reason for our success and heightened spirits this season." Photo by Jacob Larson

SOPHOMORES

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