RESTORE ALL THINGS IN CHRIST

Thunderer
2026

Lincoln PIUS X High School

Volume
70

Thunderer
2026

HOW Lucky are WE

For some people, years are measured in milestones, for others, in moments.

The ordinary mornings that turned into our favorite days.

The friendships that started with a seating arrangement that somehow became everything.

The simple walk to class that seemed like routine, until it wasn't.

The teachers who pushed us; the laughter we didn't plan for.

The inside jokes that didn't make sense to anyone else.

Because through traditions and tests, deadlines and dances, we grew together.

So before we turn the page to what's next, before this chapter becomes a story,

We stop and think...

HOW *Lucky* ARE WE

During the Epiphany Mass, theology teacher Fr. Matthew Kovar raises the host for consecration. Kovar's homily really stood out and captured students' attentions. "I think Father's homily was a perfect representation on how love works," senior Brynn Ulrich said. "I think that you never really cherish something until it's gone and that was really what the story was about." Photo by K. Tran

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Setting a positive example in the student section, a group of seniors cheers loudly for the football team. Many seniors arrived to the game early to ensure their front row spot. "We would get there at like 6:30 each week to watch our players warm up, get them hyped and set the atmosphere for the game," senior Willem Hagen said. Photo by K. Tran

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Taking a break from breakfast, a group of senior girls pose for a picture. They stayed up all night prior to senior sunrise to make sure they were not late. "It was a perfect memory to start off our senior year, even if we were really tired," senior Charlotte Shotkoski said. Photo by B. Hart

Seniors gather to watch the sunrise before they begin their final year of high school. They enjoyed breakfast, energy drinks, conversations and games during the hours they spent together that morning. "It was an amazing time to catch up with my friends without being in school yet," senior Rhianna Dunlap said. Photo by S. Gubbels

SENIOR *Signs*

SENIORS CREATE MEMORIES AT SENIOR SUNRISE

MACKENZIE NICKOLITE & LINDSEY DECKER

NATALIE FERNANDES & KATELYN TRAN

JULIA DOLEZAL, KAMRYNN WEMHOFF & PIPER LYONS

Taking a break from their fun morning, seniors Cael Morris, Willem Hagen, John Meyer and George Reese hold a senior sign for a picture. The four guys were among the group of seniors who spent the night on the football field prior to senior sunrise. "It was a lot of fun and is going to be a great memory to look back on in the future," Meyer said. Photo by B. Hart

SLEEP *Over*

SENIOR BOYS SPEND THE LAST NIGHT OF SUMMER ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD

The night before senior sunrise, Aldrich Field had some unexpected visitors. A group of around 20 senior boys had the idea to spend the night on the field.

This idea was brought up at the last minute and the seniors started to plan their night. They decided to show up shortly after sunset to begin their fun.

Their night was filled with yard games, joking around and trips to McDonald's, which resulted in very few hours of sleep.

"We tried to play spike ball, but it was difficult in the dark," senior BENJAMIN SPRINGER said. "We spent most of the night talking to each other about random stuff."

Senior JOHN MEYER had an original experience that night. He had lost his fantasy football league the previous season, so his punishment was drinking a gallon of milk and running a mile after, commonly called the milk mile.

"I had no intention of running, but when I got to the field, my friends had the milk ready," Meyer said. "The milk was warm and I felt terrible for a long time after."

His friends tried to take him to McDonald's to make him feel better, but it was not helpful.

Around two in the morning, the guys decided to get some sleep.

"I brought a tent, but we ended up not using it," Springer said. "We wanted to look at the stars, so everyone put their sleeping bags on the turf."

Seniors CAEL MORRIS and COLTEN WIESELER agreed that sleeping in the middle of the field was memorable.

"My favorite part was definitely talking with everyone before we fell asleep," Morris said. "It was such a unique experience."

The group of boys packed up before the sun rose and waited for their other classmates to arrive. Through their tiredness, they continued to have fun that morning.

Senior sunrise provided an opportunity for the class of 2026 to gather, watch the sunrise, eat breakfast and play games, marking the start of their final year of high school together.

After an intense game of spike ball, seniors Colten Wieseler, Benjamin Springer and Joseph Majerus pause for a picture with the senior sunrise sign. "My favorite part of the morning was playing spike ball with my friends," Springer said. Cornhole was also a big hit among seniors in addition to spike ball. Photo by B. Hart

With a giant deck of cards, a group of senior girls plays a game of spoons. "The cards were huge, which made the game more exciting and way more stressful," senior Kelcee Kumke said. Kumke won the game, so her friends had to buy her a 7 Brew drink. Photo by B. Hart

4-5-Senior Sunrise-Angelina test trial.indd All Pages
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Dancing center stage, sophomore Kennedy McCarville, freshman Elizabeth Krier, sophomore Claire Danner, freshman Tessa Mcinerney and sophomore Tenlea Fowler dance center stage. "I loved how i really got to make my character my own." McCarville said. The Oompa Loompa dancers got to be apart of choreographing their own dances. Photo by K. Tran

Waving off stage, many members of the cast laugh and smile on stage with their fellow cast members. "My all time favorite thing was laughing with my fat suit on" sophomore Lucas Reinke said. "It was so fun to try something new with a character this time around. Photo by. L Lempka

Facing the crowd, senior Evelyn Placek covers Mike Teevee's (junior Brenden Fitzpatrick) eyes. "I had a ton of fun getting to play the character of a loving mother, especially towards Brenden who I've grown so close to over the years," Placek said. Photo by K. Tran

Balancing on the platform, sophomore Aiden Shassare and senior Joesph Fitpatriick move around the stage, portraying floating through the air. "We had to make it look semi-real but also do that while staying on the ground." Aiden and Joesph had to work together to make the vision come to life. Photo by K. Tran

THE CANDY MAN Can

Firmly shaking hands, junior Nolan Wemhoff (Willy Wonka) and senior Henry Cunningham (Mr. Salt) introduce themsleves to each other on stage. "I really enjoyed getting to play Mr. Salt because it nothing like I have ever done before." Cunningham said. This show was Cunningham's second production for Pius Players.
Photo by L. Lempka

Portraying Mrs. Bucket, senior Bella Sweeney laughs onstage with her co-stars. "This show was so special to me and I loved getting to play the part of a loving mother." Sweeney has be apart of Pius Players since her freshman year. Photo by L. Lempka

PIUS PLAYERS RELOCATE TO SOUTHWEST

Lights flickered in a theater that was not theirs, fresh tape lined the stage floor, unfamiliar curtains hung in the air. With only 6 days to figure everything out, the Pius Players stood in the wings of the Lincoln Southwest Silver Hawks theatre, hoping opening night would still feel like home.

With the auditorium under construction, the members of this years fall play, Willy Wonka and the chocolate factory, had to move their production to Southwest. While rehearsals had been going on for weeks, the cast and crew had 6 days to make the blocking, lighting cues, and backstage routines come to life.
The crew members in specific, had a harder time adjusting to the change.

"In the weeks leading up to the show we didn't have a solid concept of the space or how anything was actually going to work" senior Luella Weigel said. "I feel like the show didn't fully come together until we were actually at Southwest."

Not only was the mental transition difficult, but so was the physical.

"Having to move everything from Pius all the way to Southwest was definitely inconvenient," junior Nolan Wemhoff said. "Everyone had to really pitch in to make everything happen."

For the cast members, the new space meant more room, and more opportunities.

"We finally got to have a real black box and have a real backstage," senior Evelyn Placek said. "It just had a ton of cool features that we didn't get in the LPAC."

The Southwest Sliver Hawk theatre included a black box, dressing rooms, bigger wings, and more seats in the audience.

Even with all the excitement and chaos, the show went on. The stage might not have been theirs, but the show was.

Posing with some props, crew members Luella Weigel (senior) and Margaret Doty (sophomore) prepare for the show in the black box. "Having the blackbox at this show was so nice because it gave us a central space we could all hangout and make noise" Weigel said. This was the 6th production Weigel was apart of.
Photo from L. Weigel

16-17 Fall Play - Brynn.indd All Pages
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SWEET Dreams

SENIORS IN PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE WHAT THEY LEARN

Excitement began to spread as seniors in MATTHEW SESTAK'S psychology classes were told they were going to have a whole period to sleep in class.

"I was super excited to sleep in class because it's not normal," senior OLIVIA DETTMAN said. "Sleeping in class is frowned upon, so it was an interesting change."

The class had started a new lesson on sleep. It entailed topics including the stages of sleep, the theories as to why one sleeps, the benefits of sleep and how sleep can affect one's overall health later in their life.

"My main hope is that students walk away from this lesson learning something new about sleep," Sestak said. "Sleep is so important to our development and overall health. I hope students learn the importance of sleep and do their best to get the hours they need and deserve!"

Senior ABIGAIL DICKINSON remembered one of her favorite topics they covered.

"I enjoyed learning about the different sleep cycles," Dickinson said. "You circulate through all different types of sleep cycles, some causing you to dream vividly."

Senior HUNTER RIESBERG was another student who loved learning about dreaming.

"We forget most of our dreams once we wake up, but it's fun to see if there's anything I can remember once I wake up," Riesberg said.

Students in psychology emphasized how sleep affected their life. Students enjoyed learning the many functions of the brain and how people interact with each other.

Seniors in psychology sleep during their napping period. "Sleep is so important in your life, so it was nice Mr. Sestak gave us a whole class period to sleep," senior Joseph Maher said. Students in psychology learned about the importance of sleep in their everyday lives. Photo by K. Tran

Pushing her sister on a swing, senior Jacqueline Diaz de Leon Sanchez notices how she interact with the playground. "For my child development class, we were learning how kids interacts with certain toys and people," Diaz de Leon Sanchez said. She remembered that her sister was more interested in playing by herself rather than with other children. Photo by L. Weigel

Working together on a group presentation, juniors in AP US History try to find answers to complex questions. "Our question was about the difference between the Federalists and Democratic Republicans," junior Malia Woosley said. Students were given a prompt and were told to help each other reach a universal answer. Photo by G. Oldenburg

Pinning her pieces of fabric together, freshman Milla Manuylo prepares to finish sewing her bag together. "My favorite project we've done in textiles class so far is making pumpkins," Manuylo said. "It only took me about a week to complete my pumpkin, so it wasn't a lengthy project." The textiles students were able to choose their own materials when making the pumpkins to individualize the project. Photo by K. Tran

Pouring the ingredients into the bowl, senior Rowan Boone measures the correct amount of flour she needs for her recipe. "I am making the dough for gingerbread," Boone said. "We are having a gingerbread house decorating contest, so I need to make sure my dough is perfect." Boone's favorite thing they made in culinary class was copycat Crumbl cookies. Photo by J. Spiegel

LIFE Lessons

WHAT LIFE SKILL DID YOU TAKE AWAY FROM A CLASS AT PIUS X?

"Cooking Techniques."

Whitney Mertens
freshman

"How to make delicious food."

Julian Ordonez Pinto
freshman

"Filing taxes and what to get insurance on."

Grace De Villiers
junior

"How to sew and patch my clothes."

Ngoc Nguyen
sophomore

38-39 - Social Studies - Jenna.indd All Pages
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BAND PERFORMS THE FIRST LIGHT UP SHOW SINCE 1980S

Get up and dance! For the first time since 1980, the band performed a routine in the dark. Glowsticks and various lights illuminated the field just enough for the band to perform a routine.

Junior **NEVA SINICA** shared insight about her mindset during the performance.

"The light show was super special since it was the first time band did it in a while," Sinica said. "Color guard had to be very precise, which brought us closer together."

Regardless of high spirits, there were some technical difficulties with the lights.

"I was in the front row and my light broke on my flag," junior **TERESA NGUYEN** said. "The lights could be challenging at times because if you hit it too hard on the ground it will change to the wrong color."

The logistics of putting together a performance in the dark was a struggle for various members in band, however the brightness of the field was not an issue.

Band director **JARED WILHELM** praised the ability of band members to perform in a dark environment.

"The lights on the field produce just enough light that they could kind of see each other," Wilhelm said. "However, they could probably blindfold themselves and still do the show."

Regardless of some roadblocks, a very special performance was introduced back into the routine of the Pius X band. With a lot of practice and dedication, the performances were successful and fun for the audience

LIGHT UP *the Dark*

Kneeling with her flag, junior Neva Sinica focuses throughout the dark routine. "Only having two lights on the end of my flagpole for light made me want to be more consistent and precise," Sinica said. "If I mess up, it's more noticeable." Sinica stayed consistent with her team throughout the performance. Photo by K. Tran

Performing during halftime, junior Margaret Cunningham is twirting her flag. "Playing on the football field is much more casual than competitions," Cunningham said. "It's a lot more fun performing in front of a familiar crowd." Cunningham enjoyed performing during halftime. Photo by K. Tran

Conducting the band during a basketball game, junior Charlie Matthes adapts to a fast-paced environment. "Conducting during basketball makes me a little bit anxious," Matthes says. "Filling out dead spaces during timeouts can get stressful." Matthes successfully adapted to a stressful environment. Photo by C. Arnold

During a football game, junior Kara Bucknell, senior Matilda Hayes and junior Charlie Matthes conduct the band. "I like spending time with my band people," Hayes said. "Watching the student section go nuts is really fun." Hayes enjoyed the football game while spending time with her peers. Photo by K. Tran

Excited to be in band with friends, sophomore Logan Hatchell plays the trombone. "I really enjoy the friendships that band has brought me," Hatchell said. "Most of the friendships I have now I met through band." Hatchell appreciated the positive band community. Photo by K. Tran

LOOKING *Sharp*

BAND MEMBERS SHARE ONE THING THEY ADD TO THEIR APPEARANCE TO "LOOK GOOD, PLAY GOOD"

"I like doing my hair to make it pretty and keep it out of my face." Sydney Beckman senior

"A colorful bandana." Cole Skaw junior

"Sunglasses." Maddox Sharp sophomore

52-53 - Band - Laney Sharp.indd All Pages 2/26/2026 10:51:41 AM

Getting a kiss from a dolphin, sophomore Abigail Wiegert enjoys a once in a lifetime opportunity. "My favorite part of my trip was getting to swim with the dolphins because it's something I've never done before," Wiegert said. Wiegert busied herself with beach days and fun activities while in Jamaica. Photo from A. Wiegert

Dodging one of his competitors, senior Oliver Steffen tries to keep his hat from getting stolen. "Scotty asked if anyone wanted to help with a game at halftime and I volunteered," Steffen said. He didn't end up winning, but he helped contribute to a fun halftime. Photo by K. Tran

Staring off into the sunset, junior Martin Owens gets ready to hit the golf ball. "I went golfing with my friends while the sun was setting and it was really fun," Owens said. He spent the rest of the evening golfing with his friends. Photo from S. Owens

GREEN *Christmas*

WHAT OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES PEOPLE DID OVER CHRISTMAS BREAK

Most people think of spending their Christmas break huddled in front of the fire watching the snow fall while drinking hot chocolate.

However, this year the weather was unusually warm so people got to do outdoor activities they would not normally be able to do. The temperatures were in the fiftys and sixtys for most of the break.

Junior MARTIN OWENS took advantage of the nice weather by playing several outside sports. He spent time on the golf course and played basketball with his friends.

"I had the idea of playing golf so my sister's fiancée and I went and played at Mahoney," Owens said.

Over Christmas break people played a ton of different sports that they can usually only play in the summer.

Pickleball is a sport not normally played in the winter but, with the beautiful weather, senior ALAYNA SHARP and her family played it over break.

"My family got a portable net, so we decided to set it up in our driveway because it was perfect pickleball weather," Sharp said.

The break remined a lot of people of summer and the activites they enjoyed with friends and family.

In the summer, junior SAMUEL SCHLAUTMAN and his friends played sand volleyball outside. They missed summer and noticed that the weather was warm, so they decided to give sand volleyball a try.

"We went to a church with sand volleyball courts, but the nets weren't up so we went to go to Holmes Lake, and we played sand volleyball for a little," Schlautman said.

The nice weather gave junior KAITLYN GILES the opportunity to fulfill summer traditions of going to Carhenge with her grandparents over Christmas break. Giles' grandparents live in Alliance so every year they go to Carhenge together.

"I thought it was funny because I went to Stonehedge over the summer, so I wore my Stonehedge sweatshirt to Carhenge and I got a cool photo," Giles said.

Everyone loves a cold snowy Christmas but sometimes it is fun to have a Green Christmas.

CHRISTMAS *Cheer*

WHEN DO YOU START LISTENING TO CHRISTMAS MUSIC?

"Probably May."
Bryelle Springer
junior

"Christmas music that's not Pentatonix a week before, but Christmas music that is Pentatonix anytime of the year."
Paul Johnson
freshman

"Beginning of December."
Mason Moscrip
junior

At a Christmas party with her friends, senior Matilda Hayes opens a gift from her secret Santa. "We had this big party at my friend's house in her basement, and my secret Santa got me Alani's and chocolate," Hayes said. All of her friends filled out a google doc of their favorite things to make gift giving a little easier. Photo by K. Tran

While in Puerto Rico, sophomore Julianne Hofmeister captures a picture of the sunset on the beach. "We were at the beach all day and we were just about to leave when I saw the sunset and thought it would be a perfect picture," Hofmeister said. She left Puerto RIco with a full camera roll and fun memories with her family. Photo by C. Hofmeister

Junior Elise Tassemeyer and the dance team smile for the camera in their Christmas sweaters. "The juniors on the dance team came up with a dance just for the holidays and we thought it would be fun to wear Christmas sweaters," Tassemeyer said. In past years they have worn Santa hats but decided to switch it up this year. Photo by N. Schnabel

64-65 - Christmas - Bailey (2).indd All Pages
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BIG *Wins*

BOLTS TAKE ON DISTRICTS

With a rocky start to the varsity softball season, the Bolts got back on track and were ready to tackle districts. Their hard work throughout the season had led up to those games.

Throughout the season, the team sustained multiple injured players. Little did they know, these setbacks would make their final moments of the season more valuable.

The first day of districts was ecstatic for the Thunderbolts. The Bolts went into the game with a clear head and the will to win. They cleared the first game, beating McCook 9-0.

"Overall, we had a great confidence going into it," senior **ERICA HORNE** said. "It was a lot of fun, and we were all really excited and ready to play."

The second game went just as well as the first, and the Bolts won 4-0 against Douglas County West.

Day two proved to be tougher on the Bolts.

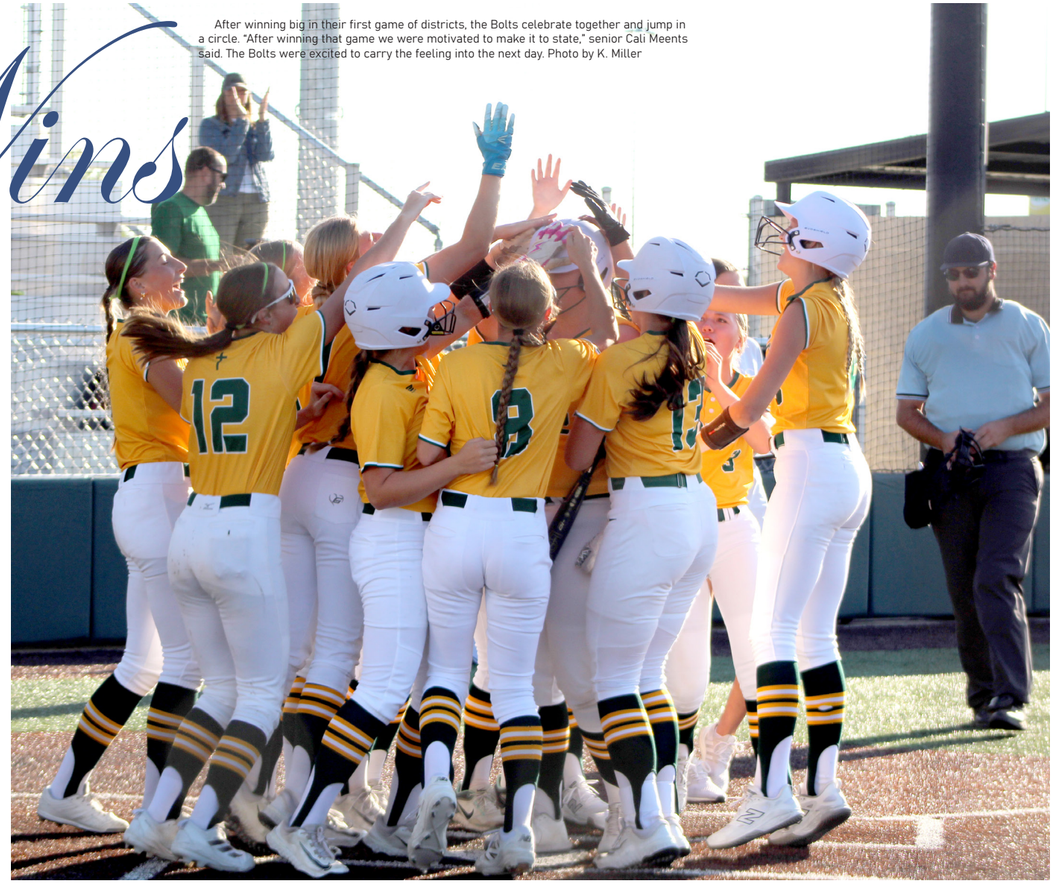
Ralston had some great pitchers. It was a close game, yet the Bolts were beat 3-1 in the first game of day two.

The Bolts bounced back in their second game. destroying Ralston 8-0.

"I think it was important to keep up our mentality, especially when we lost that first game, we came back and won the second game," junior **JORDAN HUBER** said. "We just needed that extra boost."

After a big win, the Bolts fell short on the last game losing 6-4 to Ralston in the district final.

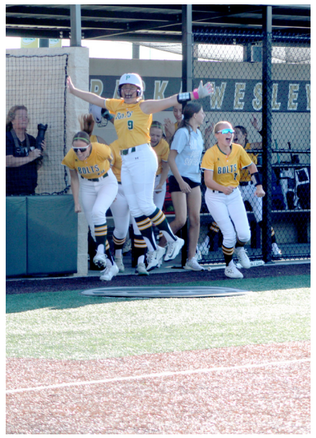
"I'm super proud of our team this season, I think we worked really well together and we each played our part," sophomore **TAYLOR HEIMES** said. "We were just a few plays away from going to state."



After winning big in their first game of districts, the Bolts celebrate together and jump in a circle. "After winning that game we were motivated to make it to state," senior Cali Meents said. The Bolts were excited to carry the feeling into the next day. Photo by K. Miller

Before a game, junior Isabella Determan gives senior Erica Horne a high-five. "I love when my teammates cheer me on so I always do my best to support them," Determan said. The support from Determan gave Horne the encouragement to play great. Photo by K. Tran

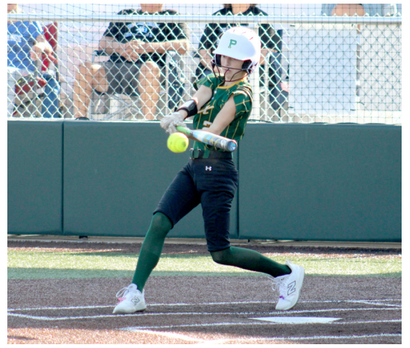
Cheering for their teammates, juniors Macy Charf, Austen Davis and Jordan Huber and seniors Elena Mastel and Erica Horne shout "Let's go!" "We cheer each other on to show support," Charf said. After their cheers, the Bolts made a great play and got an out. Photo by F. Nebel



After a big hit, sophomore Olivia Wagner jumps for joy with seniors Katherine Hoefener and Cali Meents. "I was overjoyed because one of our seniors, Erica Horne, hit a home run," Wagner said. They ran onto the field and celebrated with the whole team. Photo by K. Miller

On senior night, senior Katherine Hoefener embraces junior Kendal Heimes. "It really hit me that I'm almost done playing with my best friends while hugging Kendal," Hoefener said. It was the last regular game in the season which brought a lot of emotion to Hoefener. Photo by F. Nebel

Going after a hit, sophomore Taylor Heimes crushes the ball. "I was focusing on making every swing count against a good team," Heimes said. Heimes ran to first base and was safe. Photo by M. Moscrip



Delivering a fast pitch, senior Elizabeth Preister throws a strike on the opposing batter. "Pitching is a high-pressure position, you often feel the weight of the game because you don't want to let your teammates down," Preister said. Her teammates senior Elena Mastel and junior Kendal Heimes were ready to field the ball. Photo by M. Moscrip

Hits FOR HITTING

WHAT IS YOUR WALK-UP SONG?

"White Horse"
by Chris Stapleton
Katherine Hoefener
senior

"Welcome to the Show"
by Cody Johnson
Cali Meents
senior

"My House"
by Beyoncé
Adelaide Duggan
junior

80-81 - Softball - Emmy.indd All Pages
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Here we are, we have experienced this year through big milestones and tiny moments.

We celebrated state championships and mourned tough losses.

We changed routes to class through phases of construction.

We high-fived the assistant principal each morning.

The lessons taught beyond the classroom.

The mistakes that taught us more than success ever did.

In moments we didn't know were lasts.

Our faith has grown and our lives have changed, so let's reflect on this chapter and recognize the unique story we are all a part of...

HOW *Lucky* ARE WE

At the Lincoln Northeast preview show, sophomore Aidan Shasserre plays a rock star in the show choir's performance. "It's kind of cool because I'm usually a pretty quiet person, but in this show I get to be a rock star and be in the center of the stage," Shasserre said. The preview show was moved from Pius X to Lincoln Northeast because the LPAC was under construction. Photo by B. Hart

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