



THE CHARGER

RUNNIN' DOWN A DREAM

Chargers place 5th at state XC

AJ Grutsch | editor in chief

Girls cross country placed fifth at state Saturday, with sophomore Payton Wurtz finishing in second place. The team improved from a sixth-place finish last season.

While the girls ran the Wamego course earlier in the season, it's still difficult for most runners. "This is one of the most challenging courses we run on," coach Roger Alderman said.

"It's obviously a more difficult course so it's not exactly a PR race. It's one of my favorites though, because I love the hills," Wurtz said. "One thing that Alderman focused on this year especially was working on hills, when KSHSAA announced that state was going to be at Wamego again. I really think that all the hard work paid off at state and being able to handle the hills got me secured into second place."

Wurtz finished second for the second-straight year, losing only to three-time champion Chesney Peterson of Stanton County.

Senior Rebekah Stuhlsatz barely missed medaling for a fourth year, finishing 21st with a time of 21:42. Stuhlsatz did

receive Academic All-State, which recognizes runners with a GPA of 3.75 who place top-30. Stuhlsatz is the first 2-time winner for the award on the girls team.

Junior Sophia Castillo (73rd, 24:23) had a new best time for this season. Senior Jenna Donaldson (67th, 23:58), sophomore Isabelle Stuhlsatz (78th, 24:52) and junior Sienna Jones (91st, 26:43) were all within 12 seconds of their season bests.

"This is a very special team and we have a good thing going here even beyond the successes we've had at the meets," Alderman said.

FOOTBALL ADVANCES TO SECOND ROUND OF PLAYOFFS

Jacob Meseke | editor in chief

The Chargers handled the Belle Plaine Dragons easily Thursday, winning 54-13.

The Chargers got off to a hot start, forcing a safety on the second play from scrimmage. The Chargers built on to lead 54-0 at half. Belle Plaine was able to score two touchdowns in the second half.

Junior quarterback Wyatt Wurtz led the offense with 177 total yards and three touchdowns. Junior Miguel Hernandez ran for 58 yards and two touchdowns. Senior Logan Clark had five catches



Coach Alderman encourages sophomore Isabelle Stuhlsatz at state cross country in Wamego. Below: Payton Wurtz passes a runner from Ellis. Photos by AJ Grutsch.

for 75 yards and one touchdown. Junior Tate Deever led the team in tackles with 7, and sophomore Jude Meseke had 3 tackles for loss.

The Chargers will now face the Marion Warriors (6-3) Friday. The Warriors defeated Salina-Sacred Heart last week 38-14. The Chargers defeated Sacred Heart 42-7 last month.

With a win, the Chargers would make it past the second round of playoffs for the first time in school history.



Charger wins State Fair print event

Staff reports

The Charger was named the grand Champion of the print division of the Kansas State Fair Scholastic Press Corps.

The competition, which included 37 teams from 28 schools, requires student journalists to create a 4-page newsletter or 5-minute broadcast in about eight hours. All photography, interviews, writing, editing and design took place that day at the fair. There were 21 teams in the print division.

The Wabaunsee team of AJ Grutsch, Sophia Castillo, Ava Meinhardt, Danielle Murphy and Heather Baker finished 1st, followed by teams from Wichita North, Salina South and Inman.

Senior AJ Grutsch was awarded Best Lead Story for his story "Indy Swine Hundred," which covered pig races.

The Chargers have found success at the competition several times, finishing as grand champion in 2012 and 2018, reserve champion in 2015 and 2019, and 3rd in 2013.

Adviser Brendan Praeger said the staff competed well, despite the students' lack of experience. "We only had one returning staff member, and none who have competed at the fair before. I think that producing weekly issues prepares them for the time line required at this event, and they worked well as a team."

In addition to a grand champion rosette, the staff receives a \$100 prize.

Editorial | Students encourage YES vote on 329 bond

The voters of USD 329 should vote YES on the latest bond issue.

The latest attempt to pass a bond has been met with a variety of responses from the community. We have a different perspective than many community members, because we spend every day inside the school buildings.

First of all, the bond has many benefits — students will take more pride in a renovated school, safety would be improved, the district saves money in the long run and the schools could provide more educational opportunities with K-12 students in one location.

The bond isn't a perfect solution in every way, but without writing a blank check, there is no way to solve every problem. A couple disagreements with the initial plans shouldn't distract us from the big picture of the necessity of further investment in the district.

There are lots of reasons that voters have cited to oppose the bond. We'd like to address a few of them, and encourage people not to vote against the bond for these reasons.

Don't vote against the bond purely because your kids don't go to Wabaunsee or because they have graduated. It's not only about your children — it's about all of the kids in

The editorial is the opinion of the Charger staff. Students discuss editorial topics as a group and write an opinion that represents a majority of the staff.

Send letters to the editor to whscharger@gmail.com.

the community, and the fact that every single one of them deserves a quality education. If your children are WHS graduates, then have some pride in the school that educated your children. It is a bad look if the school your kids graduated from is in shambles a few years after your kid received their diploma. As current students, we probably won't get to enjoy learning in renovated buildings, but as some of us decide where to raise our families in the coming years, the educational environment will definitely affect us in the future.

Don't vote against the bond because you haven't been inside of the school buildings. Schools are a lot like people, what's on the inside matters most. Although our school might not look bad from the outside, our ceilings are falling down, water stains are everywhere, and if you get lucky enough you might get to feel a little breeze accompanied by rain in the upstairs classrooms. A majority of voters haven't

recently been inside the high school, but anyone who walks through the doors can see that the building is crumbling right in front of us. Voters, please don't vote against the bond because you've never been in our buildings. Take it from the students who spend practically their whole lives here.

Please don't vote no just because you don't want your taxes raised. A small increase in taxes is a worthwhile price to pay to get our students, the future adults of this world, quality education in a quality building. There are few causes better for our taxes to go to than education for our community's youth. We don't want to sound flippant here, because money is a serious issue, and we're sure it's a big part of the decision process for a lot of voters, but better schools can also help property values, and savings in the long run will also benefit taxpayers. It's more complicated than just increased taxation. Some have said that we shouldn't have a say, because we don't pay property taxes, but our families do, and we will if we stay in the community. We definitely have skin in the game.

Please don't vote no because you don't want the schools in Maple Hill or Paxico to close or you're still mad that schools

combined 30 years before any current students were born. If the bond fails, the school will face tough decisions that could still close those buildings. We think it would be better to send those students somewhere better than where they currently attend.

Don't vote against the bond because your questions aren't answered. If you're feeling lost and confused, there are many sources to get your information. You can go through the school website, there's a facebook group dedicated to answering questions, the district has held several informational meetings in each town and you're able to contact all board members through their emails as well as superintendent Troy Pitsch. Don't vote against it just because you have questions. Lots of people will give you the answers. If something is still unclear, email us at whscharger@gmail.com — we'll track down the answer for you.

While the Charger staff supports the bond, we don't want to say that no voters don't care about kids, or that there aren't valid concerns for the future of our district, but we believe the current bond is the best option for securing that future.

We encourage voters to mark yes on their ballots next week.

THE CHARGER

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"The mission of the Charger newspaper and related media is to inform the students and school community about relevant issues in a fair, accurate and timely manner, to advocate for all students and serve as an open forum for student free speech."

THIS WEEK ON WHSCHARGER.COM

Prepare to vote by listening to a podcast with Wabaunsee county clerk Abby Amick.

Follow breaking news on the bond issue, including a statement from the Maple Hill city council.