



The Blue and Gold

Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

In This Issue

<i>McDonnell Student Ambassadors Shine Despite Restrictions</i> By SOPHIE KINLEN and KRISTY HESS	2
<i>Mack Volleyball: Team Finishes Runner-Up At D4 State Tournament</i> By KATE ROTH	5
<i>Mack Cross Country: Boys Team Advances To D3 State Meet</i> By ELISE BORMANN	7
<i>Christmas In Chippewa Falls</i> By KENNEDY WILLI	8
<i>Staff Spotlight: Meet Greta Jorgensen</i> By EVA BUSHMAN	10
<i>Election Day In Chippewa County</i> By SAMANTHA WIRTZ	12
<i>Student Spotlight: Meet Maggie Craker</i> By PETER HERRON	14

McDonnell Student Ambassadors Shine Despite Restrictions

Sophie Kinlen and Kristy Hess
December 2020

Student Ambassadors Serve Through Pandemic

By SOPHIE KINLEN



Ambassadors working at one of several drive-through events this year. *Photos by Cathy Greenseth*

The year 2020 was a challenge to navigate for all and brought with it significant changes. Like many other aspects of MACS, the Student Ambassadors program has adapted to cater to the community in these hard times. The program's director, Mary Jacobson, has decided to focus this year on the elderly people in the community and in nursing homes.

"We mostly tried to address the needs of the elderly because they seem the most isolated," Jacobson said.

A newsletter has been created by students, led by senior ambassadors Ann David and Ellie Eckes. It is sent out

monthly, with the goal of entertaining and informing elderly residents at the Chippewa Manor and the Rutledge Home. Residents have had limited contact with the 'outside' world after shutdowns in March were initiated to stop the spread of infectious disease. Newsletters have jokes and interesting articles. Other annual events have continued but with modifications to protect the safety of others.

A popular event in the local community, the Spaghetti Spectacular fundraiser has been a family favorite for years. But this year, the Student Ambassadors had to be a little bit more creative. With the help of parents, volunteers, and students, the Spaghetti Spectacular became a drive-through operation. The event has been a large crowd-pleaser in the past, with many families attending to support schools. In addition to the event's signature spaghetti, the basket raffle also attracts visitors and helps to raise a lot of money for the school. This year, the basket raffle still took place, but sales were made online.

"A goal that has been prevalent since the shutdown in March was trying to keep some type of normalcy in an otherwise changing environment," Student Ambassador Benjamin Goebel (11) said.

While some Ambassador activities have changed, others have had to be temporarily stopped in order to protect the safety of students and staff. One activity that was temporarily removed was bell ringing for the Salvation Army.

The Blue and Gold

Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

Every year, Jacobson works to get every Ambassador to participate. Bell ringing has always been a popular way to help bring some holiday cheer past McDonell's classrooms and help the Salvation Army. While there has been no immediate replacement to this event, Ambassadors have demonstrated creativity and selflessness as they find other activities to partake in.

Showing appreciation to teachers has always been an important priority for the Ambassador program, but this year it was especially important to students. Online school was difficult to navigate for many staff at first, but through the hard work of teachers and staff, students were still able to receive the best education possible. A shift to virtual learning was an adjustment for the teachers as well as students, so the Student Ambassadors in the leadership committee — led by upperclassmen Anna Geissler (12), Kate Roth (12), and Kait Ortman (11) — have begun a new project to make short videos and thank you gifts as a way to demonstrate their appreciation for teachers.

Lastly, the annual MACS diaper drive was still able to proceed as usual at the end of October. While other events required some creativity for execution, this year's diaper drive was similar to those in the past. In the past, there would be games such as guessing the teacher's baby picture and trivia questions done at lunch to remind the students of the need for donations. Games and activities, such as coloring

pages and a guess jar, were still offered remotely as a way to attract the attention of the students towards the diaper drive.



Ambassadors stand with the donations from the annual diaper drive. *Photos by Cathy Greenseth and Mary Jacobson*

The Student Ambassador program, like many other extracurricular opportunities offered this school year, has been forced to adapt and constantly change throughout the uncertainty of the past several months. Just as the program has helped the community in previous years, the Student Ambassadors continue to serve.

2020 Student Ambassador Activities

by KRISTY HESS



Ambassadors work in the commons. *Photos by Cathy Greenseth, Mary Jacobson*

Students who actively serve our school community through the Student Ambassador program have continued to help others this year, despite facing significant adversity due to COVID-19. The Student Ambassador program has taken measures to remain active while staying COVID-friendly.

Recent projects have included the creation of a newspaper to give to elderly residents of nursing homes, making Christmas videos for the homebound, and sending additional ‘Thank You’ videos to MACS faculty and staff.

An Ambassador newsletter sent out to local nursing home residents covered a range of topics, from the meaning of the Christmas hymn “Silent Night” to features of MACS 2020 graduating seniors. Ambassadors saw the recent shutdown as an opportunity to reach

out, connect with others, and strengthen the sense of community.

The uncertainty of the school year, whether online, hybrid, or fully in-person, has been a roller coaster topic over the past few months among both students and staff. Ambassadors, however, hoped to bring more attention to those they considered unsung heroes of the high school. Teaching staff — not only at McDonell, but all around the world — had to quickly circumvent the challenges presented by an abrupt switch to virtual learning. Ambassadors hoped to show their thanks for the teachers adjusting their classroom methods and supporting students through a pandemic. Student Ambassadors volunteered to put together a fun 30-second video for the staff as a way to express their gratitude for all that staff accomplished over the year.



Mary Jacobson. *Mary Jacobson*

The Blue and Gold

Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

McDonell Volleyball: Girls Team Finishes Runner-Up At D4 State Tournament

By KATE ROTH
November 2020

The McDonell girls volleyball team successfully made it to state this year, bringing back the silver ball for McDonell athletics.

The 2020 season began with the onset of playing conditions that vastly differed from those of previous years. Open gyms required separation and masks. The season also had a delayed start due to COVID-19. Coaches Kat and Dewayne Hanson worked to push through try-outs and create the four volleyball teams representing McDonell athletics. The teams had to quickly acclimate to wearing a mask throughout training because they knew that was the only way they would be able to play and have a season.

The season started off with a game against Columbus Catholic. The girls team ended up playing against this opponent three times throughout the season, achieving success each time. In order to fit in conference games during such a short season, the team was playing multiple games a week with reduced practice time. The team went 7-0 in the Western Cloverbelt Conference and brought home the conference title in Cadott with a 3-0 win over the Hornets on October 8.

“We just always focused on what we could control,” coach Kat Hanson said.

Senior athletes maintained a positive attitude despite the difficult playing conditions and an uncertain future.

“Each game we played, we played it like our last, because this is the year where our season could end in a split second. We wanted to take in all the time we got to play,” senior Kate Roth (12) said. Seniors knew that the risk of exposure could end their careers unless precautions were taken. Fortunately, the team was able to stay safe for most of the season despite experiencing a few scares.

Despite sophomore varsity middle hitter Marley Hughes (10) being displaced from quarantine, freshman newcomer Aubrey Dorn (9) quickly fell into place with the team. The first varsity game Dorn played was the fateful game that determined if the team would head to state in Turtle Lake. The girls took the win in a 3-1 match and began their prep for the state volleyball tournament.



The Macks celebrate the win. *Chippewa Herald*

The Blue and Gold

Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

“We didn’t give up when the other team was ahead, and we really came together near the end,” junior Sydney Flanagan (11) said.

Although the McDonell girls team had already successfully faced off against one of their state opponents, Prentice, a few weeks prior, the team was careful not to assume an easy win at state. At first, the Macks struggled to secure a strong lead but came out with the win. In the championship game against Catholic Central, all three games were very close, only having had a total of nine points difference all together. By the end of the Division 4 tournament, McDonell girls volleyball had taken second place.

“With so much going on in the middle of a pandemic, we were able to work hard, lay it on the line, and come out as champions! I will forever remember this team for the ability to fight when their back was against the wall!” said Coach Hanson.

“The girls had such a great season and were so thankful to be able to play their whole season and make it all the way to the state tournament and bring back the silver ball to show their hard work and dedication they put in this year,” Roth added.



The girls team poses in front of a bus ready for state.



Junior Destiny Baughman on the court.
Chippewa Herald



McDonell 2020 Varsity Volleyball

The Blue and Gold

Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

Boys Cross Country Excels Despite Uncertain Circumstances

By ELISE BORMANN

November 2020

The McDonell Boys cross country team finished a triumphant season at the WIAA Division 3 state meet on October 31, marking the end of a successful four-year career for seniors Luke Newton, Jake Seigenthaler, Max Hauser, Andrew Hunt, and Jackson Bushman.

Junior Dan Anderson led the team to the finish, claiming seventh place with a time of 16:47. He was followed by Jake Seigenthaler in 62nd, Luke Newton in 65th, and sophomore Eddy Mittermeyer in 66th. Max Hauser took 87th, junior Marcus Roach took 99th, and sophomore Keagen Galvez finished up a successful day for the Macks with a time of 20:15 in 107th place.

“As a coach, having the kids run their best and end at the state meet is always where we want to finish,” head McDonell coach Marty Bushland said. “Every year, this group of seniors has been at state, either as alternates or as varsity runners. Seeing the change from spectator, to alternate, to scoring runner... it’s always nice seeing the progression.”

In addition to this year being their fourth at state, the McDonell boys team has also finished the season as conference champions for the fourth consecutive year. Senior Luke Newton said seeing success throughout his four

years has been one of his favorite memories. “It was nice making it to state as a freshman, having my last year end at state and as conference champions again.” Anderson added that running at state for both of his years at McDonell was his favorite memory as well.

“We just made the most of what we had, had a great time, and realized that was it,” Anderson said. “We really had a great time.”



Anderson takes the lead. *Chippewa Herald*

Both Newton and Anderson are open to continuing their athletic careers as college runners, with Anderson having one year left on the McDonell team. “Find one person to make you love the sport,” Anderson said when asked about his relationship with his teammates. “I was never into cross country, but then I met people who changed my mind and perspective. All it takes is one friend to make you love something.”



2020 McDonell Boys Cross Country

Christmas in Chippewa Falls

by KENNEDY WILLI

Despite the difficulties of new health regulations, the Chippewa Falls community was able to continue its Christmas traditions and help those in need during the holiday season.

The MACS system held its successful annual fundraiser to assist the greater Chippewa community. The schools worked with the Career Development Center (CDC) Chippewa County Outreach Program in helping the needy and homeless members of the community. The money was raised by students and staff through theme days, including a sweatpants-themed day and an ornament-themed day.

From December 21-22, students had the opportunity to participate in virtual activities through the annual Community Day events. A Christmas concert and series of basketball games ranging from grades 5-12 were also live streamed on the MACS website. On December 21 from 4 to 6 pm, a hot chocolate drive-up fundraiser was also held at the front doors of the school, led by student council members. All of the money raised went to the Salvation Army.

For the 33rd consecutive year, 100,000 lights illuminated Irvine Park. The Christmas Village welcomed thousands to look at the lights. With COVID-19, the

Chippewa Falls Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Director Dick Hebert recommended wearing a mask and social distancing to those who visited. The event was still a huge hit; more than 200 volunteers helped set up the lights and display this year in order to continue the historic local tradition.



Lights illuminate the entrance to Irvine Park.
Kennedy Willi



Irvine's pavilion decorated for Christmas.
Kennedy Willi

The Spirit of Christmas is a non-profit organization established in 1988 that has been dedicated to helping children under 17 years of age celebrate the holiday. Volunteers help around 1,500 children each year. Gifts and monetary donations were given by individuals, businesses, and other organizations

throughout the Chippewa Valley. The Spirit of Christmas put special emphasis on its efforts this year in order to combat the negative effects of COVID-19 in the area.

Due to COVID-19, many Christmas events for families were canceled. The executive director of Chippewa Falls Main Street, Teri Ouimetter, wanted to help families get in the Christmas spirit. Beginning the day after Thanksgiving, a present was placed outside of a Chippewa Falls location for children to search for. There were six identical presents per location, and hints to their location were posted weekly on the Chippewa Falls Main Street Facebook page.

In Chippewa Falls, the Chippewa Valley Main Street hosted a Christmas Sweepstakes event to help local businesses this Christmas season. Shoppers were able to shop at businesses such as retail stores, gas stations, service-based businesses, and restaurants. Receipts were then submitted to the Chippewa Falls Main Street. All receipts were turned in with an entry form dropped off or mailed to 514 N. Bridge St. For every entry, participants received one entry per \$10 they spent downtown to be entered in the sweepstakes; prizes included the chance to win \$500 in downtown gift certificates.

Staff Spotlight: Meet Greta Jorgensen

By EVA BUSHMAN
December 2020

Most people know Mrs. Greta Jorgensen for her role as a beloved science teacher at McDonell High School and the advisor of the McDonell Student Council. There's no doubt that she's a dedicated contributor to the school community. Nevertheless, not everyone is aware of her equally impressive musical theater background.



Mrs. Greta Jorgensen

Jorgensen first studied music to earn her Bachelor of Arts degree in music education. In the past, she has acted in multiple productions, including *The Sound of Music*, *Guys and Dolls*, *My Fair Lady*, *Godspell*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*. In addition to performing, she has also directed many shows, such as

The Unsinkable Molly Brown, *Guys and Dolls*, *The Sound of Music*, *Once Upon A Mattress*, *Oklahoma*, and many more. She has done everything from playing in the pit, to building sets, to making costumes. She also occasionally accompanies the middle and high school choirs on the piano and substitute teaches band and choir classes. This year, Jorgensen is now putting her talents to work at McDonell as well.

After talking with fellow faculty teacher Mr. Mark Neppl, Jorgensen was inspired to step up this year by using her experience to direct the winter musical, *My Fair Lady*.

My Fair Lady is a show set in 1912 London, written by Alan Jay Lerner and musically arranged by Frederick Loewe. Neppl is assisting Jorgensen as the vocal director. According to Neppl, one of the biggest challenges thus far has been constantly changing schedules due to COVID-19. Restrictions have made organizing practices around revolving obligations difficult.

Despite these difficulties, Jorgensen, Neppl, and the students involved are optimistic about the end product that they will be able to produce. Senior Jackson Bushman, who will play Colonel Pickering in *My Fair Lady*, said, "Mrs. Jorgensen's leadership through all of this has been super helpful to all of us in the show, even with all of the challenges that COVID presents."

Jorgensen makes a priority of sharing

The Blue and Gold

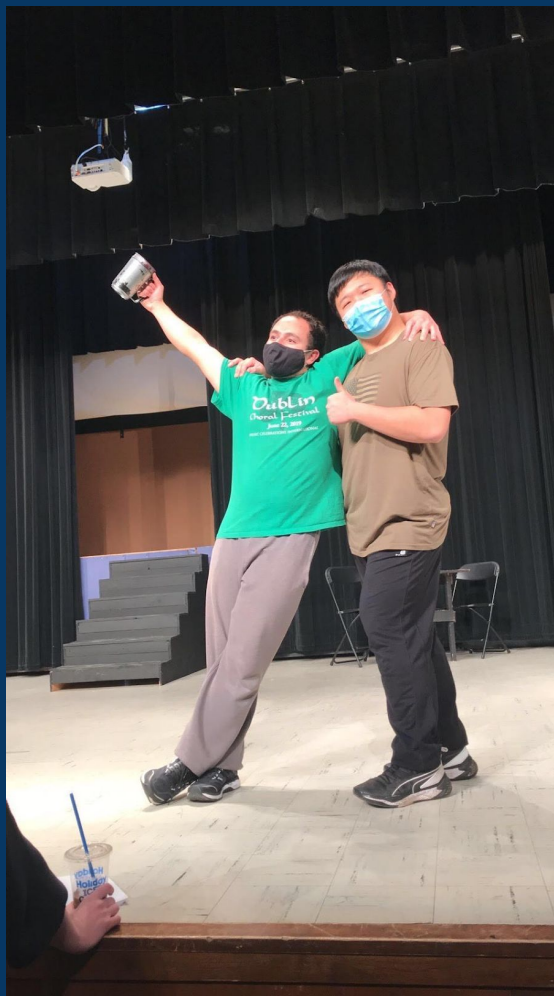
Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

her expertise with the students by providing constructive criticism (always given kindly) and constantly pushing students to reach their full potential. Her experience shines through in the tips that she shares, whether it's telling stories about her old vocal coach, pushing actors out of their comfort zone by asking them to try out a strange accent, sharing helpful resources to really get into character, or just helping everyone relax by sharing fun vocal warm-ups.

Jorgensen is undeniably a woman of great character. One of her strong suits when it comes to the musical is helping everyone and creating a positive, collaborative atmosphere while still ensuring the safety of everyone involved. Students in the show admire her for her ability to help everyone improve their skills and have fun at the same time.

“She’s been a wonderful teacher to have as a neighbor in the school... She keeps the musical as a priority along with all the different things that she’s doing. It’s really amazing,” Neppl said.

The musical debut of *My Fair Lady* will be performed each day from March 10-13. The first three performances are at 7 p.m. The final performance begins at 2 p.m.



Students pose while practicing on set.



Choral Director Mark Neppl

Election Day In Chippewa County By SAMANTHA WIRTZ



Chippewa Falls courthouse.

Once again, that time of year arrived in Chippewa Falls where the people determine who should stay and who should go. Citizens elected members of the community to positions in order to represent them and make decisions about how things should be run. This year in Chippewa County, there were six total positions available for election, consisting of the elections for the District 3 and District 7 Congressional Representatives, the District 67, 68, and 91st Representatives in the Wisconsin State Assembly, and the Chippewa County District Attorney.

Voting has been an instrumental part of our country since 1776. Many Americans do not vote because they believe their opinion doesn't matter overall.

"It is very important to vote. It was something that is in the foundation of this country; it's important for democracy," Lou Tozer, administrative assistant at McDonell Area Catholic Schools, said. Tozer, like many members of Chippewa County, is an active

member of the community and the MACS school system.

Voting is extremely important in local elections, too — not just federal elections.

"It's a complicated question," Steve Roesler, government and social studies teacher at McDonell High School, said. "In the presidential election, our votes select the group of people that goes to the electoral college. Those electors vote for president. But on the local level, all our votes count because we directly elect our officials."

Like everything else this year, COVID-19 has had an impact on voting. But has it really deterred most people from voting? When asked what has changed in the voting process due to health safety precautions, Mark Nepl, another teacher at McDonell High School who voted in person, stated, "It was really efficient. There were sanitation guidelines in place, they gave you your own pen to use the entire time."

Still, others decided to use an absentee ballot. "Because of the ... potential of coronavirus, because cases were rising here, that's why I decided to do the absentee," Tozer said.

When voting, it is also important to have all the information you need to make what you think is the best decision for a candidate.

The Blue and Gold

Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

“I looked at each candidate’s websites, I looked at trusted resources, and had conversations with trusted individuals,” Erica Boehm, a youth ministry leader in the high school, said.

Molly Bushman, the President of McDonell Catholic Schools, said her preparation involved becoming extremely informed on all perspectives.

“Read unbiased information about the different candidates, and talk with people that you trust about their opinions and take that to prayer,” Bushman said.

Voting is a right given to the people by the fathers of the country. When asked what advice he would give to future voters, Neppl said, “Get prepared early, find an unbiased source of information, whatever your belief system is.”

“Take time to learn and not just go with what the popular opinion is, or what sounds good on the surface, or what your parents do, but learn for yourself what is true and good,” Boehm said.

The officials elected in Chippewa County through 2020 were Democrat Ron Kind for District 3, Republican Tom Tiffany in District 7, Republican Rob Summerfield in District 67, Republican Jesse James in District 68, Democrat Jodie Emerson in District 91, and Wade Newell for District Attorney.



Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI District 3)



Rob Summerfield (R- District 67)

The Blue and Gold

Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

Fall Student Spotlight: Maggie Craker

By Peter Herron
November 2020



Maggie Craker (12) stands ready to play.
Chippewa Herald Sports

For this quarter's senior spotlight, *The Blue and Gold* has chosen Maggie Craker. The 17-year-old student leads a busy life, balancing school, friends, and sports all at once.

Raised in Chippewa Falls, Craker transferred from Jim Falls Elementary to the MACS system in 3rd grade. She then continued her education at MACS for the rest of her elementary, middle, and high school years. She has maintained high grades throughout her high school career, maintaining an ongoing streak of achieving high honors each term.

"I like mathematics the most," Craker said when asked about her classes. Craker may have inherited her love for the subject from her mother, a math professor at CVTC.

Her favorite teachers throughout her years of schooling include Mr. Justin Kuehl, a literature teacher at Notre Dame Middle School, and Mrs. Brittany Canfield, a McDonell science teacher.

"Maggie is someone who lights up the day of everyone she comes in contact with. She has a spunky personality that makes every class fun. Having Maggie in class made each day interesting and something to look forward to," Canfield said.

Perhaps even more impressive than her excellent academic achievements is Craker's brilliant career in athletics. As an athlete for three years in volleyball, basketball, and softball, Craker has become an intimidating competitor and will graduate with a total of 10 varsity letters. Although all of the sports she plays are important, Craker named volleyball as her favorite. Craker even signed to continue her volleyball career through college athletics at Western Illinois.

"It had everything I was looking for... I love the town, all the opportunities the school has to offer, and the volleyball coaches and program as a whole," Craker said.

"She will be so greatly missed because she always put 110% into every play we had and never gave up on a ball. She also was such a good teammate. She always encouraged everyone. She also always made sure we all were trying our

The Blue and Gold

Autumn 2020 - Winter 2021

best as well,” fellow senior and teammate Kate Roth said.



Craker signs to continue her volleyball career at Western Illinois.

In her limited free time, Maggie keeps herself busy by doing home workouts, learning new card games with her family, baking, and binge-watching Netflix. She also enjoys playing with her dog and hanging out with friends.

She would like to thank her parents and all of her coaches, especially the varsity coaches Kat Hanson and Dewayne Hanson.

When asked what advice she would give to incoming freshman, Craker simply said to “live in the moment.”

“This is something that I didn’t learn the importance of until the middle of sophomore year... [It] seems like you

have forever in front of you, but high school goes by very fast,” the senior said.

To others, Craker advised, “Give everything your 100% focus and effort. There isn’t any point in doing anything if you aren’t going to do it right.”



Craker on the volleyball court.



Craker interacts with her teammates during a game. *Maggie Craker*