



nuff said:
Graduation

Graduation

May 17, 2015



One final gathering. All together, the seniors spend time their time waiting for their cue that the ceremony will begin.

All smiles. Ready for the last day of his high school career, Luke Cavender is eager to graduate.

We did it. One final farewell handshake as this senior walks down the aisle with his diploma.

Hug it out. These two seniors have one last hug together, happy to be moving on, yet glad that friendships will remain.

Oh, gosh, this is really happening. The expression says it all for each member of the graduating class.

One final song. The seniors in choir sing their final song together before taking their seats on the floor of the Center.

It was the day the seniors had been counting down to all school year – graduation. On May 17, 2015, West High bid adieu to around 800 seniors, marking the end of the Class of 2015. For some, graduation was full of nostalgia as they spent their last moments as West High students with their peers.

“I’m excited to spend our last day as West Aurora Blackhawks as a whole group,” said Allison Moore.

The ceremony was once again held at NNorthernIllinnois' Convocation Cneter to accommodate all of the family members of the Class of 2015. Cheers and applause were heard

when each student's name was called.

Before the calling of names and giving of the well deserved diplomas, the class heard from three peers: Valedictorian Stephanie Cheng and classchosen speakers Rachel Metcalfe and Hayden Sak (who had followed in his brother's steps as a speaker) began the honorable ceremony with their remembrances of the past four years.

After four years of finals, passing periods, and schoolwork, the Class of 2015 was ready to begin the next chapter of their life . They began as a team at West Aurora, and forever that is what they will be, after

contributing so much to the school, and onward to contribute to the world.

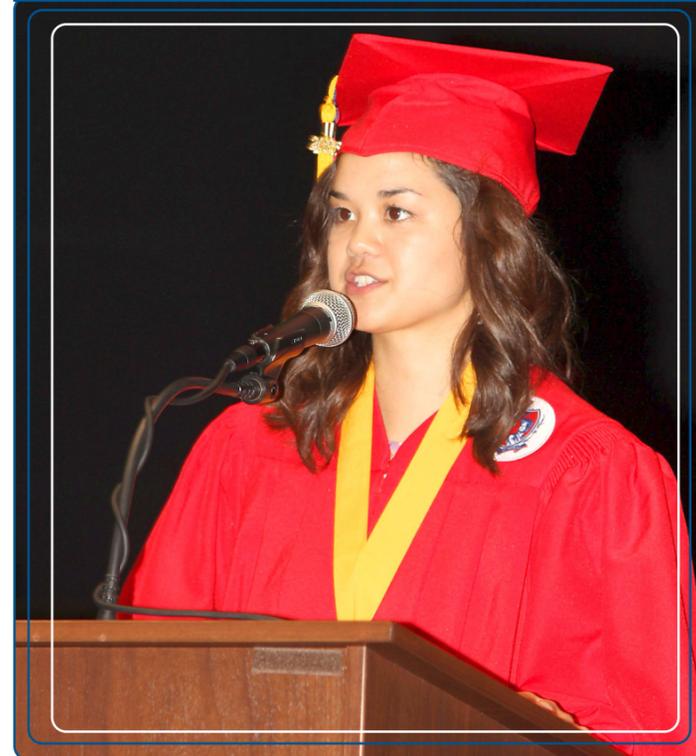
“Thank you for your excellent contribution to our schools. I wish you all the best of luck,” Superintendent Dr. Jeff Craig said at graduation. “Today is the result of a great team effort. We are honored to be a part of the students’ team during their time here.”

With administrators and teachers looking on, one by one, each student walked across the stage to receive their emblem of a rite of passage: a diploma.

Good luck, Class of 2015.



All of it paid off. Giving her farewell speech, Valedictorian Stephanie Cheng reminds her peers of how inspirational Mr. "Kak" had been as a teacher.



Finally over! After four years, these seniors are ready to start their new lives.



Dancing, talking, mingling. All in the evening at the prom. With various designs of dresses and tuxedos, the prom is an evening of formal differences.

All giggles. It may be a formal affair, but who says seniors can't have fun at the prom.

Showing his best moves surrounded by his classmates, senior Rashan Ford enjoys his time on the dance floor.

Getting their groove on. Can you count the various Blackhawks and their dates on the floor? Probably not because of the crowded conditions.

Surprise, surprise. Royalty is crowned with seniors Julie McArdle and Luke Cavender taking the crowns at prom as Queen and King of the evening.



Last dance

Prom 2015

After elaborate prom proposals, major dress decisions and picking out the right corsage, West High upper classmen (and some difficult classmen, too) went to accommodate for last dance and socialization for the dance over the evening: Prom 2015.

For some, prom was an event they had been anticipating since they were freshmen. They spent a great deal of time conjuring up images in their head of how the night would go, who they would dance with, and the great venue. To many, the getting ready for prom was the best part of the entire night.

"I loved dressing up and getting all

pretty," junior Madeline Flynn said.

Besides the fancy dress and music, prom is notorious for being crowded. It is difficult to find a venue to accommodate so many students, but the dance floor was overwhelming crowded. Some dancers were dancing between the tables.

So the night is not about just the clothes and the music, but it is an evening of formality, including the food. While the prom committee (under the direction of Natalie Gross) did a fantastic job of theme selection and decorations, it is the venue that provides the food.

"I mean, it's better than I usually

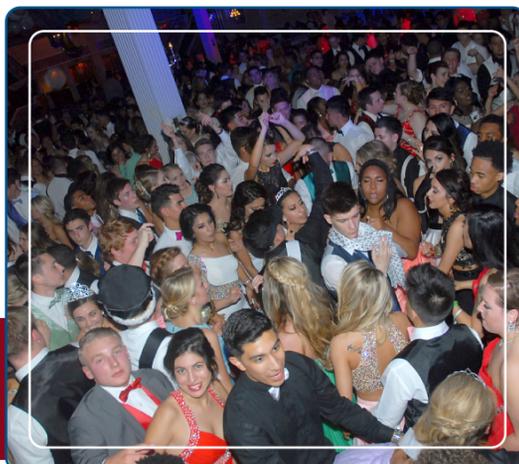
eat, but not restaurant quality," senior Michael Kunze said.

According to many, the potatoes were the only enjoyable part of the meal. This resulted in some potatoes going missing as people were scrounging around for something to eat.

"Someone stole my potatoes. I went to get a drink and they were gone," said senior James Iglesias.

In spite of the crowd and the food problems, the prom lived up to expectations for those who had visualized their "big night."

"I had an amazing night. It was my senior prom and it was great," said Kunze.

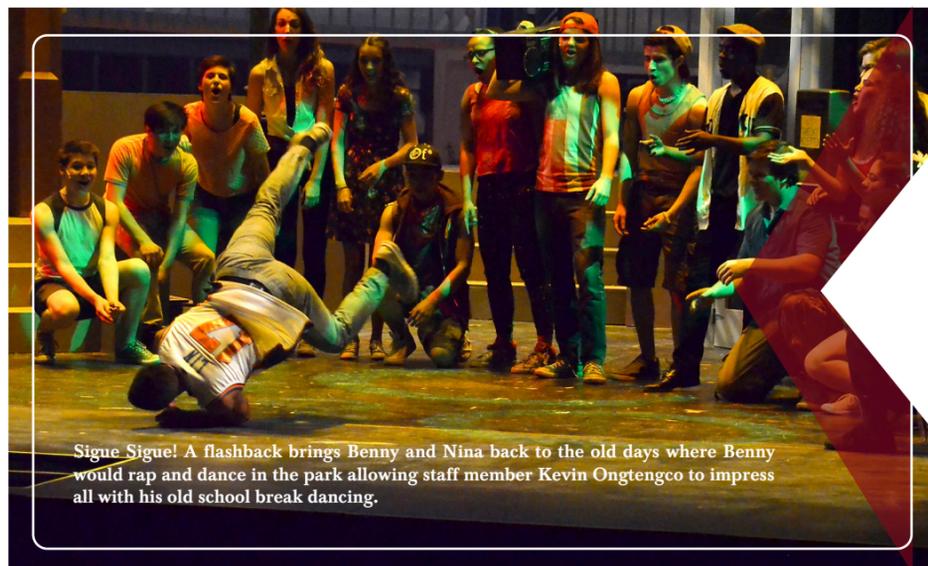


Turning up. Even though the dance area was crowded, that did not stop the dancing.

Tasha Jackson, Anna Ebey, Tory Joray, Gia Marzullo, Sean Anthony, Airianna Quintilla, and Ricardo Torres.



The stage crew is always amazing. They literally are the backbone of any production. Thanks to all, Michael Baggese.



Signe Sigue! A flashback brings Benny and Nina back to the old days where Benny would rap and dance in the park allowing staff member Kevin Ongtengco to impress all with his old school break dancing.

In the Heights extravaganza

"In the Heights" has been another example of our thespians out-doing themselves once again as this breathtaking musical was a wonderful depiction of what West is all about in so many distinctive ways.

How does Theatre Troupe 2013 always manage to step it up each year for the mainstage musical production? Whether it was the roughly 600 man hours of set-build or the underlying passion of the cast, "In The Heights" was a production to remember.

The diligence to make this production possible has been expressed in the phenomenal acting, singing, rapping, and choreography. Not to mention the backstage endeavor with how the stage was so beautifully set up, the lights and effects so perfectly on cue, and, of course, the incredible music from the pit band.

How can we forget the indoor firework show during act ones finale? Or the mural of Abuela Claudia spray painted onto the grate by West's very own junior Carlos Flores?

It is the memories that were made that counts for West's thespians. Unfortunately this year, Theatre Troupe 2013 was forced to say goodbye to our dedicated pit conductor and vocal instructor, Jonathan McClear, who was promoted and is not longer able to assist in extra-curricular activities.

The passion the performers hold for theatre at this school is the soul motivation for pulling off a show like this. The lead in this show, Usnavi DelVega, was played by senior L'ron Suggs Stewart who looked at this show as an opportunity to show the community just how talented West Aurora's theatre program is.

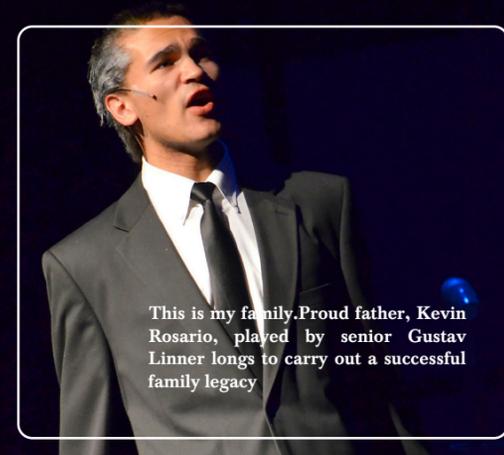
"I feel like we stepped it up this year because

the show was so different from what people are used to. It's a show high schools usually don't attempt," said Stewart.

Part of what made this show so different was the diversity of the performers. There were many featured roles in this show played by seniors L'ron Suggs Stewart, Tremaine Pogue, Terrance Johnson, Lauren Lanahan, Emma Scatterday, Michelle Tigges and Gustav Linner. The show also had a fair share of their juniors, including Patricia Cors, Carlos Flores, Diego Carillo and Mackenzie Costanzo.

But it wasn't only upperclassmen, sophomore Mariana Mercado made her Theatre Troupe 2013 debut as Nina Rosario and performed as if she was born singing and dancing.

Lights Up! Up at the break of day, Usnavi DelVega, portrayed by senior L'ron Suggs-Stewart, sets the scene in Washington Heights.



This is my family. Proud father, Kevin Rosario, played by senior Gustav Linner longs to carry out a successful family legacy



Me Diga! The ladies of the salon, Carla and Daniela, played by seniors Michelle Tigges and Emma Scatterday, get in the barrio one hairstyle at a time.



Look at the Fireworks! After the blackout, the people of Washington Heights gather for fireworks as Benny and Nina, played by senior Tremaine Pogue and sophomore Mariana Mercado spark their love.

WEPA Vanessa! As everyone shares laughs and dances, juniors Carlos Flores and Victoria Linner light up the night.



96,000? With 96,000 dollars Sonny, played by junior Diego Carillo, tells the barrio is big plans to change lives



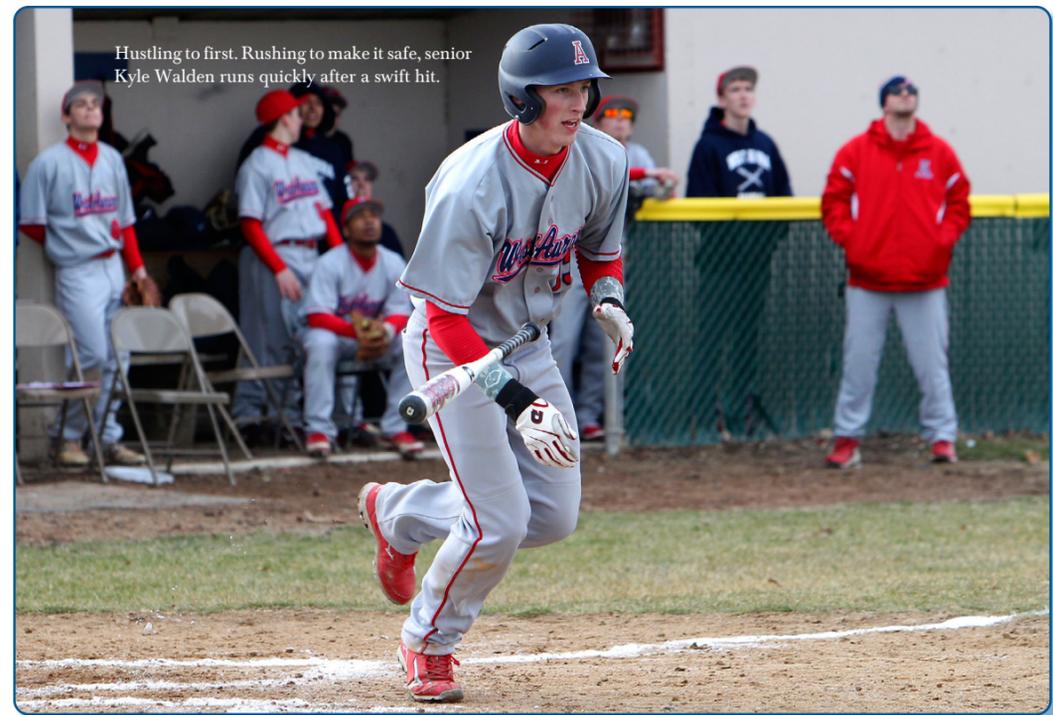


Hes got heat! Launching the ball to second base, senior Seth Palmby assists on tagging out a player.

Stepping up to plate! Getting ready to hit a ground ball, junior Ryan Becker takes his stance.

Hes out! Sending a wicked fast ball, junior Logan Love tries to strike out the batter.

Take me out...



Hustling to first. Rushing to make it safe, senior Kyle Walden runs quickly after a swift hit.

The boys on the field made great strides, but what it has been like to make these gains without a beloved coach, that's something only these players can truly understand.

After a long battle, beloved coach, father, and friend Coach Kak passed away in the summer of '14. It hasn't just been a loss for the players though; off the field is Madison Hoffman, a senior who has been managing the team since she was a freshman.

"It's been so weird without him. He knew how to make everyone smile," said Hoffman on how things have changed without him. Though he is missed always, his memory lives on with the players.

With eight seniors graduating, it had been bittersweet to realize that the high school games are ending. Slowly, the guys realized more and more what baseball means to them.

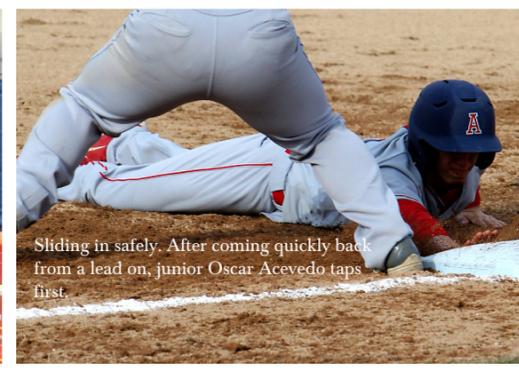
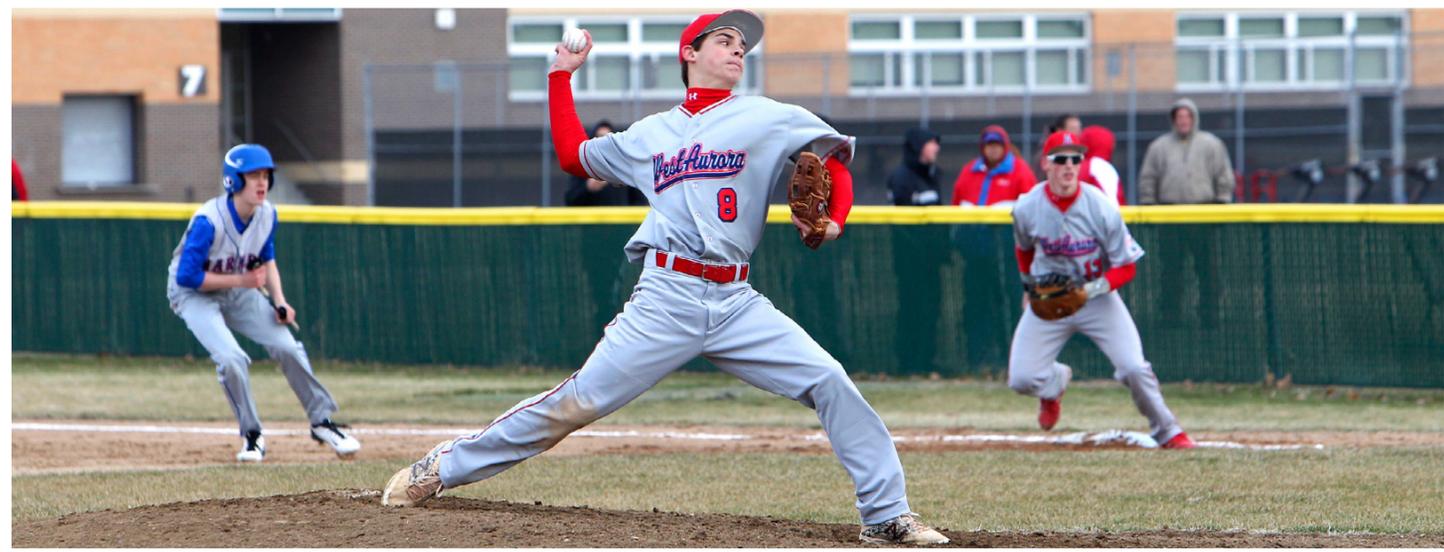
"Baseball is just an escape, and it's just where I go to truly enjoy myself because I love the game, and I love the guys," said senior Cole Rundle.

Seniors Bek Guzman and Becca Pearson took up the job of managers along with Hoffman.

"I've loved baseball since I was a kid, but never knew how to enjoy it with others," Guzman.

Enjoyment is part of the American game.

Varsity Baseball. Front Row: Madison Hoffman, Joe Griffen, Connor Palmby, Brett Kaufmann, Ryan Becker, Philip Mallory, Matt Desjardine, Doug Hershey and Bek Guzman. Second Row: Jared Liebelt, Kyle Walden, Coach Nick Golich, Coach Preston Larrison, Coach Bill Mitchinson, Trevor Hannan and Cole Rundle. Back Row: Jake Arsenaunt, T.J. Jackson, Win Kipp, Seth Palmby, Eduardo Terrazas, Oscar Acevedo and Logan Love.



Sliding in safely. After coming quickly back from a lead on, junior Oscar Acevedo taps first.



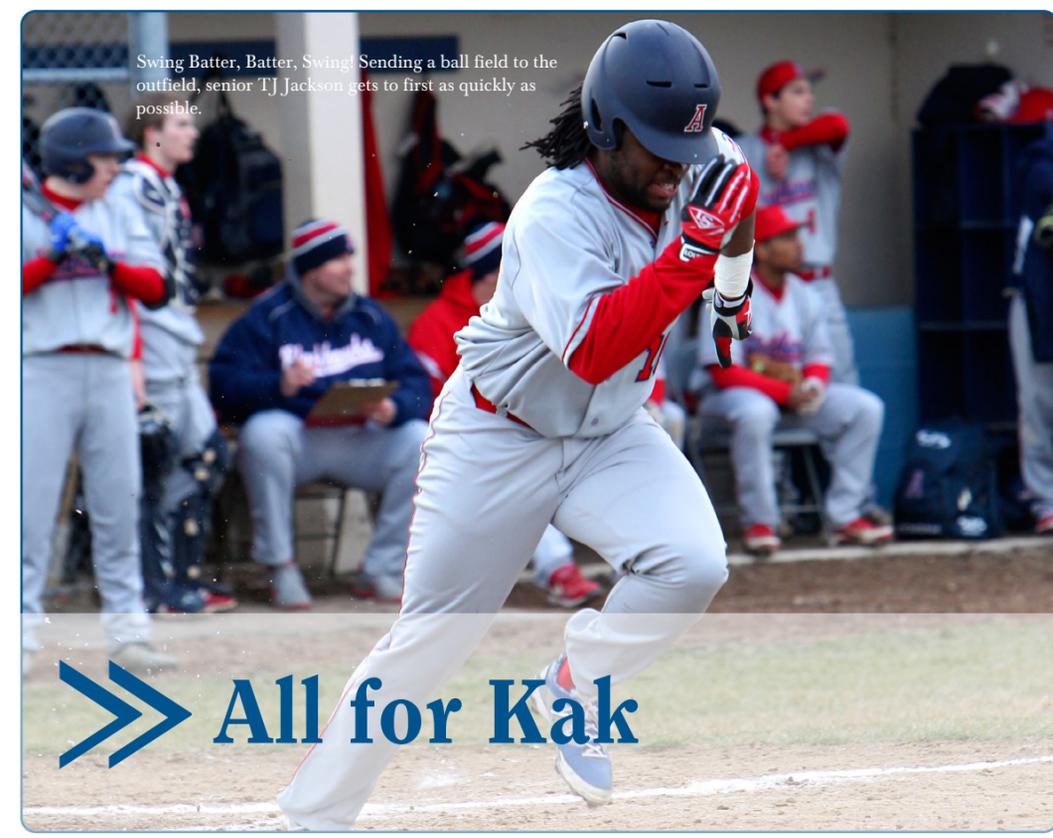
Get the ball to first! Sending the ball from third base to first, junior Joe Griffin rushes the ball to the first baseman.



Getting low. Stretching for a low ball, senior Phill Mallory gets dirty to make the catch.



That's a stinger! Hitting a line drive, senior Eduardo Terrazas connects with the ball.



»» All for Kak

“Never give up, because it motivates us to keep going even if we’re losing,” said freshman Charlie Griswold.

Or in cold, rainy weather. With a spring sport (especially an outside sport), the weather is a factor. Baseball is a sport where keeping warm does not involve “running” unless you are a hitter, to keep warm.

“Don’t take any pitches off, give 100% hustle all the time,” said freshman Cameron Zimmerman

Knowing you are in control of the ball makes it better

“I like being the catcher, because you can see everything,” said sophomore Dustin Hartkopp.

This sport has always been fun for the players as well as the spectators.

“Baseball is the past time of America and, yes, it is something I always have and will enjoy doing” said sophomore Hunter Voss.

some challenging moments, such as going against other teams.

“Neuqua [was challenging] because they could hit, and we couldn’t field,” said freshman Cameron Zimmerman

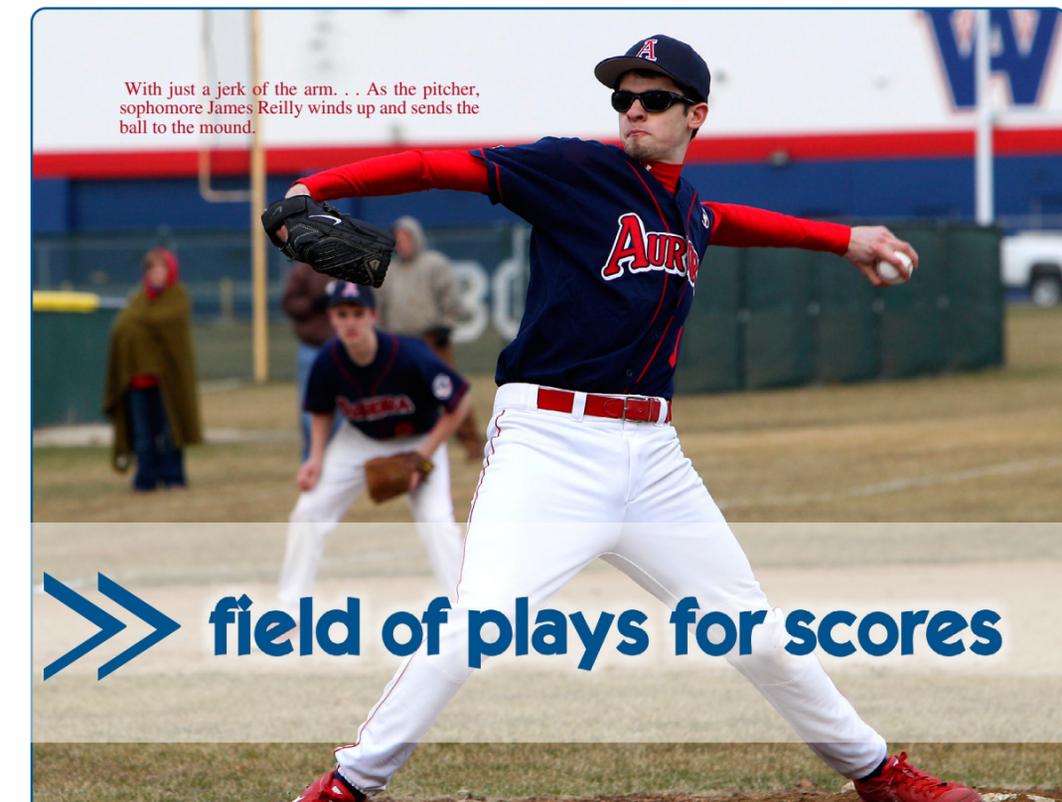
Sometimes baseball is canceled because of the weather, and that means no practice or meets so practice must go somewhere.

“I go in the basement and hit because those days suck” said freshman Griswold

Basements, gyms, fields in the rain . . .all is done for the love of the game.

Freshman. Row 1: Kevin Denovellis, Joshua Adam, James McCann, Jacob Gray, Deondre Perkins, Julio Herrera, Charles Griswold, Dustin Tomas, Isaiah Dieppa. Row 2: JJ Rivera, Alberto Martinez, Coach Tokarz, Coach Carnduff, Coach Johnson, Jacob Pavey, Miles Tonielli . Row 3: Anthony Bustamante, Jordan Perez, Jorge Soto, Aaron Jackson, Juan Diaz, Malik Strickland, Jordan Lanham. Row 4: Reed Branom, Jorge Donatlan, Teddy Hernandez, Sean Zimmerman, Osvaldo Ruiz, Adrian Reyes, Kyle McCoy, Cameron Zimmerman

JV. Row 1: Parker Wallace, Hunter Voss, George Alexandrou, Dustin Hartkopp, Griffin Archer, Myles Whiting, Salvador Emery Row 2: Taylor Zimmerman, James Reilly, Nolan Watts, Coach Adam Butler, Coach Jason Christiansen, Oscar Rodriguez, David Woods, Matt Lenert-Miller. Row 3: Tyler Millen, Johnathan Suarez, Adrian Lopez, Aaron Medlin



With just a jerk of the arm. . . As the pitcher, sophomore James Reilly winds up and sends the ball to the mound.

field of plays for scores

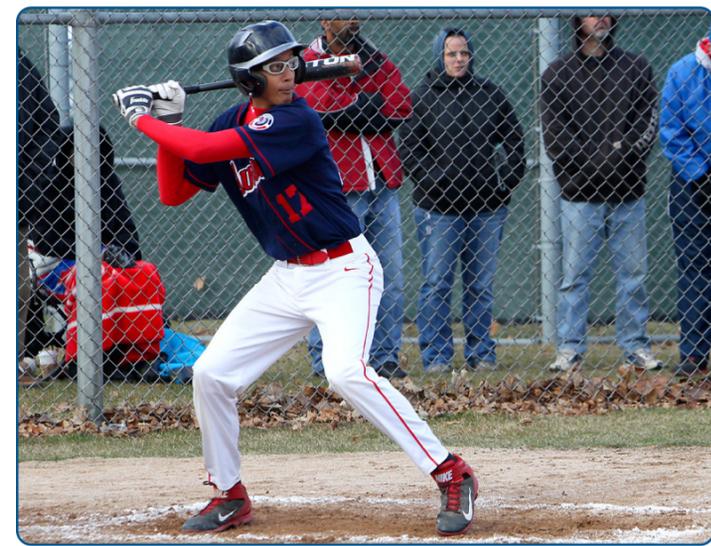
Summer game

Focusing ON THE BALL. Waiting patiently for the ball, freshman Taylor Zimmerman is ready to swing.

Waiting for another try. Waiting at the mound with glove in hand, Evan Losselyoung watches the action.

Perfect stance. Watching where the ball will go for a potential slide into the base is part of the runner’s job, even it means a bit of grass stain on the knee

Safety is always first. With his protective gear on, Blake Hartigan waits for the pitch.



Sweet run home. Running home, sophomore Aaron Medlin tries to steal after the hitter makes his move.



Look back and run forward. Blasting to get to third base, sophomore Myles Whiting goes for the score.



Fireball. Throwing the ball to the batter, sophomore Tyler Millen is ready to release a powerful curve ball.

Girls Varsity Soccer .Front Row: Karina Rios, Karina Patino, Bailey Ziman, Jocelyn Ferrar, Vanessa Garcia. Row 2: Sofia Papoutsis, Carli Hix, Coach Briars, Coach Wagley, Coach Radloss, Raashan Ford, Katherine Stephenes, Mariyah Zeitz. Row 3(Back Row): Riley O'Brien, Yulissa Espino, Nuriya Khurshidova, Anahi Toscano, Hannah Pealstrom, Cristina Sosa, Jessica Ortiz.

Crossing through defenders! Manipulation is senior Yulissa Espino's game as she plays through!

Bumping heads! Using her head for both strategy and bump, senior Hannah Pealstrom readies herself to hit the brawn with brain.

Let's go, Blackhawks, let's go! Leaping into the air, Riley O'Brien kicks at the air, her eyes on the enemy goal.

Perfect form! Leaning to the right, Riley O'Brien kicks the ball, ready to score a goal!



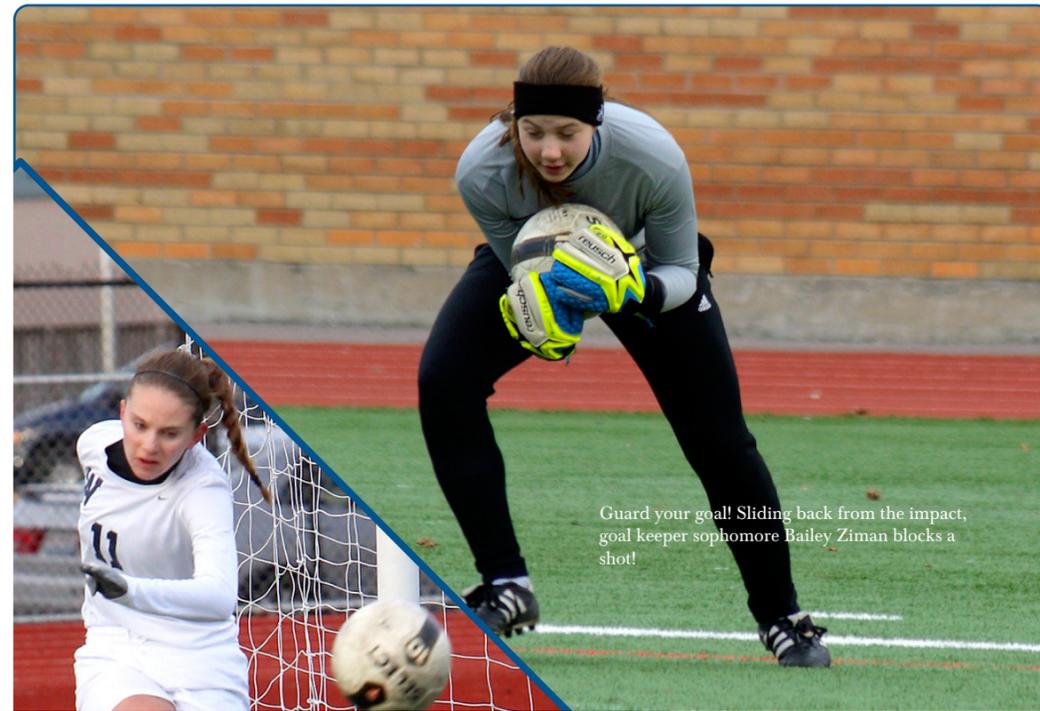
Alive and Kickin'



Control it. Letter winner, sophomore Katharine Stephenes works the ball down the field.

All by herself! Or maybe not, depending how fast those two blues are, Jessica Ortiz keeps the in motion.

Kick it up! Kneeing the ball into the air, Mariyah Zeitz keeps the ball from the enemy.



Guard your goal! Sliding back from the impact, goal keeper sophomore Bailey Ziman blocks a shot!



You go, girl! Hair whipping through the win, Carli, senior, goes in for the kill, moving the ball through defenders to score!

>> the girls play nicely

Girl's varsity soccer punted their way to the top.

The girls' varsity soccer team began with a good start at their first Pepsi shoot tournament; returning back with 2 wins and 1 loss.

"Coach always tells us to give the other team a ` ` hard time," said junior Marayah Zeits. The Blackhawk tournament was another great success for the girls. They celebrated a victorious 3 to 0 win against East Aurora, Rosary and Kaneland.

Throughout their tournaments and scouters from many different colleges looking to recruit some fresh, new players to their college teams came to visit.

"Coach Waggs told us to give it our all; this time is our opportunity," said senior Cristina Sosa.

Through out the season the girls appreciated the support from parents students and staff.

"We got all the support we could get, and we appreciated all of it," said senior Karina Rios.

Their practices had been consisted of intense cardio such as running laps around the schools soccer field though a determined mentality, and perfected their skills.

"I don't really have a favorite soccer player; I look up to all of them. I look up to Abby Wanibache, because she has great will and drive to achieve her goals," said freshman Riley O'Brien.

Despite the lousy weather they had for several weeks, the lady Blackhawks managed to push through.

Through a lot hard work and teamwork, the soccer team rose to victory one way or another. Our school has a sense of determination that can not be imitated, The soccer is a perfect demonstration of how working together winds up in success and most importantly, newly developed skill with any experience a player begins with.

Although the team lost a few games, for our school it is not about winning that drives them. Most of the team players have been playing for a really long time, coming together with people like them really helps the players make new friends and interact.

"Pushing myself to listen to critiques from my teammates is something that I have learned this year" said freshman Hannah Johnson.

With this, it is clear that being part of these teams helped to develop new skills. All together the team decided that they wanted to work on communicating more and improve themselves everyday. Which is what our school is all about, everyday should be lived to improve one's self. Everyone can learn from these charismatic girls who are determined to play every game like its the last.

With all this information, the team encourages everyone to join the team and to leave with a once in a lifetime experience and new friends.

"I encourage everyone to become part of our family, we practice everyday and it's always a blast. I have become a more advanced soccer player thanks to my team mates and myself," said Johnson.

Freshmen: Row 1 (Back): Brenda Durante, Dameria Pedraza, Daniela Rangel, Brenda Cielo, Daisy Nieto, Crystal Guzman
 Row 2: Doraly Vargas, Itzel Ochoa, Kristin Raffanti, Coach Espana, Andrea Guzman, Hanna Johnson, Abosee Kalejaye
 Row 3: Kayla Lopez, Emily Gutierrez, Kassandra Guzman, Kate Martinez, Tpoaz Del Rio, Diana Padilla, Angela Johnson.

Junior Varsity: Row 1 (Back): Nelssy Lazcano, Jade Jamieson, Marlene Sanchez, Mylene Palacios Ferrer, Andread Erazo, Monserrath Espino, Alondra Sanchez
 Row 2: Camila Leon-Galvin, Jocelyn Flores, Mayra Millan, Shannon Cozzens, Evelyn Burchiaga, Anna Rojas, Brianna Malczyk
 Row 3: Duyen Thieu, Vanessa Pyburn, Anna Garcia, Giselle Alarcon, April Alvarez, Giovanni Huerta



Woosh! Freshman Kristin Raffanti dribbles past the opposing team on the way to the goal.



Hand in hand! Fighting for the ball, Damira Pedraza goes in for the kill on the opposing team.

kick and slam



De"feet" never

Dodge! Freshman Kristin Raffanti dribbles the ball away from the opposing team.

Out of the way! Freshman Angela Johnson steals the ball away from the opposing team.

Dominating the field! Ready to strike, Kassandra Guzman keeps her eye on the ball.



Teamwork! Challenging the Geneva opposition, Anna Garcia and Dina Padilla from the team go all out to win the ball over.

Ready to win! Working together for the next game, Angela Johnson and Dameria Pedraza are ready to take on anything.

In mid action! With a striking force, Angela Johnson maneuvers through the opposing team.

Watch for the wind's direction. Throwing around some disks, senior Karl Fowler is using all his energy to make sure his throw is top notch.

Huffing and puffing. Using all his energy, freshman Kyle Melles is making his way to the finish line.

Jumping the obstacles. Leaping over the hurdles, senior Fernando Miranda is making his way to the end.

Gravity has nothing on our guys. Flying through the clouds, sophomore Spencer Locke is pole vaulting through the deep blue sky.



Endurance



Taking a breather. Even though it may be chilly weather, junior Nicholas Thompson takes a break for a second to catch his breath after putting forth his best effort.

The boy's track and field team had a great season.

The team has been performing well, and conditioning so they can continue to build their endurance and stamina levels.

"We've been doing pretty good lately. Hunter [Siler] threw a state qualifying throw, and the team got second place in our last meet," said senior Karl Fowler.

The team worked hard on perfecting different techniques for throwing disks and such, on top of that, they also performed more weightlifting because they did more running during the warmer months of the year.

"We work together and play together as a team, but when it comes down to competitions, we support each other and critique each other's throws, but at the end of the day we are still playing against each other and we all want the best score," said sophomore Spencer Locke.

Some of the team members just joined this season, while some are seasoned players teaching the new kids on the block useful knowledge of the game.

"I have been doing track for seven years, since I was in 6th grade," said Fowler.

There are many aspects to track and field, including conditioning, attending events, perfecting necessary abilities, even just hanging out with friends and bonding with your team.

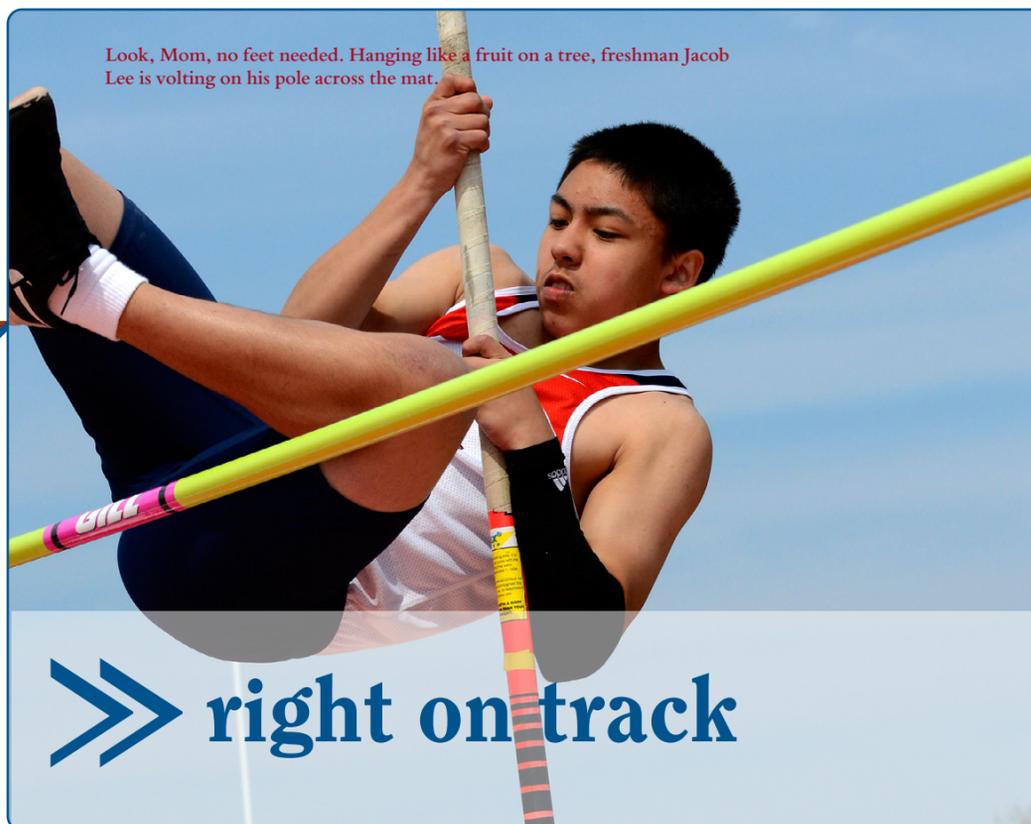
"I like track and field because it is not just simply running. There are many more events to it," said sophomore Bryce Nichols.

Track can be a challenge sometimes, testing your stamina and endurance.

"You have to be precise on your technique to obtain a good score," said sophomore Thomas Yarbrough.

The team had many members, each with his own unique ability to perform on the field as a runner, pole vaulter or shot putter.

Track, known as an outdoor sport, actually begins indoors as basketball was just concluding. With conditioning and "winter track," track is a year-round sport.



Look, Mom, no feet needed. Hanging like a fruit on a tree, freshman Jacob Lee is volting on his pole across the mat.

right on track

Varsity Track. (Row 1) Back Row: Alex DeBolt, Vidal Griffin, Hunter Siler, Trevon Weathersby, Karl Fowler, Rashad Jeffries, Fernando Miranda. Row 2: Dante Battle, Coach Fowler, Coach Melchiori, Coach Lamb, Coach Hilby, Coach Shaw, Coach Rizzo, Zeovan. Row 3: Sam Deisher, Herman Glass, Zach Vincent, Kivanne Johnson, Brandon Agee, Jacob Barbush, Elliot Rounds, Dominic King. Row 4: Gideon Coble, Barry Puckett, Juan Zamudio, Andrew Kline, Tyler Lawrence, Griffin Morrill, Francisco Martinez, Nahom Gebormichael, Baron Smith. Row 5: Issac Degaldo, Steven Castellanos, Nick Thompson, Chris Walker, Chandler Behrens, Cornell Smith, Daniel Murphy, Izaiah Lawrence, Derek Vargas. Row 6: Manager Jessica Puga, Jacob Bailey, William Tyson, Michael Dudley-Pryor, Andrew Churchill, Corey Brown, DJ Warren, Tomas Dominguez, Martin Morales, Norman Talmongan, Manager Jackie Puga.

JV. Front Row: Brian Garcia, Joel Magar, Zach Thorell, Darren Phu, Patrick Reilly, Erick Gutierrez, Michael Schindelbeck, Genaro Perez and Steven Garcia. Row 2: Christian Walls, Todd Winders, Patrick Galloway, Manny Navarro, Michael Castellanos, Jacob Lee, Daniel Jacquez, DT Minor and Percy Williams. Row 3: Kameron Moore, Cionte Carter, Nicholas Catalano, Thomas Yarbrough, Alex Gomez, Bryce Nichols, Joel Ramos and Giovanni Leon. Row 4: Dylan Conn, Austin Fonseca, Cameron Walker, Eddie Fowler, Josh Mayhew, Oscar Gonzales, Christian Kline, Jackson Orland and Noah King. Row 5: Brad Komes, Coach Fowler, Coach Courtney Lamb, Coach Hilby, Coach Shaw, Coach Rizzo and Reece Mavros. Row 6: Chris Strnad, Owen Thoman, Michael Hunger, Spencer Locke, Jose Castaneda, Nathan Broome, Fabian Alonzo, Austin Albright and Jaeshawn Robinson.



Hopping to victory. Steadily making his way to the finish line, senior Fernando Miranda is almost to the end.

Giving it my all. Racing to the end, senior Dominic King is running as fast as he can in order to beat his opponent.

Running start. Ready to pole vault, junior Nick Thompson is preparing for a win.

With one of the largest teams in school, girls Track and Field has a great sense of companionship. All the girls put in their full potential and love feeling the rush when they are in the zone.

“Track is really eye opening because I learned about body rotations and team work!” said sophomore Lasdavanh Vongphakdy.

All the girls, despite their difference in their roles on the team, whether it is shot put, hurdles, sprinting, or running, they all have fun and get along very well.

“My favorite part of track is the fact that my teammates and I aren’t just teammates, we’re a close family unit. We talk and hang out outside of practice, meets, and school,” said junior Kara McCleary.

Being on a team isn’t the only thing that brings them together. Being part of track brought them together as friends and made them all like family.

“Being on a team with so many other people feels a little separated at first, but you definitely get to know yourself. You’ll always find a friend,” said junior Gabriela Aguilar.

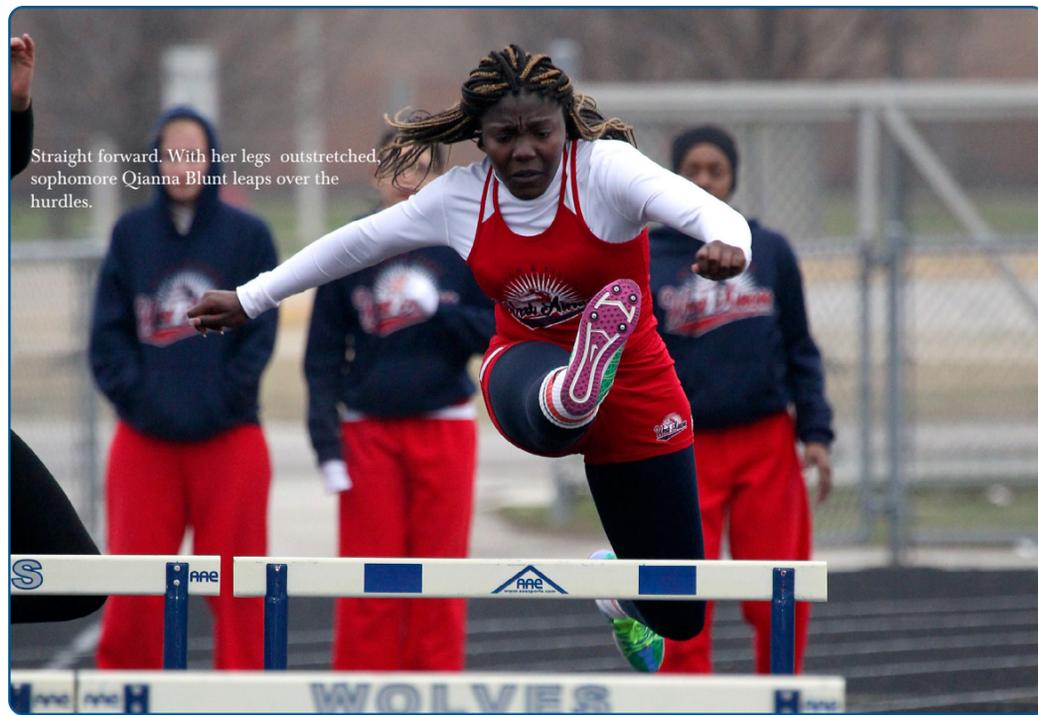
Traveling from meet to meet every weekend can get tiring, but it will never fail to make them feel great after an awesome time together.

The majority of the girls agree track makes you a better athlete and person all around.

“Track made me better because it teaches life lessons but also prepares and challenges me to work at being great,” said junior SaMya Hunt.

Varsity Girls Track. Front Row: Marin Munos, Gabriela Aguilar, Tamia Rayford, Rajiah Andrews, SaMya Hunt, JeMya McClendon. Row 2: Dominique Washington-Manager, Katie Kransinski, Leah Rachow, Joslyn Noel, Tatyana Skokan, Miranda Gollwitzer, Jennine B-Manager. Row 3: Coach Angela Cassetto, Coach Hammarberg, Coach Towles, Coach Veldman, Coach Bobo, Coach Rigaud.

Lower Level Track. Front Row: Arielle Madro, Brooke Nichols, Riley, Brittany Green. Row 2: Essence Rayford, Skylar Doby, Deviena Pratomo, Evelyn Torres, Candleraria Moreno, Lindsay Muth, Courtney Bishop, Lasdavanh Vongphakdy. Row 3: Lauren Harris-William, Sienna Rucka, Estefania Garcia, Jennifer Aguilar, Graciela Garcia, Morgan Mehlbrech, Jennifer Quiroga, Jaslyn Rios, Arielle Flint. Row 4: Kara McCleary, Artavia Jefferies, Molly Schultz, Alegra Chavez, Yesenia Sanchez, Morgan Fogle, Diamond Russell, Thailand Stewart-Love, Ashley Williams Ayriaona. Row 5: Elise Herbert, Amelia Krantz, Qianna Blunt, Kiyanna Rodgers, Dzhamiyya Khurshidov, Izlynd Clark, Taylor Hartman, Omuniquie Smith-Jackson, Ariana Salgado. Row 6: Audrey Krantz, Selene Martinez, Coach Angela Cassetto, Coach Hammarberg, Coach Towles, Coach Veldman, Coach Bobo, Coach Rigaud, Jacara Smith, Marciella Williams.



Straight forward. With her legs outstretched, sophomore Qianna Blunt leaps over the hurdles.



Looking towards the end sophomore, Tamia Rayford runs all bundled up against the cold spring weather, mittens and all.

Another one bites the dust!



Flying to win

Go long. Jumping over the sand, sophomore Selene Martinez flies through the air.

We’re jumping, jumping. Getting ready to land, Kayla Battle throws her hands in the air.

Run like the wind. Ahead of the competition, junior Lauren Hubbard runs with the wind in her hair.

Over the hurdles. Going as fast as they can, the girls track hurdlers jump high in the sky.



No letting go now. Lifting herself into the air, junior Anne Shultz gets ready to flip over the bar.

Almost there. Getting ready to lift herself up over, freshman, Brooke Nichols slams her pole into the ground.

Get on up there. With her hands high, freshman, Arielle Madro jumps with all her might.

Congratulations to the team for qualifying for State in the 4 x 200 meter relay. The following girls placed 6th: Tamia Rayford, Joslyn Noel, Lauren Williams and JeMya McClendon.

"Speed, accuracy, and good sportsmanship" are three of the essential skills needed to succeed in badminton according to freshman Regan Jones.

To the outsider, badminton looks pretty easy. Badminton played at family parties and gym class is what we're used to. Taking a couple steps to reach for the birdie with a light racket. But that's not the case for the freshman girls' team.

"You have to think fast and be quick on your feet," said freshman Pawdoh Soe.

Never knowing if your opponent is going to smash the birdie or give it a light tap, you must stay moving.

Going to badminton game can be a little confusing at first. The score is self-kept and there are multiple games going on at once, up to eight at a time. The game is played either one on one or two on two with a best two out of three game with a winning score of 21.

"We are all like a big dysfunctional family," said freshman Shannon Casey. "We spend a lot of time together and sometimes get into arguments, but that doesn't stop us from being a team."

The team practices every day after school, with a total of at the most four games per week forcing them to spend a lot of time with one another.

"You have to be independent and trust others, but don't rely on them," said freshman Sydni Wallace.

Especially for the singles players, independence is key. Before each serve the girls announce the current score, giving them something else to focus on besides the game itself.

"Through badminton I've learned that it takes time to perfect things and everything will not be perfect on the first try, but don't give up," said Wallace.

Freshman Badminton. Row 1: Isabelle Barriball, Regan Jones, Nitze Ruiz, Jacqueline Rivera. Row 2: Logan Christensen, Ruby Barrera, Shannon Casey, Sydni Wallace. Row 3: Pawdoh Soe, Coach Nieman nn, Karina Antunez.

JV Badminton. Row 1: Corrine Cutlip, Lara Gruninger, Angelise Melendez, Elena Ramirez, Abby Jeske, Brenda Contreras, Athina Gerodias, Rosa Tovar, Lilia Perez. Row 2: Kendyll Leifheit, Emma Wegman, Sydney Butler, Sam Rhodes, Anahi Aguirre, Ashley Meza, Eleanor Krantz, Jordyn Liebelt. Row 3: Josely Hernandez, Geizy Ruvalcaba, Alondra Ramirez, Netty Guzman, Coach Baumann, Sarah Hinckley, Rachel Heiss, Rachel Quade, Nicole Sa'd.



Smashing stroke! Reaching backwards junior Rosa Tovar sets up as she waits for the birdie.



If you want soft serve, go to Dairy Queen. Waiting for the silence, freshman Pawdoh Soe gets ready to serve.

Smashing into the season



Got birdies?

Reaching for the sky! Sophomore Nicole Sa'd stands on her tip toes to get the birdie as her partner, sophomore Elenor Krantz stands back keeping her eye on the game.

Can you make a bird fly? Sophomore Nicole Sa'd can as she sets up the perfect serve.

Stand back! Looking focused, sophomore Emma Wegman extends her arm waiting for the birdie.

There's nothing bad about badminton! Keeping her eye on the game, sophomore Sam Rhodes has her racquet ready.



Serving up a storm! Ready and focused, sophomore Alondra Ramirez sets up for the match.



Hands up! Talk with your racquet, play with your heart. Freshman Ruby Barrera awaits for the birdie.



Order on the court! Watch out, sophomore Jordyn Liebelt has her racquet ready to make a smash.

Another successful season with two players, Keira Lofthouse and Jordyn Poppen, going to State competition.

Much preparation and practice was needed to make this year as successful as it was. As with any sport, as soon as the final rings, the team is ready to play against each to improve their skills.

"This season was awesome!" said senior Mary Sutarik. "Everyone on the team really bonded and became family."

Many assume that this sport is just a backyard sport, but these students proved to everyone that this is a sport that shouldn't be scoffed at.

"People always assume that badminton is an easy, leisurely sport", said junior player Vita Pratomo. "Those joining usually believe that they will need to put little or no effort. My tip: brace yourselves. We run, we drill (over and over), we learn, we push ourselves, and we prove that badminton is an honorable sport."

"Another exciting part of the season was receiving the sportsmanship award," said Sutarik. "This award is only given to one Illinois HS badminton team each year, so it was awesome knowing that others noticed our attitudes on and off the courts. This is by far the best team I have been able to be a part of!"

West will always be proud of the 2015 team, also.

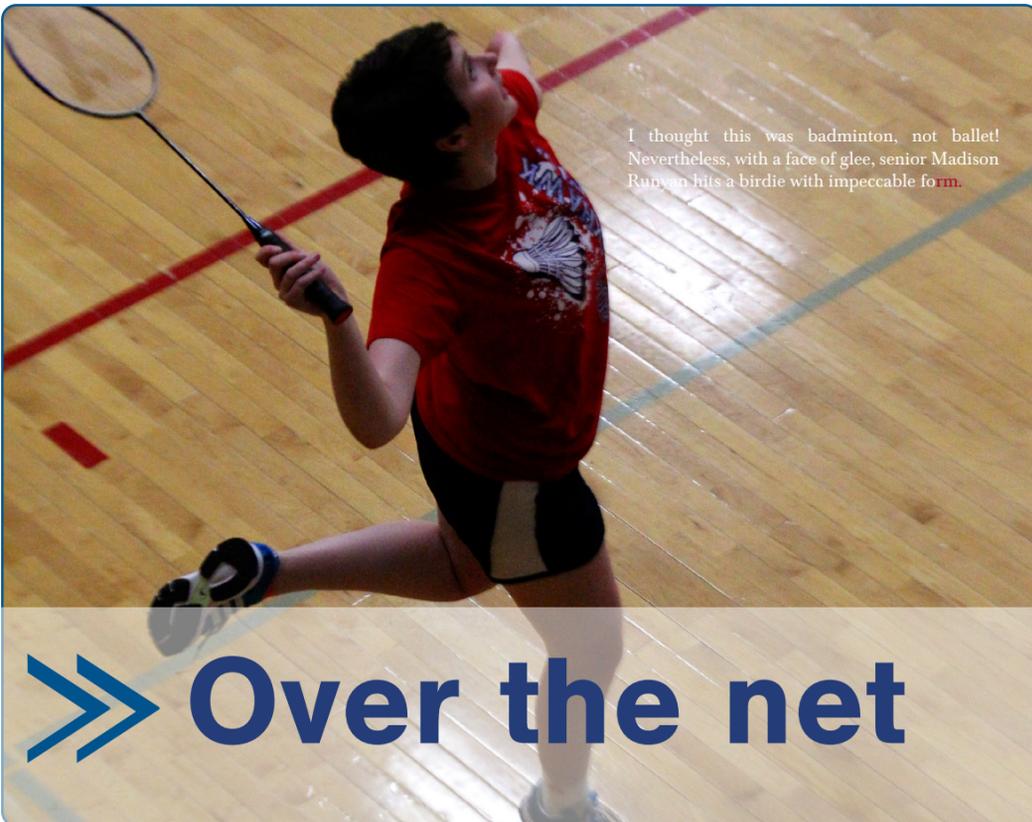
Row 1: Alissa Johnsen, Katie Vongphkady, Mary Sutarik, Christin Dumba, Cynthia Saucdo. Row 2: Amber Moenkemier, Keira Lofthouse, Jordyn Poppen, Madison Runyan. Row 3 (Back): Vita Pratomo, Coach Lopez, Christina Valdes



Serves up! Heels in motion, Christin Dumba shoots a birdie over the net.



I thought this was badminton, not ballet! Nevertheless, with a face of glee, senior Madison Runyan hits a birdie with impeccable form.



Over the net



Serves up!

To the right, to the right, to the right, to the right! Redundant, yet catchy and to the point. Her eyes trailed on the birdie, Jordyn Poppen is ready to smack that sucker down into the opponent's court with NO MERCY!

Will it make it? Probably, with this West Aurora badminton player. Knees bent down to the floor, her gaze is fixed on the incoming birdie.

Why so serious? Because seriousness is the only way to play with badminton, especially West Aurora style! With a one-track mind to victory, senior Katie Vong, senior wipes the sweat off of her brow after a long, hard game.

She's a queen, she's mean, she's the statue of liberty! With her hands up in the air like she doesn't care, this West Aurora badminton player shows off her patriotism during play.



Where's that birdie? Oh wait, in your hand! However, nothing wrong with playing dos. Christin Dumba focused gaze on up and beyond, gets ready to transfer it to the opponents' feet.



Serving or shade? Either way, she's got spirit! With a flick of the wrist, junior Vita Pratomo serves the birdie with as much elegance as any aggressive player can muster.



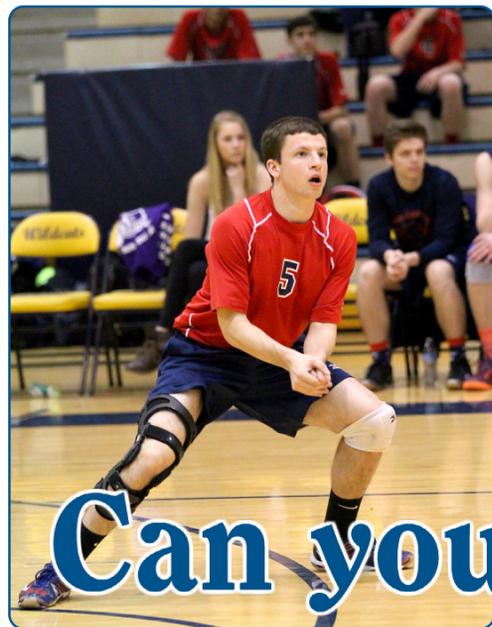
Sweat, work, repeat, girl! Out of breath but not out of steam, Katie Vong, senior, gets ready to demonstrate once again how great a badminton player she is.

When you play ball, leave it all. Waiting for the ball to extend over the net, junior James Roggeman bumps the ball with focus, anticipating a drop over the net.

King of the court. The face says it all as junior Justin Reynolds shows his dominance after a victory.

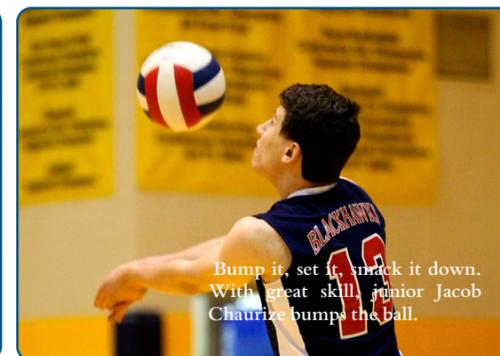
Welcome to the block party. Whoever is the tallest makes the block as juniors Chase Kilmer and Justin Reynolds jump high to successfully block the ball.

Not a team, but a family. Huddling together, the varsity team encourages one another before going back on the court.



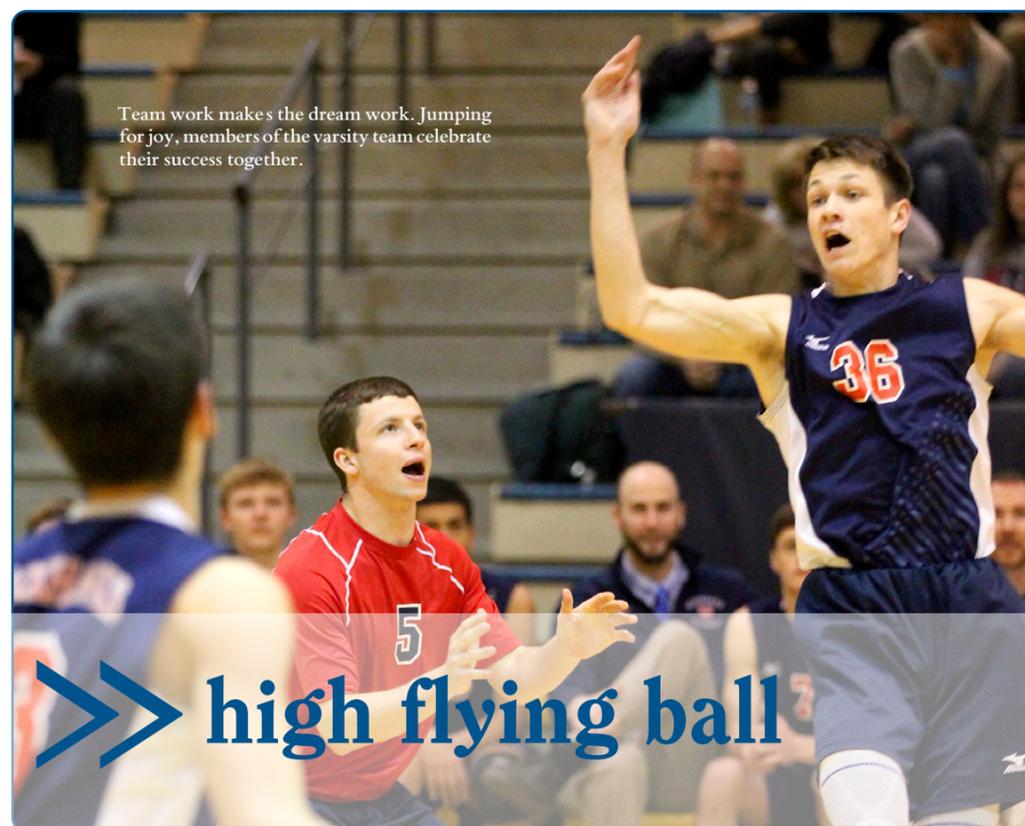
Can you dig it?

Reach for the stars. Junior Adam Fitzgerald sets the ball to his teammate with great skill.



Bump it, set it, smack it down. With great skill, junior Jacob Chaurize bumps the ball.

Team work makes the dream work. Jumping for joy, members of the varsity team celebrate their success together.



high flying ball

“Our attitudes towards each other and the task at hand has begun to change, and it is leading us in a positive direction,” said sophomore Tommy Garcia.

While a positive outlook adds to the successful varsity team, it certainly is not the only improvement they have made this year. The team, comprised of mainly juniors with a few senior and sophomores, is older, wiser, and more skilled than in years past.

“This team is different than in previous years because we are generally older and we have developed more chemistry,” said junior Adam Fitzgerald.

With a record of 7-8 mid-May, the team has succeeded in several important victories: defeating Wheaton North, Wheeling, Glenbard North, St. Charles North, and Geneva.

“Glenbard West was probably our most notable game,” said junior James Roggeman. “They’re a very good team and both times we played our hearts out and almost won.”

As with any other successful team, however, volleyball is not all fun and games. Strenuous amounts of work go behind every practice, as well as difficult training on the off season. Many of the varsity athletes have played club volleyball prior to high school or continue to play on their off season.

“Club volleyball gives you an edge above someone who does not have prior experience,” said sophomore Thomas Kovanic.

Between off season training, practices, schoolwork, and other extracurricular activities, it appears the varsity volleyball team performs a balancing act daily. True dedication is evident, when the busy individuals still have a drive to make their team the best it can be.

“Volleyball takes up so much time, but I have chosen this life and sport for a reason,” said Garcia. “Volleyball gives me passion and happiness. I love the amount of work required because I know where it will lead me in the future to come.”

Row 1 (Back): Thomas Kovanic, Coach Mike Schwerdtfeger, Coach Tolis Koskinaris, Coach Kevin Mortlock, Coach Grant Marlowe, Justin Reynolds. Row 2: Chase Kilmer, Vincenzo Mannella, Tom Garcia, Emmanuel Chaidez, Nicholas Catania. Row 3: William Shoemaker, Adam Fitzgerald, James Roggeman.



Serving up a win. Setting the tone for a win, sophomore Emmanuel Chaidez serves the ball to the other court.



I pledge allegiance. With hands folded behind their backs, sophomores Thomas Kovanic and Vincenzo Mannella say the "Pledge" prior to the game.



Eyes on the prize. Intently watching the ball, sophomore Tom Garcia spikes it with great force.

How does a team measure their season? In wins, or losses, maybe even improvements made by the players and overall as a team? Try in memories, in friendships, and in lessons taught that will last a lifetime. It is measured in coaches that help the players grow, on and off the court, and in boys who gave their all every single game.

They did their best, and made time off the court to make sure the team was able to get along and act as one well working unit.

“We worked hard every day in practice and hung out a lot outside of practice. This helped us build a bond that improved our play on the court,” said Kevin Carder

“Playing volleyball has allowed me to become a better leader, as well as form countless friendships with many great people.” said junior Ryan Golembeck on what volleyball has given him. He had more to say when asked about what the sport means to him.

“Playing volleyball has become such a great aspect of my life, and I have made memories that will last a lifetime,” said Golembeck.

“Volleyball is life; it’s been a huge part of mine. It’s fun, competitive, and an outlet for me to relieve any stress or issues I could be dealing with. I’ve learned to have grit and never give up on a play or a teammate, because they could still have faith in you,” said sophomore Alex Barton.

It’s not about the games won, or the mistakes made, it is about the sweat and work put into every play, and what the boys take from every mistake made.

Front Row: Arturo Balines, Isaac Jaquez, Jacob Oakley, Ricardo Torres, Jared Peters, Erik Olson, Jacob Riggs, Janick Macias, Devin Moore, Sarah Hinkley. Row 2: Sydney Butler, Jacob Barbush, Roberto Martinez, Joe Griffin, Dan Capici, Oscar Acevedo, Nick Thompson, Nick Catalano Row 3: Aron Medlin, Xavier Bijarro, Jason Jude, Josue Vazquez. Row 4: Coach Curran, Ubaldo Torres, Rodrigo Delacruz, Stone Swayze, Rashaud Jefferies, Baron Smith, Damerick Evans, Cody Hett, Cesar Gutierrez, Rashann Ford, Carlos Jaquez, Coach Wallace, Dominick Rodriguez Row 5: Coach Plata, Nick Spagnola, Jordan Wellington, JaeShawn Robinson, Miguel Delacruz, Alex Gonzalez, Cory Bunnetto, Noah Cavender, Steven Norman, Taylor Zimmerman, Alex Roldan, Bayron Vargas, Coach Crawford



Reach for the sky reaching high for the spike Junior Ryan Golembeck achieves new heights



Net rewards

Don't worry—we got this. Mid air, both freshmen Michael Walker and Carrick Coakley defend their side of the court.

Hands in the air like they just don't care. Extending long, freshman Arturo Alcala reaches for the set.

Oh, no, you don't. Blocking the ball from coming over the net, sophomore Tyler Erikson keeps the game going.

Not alone. Although he appears to me a one man team, sophomore Tony Carlini just is the correct position to spike the ball.



Waving hello from the court with his arm ready Junior Ryan Golembeck prepares to defend his court.

Spike it for the win



High five! Palm ready to set the ball, sophomore Tyler Erikson gets in position to score.



Outta here! Working as a team, sophomore Zuriel Badillo takes leadership to spike over the ball.



Almost there. Anxiously waiting for the set sophomore Tony Carlini stays under the ball.

JV and varsity tennis played this season with remarkable teamwork! Not only is tennis a great way for any student to try something new, but it can become a very competitive sport. Getting the best of both worlds, tennis allows any person joining a great time with each meet.

The vibes of all the people involved are extremely welcoming; the atmosphere of being outside can relieve the stresses of school and put the players in a mood to be proud to be part of a delightful group of individuals with own aspirations.

"I hope to one day go to college and get a job in physical therapy," said Ian Sewell, varsity player. Meeting these individuals will be an eye-opening experience. Becoming part of them is a step further!

With one notable victory, these individuals, each meet comes together in more improvement, we will not back down! These teammates put in 150 % contribution to each meet, and still believe they can do better each time. This is a mindset very special to have and portrays exactly what our school spirit is like with any sport too.

Winning or losing, there is always room for improvement. Building leadership skills and social skills, tennis players always have an enjoyable time playing each other, making friends, and competing skills they have built as a team. "Being part of the tennis team has boosted my self-esteem and also made me a more athletic person" said junior Ariqu Quach.

Tennis is a very small sport not a lot of people know about at our school, but the impact it has on people who join is very inspirational. Trying new things sets a person in a new directions, opening more doors and crossing new paths that can last a lifetime. Pushes peers to become their best selves, the end of this season will mark gratifying success to these team members.

"Being part of the tennis team leads you to rely on each other and trust one another to win or be successful" said senior Evan Castillo.

It is very much encouraged by these Tennis players that a lot of new faces come with next year! Building one's self to become a varsity player is an incredible accomplishment, even if one's athletic career is very brief. The satisfaction will be worth the new experience!

In action! Running across the court junior Elliot Barbel keeps his eyes on the ball as he reaches for victory.

Attitude is everything! Keeping his eyes on the prize, senior Irving Espinoza gets ready to destroy the other team.

Good game! Approaching in a handshake Seniors Lorenz Von Arx and Ian Sewell come together after a mutually accomplished game.



Setting the scene! With active teamwork, senior Lorenz Von Arx reaches for the ball while senior Ian Sewell keeps a look out on the opposing team.



it's love of the game



our court advantage

Varsity: Row 1 (Back): Meliton Chaidez, Ariq Quach, Caden LaFond, Evan Castillo, William Isiminger. Row 2: Coach Bill Stanley, Ian Sewell, Shawn McCarney, Irving Espinoza, Lorenz Von Arx, Noah Barbel, Joey Resko

Junior Varsity: Row 1 (Back): Jonathan Barajas, Austin Wood, Aaron Avila, William Lannefeld, Michael Nelson, Sebastian Sanchez. Row 2: Oscar Carrillo, Jack Farrell, Elliot Barbel, Mr. Kaiser, Charles Kropp, Michael Butler, Simon Barbel. Row 3: Luke Reimers, Ulisses Rios, Alan Marcial, Michael Penaloza, Fernando Galacia, Bradley Gordon, Eric Amaya

Reaching for success! In mid action, senior William Lannefeld dominates a hit with strength.

Ready for action! Keeping an open eye, senior Caden LaFond is set for whatever comes his way.



Watching out! With great attitude, senior William Lannefelch approaches the court with skill.



Backflip! With attentive movement, senior Ian Sewell keeps focus on the ball.



Going the extra mile! Moving energetically, senior Lorenz Von Arx strikes with force.

"I need to put in 110% effort in every play and every ball hit, so I can make a spectacular play, not just an average play," said junior Jamie McCreedy.

McCreedy is not the only one on the team who feels this way. The talented members of the varsity softball team are ready work harder and harder to make this their best year yet.

"I hope we make it to state for all of our seniors who won't be back next year," said junior Corey McCreedy.

As a way to pave their path to success, the girls each found something new to improve with themselves or the team.

"I'm worked on being a more vocal leader," said senior Taylor Podschweit.

It is clear through all their effort that the girls on the team love the sport. Many of them have been playing since childhood with many going on to play in college or hope to.

"I've always enjoyed representing our school," said Podschweit. "I've played softball my whole life, so playing for our high school is very important to me."

Podschweit recently signed to play softball at the University of Indiana in the coming fall.

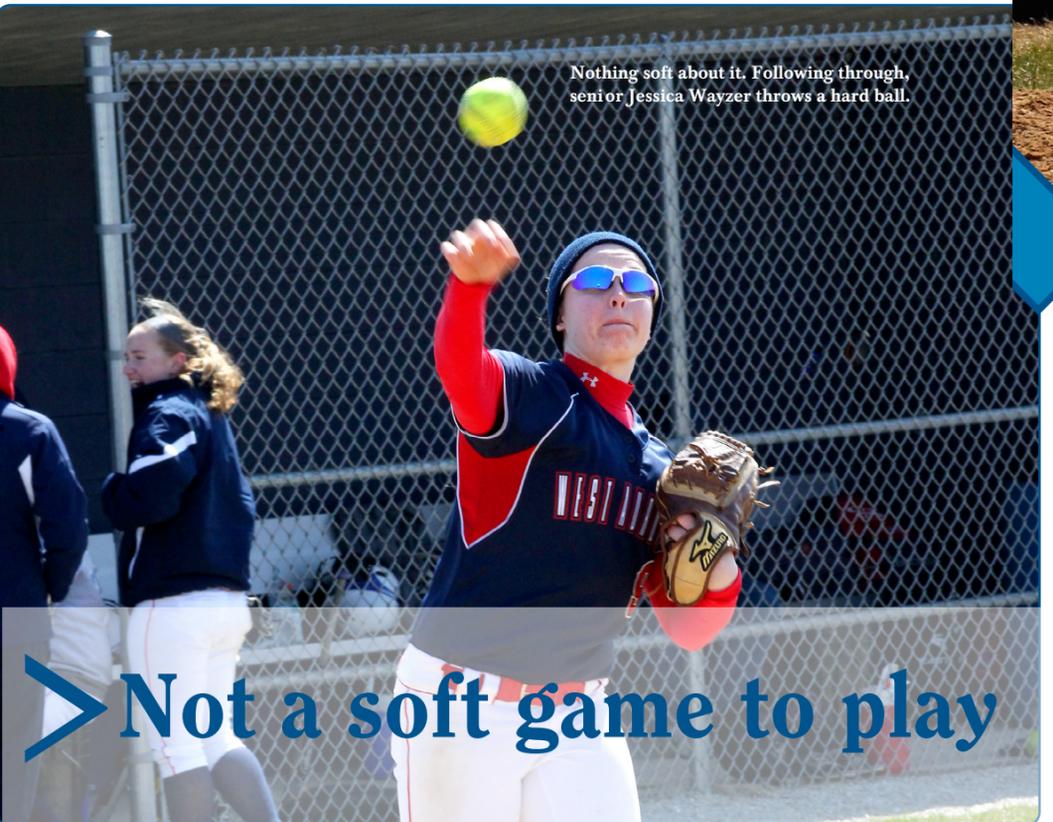
One of the toughest competitors for the girls was Bartlett High School; however, the girls worked hard and procured another win, keeping their team in the lead for Upstate Eight.

You're out! Throwing the ball back to get the other team out, senior Jessica Wayzer saves the team from losing.

Concentration. Focusing on the ball, junior Kimberly Shliff prepares to hit a home run.



Versatile player. Voted by all of her teammates as their best player, sophomore Hannah Beatus changes pace as she bats instead of pitches.



Nothing soft about it. Following through, senior Jessica Wayzer throws a hard ball.

> Not a soft game to play



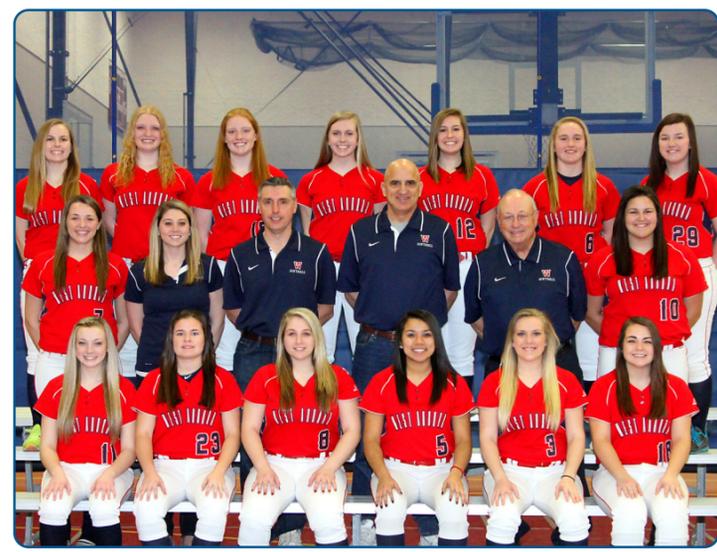
Not a "girly" sport

Swing, batta batta! Gearing up to hit a home run, junior Jamie McCreedy positions her bat.

Out of my way! Watching her teammate bat, junior Alexis Faxon begins to run the bases.

Getting low. Crouching down, senior Kendall Podschweit catches a ground ball.

Varsity Softball. Front Row: Hannah Beatus, Taylor Podschweit, Kim Shliff, Jessica Vargas, Lexi Faxon and Kendall Podschweit. Row 2: Kallie Rundle, Coach Lindsay Herwaldt, Coach Randy Hayslett, Coach David Zine, Coach Neil Ormond and Cara Jimenez. Back Row: Jessica Wayzer, Jamie McCreedy, Grace Hunger, Tori Hunger, Carley Frauenhoff and McKenzie Copjer



Think fast! Throwing the softball, senior McKenzie Copher shows off why she Iowa Wesleyan signed her on as a pitcher.



I got it! Getting low to make the catch, junior Corey McCreedy fields a ground ball.



Gotta catch them all. Protective gear on, junior Kimberly Shliff catches a curveball.

Hit 'er home! Up to bat, junior Jaclyn Sanchez is prepared to hit the ball for the run to home. plate.

Eye on the prize. About to swing, this jv player makes eye contact with the ball she is about to hit out into the field.

She ain't hittin' it soft. Swinging through, this jv player hits a softball out of the ball park.

Under and over. Pitching underhand, sophomore, Victoria Harkless throws an excellent curve ball to the opposing team.



Angels in the outfield



Swing it through! Swinging the bat, sophomore Sarah Hansen hits the softball out field.

Hustle, hustle, hustle! Hustling for the ball,, sophomore Savannah Swayze jumps out to get the ball flying across the field.

Victory! Coming back from a home run, freshman Elizabeth Zoppa smiles and jogs it out after her victory.

Chuck it real good. Pitching the softball, freshman Emma Boland throws the ball as hard as she can to the opposing team.



As these beautiful angels made their way out on the field, they played hard and proved themselves to be true. Blackhawks on the softball diamond. Over the season, they worked hard and bonded in order to make the team work.

"I am very happy about this season. I am so glad I have the opportunity to work with such a great group of girls," said freshman Faith Pokryfke.

The fact that these girls got along so well made it easy for them to play well.

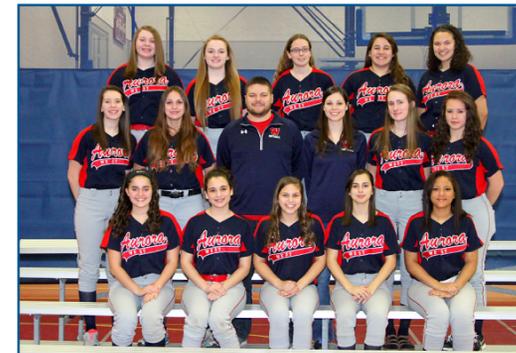
"We joke around and we get along. We felt an instant connection," said freshman Aislinn Strusz.

This connection is what brought the teams together and bond over the sport.

Whether they won or lost, they always remembered to be a strong and mighty team of the Blackhawks.

"Even though we've lost in the past, we still play our best and have had great games as well," said sophomore Sarah Hansen.

It is a long season for the players, but they played to the last day of school and beyond.



Bring it on home. With eyes of determination, sophomore Sarah Hansen plans out her up and coming perfect hit



Swing, batter batter

Freshman Softball. Row 1: Lauren Deliman, Savannah Swayze, Melanie Garcia, Melanie Oswald, Janessa Hodges
Row 2: Emma Boland, Sarah Love, Coach Dave Gesiakowski, Coach Erin Mikulecky, Caiti Gallagher, Vanessa Franco. Row 3: Amanda Lasky, Oriana Baltierra, Jami Puga, Colette Palmer, Desirae Turner

JV Softball. Row 1: Megan Campbell, Victoria Harkless, Coach Nicole Faulstich, Aislinn Strusz, Sarah Hansen. Row 2: Faith Pokryfke, Madisyn Ocasio, Alyssa Getz, Elizabeth Zoppa. Row 3: Emily Catania, Melissa Fidler, Bridgette Ortlieb, Jaclyn Sanchez

TIMBER! Outstretching his stick, Dominic Degaetano trips the enemy, sending him toppling down.

Group hug! As twin disasters, two Blackhawks team up to take the enemy down.

Run, Forrest, Run! Holding his lacrosse stick like an Olympian holds the torch, Saul Rubio runs to the aid of his fellow Blackhawks.

Before we got our own lacrosse team, all most people knew about the sport was that it was epic, fierce and violent (and featured on MTV's Teen Wolf).

However, these ball-in-net-newbies made a name for themselves and put their mark on the green grass of West Aurora.

One Blackhawk lacrosse player, Kobe Nguyen, sophomore, had much to say about his newfound brotherhood.

"[A] local friend introduced me," said Nguyen, when asked about what jump started his interest in lacrosse. "[One of my new friends is] Dylan Hannon."

Nguyen and the rest of the guys on the lacrosse team improved over the short season.

"It's a new sport and [we're] learning new fundamentals," said Nguyen. "[We've grown] very much. Everything we can think of has improved tremendously."

He advises other people to join the team as well.

"If you're thinking about joining, just do it!" said Nguyen. "[It's] worth the \$500 to join."

When asked to join next year, he exclaimed, "YES!!" Great on teamwork, defense and speed, the only thing Nguyen can really think of to improve the team is more people. So join next year, Blackhawks! West is BEST!



La-crosse into a new era!



B-hawk piñatas!

Varsity. Row 1: Saul Rubio, Dominic Degaetano, Reed Deblois, Luke Bivins, Aidan Degaetano, Ben Laurx. Row 2: Rordan Stanton, Dyan Hannon, Cody Horvath, Andrew Miles, Dylan Bernal, Chase Bennett, Matt Jelden. Row 3: Dylan Harvey, Tristam Kimbrough, Austin Chione, Christian Gomez and Kobe Nguyen.

You want a piece of me? You're going to have to watch yourself first! With his teeth gritted into is mouthguard, Kobe Nguyen guards the enemy player as he catches the ball, ready to intercept.

And I'm FREE-FREEFALLING! Well, it may look that way, but Saul Rubio is actually running at top speed, with his gloved hands tight on his lacrosse stick, racing to win.

High five? No, way down low! That's how this Blackhawk has his lacrosse stick positioned, for good reason! With his head up high, he's got his eyes on the prize.

Perfect parabola! As he runs, Andrew Miles slams the ball to the goal.



Let's spar! With his hand wrapped around the head of the stick, it looks like Dylan Hannon is about to throw a javelin!



ATTACK! As the enemy has possession of the ball, three brave Blackhawks are ready to take him down!



I got you, bro. Dominic Degaetano is in hot pursuit, a fellow Blackhawk waits in the wings, ready to back up his friend.