

# The Storm Report

## OAKES TORNADOES UPDATES

October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025



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## 2025 Fall FFA Leadership

By: Ava Thompson

The 2025 FFA leadership conference focused on looking at strong leaders and helping them ready to take action. I have interviewed a few people, and I will share their thoughts. According to Shayle Zimbelman, the main goal of the conference was to help students learn how to be kind, caring, and helpful leaders. At the conference, students discovered that leadership isn't just about having a strong reputation about themselves, its about taking action and helping others.

There were lots of fun lessons and activities. Rebecca Schlader said that at the gold conference, students learned how to start conversations, take action, and practice leadership skills. She explained that they did activities and got everyone talking and meeting new people. Erin Rodine added that the conference helped students feel more confident, especially when talking in front of big groups or meeting new friends. She also said her favorite part was meeting people from all over the state, while learning new leadership skills.

Students also learned things they could bring back to their own FFA chapters. Shayle Zimbelman said she learned about different leadership styles and how they can help with solving problems. Erin Rodine explained that students worked together on service projects to help people in need, which also led to long lasting friendships. Rebecca Schlader reminded everyone that leadership is important in FFA because members are role models and need to show responsibility and their respect for agriculture.

Even though the conference was a great experience, Shayle thought it would be nice to add more breaks so students could rest and move around. Overall, the 2025 FFA Leadership Conference helped students gain confidence, build teamwork skills and learn how to be strong leaders both in their schools and in their communities.

## When the phones rang, OHS answered- Stronger Together!

By: Kalyn Haafke

For years, Vickie Kelly and Mary Lou Sundby kept hearing the same thing: **donations would make a bigger impact if the money stayed local**. That idea, plus their passion for helping people in Dickey and LaMoure Counties, is what inspired them to start Stronger Together, a nonprofit that makes sure no cancer patient in the area has to fight alone.

“Our goal has always been to support people right here in our communities,” Kelly said. “Through Stronger Together, we can provide financial help with treatment, care, and everyday needs so patients and their families can focus on healing and hope.”

The foundation’s mission is simple: **to make sure no cancer patient in Dickey or LaMoure County fights alone by helping with treatment costs and daily life expenses**.

Their kickoff event was a huge success. The Survivor Event had over 50 attendees, and the speakers sharing their cancer journeys inspired everyone. The online auction raised \$3,600, and ten teams helped answer phones during the telethon. Organizers think this year’s total might even beat last year’s \$50,000!

A big part of the event’s success was OHS students. Members of Honor Society, Student Council, and Vision Zero helped answer phones during the telethon for an hour and even served lunch. “Their energy really made a difference,” Sundby said. The students like to make it a little friendly contest between the groups to see which group is able to raise the most money. When Eli Dinger was interviewed by Ricky, he was asked why he was helping, “To beat Honor Society, and to raise money.” A little friendly comptetion never hurts.

“Some local businesses also stepped up just a week before the event to provide the meal we served,” Kelly added. “The turnout and donations were incredible.” With money still coming in, the foundation is hopeful they’ll reach their \$60,000 goal.

The funds will be distributed after the foundation’s fiscal year ends in December 2025. People can submit nominations on the website, and a committee will review applications before the board makes the final decisions.

If anyone wants to help, they can reach out to Vickie Kelly (701-710-0152) or Mary Sundby (701-210-0613) to volunteer, donate, or join future events.

Looking ahead, Kelly and Sundby want to raise more money each year and help even more families in LaMoure and Dickey Counties. “Every dollar counts, and with community support, next year could be our biggest year yet,” Sundby said.



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## Washington, D.C Turned me into a Leader

By: Breann Young

This September, Marley Foss, one of our North Dakota HOSA state officers had the chance to attend the Washington Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C. She said it was a cool and exciting experience because she was able to connect with leaders from all across the country while also exploring the city.

At the conference, she met with the International Executive Council of HOSA and got to talk with other state officers from different states. She explained that sharing ideas with them was really helpful and gave her lots of new things to bring back to North Dakota HOSA. One of the most memorable parts of the trip for her was visiting the Holocaust Museum and touring the city. She said both were powerful and interesting experiences that stood out from everything else.

Marley also shared how the trip helped her grow as a leader. She learned that leadership is not just about being in charge but about listening to other members who might not always have the same voice or role. She also realized that leadership works best when everyone uses their strengths together. The main skills she used during the trip were communication and teamwork, which helped her meet so many new people. She said seeing other leaders who were confident and well-spoken inspired her to keep growing as a leader herself.

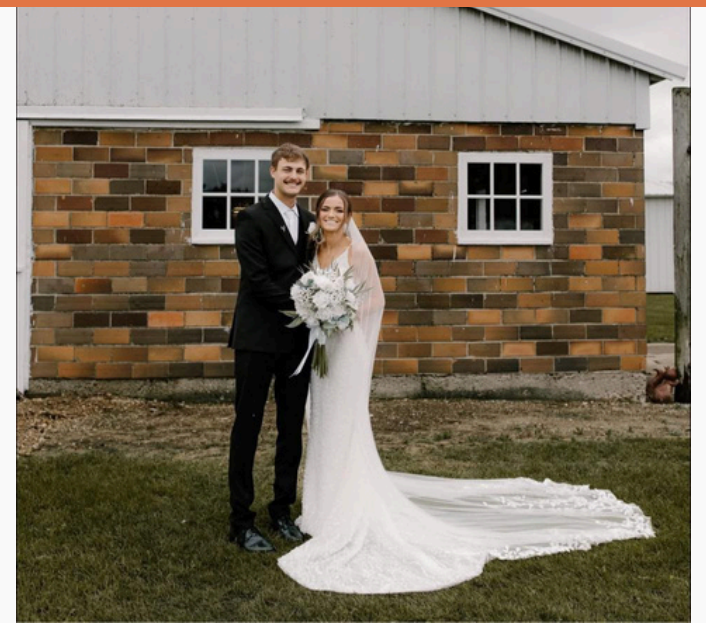
Marley is excited to bring back new ideas and connections she made to help North Dakota HOSA improve and continue to grow. When asked what advice she would give to anyone thinking about running for state office, her answer was: “Do it! It is such a fun experience. I have created so many new friendships and grown so much as a person and a leader.”

Overall, her trip to Washington, D.C. showed how HOSA can open doors and help students grow as leaders while making connections with people from all over the country.

## Back to where it all Began!

By: Lila Iverson

Lanie is an Oakes Public School alumna from the class of 2021. On September 20th, 2025, Lanie and Connor Shall got married at the Awender Sail Barn. So now the happy couple has returned to Oakes to start their new life together. Lanie is a small business owner of The Spa Next Door. Our mass media class thought it would be a great idea to highlight someone from the past who still has a mark today. Her journey has brought her through school, relationships, community, and now marriage. What has affected her throughout her life in Oakes?



Lanie was great on the starting line as she was breaking records. During her time in school, Lanie said, "I enjoyed being a student, unlike many who couldn't wait to graduate." She loved her time in Oakes. "Our class was super close," she said. "So, it made every class, sport, and school event so much more enjoyable." She says those friendships and experiences helped shape who she is today, teaching her lessons she still carries with her, such as taking risks, not being afraid to fail, and learning from every experience. When asked if she always knew she and Connor would stay together after graduation, she said, "No, because when you are in a relationship in high school, you are still so young. People change; plans change. You just have to follow your own path, and if they match up, great." After graduation, Lanie knew right away that she wanted to come home. "I love the community and the small-town feel. Big cities just are not for me," she said. "I wanted to give back to the community that supported me all through high school, especially during sports."

Now, as she and Connor begin their life together, Lanie is excited to build their future here. "It makes me super excited to hopefully raise our future children in this community. You are always supported, even by people you may not even know. It is a wonderful feeling." Coming home also gave Lanie a chance to start her own business. She opened The Spa Next Door, offering facials, lashes, and brows to the community. "The community was so supportive from the start," she said. "I did a survey to see if people would be interested in the services I was offering, and everyone was so encouraging. People here are open to trying new things, and that trust meant so much."

Being a young business owner has not always been easy. "Owning and opening a small business in a small town can be tough," she admits. "You never know if your schedule will stay full or if you will make enough to rely on. You do not get benefits like health care, and sometimes you have to work late until six or seven at night to get people through the door and build those relationships. But it is all worth it." Lanie hopes her business helps make Oakes feel more connected and complete. "I just want to give this community options we have not had before. Not everyone wants to drive to another city for nails or spa services. So, I wanted to help make our little town feel like it has a little more to offer."

Looking back, she is amazed by how far she has come. "It's crazy," she says. "When I graduated, I thought I wanted to be a chiropractor. But plans change, and that's okay. You never know what's better for you until you take a risk." Lanie also shared some advice for current students who are trying to balance school, sports, friendships, and relationships. "School always comes first. Education is an investment in your future," she said. "Time management is real, even if you don't believe it now! When it comes to friendships, remember quality over quantity. A few friends who really care are worth more than twenty who don't check in on you." Her biggest piece of advice? "Make time for yourself. Everyone's always on the go but taking time to slow down and focus on yourself is super important."

For those dreaming about the future, Lanie's message is simple but powerful: "Do it, even if it doesn't work out. At least you know you tried. It is okay if things do not go the way you planned. If it's not meant to be, it's not meant to be. God has a plan for you."

From high school classmates to lifelong partners and business owners, Lanie and Connor's story is a true example of how love and community can bring things in full circle. Their journey reminds us that sometimes the best place to start your future is right here, where it all began, at home in Oakes.

# The Storm Report

## Teacher Spotlight



By: Naldysen McKay

What inspired Nolen Peterson to become a teacher was his mom, who was a special education teacher for 35 years. He saw how much she cared and how many lives she changed, and that made him want to do the same. This year marks his 22nd year of teaching he spent three years at Turtle Lake-Mercer and the last 19 years here in Oakes.

For him, the most rewarding part of teaching is seeing his former students who he still calls “his kids” grow up to be good people. He keeps his students motivated and engaged by doing all the little things in the classroom that have evolved over time, like starting the day with news, having “play of the day,” random music days, and fun talks about sports or hunting.

His favorite classroom project is when students use Ancestry to make their family trees. He says it’s always interesting to learn how people came to be, and he even learns new things about his own family every year. One lesson he hopes his students always remember is his saying, “Don’t be a butthead.” To him, that means being kind, respectful, and humble realizing you’re never the most important person in the room. When challenges come up, he handles them by being consistent and fair. Most of his students know what will happen if they break the rules before they even do it. His favorite thing about Oakes School is giving high fives and saying hello to everyone in the hall, especially since even the older kids smile for a high five.

His goal for this school year is to keep getting better and continue learning from others. Some of the best advice he’s ever received came from his college football coach, who told him to never think he’s the most important person in the room and that he’s capable of more than he thinks.

His favorite class to teach is Law and Justice because it’s unique there’s no other law class in school and he gets to bring in guest speakers to show students how the law works in real life.

When times get tough during the school year, he stays motivated by coaching basketball in the winter he knows he has to show up for his team no matter what kind of day he’s had. His advice to new teachers is simple: you don’t have to be perfect, and kids need structure, discipline, love, and encouragement.

## Tornadoes on the Move: Junior High Fall Sports Update

By: Addie Umbreit

Every varsity star starts somewhere-and for the Oakes Tornadoes, that ‘somewhere’ could very well be junior high. The Oakes Tornadoes are known for their hard work, dedication, and teamwork-and that is evident whether they’re competing on the court or battling it out on the field. We often shine the spotlight on our varsity football and volleyball teams, but let’s not overlook our rising junior high Tornadoes. These young athletes are crucial in laying the foundation for future success and growth for Oakes. So, let’s take a closer look at how the junior high Tornadoes are progressing as their seasons continue.

No matter the team, the cheering from the community is what encourages them to do their best each game. We see their progression through the season as they put in the work during practice. Showing up to support the Tornado athletes pushes them to strive for their best each game.

# Guess the Teacher

By: Jyles Meier

WHAT'S A HOBBY YOU LOVE OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL?

CAMPING



WHERE'S THE MOST INTERESTING PLACE YOU'VE TRAVELED TO?

VENEZUELA



FAVORITE COLOR?

YELLOW



IF YOU WEREN'T A TEACHER, WHAT JOB WOULD YOU HAVE?

I'D JUST BE A PARENT.



FAVORITE MUSIC ARTIST?

DAVID CROWDER



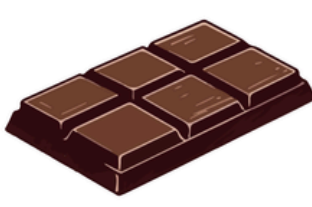
FAVORITE CAFFEINATED BEVERAGE?

COFFEE



FAVORITE CANDY?

ANYTHING CHOCOLATE



ANSWER WILL BE IN NEXT NEWSLETTER!

To begin with, the junior high football team-coached by Ryan Schneider, has had a kickstart to their season with five notable victories. Starting off their season, the junior high boys took to their home field winning against Richland 20-0 on August 25<sup>th</sup>. This was just the beginning for them, as they continued to successfully compete throughout the month of September. Likewise, the Oakes football team traveled to LaMoure on September 2<sup>nd</sup> earning a victory with a score of 20-0. Additionally, the Tornadoes had another victorious game in Lisbon winning 40-0 on September 15<sup>th</sup>. During their season they have been staying consistent winning throughout the past month. September 22<sup>nd</sup>, they had another home game, claiming the field with a score of 36-0 against Sargent County. One final game to point out was on September 29<sup>th</sup> against Northern Cass, 30-8. As they reflect on these earlier games, they can see just how much dedication is contributed to the football team.

Of course, make sure you’re staying up to date with the team to cheer them on. As their next game is approaching, wish the junior high football team good luck on October 14th when the Oakes Tornadoes play EEK at 4:30 p.m., here in Oakes. Next, the Oakes junior high volleyball team has also been putting in the work. Coach Jordyn Kelly and Jaidyn Hill gave an update on how the volleyball girls have been progressing.

On September 16th, the junior high Tornadoes competed in a triangular at Milnor facing off Sargent County and Lisbon. Both the 7th and 8th grade teams pulled out a win against Sargent County by came up short against Lisbon. However, the 7th graders bounced back on September 23rd in Oakes, where they defeated Ellendale and Lisbon in another triangular matchup. Meanwhile, the 8th grade team faced tough competition that day, falling to both Ellendale and Lisbon. September 30th brought more action as the teams traveled to Edgeley. The 7th graders brought home another win, while the 8th grade team was defeated in their match. Despite the losses and victories, the junior high team continues to learn from each and stay dedicated to their work during practice as they continue to grow. Within this past week, the junior high volleyball team will have traveled to LaMoure on October 6th where they competed at 4:30 p.m. Continue to support the Oakes Tornadoes by showing up and cheering loud!



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## Senior Spotlight

By: Kalyn Haafke



For this issue our senior spotlight shines on a student who’s as dedicated to his sports as he is to being himself. A four-sport athlete, he’s spent his high school years on the football field, basketball court, baseball diamond, and golf course. His favorite class? Gym, of course — not just for the activity, but for the chance to hang out with Mr. Sagert, his favorite teacher. “He taught me to do what you love, and love what you do,” he said.

When it comes to favorite memories, one moment stands out: sneaking onto the juniors’ homecoming float as a sophomore during the homecoming parade. Homecoming continues to be his favorite tradition, a week that brings everyone together. Outside of school, he can usually be found farming or fishing, with his two dogs, Bug and Melvin, close by.

His journey through high school hasn’t been without challenges. “As a freshman, speaking in front of a crowd felt impossible.” Over time, he learned not to worry about what others think — a mindset that helped him grow into his confident, down-to-earth self. He says the biggest influence in his life has been his grandpa Larry, who’s taught him everything from playing chess to being a good person.

Looking back, he’s most proud of simply making it this far. Being a senior, he says, comes with a mix of excitement and nostalgia — the responsibility to set an example for younger students while managing the stress of it all. His advice to his freshman self is simple: you don’t need a girlfriend to be happy.

After graduation, his main goal is to make it through his first year of college — one step at a time. For now, he’s focused on soaking up the last moments of high school life, surrounded by the friendships that mean “absolutely everything.”

## Crosswalk Safety

By: McKenna Allston

It’s estimated that 50 years ago, 50% of Americans walked to school. Currently, about 12% of children walk or bike to and from school. Teaching young children is crosswalk safety is essential to prevent accidents and injuries.

On September 26th, 2025 the vision zero members took time to teach the first graders how to safely use the crosswalk. Vision zero is a strategy that works to eliminate all traffic fatalities. This was an effective way to teach the first graders because this demonstration from the high school is it is much more engaging than a lecture from their teachers.

In conclusion, vision zero is great for all. It teaches teenagers leadership skills. It improves safety in kids and strengthens community bonds. This activity leads to a generation of safer and smarter pedestrians.



### TOP 10 WAYS TO SURVIVE A MONDAY

|    |                                     |
|----|-------------------------------------|
| 1  | CAFFEINE                            |
| 2  | SNACKS                              |
| 3  | TAKE A NAP AFTER SCHOOL             |
| 4  | GO TO BED EARLY ON SUNDAY           |
| 5  | TEA FROM WILD WOLFF                 |
| 6  | JUST POWER THROUGH                  |
| 7  | FIND JOY IN THE SMALL THINGS        |
| 8  | FAKE IT TILL YOU MAKE IT            |
| 9  | REMEMBER FRIDAY IS ONLY 4 DAYS AWAY |
| 10 | CALL IN SICK                        |

CAFFEINE  
CAFFEINE  
CAFFEINE  
CAFFEINE  
CAFFEINE

Snack Time

A SURVEY WAS GIVEN TO OHS STAFF AND 7<sup>TH</sup> -12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS. THEY WERE ASKED "HOW DO YOU SURVIVE A MONDAY?"

50 PEOPLE TOOK THE SURVEY AND THESE WERE THE TOP 10.

## Batter Up, Limestone Down

By: Isaac

With a new baseball season on the horizon, making sure the field is ready for the rough and tough of it all is very important (oh, and the players should be ready too). Which is why the school is incredibly thankful for a generous donation of \$4,000 from Capital Credit Union. Though some of you may have been interested in what exactly the money was spent on. Luckily, Activities Director, Robin Paul was willing to sit down and discuss so we can get the insider scoop.

The first thing to know is why exactly were we granted this massive sum of money? Robin stated that “it was used to pay for the agri-lime at the field at Cummings field.” Hopefully this can help boost the new team’s field performances. With the field freshly coated, there should be some positive effects that come out of it, so when asking Robin how she felt about the new field, she responded, “It’s great; it’ll really help the baseball team,” so here’s to hoping that this season’s a good one.

Such a generous donation is greatly appreciated; I’m sure our baseball staff would agree. I asked if they would want another. Robin responded with, “We can always use donations for projects; there are always upgrades needed.” So if you have an oil rig grandparent, rest assured your money is safe with Robin. With all that being said, the real question is whether or not the agri-lime will help improve the baseball team’s performance. Robin seems to think so, commenting, “The new agri-lime will help us as well as other legion teams.” It’s a shame it couldn’t just be our team’s advantage. With all that’s said and done, thank you Capital Credit Union, and we wish the baseball team a SMAAASHing good season!!!

