



Blue & White

A Weekly Production from the MHS Journalism Class

P.O. Box 580-Montezuma, IA 50171- www.montezuma-schools.org

Homecoming Hoopla

MHS Student councils prepares for Homecoming 2017 festivities.

By Chase Talbert
It's that time of year again—homecoming—but instead of having a piece on the homecoming court or the football game, the newspaper staff and I decided that Montezuma might be interested in what it takes to make this event go off without a hitch. I interviewed Ms. Earlene Taylor, acting leader of student council, and Samantha Yarbrough, a senior member who has been in student council for her entire high school career. Ms. Taylor has been running the student council for the last five years, even though this may seem like a short time there has been. Since Ms. Taylor began running student council, she has seen a number of homecoming activities taken away for various reasons, a few new ones

added to replace them, and more encouragement to show school spirit and pride for your community. Even when Ms. Taylor wasn't head of the student council, it was still the student council's responsibility to plan and organize all homecoming events; that has remained the same since she was in high school. Ms. Taylor and Ms. Yarbrough's both enjoy the end of homecoming, but Ms. Taylor also enjoys working with the student council members and watching the kids enjoy homecoming activities her and the student work so hard to come up with, while Ms. Yarbrough enjoys testing out the games for homecoming. Ms. Taylor's least favorite part of planning homecoming is

trying to make sure everyone is happy with it while Ms. Yarbrough's is having to design the homecoming shirts. Ms. Yarbrough may not enjoy designing shirts, but she does, however, enjoy student council. That is because she is able to have a choice in the decisions that affect the high school student body. When asked about the difficulty of being on student council, Ms. Yarbrough said this, "It's only hard if you don't want to put in the effort that it takes to be a student council member." The most difficult part of planning homecoming for Ms. Taylor is organizing everyone for the parade, getting speakers for Braves Night and organizing that, and making sure it all runs smoothly.

Despite the difficulties that come with planning homecoming, at the end of the day, Ms. Taylor still enjoys it, but only because she gets to do it with the student council. People may know about the work that Ms. Taylor puts into homecoming, but she also wishes for everyone to know about the sheer amount of hard work the student council members put into helping with Braves Night, surveying the students, and helping organize other homecoming activities. Lastly, Ms. Taylor had this to say to the community and any others planning to be involved with homecoming, "Please attend, support our students, help us cheer on our athletics to a victorious week and participate where you can."



SENIOR STUDENT COUNCIL: Back row - Andy McCulley, Breck Goodman, Hanna Jones, Chase Talbert. Middle - Jenna Walter, Sam Yarbrough, Shelby Helm. Bottom - Charles Bowen.

Photo credit: Stevie Reed

A History of the Montezuma FFA Chapter

By Brayden Stockman
The Montezuma FFA chapter has been an important part of our school since it was created on April 13, 1936. Since its formation, it has grown into a school wide organization that hosts around 25 competitions for students. Since the beginning of the chapter, 85 individuals and teams have won at the state level. Nine teams then became national champions. Rick Swenson, the Montezuma FFA advisor, has been coaching FFA at Montezuma since he started teaching at the school in 1988, this being his 29th year. He has watched the growth of the Montezuma FFA chapter throughout much of its lifetime, since before the acronym of Future Farmers of America was replaced with the National FFA Organization. Although the Montezuma FFA chapter had

been open for 52 years before Swenson came to teach at the school, Swenson certainly assisted in growing it to its current state. "It from was a long, sometimes painful, process," said Swenson about growing the FFA chapter from farmers to a wide variety of the student body. Since his arrival as the Montezuma FFA advisor, Montezuma has won 85 state competitions. Of these competitions, the Farm Business Management team has won state every year since 1994 but 2015, and has won nationals 5 times. Over this time, the competitions offered have changed very much. "Probably most of the competitions we have now didn't exist when I came here. It's more or less what the students want. Dairy products and horse judging used to be popular with the students,



KATIE DUNLAP, above, is in her first year as English teacher at Montezuma. Dunlap previously student taught and substituted here.

Photo credit: Carrie Jennings

New Teacher Spotlight: Katie Dunlap

By Carrie Jennings
Katie Dunlap, high school and junior high English teacher, is one of the newest additions to the Montezuma High School staff. Although she is new to the staff, she is not new to teaching here in Montezuma. Her first taste of Monte came from student teaching for half a semester in 2015. Later, she began substituting here for a year before applying for a teaching position at Wilton High School in Wilton, Iowa. She taught there for a year before returning to Montezuma High School to teach English. Dunlap believes that being a teacher is much different from being a substitute. "It's a lot more work," she admits, "[but] it's also nice since you're able to craft your classroom to fit your personality." Despite the workload, Dunlap loves being a teacher, especially one who teaches English. When asked why she chose to pursue a degree in teaching English, she replied, "My English teachers were the... [people] that inspired me most as a student, and I want to be able to inspire students, too."

so good, she states, but other days can be the best. Dunlap does her best to make her classes as interesting as possible. She continues to improve on making her lessons more interactive and having less lecture time. She states that she could also continue to work on bettering her classroom management skills and her ability to explain concepts to students. Though Dunlap is hard at work teaching all of her students, she is also learning a lot from her students. One lesson she has learned is that everyone has a story, and they should not be judged based on their surface behavior. She also would like to mention that she loves working here at Montezuma High School. "The staff is so supportive, [and] the kids are great," she beams. "Monte feels like a second home to me." If she could change one thing about the school, though, to make it better, it would be to add a high school library, something many high schoolers have been asking for for a long while. In conclusion, Dunlap wishes to address the Montezuma community: "I feel very fortunate for the opportunity to teach in this close-knit community, and I look forward to setting roots here."



BLUE AND GOLD AT HEART: Above are some paraphernalia from the Montezuma FFA Chapter. Mr. Swenson and Mrs. Schanbacher have been advisors for 29 years and 5 years, respectively.

Photo credit: Elliott Stockman

but there was less of a demand, so we don't do it as much. And we've only done Experience the Action for two years now, because some students wanted to try it," said Swenson about the differences in competitions between when he arrived and now. Another major change in the Montezuma FFA chapter is the addition of junior high FFA. "When Mr. Moretz and Mr. Versteeg gave me permission to search for a second ag teacher, we had the manpower to accommodate more kids. I think it's a tremendous bonus," said Swenson about the decision to add junior high. Junior high has since found success, winning state multiple times since

its formation in 2013 with their lead advisor Lindsey Schanbacher. Swenson continues to this day to travel with students to conventions and contests, and says that he enjoys it very much. When asked what his favorite part of advising FFA was, he stated, "Well, working with the students. That's the best part." He also thanks the citizens of Montezuma who support the students and the Montezuma FFA department, stating, "Most of our success is built off of the community people we use as resources," and believes that the continued success of the Montezuma FFA chapter wouldn't be possible without them.

The Blue and White Staff



Calendar of Events

Thursday
JH Volleyball @ BGM - 4:15 pm

Friday
Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony - 7:00 pm

Monday
Varsity Volleyball @ Belle Plaine - 5:30 pm

Tuesday
FFA District Soils @ Muscatine
JH Football vs GMG: Here - 4:15 pm

Wednesday
No Activities

Thursday
JH Volleyball @ North Mahaska - 4:15 pm
Cross Country: Here - 4:30 pm
Varsity Volleyball: Here - 5:00 pm