

The Scratching Post

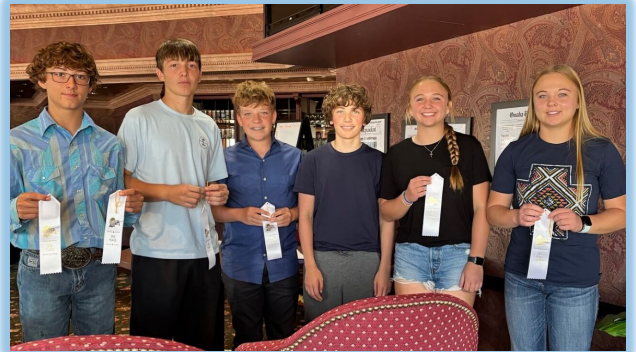
August , 2025

A Very Fair Trip

As school was just starting to get into the swing of things, students got one last adventure before school got back into gear. This last adventure involves a trip to Grand Island for the state fair. The participants qualified by doing a combination of two things, which were having quality scores on NSCAS state testing, and good behavior in class. This combination motivated students to do their best. And it positively impacted the students in the school. This opportunity to attend state fair encourages all students to reach higher for academic success and great behavior within the classroom.

Kambrie and Kassie Loutzenhiser, Knox Hottell, George Teeple, Tate Olsen, and Luke Olsen took the trek to State Fair in Grand Island for academic testing. They participated in the quiz bowl tournament in which they got 3rd place. This group also completed the math, spelling, science, social studies, and grammar academic tests. On the math tests, Knox got 3rd place and George got 4th. For spelling, George received 4th and Luke received 3rd. Knox took 5th and George 2nd on the science test. On social studies, Kambrie placed 5th while Luke got 4th place. Finally, on the grammar test, George secured 5th place.

Getting to go to state fair is a great benefit to our students. According to George, "The state fair was relaxing, fun, exciting, and a great opportunity to get out of school and hang out with friends." This program encourages a culture of achievement. It motivates students to engage in their studies more deeply. Way to represent Wildcats! By Luke Olsen



BANNER COUNTY SCHOOL

PREPARING THE STUDENTS OF TODAY FOR THE WORLD OF TOMORROW!

Let's Go to WESTCO!

Banner County students attended the WESTCO and UNL field day as an annual FFA event. This event provides hands-on learning and career exploration in the agriculture industry for high school FFA students in the Panhandle region. Students attend the event to gain information and experience. Twenty Banner County FFA members attended this year.

Students were able to participate in a variety of activities while attending this field day. One session included learning about the types of mold and diseases, and how these affect plants and their growth. There was a station where you could understand what cattle eat. Then you could actually put your hand inside a cow and feel around! According to Leeigh McGowan, her favorite station was learning about cattle collars. (Check out her article on page 4 to see how cattle collars can improve ranching methods.) These are just a few of the stations the students were able to attend.

Overall, attending the WESTCO and UNL field day was an invaluable experience for all twenty FFA members from Banner County. New memories were created through the hands-on learning opportunities. Learning about all of the new things that have come from FFA is an experience that highlights the importance of practical knowledge in shaping our future careers in agriculture, inspiring us to explore new ways to learn about the future.

By Hayden Mathiason



CHOOSING TO RUN

This year, Banner County school has a single freshman running for our cross country team. This brave runner is none other than Luke Olsen. Earlier in the season, Luke ran at the Ger-ing cross country meet. This was his second meet of the season, which did not go as well as his first. The course was more difficult, with rough terrain that made the fun tougher. Overall, he had a solid meet, but there were still areas his coach wanted him to improve.

The biggest challenge Luke mentioned was "the hills". His coach explained, "Luke works on running up hills and practicing race strategies for when he faces them again on the other courses. Luke said the course was the toughest he has seen throughout past seasons. So, when he lined up, he knew his time might not be as strong as his last. Although his time was slower than his goal, it was better than he expected, which pleased him. He also knew he had to go home and train harder the following week.



Coach Christiansen added that his biggest challenge as a runner is not having teammates to push and motivate him during races. Still, Luke has set many goals for this season, with his coach emphasizing the importance of improving his speed and strength. Overall, Luke has had a strong start to the season so far. We can't wait to see him continue to improve throughout his lengthy high school career. By Tack Cross

Adrian Smith Presentation

Have you ever wondered who makes some of the decisions that affect our daily lives in the state of Nebraska? One of those people is Adrian Smith. Adrian Smith is the representative of the 3rd district of Nebraska and has been in this position since 2007. His role is important because he works on many issues and problems that directly affect our state. Recently, he emailed Mr. Holmberg about visiting Banner County and presenting to some of the upperclassmen at the school.

To prepare for his presentation, Mrs. Hilbert had her students research Adrian Smith as to what he was currently working on and what his responsibilities are. The actual presentation had many different topics, such as what his job entailed, what he was working on at the time, and legal issues in Nebraska. He also talked about how the district works and what the plans were for it. One of the takeaways of his presentation was that funding our government takes a lot of money, and there is no easy way to do it. One of the students said that their favorite part was when he discussed a detention center being built.

When asked about the experience, Mrs. Hilbert stated, "It was a good experience for the students to learn about what a representative does, how busy they really are, and it was a topic that helped the students gain a better understanding of these roles within the government." Overall, the presentation helped the students see what a representative does on a day-to-day basis and what goes on in the government at that level, while also showing them some of the plans for the future. By George Teeple



New This Year: Applied Journalism Highlights

Our journalism students are now sharing stories about the applied content they're learning both inside and outside the classroom. This month, we feature an article by **Leeigh McGowan**, who participated in the **WESTCO Field Day** and explored innovative ways to update traditional ranching methods. See page 4.

ARE SMART COLLARS THE FUTURE OF RANCHING?

How do farmers keep their livestock safe and in their designated area? Managing livestock effectively is crucial for farmers, and one innovative solution is the use of cattle collars. These devices allow farmers to keep their cows within designated areas without the need for traditional fencing. While collars offer convenience, their costs can add up quickly, prompting farmers to consider alternatives like electric fencing. Cattle collars are the beginning of a technological revolution for agriculture in our area. Many ranchers in our area have cattle in surrounding areas, and with this they can keep track of their livestock from their phones or a tablet.

During the WESTCO Field Day, we learned about cattle collars. The collars are used to keep the livestock in their designated areas. You can use a GPS on a tablet to mark your lines for your pasture and if the livestock crosses the line, then it will send them a loud beep and a small shock. It takes about 3-4 times to train the animals to stop going past the boundaries they are given. The price of the collars can easily add up quickly and can last up to 5 years before you have to replace them. Though innovative, the collars can be more expensive than a traditional fence. Though setting up an electric fence is very time consuming, in the long run, it will cost you much less. Additionally, after you pick up the fence, you can use it again and again without having to replace too much.

Would it be better to run an electric fence or purchase cattle collars? According to FFA sponsor Mrs. Olsen, "The cattle collars are a neat concept and would work for smaller areas with less livestock." You would think that the collars would be an easier way to keep your animals where they are supposed to be and there's less labor. The cattle you have, the more costly using the collars will become. For example, with 250 collars at \$65 a piece, it would cost \$16,250 while one wire electric fence would cost approximately \$1,000. In this scenario, it would be more cost effective to use manual labor and put up the electric fence than purchase the collars. However with smaller batches of collars, it could be more cost effective. In the end, it just depends on what the rancher values and how many cows would be using the collars. By Leeigh McGowan



"LOCO FOR HOCO"

Banner County School had an amazing homecoming week! It was all possible thanks to Student Council Sponsor Mr. C. and his dedicated student council members. According to Mr. C., "I had a lot of help from Makynna Boettcher. We didn't have a lot of time before homecoming this year, so we started planning last year. She kept all the notes, and we were able to get homecoming planned." However, before the games took place, there were dress-up competitions.

The week was filled with many laughs and many, many memories. On Tuesday, the students were encouraged to dress like Adam Sandler. On Wednesday, the students rhymed without reason. Rhyme without reason is when you get to find two things that rhyme for no reason, like sock and rock, moo and boo, and frog and log. Thursday, was the class competition day themed around decades. Thursday evening brought the bonfire, Rosita's food truck courtesy of Banner Capital Bank and Dirty Lil' Swigs sodas. The stage was set and finally, the homecoming king and queen were announced! Congrats to Kambree Hottell and Micah Dittbenner for winning! Finally it was game day. Students participated in spirit day and brought the energy to the games. This year's homecoming games looked a little different than past years. The football team only has 6 players this year, so they have to run a JV schedule. This meant they played before the volleyball game.

We celebrate homecoming so we can honor the athletes and commemorate the school. We bring as many people as we can to help cheer on our student athletes during this commemorative week. We want to cheer them on to show off the dedication they have and their hard work. The student-athletes had many hard practices leading up to their big game. The girls battled fiercely but lost 1-3 in their match while the boys fought on the field, but lost 25-43. Even though both teams lost, there were many accomplishments during both games and we are very proud of the volleyball and football players! Thank you to everyone who came and cheered on our teams for these games!

Homecoming week ramped up the school spirit for our students and athletes, and we can't wait to see what the rest of this season brings for our teams. We hope to see you all for the games to come! Set reminders, mark your calendars, the Wildcats are ready to have a great year academically and athletically! By Kyrie Roldan



Senior Spotlight—Kesmera Palu

This month's senior spotlight features Kesmera Palu is described as unique, kind, and a dreamer. We asked Kesmera about her high school years and what her plans are for after graduation.

Q: What extracurricular activities have you participated in?

A: Volleyball, Track, STUCO, Choir, One-Act, and Speech

Q: What are your goals for this year?

A: I plan to pass all my classes and do well in school.

Q: What are your plans for after high school?

A: I would like to go to college for 4 years and train to be a flight attendant. Then come back and get a history degree.

Q: What is one of your favorite classes and why?

A: Choir, because it is just a fun class and environment. I like to sing so that just makes it 10 times better.

Q: What is one piece of advice you would give to younger students?

A: Stay on top of your work and don't fall behind.



August 18, 2025

ANNUAL ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

The Federal Government and the State of Nebraska require that all patrons and staff of each school have an opportunity to view the Schools Asbestos Management Plan for each building within the district. Please be advised that the Asbestos management Plan for Banner County School District is on file in the Superintendent's office and is available for public inspection at any time with proper 48 hour notice.

This school is required to conduct an AHERA inspection every three years by a certified inspector. The inspection reports are available by request in the Superintends office. Every six months, the school is required to survey the asbestos material to ensure there is no change or damage to the material.

Asbestos contacting material is located in the following areas:

- East entry to old gym (friable; closed and sealed to the public)
- All 9"x9" floor tile (non-friable)
- Transit in kitchen, entry doors, science room (non-friable)

On February 17, 2023 an AHERA inspection was performed by Panhandle Geotechnical & Environmental, Inc. based out of Scottsbluff, Nebraska. All of the locations listed above containing asbestos materials were inspected producing favorable results.

There has been no fiber release during the past year.

If you have any questions, please contact Tod Wenger, Designated Person or Mr. Chris Lecher, Superintendent.