



# *The Scratching Post*

January, 2026

## **FFA COMPETITION RESULTS**

The Banner County FFA recently competed at WNCC in several events, including livestock management, floriculture, and welding. The students took multiple tests, hoping to qualify for the state competition.

One of the categories in which the students competed was floriculture. Braedyn Bojorquez, Gianni Green, Hayden Mathiason, and Wilbur Reichenberg represented Banner County School in this competition. In floriculture, students take two tests: one to identify plants and a second to understand plant labels and how to care for plants. Additionally, students must create an overall design for a floral arrangement.

The second category was welding. Participants in this event were Blake Green, Kambree Hottell, Leigh McGowan, and Micah Dittbenner. This event requires taking an exam and then being assigned to different welding processes, such as stick, TIG, and oxy-acetylene (or other auxiliary) welding. After welding, the work is inspected and graded based on weld quality and the exam score.

Livestock management was the final category. Students who participated in this event were Austin West, Karlye Dittbenner, Kassie Loutzenhiser, Luke Olsen, Shawnie Mason, and Tate Olsen. The students studied categories such as horses, sheep, pigs, and beef and took one exam covering all these areas.

Representing the teams and students who placed were Kambree Hottell, who placed first in welding, and Gianni Green, who placed 18th overall individually and received a red ribbon in floriculture. The welding team placed sixth overall and is now focusing on the next competition in February. We wish them luck. – by Hayden Mathiason



# Wrestling for State

The 2025–2026 high school wrestling season has started, and the team has two wrestlers: Wilbur Reichenberg and Tate Olsen. So far, Wilbur has a record of 24 -17 and Tate has a record of 24-6. With district wrestling approaching, they are preparing for one of the most important tournaments of the season, which could qualify them for state.

As for the wrestlers' goals this season, Wilbur and Tate have both stated that they want to qualify for and place at the state tournament. Even though the wrestlers have ambitious goals, Coach Olsen said his main expectation for them was simply: "To get better every day." Wilbur plans to reach his goal of placing at state by increasing the effort he puts into his wrestling; this is his main focus. Tate plans to achieve his goal by improving his ability to escape and score from the bottom, so he is concentrating on that skill during practice.

Despite the wrestlers' winning records, they still face some key challenges. For example, practice can be difficult because of the limited number of participants. For Tate, "going up against older kids with more experience" has been his greatest challenge this season. For Wilbur, his main challenge has been maintaining his confidence after wins and losses. Coach Olsen is working to improve two key areas for the team right now: overall mental toughness and the ability to handle adversity on the mat.

Ultimately, the wrestling season is underway, and the wrestlers are working to achieve the goals they set for themselves. Although they have faced some challenges, they are overcoming them and continually improving their skills. – by George Teeple



## Senior Spotlight — Kambree Hottell

This month's senior spotlight features Kambree Hottell. Kambree is described as sassy, fun-loving and bubbly. We asked Kambree about her high school years and what her plans are for after graduation.

**Q: What extracurricular activities have you participated in?**

**A:** Basketball, FFA, One-Act, and Trap shooting

**Q: What are your goals for this year?**

**A:** Graduate and have no more than 20 tardies.

**Q: What are your plans for after high school?**

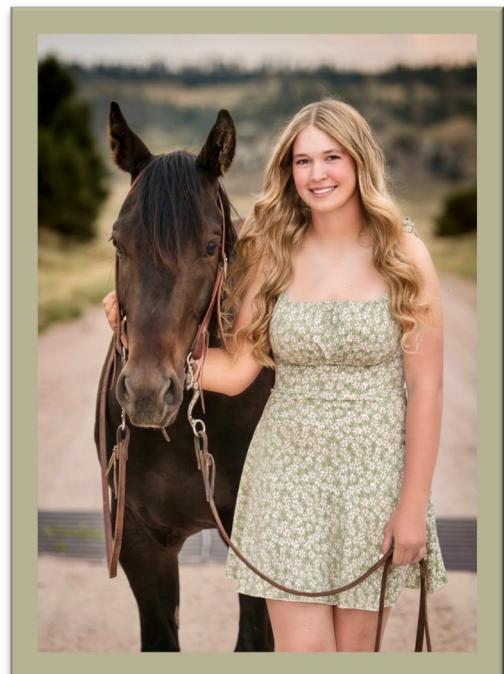
**A:** Work at Roux Reining Horses, then study Equine Science at Central Wyoming College.

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

**A:** JAG because I get popcorn.

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

**A:** Have fun and do your homework.



# Building Momentum

The Lady Wildcats basketball team is off to a challenging but promising start this season. With a roster of ten dedicated players and two new coaches leading the way, the team has shown determination and heart on the court. As of the publication date, their record stands at 6-11, but each game has provided valuable opportunities for growth and improvement. Despite the ups and downs, the players continue to support one another and represent Banner County with pride.

This season has been particularly exciting for the Lady Wildcats. After a few difficult years with low numbers, having a full roster has been a game-changer. The girls have been working diligently, and their hard work is paying off. Head Coach Mr. Lecher said, "The girls have improved by delivering the ball sooner and by using spacing concepts on the court." The team has faced some obstacles along the way, including occasional illnesses and the adjustments that come with new coaching methods. These new methods have helped lead the way to significant wins. One of the season's most memorable moments came during a thrilling matchup against Minatare, when the Lady Wildcats pulled off a nail-biting, one-point victory in overtime. While this victory gave the team a confidence boost, the most noticeable change in momentum didn't occur until after Christmas break. The Lady Wildcats went on a three-game winning streak, demonstrating their growing skill and overall improvement. Each player's contributions, combined with dedication to practice and a willingness to learn, have made a noticeable difference in the team's performance on and off the court.

The Lady Wildcats have shown remarkable improvement this season, especially under the guidance of their new coaches. Early challenges and a slow start have given way to better teamwork, improved court awareness, and an energized roster that is beginning to reach its full potential. With their hard work paying off and momentum on their side, the Lady Wildcats are proving that dedication, determination, and strong leadership can turn a challenging season into a story of success. – by Leeigh McGowan



# **Building Toward the Future: Wildcats Focus on Growth This Season**

This season the boys' varsity Wildcat basketball team is learning. With more development, practice, and maturity next season, the team will dominate. Despite an unfortunate losing record to start the season, Coach Revelle and Coach Avila continue to focus on building skills and maintaining a positive attitude. This growth will lead the boys' team to future wins.

The Wildcats are a small, young team. There are nine players total: four freshmen, four sophomores, and one junior. Even though they have a negative win-to-loss ratio, the team has shown growth. Free throws and team chemistry have improved drastically. Coach Revelle and Coach Avila have pushed the team to be more accurate on free throws and passing. High-stakes free-throw practice has been a constant during practice and has carried over to games. The young team is showing more confidence with passing.

After talking with the team, they said that in-game experience has helped them gain confidence with free throws and passing. Player #23, Tack Cross, states, "Overall, we need to get better at shooting. Even if it's 10% better, the outcome of games will be different." Jackson Onstott, player #15, also shared his thoughts on how the season has gone so far: "The season started off alright but has gotten better."

The start of the season was challenging, but it's all about improvement. The coaches and players have been focusing on building team chemistry, and when someone gets put down, the team brings them up. Next season will show the results of all the work these young men have put into this season.—by Blayten Freeling



## ***Students Shine at Panhandle Honor Band***

On January 5, senior Abby Jones and freshman Luke Olsen participated in the Doane Honor Band, which was hosted in Bridgeport. The students had a unique experience playing in a large ensemble alongside musicians from across the Panhandle. What made this experience especially distinctive was bringing all these students together to perform pieces with people they had not met before, under the direction of a guest conductor from Doane College.

The all-day event began at 9:00 a.m. and continued into the afternoon, concluding with a concert featuring all participating students. To prepare for the concert, the students rehearsed the four program pieces on their instruments throughout the day. Midway through the day, the students split into sections to work on their specific instruments and parts. According to Abby Jones, one of the challenges of the event was learning and performing relatively new pieces in an unfamiliar environment under the guidance of a new conductor. Mrs. Cooper said that a highlight was "seeing our students do so well."

Overall, the students had an educational experience collaborating with musicians from other schools. Although Banner County High School's band is currently quite small, our students performed well within this larger ensemble. Abby and Luke appreciated the opportunity to perform with a full band and to demonstrate what they learned during the Honor Band sessions.

- by Luke Olsen



## **The Future of 3D Printing**

In October, Banner County received a new 3D printer. The printer was granted to Mr. Lemoine and his science, engineering, and technology students. With the 3D printer, students will be able to create projects, prototype and improve their designs, problem-solve, design parts, test ideas, and make improvements—for example, a hand crank that Mr. Lemoine and his class repaired. They will also be able to see the results of their projects in real time.



To obtain the printer, Mr. Lemoine applied for funding and purchased it through a Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) grant. It took a few months from applying for the grant to actually receiving the printer. Mr. Lemoine wanted the printer to give students better access to more modern equipment. According to Mr. Lemoine, "There are some major differences between the new and old printers. The old printer was a MakerBot Mini+; it was good for basic prints and learning fundamentals. The new printer is the Bambu Lab H2D; it is faster and better for more complex and advanced prints."

With this printer, the students will have the opportunity to create and build more complex and ambitious projects, such as the chessboard the engineering class created or the hand-crank handle they produced for the science class to use. We can't wait to see what the students create with the new printer!

-by Kyrie Roldan



# Spelling Bee Results

The 2026 Spelling Bee was held on January 29, 2026, at 12:30. There were 67 participants in grades K -8. Mr. Holmberg was the reader and judge. Mrs. Villagrana and Mrs. May were also judges. They did a superb job!

**Congratulations to Tacey Cross  
on becoming this year's champion!**

Class Spelling Bee Results			
	1st Place	Second Place	3rd place
K	Judd Stauffer	Bryson Rowell	Margaret Cooper
1st	Emersynn Stauffer	Tatum Revelle	George McGowan
2nd	Breklyn Cross	Charles Cooper	Tipton Dittbenner
3rd	Amiah Cooper	Harli Revelle	Raelynn Felkins
4th	Henry Groves	Brogan Cross	Saryah Mason
5th	Andy McGowan	Bexlie Groves	Rebekah Jones
6th	Gabe Olsen	Tacey Cross	Aili Cooper
7th	Autumn Stokes	Railin Mesteth	Roger McGowan
8th	Kambrie Loutzenhiser	Bella Young	Joshua McGowan



Overall Results	
Place	Name
Champion	Tacey Cross
2nd	Gabe Olsen
3rd	Autumn Stokes

