

MUSTANG NEWS



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LESSONS *That Last*

THE ECONOMICS UNIT IN MRS. BLOMENBERG'S K-1 IGNITE CLASS STARTS WITH THE CONCEPT OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND. What follows is a brainstorming session and vote on what the class will sell at their Concordia Children's Business Fair booth in mid-March. The winning idea for 2024 was the theme 'St. Patrick's Party,' and the class successfully implemented the theme from the decorations to the food and drinks.

While the business fair is open to any kindergarten through 12th-grade student, Mrs. Blomenberg says a team approach allows everyone to participate without the commitment a booth requires when run by one student. Families supply one ingredient, class time is used to make the products, and sales shifts are split between students. "With eighteen students, I told them we could only do this if we had enough people to work. Some people didn't want to leave!" says Mrs. Blomenberg. *continued on page 2*



THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

Your participation in directing Thrivent Choice Dollars to Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha makes a difference!

THE TOTAL DIRECTED
IN 2024 WAS
\$5,702

SO FAR IN 2024, YOU DIRECTED
\$5,106

If you are a Thrivent member with Choice Dollars to direct, please go online and select either Concordia Academy or Concordia Jr. - Sr. High as your non-profit organization of choice for 2024!

Please log in to your account today and direct Thrivent Choice dollars to Concordia Academy or Concordia Jr.-Sr. High.



thrivent

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With exciting St. Patrick's Party items like puppy chow, jello salad, punch, and bookmarks, the K-1 Ignite table was a hot spot to shop. When the supply of puppy chow dwindled to just one bag, the lesson of supply and demand kicked in, and the students decided that the bag's price needed to increase.

Puppy chow and bookmarks are now noted as hot sellers in the K-1 Ignite logbooks. The remaining punch was enjoyed at the class party, and students shared that their favorite parts of the event involved "selling," Breyton T., and "seeing people," Elle P.

Mrs. Blomenberg's class wrapped up their economics lesson with a profit-and-loss unit, during which they learned that they had netted \$120 from their booth. While taste-testing punch and puppy chow may have been the favorite activities, the overall lesson is certainly one these students will remember for a lifetime.



CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION TIMELINE AT-A-GLANCE

- Concordia was informed by St. Mark Lutheran Church that they would launch their own school and that the Concordia Academy lease would not be renewed after June 2023.
- Planning commenced immediately with the Board of Directors and a large constituent group.
- Constituent group input led the Board to understand that a unified K-12 campus was both the long-term vision and the preferred choice of the constituents.
- Concordia finalized their primary renovation and construction partners through a bid and interview process. BCDM architects and Meco-Henne Construction were selected. Other partners included Lamp Rynearson and Morrissey Engineering.
- Concordia learned during the preliminary design process that a FEMA approved storm shelter would be required. This space is now named The Nancy Griffith Worship and Performing Arts Center.
- From mid-May through July of 2023 the school offices and Auxiliary gym worship stage were renovated to classroom spaces to provide for the needs of Concordia Academy. The project took just 78 days from start to finish...quite an accomplishment!
- July 2024 is the planned completion of the external road system, four additional classrooms, school office area, and The Nancy Griffith Worship and Performing Arts Center. The project is considered on time.

WAYS TO SUPPORT CONCORDIA

As God continues to bless this ministry, we give thanks for YOU! Thank you for supporting the growth and development of Faith Secure, World Ready, Kingdom Leaders through your time, talents and treasures. Have you considered these ways to support Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha?

IRA Charitable Rollovers or IRA RMDs can provide an opportunity for stewards over the age of 70.5 to make gifts to Concordia directly from their IRAs with no income taxes due on the rolled over or donated funds.

Employee Match Ask your employer if this option exists for you.

Gifts of Stocks Concordia can receive gifts of appreciated stock.

Estate Planning Have you considered leaving a legacy gift for Concordia as a part of your estate planning?

Endowment Fund Gift Helps us plan for the future!

Thrivent Choice Concordia partners with Thrivent Financial and is eligible to receive Thrivent Choice Dollars.



MRS. NICHOLLE BLOMENBERG was the recipient of the Lutheran Education Association's 2024 National Outstanding New Lutheran Early Childhood Teacher Award. **Congratulations, Mrs. Blomenberg!**

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR TALENTED TEAM!



MR. FINK completed his Masters in Organizational Leadership from the Townsend Institute at Concordia University, Irvine.



MRS. DOERR finished her Masters of Education with an emphasis in Trauma and Resilience from Concordia University, Nebraska.

IN THE loop

LEADERSHIP

Nathan Domsch, Academy Principal,
Interim Head of Schools

Amy Schwarting, Jr. - Sr. High Principal

FAITH SECURE WORLD READY KINGDOM LEADERS



UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 10 & 11:** Concordia Connection
- August 6-8:** Senior Class Retreat
- August 6:** 6-12 Back to School Night & Pictures
- August 12:** K-5 Back to School Night
- August 11:** Junior High Jam for NEW Students
- August 6:** Senior High Parent Meeting
- August 14:** First Day of School
- August 23:** Mustang Meet & Mingle
- August 30:** First Home Football Game
- September 27:** Homecoming Football Game
- November 9:** Concordia Goodies & Gifts Craft Sale

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ryan Hahn (*GraceHill Lutheran Church*)
- Charista Baye (*King of Kings Lutheran Church*)
- Alison Betten (*Grace Hill Lutheran Church*)
- Pastor Caleb Kruse; Pastoral Representative (*Lord of Life-Elkhorn*)
- Rob Lindau (*Zion Lutheran Church*)
- Nanette Rasmussen (*Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church*)
- Matt Rehbein (*Zion Lutheran Church*)
- Joe Risko (*Pacific Hills Lutheran Church*)
- Kim Sucha (*St. Timothy's Lutheran Church*)
- Dan Swan (*Pacific Hills Lutheran Church*)
- Pastor Dusty White (*Coram Deo*)

Alumni IN ACTION

ELEVEN ALUMNI CHILDREN ARE ENROLLED AT CONCORDIA THIS YEAR. As a relatively young school, opening less than 30 years ago, Concordia is beginning to see legacy students arrive. Matt & Kate (Hannemann) Mueller are an alumni couple with two children enrolled, and a third starting in the fall of 2024. Alumni children are enrolled for a variety of reasons, but the Mueller family has a story all their own.

When Kate (Hannemann) Mueller arrived at Concordia in 2008 for her Senior year it was where she wanted to be. "I went to public school before coming to Omaha and it turned out that my community was my church. When we arrived here, attending a Lutheran school was my priority," explains Kate. And the community she was expecting was right there waiting for her. "It was instant family. I was immediately connected with friends and activities."

2008 was the year of the inaugural Niobrara senior retreat, which Kate found to be a fun way to connect with classmates and teachers. She also recalls there weren't lights on the football field, so games were played early and a tradition became to go to the Hannemann's house afterward began. The days of dodgeball tournaments are also fresh in her memory, "and let me tell you, Marty Senechal totally cheated!"

Those memories are full of value and joy, but what holds deep meaning for Kate is what she found in her relationships. "Mrs. Lee did my Senior Blessing. We had a special connection as she was willing to talk about faith with me," shares Kate. She was also blessed to have Mrs. Gail Klemp overseeing her study hall. Kate went on to Concordia University in Seward, NE and earned her degree in Elementary Education with a K-12 Special Education Endorsement.

Since then, Kate has always told Mrs. Klemp, "Save me a seat; you know I'm coming!" As of the fall of 2023, the dream team of Mrs. Klemp and Mrs. Mueller has been side-by-side, serving students in the Academic Success Center. Of their partnership, Mrs. Klemp shares, "Working with Kate has been an answer to my prayers. It has been a trail-blazing year learning how to navigate the logistics of having a Special Education teacher on our campus, but I love that I am experiencing it with Kate! We work very well together and it has been a blessing to have someone in the Academic Success Center with a Lutheran Education background."

Being back in the hallways of Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha offers a myriad of benefits to Kate. "It's fun being in the hallways where I met my husband and he asked me to prom," she notes, "but more importantly, it's a blessing to see my kids in the hall and give them a quick hug. Seeing their friends' parents serving lunch, leading chapel, and being leaders in our school community is so huge."

Knowing that Concordia is now old enough for the children of alumni to attend, it offers the opportunity to ask how their own experience influenced that decision. "Christian education prepared me to raise more Kingdom Leaders in my own kids. We wanted to have a relationship with our children's teachers, to know who they are, and what they believe in," shares Kate. "Our kids have a system of adult Christians they can go to in order to ask hard questions, and I trust those people are going to lead them in the right direction and the truth."



a Passion FOR LUTHERAN EDUCATION



"THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PLACE.

It's not just the building. It's the whole feeling when you walk in the door. You know the Holy Spirit is here and it dwells here. It is evident." That's how Lori Gedwillo describes Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha. In an hour of time shared with this couple one will come to realize how deeply dedicated they are to Concordia and Lutheran Education as a whole.

Steve Gedwillo was born the youngest, by far, of six children, and his father was a Lutheran pastor who passed away when Steve was only five years old. All his siblings attended public school, and his two oldest sisters were very interested in where he would be sent to school. Both of those sisters attended Concordia colleges, where they met their husbands, who went on to become Lutheran school principals. "One of the best things that happened in my life was my sisters and their husbands persuading my mom to send me to a private Lutheran school. I attended St. Paul's in Sioux City. The

principal was my brother-in-law's cousin, and his wife was my first-grade teacher," shares Steve. These events were a game-changer in Steve's life.

This was Steve's start as a lifelong fan of Lutheran Education. When he and Lori married, they moved to Omaha; after having children, they wanted a Lutheran education for them. They discovered that all the Lutheran schools at that time were on one end of town, the East end, opposite from where Steve and Lori lived. When the kids got to be school-age, they sent them to Mt. Calvary. "They were great. The kids loved it. We loved it. We just believed in it," says Steve.

Along with the Gedwillos were a group of like-minded Lutherans who were also driving across town to Mt. Calvary. Included in this group was Pr. Block from Divine Shepherd. Pr. Block initiated a prayer group regarding a school in West Omaha called West Omaha Lutheran Schools Study Group – WOLSSG.

With much excitement and joy Steve shares, "All those people were getting together, meeting regularly, and decided, 'we need to do this.' It was finally to the point where it was time to move so WOLSA became incorporated and hired Dave Mueller as the Executive Director. Dave is small in stature but a great big man of God who came in with the structure and organization to make it happen."

Gedwillo's four children and a daughter-in-law graduated from Concordia, and Steve and Lori share with delight, "We were amazed at seeing our kids be witnesses to Christ. They got to do all kinds of activities they maybe wouldn't have done in a public school. And they heard the word of God every day."

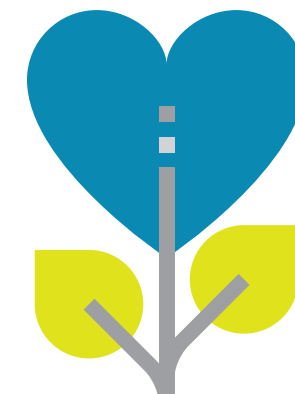
While the kids were involved in activities, Steve and Lori were busy too. Lori taught for 19 years, starting at Abundant Life in 1998 and continuing to move through the system and into Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha. Steve was on and off the Board of Directors over the years, served as a volunteer, and assisted with the football programs. "It was just one of the best things as parents to see our kids' faith develop," says Steve.

The faith development of students at Concordia is something the Gedwillos are still seeing. Their presence at activities, sports, the gala, and more is commonplace. The Gedwillo's involvement through continued gifts is the kind of generosity that comes from a deep passion and desire to be a part of something incredibly special. Members of the Concordia community like Steve and Lori are held near and dear to the heart. Steve explains, "My roots and affections in this are really deep. It's our job to train up the next generations in the word of God."

It's not just the building. It's the whole feeling when you walk in the door. You know the Holy Spirit is here and it dwells here. It is evident.

Lori Gedwillo

At the end of the day, Lutheran education is what brings us here and keeps us here. We are willing to do what it takes to get our kids an education based on truth. **Kate Mueller**



FROM DOMSCH'S *desk*



Accreditation verifies quality educational institutions for the community, and Concordia is dually accredited by National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) and Cognia. Throughout this school year, Concordia's staff, Board of Directors, and a few parent volunteers have been working to complete a self-study to ensure that we meet or exceed all NLSA accreditation standards.

This spring, a team of educators from area public, Lutheran, and other Christian schools visited Concordia to verify our report. That team recommended Concordia for accreditation, identifying zero deficiencies, thirteen outstanding strengths, and three powerful practices. Those strengths include our facilities and programming but focused on our community. Concordia is blessed with a talented staff that lives out our mission and purpose, families who care deeply about their children's education, and volunteers and community partners who support our mission and contribute to a rich experience for our students.

In addition to verifying Concordia is doing well, accreditation fosters a culture of continuous improvement and accountability. This commitment to constant improvement ensures that Concordia remains responsive to the evolving needs of students, families, and our community. We are focused on maintaining high standards and dedicated to continually enhancing the quality of education and overall experience of every Concordia student. Through the self-study process, Concordia has identified critical areas for improvement, including living out our Christian ethos, developing deeper relationships in the community, ensuring quality leadership, developing new funding opportunities, addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by technology, and continuing to improve student safety through updates to our facility and emergency response procedures.

We look forward to sharing more about our plans for improvement in the coming months! Concordia is an exceptional school and community with promising opportunities for ongoing improvement, ensuring continued growth and success in the development of students who are faith-secure, world-ready kingdom leaders!

BLESSINGS *Nate*



BE BOLD!!

With the classrooms empty for the summer and another year in the books, I reflect on the incredible journey we've been on here at Concordia. This year was nothing short of extraordinary, filled with milestones, growth, and an unwavering commitment to nurturing young minds while sharing the love of Jesus.

One of the most significant highlights of this year was the successful move of the Academy to our Concordia Fort Street campus. This transition has brought together two campuses under one roof, creating an atmosphere of collaboration and unity. Throughout the school year, we have worked to create an environment where faith is taught and lived out daily. Whether through chapel services, Bible classes, or service projects in the community, our students have been encouraged to deepen their relationship with Christ and live as beacons of His love and grace.

The time has come to say goodbye to our graduating seniors, and we do so with hearts full of pride and hope. They have been beacons of light in our school community, showing the younger students how to become Faith Secure, World Ready, Kingdom Leaders. Their contributions to our school community have been incredible, and while we are sad to see them go, we are excited to witness the achievements that await them. We wish them God's richest blessings and pray they remember the values and lessons they have learned at Concordia as they pursue their dreams.

To our dedicated faculty and staff, thank you for your unwavering commitment to our students' success. Your passion for teaching, mentorship, and guidance have made a lasting impact on the lives of our students, and we are incredibly grateful for all that you do.

As we close out the school year, let us give thanks for the blessings we have received, the friendships we have formed, and the memories we will carry with us always. May God's love continue to guide and sustain us in the days ahead, filling our hearts with peace, joy, and hope.

Wishing you all a summer filled with the abundant blessings of God's grace.

Mrs. Schwarting



GALA GRAND TOTAL: \$266,000



Thank you to the many people who helped make the 2024 Kingdom Leaders Gala a wonderful success. This night of celebration, community and generosity will bless our students by providing access to financial assistance. We believe all students should be provided a Christian education, regardless of their financial situation.



KINGDOM
LEADERS
gala

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

- **The 4th grade class** solved over 250,000 multiplication & division problems using the "Reflex" digital math program since January 1st! They improved their math fact fluency and challenged Mr. Domsch to math games to show off their skills!
- **NEHS Theatre Academy** has selected **Sophia Srygley** as one of their top ten Outstanding Actresses in a lead role for her role of Mrs. Wormwood in Concordia's production of MATILDA. She will receive her award and perform at the Tony-inspired "Showcase" that NHSTA hosts on June 13 at 7:30 the Orpheum.
- **NHSTA** selected **Evan Cook** as one of ten Outstanding Supporting Actors for his role as Bruce in MATILDA.
- **NEHS Theatre Academy** has selected **Gabby Staub** as one of their top ten Outstanding Actresses in a supporting role for her role of Lavender in Concordia's production of MATILDA. She will receive her award at the "Showcase" that NHSTA hosts on June 13 at 7:30 the Orpheum.
- **The JH Orchestra** attended the **NEASTA (American String Teacher Association) Young Orchestra Festival** at Millard South on Saturday, May 11 and received a High Superior rating!
- **Robotics:** 5 High School and 3 Middle School teams qualified for the State Robotics Tournament this spring.
- **Nominations to Girls & Boys State:** Our staff nominated students to attend this non-partisan Nebraska Legislative Leadership Camp at UNL this summer, based on character, academic & athletic/arts/club involvement. Students represent Concordia while learning the process at the capital and how everyday citizens help govern our community. Nominees include Adleigh Beck, Elissa Domsch, Amelia Engle, Alyssa Eschmann,

Adelaide Mosher, Emily Lindau, Malachi Ellis, Peder Erslund, Jackson Shepherd, Adam Sucha, Andrew Swan, Jack Thrasher and Luke Raymond.

- **Alex Eschmann and Gabby Staub** were named to the Rotary Honor Roll.
- **Adam Sucha** individually qualified for the **Class B Boy's State Golf Tournament** for the 3rd time as a junior. This season he also set the school scoring record on a par 70 course (Miracle Hills Golf Course) scoring an even par 70.
- **Individual qualifiers for the state track meet- boys track and field include**
Payton Day (1600)
Joshua McNair (400)
Payton Day, Isaac McNair, David Rice, Avery Dieckman (4x800)
- **Members of the Girls Tennis Team represented Concordia at the NSAA state tennis tournament:** Daisy Frohardt, Maddie Ackerman, Alyssa Eschmann, Lillie Johnston, Sophia Srygley and Sonia Bedrnicek.
- **Boys Basketball** placed 3rd at State
- **The Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA)** is pleased to announce the student recipients of the Winter 2023-2024 Nebraska Chiropractic Physicians Association (NCPA) Academic All-State Awards:
Boys Basketball: Jackson Shepherd & Jack Thrasher
Girls Basketball: Adleigh Beck & Abby Matthew
Speech: Adelaide Mosher & Sarah Murray
Girls Swimming: Jocelyn Addink
Wrestling: Brody Clark & Trevor Hancock
Girls Wrestling: Amelia Engle & Camden Kouba



State Robotics Participants

- **Quintan McCafferty** was named first team all-state in C1 basketball. He was also Concordia's first-ever Superstate section in boys' basketball. He was named third team Superstate, which is chosen from the entire state regardless of class.
- **The following high school track school records were broken this year:**
Boys 4x800 - Payton Day, David Rice, Isaac McNair, Avery Dieckman
Boys 4x400 - Josh McNair, Payton Day, Isaac McNair, Avery Dieckman
Boys 4x100 - Ben Dappah, Jarek Petersen, Josh McNair, Asher Hanson
Boys 100 and 200 - Josh McNair
Boys 1600 & 3200 - Payton Day
Girls 4x100 - Kyra McNair, Raegan Elmlblad, Alyse Moulton, Addie Stater
Girls 1600 - Faith Jipp

CELEBRATING THE LUNAR NEW YEAR WITH THE INTERNATIONAL CLUB

CONCORDIA IS HOME TO STUDENTS FROM KOREA, CHINA & MYANMAR / BURMA!

Now heading into her senior year at Concordia, Amelia E. joined the International Club (IC) as an eighth grader at the encouragement of her best friend. "She needed someone to go with her, so I joined," shares Amelia. "I stayed in the club because I love all the culture. The potlucks with different foods, the trips to activities like curling or to south Omaha, the Guatemalan culture we learned about this year, and meeting all the international students. Seeing how they interact with everyone and how laid back they are interests me. I've made a lot of good friends from all around the world through IC," says Amelia.

This semester, the International Club celebrated the Lunar New Year with a party on February 4, inviting the public to view the talents of all of Concordia's Jr.-Sr. High International Students. Games of gongxi and chinlone attracted guests who desired the challenge of learning a new game. For the foodies in the crowd, there was hot pot, chap chay, bubble tea, and more to sample. Even the artists in the group found something to satisfy their creative side by learning the arts of writing and speaking in foreign languages.

"The Lunar New Year party was so fun. It was great to see that event embraced by a group of students who aren't part of host families," shared Doug Gillespie. The Gillespie family is deeply engaged in the International Club and strongly desires to see it grow along with the diversity of the Concordia student body. "We like to travel and have five children. Two are biological, three are adopted, and this year we have Ariana, our International Student in fifth grade," says Doug. "We desire to expose our children to people who think, look, and act differently and can share their experience of Jesus from their country."

Encouraging the involvement of more Concordia students is always a priority for any activity, but the Gillespies have invested in this specific program by purchasing ping-pong tables. It may seem an odd method at first, but when the paddles come out the excitement is high, and students of all ethnicities find a common ground that creates new and stronger friendships.



The club's bi-monthly meetings allow new members to join at any time throughout the year and participate in learning about various cultures, attending events that expose the group to activities enjoyed by other cultures, and enjoying foods from around the world. Every International Student at Concordia is a club member, and students live with host families from within the Concordia school community. Hosting these students is an immersive way for students and their families to experience another culture for a school year. According to Doug Gillespie, "It's a way of exposing your kids to something cool and different."

CLASS 2024 SENIOR CLASS 2024 SENIOR CLASS 2024 SENIOR CLASS 2024 SENIOR CLASS



Josiah Abendroth



Madison Ackerman



Angela Anderson



Jonathan Armas



Esther Baldwin



James Bellus



Piper Blackledge



George Burnham



Brody Clark



Elizabeth Dennis



Avery Dieckman



Abby Distefano



Raegan Elmsblad



Jade Freeburg



Jacob Ginsburg



Isaac Goetz



Mackenzie Groninga



Lawson Hald



Trevor Hancock



Kathryn Hanks



Jack Hartman



Kayli Hartzell



Echolynn Holmstedt



Landon Hull



Nick Johannes



Ryker Jones



Grant Kaminski



Felix Kimeu



Claire King



Reese Lane



Kaitlin Lichtenberger



Grace Linde



Charlie Marco



Jacklynn Marco



Abigail Matthew



Oscar Maxon



Quientan McCafferty



Joshua McNair



Isaac McNair



Emma Muetting



Sarah Murray



Jayden Olson



Will Olson



Trevor Potmesil



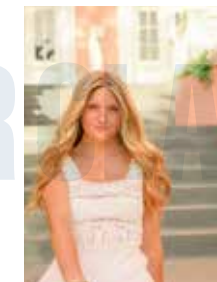
Morgan Prescher



Karson Pryor



David Rice



Marissa Riffel



Nicholas Roberts



Henry Samuelson



Megan Sawall



Ashley Schell



Myranda Schildt



Kyle Schneider



Brooklynn Snyder



Alex Stadler



Carter Sunde



Molly Thompson



Mayleigh Walvoord



Teagen White



Kiley Wilkinson



Amara Woodward



Zachariah Zauha

A PLACE to *Belong*

**MORE THAN JUST
A SCHOOL BUT A
COMMUNITY...A
FAMILY.** - MOLLY HENG



"There is no user's manual or rule book for parenting. As parents, we are doing the best we can. As I keep telling Mrs. Mueller, sending our kids to Concordia is the best decision we've ever made and the best money we've ever spent," says Molly Heng.

The fall of 2022 brought Molly and Jeff Heng and their children, Ayden now a 7th grader, and Peyton currently in 6th grade, to Concordia. The move was for the environment, to change the setting and the way the daily rhythms of life had settled for Peyton and Ayden in the public-school setting. What the Heng family found was a much deeper and more meaningful experience for their family than they had expected. "The teachers really, really care. I've had great conversations and feedback from them, and all of them watch out for the kids. Peyton and Ayden adore their teachers and it's been a great experience for both of them," shares Molly.

An unexpected experience came right away for Ayden when he joined his class in August on a trip to Camp Luther. Jeff joined as a chaperone and after that first group experience Molly says Ayden felt welcomed and accepted because of the actions of one of his classmates. Molly & Jeff shared that Ayden didn't even want to go on the trip, but at lunch one of the boys made sure he had a spot at the table and welcomed him as part of the class. This interaction may have been a turning point for Ayden as going to school before coming to Concordia was a struggle, but now he enjoys going and dislikes the idea of missing school.

Not to be dismissed are the changes in Peyton's faith and academics since joining the Concordia family. "She really enjoys going to worship, loves her discipleship class, and Mrs. Sado. "Peyton is always very positive when she comes to class and is eager to share what she's excited about. She looks forward to discipleship lessons,

especially on days when she gets to keep score for Bible trivia," says Mrs. Sado.

The turnaround in both of their educational abilities has been amazing," says Molly. "Concordia is an academically challenging school, and Peyton had always been behind in the classroom until she came to Concordia. She arrived almost three grade levels behind, yet now she's completely at grade level earning all As and Bs. Ayden has almost all straight A's," notes Molly. "There's a huge level of respect for everyone's roles. Concordia can be intimidating from the academic aspect, but without having what the public schools have as far as special education services, Concordia is blowing it out of the water. Mrs. Klemp and Mrs. Mueller are giving so much individual attention to students to help them thrive!"

Jeff and Molly are thankful for the Concordia community and the Academic Success Center where Ayden and Peyton meet with Mrs. Klemp and Mrs. Mueller each week. They discussed the organization as whole and their belief that Concordia is built from the top down. "We feel there is a welcoming feeling you get when you talk to anyone from Concordia, making it more than just a school but a community, and when you add in the environment and faith-base it becomes a family!"

Since becoming part of the Concordia Family, Ayden and Peyton have participated in Faith in Action Day and Peyton is in Mr. Jipp's Growing Leaders class who went to Open Door Mission. She was so moved to learn how many children there are in Omaha's homeless community that she created her own fundraiser and filled the back of Jeff's truck with necessities and stuffed animals to donate. Molly and Jeff sum it all up perfectly, "You want your kids to grow up to be kind and caring, and the Concordia environment grows that."



**AYDEN AND PEYTON ARE THRIVING
AT CONCORDIA!** - MOLLY HENG

“ONE OF THE THINGS I LOVE ABOUT CONCORDIA IS THAT WE CAN OFFER A WORSHIP ARTS CLASS THAT IS SO UNIQUE. Many organizations offer a rock band-style class, but it is rare for a worship arts class like this one to exist, even at the college level,” explains Mrs. Hannah Nunnenkamp-Engelman. Throughout her 13 years of teaching, she has reached out to other worship artists and leaders, asking about their experiences. She discovered they don’t have the same contemporary worship program as Concordia.

What Concordia Omaha is offering through the Worship Arts class is putting students on the radar for Concordia universities. “Even universities don’t have that contemporary worship piece, and they see our kids with this experience and are impressed with what our kids can bring to their programs,” shares Mrs. Engelman.

Leading weekly Prayer and Praise each Thursday gives the group experience in all aspects of group worship, including technology. “Cora F came in halfway through the year and did an amazing job of really making sure we were prepared with visuals and tech each week. Molly T really took ownership of the slides, uploading the songs, and creating graphics. Ryker J was independent in his entire setup. Seeing the kids grow this year and recognize what needed to be done before being asked was huge,” shares Mrs. Engelman. Students can press into that even more next year in the new Nancy Griffith Worship & Performing Arts Center and learn more about the technical aspects of worship arts.

Along with the technology and the setup comes the leadership aspect of Worship Arts. “When students audition, they need to be able to perform at a higher level because they have to hit the ground running, and an emotionally secure student is necessary to lead the entire student body in worship,” notes Mrs. Engelman. The group engages in deep conversations about the purposes of worship and the idea of viewing the student body as a congregation to be led in worship rather than as an audience to be entertained. “We talk about how it’s not about the ‘I’ but about how our actions are for the Lord with a focus on leading people and how best to lead them.” Mrs. Engelman says that this focus has helped the students to look more closely at the lyrics and their meaning, giving them more passion when singing and playing.

When it comes to passion, students in Worship Arts bring it all with them to the stage. “Lena R. is the most sincere person regarding true and deep worship. She exemplifies a strong and silent leader when it comes to giving back to the Lord. She gives from the heart when she sings,” shares Mrs. Engelman.



Worship Arts

CLASSROOM FOCUS

While Lena R. sings from the heart, Ella G prepares with all of hers. “Ella’s intense preparation for worship is humbling,” says Mrs. Engelman “she is so physically close so she can truly hear the melodies.” Ella’s physical need to be close to Mrs. Engelman during rehearsals stems from hearing loss she has lived with for most of her life. Ella doesn’t mind sharing her story with others. In fact, she believes it is one of God’s wonderful miracles that she failed a middle school hearing test for doctors to discover the issue and correct it in time to save her life. “Having Mrs. Engelman singing the melodies right next to me helps me understand them and block out the harmonies,” shares Ella.

Harmony in worship is what brought Ella to the class. “I knew about Worship Arts because of my friend McKenna, so I talked to Mrs. Engelman,” says Ella “I love the class and everyone there. It’s the time I can really focus on God and connect with Him. I really hear Him through worship. Singing connects me.”

Trades Fair

THE CONCORDIA TRADES FAIR KICKED OFF WITH A VISION FOR GIVING STUDENTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO ALIGN THEIR TALENTS AND PASSIONS WITH A CAREER PATH THAT SERVES GOD. Event organizers sought to display places where students can serve their community and be a Kingdom Leader. The event was a great success.

Katie Zimmerman, Recruiting and Engagement Specialist for Mulhalls said, “The kids were really kind and asked terrific questions. We had several students apply and have hired one for our summer crew already.”



“...THESE KIDS WERE REALLY KIND...”



5th Grade Wax Museum

Mrs. Blomenberg & Lucille Ball (Brynn C.) discuss the famous chocolate scene.

SARA MAXON’S FIFTH-GRADE CLASS PRESENTED THEIR WAX MUSEUM PROJECTS TO FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND THE CONCORDIA COMMUNITY ON MARCH 15. The crowds that gathered to view the projects may have been unusually large this year, but the interest was sincere. Parents, grandparents, staff, and students convened in the commons to hear life stories, facts, and trivia. High school students found it fun to reflect on their own past projects as they viewed the class choices of famous Americans.

Preparations for the project started almost six weeks in advance with reading a book focused on the selected subject. A research paper, complete with a bibliography followed, then the creation of backdrops, costumes and speeches. The result of all the hard work was an incredible display of showmanship by all twenty-four students.

Lucille Ball brought her chocolates, Bob Ross “painted” happy little trees, and Dolly Parton used her microphone to share her story. Each student had a button for guests to push to initiate their story. Once the student had shared the story the interactive piece of the presentation began and guests were encouraged to ask questions and test their knowledge with the trivia questions.

When asked what they learned, Sally Ride (Alexa D.) said, “I learned that Sally Ride met the second woman to go to space!” While the day was focused on learning, some of the most important lessons are what we learn from the heart. Ben Franklin (Benjamin L.) shared that his favorite part of the day was “when my family came and saw what I was doing.”

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

THE CAREER AND TRADES FAIR FEATURED 25 LOCAL BUSINESSES. 3 STUDENTS SECURED SUMMER WORK/INTERNSHIPS!



PASTORS IN THE HOUSE

Every year, the freshman and sophomore classes work on an exegetical project that focuses on a particular verse of the Bible assigned by teachers. The verse is examined in various ways regarding context, word study, theological application, and connection to contemporary times. We invite area pastors, both active and retired from our association churches, to come in and help the kids with their exegetical projects, providing their expertise, wisdom, and experience.

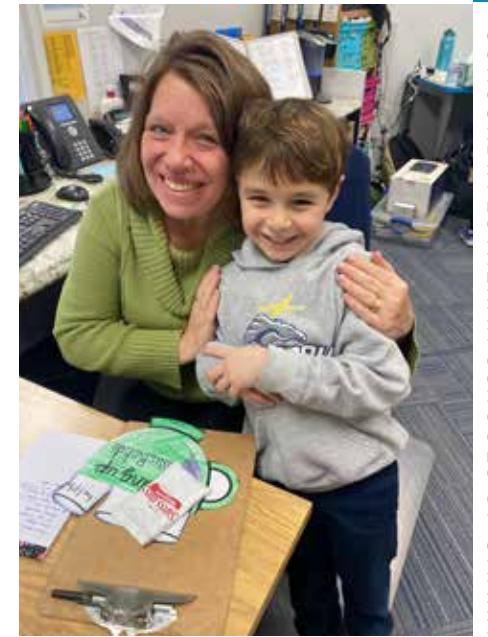
LEARNING & fun HAPPENING ALL OVER CAMPUS!



Aerospace engineering students studied propulsion and rocketry for their final unit of the semester. Students learned about the physics of rockets and used that knowledge to design their own rockets for launch as their final project. Using a kit, students assembled a basic rocket to practice preparing, safely launching, and recovering a rocket.



Mrs. Doerr's class practiced their social skills by delivering notes and treats to Concordia staff.



Academy Students kept an eye on the solar eclipse.



CHICKS IN BIOLOGY

BIOLOGY STUDENTS ARE ENJOYING SOME NEW CLASS MEMBERS

- All of the chicks hatched out of eggs coming from the Ellis' and Erslands' coops.
- They were from 3 different breeds of roosters (Buff Orpington, Starlight Green Egger, and Dominique) and a variety of hen breeds/hybrids.
- This was our 3rd time incubating eggs in the classroom and we had our lowest hatching success rate this time (about 50%)
- Chicken eggs are incubated ideally between 99.5 and 100.5 degrees and hatch at 21 days
- We candled the eggs twice during the incubation process (1st time at 8 days and again at 16 days)
- They begin eating and drinking almost immediately after moving out of the incubator but can stay in the incubator for up to 48 hours post hatching before they are transferred. During this time they begin drying and fluffing up.
- We kept them in a stock tank under a heat lamp for about 3 weeks in our classroom. Then went home and eventually end up in our coops.
- The hens will begin laying eggs at about 5-6 months old.



Mrs. Senechal's 4th grade class participated in a Math Escape Room!

AARON MOULTON



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

IN MAY OF 2021, CONCORDIA BASEBALL PARENT AARON MOULTON JOINED THE MUSTANG LEGION BOARD WITHOUT KNOWING WHERE THAT ONE STEP WOULD TAKE THE ENTIRE CONCORDIA BASEBALL TEAM. The Mustangs had been practicing and playing at the Omaha Home for Boys (OHB) field since 2015, and the partnership had been mutually beneficial. The team is comprised of players from Concordia, Brownell-Talbot, and Omaha Christian Academy. However, the facilities were no longer meeting the needs of the team, school, and parents. "A discussion began to find a new location with everything we needed: restrooms, bleachers, batting cages, etc. We had struck out multiple times trying to find a great location for our team, so we just let it go," says Moulton.

That year, the team made it to what was the first Class C state baseball tournament to take place in Nebraska. Following the tournament, the team suffered a major loss with the theft of the team gator, PA console, and scoreboard console from the storage shed at OHB field. With the legion season only two weeks away, the team needed to raise over \$6,000 to purchase new equipment. As blessings tend to do, half of the money unexpectedly arrived through one donation, and the Mustangs started the season on time.

In July, Moulton saw an article about Ralston High School's baseball team's move from the historic Orval Smith Memorial Field to

its new diamond. He took a chance and emailed the city, inquiring about the Mustangs' use of the field. By Late August, he had a response from the city of Ralston, and meetings commenced. On October 15, a plan was in place for Mustang Baseball to have a new home at Orval Smith Field.

Moulton's foresight, action, and follow-through brought Mustang baseball to a beautiful new home where foul balls are known as "Free Flying Hot Dogs"! Attendees know that when a foul ball is hit, they are rewarded with a free hot dog for returning it to the concession stand, per the long-standing tradition at Orval Smith Field. Not to be outdone, the Mustangs have brought their own tradition to Ralston with the dancing moms and daughters staking a claim to the deck along the top of the bleachers in front of the press box, newly constructed this season compliments of Maverick Construction and Kay Dee Corporation.

Along with the new deck are stairs to the pressbox, repairs to the bleachers, new concrete and picnic tables, and repairs to the field. "The city has been very accommodating to our Legion Board in immediately investing in facility upgrades, and even investing more as a city. The bottom line, and what I am so grateful for, is that our students who participate in baseball are much better served now," shares Ben Ersland, Concordia Activities Director.



Mustang player John P. from Brownell-Talbot



Mustang player Ryan S. from Concordia

UPDATES TO THE NEW FIELD INCLUDE:

- ♥ new deck
- ♥ stairs to the pressbox
- ♥ repairs to the bleachers
- ♥ new concrete
- ♥ picnic tables
- ♥ repairs to the field

“WE HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY BLESSED BY AARON’S EFFORTS.”

BEN ERLAND



MISSION WORK CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE. We see it in the Growing Leaders class, during Faith in Action Day, and students' mission trips. It's visible in our hallways, our churches, and our neighborhoods. The joy that comes from missions is not held close and hidden, but is shared with those around us so they can know the good works of God.

Seniors Mayleigh W. and Mackenzie G., Freshman Ella H., and chaperone Mrs. Tammy Latimer were invited by Pr. Sean Chapman to serve in Whitestone, NY, in March 2024. When Mackenzie decided to go because her older brother had been on mission trips and enjoyed excellent experiences, her best friend Mayleigh knew it was time to go on a mission trip as well! Ella was the lone freshman in the group, but was debating between the Alaska trip and New York. Having been a student of Pr. Sean during his time at Divine Shepherd in Omaha, she knew how exciting time with him would be, and that time being in NYC was an added bonus.

The first bit of work the group participated in was food distribution in the bitter cold at the Legacy Center. "That was the most impactful part of the trip for me," said Mackenzie "seeing all the people there on that freezing cold day and still people kept coming even though it

was so cold." Ella noticed the reactions of those to whom they were handing out food that morning, "They see the same people running the pantry all the time. We were new faces, and they were shocked by seeing people from Nebraska who came all that way to help them."

The team was tasked with planning and leading Palm Sunday worship and a one-day VBS, but what they didn't know was there was a giant Easter egg hunt planned at the same time! The team learned to "Enjoy the chaos," said Mackenzie.

When it came time to make a new impression, it was at the preschool in Queens. "Having someone older interact with you when you are little is always cool - they look up to the big kids," shared Mayleigh about their time leading chapel for the preschool. "Hopefully, we've made it possible for more groups to go in the future and make their own impact."

Each night, the team did devotions together and shared their highs and lows for the day. "I could tell they were impacted by what they saw and heard. The highlight for me was to see the team brainstorming how they could take what they experienced in NYC and put it into action in Omaha," said Mrs. Latimer.



MISSION WORK CAN HAPPEN

WE WERE NEW FACES, AND THEY WERE SHOCKED BY SEEING PEOPLE FROM NEBRASKA WHO CAME ALL THAT WAY TO HELP THEM. - ELLA H.

CHECK OUT OUR
NEW WEBSITE FOR
DIGITAL COPIES OF THE
NEWSLETTER, MUSTANG
MEMO, & MORE UNDER
THE "NEWS AND
UPDATES" TAB!

CONCORDIAOMAHA.ORG

A PUBLICATION OF CONCORDIA LUTHERAN SCHOOLS OF OMAHA FOUNDATION **SUMMER 2024**

2023-2024
SCHOOL THEME

FIRM
FOUNDATION
ISAIAH 28:16

*Therefore thus says the Lord God, Behold, I am
laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly
cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He
who believes in it will not be disturbed.*

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN SCHOOLS OF OMAHA > NEWSLETTER

FOUNDATION BOARD

- Gaye Lynn Schaffart
Board Chair
- Lee Handke
- Gail Hawkins
- A. William "Bill" Kernen
- Brandon Newhouse
- Lloyd Probasco
- Dan Vehle
- Sabrina Weiss



**LEE
HANDKE**

FOUNDATION BOARD
Update

As many of you know, the Concordia school campus is right in my backyard. In fact, Concordia is the main reason we moved to our current house in 2008 as our two sons were beginning their journey at Concordia Academy. Now they have both transitioned to college life and beyond and I look back fondly on their education and experiences within Concordia's Christian community.

Today, I look out my back window to see a miracle continuing to rise from the site that once held a simple horse barn. The addition of classrooms, administrative offices, and a worship arts center will enhance the Concordia experience for students, staff, and visitors to our school. Like many of you, I toured the new addition at the Gala, and it is incredible! And while it is nice to have new facilities, I am reminded of the refrain from the hymn in the red Lutheran Hymnal, "The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord"! How appropriate it is that "Firm Foundation" has been the school theme for this year.

I can't help but think of the many comparisons of "foundation" here. Of course, we have a very tangible school foundation made of concrete and rebar upon which these beautiful new spaces are built. And we have the Concordia Foundation, dedicated to ensuring the long-term viability of Concordia for generations to come. But most importantly, we have Christ as our firm foundation, offering His grace and mercy to all.

It is an exciting time to be a Mustang as we accept God's call to bring others to His firm foundation, and to support students on their journey to become Faith Secure, World Ready, Kingdom Leaders. Please join us on that mission through prayer and support of the Concordia Lutheran Schools Foundation and Thrive Campaign.

FOUNDATION BALANCE

MAY 2024 BALANCE

\$2,549,549 ≈ \$161k

DECEMBER 2023 BALANCE

\$2,791,511 ≈ \$232k

JUNE 2023 BALANCE

\$2,488,929 ≈ \$112k

MARCH 2023 BALANCE

\$2,356,945 ≈ \$45k