



fall 2018

volume 48 • number 4

nc advance

nebraska christian schools building lives for eternity

Pray for NCS

Building Lives for Eternity

In Transition

by Tim Hekrdle, Superintendent
Editor's note: Tim Hekrdle became Nebraska Christian's superintendent in July. Hekrdle has a master's degree in Educational Leadership and has spent 16 years serving students and parents in an educational setting. We are grateful for his leadership of the school and hope you will enjoy getting to know him and his heart for the Lord a little better through his column.



As I have learned more about the history of Nebraska Christian, I notice a common thread of God drawing many

servant hearts to the mission that we uphold. Today is no exception to this. God has placed a plethora of committed faculty, staff, and families here at NC. I am blessed to be serving alongside committed Christian families who use God's Word as a foundation for their values and principles.

As a body, it is important to reflect, set goals, and seek the Lord's guidance in this season of transition. To that end, we are engaging the Nebraska Christian community in a time of discussion and reflection. With each conversation, we invite the Holy Spirit to play a part. The NC leadership team will use these conversations as a guide in assessing the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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NC Begins 60th Year of "Building Lives for Eternity"



On August 14, Nebraska Christian Schools officially kicked off its 60th year with 208 students: 57 in the elementary, 45 in junior high, and 106 in the high school. Over the first month, a few students joined, bringing the total enrollment to 213 as of October 4. We are excited to see what God will do at NC in the upcoming year!

Left: Freshmen Lizzy Powers and Molly Griess eagerly approach the first day of school.



Homecoming

Squad Up Day winners with their "Roller Coaster" (clockwise from top left): Arwen Zhang, Jordan Schnell, Madi Felt, Skylar Swantek, and Halle Strong.

Crazy dress-up days. Old friends reunited. An exciting football game. Pep rally games. Those things and more made up Homecoming 2018, a week full of fun and excitement.

This year's student council wanted to make Homecoming feel more special than normal, so they recruited a decorating committee to prepare the high school hallways for the week; perhaps the most popular place to take pictures

throughout the week was the "photo booth" decorated with streamers, twinkle lights, and balloons.

The annual Homecoming pep rally was held on the first day of the week; this change helped build excitement for the week and gave students an opportunity to make posters supporting the sports teams.

The dress-up days garnered much participation from the student

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Students:

Pray for solid friendships to be built among students.

Pray for the safety of our athletes.

Events:

Pray for preparations for the Harvest Festival (Oct. 26) and Festival of Lessons & Carols (Dec. 14).

School:

Pray for the school's financial needs (see pg. 2) and that we would trust the Lord to provide.

— Philippians 4:6 —

60 Years: Let's Celebrate!

Plans are being made for our 60th Anniversary celebration. We'll be sure to let you know about all of the events.

We want everyone to join us in celebrating what God has done at Nebraska Christian over the last 60 years!

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Tim Hekrdle, *Administrator*

Becky Ritta ('99), *Editor*

Beth (Ritta '98) Keim, *Layout & Design*

The NC Advance is available free of charge. To subscribe, change your address, stop receiving the publication, or submit information, please contact us at:

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Editorial Submissions: All news or information from NC Alumni, students and teachers is welcome. Letters may be edited for length or clarity.

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Mission:

The mission of Nebraska Christian Schools is to assist the family and church by providing a Christ-centered education, equipping students with a biblical worldview and encouraging a love relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

New Staff Join NC Family



Hannah Myers ('14)

by Savannah Thomas,
senior

Hannah Myers is currently working her dream job as a kindergarten and ELL (English language learners) teacher. She graduated from NC in 2014, then she attended college at UNK for two years, Grace University for two years, and is currently enrolled at Doane College. Myers graduated from Grace in May 2018, and now she is finishing two years at Doane to get her teaching certificate.

Before coming to NC full time, Myers was a tutor for two summers for NC's ELL summer program. The thing Myers enjoys most about her job is being able to work with the students and teachers, and she loves the diversity we have in the school.

Myers came to know Christ when she was an NC student. Of her time as a student, she said, "I was surrounded by people who truly know Christ, and I just loved that."

Myers decided to go into teaching after she had important people in her life tell her she was gifted in that area. She knows she made the right decision because she truly loves teaching. She said, "God has gifted me in [teaching], and to use that is very satisfying. I love teaching other students how to use their own gifts."



Amy Merchant

by Josie Maberry,
junior

Amy Merchant is a new staff member here at Nebraska Christian. Her husband Ben graduated from NC in 1995, and they have two children who both attend NC: Truitt (8th grade), and Zander (6th grade).

Her responsibilities at NC include teaching the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade classes. She attended the University of Nebraska-Kearney to get her teaching certificate and Moody Bible Institute in Chicago to obtain a bachelor's degree in educational ministries. Before she came to NC, she taught first grade at Faith Christian Schools in Kearney. She taught there for four years and decided to apply for the NC job when the teaching position opened up last spring. Before working at Faith Christian, Merchant taught 1st and 2nd grades at Grand Island Christian School.

Merchant is thrilled to be part of the NC staff. She said, "One of my main reasons for coming to NC was that I love teaching in a Christian atmosphere." She also likes the benefits of Christian education and wanted her two sons to be able to experience it. She said, "One of my favorite parts of my job is getting to know the students, interacting with them on an every day basis, and being a part of their learning experience."

Calendar of Events

OCTOBER

26 Harvest Festival, 6:30 p.m.

NOVEMBER

21-26 Thanksgiving Break
School dismisses at 11:30 on the 21st

DECEMBER

14 Festival of Lessons & Carols,
6:15 p.m. (see pg. 6)

21-January 6
Christmas Break
School dismisses at 11:30 on the 21st

For additional events visit
nebraskachristian.org/calendar



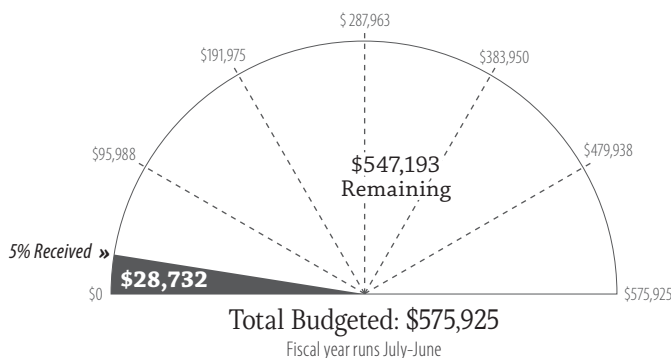
Donnie Halbgewachs

by Carsyn Ostrand,
senior

One of the new faces on the Nebraska Christian staff for the 2018-2019 school year is Donnie Halbgewachs. He is serving as the senior Bible teacher and took the job just two weeks before school began. Halbgewachs is familiar to some of the students here at NC because he sees them on a regular basis at the church he pastors in Dannebrog, Nebraska. He is the pastor of the First Baptist Church, where multiple NC families attend. Senior Emma Kaczor said, "Having my pastor as my Bible teacher is really fun...except he likes to call on me a

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2018-2019 Gift Income: \$28,732 Received through Oct. 4



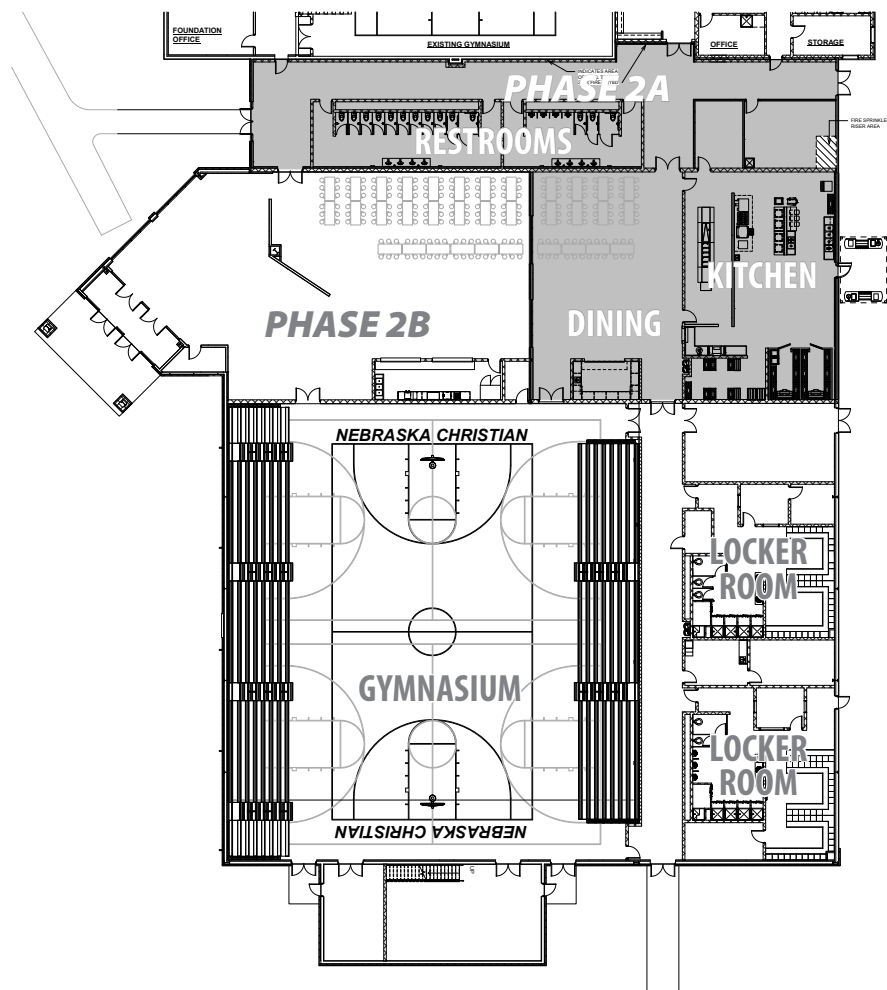
God continues to provide for the needs of Nebraska Christian Schools through the gifts of people like you. Thanks so much for your faithfulness. Your support makes our mission possible.

Dollars & Sense by Tom Dockweiler ('79), Business Manager



The 2018-2019 fiscal year started on July 1 and will end on June 30. This year's budget calls for \$575,925 in gift income, which includes money raised by the auction in March. As always, we are trusting God to provide this amount or to provide support for Nebraska Christian Schools in some other way. We are

off to a slow start. If gift income came in consistently throughout the year, we would need to have received \$115,250 by the end of September. As of October 4, 2018, we have received a total of \$28,732. This compares to \$108,484 on the same date last year. I am anticipating an unusual year and looking forward to what God is going to do. Please pray with us for His provision in His way and for His glory.



Phase 2 New Kitchen, Commons Area & Gymnasium

Phase 2A \$1.9 million

- State of the Art Kitchen
- Dining Hall with Seating for Over 200
- ADA Restrooms / Storm Shelters

Phase 2B \$4.1 million

- Collegiate Sized 94' Competition Gymnasium & Activity Center with Seating for Over 900
- Concession Stand for Activities & Fundraising
- Boys & Girls Locker Rooms
- Athletic Training Room & Uniform Storage
- Athletic Storage Space
- Fine Arts/Programming Storage
- Entrance & Commons Area
- Exterior Remodel of Existing Gymnasium Building
- Expanded Parking Lot with Convenient Drop Off and Pick Up

Make checks payable to Nebraska Christian Schools Foundation

Mail to:
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PO Box 222, Central City, NE 68826

EIN: 45-1300291
foundation@nebraskachristian.org
nebraskachristian.org/foundation

Contact
Jody: 308.940.0249 / NC: 308.946.3836
Jody Heuermann, Foundation Director

Leaving a Legacy that Builds Lives for Eternity



by Jody Heuermann,
NCS Foundation
Executive Director

In the midst of the fundraising and planning for Phase 2A, I am reminded that this campaign is not about a building. The Next 50 Years campaign is about the mission of partnering with the family and church to provide a Christ-centered education and encourage each student to have a personal relationship with Jesus.

Today, through the Nebraska Christian Schools Foundation, you have the opportunity to leave a legacy. The Next 50 Years Capital Campaign will update aging campus facilities and provide new space, which will dramatically impact our appearance and ability to function better during the school year.

Please prayerfully consider how you can financially support moving this phase forward. Thank you for your support of Nebraska Christian Schools and the Next 50 Years Capital Campaign.

**Phase 2A
\$1.9 million**

—
\$1,425,000

—
\$950,000

—
\$475,000

\$315,000
Received



Mark Your Calendar Now: NC Dinner & Benefit Auction // March 23, 2019



by Kristy Langemeier, Special Events Coordinator

Mark your calendars and begin thinking of who you are going to invite! The upcoming

17th Annual Dinner and Benefit Auction will be held here at Nebraska Christian Schools on March 23, 2019. This highly anticipated event is the perfect time to raise a significant part of our annual budget, meet the tuition needs of many students through scholarships, and show our campus to those who don't often find themselves here.

Much work goes into making this a successful evening, and we are so thankful for all the help we have received from many generous supporters throughout the years. We have already begun preparations for the 17th annual event and would like to take this time to ask for your help to make this year's event another record breaking one.

We need help in the following areas:

• Prayer

The Lord is control of all, and we need His guidance as we prepare for this event.

• Acquisition Team

We have an organized list of established givers who just need to be contacted and a time to be arranged for the items to be collected. It is not a cold call, and if we have a large team, the numbers to approach will be few. It is a wonderful way to share NC with businesses everywhere and collect the items that will help support our teachers and students. A bonus is that you will get a sneak

peek at what will be up for bid in March or even acquire an item that you want to bid on! *The Acquisition Team will start December 15, 2018.*

• Items for the Auction

If you have an item you would like to donate or an idea for an item, please contact the Special Events Office. We would love to hear from you.

• Assistance in getting mailings out in the months of January, February, and March.

Be looking for our initial mailing during the first few weeks of January, outlining the details of this year's wonderful event.

If you have any questions or would like to volunteer to help, please contact Kristy Langemeier in the Special Events Office at 308-946-3836, via email at klangemeier@nebraskachristian.org, or call or text her at 402-209-3282.

Memorial Gifts

For: Ken Gnadt
From: Don & Kayleen Riley
For: Larry Green
From: Don & Kayleen Riley
For: Pat Hanson
From: Mary Reisinger
For: Alverta Johns
From: Curtis & Joyce Cooper
Dorothy Glad
Linda Peterson
Bob & Susan Ritta
For: Jane Jones
From: Dorothy Glad
For: Stuart and Carol Mieth
From: Diane Henry
For: Bart Miles
From: Don & Kayleen Riley



Alums at Homecoming

Judi (Elsberry '85) McHargue, Whitney Twogood ('14), Rachel (McHargue '14) Stevens, Cailyn (Ostrand '14) Grabill, Paul McHargue ('88), and Whitney Heuermann ('16) join other alumni on the football field at halftime of the Homecoming game. Each year at Homecoming, alumni in attendance are recognized at halftime.

Hekrdle, continued from pg. 1

From there, we will identify and prioritize our vision and direction to strengthen Nebraska Christian for the coming years.

The primary goal of this transition plan is to listen, learn, and develop an understanding of the school and the Nebraska Christian community at large. A secondary goal is to take immediate action in some of the components that are job-specific. The first portion of the plan includes the specific action steps that we will engage in as I learn about the moving parts, departments, and procedures in the Nebraska Christian community. This segment is about supporting the current happenings of the school. The second portion of the transition plan is to develop a strategic plan; this is all about painting a vision for the future of Nebraska Christian. This is more intensive and involves a listening tour with multiple and diverse groups of NC's constituents. This "Vision & Values" tour allows us to hear from students, staff, parents, alumni, and community members to identify the needs and desires of the Nebraska Christian community.

You can view the transition plan

For: Lorena Millsap
From: Joyce Glynn
For: Clarence Quand
From: Don & Kayleen Riley
For: Dan Schlagel
From: Dorothy Glad
For: Pat Wills
From: Don & Kayleen Riley
In Honor Of: Our Vets Who
Have Served & Are
Serving Now
From: Don & Kayleen Riley

in its entirety on our website at nebraskachristian.org/about-nc/transition-plan, and I encourage you to spend some time reading it. Right now, though, I'd like to give you a brief update on what I'm learning through the "Vision & Values" listening tour.

To start the tour, I have met with the NC staff and faculty in groups of 1-5 over the last few weeks. In those meetings, the school's commitment to its mission of providing a Christ-centered education has been, by far, the strongest theme brought out among staff members. They appreciate the liberty and responsibility they have to teach each subject from a Christian perspective, and they wrestle on a regular basis with how to do so to the best of their abilities. The family feel of NC, the positive student leadership, and the God-honoring attitudes seen by staff among the student body have also been common themes.

An area we look forward to strengthening is our communication with the central Nebraska community about who we are and what we do at NC. We offer something distinct here, namely, a Christian education. Many have said that NC is a "hidden gem," and we need to continue to get the word out about NC.

As I continue the tour, I look forward to hearing from other groups, learning more about what members of the NC community value, and ways we can improve as we look toward the future.

If you'd like to join in the conversation, please fill out our online survey. You can access it from the link on the homepage or at nebraskachristian.org/survey.

NC Almanac

10 years ago (Fall '08)

- Nebraska Christian's 50th year begins with 179 students enrolled in preschool through 12th grade.
- New staff include Kaitly Flynn ('06) and Dee Flynn.
- The Nebraska Christian Foundation is formed with the following board members: Dr. David Edgren, Lanny Faeh ('79), Jody Heuermann, Belinda (Berck '86) Strobel, and Mike Toukan.

20 years ago (Fall '98)

- NC begins its 40th year with 199 students: 61 in elementary, 24 in junior high, and 114 in high school.
- New staff include Nadine Myers, Martha Parlane, Charissa Smith ('94), Jacki Knaub, Karmen Hamer, and Terry Elge.
- Jeremy Senkbile ('99) and Andrea Krug ('99) are selected Homecoming King & Queen.

30 years ago (Fall '88)

- Enrollment is up over the previous year as NC's 30th year begins with 158 students enrolled in grades K-12.
- New staff include Eddra Ritta ('81) and Daryl Walling.
- Coach Larry Schreiber receives a gold medal for coaching track and a bronze medal for coaching football from Franklin Life Insurance Company.

40 years ago (Fall '78)

- NC's 20th year begins with 142 students enrolled.
- New staff include Dale Wight, Mr. & Mrs. Roy Carr, Jr., and Rev. & Mrs. Marvin Ecklund.
- Tom Dockweiler ('79) is named Outstanding Student of the Month by the Central City Sertoma Club.

50 years ago (Fall '68)

- 121 students are enrolled in grades 9-12 as NC's 10th year begins.
- Sharon Hamilton joins the staff.
- Dr. John Blanchard, executive director of the National Association of Christian Schools, is the special speaker at the 10th Annual Corporation Day.



Class of '78. Back: Merle Dake, Mike Ritta, Ross Garwood. Front: Faith (Kauffroath) Zellweger, Carla (Jordan) Osler, Lori (Nelson) Garcia, Linda (Krieger) Garwood, Dawn (Faeh) Hanson, Joan (Johnson) Perkins, and Ann Marie (Lukasiewicz) Goettl.

New Staff, continued from pg. 2

lot! I think it will be a very good and beneficial year for all of us."

Halbgewachs graduated from Cozad High School in 1984 and married his high school sweetheart, Karma, at the age of 18. They have three children. Ethan, their oldest, is 24 and works as a police officer in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Their daughter Hannah is 20 and attends the University of New Mexico. Isaac is their youngest and is a freshman at NC.

After graduating from Cozad, Halbgewachs attended the University of Nebraska-Kearney and earned an education degree. Later on, he re-

turned to UNK and graduated with an elementary degree. Throughout his career, he has taught at several different schools and then felt led to go to seminary. He is currently enrolled at Wheaton College.

Halbgewachs took the job at NC as the senior Bible teacher because "I really, really, really love to share the Gospel and tell others what God has done for me. I want to share it with everyone, anywhere I can."

The senior class is eager to learn more about God this year and also advance their knowledge in apologetics, and they're looking forward to learning from Halbgewachs.

Teams Rise to the Occasion for Homecoming



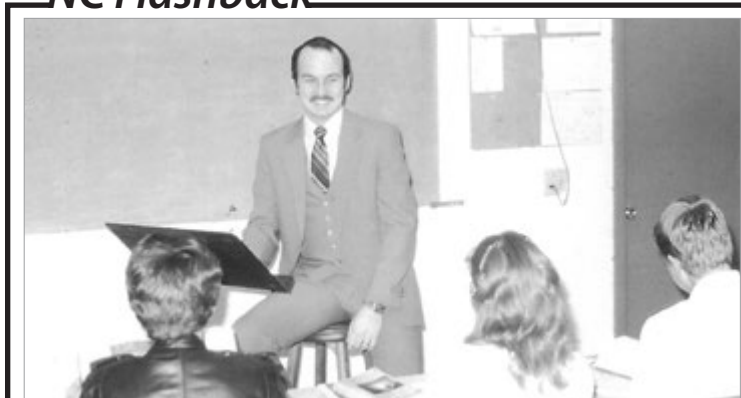
Quarterback Elijah Boersen runs the option during the Eagles' first possession of the Heartland game. The Eagles won the game 50-6.

NC's sports teams all had good showings during Homecoming week. The volleyball team hosted Centura on Tuesday and Heartland Lutheran and Humphrey St. Francis on Thursday. The 14-2 Lady Eagles emerged victorious from each match. On Friday, the cross country team traveled to St. Cecilia, where the boys and girls teams each took second place. Then on Friday evening, the NC football team took on Heartland (Henderson), winning the game 50-6 to remain undefeated at 5-0.

This is the best start of any NC football team since 2003, when the team went 9-0 during the regular season. Coming off of last year's 2-6 campaign, the team members are thrilled to be seeing better results on the field. "I think the main difference this year is unity," said junior noseguard Garrett Swantek. "The juniors and seniors have stepped up into leadership, and everyone gets along with each other."

Keep up with our teams as they complete their seasons by following our blog: nebraskachristian.org/blog.

NC Flashback



For this flashback, we're looking back at the beginning of a current staff member's teaching career in the 1980's. If you can identify him, you could win a prize! Send your guesses to advance@nebraskachristian.org.

From the last issue: Pictured at the 2006 commencement ceremony are Board Chairman Norm Krug and Ruby Chang ('06). Congratulations to Ashley Stone ('06)! Her name was drawn from all those who submitted correct entries, so she wins our prize!



A Festival of Lessons & Carols!

Friday, December 14, 2018 // Doors open at 5:30 • Festival begins at 6:15

Tickets are \$20 each and will be available for purchase in the NC office starting November 1. Please contact the school at 308-946-3836 with any questions.



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Left: Superintendent Tim Hekrdle with his doppelganger Cody Griess on Staff/Student Swap Day.

Above: 7th graders Alexandra Bruning and Hope Seip react to winning "Best Cross Country Sign" during the sign decorating competition at the Homecoming pep rally.



Above: Kindergarten students Will Zanger, Charlotte Hale, Stetson Stuhmer, Orrin Strong, Aubrey Krug, Gabriel Green, and Brinlee Galles, along with their teacher Hannah Myers ('14), show their school spirit on White & Blue Day.

Homecoming, continued from pg. 1

body and staff. On Staff/Student Swap Day, at least three Mr. Hekrdles, a Mrs. Flynn, and a Mrs. Musgrave could be seen on campus, and the teachers embraced the opportunity to dress in comfortable clothes. Creativity abounded on Squad Up Day, which consisted of students grabbing a few friends and dressing in a way that unified

them. The winning squad designed roller coaster cars out of cardboard. "It took us about four hours total," said senior Arwen Zhang, one of the five squad members. Class Color Craze Day saw each class dressed in an assigned color. And on the final day of the week, everyone dressed in school colors in honor of Homecoming.

The Homecoming weekend events featured a cookout prior to the football game, a football victory, class reunions, and the annual Renewed Strength 5K. Several classes reunited for campus tours, food, and fellowship, including members of the classes of 1968, 1973, and 1978. And on Saturday morning, 17 intrepid souls braved the cool,

misty weather to run in the 5K and 1-mile fun run.

Student Council President Jon Dockweiler felt the week was a success. "Homecoming week really showed off the school spirit and creativity we have in the student body this year," he said. "I enjoyed seeing students having fun and laughing together."