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State Cross Country runners tackle Kearney's hills

by Jesus Montoya

The West Point-Beemer Cadets brought down two state qualifiers to the Cross Country State Championship meet on Friday, October 24, 2025, those students being Zaq Leslie and Emerson Meiergerd.

Zaq was able to place 83rd out of 117 competitors; it was a tough race for many racers with the chilling temperature that was much different from past meets. He was able to hit his second best time of the season with the tough competition that ran beside him, that time being an 18:37 5k compared to his district time being an 18:25 5k, a very great accomplishment.

Emerson placed 63rd out of 119 competitors; she was able to run her best time of the season at this meet. She was also able to get very close to her personal best from the past season, running a 21:52 5k compared to her 21:40 from last year at the State Championships.

To prepare themselves for the race on Friday morning, they began by doing a shake out run to get all of their nerves out. This was not a very long run, only consisting of one mile. They got some hotel breakfast and had a couple of hours before they headed out to the course. Both had different ways of thinking about what's to come, but ultimately, they thought it all comes down to their mindset and what they believed they could accomplish

"I practiced hard, and ate healthy," stated junior Zaq Leslie.

In order to prepare for the championship meet, Zaq mainly practiced to his best ability, and rested easily. Eating healthy foods before a race is crucial as that is what the body uses as fuel on race day.

"I stretched and rolled out my legs two days before the meet," stated sophomore Emerson Meiergerd.

She spent her time after tough practices stretching and taking care of her body before the race day to prepare. Having fresh legs before a meet is a very important factor that contributes to your result on race day. Since she had raced at the championship meet before, she already knew what was to come, and what she had to do to prepare for the day. She knew that the course would be filled with hills, but with all of the competition present that would push her for better time.

Before the race, both competitors were looking forward to different things upon finishing. Zaq was looking forward to eating some good

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food after the race, motivating him to finish faster, whereas Emerson looked forward to seeing all of her friends and family members. Both used motivators to look towards something positive to think about during and before the race.

Head Coach Meghan Schneider and Assistant Coach Tony Mitzel were both very proud of the team and the competitors who were able to compete at state. They look forward to another great season next year with room for improvement.

State land judging students enjoy playing with dirt

by Zaq Leslie

The sun was just starting to rise over the fields surrounding West Point Beemer High School Future Farmers of America (FFA) students as they prepared for an annual tradition: State Land Judging. This event is not only a test of the students knowledge about soil and water, but also a celebration of the skills they have developed throughout their FFA career.

Land judging offers FFA members the chance to assess the qualities of various plots of land. Students dive into soil types, drainage, erosion potential, and land use capabilities. These vital skills are not just useful for the competition; they are foundational for anyone interested in agriculture, environmental science, or land management. With agriculture on the rise in our community, the understanding of land characteristics cannot be understated.

Cartoon by Zaq Leslie

On the day of the event, students gathered in teams, equipped with soil probes, measuring tapes, and notebooks. The atmosphere was filled with excitement and nervousness; these students spent months preparing for this very moment. Each team, composed of a variety of dedicated high schoolers, was ready to showcase their knowledge they gained through studies and hands-on experiences. The weeks before state, High School Ag teacher Lee Shroeder, brought dirt for the students to study and practice on.

As the competition was underway, students explored designated judging areas. They relied on their knowledge of the subject to analyze the land. The judges presented each team with different sites to evaluate, challenging their ability to adapt to varying conditions and landscapes.

“I feel like I know what I am doing, I have done this a couple of times and did amazing then so what is different now,’ junior Colby Anderson stated. The collaboration of teams is where teamwork and communication are just as critical as individual knowledge.

Throughout the day, the teams encountered various land

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features, such as clay soils, sandy soils, and areas with significant erosion. Each characteristic presented its own challenges and opportunities. Their evaluations required sharp critical thinking and an understanding of various agricultural principles.

At the end of the day, the judges tallied the scores while anticipation hung in the air. Each team's work was a testament to their preparation, passion for agriculture, and commitment to their FFA chapter. When the results were announced, cheers erupted from students as they saw the results of their hard work and dedication had rewards. Regardless of individual ranking, every participant felt a sense of accomplishment.

"It was awesome just being there and participating in this event," sophomore Emerson Meiergerd stated.

In the hours after the competition, reflections took place. For many, this was more than just a contest; it was an opportunity to learn and improve.

"For the next year, I am going to study and work hard to improve my skills," Colby Anderson stated. Success was celebrated, but the true lesson was learned. Students returned to their schools, ready to apply what they learned.

The State FFA Land Judging event is not just an academic competition: it is a stepping stone for future leaders in agriculture. As students look forward to next year's event, the growth they witnessed this year will inspire even more high school students to engage with natural resources and the science behind sustainable land use.

As the sun set on the day's events, the students packed up their materials, not only with trophies in hand but with a deeper connection to the land they live and work on. The West Point FFA Land Judging team reminded everyone how crucial the impact of agriculture has in our everyday lives. Through challenges and triumphs, they learned that understanding the land is about more than just soil; it's about nurturing relationships and preparing for the future.

Overall, the State FFA Land Judging event serves as a reminder of the importance of hands-on learning and the dedication that students put into their education.

Halloween in a Trunk?

by Angeline Berganza

On October 18, 2025, the Family Career Community leaders of America organization hosted the annual Trunk or Treat at the West Point Beemer public parking spot. A tradition that has taken place for 4 years. This allows families to come together as a community and spend time together to create memories.

The most important thing that you have to focus on when planning an event similar to the Trunk or Treat is that you want to make sure the day is free of any other activities.

"When preparing an event for this you want to make sure that you have many members helping with it, it takes a lot of people to make it a success," mentioned adviser and FCS teacher Brianna Wolfe.

Other major focuses are making sure you have sponsors, since there's no way of receiving candy and prizes without their help. FCCLA did a fantastic job on advertising for their event so it had a good outcome.

"The main purpose of the trunk or treat is to bring the community in an exciting, safe, and free environment" stated Brianna Wolfe.

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The event went well considering the amount of time it took to plan and the unfortunate event of the weather being terrible.

Chapter President, Lia Montenegro stated "I would improve just by trying to make something on the spot. I think we should have had a back up plan in case it was too cold. Also just having more games."

Although the weather took a turn, the community still showed up for FCCLA which is amazing.

Photo by Mrs. Brianna Wolfe

" We did what we could do even if we members did not want to be in the cold and rain but we love our community and they are the reason why FCCLA continues to grow. They came all this way for us so we have to do the same," mentioned Montenegro.

FCCLA has to consider which activities members are in because they want enough people to come out and help, but also what is happening in the community.

"The positives in the event was how the community showed up but also the involvement with the kids," communicated chapter Vice President Samantha Fehrer.

Gianni Sanchez was a member of FCCLA who participated in the event. She communicated on how she would have dressed comfortably and that she enjoyed having fun with friends while giving the kids candy.

FCCLA had a terrific outcome this year! The community can't wait for what's in store next year.

Art Club draws interest of student artists

by Camila Calderon

The first Art Club meeting was held on October 16th, and they had their studio night on October 28th, kicking off the beginning of the club.

The Art Club is an opportunity for a student to showcase their creativity and endless imagination through the form of painting and drawing. Teacher Kimberly Anderson is the director of the art club, and this year, 25 members have enrolled into the afterschool club. They have studio time, or meetings, after school and dedicate almost an hour to the pieces they choose to make. Their daily meetings are generally carefree, but Kimberly does give the opportunity to enter pieces into competitions.

Kimberly believes the main purpose of art is to encourage students to create art; the club provides an opportunity to expose them to it outside of school hours." I want my students in art club to

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be able to come and create artwork during studio time and to do art related things for both the school and the community."

In their daily meetings, they get to work on projects with materials Anderson offers in her classroom. "Most of our meetings are just studio time, so they can come and create artwork and use any of my materials," she states. One challenge teacher Kimbery faces is setting up studio nights that fit into everyone's schedule, so to solve this problem, she tries to plan student nights in order to allow every member to attend at least once.

"One thing I like best about the art club is the freedom the students have with creating their own artwork. They don't have to do my assignments like when they are in my class," she shares.

junior Allison Wolken, a member of the art club, shares that she enjoys listening to music and talking with friends as she works on her art pieces. "The main purpose of the art club is to bring people who love making art together," she mentions.

One main goal that Allison wants to accomplish through art club is to change up her style. "I've been an acrylic girl my whole life, so my goal this year is to be able to use oil paint," she states.

Although she enjoys painting, she also faces daily difficulties like art block and burn out. "I think a lot of art inspiration needs to come naturally, and art club is great encouragement for that."

During every meeting, Allison sets expectations for herself by encouraging and trying to create a fun environment for the artists around her. "The most rewarding part of an art club is the art you create. It gives you something to be proud of," she says.

The art club is a place to encourage artists to let their creativity and imagination run wild with an endless amount of materials at their disposal. From free studio time to art competitions, members enter the artistic world to express themselves through innovation and inspiration. It allows them time outside of school to commit to art and work on whichever projects they desire.

Turkey rollers roll out the season: Bowling underway

By Ethan Corrales

This is the season for Winter sports to prepare for the season and begin practice. When people think of Winter sports they usually think about Basketball or Wrestling. However, right under everyone's noses in one sport that everyone has had a little experience in, Bowling. While everyone is focusing on Basketball or Wrestling, Bowling has already had their first practice.

"There's four people on a lane, and you go through how many sets you want to," said junior Katlyn Hittle when asked how practices are formatted. "We have Samantha's dad that comes in... and he tells us what we're doing wrong and how we can improve."

The bowling team practices down at our local bowling alley on Main st. The practice format for bowling is certainly interesting and unique compared to the practices of other Winter sports. With everyone on a lane bowling and getting feedback from the coaches, the team can work on

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their form, power, and angle they bowl at. To prepare for the season, many of the bowlers have been stretching, practicing their form, and experimenting with many different types of techniques.

Competitions are relatively similar to casual bowling except with a team. The team members have stated that during the games the teams socialize and the atmosphere is positive, and when it is the final round, their fellow competitors cheer each other on until the very end.

“The coaches are amazing. They are always encouraging, and they try their best to make sure everyone gets an equal chance to bowl in a meet. My dad also helps coach, and I think he does a great job with it,” stated junior Samantha Francis when asked what the coaches are like, “he knows how to explain things in a way we can understand.”

Many of the bowlers have stated that the coaches are exceedingly helpful and are very friendly. They say that the coaches overview them as they bowl and give feedback as practice goes on.

The team is extraordinarily close-knit with each other with everyone helping the other. “If they’re having a bad day, we’re gonna help. If I’m having a bad day, I’d expect them to try and help me, but I expect them to be a teammate, like any other sport, always be there, always help,” said junior Zaq Leslie when asked how his teammates are.

Teamwork is one of the most fundamental blocks in building a team. Everyone should be able to lift each other up when another is down, they should be able to cooperate with another for the betterment of the team, and they should be able to communicate to ensure the optimization of competitions. Bowling has surely proven itself to be one sport which shows these traits the most with not just the teams showing the traits within themselves, but the competitors as well.

With the clock ticking down for their first meet, our bowlers are focused on perfecting their discipline and squeezing everything they can out of their practices.

“I would like students to try and take only a little more seriously, yes, have fun, but at the same time, they also have to realize it's a sport, and it'd be nice to try to go to state and districts,” said junior Katlyn Hittle.

Brester’s Best Bets
Week 10 College Football Predictions

(Stats from ESPN)
by Chase Brester

I will be giving my predictions for 3 of the Week 10 matchups for College Football. As of now I am a perfect 4 for 4 on picks.

#18 Oklahoma(6-2) @ #14 Tennessee (6-2)

Tennessee opens as a 3 point favorite over the Sooners. This is a very important game for both teams. Whoever loses this game, will lose their shot at the playoffs. Tennessee has been electric on offense this year. They have been averaging 41.9 points per game. The Volunteers are led by their stud transfer QB, Joey Aguilar. Aguilar has passed for over 2,000 yards and 18 touchdowns. On the other hand, Oklahoma has been pretty slow on offense since QB John Mateer got hurt. After the first 3 games, Mateer was at the top of the Heisman watch. He later broke a bone in his throwing hand that put him out for a few weeks. He returned two weeks later for the big rivalry game against Texas. He really struggled that game with 200 passing yards and 3 interceptions. This game is gonna come down to if John

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Mateer can play the way he did early on. I think that this Tennessee offense is really consistent and will be too much for the Sooners. **38-24 Tennessee.**

#17 Cincinnati (7-1) @ #24 Utah (6-2)

Utah opens as 7 point favorites over the Bearcats. This surprises me because Cincinnati has been rolling with a 7 game win streak. The Bearcats only loss was in the season opener against Nebraska. However Utah is coming off a dominant win over Colorado, 53-7. The Utes finished with 587 total yards, and 422 of them were rushing. Cincinnati's QB Brendan Sorsby has only thrown 1 interception through 8 games. He has also thrown for 1,800 yards and 20 touchdowns. I believe this game will be a shootout. Both teams are averaging over 400 yards per game. Both teams are averaging 38 points per game. I think this is a must win for both teams, if they want to make the playoffs. If you are in the Big 12 you really can only have 1 loss if you want to make the playoffs, but Utah still has a slim chance of making it. Cincinnati still has a good shot since their schedule only has 1 more ranked team after this. I think Cincinnati covers the spread, but I think Utah wins **41-35.**

 # 23 USC (5-2) @ Nebraska (6-2)

Of course I had to save the best for last. Primetime, Blackout on NBC. A game I have had circled on my calendar since January. This is where Nebraska has been wanting to be. A playoff eliminator against a team they have never beaten. USC opens as a 6 point favorite over the Huskers. The Trojans offense is #1 in the nation in yards per game. They are averaging 530 yards per game. Nebraska is averaging 400 yards per game. The Huskers have a better defense, only allowing 284 yards per game. USC's defense has allowed 365 yards per game. The impact players for the Trojans are, QB Jayden Maiava and WR Makai Lemon. 758 of Maiava's 2,180 passing yards have been to Makai Lemon. Lemon is 5th in the country for receiving yards. Impact players for the Huskers are QB Dylan Raiola and Emmett Johnson. Raiola has 1,900 yards passing with 17 touchdowns and 6 interceptions. Nebraska RB Emmett Johnson is 5th in the nation for rushing yards with 837. Johnson also has 9 touchdowns. This game is gonna come down to Nebraska's defense. I believe the crowd could play a big factor, but Nebraska has to be able to limit big plays which is something this Trojan offense does. Nebraska's offense will have to do their best to keep USC's offense off the field. The best way to do that is by running the ball and taking up a lot of time. As much as I want to pick Nebraska, I just don't think it will happen. **34-31 Trojans.**

These are my picks for week 10 of the College football season. I hope I finish this week 6-1 because I would rather have Nebraska win then get the pick right.

Not throwing away my shot!

By: Samantha Fehrer

Lin-Manuel Miranda's hit sensational and Tony winning American musical, Hamilton: The Musical is a worldwide uproar. This astonishing two hour musical is a narration of the founding father, Alexander Hamilton's life in two separate acts. While this musical is mainly focused on American history, the catchy singing and rapping creates a contrast if you do not enjoy history. With the modern music twist, it causes people all over

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the world to relate to such an important factor in history.

Hamilton: The Musical starts off with Alexander's arrival in America as an orphaned immigrant. Alexander is played by the author and composer, Lin-Manuel Miranda. Lin portrays Alexander as a determined young man wanting to get his name in the history books. They highlight Alexander's rise to fame up until his very unfortunate death. On the negative side of his life, Lin shows Alexander's political issues and even the major scandal that leaves Alexander not able to run for president.

As the lights spotlights on the main narrator, Aaron Burr, originally portrayed by Leslie Odom Jr, the opening song "Alexander Hamilton" starts with a summary of the whole musical. This song is a fantastic way to give the audience a preview of what to expect in the show, without giving out any major spoilers. Act one portrays Alexander's early life and his rise to being a huge political figure. The show progresses on how Aaron Burr starts to gain his hatred for being in Alexander's shadow. Act two showcases then how Alexander seems to fall from that rise of fame, and ultimately his scandal that led to his downfall. This portion of the musical showcases more of the political side of him.

Hamilton: The Musical is a musically challenging piece which took Lin-Manuel Miranda seven years to write. Specifically, it took him one year to write the song titled "My Shot." This musical was not something that just got thrown together, it took a lot of hard work and dedication for it to rise to fame. The hip-hop twist to the historical significance makes the musical verbally appealing to the audience. Despite what some may say a boring subject, Lin made it enjoyable to everyone across the world. This proves just how much of a musical genius he is.

The repeating line, "I am not throwing away my shot," has a significance even until the unfortunate ending, and is the most iconic line even outside the musical. This line shows how Alexander Hamilton seizes every opportunity thrown at him. The line is repeated in many songs, which is ironic because of the downhill of his life at the end of the musical.

Overall, the award-winning musical, Hamilton: The Musical, is in the top musicals of all time. The historical twist on modern day music has caused everyone to fall in love with it. It is currently still being toured around the world and will continue to make people obsessed with it, just like it did back in 2015 for its first airing.

Cartoon by Ally Wolken