



CARDINAL FLYER

Hayes Center High School Journalism

Thursday, October 1, 2026



Photo by Lanie Soundy
Ayleen Hernandez smiles before beginning to paint a classroom window for Homecoming. The senior class tradition of painting downtown businesses' windows continued for another year to the theme of America's 250th Anniversary.

2026 HOMECOMING HIGHLIGHTS

BY HARLI COX

This year's homecoming week was filled with lots of school spirit, competition, and fun activities. Students were able to participate through activities like dress-up days, spirit builders, and the decorating of hallways, and parade floats. This year's homecoming theme was America's 250th Anniversary, so students used America's colors to showcase our school and community for Friday's homecoming games.

The dress-up days also gave students a chance to show their school pride. The themes included "Through the Ages" where

each grade dressed as a different age, "Dress for the Wrong Occasion", "Anything but a Backpack", "Red, White, and Blue Day", and "Jersey Day".

Several spirit builders were also held during the week. On Monday, students competed in an activity that was similar to barrel racing but instead, they sat on roller chairs and were pulled using a jump rope by another student on their team. Each grade participated as a team which created lots of competitiveness between groups. Tuesday's spirit builder was "One Word Karaoke". A pair of competing students were given one word, and the first person to come up with a song that included that word won the round.

Additional activities such as hallway decorating and float building gave students a chance to have fun competing with each other and also helped to enhance our school spirit. Results of hallway decorating included 5th place- junior high, 4th place- seniors, 3rd place- juniors, 2nd place- freshmen, and 1st place went to the sophomore class. The parade class float placings included 5th place- junior high, 4th place- seniors, 3rd place- sophomores, 2nd place- freshmen, and 1st place was won by the junior class. Our sports program also had a busy week starting with cross country at the golf course on Wednesday afternoon. The activities wrapped up on Friday with a parade down mainstreet at 1p.m., as well as volleyball and football teams taking on the Perkins County Plainsmen. Both teams were successful with volleyball winning in four sets and with the football team winning 34-6.

The week concluded with the MHC homecoming dance on Saturday night in Hayes Center High School's old gym. Overall, homecoming week gave students a chance to be involved in fun activities, boost our school pride, and show off our community's support for our school.



Wolves Running Towards Success

By Carly Softley

Since the sports co-op between Hayes Center and Maywood in the 2015-2016 school year, sports such as basketball, volleyball, football, and track have been known across the state as being played at a high level. With several state appearances, the MHC Wolves have been known for success.

However, there is one sport that is often overlooked: cross country. Since the co-op, the MHC cross country team has sent several athletes to state, including now junior Agneshka Sankey who has competed at the state championships the last two years.

Several Maywood and Hayes Center community members might have noticed the small team that regularly 'runs the town' mid-afternoon. The team consists of six high school female athletes: senior Ayleen Hernandez, junior Agneshka Sankey, junior Ava Messersmith, junior Cali Rutherford, sophomore Carly Softley, and sophomore Briana Vapenik. There are also four high school male athletes: senior Rubiel Lopez, senior Steven Werkmeister, senior Clayton Mahanes, and sophomore Aaron Lawson. In addition to the high school members there are also several junior high members including Cyndey Softley, Gavin Johnson, Mateo Hernandez, Paige Messersmith, Kinsley Vapenik, Chaz Jeffers, Hank Rutherford, Mateo Espinoza, and Caysen Sonnenfeld. Every athlete on the team has embraced the role of pushing themselves to setting new personal bests and improving their times throughout the season. Along with bettering themselves every practice, athletes have also been

able to embrace the environment of having such a close-knit team. Since the start of the school year, the team has had a pool practice where they conditioned at the North Platte Rec Center, and shared several pre-meet pasta meals that have been made by athletes' families. The team also spent almost every day of the summer packing on the miles and attending some running camps.

The Wolves cross country team is halfway through their season with districts just around the corner. So far, the girls team has had several athletes medal at various different meets including Carly Softley and Agneshka Sankey who have medaled at nearly every meet so far. The girls team also placed runner-up at both the DCS Invite and Cambridge Invite. Coach Gallegos sees the girls team making a run for state. "We are proud of the progress but we are not satisfied, as the goal is to be at our best as we head into conference next week and districts right after. The girls team has a chance at qualifying for the state meet and I'm excited to see where that takes us."

The boys team has also had success with Rubiel Lopez placing 13th at the Arapahoe Invite and 12th at the MHC Invite. Several other boys including Aaron Lawson and Steven Werkmeister have continued to improve and set new season bests.

Upcoming meets for the Wolves include the RPAC conference meet on Thursday, October 8th and the district meet on Thursday, October 15th at the Perkins County golf course. Cross country athletes will get the chance at districts to qualify for the state meet which will be held on Friday, October 23rd in Kearney. Best of luck to the MHC cross country team!



Photo by Aaron Gallegos
Junior high and high school cross country medalists pose for a photo at the MHC Invitational Meet in Hayes Center on Wednesday, September 23rd.



SPORTS SCORES

Varsity Football vs. Perkins County @HC, Friday, Sep.25

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Final
Perkins Co. (0-5)	0	6	0	0	6
MHC (3-2)	6	14	8	6	34

Bentley Broz: 2 touchdowns

Quaid Brott, Kade Broz, Oliver Anders: 1 touchdown

Varsity Volleyball vs. Perkins County @HC, Friday, Sep.25

	Set 1	Set 2	Set 3	Set 4
Perkins Co. (11-4)	25	26	17	13
MHC (11-4)	23	25	25	25

Varsity Volleyball vs. South Loup @Sutherland, Sat., Sep.26

	Set 1	Set 2
South Loup (4-9)	21	19
MHC (12-4)	25	25

Varsity Volleyball vs. Overton @Sutherland, Sat., Sep.26

	Set 1	Set 2
Overton (4-13)	21	23
MHC (13-4)	25	25

Varsity Volleyball vs. Hemingford @Sutherland, Sat., Sep.26

	Set 1	Set 2
Hemingford (10-4)	10	19
MHC (14-4)	25	25

Var. VB vs. Brady @Wallace Tues., Sep.29

	Set 1	Set 2
Brady (9-11)	21	21
MHC (15-4)	25	25

Varsity VB @Wallace Tues., Sep. 29

	Set 1	Set 2
Wallace (2-14)	8	15
MHC (16-4)	25	25

Cross Country

@MHC

Wed., September 23

Girls

Individual

Carly Softley (4th)

22:36.8

Agneshka Sankey (6th)

23:15.5

Ayleen Hernandez (25th)

29:17.7

Boys

Individual

Rubiel Lopez (12th)

21:05.1

Aaron Lawson (23rd)

23:00.1

Steven Werkmeister (28th)

23:50.2

Cross Country

@UNK

Tues., September 29

Girls

Individual

Carly Softley (36th)

22:31.9

Agneshka Sankey (57th)

23:22.6

Briana Vapenik (229th)

36:14.6

Boys

Individual

Rubiel Lopez (133rd)

21:06.2

Aaron Lawson (241st)

23:22.1

Steven Werkmeister (275th)

24:18.9



Photo by Megan Soundy
The MHC Wolves volleyball team won the Sutherland Invitational Tournament beating South Platte and Hemmingford on Saturday, September 26th.