



## Flyers State Champs for academics



PHOTO BY: EMMA WILKER

Superintendent Mr. Pohlman and Principal Mr. Goodwin recognize Marion Local as the #1 School District in Ohio.

COLUMBUS – Friday, Sept. 13 was definitely not unlucky for the Marion Local School District: we were named this year's top district in the entire state for academic excellence. Every year, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce releases statewide Performance Index Rankings, reporting the cumulative scores of each district's students on all of Ohio's State Tests. In 2024, Marion Local students outperformed over 600 other school districts to be ranked #1 in the entire state.

This is the first time in school history that Marion Local has claimed the top spot for academics in Ohio. Over the last five years, the Flyers have consistently placed in the top five school districts, placing second in the state in both 2021 and 2023 and fifth in 2022. Since Ohio's State Tests were launched in 2016, Marion Local has placed in the top 10 academically every single year.

Superintendent Mike Pohlman is justly proud of the students, teachers, parents, and community members who made this possible. Mr. Pohlman explained, "I would like to congratulate the students, staff, and entire community for the #1 ranking in the state of Ohio for obtaining the highest Performance Index score. We will celebrate this success because of the discipline it took to reach our goal, but we will also continue looking forward to achieving even greater things in the future."

On Oct. 10, the entire district enjoyed a celebration assembly at Booster Stadium, led by Mr. Koenig. Kona Ice also stopped by in the afternoon, much to the students' delight!

Locally, several school districts placed well in Ohio's Performance Index Rankings this year. Three local schools made the top 10, as Versailles placed sixth and Fort Loramie placed seventh. Two more local schools made the top 15, as New Bremen placed 13th, just nudging out Minster at #14. St. Henry just missed the top 20, placing 21st, but beat Russia at #26. New Knoxville (#37) and Fort Recovery (#45) also placed within the top 50 school districts in the state.

Within the top 100, Anna placed 60th, while Coldwater was 69th. Just making the top 200 school districts (the top third of the state) was Parkway at #195.

Placing around the 50th percentile for the whole state were Wapakoneta at #268, Celina at #308, and St. Marys at #335. Greenville came in 414th, and Sidney was near the bottom at #567.

## Flyer football flies into history



PHOTO BY: CHRISTY WILKER

The Varsity Flyer football team, consisting of 18 seniors and 66 boys total, storms onto the field during their Week Two matchup against the Franklin Wildcats.

By: Hayden Poeppelman  
Sports Editor

MARIA STEIN – The Marion Local Flyers football team has remained undefeated since the 2021 football season, boasting a jaw-dropping record of 56-0 heading into Week 9 vs. the Minster Wildcats. The current Ohio high school record is 57

consecutive wins, which is held by another local MAC school, Delphos St. John's.

The Week 10 matchup versus Coldwater on Oct. 25 will determine whether the Flyers will cement their names into the OHSAA history books. At press time, Marion Local is only two wins away from going down in

history with the longest recorded unbeaten streak in Ohio high school football.

The Delphos St. John's Blue Jays have held the consecutive win record for the past 23 years. They maintained their winning streak from the 1996 football season to the 2001 season.

## Queen Hess harvests Homecoming crown



PHOTO BY: CHRISTY WILKER

The 2024 Homecoming Court: Natalie Evers, Lydia Hess, Avae Unrast, Rachel Kuether, and Brooke Evers.

By: Emma Wilker  
News Editor

MARIA STEIN – This year's Homecoming Queen, Lydia Hess, was crowned at halftime of the Varsity Flyers football game versus Fort Recovery on Oct. 4. Queen Hess was crowned by last year's queen, Nora Eckstein, and was escorted by Hayden Poeppelman. The rest of the Homecoming Court and their escorts included Brooke Evers and Derek Otte, Natalie Evers and Damon Cramer, Rachel Kuether and Caleb Huelsman, and Avae Unrast and Ian Rindler.

The Homecoming King, Colten Ahrens, was crowned on Sept. 30 at the varsity volleyball game against Crestview. The boys' Homecoming

Court members were Colten Ahrens and Emerson Bruns, Dalton Anthony and Carly Niekamp, Damon Cramer and Zoey Goettemoeller, Parker Hess and Lydia Hess, and Caleb Huelsman and Morgan Fleck.

This year's Homecoming theme was Fall. The 2024 Homecoming Dance was held on Oct. 5. At 8 p.m., students were dressed to the nines and packed the Hangar for a festive fall night. The overall attendance was 270 students, an increase from last year.

On Friday afternoon, the student council decorated the gym. Senior Class President Lydia Hess commented, "This year, the student council decided to use Fall as the theme because it correlates with the Homecoming season, and it is easy to find affordable decorations. The setup on Friday went very quickly, and everyone worked together very well. The same goes for the tear-down after the dance. As for the dance itself, I feel everything went well, except for the music, which was eventually sorted out."

Student Council Advisor Mrs. Broering said, "Homecoming went really well this year! The student council members worked hard, and I enjoyed working with this great group of students. While the dance had a little rough start with the music, it ended up being a fun night for everyone. I might have to step up and be the DJ next year . . . we will have to see!"

## Band scores Superior, returns to State

By: Michaela Osterholt  
Features Editor

MARIA STEIN – The Marion Local Marching Band has taken a new course this season with two field commanders, juniors Katelyn McClurg and Emily Moeller. They were happy to direct the band on Sept. 28 at the 50th Midwest Band Competition at Booster

Stadium. The band received a Superior rating, or a one, qualifying for the Ohio Music Education Association State Marching Band Finals on Nov. 3 in Piqua.

The band hasn't qualified for State since their show *Community* in 2021, so this is very exciting for our whole community.



PHOTO BY: DEANNA STEINBRUNNER

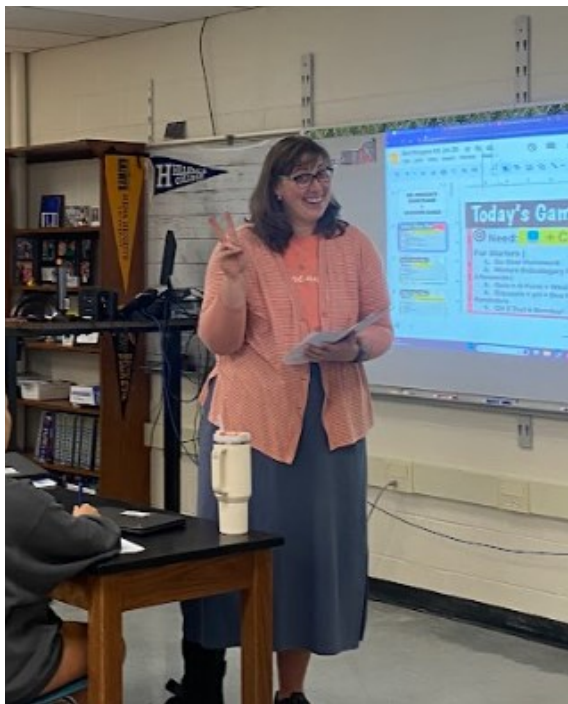
The 2024 Marion Local Marching Band celebrate their qualification for the State Marching Band Finals at the 50th Midwest Band Competition on Sept. 28.



# Three new teachers thrive at Marion



By: Emma Wilker  
News Editor



PHOTOS BY: EMMA WILKER  
L-R Mrs. Brackman, Ms. Dirksen, and Mrs. Prenger are already at home in their new classrooms at Marion Local.

MARIA STEIN – For the 2024-2025 school year, three new female teachers joined the high school staff at Marion Local to fill social studies, science, and art positions. To get to know our new teachers and give them a warm welcome to the high school, here’s a little bit of information about each.

The first new teacher joining the Marion Local staff is **Mrs. Hunter Brackman** in room 206. She will teach AP Government, Government, and World History this school year.

Mrs. Brackman is originally from Fort Loramie, where she graduated in 2017. After high school, she attended Bowling Green State University to get her bachelor’s degree in 2021 (“Talons Up!”). Mrs. Brackman has been the Government and World History teacher at Bath High School for the past two years. She is currently getting her master’s degree in Instruction and Curriculum Planning from the University of Findlay. She lives in Minster with her husband and 3-year-old son, Arlo.

When asked about her year so far in her new position at the high school, Mrs. Brackman states, “So far, I am really enjoying Marion Local and have had a pretty good transition since starting, which has been amazing. All the staff have been super welcoming, and I can’t wait to see how the rest of the year goes!”

Moving on, **Ms. Katherine Dirksen** teaches Chemistry, Physical Science, and Physics in room 327. This is her 10th year of teaching high school science.

She was born and raised in Marion Local and graduated “back in the day” in 2008. She played volleyball, basketball, and joined track her sophomore year. In addition to teaching, she has stepped in as the head volleyball coach and coaches track and field. She started on Marion’s first State Championship volleyball team and also coached the first boys’ State Championship track team. Ms. Dirksen enjoys teaching here because she gets to drive east to school every morning.

She comments, “This is a big deal because I get to drive towards the horizon as the sun rises. There’s just something profound about the way the sun rises over the fields in the quiet and calm of a new day that one cannot help but remember their role in something bigger. It’s just inspiring and unexpected, and I just love that reminder.”

**Mrs. Kerry Prenger** teaches Art I, Ceramics, Drawing, Graphic Design, Painting, Photography, Portfolio, and Yearbook in room 343.

Mrs. Prenger is originally from Celina and graduated from the University of Saint Francis in Fort Wayne, Indiana. She lives in Maria Stein with her husband, Eric, and their four children: Joellen, Killian, Hudson, and McCoy. Their family also has a hobby farm with chickens, cows, cats, and dogs.

When asked about this year, she exclaims, “This is my 11th year teaching art, and I absolutely love my position here at Marion Local! The staff and students have been wonderful, and I’m constantly impressed by the amount of talent in my classes. The students’ excitement to learn makes teaching so much fun. I’m enjoying getting to know the students and learning more about who they are. One of the best parts of being here is helping them tap into their creativity and watching them grow.” Her favorite quote is, “Everything will be alright in the end. If it is not alright, it is not the end.”

# Administration moves to high school library



PHOTO BY: HAYDEN POEPELMAN  
Mr. Pohlman settles into his new office.

By: Carson Bills & Ethan Heitkamp  
Staff Writers

MARIA STEIN – The district administration team will be located in the high school library for the next two years, aiming to move into their

offices in the newly constructed school building in 2026-2027.

When asked about the benefits of the new office location in the high school, Superintendent Mike Pohlman said, “Coming here [to the high school building] has opened up some opportunities to be in the same building as a lot of the advisors and coaches who tend to be more high school teachers who deal more with the central office.”

Although moving to the high school has its benefits, it also has some downsides. Mr. Pohlman explained that some of the businesses they work with, such as Garmann Miller, the architectural company responsible for helping design the new building, have shown up at the elementary building and needed to be redirected to the high school for meetings.

“We just need to establish some



PHOTO BY: HAYDEN POEPELMAN  
Bookshelves have been removed to accommodate the administration office furniture.

new patterns with some of the people we work with,” Mr. Pohlman states.

After getting fully settled in, misdirection-based problems should cease to exist as time goes by.

It’s not just the superintendent who is excited about the new move: Superintendent’s Secretary Mrs. Lynn Will is very comfortable working in the former high school library, commenting, “We have more space now!”



# ML football remains undefeated since 2021



PHOTO BY: CHRISTY WILKER

Senior captains Adam Winner, Parker Hess, Carson Bills, and Drew Lause walk out to midfield for the opening coin toss at Franklin on Aug. 30.

By: Hayden Poeppelman  
Sports Editor

MARIA STEIN - The Marion Local Flyers football team continues its unbeaten record of 56-0, starting in the 2021 football season, going into Week 9 against the Minster Wildcats. The Flyers are nearing a state record as the current consecutive win streak record is held by Delphos St. John's with 57 consecutive wins during the 1996-2001 seasons.

With playoffs right around the corner, the Flyers are looking to win their 19th MAC title. In the 2024 season, the Flyers have shown to be a juggernaut, outscoring teams 407-22. Rolling into Week 9, the Flyers are looking to uphold their three-year win streak through the remainder of the regular season and potentially through the playoffs.

Marion Local's quarterback Justin Knouff has been a driving force for the Flyers offense with 1,266 passing yards. During the season, Knouff is 67 for 90, boasting a 74.4 passing percentage with 19 passing touchdowns and three rushing touchdowns. As a dual-threat quarterback, Knouff has displayed explosiveness and athleticism through designed quarterback-keep plays.



PHOTO BY: CHRISTY WILKER  
Senior Carson Bills kicks an extra point vs. New Bremen on Sept. 20.

Knouff has totaled 322 rushing yards with 11.1 yards per carry with designed quarterback runs and scrambling combined.

As Knouff's Mustang and Sally, seniors Victor Hoelscher and Andrew Pohlman are the primary targets for Knouff on 63 percent of all of the Flyers' passing plays so far this season. As a receiver, Hoelscher has 36 receptions with a combined 734 yards receiving, averaging 20.4 yards after catch with 12 touchdowns so far this season. On the special teams side of the Flyers, Hoelscher has 70 yards on three returns as a kickoff returner.

Marion Local's second primary receiver, Pohlman, is also showcasing a notable stat line so far this season. Pohlman has 16 receptions on the season for 323 yards, averaging 20.2 yards after catch. Pohlman has accumulated four touchdowns on the season, both receiving.

The Flyers' backfield is not to be outshone by their receiving core, as their running back core with seniors Ethan Heitkamp, Drew Lause, and Parker Hess, along with junior Kamden Eifert, continues to make waves in this Flyer offense.

Drew Lause has been a staple of Marion's offense as a running back since his freshman year in the 2021 season and continues to perform through his senior year as well. With 37 carries for 206 yards, Lause averages 5.6 yards per carry, and, along with that, Lause takes responsibility for 10 Flyers' rushing touchdowns this season. Lause has also been involved in the Flyers' passing game with one reception for 12 yards.

A running back for the Flyers, but also a blocking fullback, senior Ethan Heitkamp is a player utilized in every aspect of the Flyer's running game. With 25 rushes for a combined 79 yards, Heitkamp averages 3.2 yards per carry and has seven touchdowns so far this season to call his own.

The Flyers' second utility running back is senior Parker Hess. Hess has been involved with running the ball and the Flyers' passing game through double passes. As a running back, Hess has 41 carries for 379 yards with an average of 9.2 yards per carry and six touchdowns on the season. Unfortunately, Hess sustained an injury during Week Two vs. Franklin. He returned in Week Five against New Bremen and is continuing to put up an above-par performance.

A Flyer who made a name for himself early in the season is junior Kamden Eifert. With the one-sided scores throughout the season, Eifert has seen a lot of playing time late in these games. Eifert currently possesses the most impressive stat line out of all of the Flyer running backs. With 32 carries, 283 yards, and seven rushing touchdowns, Eifert leads the Flyers in rushing yards and yards per carry so far this season. Receiving-wise, Eifert has three receptions for 52 yards, which makes him a leader for receiving yards among running backs as well.

Flyers' 4.5-star kicker Carson Bills has shown his consistency so far this season as he has only missed one PAT but has not missed any field goal attempts thus far. During this off-season, Bills refined his talent through kicking camps across the country. Kohl's Professional Camps run the camps attended by Bills and bring in athletes from across the nation to showcase their talents. Among these top talents, Bills is ranked 125th out of nearly 300 other elite athletes. The camps take place year-round, so Bills has had no shortage of time to take his talent to the next level.

When asked how much performance-kicking camps have helped refine his skill, Bills says, "Honestly, my biggest improvement is my confidence in myself. This year I'm able to relax on the field and let my training take over." Bills' answer is proven on the field as he expresses

a more relaxed demeanor in every aspect he is involved in. Upon further questioning about statistical improvement and his kicking control, Bills responded, "The farthest field goal I have ever made is a 62-yard field goal. I am confident in my kickoffs and can control them relatively well." This is also shown on the field as Bills has yet to miss a field goal, and his kickoffs are night and day compared to last year as he has been able to keep his kicks in-bounds during this season.

Defensively, the Flyers have been formidable. Senior Bryant Meier leads the Flyer defense in both tackles and interceptions. Meier has 11 unassisted tackles, 39 assisted tackles, and three interceptions so far this season. This ties Meier with senior Ryan Homan, who also has three interceptions, but Homan leads the team in unassisted tackles with 15.

When asked about his thoughts on the football season so far, Meier, a man of very few words, or a word, says, "Good." As the season moves forward, Meier continues to showcase his unique intellectual prowess both on and off the field.



PHOTO BY: CHRISTY WILKER  
Senior Victor Hoelscher receives Justin Knouff's pass vs. St. Henry on Sept. 6.



# Flyers commence tournament run tonight

By: Addison Eyink & Grace Moeller  
Staff Writers

COLDWATER – The Marion Local volleyball team will begin their postseason tonight, Oct. 16, at Coldwater High School against Lincolnview. The Flyers have a 13-6 record heading into playoffs.

Junior Grace Moeller has been named 1st team All-MAC, and with her seniors Avae Unrast, Chloe Ronnebaum, and Natalie Evers were named 2nd team All-MAC. Sophomore Mya Eckstein received an All-MAC Honorable Mention.

New head coach Ms. Katherine Dirksen is also the new chemistry teacher and track and field coach. Coach Dirksen, who graduated from Marion Local in 2008, fits in well with the team and gets along well with all the players.

Coach Dirksen stated, “To be honest, I’m just glad the girls put up



PHOTO BY: CHRISTY WILKER

The Lady Flyers celebrate a major point scored against New Bremen on Sept. 19.

with me . . . In all seriousness, sometimes it can be a lot to ask for when somebody is coming into a program and changing the dynamics of every aspect, from practice to mindset to gameplay.

“The girls have responded very well, as well as having an open mind and rolling with it no matter how crazy an idea may seem. I’m blessed to have been able to encounter each of these young ladies; they have all

taught me a lot . . . It’s cool to be back!”

Senior Natalie Evers explained what this season means to her: “I’m very excited that this is my senior year, and I can’t wait to see how far we go in tournament!” To add to the conversation, senior Avae Unrast stated, “I’m really excited to be back for my senior year with all my friends. I feel like the team connects very well. GO FLYERS!”

The Marion Local junior varsity team also has been stepping up to the plate. They had a strong season with many great wins.

When speaking to JV Coach Shelby Prenger, she explained what she truly thinks of the team: “It has been another fun season. This is my second year as a coach, and it has been a fun challenge getting the girls to work hard and develop a solid mindset to get them ready for varsity!”

## Pohlmann sprints to 2nd spot in ML history



By: Johanna Dirksen  
Staff Writer

MARIA STEIN – Junior Dalton Pohlmann has made 1st Team All-MAC and is now the second-fastest boy in Marion Local cross country history behind Troy Stucke, who graduated in 2023. Junior Ryan Stucke also made 1st Team All-MAC this Saturday and enters postseason as the ninth fastest

boy of all time for ML cross country. Junior Isaac Bruns made Honorable Mention in the MAC honors.

This coming Saturday, Oct. 19, the girls’ and boys’ teams will compete in Districts at Columbus Grove. Both teams hope to do well so they can move on to Regionals the following week.



PHOTO BY: JEANNA HEITKAMP

Flyers compete at the Troy Twilight Meet. Left to right: Josie Bruns, Honor Fledderjohann, Maria Dirksen, Hailey Bohman, Johanna Dirksen, Molly Bruns, Gina Bruns, and Ellie Heitkamp.

The team’s hard work at practices has paid off at meets. The team has raced in Maria Stein, Celina, Greenville, Tiffin, Troy, Versailles, and Coldwater.

The boys’ team is working hard to go back to Regionals, and possibly State. This year’s boys’ team is very strong, consisting of juniors Isaac Bruns, Trey Goettemoeller, Christian Kremer, John Mescher, Brody Otte, Dalton Pohlmann, and Ryan Stucke; and freshmen Tanner Hartings and Austin Mescher.

The girls’ team has been successful so far this year with many season and career PRs. The team includes seniors Josie Bruns and Ellie Heitkamp; sophomores Molly Bruns, Gina Bruns, and Johanna Dirksen; and freshmen Hailey Bohman, Alivia Beasley, and Marah Ray.

## Kremer ties school golf record

By: Hayden Poeppelman  
Sports Editor

MARIA STEIN – Marion Local golf team’s number one man, junior Grant Kremer, has been creeping up on the nine-hole school record held by 2003 Flyer graduate Kirk “Kirby” Stucke at 35 total strokes. At the end of the season, Kremer had tied Stucke’s school record, with his sights set on breaking it next year.

As a whole, Flyer golf had a mediocre season at best. The boys’ golf team finished 2-7, playing only conference matches, and the girls’ golf team finished 5-6, with a record of 3-5 in conference matches. At Sectionals, both the boys’ and girls’ teams did not advance. There were also no individual Flyers who advanced further this year.

When asked what kept him from cementing his name in Flyers’ history with a new record this year, Kremer responded, “Usually I will get too ahead of myself when I have like three or four holes left. I don’t focus on the shots I’m hitting in the moment, and I need to be able to focus on the shot I’m on and not the next couple holes.” Golf is more of a mental game than physical, and staying in a balanced state of mind is crucial to a golfer’s success. Kremer emphasizes that his Achilles’ heel is that he stops living in the moment and starts to focus on his next shot before the one he is currently taking. Kremer says this causes him to lose focus and can even affect his play leading him to mishit shots and add to his score.

When questioned on the possibility of breaking the record this season, Kremer said, “Probably not, we only have like two matches left.” With such a small amount of time remaining in his junior season, Kremer did not see breaking the record this season as a plausible outcome. While this did turn out to be true, Kremer has his senior year remaining in golf to immortalize his name in Flyers’ history.

When asked about her season, junior golfer Grace Brunswick said, “As long as you



PHOTO BY: TESSA KREMER

Junior Grant Kremer winds up for his tee shot.

have a cute outfit, it doesn’t matter what your score is!” Needless to say, golf is more than just a competition. It’s also a great opportunity to dress up in golf attire as well.

Upon being questioned about her golf season as a senior, Lydia Hess responded, “Yes, you can be a senior on JV!” She highlights the bizarre statistic that the Marion golf team had this year: more Marion Local seniors were on the Junior Varsity than Varsity during this 2024 fall season.

Senior Austin Niekamp, when questioned about his golf season, reported, “We weren’t good, but we sure as heck had fun.” No words have been or ever will be told to describe the Marion Local High School golfing experience more truly.



# Juniors' boredom builds in study halls

By: Michaela Osterholt  
Features Editor

MARIA STEIN – Principal Goodwin believes the Class of 2026 should take at least seven classes during the 2024-2025 school year. However, many juniors with three study halls believe this is “useless” and “boring.”

Juniors must be here for seven periods each day unless they are Tri Star students. Some juniors are stuck in study hall at the high school for two whole periods, and some even three. This is very different from past years since the current seniors had no minimum requirements of how long they had to be in school when they were juniors.

Most juniors are satisfied with their schedules this year, but those with three study halls are not. A few others with tougher classes in their schedule are not completely satisfied with theirs either. Otherwise, most juniors are happy with their schedules because they either come in late, leave early, go to Tri Star, or have the perfect balance of classes.

Danielle Meier is one of the juniors who claimed she is unsatisfied. She said this because she has “a lot of study halls.”

Another junior, Aaron Heitkamp, is unsatisfied since he feels he shouldn't have to arrive at school at 8:25 a.m. on A Days: “I don't feel there is a good reason why I need to be at

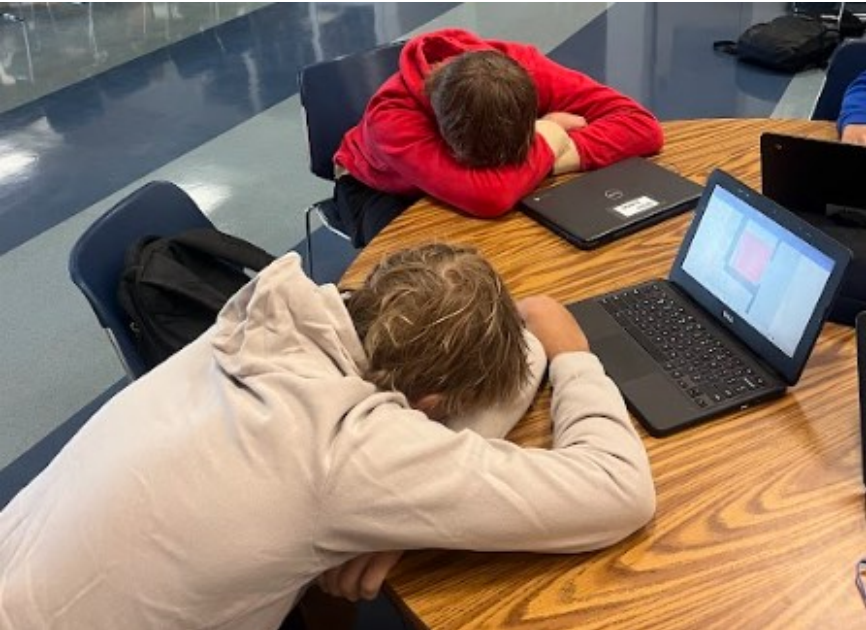


PHOTO BY: HAYDEN POEPELMAN

Juniors Derek Knapke and Grant Kremer reset their brains during their study halls.

school for 2nd period on A Days when I have a study hall.” This is a very good point, as Heitkamp does not have class on A Days until 9:27 a.m.

On the other hand, Lydia Steinbrunner is just another junior who is upset with her schedule because she has all of her hard classes in the mornings when she is tired, and, as she said, “I do not function well when I am sleepy.”

Most juniors said they do basic activities in study hall, like homework or listening to music. Some students, though, pursue unusual interests, like Dylan Dahms. He likes

to “watch YouTube or write letters to someone; maybe homework, but probably not.”

Another unusual response from Wyatt Fleck was “sleep.” Let's hope the juniors with three study halls don't all fall asleep during the school day.

On the contrary, juniors happy with their schedules said they were “great” or just “good.”

Let's hope they all become used to their schedules towards the end of the school year and hope next year is better for them, so we don't have to hear their complaints any longer.

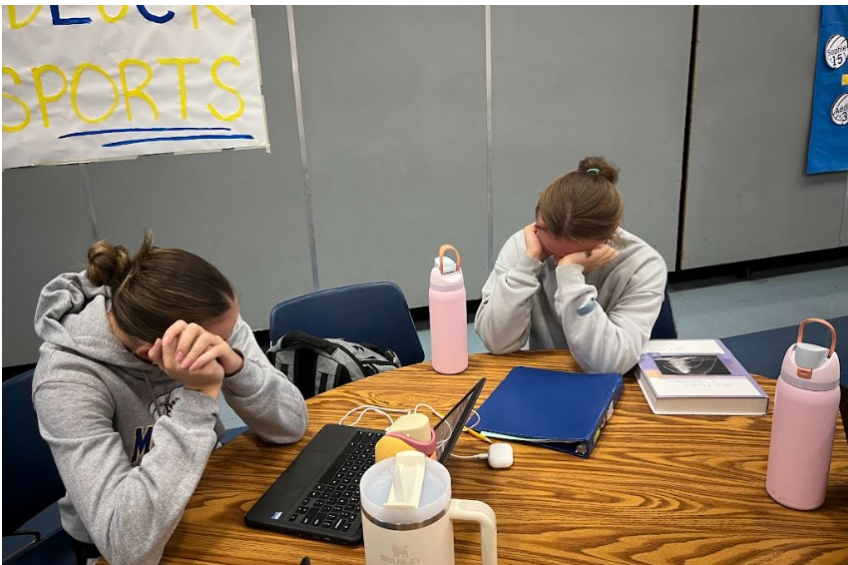


PHOTO BY: MICHAELA OSTERHOLT

Juniors Grace Moeller and Danielle Meier “rest their eyes” through back-to-back study halls.

# Freshmen fight HS worries, woes



PHOTO BY: HAYDEN POEPELMAN

Freshmen Larissa Arling, Cristi Dahlinghaus, Evan Beasley, and Blake Feltz show their disapproval of their complicated, busy schedules as high school students, even though Mr. Grabowski is on hand to help them survive.

By: Hayden Poeppelman  
Sports Editor

MARIA STEIN – An undiscussed topic for many students is the transition from eighth grade into the high school building as incoming freshmen, with the challenges of moving from “top dogs” in

middle school to being at the bottom of the food chain in high school. Upon being asked a few questions regarding this topic, several freshmen gave a glimpse into their newfound high school woes.

When asked about challenges that arose from

now being in high school, freshman Emma Homan states a major challenge is “having a study hall with [sophomore] Kendyl Hess.” When other freshmen were asked whether or not Homan's complaint was unbiased, most agreed with her statement due to Hess's occasional loudness during study hall.

Pushing that aside, many freshmen expressed the challenges of balancing more classes this year, as their class schedules have gone from four block-length classes each day to six or eight period-length classes. Many freshmen have expressed that they are struggling with the bigger workload in addition to their athletic responsibilities.

While the woes were many, some of the changes shed a positive light, proving high school is not as bad as it seems. Upon being asked what the biggest difference is between high school and middle school, freshmen Raygen Kramer and Deanna Dirksen both said they enjoy the increased freedom that they now have at the high school level. Dirksen went on to say that while she does enjoy the newfound freedom and sense of independence, there is also more fending for yourself as well. With more independence comes more responsibly.

While there are both challenges and differences when it comes to transitioning from middle school to high school, there is also a sense of independence and freedom. With time, the freshman class will fall into a rhythm, and those freshman woes will wash away.





## McClurg, Moeller direct marching band



PHOTO BY: CHRISTY WILKER

Field Commander junior Katelyn McClurg directs the band at the home football game versus New Bremen.

By: Michaela Osterholt  
Features Editor

MARIA STEIN – Juniors Katelyn McClurg and Emily Moeller were chosen to direct this year's band show for the 2024 marching and competition seasons, which differs from recent years when only one field commander directed.

The field commanders' leadership has already led the band to a Superior rating midway through this competition season, which guarantees an appearance at State this year.

Since this year's show is relatively longer, containing four movements instead of the usual three, Band Director Mr. Spettel felt it was necessary to have two conductors. The band's competition show *Red* in 2020 was the last time two field commanders were on the podiums.

The two field commanders retained a lot of their main directing skills from a camp they went to over the summer, called Sparks Summer Clinic for Drum Majors at Wittenberg University. They came back more than ready to direct the band at Maria Stein Country Fest's opening ceremonies and for the rest of the 2024 marching season.

Mr. Spettel states, "Having two field commanders has been great for the band program this year. The band is increasing in size, and we have several emerging leaders within the group. This has been a great opportunity for Katelyn and Emily to further develop their leadership

styles while having one another to work with. This allows them to navigate this new experience together, which has been pretty helpful for both of them."

This year, the band's show, *Monarch*, consists of two kingdoms. Each field commander is the leader of a kingdom. The kingdoms are separated by instrument: brass is Kingdom 1, or the red kingdom, and the woodwinds are Kingdom 2, or the blue kingdom. The percussionists and color guard stay neutral.

The band has uniform shirts this season to portray the different kingdoms: red on one side and blue on the other, with a gleaming gold stripe through the center to represent royalty.

During the show, hatred grows, and, eventually, a fight roars out among the kingdoms. Death is the result of this grueling fight. Then toward the end of the show, everyone comes together after discovering what they've done.

The field commanders have been well prepared by many hours of practice during the twelve-hour



PHOTO BY: CHRISTY WILKER

Junior Emily Moeller, also Field Commander this year, directs the band at home versus New Bremen.

days for a week of band camp in mid-July and countless other hours during the rest of the season.

In November, the band will perform at Bands of America at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana. Band members are looking forward to this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

## 'Saucy Seniors' shine at powder-puff



PHOTO BY: ISAIAH POHLMAN

The Saucy Seniors team full of smiles after winning the 2024 Marion Local powder-puff tournament.

By: Emma Wilker  
News Editor

MARIA STEIN – The annual powder-puff football tournament at Booster Stadium kicked off at 1:30 p.m. on Oct. 4. The winning senior team, Saucy Seniors, took the glory in this year's intense competition. The team consisted of 12 girls: Emerson Bruns, Josie Bruns, Brooke Evers, Natalie Evers, Georgia Fleck, Morgan Fleck, Zoey Goettemoeller, Lydia Hess, Rachel Kuether, Chloe Ronnebaum, Avae Unrast, and Kaylee Wilker.

This year's referees were seniors Ethan Heitkamp, Parker Hess, Victor Hoelscher, Luke Kunkler, Drew Lause, Lincoln Stachler, and Kyle Ungruhn. This year included some fascinating costumes for the referees, specifically a bottle of ranch, a dinosaur, a prisoner, and a pickle. It is safe to say the referees were not biased in any way towards the seniors.

The announcers working hard in the press box all afternoon were seniors Colten Ahrens, Daniel Everman, Ryan Homan, and Justin Knouff.



PHOTO BY: MRS. HEMMELGARN

Freshmen enjoying their first powder-puff tournament.

This year, per our festive "Fall" Homecoming theme, the seniors' powder-puff team shirts were crimson red. The juniors stepped out in pumpkin orange, sophomores wore brown, and freshmen wore yellow.

In addition to our powder-puff spectacle, Ag teacher Mr. Elsass continued the 10th annual FFA Cornhole Tournament.

Mr. Elsass remarked, "We are glad to offer an activity for students to compete in alongside the powder-puff tournament. The one big change this year was the availability of a bullhorn to keep the games moving. This year's champions



PHOTO BY: ISAIAH POHLMAN

The Class of 2025 seniors all together in their beautiful crimson red after their final powder-puff tournament.

were juniors Dylan Dirksen and Trent Homan, who had a dominant showing from start to finish."

Maybe Coach Goodwin should recruit some of the girls to play at the next football game since they showed off their skills during the tournament. On a serious note, the students had a successful, competitive, and fun fall afternoon under the sunshine.



PHOTO BY: MRS. HEMMELGARN

Students who were not participating in powder-puff stayed busy partaking in the cornhole tournament run by Mr. Elsass and the FFA.



PHOTO BY: MRS. HEMMELGARN

Juniors and freshmen battle in an intense game, refereed by a dinosaur, while seniors wait for their next opponents.





## Students celebrate Spirit Week

By: Hayden Poeppelman  
Sports Editor

MARIA STEIN – Homecoming Spirit Week 2024 gripped the high school from Monday, Sept. 30 until Friday, Oct. 4 as excitement built for the Homecoming football game against Fort Recovery and the dance on Saturday night.

The theme for the Homecoming dance this year was Fall, which was reflected in the dress-up choices for each day of the week.

Monday was “groutfit” (all gray outfit) day, when students dressed to match the cloudy, gray fall weather. Tuesday was jersey day, and the freshman class participated with a variety of jerseys, as no two are the same. Wednesday was U.S.A. day, as demonstrated by seniors Emma Wilker and Ava Ranly when they showed their American spirit proudly. Thursday was blackout day, which the senior class went all in for.

Friday was day that freshman super fundraiser

Justin Bergman was granted his “senior entourage” of Dalton Anthony, Henry Mescher, and Colten Unrast, a formidable trio. They performed valiantly, sometimes, in their efforts to protect Bergman from the mean streets of Marion Local.

Friday afternoon was the annual powder-puff tournament. This year’s T-shirt colors were picked by the student council, and the girls in each grade wore their team shirts proudly (even the sophomores, whose color was brown!).

### Monday: Groutfit



### Tuesday: Jerseys



### Wednesday: USA



### Thursday: Blackout



### Friday: Senior Entourage, Powder-Puff



PHOTOS BY: KAYLA MCCLURG, AVA MESCHER, ISIAH POHLMAN,  
EMMA WILKER, MRS. HEMMELGARN, MRS. HOWELL, & MRS. SEGER



# Guess the teachers' fabulous fun facts

By: Michaela Osterholt  
Features Editor

MARIA STEIN – Many of Marion Local's fabulous teachers for the 2024-2025 school year have some fun facts about them. Read about each mystery teacher, and guess who each one is!

### FACTS

1. This teacher used to live in Malibu, California.
2. Someone was murdered in this teacher's childhood house before they moved in.
3. The next teacher has a grandson named Charlie.
4. When this teacher was younger, their junior high brother brought home a shot put. It ended up giving them stitches above their eye.
5. This teacher was on the wrestling team in high school.
6. In this teacher's free time, they like to do 1,000-piece puzzles.



IMAGE CREATED BY: MICHAELA OSTERHOLT  
Marion Local's teachers dressed as characters from *Little House on the Prairie* for Mrs. Dippold's 50th birthday.

7. This teacher is an only child.
8. This random teacher was a field commander in their junior and senior year of high school.
9. The next random teacher was run over by a truck.
10. This next teacher had a walking newspaper route from 1982 to 1988 for the Piqua Daily Call.
11. This teacher has gone bungee jumping.
12. During a high school football game, this teacher unknowingly played with a burst appendix.
13. This teacher's first job when they were 16 was as a produce clerk at the grocery store.
14. This random teacher was born in Kentucky.

### TEACHERS

Mr. Bruns	Mrs. Hemmelgarn
Mr. Delawder	Mrs. Howell
Mrs. Dippold	Mrs. Mueller
Ms. Dirksen	Mr. Salazar
Mr. Elsass	Mrs. Seger
Mrs. Fortkamp	Mr. Sherrick
Mr. Goodwin	Mr. Spettel

## Dear Freddy...



Marion Local's own Freddy the Flyer is ready and willing to give students advice as they make their way through high school. Write to him via Mrs. Hemmelgarn's mailbox in the office!



PHOTO BY: MRS. HEMMELGARN

Unimportant Sophomore texts his college crush "Pookie Bear" telling her how much he misses her.

By: Austin Niekamp  
Staff Writer

Dear Freddy,

I'm struggling. I'm devastated. The beautiful soul that you helped me charm last year just broke my heart.

I have cried for days upon days. Nothing helps. I need you, Frederick. I miss her sweet, loving smile. The way

she laughs. The way she made me feel. The way she loved me. I miss her beautiful face. I miss her. When she went to college, she forgot about me. Our relationship crashed and burned. I wasn't even a bad boyfriend; she just gave up on us.

Can you help me? I don't know what to do.

Sincerely,  
Unimportant Sophomore

Dear Unimportant Sophomore,

I figured your relationship would implode and you would once again write to me. If I had to guess, this breakup is probably your fault but you won't admit it. If I were you, I would give up on her and start from scratch. But if you really want her back, I have some advice.

First, like every one of her Instagram posts and double or triple snap her until she snaps you back. Also, at least once a day send her a message. If this doesn't work you could even send a letter saying how much you miss her. If all else fails, just show up at her dorm with a box of chocolates and a teddy bear.

Sincerely, Freddy

P.S. Let me know if this works the next time you write to me!

## Vehicle of the Month



PHOTO BY: DAMON CRAMER

Senior Bryant Meier and his dented but beautiful 1999 Oldsmobile.

By: Damon Cramer  
Staff Writer

MARIA STEIN – This month, senior Bryant Meier wins the Vehicle of the Month title. Meier got his 1999 Oldsmobile when he got his license in 2023.

Most of the car's miles are spent driving to and from his girlfriend's house in Saint Henry. Inside the Oldsmobile, you will find many thumbtacks holding the headliner up.

Recently, Meier got in a minor fender bender that caused small dents on the left side of his car. As a result, Meier was not able to drive his Oldsmobile for weeks. Luckily, Meier is now able to drive it again and is now back to driving around Mercer County (especially to his girlfriend's house) in his classic, award-winning, twentieth-century ride.

### Teachers' facts answers:

1. Mrs. Hemmelgarn
2. Mrs. Howell
3. Mr. Goodwin
4. Mr. Bruns
5. Mr. Spettel
6. Mrs. Fortkamp
7. Mr. Sherrick
8. Mrs. Dippold
9. Ms. Dirksen
10. Mrs. Seger
11. Mrs. Mueller
12. Mr. Elsass
13. Mr. Salazar
14. Mr. Delawder