



THE SAYDELPHIC

The Newspaper of Saydel High School

May 16, 2014 VOLUME 56 ISSUE 4



 Saydel High School

 @SaydelHS

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Farewell, Mr. Hook

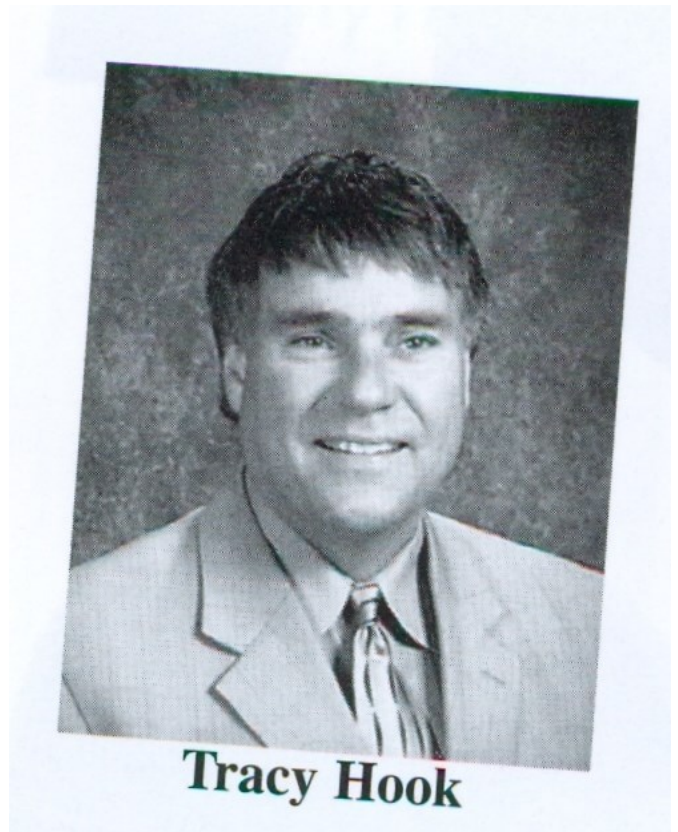
by Nick Dolan

When Tracy Hook has called students into his office, one thing he's heard is that he's not fit to judge a high school student, that he doesn't know what their life is like. "That's why I like to tell them about my struggles growing up. One time I pulled out a picture of the front room of the house I grew up in. The house was worn-down and dilapidated. I said, 'this is where I slept each night'. I said 'I've had some rough things growing up, but I had parents, clothes, food, and that's what matters in life.'"

Mr. Hook was raised in Creston, Iowa, pop. 8000 both today and when Hook grew up there. "The high school there was about the same size as Saydel. It was a great experience going there. I spent most of my time concentrating on playing basketball and football. Teachers knew you there; it was a real community. It was good enough that I sent my daughter through the same school." Hook was on his senior homecoming court, but wasn't elected king.

Hook took his passion for basketball and applied it to his first teaching job, at Southeast Warren High School. He began as an industrial tech teacher and a basketball coach. "Coaching and teaching are all in one, really. As a teacher you're coaching students in a subject they can use throughout their lives. With industrial tech, that's easy. They'll use it throughout their lives." He eventually became the principal for junior and senior students there, a job he views as like coaching a school.

He came to Saydel in August of 2002, when the school board chose him out of a list of candidates. He has continued to hone and alter his brand of leadership during that time. "[I've helped build] a positive environment for people to learn in. [I've] brought in staff to work, and been honest about wanting new teachers to stay here and be committed [...] Another thing is being tolerant and understanding of people's needs."



Earlier this year, Mr. Hook was named Interim Superintendent of the district in the wake of Brad Buck's leaving the same position. Hook prefers being principal to being superintendent. "I prefer being with kids. It's more remote in the district office."

You might be wondering what Mr. Hook plans to do after leaving Saydel. Mr. Hook doesn't know for sure either. "The best scenario is I am planning on retiring. I hadn't planned it this way, but this is the way it turned out. I'm going to retire. That doesn't mean I won't be working again, because that might be [the case]. I've had 32 years in education, so I think I've got a good 6-8 left. It depends on what avenues could come my way. Whatever happens, I want to be able to give back and help people."

Mr. Hook views life through the lens of success. His advice for the seniors graduating in the coming week is: "Whatever you choose to do in life, make it be successful. If you go into business, you work for someone, you raise your kids, whatever, be successful, work hard at it, and you'll feel good about yourself and life. Whatever it is you choose to do, it's important you're successful at doing it. Whatever you do should be so important that you work hard at it all the time. If you work for a city, or a school, or whatever, do a good job at it. If you don't, you let other people down. Success to me isn't measured in how much money you make. It's measured in how well you do something that you choose to do."

When asked who would win in a sword fight between himself and Mr. Schulte, Mr. Hook replied: "I would win, and I'll tell you why. I have been a survivor my whole life, from the time I was born, until now. And I'm taller."

Art Classes: Mrs. Marcy Davidson

Q: What would you say is the biggest achievement this year for the art classes?

A: I really enjoyed having all of the intro classes in the first semester and the advanced classes second semester. It was nice to flow from one section to the next without having to change so much curriculum on a daily basis. I think the quality of the artwork was outstanding. I saw a lot of personal growth in process, skills, and understanding. TAP helped students connect with what they were doing and reinforced the vocabulary and learning.

Q: What were some of the highlights through the year for the art classes?

A: One of the highlights was winning over 45 ribbons and Best of Show at the Heart of Iowa Conference Show. Another recognition was the first place winner, Nicole Axtell, at the Iowa State Fair and first runner up, Tyler Fugate.

Q: What are goals you have met this year?

A: I have enjoyed having students be able to choose a project or two this semester. This doesn't always work, but many students are motivated and driven and so this has afforded me the opportunity to let students direct their own learning more than in other years.

Q: What do you hope to change in the art classrooms next year?

A: Next year I have added another 3 credit college class Exploring Art Media which will be curriculum taught in Advanced Studio Lab. This will be an excellent opportunity for next year's juniors and seniors to expand upon their college opportunities at Saydel.

Choir: Mr. Michael Puffett

Q: What would you say is the band's biggest achievement this year?

A: The choir's biggest achievement this year was in realizing the importance of counting on the talent in the room. Our numbers are down a little this year, and students really learned that growth and improvement wasn't about the number of people in the room, but about each of those singers working to improve themselves.

Q: What are some highlights for choir this year?

A: There were several performances that went well for the choir and culminated with the State Large Group Contest. At this festival, the Girls Choir received a Division I (Superior) rating and the Boys Choir received a Division II (Excellent) rating.

Q: What would you like to change for next year?

A: I would like to see the students start the year right where we left off. There often seems to be a regression in the fall that I would guess is caused by the idea that contest is far away, so the students don't feel they need to do their best yet. My dream would be for them to truly do their best all year. I think the choir would be surprised at what they could accomplish if they could get past the "save it for the big contest" mentality that prevents them from realizing the remarkable growth of which they are actually capable. I have had several Saydel students go on to sing in their college choirs, and they often comment on the excitement and fulfillment they receive from a group that is working to be their very best each and every day. It is this spirit enriching excitement and fulfillment I wish for the Saydel High School Choir.

Interviews by Nicole Axtell



Olivia Hockey
with her Best of
Show painting

Band: Mr. Eric Layden

Q: What would you say is the band's biggest achievement this year?

A: Our biggest achievement this year has been proving that a band doesn't always need to be large to be good. We are a smaller group this year, but we're still performing together as a team, and making excellent music as a result. I would say that our smaller size has actually been a benefit to the players this year, as no one has been able to "hide" within the band, and everyone has become accountable for their own part.

Q: What were some of the highlights this year for the school band?

A: Our performances are always highlights for me, because they end up being a culmination of all the hard work, time, effort, and energy the students have poured into the band in the previous weeks and months. Of course, having a highly successful marching band season where the band was awarded many top honors is always exciting as well.

Q: What are goals you have and or have met this year?

A: My biggest goal this year was to continue the amazing work that Mrs. Williams had done with the band in the years before me. The band this year has welcomed me (at least to my face), and has continued to perform at their best throughout the year. That's all a band director can ask!

Senior Quotes



"Nothing that's worthwhile is ever easy."

-Riley Hayes

"I can't tell you the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everyone."

-Kim Swarts

"Those who shine from within don't need the spotlight."

-MaKayla Handeland

"In life we do things. Some we wish we had never done. Some we wish we could replay a million times in our heads. But they all make us who we are. And in the end, they shape every detail about us. If we were to reverse any of them, we wouldn't be the person we are. So just live. Make mistakes. Have wonderful memories. But never ever second guess who you are, where you have been, and most importantly, where it is you're going."

"You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think."

-Brooklynn Mayer

"The more you are like yourself, the less you are like anyone else, which makes you unique."

-Cassie Lee

"Everything happens for a reason."

-Alyx Andron

"Always treat everyone with the utmost respect, because you never know who you'll need in the future."

- Thadius Taylor

"Be the same person you are in the dark that you are in the light."

-Alex Gustafson

"Life does not cease to be funny when people die any more than it ceases to be serious when people laugh."

-Tim Walkwitz

"If you don't try you will get no reward, but choose to try, and you will double your reward."

-Caleb Primrose

"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." (John F. Kennedy)

-Tucker Watters

"True friendship isn't about who came first and who you've known the longest. It's about who came and never left."

-Tabatha Taylor

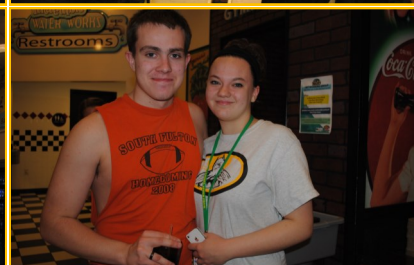
"Never say goodbye, because goodbye means going away, and going away means forgetting."

-Nicole Williams

"Why stop dreaming just because you are awake?"

-Tyler Howard

After Prom



Love & Tennis

by Randa Patrick

In tennis, love means nothing. It literally means zero when you're talking about the score. For the girls who play, their love for the sport is anything but nothing. From mid-March, when the ground is still frozen, you'll see the Saydel girls tennis team practicing. "I don't like indoor practice, so if we can make it outside, we'll be out there," stated Coach Mike Downs. The season didn't officially start until April, but the girls worked hard to better themselves before that.

"This year, we have about 16 girls, which is the perfect number for a tennis team," shared one of three team captains, Casey Brown. Captains this year include seniors Mackenzie Miller and Randa Patrick and junior Casey Brown. "The girls are so dedicated," shared Coach Downs. "They really do love the sport, and it makes me enjoy coaching them just that much more." Every year, the girls have individual goals, but they tend to have a team goal as well. "This year, I just want everyone to give all they've got and bond like a family," stated Casey Brown.

Coach Mike Downs has been coaching since 1983, and has been the Saydel girls' tennis coach since 2004. "When I began coaching at Saydel, it seemed like a challenge, and I enjoy challenges. It's a lifetime sport and I love watching all of the girls improve. Not only is it a team sport, but also an individual sport." He mentioned. "I began playing at a very young age. My mother was from England, and played tennis a lot. She then taught me. I've always loved it."

Between team dinners, the annual Pink Out game, and all of the days spent together on the bus and at meets, the girls form close bonds and make some really great memories. Since the team is fairly small, all of the girls get to know each other well. "I really enjoy playing doubles because you work well together with someone

else and the bond is closer," Mackenzie said.

All in all, the girls' tennis team is always dedicated and ready to play. New players are always fun to have, though. "Tennis is fun, and you'll be able to play it for life. It really is worth the while and I recommend going out for it," Coach Downs said. There are only a few more meets left in the season, so go out and cheer on the tennis team!



Boys Tennis

by Cassie Lee



The boys tennis season started at the beginning of April and ended on Tuesday, May 13, in an away match against Ballard that ended with a 2-7 loss. But this season's W-L comes to 5-4, with senior Alex Gustafson placing 3rd at the Knoxville Invitational on April 19. Gustafson and fellow senior Hunter White also came close to beating the school record for most points in a single season. This season's team consisted of 11 players: three sophomores, three juniors, and five seniors. All players were varsity this year. Why do they play the sport? "I enjoy playing tennis because of the people I get to hang out with. And it's a game that can be played until you're very, very old," senior Hunter White said.

Congrats to the boys tennis team for a successful season!

Clockwise from top left: senior Hunter White; senior Alex Gustafson; junior Joe Smith; senior Evan Andrews.

A great start for a great team, Saydel's girls track team is on the path to a good season.

Looking into Girls Track

by Nicole Axtell

Saydel High School's girls track team's biggest achievement will depend on how well they do in the conference meet in May and on how many of our athletes qualify for State. "These are the goals they strive for in our program each and every year," says Coach Wederquist.

For track, the year has been pretty frustrating due to the weather. However, "Placing 3rd and 4th in two meets certainly is something that we haven't done since I've been head coach," Coach Wederquist explains. This year the team has had 16 returning and 12 new teammates to the program—a total of 28 runners, which is an all-time high leaving it as the largest team since Coach Wederquist has been the head coach.

Two runners qualified for State, which will be held May 22-24: Gabbie Richards for the 100 and 200 meter, and Emma Bowman for the 400 meter hurdle. Good luck at State!



Boys Track & Field

by Courtney Hill

This year's boys track season is off to a great start. So far, Saydel has placed 2nd in two meets. The team has also shown great improvement individually, with several personal records being broken, not only by runners, but also by throwers and jumpers as well. Junior Clayton Sommers set a new personal record for the 400 meter hurdles with a time of 56.72 seconds, which also sets a new school record for that relay.

The boys also hosted a home track meet on April 29. The visitors at this meet included ADM, Perry, Chariton, DC-G, Knoxville, and Carlisle.

"This season has been a lot of fun. We have shown a lot of improvement all around. I'm looking forward to finishing out this season with my team as best as we can," says sophomore Jake Philipsen.

Two juniors qualified for the State tournament held on May 22-24. Clayton Sommers made it to State in the following events: High Jump (5' 10"), 110 High Hurdles (16.04), and 400m Hurdles (57.30). Casey Roberts qualified for State in the following events: 800m Run (2:03.30), 1600m Run (4:45.41), and 3200m Run (10:18.31). Good luck at the State meet!

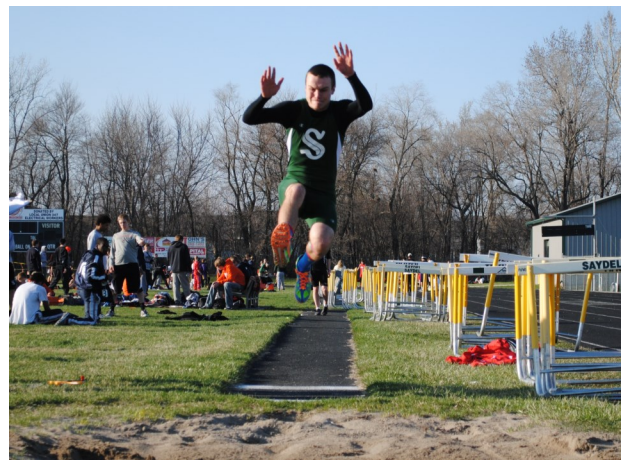
Junior Casey Roberts runs at a steady pace during the two-mile event.



Senior Justin Pehl sprints to finish the race after jumping over a hurdle.



Sophomore Jake Philipsen leaps over a hurdle.



Senior Jake Figgins jumps as far as he can in the long jump event.



Sophomore Dylan Coffin jumps over the hurdle and tries to get in front of his opponent.

Golf

by Riley Hayes



The golf team at Saydel has had a really swingin' year. The varsity team picked up four wins in their first three meets, beating both Southeast Warren and West Marshall. On April 15, at their home meet, the team shot the second best varsity score in the last five years with a 176. The individual scores were all-season bests for junior Trey Newman (41), sophomore Rece Martin (43), junior Jake Hokanson (46) and freshman Joe Bohler (46).

Alongside major team accomplishments, there have been some outstanding personal records being set by our boys golf team. "Our top golfers so far this year have been Trey Newman, Rece Martin, Jake Hokanson and Joe Bohler. Jared Reese and Jack Lande have also contributed to the varsity totals at some point during the year," Coach Scott Powell said. "Trey Newman has had two birdies and our school record is five so he is on pace to break that. Joe Bohler also had one birdie."

"I like to golf because it's fun and I like to interact with the golfers from other schools" junior Jack Lande said. "I also like to visit the other golf courses in Iowa."

The boys played their conference meet on Monday, May 5, at the Tournament Club of Iowa in Polk City. Their sectional meet is scheduled for Friday, May 16, at the Edmundson Golf Course in Os-koloosa. Make sure you go out to the greens to support our boys!



High School Construction Continues

by Nick Dolan

A final look at the old bleachers, which are being rebuilt as part of the bond-referendum renovations.

Photo courtesy Tracy Hook

If you've been coming to school at all this month (which you should be), you'll have noticed that the front entrance has been fenced off and replaced by the entrance to the new gym. This is the result of a bond referendum passed last year by voters within the Saydel district that gives the district \$7.98 million over a period of twenty years. This money will come from taxpayers, and the construction being done is a part of that.

In the building, the front office, the weight room, the old gym, the boys' locker room (next to the old gym), the fish-bowl lab and the front entrance will all be affected by these renovations. "The weight room will be moved to where the front office is now, and the present weight room and boys' locker room will be the new office complex," Principal Kevin Schulte said. Also, "the fishbowl lab will be a teacher workspace and conference room." Repairs will be made to the old gym, and the north end of the old gym (the part with the concrete floor that is mostly used for storage) will be transformed into a two-floor cardio facility.

The benefits of the cardio center and a renovated gym are obvious, but there's a specific reason why the front office is being moved. "People entering the building will have to walk through the front office now. It gives us greater security and more safety," Schulte said.

The other major change at the high school will be an artificial turf and new bleachers for the football field. Construction for these began on April 30, one day after the last track meet of the season (the last thing it will be used for this spring).

Work on the building renovations will be completed by August 1. The football field will be done by August 15.

The bus garage at the west end of the parking lot is also being demolished and moved to Woodside.

During the construction, buses have been picking up students in the south lot. When students park in this lot it makes it difficult or impossible for buses to use the area. The administration asks you not to park in this area. It is cordoned off so that our facilities will be better next year.