

Durant junior dances with Wilton Stepperettes

By Paige Happ

Once again, junior Brooklyn Frantz will compete in the Iowa State Dance Championships December 4-6 in Des Moines—this time with the Wilton Stepperettes.

State dance will be held at the Wells Fargo Arena and Hy-Vee Hall in Des Moines.

Frantz placed eighth at state in the solo competition her freshman year with a team from Durant High School.

As the 2024-25 school year began, she joined the Wilton dance team, the Stepperettes, due to the lack of dance participants in the Durant program.

Durant last had a dance team during the 2022-23 school year. Schools have to have at least six dancers to have a team. Durant had exactly six and performed dances as well as competed at state with a group dance.

Without a Durant team last year, Frantz continued to dance with her studio, Artistic Intensity Dance Company in Davenport.

“I train 15 plus hours a week try-

ing to better myself and my dancing,” said Frantz.

She has been dancing for 14 years and dances all year round as she has continuous practices, performances and competitions.

“Being a dancer and attending Durant for two years now, it was very apparent to me that there were very few dancers in the high school,” said Frantz. “I think it’s sad that we don’t have enough students that want to go out anymore.”

Frantz did not get the opportunity to perform at state her sophomore year. In order to attend state and perform a solo, dancers also have to perform in a group dance, according to the Iowa State Dance and Drill Team Association.

“When Durant had a dance team, I was able to compete my solo since we had a team to perform a group dance,” said Frantz. “But since we didn’t have a team last year, they said I couldn’t compete a solo.”

Frantz made the decision to try out for the Stepperettes in hopes of making the team and getting to perform at state in a

group dance and a solo.

Frantz attends practice with the Stepperettes on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.

In order to qualify for state now, dancers must place in the top 10 of their class at the qualifiers.

Frantz will compete as a solo dancer in contemporary style. The Stepperettes will also perform in two team styles, pom and jazz.

“I have high hopes and goals of making it to state and placing higher than I did my freshman year,” she said.

“I look forward to competing at state because I love every chance I get to perform.”

Head Coach Jordan Showers, who is in her first year with the Wilton dance team, is excited to watch Frantz perform and succeed.

This is the first time a Durant dancer has joined the Wilton dance program.

A result of Wilton and Durant combining dancers means the Stepperettes will move up in class. There are 12 total classes.



Photo contributed by Brooklyn Frantz
Junior Brooklyn Frantz will compete with the Wilton Stepperettes at the Iowa State Dance Championships next month.

During Frantz’s freshman year, Durant was in Class III. Now with Wilton and Durant together, the Stepperettes will compete in class VII.

“Brooklyn is an extremely hard worker! She brings a diverse dance background to the team,” said Coach Showers.

Livestreaming Durant athletics popular for those who can’t make event

By Colby Gast

Livestreaming Durant sporting events on Facebook has quickly turned into a beloved option for residents to stay tuned to Durant athletics if they can’t make the games in person.

Mr. Ryan Tappendorf, a city worker and volunteer firefighter, first brought up the idea of streaming high school games to Athletic Director Matt Straube as a temporary solution for fans during the COVID-19 pandemic, which made attending the games in person difficult for some. Streaming the games gave fans a way to still watch the events, just from home.

He first streamed the varsity basketball games in the 2020-2021 school year

using a webcam with a wide angle that was connected to his laptop.

As the stream began to grow, the Durant Athletic Boosters provided funds for Mr. Tappendorf to upgrade his equipment to improve the quality of the stream.

The equipment costs about \$1,500 and includes a camera, sound mixer, tripod, table, two headsets, and a computer. He also uses a portable generator for away games that is generously donated by Coach Ross DeLong.

This temporary solution has turned into a dependable routine at some of the sporting events for Mr. Tappendorf’s loyal viewers.

Mr. Tappendorf streamed all of the baseball games, including the fresh/soph, junior varsity, and varsity games, this past summer and all of the varsity football games on Friday night and the junior varsity games

on Monday night this fall.

This winter, he plans on streaming the home wrestling meets and as many basketball games as he can.

“I’m always hoping to catch a highlight play or a memory-making moment for all the high school athletes, so they will always be able to show family members that can’t be at the event, or even down the road when they can show their future family,” said Mr. Tappendorf.

Mr. Tappendorf and his co-announcer, Johnny Wisdom, also provide play-by-play commentary, which is a reason the streams have become so popular.

Mr. Tappendorf and Wisdom have been friends for over 20 years. They met each other through a pro wrestling group they were involved in.

Streaming these events is a major time commitment for Mr. Tappendorf, who

is married to Durant special education teacher Tracy Tappendorf. The couple have three children, including sophomore Kaleb Tappendorf who played on the football team this fall.

As a city worker, Mr. Tappendorf has to strategically plan his work schedule, so he can stream both day and night games.

“I make sure to save a majority of my paid time off from my job for the early baseball games,” said Mr. Tappendorf.

Streaming the varsity games is a labor of love for him. When Mr. Tappendorf grew up, he didn’t play any sports until the age of 14 when he fell in love with football and baseball.

“I love the next-level thinking that can make the difference in sports,” said Mr. Tappendorf.

“Someone that has a high IQ in a certain sport can have an advantage over someone that may be physically better than them.”

Mr. Tappendorf has many loyal viewers to his streams, one being the Durant middle school and high school industrial tech teacher, Tim Rouse.

Mr. Rouse has tuned in to many of the football games, baseball games, and home wrestling meets.

“As a teacher, it is a great way to connect with my students when I can talk about things I saw in a game or match,” Mr. Rouse said.

“It helps me to build on those relationships with them.”

Hair~Makeup~Tanning

Kiley Van Sloten (DHS 2007)
Owner/Stylist
Alicia Cooling and Danielle Halferty,
Stylists
210 5th Street, Durant, IA
(563) 785-6227

Bennett From page 1

Bennett as a school and gets families invested in coming to Durant.”

The basketball game between Durant and Calamus-Wheatland will be an Achieve Challenge, a statewide community service initiative started by the Iowa High School Athletic Association in 2010.

“An Achieve scrimmage allows teams to essentially play another game with officials, keep score, and take admission,” Mr. Straube explained. “It just doesn’t count towards stats and records. The one requirement for an Achieve scrimmage is that you

have to do a service project in your community.”

For its service project, the Durant basketball team plans to have a food drive for the food bank here in Durant. Mr. Costello and Mr. Strub hope the Battle of the Bomber Dome can become a yearly tradition.

“I’ve already started to hear some buzz, some people talking about how they’re looking forward to it,” Mr. Costello said. “Hopefully it’s a success, and we continue to have our communities up here and utilize our facilities.”

Arty's Ice Cream and Grill's boys' basketball player of the month

DIET CAN START TOMORROW
609 W. 5th St.
Wilton, IA 52778
563-732-2222

Sophomore Benjamin Feuerbach has been playing basketball since he was five years old. He got into the sport from watching his dad and friends play. What he enjoys most about the sport is being able to play with his friends and teammates. His favorite memory from last year was beating the JV Wilton team at home.

Feuerbach

Apex Ink and Apparel's junior high athlete of the month

708 5th St., Durant, IA 52747
563-785-6223

Eighth grader Ruby Timmerman is a forward on the basketball team. This season Timmerman wants to make more outside shots. She said she likes playing basketball with her friends and enjoys the teammates supporting each other. She also plays volleyball and softball.

Timmerman

Raynor Door's wrestler of the month

2370 West Lake Blvd.
Davenport, IA 52804
563.391.9566 – phone
www.raynorqc.com

Junior Trey Ramer has been wrestling for 13 years. He got into the sport because his cousins wrestled. What he enjoys most about wrestling is that it is an individual sport where he is on the mat by himself. One of his favorite memories from last season was wrestling at state, and his goal this season is to place at state.

Ramer

Peel's Inc. girls' basketball player of the month

755 W. Iowa 80 Road
Walcott, IA 52773
(563) 468-5460

Senior Mariah Alpen has been playing basketball since the first grade. She got into the sport because of her dad and her sisters. Some of Alpen's goals this season are to improve her game by using the knowledge from her coaches and also to work more on her outside shot.

Alpen