

# Editor feels need to make up for lost time

By Sofia Reyna

This school year, Durant students will return to school with a sense of normalcy as they are no longer required to wear masks in school. As editor of *The Wildcat Chronicles*, I look forward to leading our publication in its third year.

However, Durant seniors like myself may have a problem that other grades do not—the feeling that we have to make up for lost time.

Since the pandemic started, students have had to face changes, such as a three-month school shutdown to end the 2019-2020 school year and COVID-19 restrictions last year that included the option of online schooling.

With little to no restrictions this year, students will be able to experience school normally once again.

However, there is a sense of disappointment for me when thinking back to the previous two years spent during COVID. I wasn't able to experience the two school years to the fullest. That dread started when I was unable to participate in a dance team showcase cancelled because of the shutdown.

That first summer of COVID, I was stuck at home, and to make matters worse, I opted for online schooling that first semester back, and that experience was horrible because I felt suffocated at home and had no motivation to learn.

## 4-sport athlete hopes to return this fall from knee injury

By Ally Happ

Time. You only get so much time in high school to experience everything you want. One thing I didn't want to experience was a season-ending injury, but I did.

On June 20 during an off-season basketball scrimmage, I felt a cracking sensation in my knee coming down from a lay-up. At that instant, I knew something was wrong but tried to brush it off knowing I had a softball game the next day, and I could not miss it over a little basketball injury.

So I tried to keep scrimmaging with my team, but I could barely walk, let alone run. Shortly after, my coach Ross DeLong pulled me out and sat me on the bench. I knew this was not good.

During COVID, my classmates were spread apart from each other, both figuratively and literally. Friend groups had split up or changed during this time. Also, some students have experienced falling grades, myself included, during the pandemic.

Expecting everything to return right back to normal is quite a large task after a worldwide pandemic has taken place. I personally believe that trying to experience my senior year to the fullest will be a hard task since I will have to focus on bringing my grades up again and preparing to leave for college while simultaneously trying to make up for the lost time of the two previous years.

So what does that lost time look like? For me, I didn't get to spend time with my friends, who I didn't get to see regularly even before the pandemic. When I did catch up with some of them, they would tell me about their experiences during the pandemic and what was happening around them. I felt like I was an outsider who knew nothing about what was happening in my circle of friends and also at school, somewhat like a social pariah.

High school is also when young adults are supposed to learn more about themselves and try to figure out what they're going to do later on in life.

I haven't had much time to prepare for living on my own, and there are many things I want to experience—like learning how to cook, pay bills, or even how to



Senior Sofia Reyna, the new editor of *The Wildcat Chronicles*, edits the first issue of the 2021-22 school year.

change a flat tire—before I have to focus on more important things like renting my own apartment and having to buy groceries on my own.

In other words, I will have to learn how to rely solely on myself.

Even as I wrote this column, I realized how difficult it was to put my feelings into words about how the pandemic has affected me. It was hard for me to explain ev-

erything that I lost.

Even though I do feel a bit wary towards the upcoming school year, there's also sense of excitement that we will finally have one year of normalcy.

While this is my last year at Durant, I believe things will actually feel normal again in due time, maybe when I go dress shopping for Homecoming or when I have my first choir concert.

The next day I tried to play my softball game, but as I stepped up to the plate, I knew if I hit the ball, I would not make it to first on my leg. Thankfully, I struck out and walked back into the dugout. I was done after the first inning.

The following day, I went to the

ORA office in Bettendorf and got an x-ray that showed I had a possible cartilage injury within the kneecap. The doctor told me I could either get an MRI done or try to just ice the knee, take pain medications, and rest it.

I knew I had to get an MRI to make

sure there was nothing too damaging in my knee.

On Wednesday, one day later, I woke up early and got the MRI. My next scheduled appointment was planned for the following Monday, but later that same day, the doctor's office called my mom and asked if we would want to come back to discuss the MRI scan.

Instantly, I got worried. I wondered why the doctor wanted to see me so soon after. It was going to be one of two options: 1. All good news, nothing is wrong with you, you just need to rest, and you'll be back to sports really soon or 2. Stop what you are doing right now because you severely hurt your knee.

It was the second option.

The MRI scan showed a piece of cartilage detached from my kneecap, and I needed arthroscopic surgery to remove it. Just like that, my junior softball season was cut short.

Surgery was set for July 1. The doctors removed the loose cartilage while also drilling tiny holes in the kneecap—a procedure known as microfracture—to create new cartilage.

The recovery time was three to six months, and physical therapy started right away.

For the first six weeks of recovery, I was stuck in a knee brace to mobilize it and let the new cartilage heal. During those weeks, physical therapy was not aggressive, and I focused on doing exercises to help my other muscles in my left leg stay as strong as possible.

But this also meant I did a lot of exercises at home to help my leg get stronger outside of physical therapy.



Now my senior volleyball season is up in the air. Currently, I am unaware if my leg will be strong enough to return before volleyball season ends and even if it does, is it worth risking another possible injury to my knee.

Or would the safer option be to let it heal more and miss out on my entire senior volleyball season, my last time ever playing volleyball competitively.

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**Durant Hub's mixologist of the month**  
 Sophomore Macy Huston started working at the Durant Hub in June. Her favorite beverage to make is the Farmer's Market. The best part about working at the Hub "is being able to work with some of her best friends." Owner Brittney Ingles works with her employees to create school-friendly schedules.  
608 Fifth St., Durant, IA  
(563) 260-8834  
 Huston

**Liberty Trust & Savings Bank's teacher of the month**  
 Mr. Tim Rouse has been teaching at Durant for 18 years. He has seven shop classes. Mr. Rouse said, "I teach because it's the best way I know to help kids become more productive citizens and members of their communities. I enjoy passing down skills that they can use everyday in their post-secondary lives."  
 Rouse

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