

DeLong chosen as newsmaker of the year

By Royce Richman

Senior Isabelle DeLong picked up where her brother left off as *The Wildcat Chronicles* newsmaker of the year with five appearances, according to a compilation of student interviews done throughout the school year by *Chronicles* reporters.

Senior Charles Huesmann and sophomore Colby Gast each appeared four times leaving them tied for second place.

There was a seven-way tie for third place. Junior Josh Peel, junior Kadyn Kraklio, junior Katelynn Toft, junior Addison Daufeldt, sophomore Brooklyn Frantz, junior Bryce Daufeldt, and senior Lainey Shelangoski all had three appearances.

Isabelle's brother, Nolan DeLong,

was tied for the top newsmaker in 2022 and 2023. In 2022, he tied with Ethan Gast with six total appearances. In 2023, Nolan and Garrett Hollenback won with four appearances each.

"Nolan has always been someone who I have looked up to as a sibling and a person, so I am honored to be the next DeLong athlete and to take his place," said Isabelle.

DeLong is appreciative of *The Chronicles* for covering the sports that she's involved in.

However, she said that the newspaper should emphasize academic stories as much as athletic stories.

"I think *The Chronicles* does a very

good job covering sports, but I do think they can have a better balance between sports stories and academics," she said. "It is important to include everyone and make everyone feel like they matter."

Huesmann said that he thinks it's awesome that he got the chance to share his place in the top two with his cousins, Nolan and Isabelle, for the second year in a row.

Huesmann, who has been a regular source for *The Chronicles* throughout his high school career, said that it is important for the reporter to ask good, in-depth questions for an interview to be successful.

"It's an honor to have this award, and I love to make the news in sports I work very hard for," said Huesmann.



Photo by Nic Poston

The home crowd celebrates senior Isabelle DeLong's 1,000th career point during a home game against Wilton on Feb. 6. DeLong is the *Chronicles* newsmaker of the year.

Operation Prom



Photo by Nic Poston

Durant firefighters place senior Mason Badtram on a stretcher after a simulated two-car accident April 24 in the high school parking lot. Operation Prom highlighted the dangers of intoxicated driving and involved Durant first responders along with a helicopter from MedForce of West Burlington.

Cat's Cafe provides new opportunities

By Kaetlyn Hansell

A new small business at the Durant school allows students with disabilities to learn valuable life skills.

The Cat's Cafe was developed by special education teacher Ms. Alexandra Felsing with help from fellow staff member Mrs. Paige White. Five of their students make energy drinks for Durant staff.

"I started Cat's Cafe because I wanted something where the students were doing hands-on learning," stated Ms. Felsing.

"This also gives the students something to talk about with others while working on having meaningful conversations."

Students take a variety of jobs such as doing inventory, ordering supplies, reading order forms, stickering cups, getting ice, reading the ingredients list, and making drinks.

The drinks are delivered to staff members on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-2:30 p.m.

The drinks offered include names such as "WOW," "I Love It," "Yummy,"

and "Yes!" Caffeinated drinks are \$4, and the non-caffeinated drinks are \$3. Custom drinks can also be ordered.

Life skills such as communication are learned with everything the students do with the Cat's Cafe.

"Many of them can and will go on to work, possibly at a coffee shop, be a greeter, stock stores, or something that matches their skill set," Ms. Felsing explained.

"This is prep for those types of jobs. The students are expected to follow directions, which are important for any job. They also have to greet the customer, tell them the price of the drink based on what drink it is, take money, make change, and know where to deliver the drinks based on who we have drinks for that day."

Ms. Felsing said staff are there to help when needed.

"We are there to assist with making sure that things are being made correctly and helping with the physical needs of some students to make the drinks," stated Ms. Felsing.

Ms. Felsing said she also began the

Cat's Cafe with an eye toward the future.

"We had a good group of students coming up to the junior/high school in the next couple years and starting Cat's Cafe now gave us a little time to work out all of the kinks in it," stated Ms. Felsing.

"During Cat's Cafe, the students are working on social skills, work skills, money skills, and so much more."

Ms. Felsing has five students in her class who range in age from fifth grade to 12th grade. She has two students all day, two students half a day, and one student for a quarter of the day.

The Cat's Cafe means a lot to sixth grader Emma Holbert. She loves to be a part of the cafe with her fellow students.

"It is something to do with my friends," stated Holbert.

Holbert makes and delivers the drinks to teachers. The students receive from eight to 20 orders each time.

Ms. Felsing said her special education class focuses on life skills for her students, so they can be successful and live as independently as possible.

D-Day From page 1

-mon practice in the Cole family. Dick was also in the Navy for 24 years, serving on submarines and retiring at the rank of lieutenant commander. And as the family tree moves down, the tradition may carry on too. Wyatt has ambitions to go into the Marines when he gets out of high school.

"I thought it was pretty cool what he [Elliott Cole] did, and he's definitely a motivation for me to join the military," said Wyatt, who found it fascinating to think how dangerous a battle his great-grandfather was a part of and how brave he had to be.

"He could have easily died in that battle, and as you know, that would have changed my whole family tree," said Wyatt.

"It's just insane to think about."

Durant history teacher Dan Knipfel said D-Day played a pivotal role in securing a foothold on the Western Front.

"Prior to D-Day, the Allies didn't have a strong spot to invade Europe," said Mr. Knipfel.

"After D-Day, the Allies were able to bring in a ton of resources and manpower to liberate France and eventually bring an end to World War II."

Some 160,000 troops from America, France, and Great Britain invaded the beaches initially. There were also about 11,000 aircraft and 7,000 ships and boats in the operation, Mr. Knipfel said.

There were five different invasion beaches, according to Mr. Knipfel. American forces came ashore on Omaha and Utah Beach, British forces on Sword and Gold Beach, and Canadian forces on Juno Beach. But Omaha Beach was the bloodiest.

"Germany had Omaha Beach heavily defended, and the U.S. may have underestimated their strength," Mr. Knipfel said. "The U.S. struggled to secure the beach due to a combination of poor weather and difficulty clearing beach obstacles, so armored support vehicles could get on the beach."

The Omaha Beach landing resulted in 2,400 American casualties.



Photo contributed by Dick Cole Elliott Cole is pictured after he joined the Army in 1943.

Raynor Door's girls' track athlete of the month



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

Freshman Elise Jones has been in track for three years and tried it out in junior high and really enjoyed it. What she likes most about the sport is competing in the track meets and also being able to spend time with her teammates. Jones competes in the 100-meter and 200-meter dash and also is a member of the relays for the Wildcats.



Jones

Peel's Inc. golfer of the month



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

Senior Grady Claussen has been playing golf since his freshman year at Durant. He got into the sport because of his friend Collier Rockow. What Claussen enjoys most about golf is that you can only blame yourself if you don't do your best at meets.



Claussen

Arty's Ice Cream and Grill's boys' track athlete of the month



609 W. 5th St.
Wilton, IA 52778
563-732-2222

Senior Caden Meyer has been in track for seven years. Meyer got into the sport because his mom wanted one of her kids to join track. What he enjoys most about the sport is participating in the track meets and watching his teammates succeed. Meyer is a hurdler, a high jumper, and runs a 400-meter leg in relays.



Meyer

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



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

Eighth grader Peyton Schroeder has been in track for four years. Schroeder got into the sport because she wanted to try it out, and she liked competing in races. Her favorite thing about track is when she accomplishes her goals for the sport.



Schroeder