

# THE SAGE

Cokeville High School

October 2023

## Homecoming King and Queen!

On the day of the voting, all 9-12 graders were called to the kitchen to vote for homecoming king and queen. Later, the entire school gathered in the auditorium for the announcement of the king and queen. Everyone was silent as the winners were announced. The king was announced first. It was Micah Petersen. Following that announcement, the queen was announced. Dakota Vierig had won, becoming the next homecoming queen. The whole crowd chanted, "Kiss, kiss, kiss!" But sadly, the queen and king did not.

The next day, Friday, everyone was called to the auditorium for the Homecoming assembly. By tradition, the king and queen both had to give a speech. They both mentioned how great Cokeville High School is and what they're happy about. They also thanked important people that helped them get to that point in their lives. During the parade, the king and queen were the center of attention. Everyone cheered as they drove by.

– Kacen Milsted



## Spirit Contest Winners

The decoration of the windows, lockers, and floats happened for two hours every day, but on Thursday we had the last half of the day to work. The class that decorated the windows the best was the freshman class. This was a great win for the freshmen. I, being one of the freshman students, think that we dominated the windows.

Every class had tried hard to win lockers, but the seniors had put in the

most work and effort, and it paid off. The seniors beat every other class's lockers by a mile. Like, talk about effort. They had written every single class member's name in graffiti style on the lockers.

They also had a big banner of cheer words, including *fantastic*, *boom*, *dang*, *we rock*, *winner circle*, and other words. My personal opinion on the floats was that everyone did well; therefore, the competition was great. Everyone worked really hard on their floats. But in the end, the winning float was the sophomores'. They had trees and tents all around their float, and it was definitely worthy of the win. For daily during the week, the student body was called into the auditorium. After each class sat together, the cheerleaders led everyone in singing school chants, and the class that cheered the loudest won. Every class screamed their lungs out as they tried to bring home the win. After the chants, people from each class, chosen by the cheerleaders, would be called up to play a game. Whoever won the game was awarded 50 points for their class.

– Kacen Milsted



## The Tailgate Party

The tailgate party is a staple of homecoming week, and one of the best parts. The tailgate started at 6 P.M. with face painting at the high school as well as soup and dessert at the park. The food is only the beginning, with lots of fun still yet to come. With small games of backyard football and 500 happening all around, you might even have an opportunity to join. But don't get too excited; the best is still ahead.

Next is the writing on the road: With the smell of spray paint lingering all around, you look to Main Street, where you'll find kids of all ages painting their names and numbers on the road. Then the senior girls and the cheerleaders start to huddle up and cheer. Soon the road is loaded with high schoolers cheering as loud as they can. We wait for the senior boys, who are on Big Hill with the goal of lighting the C. Soon the "light the C" chant begins, and usually way too early, but eventually the C is lit. The boys are on their way down, and the cheers begin once again while waiting for the senior boys.

Once they get off Big Hill, we sprint to the bonfire the junior boys have prepared. As the fire burns, we call the names of the seniors and they each give their pump-up speech individually. Notable mentions being Drake Plowman and his "look over there" dance, and the football captains, Jack Dayton and Micah Petersen, doing the pregame football chant. After these speeches, the students all walk or run back over to the school for the coaches to give their pump-up chants, some of the best being Coach Pauni doing the Haka, Coach Linford running around the circle of students giving high-fives to everyone he can, and the best of all: Principal Dietz doing the iconic "everywhere we go" chant. Then it's time for the classes to cheer, with some of the best ever seen, like the "Wild Mike." Finally it's time for doughnuts and apple juice, and with that, the 2023 homecoming tailgate party comes to an end.

-Dash Nate



## Teacher Spotlight: Mr. Linford

At our recent Homecoming program, the school honored Marty Linford and Darren Moody for their service as wrestling coaches. A short film was shown, composed of pictures of the coaches through the years. The film was nothing short of heartwarming, and Mr. Linford could be seen weeping in the front row. Linford has been a big part of our school academics and athletics. Now we'll take a closer look at one of our beloved teachers: the myth, the legend, Mr. Linford.

Referred to as Coach Linford, Mr. Linford, Brother Linford, and Elder Linford, Marty Linford was born in Jackson, Wyoming, in 1969. He grew up on a ranch in Star Valley, where he and his younger brother enjoyed hijinks one would expect to show up in *Harris and Me* (one of Linford's favorite funny reads). When asked about his childhood, Linford responded with a wide grin, "Oh man, I had the greatest time growing up. My little brother and I did so many crazy things and got in so much trouble. And I wouldn't change a bit of it." He was a wild child with his little brother. "My brother and I once," he recalls, "were running from the cops for throwing fireworks and we climbed the tower at the football field. The cop was chasing us and we threw fireworks at him, and then jumped off the back side down onto the pro pits [high jump mats] and got away." He was about eight at the time. With a laugh, Mr. Linford said, "I was a bad example, that's why I don't tell too many of these stories to you guys."

After being a "wild child" with his brother, he went into high school where he made lots of memories. Linford was asked if he was particularly smitten with any of the girls. He answered with a mischievous look, "Oh yeah I had lots of crushes in high school. Tristi Roberts, Natalie Olsen.... Just put those two down." Later, he added Stacy Laker to the list. A student asked how many girlfriends he had, and he responded by chuckling "more than enough girlfriends." Coach Linford commented on his experience as a teenager saying, "Oh I loved high school. Let's see...crazy high school things we did..." With a smirk, he said, "I'd better

not tell any of these things." He still was not exactly an angel child in high school. Mr. Linford graduated as a part of the class of 1987, and departed on a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the following year. He served in Costa Rica speaking Spanish.

After his mission, Mr. Linford attended the University of Wyoming studying criminal justice. About a year later, he decided he was going to be a teacher. He looked at his credits, and after seeing he had three more credits in English, he decided to be an English teacher because "it would be faster." Linford did his student teaching in Cokeville and told Mr. Birch, "When you retire, I want you to give me a call." In 1994, his first teaching job took Linford to Wells, Nevada, where he taught English and Spanish and coached both wrestling and football. After six years in Nevada, the call came, and the Linfords "have been here ever since." Mr. Linford became Cokeville's Spanish and English teacher in 2000; he also helped with junior high football and became an assistant coach for high school football. He became the head coach in 2022. In 2001, he became the head wrestling coach and retired after the 22-23 season. This year, he was inducted into the WCA Hall of Fame.

Now that we know more about his past, here are some fun facts about Coach Linford. In accordance with his love of wrestling and Spanish, he would be a luchador with the name Marvelous Martin. His theme song that he would enter the stage listening to would be "Bad to the Bone." Marvelous Martin wouldn't change his name if he was given the choice. He must've decided it suits him pretty well. Mr. Linford doesn't have a favorite child, but he said, "If I want to talk hunting, Jackson's my favorite. If I want to talk sports, I'll call Colter. If I want to just be happy and hang out, I hang out with Eli. If I want to screw around and rough-house, I hang out with Flint. And I love my daughter, she just takes care of me." Mr. Linford's proudest moments were "...watching my boys go on missions. And then [watching my athletes] win big football games and wrestling matches."

Mr. Linford doesn't have a favorite book because he "love[s] all books." Genres he enjoys include fantasy, western, and historical fiction. Some of his favorites are the *Genghis* books, a

historical fiction, *Harry Potter* in fantasy, and *Elmer Kelton* in westerns. Writing a novel is on his bucket list. If Mr. Linford could go back in time, he would be an archer in middle-aged England or a trapper in the Rocky Mountains during the 1800s. If he could live anywhere in the world for a year, he would go back to Costa Rica. His bucket list also includes visiting the Greek isles and taking his wife to Hawaii. Another item is "Win a football state championship as head football coach." Linford's favorite quote/catchphrase is "the harder you work, the harder it is to surrender," which applies to his endeavors in coaching and in life. His favorite subject in high school was history.

Mr. Linford loves teaching, and when asked about his reason, he responded, "Man, that's a great question. Because I guess I haven't really grown up, and I love being around kids. And [I love] watching them get better at what they want to do." He enjoys "getting kids hooked on books" and teaching reflective writing, such as personal narratives. "I like to see what you guys think and your adventures."

It is plain to see that this mentor loves teaching and coaching. Now we know more about someone who has had such a big impact on many of his students and athletes.

—Amelia Richardson



# Seasons are Changing!



## Spooky Season

October is synonymous with leaves turning, cooler weather, hunting, and of course a whole month dedicated to Halloween. Halloween is a child's favorite holiday because of the festivities, decorations, spooky fun, parties, haunted forest tours, the occasional spook alley, costumes, and of course the candy.

Halloween has come a long way since our parents' generation. Today, it is not uncommon to see an 18-foot skeleton in the front yard of Mr. Tims' house or the entire cast of *Nightmare Before Christmas* hanging from the ceiling of my bedroom. Any of these can be found in a mega pop-up Halloween store and, according to the retail analysts, a predicted total of Halloween spending should reach over 12 billion, expected to surpass last year's spending of 10 billion. "90 million pounds of chocolate is sold annually in the United States during the week of Halloween. Easter racks up 65 million pounds, and Valentine's pulls in a measly 48 million pounds of chocolate."

One of Cokeville's favorite traditions for kids is the annual Halloween Carnival hosted by the Cokeville PTO. Every year the elementary school hosts a fundraiser for the 6th graders, consisting of a meal and games for the community. In addition to the meal and games, a basket auction has recently been added to raise money for the classroom parties, Christmas coloring books, and new playground equipment. The carnival brings in an estimated \$1,500, and the basket auction equally brings in an estimated \$1,500. Several businesses in surrounding communities such

as Kemmerer, Montpelier, Evanston, and Star Valley donate food for the meal, cash donations and silent auction baskets. Businesses such as Star Valley Medical Clinic, Walton Feed, and Broulins donate the majority of the food and prizes. The parents of the 6th grade class are in charge of bringing in certain items that the PTO arranges.

Trunk or treating has become increasingly popular for some communities, and Cokeville has had a few in the past. They are always highly attended, as the children want to go for the fun, and parents like the children to get as much use out of their costumes. The Hideout Motel has recently offered up the lobby for the games and fun. It has also been nice for some children, as the state high school volleyball tournament in Casper has landed on or near the holiday.

As for the junior high and high school aged kids, Halloween consists of scary movie watching and driving younger siblings around town to go trick or treating. I'm quite certain my siblings and I ate most of the candy that was left over from my mom over-buying Halloween candy. It didn't last long in my house, but it was just the beginning of what I call candy season, that lasts until the Easter Bunny drops his last chocolate egg.

I love this time of year, as we are fortunate to have a holiday where you can legally display goblins and witches in the front yard, and a few weeks later you are replacing them with gingerbread men and reindeer..

-Clay Tiechert

# Special Interest

## Speech and Debate

For my entire time in high school, I have had the opportunity to participate in the amazing activity that is speech and debate. Through participation on Star Valley's speech and debate team I have traveled all over the state of Wyoming and even well into Utah and Idaho. What is speech and debate, and why can it be so beneficial?

Speech and debate is an activity that truly has something for everyone: There are events dedicated to both the intellectual side of things and the emotional side. So, while some speech and debate competitors may be arguing about a foreign topic, others will be performing a funny skit.

Speech and debate also helps you develop useful critical thinking, problem solving, and research skills. This is proven explicitly by the fact that colleges and universities really do care if you have participated in speech and debate. In 2019 the rate of enrollment to a top 10 university was 5 times greater if you had done speech and debate, from a 1% national chance to a 5% chance if you are a part of speech and debate. This proves the value of what you can learn during your time in speech and debate.

One of the best parts about speech and debate is that the skills you learn can last a lifetime. For example, the ability to persuade and be confident in yourself and whatever you are talking about has so many different applications in your future life. The knowledge that you gain, as well as learning how to learn better, is a great benefit of speech and debate.

I think speech and debate can also do great things for your emotional intelligence. In speech and debate you can develop more empathy through many different means, like hearing a particularly moving piece performed and also by being forced to advocate for something you may not do on your own.

As I stated earlier, I have had the opportunity to compete in speech and debate through Star Valley for the last two years. I've really enjoyed my time on this team and the people I have met. I've traveled to all kinds of tournaments, whether it was nationals, qualifiers, or a huge tournament in Utah. Star Valley has said before that they would love to have other kids from Cokeville join. If you are interested, you can find information on the SVHS website.

For me personally, I have mostly participated in debates like Lincoln-Douglas (Lincoln like the president) debate, policy debate, congressional debate, extemporaneous debate, and impromptu speaking. Most of my success has been in Lincoln-Douglas debate, where I have won tournaments like Evanston; Jackson Hole; and Layton, Utah. However, I am still ranked in the state for most of the events I do: 15th in Lincoln-Douglas, 15th in policy debate, 27th in Congressional debate, 7th in extemporaneous debate, 16th in impromptu speaking, and 49th in the state overall.

Not many people realize it; however, Wyoming is actually a very competitive state for speech and debate. The top student in the nation in speech and debate points was from Cheyenne. We are even more competitive and better competition than some other really big states, like Florida. If I moved to Florida, I would also be ranked 48th in the state, which is a real testament to how great our speech and debate program here in Wyoming really is.

In the end, speech and debate means a lot to me and is more than meets the eye. It is a way to develop skills you will use for the rest of your life, and I feel like I have gotten so much out of it.

—Evan Dietz



The speech and debate team after a successful speech and debate tournament in Utah.

# Book Review

## The False Prince, by Jennifer A. Nielsen

After the #1 New York Times best-selling author Jennifer A. Nielsen visited, many people scrambled to get their hands on her books. Students read or reread her well known book *The False Prince*. I was one of those students. I was stunned by her immersive storytelling and her mastery of twists.

*The False Prince* is a fantasy fiction and young adult novel set in the seemingly middle-aged kingdom of Carthya. It is a gripping fantasy novel that immediately draws readers into a world of deception, political intrigue, and the indomitable spirit of a young orphan. This 500-page masterpiece is a remarkable journey through a land filled with treacherous plots, unexpected alliances, and the unwavering determination of a compelling protagonist.

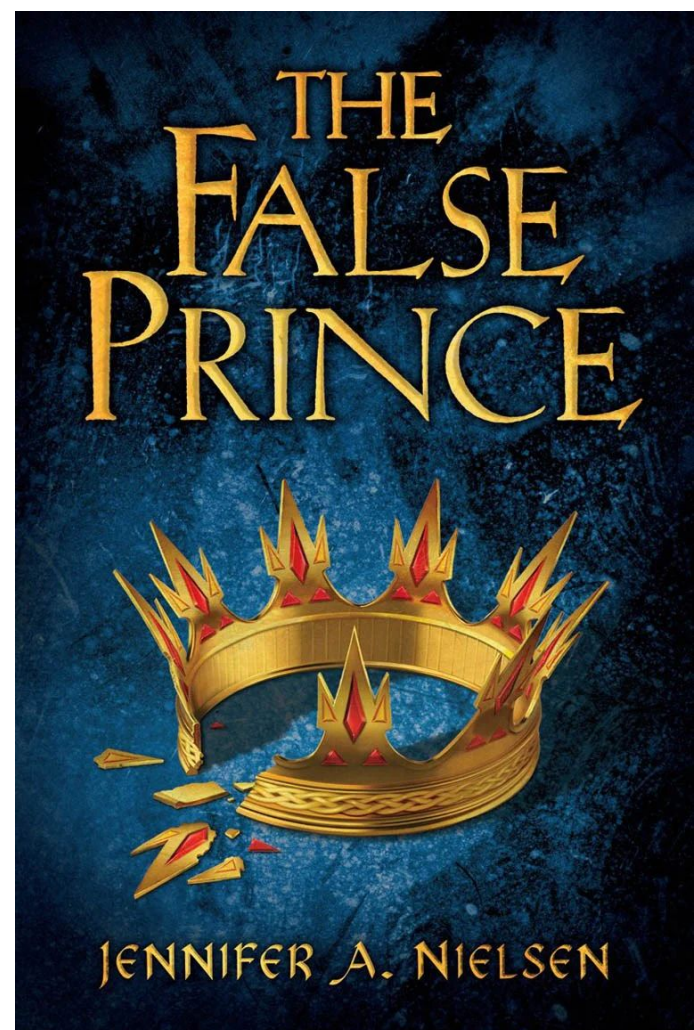
The story is set in the fictional kingdom of Carthya, a realm teetering on the edge of political turmoil following the sudden death of the royal family. Amid this chaos, we meet Sage, an orphan with a defiant spirit and a knack for mischief. Sage's life takes an unexpected turn when he is chosen, along with three other orphans, by a cunning nobleman, Conner, to participate in a dangerous scheme to impersonate the missing Prince Jaron, who is presumed dead.

The character development in *The False Prince* is one of its most outstanding features. Sage, the book's central character, is a complex and layered protagonist. Nielsen beautifully captures his wit, defiance, and vulnerability, making him a character readers will root for from the very beginning. His interactions with the other orphans, Tobias, Roden, and Latamer, create a dynamic and tension-filled atmosphere that keeps the story engaging throughout. Outside of the main character, enemies become friends and vice versa, this is a prominent storytelling device. How the relationships change and develop throughout the plot is also excellent.

Conner, the mastermind behind the deception, is a character you will love to hate. His cunning manipulations and the moral dilemmas he presents to the orphans add layers of depth to the narrative. As the plot unfolds, readers are constantly left guessing about Conner's true motives and the extent of his malevolence.

The world-building in *The False Prince* is exceptional, immersing readers in the intricate politics and social structures of Carthya. The novel's setting is richly detailed, and the political intrigue and power struggles feel authentic, creating a sense of tension that keeps you on the edge of your seat. Nielsen excels at building a world that is both fascinating and believable.

The pacing of the book is perfect, with a combination of thrilling action sequences and quieter, character-driven moments. The plot is meticulously crafted, filled with



unexpected twists and turns that will leave you breathless. Nielsen masterfully balances character development, political intrigue, and action, making *The False Prince* an exhilarating read from start to finish.

Furthermore, the theme of identity and the masks we wear is prevalent throughout the story. The question of what it means to be a true prince, both in name and character, is explored with depth and nuance. This theme adds a layer of emotional resonance to the narrative.

Jennifer A. Nielsen's writing is elegant and accessible, making *The False Prince* suitable for readers of all ages. Her prose is vivid, bringing the world of Carthya to life with its rich descriptions and vibrant characterizations. Nielsen has a gift for crafting memorable dialogue that feels authentic and adds depth to the characters.

In conclusion, *The False Prince* by Jennifer A. Nielsen is a captivating and enthralling fantasy novel that will keep readers glued to its pages. With its well-developed characters, intricate plot, and immersive world-building, it's a must-read for fans of the genre. The story's exploration of identity and deception will leave a lasting impression, making it a book that lingers in the mind long after the final page is turned. Jennifer A. Nielsen has crafted a true gem with *The False Prince*.

–Amelia Richardson

## Special Interest

### Damian Lillard Trade

“It’s Dame Tiiiiiiiiimmmmmmmmmmmeeeeee!!!!!! This All-Star is one of the greatest players of all time.” If you’re an Oklahoma Thunder fan, you know who Damian Lillard is, the guy that ended your finals dream with his clutch half court shot. You’ll always remember that shot as Dame Time. There’s big news now, though: Dame will be competing in the eastern conference now. Before you let out a breath of relief for your west team however, this trade was one of the biggest and best trades ever.

Damian Lillard was born in Oakland, California, on July 15, 1990. His parents were Gina and Houston Lillard. He had one brother and one sister. Oakland High School is where he attended high school because that was the only school that gave him a chance to have a good amount of playing time. Damian Lillard was a small player, being only 6 '1 and having a small build. After high school, he was offered a scholarship to one of the local schools, Weber State, located in Ogden, Utah. There, he led the Wildcats to a lot of victories. He even finished a degree in sales. Lillard was then drafted to the Portland Trail Blazers. He did very well right off the bat, and he was selected for the Rookie of the Year. Spending a total of 11 years there, he was selected as an All-Star a total of eight seasons and led the team to nine playoff appearances. He is ranked first in the franchise in three pointers made, and he is second in assists.

However, even though he said he would never leave the team that believed in him and drafted a small town college guy, Dame was traded to the Bucks this off season. It was a three-way deal between the Blazers, Bucks, and the Suns. Damian Lillard was traded to the Milwaukee Bucks, and now he will be teamed up with Giannis Antetokounmpo. The Trail Blazers received Jru Holiday, but his trade here was short lived because he was sent to the Boston Celtics. The Blazers also will receive future draft picks and the Suns center, Deandre Ayton, and Toumani Camara. The Suns received Blazers center Jusuf Nurkic, their forward Nassir Little, and Keon Johnson. The Suns also got Grayson Allen from the Bucks.

So even though the West got rid of one of the greatest scorers in history, the West is still just as strong as they have been. The Suns are still trying to make the Kevin Durant and Devin Booker duo work out, and now they received a great center in Nurkic. The Trail Blazers have a great guard Anfernee Simons, and they got the third draft pick, Scoot Henderson. Then the Warriors will continue to be a threat, and they also just received the 19-year player, Chris Paul. The Kings are one of the fastest teams in the country, and they will be a big threat for everyone. Then the Lakers still have all the superstars on their team, but we’ll see if they can get their game together and share the ball. Either way, this NBA season will be as exciting as any of them.

–Justin Moyes



## Student Spotlight: Kayson Walker

“Live to love to learn to love to live.” All of you people that have seen this written on the whiteboard in Mr. Linford’s room probably have the same reaction that I had: What the heck does that mean? However, if you take some time to think about it in a deep way, you will realize how smart this saying is. That is just like the Student Spotlight for this month: At first glance you are probably thinking, what happened to him at a young age, but once you get to know him, you will find out there is something smart beneath that mustache of his. Without further ado, I welcome into the spotlight, Kayson Walker.

Kayson Walker is a student at our beloved Cokeville High School. He is a great student, and he is also the quarterback for the football team that is doing very well this season. He plays basketball and, instead of doing track, insists on being punchy as he works for the ranch, Circle B. He is also in the music group Celebration because he has a wonderful singing voice, and he was in the musical *Footloose* last year. He says he can’t wait to do the musical again this year. He is a joy to all of his teachers, friends, and everyone he is around. I asked Kayson some basic questions, and I could really feel his Panther Spirit. The first question I asked him was what his favorite color is, to which he immediately replied with no hesitation, “I bleed orange and black.” This shows how much Panther Spirit he has and how devoted he is to trying to make Cokeville sports successful.

His favorite food is pero tacos. Now, Kayson was in Spanish class while he said this, so it was a little hard to understand because his Spanish is not the greatest. This translates into dog tacos, but we are going to assume that Kayson does not eat his dogs no matter how mad he gets at them. He loves to say hi to his mom, grab a good taco, and go into the living room to watch college football or



one of his favorite movies. However, he doesn’t have a lot of time to enjoy sitting around watching TV, because he is usually very busy doing his favorite hobbies, roping and kissing women. Now, we will once again assume that he doesn’t rope the women and then kiss them, but he loves to rope cows and be punchy during the day, and then turn on party mode and kiss women at night. He is very sought after by the women, but sometimes he likes to go after the women that he has no shot with. “The only failure is not to try,” he says.

Kayson is the quarterback for the football team and says that football is his favorite sport. When asked why, he said, “I just like handing the ball off to someone like Jack Dayton or Micah Petersen and just watch them have a great run for the team and know that I started that play.” He also loves the physicality of football on defense and being able to get a really good hit on a kid that he doesn’t like from the other teams. He also loves to get the stickers for his helmet and try to make his helmet look as black as possible. Once again, he says, “I love getting stickers because my teammates did really well and I was the person to start the play that they did so well on.” However, even though Kayson gives all the credit to his

teammates, he is a very good linebacker, being ranked 13th in the state in defensive points, behind two of his teammates, Micah Petersen at 2, and Justin Moyes at 11. He has led the state in passing proficiency for this season. His favorite story is when Jack Dayton had a really nice run, and Kayson and Brodie Dean watched him and then gave each other a big hug to celebrate the run.

Kayson is also very good at saying motivational quotes. He says that he comes up with all of his quotes, and if there is a name under the quote that isn’t his name, that guy stole the quote from him. One of his most motivational quotes is, “Setting a goal is the first step at turning the invisible visible.” He says this really helps him in going through this tough life as a high school student. However, Kayson has a less serious side of his life. “Don’t be sad, because sad backwards is das and das not good, make sure to tip the waitress and stay classy.”

Kayson is an outstanding student; he is truly a joy to our lives.

–Justin Moyes