

SUMMER  
EDITION

VOL. 75  
2025

# WESTNEWS

## M A G A Z I N E



West Lutheran High School  
WLHS.NET



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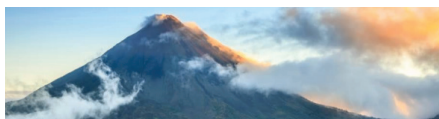
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# PRINCIPAL'S LETTER

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

*As we reflect on the 2024–2025 school year, we are reminded of God's never ending grace, beautifully stated in our theme passage: "For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations"- Psalm 100:5 (NIV 11). Under the theme "Forever Faithful," we have seen countless examples of God's goodness at work in our students, staff, and supporters.*

We ended the year with 203 students and celebrated the graduation of 48 seniors, now stepping into the world with a Christ-centered education and strong faith. Looking ahead, next year's freshman class may welcome 55 students.

This year, we were blessed to welcome several new members to the West family: Pastor Isaac Cherney (Religion, Latin, and Guidance), Jennifer Olson (Marketing), Rachel Olson and Autumn Class (Study Hall), and Nancy Mischke and Pastor Bruce Janisch (Mission Advancement). We're thankful for their energy and dedication.

International outreach grew with visits to London, Frankfurt, and Seoul to build connections for future enrollment. Please pray the Lord leads students to West Lutheran to hear the gospel and receive a Christ-centered education.

Fine arts continue to thrive, with over 2,000 attending this year's theater and musical productions. Through classes, performances, and chapel, students are growing as Christ-centered leaders.

Our Executive Committee and Board of Regents are developing a 10-year campus improvement plan to position West Lutheran for a strong future-we look forward to sharing more as the vision unfolds.

We're deeply grateful for your prayers, time, and gifts - each one helps keep Christ at the center of West Lutheran. Thank you for your continued support as we Learn, Believe, Grow, and Achieve.



**DAVE GARTNER**

West Lutheran High School  
Principal

## PEOPLE TO NOTE IN 2025

Board of Regents Chairman  
Pastor Josh Mayer  
pastorjmayer@gmail.com

Principal  
Dave Gartner  
dgartner@westlutheran.net

Vice Principal  
Jason Hahn  
jhahn@westlutheran.net

Dean of Students  
Nathan Veach  
nveach@westlutheran.net



# NEW FACES AT WEST BITTERSWEET GOODBYES

When you see these new faces around school be sure to **welcome** them! Our faculty and staff are a precious gift to our students. It is also hard to say **goodbye** to some of our favorite people! They will be truly missed.

Sincerely, Your West Family



**Anna Gartner**  
**English - New In 2025**

We're grateful God has led you to West Lutheran. Looking forward to partnering in ministry with you!



**Josh Wong**  
**Math - New In 2025**

Congratulations on your new position here at West Lutheran. We look forward to serving with you. God Bless!



**Sora Lee**  
**2020-2025**

Thank you for your devotion and faithfulness to West and the students. May God bless your new journey. You will be missed!



**Steve Bratten**  
**2015-2025**

Thank you for your service and dedication to West Lutheran! Happy Retirement and God Bless you!

## MILESTONES. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS. WELL DONE.



**Steve Jensen - 30 Years**  
**at West Lutheran HS**



**Steve Bratten - 10 Years**  
**at West Lutheran HS**



**Amy Filthaut - 5 years**  
**at West Lutheran HS**



**Sora Lee - 5 years**  
**at West Lutheran HS**  
**& in the WELS Ministry**



**Jason Hahn - 25 years**  
**in the WELS Ministry**

### HONORING FAITHFUL SERVANTS IN MINISTRY

With hearts full of gratitude, we celebrate those marking milestone anniversaries of service at West Lutheran High School and in the WELS ministry - from 5 to 30 years. What a blessing you are! Your faithfulness in serving the Lord through Christian education and ministry is a powerful testimony to His goodness and grace. Through your teaching, leadership, and love, you have touched lives, planted seeds of faith, and pointed countless hearts to Christ. As Scripture says in **1 Corinthians 15:58: "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."** Thank you for your commitment and Christlike example. Your service reflects the light of Jesus and inspires all who walk beside you. Well done, good and faithful servants! We give thanks to God for each of you.



# NEWS

## PITCH-IN DAYS

### WISE PENNY THRIFT SHOPPE

They say *many hands make light work* and this couldn't be truer for our recent Pitch-In Days. We were blessed to have wonderful turnouts each day, with students, parents, grandparents, and friends of West Lutheran coming together to lend a hand. Together, they sorted, tagged, and priced an impressive 148 boxes of clothing, along with books, toys, fishing tackle and collectibles. They also carefully sorted antiques and even listed items for eBay auctions. Throughout the days, there were plenty of snack breaks and moments for fellowship, making the work feel even more rewarding. Time flew by as we accomplished so much in just a few days. We are truly grateful for the opportunity to host the Wise Penny at our school, giving us a firsthand look at their operation in action. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers- who collectively contributed over 600 hours in just three days- the event was a tremendous success. If you're interested in volunteering at the Wise Penny Thrift Shoppe, please reach out to the store at [wisepennythrift@outlook.com](mailto:wisepennythrift@outlook.com).



## THE WEST GALA

### ALL THAT JAZZ

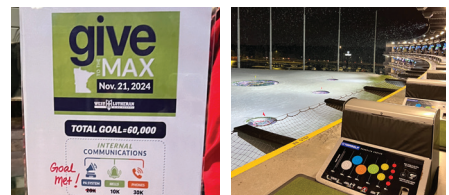
We're thrilled to celebrate the incredible success of the Annual West Lutheran Gala, held this past April! It was a memorable evening filled with shimmering sequins, playful fringe, and the soulful sounds of West's very own Jazz Band. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of our supporters and donors, we raised an outstanding \$180,000! These funds will go directly toward replacing the High School roof and providing vital tuition assistance for our students and families. Mark your calendars now - next year's Gala is set for April 18, 2026. The theme is "The Future is Bright", so come dressed in your boldest, brightest attire and get ready to glow the night away! Thank you again to everyone who made this year's Gala such a success. Your support helps ensure a strong future for West Lutheran High School!



## TOP GOLF FUN

### GIVE TO THE MAX

The 4th Annual Top Golf Event for 2024 took place in November and was an incredible evening filled with fun and fellowship. With over 90 attendees, it provided a fantastic opportunity to celebrate West Lutheran High School while connecting with fellow parents, alumni and staff through exciting interactive golf games. Mark your calendars- the next Top Golf event is scheduled for November 19, 2025. Keep an eye on your inbox for more details to come. We hope you can join us this year!



## THE WARRIOR DEPOT

### READY FOR 2025

The Warrior Depot is completed- that's a wrap! When you are onsite again, please check it out. The Warrior Depot was accomplished through the generosity of the 2024 Gala. It houses our two buses, as well as creates extra cold storage for the school and our sports teams. We had so much fun watching the depot take shape; from breaking ground, hanging the drywall, roofing, and pouring the driveway! We are grateful to all who helped make this dream a reality.





# ROBOTICS

## STATE ROBOTICS

The Aluminum Warriors advanced to the State Robotics Competition for the *third consecutive year*-an exciting milestone for the team. While success on the competition field is a blessing, the West Robotics program is ultimately focused on something even greater: helping students discover and develop their God-given talents. Every student is uniquely gifted, and robotics provides a platform to uncover and grow in areas like public speaking, mechanical engineering, programming, CAD design, strategic leadership, and a wide range of technical and creative skills. The 2025–2026 season kicks off in August, and we're excited to announce some new updates and opportunities on the horizon.



# PATHWAYS

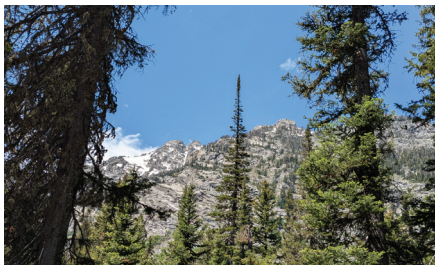
## SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

West Lutheran is proud to offer a groundbreaking suite of **science and engineering pathways** designed to empower students with exceptional opportunities. These innovative programs provide unmatched depth and variety - offering students and families a level of choice rarely seen, even at schools three times our size. With a focus on real-world application and advanced learning, our pathways inspire students to exceed their perceived limits and prepare them for success in high school, college, and beyond. If you'd like to learn how these pathways can support the growth of a teenager you know, please reach out to James Hahm at [james.hahm@westlutheran.net](mailto:james.hahm@westlutheran.net).

# MISSION TRIP

## TRUTH IN LOVE MINISTRIES

In early June, 22 students and 3 chaperones had the incredible opportunity to go on the summer mission trip and serve on the Truth in Love Ministry Team. This marks our fourth year partnering with this impactful ministry. Thanks to your prayers and generous support, we surpassed our fundraising goal and raised a total of \$23,685. We were richly blessed, and because of your donations, we were able to share the truth of God's Word and the saving grace of Jesus Christ with a Mormon community in need of the Gospel. Be sure to watch for a special recap in an upcoming newsletter, where students will share reflections on how God moved them through this unforgettable experience!



# TRAVEL ABROAD

## COSTA RICA ADVENTURE

From June 1–9, 2025, 14 students and 2 teachers from West Lutheran High School and St. Croix Lutheran Academy participated in an educational adventure to Costa Rica. The trip centered on immersive Spanish learning at Intercultura Spanish School on Sámara Beach, where students received 20 hours of intensive instruction. Cultural immersion was a key component, with students living with host families, participating in cooking classes, and learning salsa dancing - strengthening their language skills and deepening their understanding of Costa Rican culture. Beyond academics, students enjoyed thrilling adventures like surfing, snorkeling, ziplining, kayaking, and visiting volcanic hot springs. They also gained valuable life skills, from navigating airports to using foreign currency. The experience fostered personal growth, new friendships, and lasting memories. All returned with improved Spanish, greater global awareness, and gratitude for an unforgettable trip that blended learning, culture, and faith-filled fun.





# FINE ARTS

## EXPLORING TALENT BEYOND MEASURE.

**S** **Song. Melody. Notes. Voice. Percussion.** This school year has been an incredible one for our music department under the direction of Mrs. Kari Hahm. With four dynamic concerts showcasing the talents of our choirs and bands, we performed for enthusiastic audiences all year long. Our touring choir, Accents, had the joy of visiting association churches- lifting voices in worship and praise. Students also had opportunities to grow musically through Band Fest and Choral Fest, learning from expert clinicians and collaborating with peers from other schools. We're excited to announce that West Lutheran will host *Band Fest 2026*- a thrilling opportunity that's already generating excitement across our school community.

Through a generous donation and support for the Fine Arts program at West, we have a new 24' x 36' portable stage, 8 new fireproof curtains, and 14 new over the ear performance microphones. Thank you for all of the support for the West Lutheran Fine Arts program.

## ACCENTS, CONCERT CHOIR & BAND





## FALL PRODUCTION

*Deadline-A Murder Mystery Comedy*



## WINTER SHOW

*La Bella Cinderella*



## SPRING MUSICAL

*Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*



### **D** Drama. Theater. Stage. Lights. Action.

West Lutheran's Theater Department showed its versatility in the 2024–2025 school year with three unique and engaging productions. The fall drama, *Deadline – A Murder Mystery Comedy* by Don Zolidis, directed by David Denninger, brought classic mystery tropes to life: a remote mansion, quirky staff, unsuspecting guests, and a sudden murder that had to be solved. With bold comedic characters and laugh-out-loud moments, the show kept audiences entertained and guessing until the final curtain.

This year's West traveling show was *La Bella Cinderella* by Claudia Haas, a prolific local playwright from White Bear Lake. This whimsical, Italian-inspired twist on the classic Cinderella tale delighted audiences with humor, heart, and all the pasta jokes you could imagine! Our talented dual casts brought the show to audiences at seven of our area Lutheran grade schools.

Our spring musical, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* by Andrew Lloyd Webber, was a vibrant and memorable production. Twenty-two West Lutheran students were joined by 23 children from our member congregations, creating a dynamic and heartwarming cast. The show's popularity was evident - selling a record-breaking 1,200 tickets, making it the most attended theater production in West history.



# ATHLETICS

## WARRIOR SPIRIT.

**BASEBALL** The West Lutheran baseball had an exciting season, with over 30 student-athletes across two teams. The varsity team finished 5–11, with many close games, including a late-season upset over top-ranked St. Agnes. Sophomore Carter Anderson earned 2nd Team All-Conference honors, while Ethan Fehrenkamp received Honorable Mention and made the Section 5AA Tournament Team. The JV team ended with a 4–10 record.

**LACROSSE** The Providence Academy boys varsity lacrosse team (in co-op with West Lutheran) finished the 2025 season with a 7–8 record and placed third in the Independent Metro Athletic Conference (2–2). Highlights included a 10–9 comeback over Breck, an 11–7 win against Becker, and a 16–3 rout of Academy of Holy Angels. Junior Minkee Schempp (#24) led a defense that notched a .569 save percentage and 396 ground balls. Offensively, the Lions tallied 136 goals and 79 assists.

**TRAP** The 2025 WLHS Trap Team had a strong spring season with 20 shooters, including several new members. The co-ed team included 3 girls and 17 boys. Many athletes posted high scores throughout the season, with Conor Asleson shooting a perfect 25. Firearms safety remained a priority at every practice. Special thanks to our supportive parents and coaches Eric Reynolds, Lorelle Neu, and Greg Schempp.

**BOYS SOCCER** The Warriors made it into sections this year pushing an already amazing season into a great post season. The Senior class of 9 boys made a lasting impression on the West soccer program. Gabe Meist made the all-state team. Karsten Kromschroeder, Tommy Ellis, Clayton Ernst and Leo Roeber made all-conference.

**GIRLS SOCCER** JV and Varsity Girls Soccer had a great season! While co-oping with Maranatha Christian Academy, their record improved. The Varsity Girls had an overall of 5–6–6 and the JV girls had an overall of 7–0–1. Our senior Sophia Beck received All Conference and Defensive MVP. After a 10 year hiatus, this coming season West will have enough players to start their own Warrior Girls Soccer team.

**FOOTBALL** The Providence Lions co-op football team had a strong season at both levels. Varsity finished 6–2, just one game shy of the 4A state tournament. The C-team also went 6–2, highlighted by a comeback win over rival Orono, sealed with a goal-line stand. Standout performances included sophomores Hayden Kiecker (2 interceptions) and Carl Meitner.

**VOLLEYBALL** The Girls Varsity Volleyball team wrapped up an impressive season with a strong playoff run, advancing all the way to the section final. In a historic moment, they captured their *first-ever* set victory in a section championship match. A standout highlight from the season was senior captain McKenzie Burke becoming West Lutheran's all-time leader in kills, finishing her high school career with an incredible 876 kills. The team is excited for the next chapter and eager to build on this year's success.

**BOYS CROSS COUNTRY** Continuing their tradition of success, the West Lutheran boys *won* the MCAA conference meet for the 8th straight year, the section meet for the 3rd, and placed 5th at state. Seniors Jacob Pfothenauer and Isaiah Boerner were key contributors - Jacob took 2nd in the conference (16:01, second all-time) and at the 4A section meet. This team supports each other in running and in life, with their sights set on a state title next year.

**GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY** For the *first time* in program history, the West Lutheran girls made a team appearance at state, finishing 8th of 16 teams. They also won the MCAA conference for the second year in a row and claimed their first-ever section title. Senior Grace Hahm led the way, covering the 5K course in an impressive time of 19:13. The team has set a new standard and is excited for next season.

**TRACK AND FIELD** West Lutheran Track and Field had a historic 2025 season, *breaking 17 school records* - including the boys and girls 4x400 and 4x800, boys long jump, and discus. The boys team won their *first-ever* conference championship, and West Lutheran *set a new record* with 6 boys and 1 girl qualifying for state. At the state meet, the boys 4x800 placed 9th, and senior Gabe Miest took 8th in the 200m. All glory to God.

**HOCKEY** Five West Lutheran boys played this 2024–2025 hockey season under the Providence Academy Lions Boy's Hockey Co-op, which includes West Lutheran High School, Heritage Christian Academy, Legacy Christian Academy, and PACT Charter School. The boy's hockey program advanced to the semi-final round of the metro Section 2A of the MSHSL and finished the season 12–12–3.

**SOFTBALL** The Warrior Softball team finished their season 14–8 and with a 2nd place finish in MCAA conference. The lady Warriors were led by team captains Eleanor Rolf and Marissa Tusler to their 4th straight section final game. Kailey Oppitz led the post season at the plate with a .536 batting average and .950 slugging percentage. To add to the season accolades, MCAA All Conference was awarded to Eleanor Rolf, Marissa Tusler, Kailey Oppitz, and Juliet Roeber. With the 2nd place Section final finish, we were awarded 5 All-Section to Eleanor Rolf, Marissa Tusler, Kailey Oppitz, Emme Roeber, and Grace Rolf.

**BOYS BASKETBALL** The 2024–25 boys basketball team took on one of the toughest schedules in team history with games against much larger schools in their non-conference games. Although their record wasn't as good as hoped, the team kept improving throughout the season. This was shown with them winning 5 of their last 7 games and winning their first 2 games in the playoffs.

**GIRLS BASKETBALL** The Girls Varsity Basketball team finished 3rd in the MCAA South Division with a 20–8 overall record. The team made it to the quarterfinal round of section tournament play. During the season, team captain, Marissa Tusler reached the 1,000 point milestone and became the West Lutheran Girls basketball all time leading scorer. Freshmen, Veda Makepeace ended the season 9th in the state for made 3-pointers with 96 on the year.

**BOWLING** Varsity and JV bowling had an impressive season showing great skill and teamwork on the lanes. Both teams consistently brought energy and determination to every match. We're looking forward to building on that momentum next season.







# CLASS OF 2025

**CLASS VERSE: "THE LORD HIMSELF GOES BEFORE YOU AND WILL BE WITH YOU; HE WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU. DO NOT BE AFRAID; DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED." DEUTERONOMY 31:8**



**VALEDICTORIAN  
ISAIAH BOERNER**



**SALUTATORIAN  
NATHANAEL SPEIDEL**

**WHEREVER YOU GO,  
GOD GOES FIRST!**

We are incredibly proud of the Class of 2025! Each of you has chosen a unique path filled with promise and purpose. Know that our prayers go with you as you step into this next chapter.

Blessings, Your West Family

**WE'RE PROUD OF OUR**  
**2025**  
**Graduates**  
**WEST LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL**





# STEPS AHEAD

## THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT - ROOF REPLACEMENT.

For over two decades, the small gym and surrounding spaces have served as a hub for learning, growth, and community. However, time and weather have taken their toll, and it's time for a much-needed upgrade. A **new roof** will ensure a safe, dry, and energy-efficient environment for our students and staff for years to come. With your generous support, we were able to **raise the roof—literally!** We thank those who joined us in person or remotely at the **2025 All That Jazz Gala** and helped us reach our goal for this project. We are looking forward to the new roof being completed sometime this summer! Together, we made this project a reality!



# 2025 FUNDRAISING STATS

The 2024-2025 School Year blessed us with generosity in giving that **exceeded all expectations**. Through our West Supporters, God richly blessed us in many ways.

**INDIVIDUAL/CORPORATE RAISED - 178,773**

**GIVE TO THE MAX 2024 RAISED - 64,897**

**WISE PENNY THRIFT SHOPPE RAISED - 123,325**

**2025 ALL THAT JAZZ GALA RAISED - 180,188**

**ASSOCIATION CONGREGATIONS RAISED - 140,497**

We also rejoice in the countless hours that were donated to work with students, maintain our facility, carry out our programs and plan for the future. What **amazing expressions of love!** What joy and encouragement we find in them! It is through this giving that West LHS fulfills our endeavor to Learn, Believe, Grow, Achieve for our high school youth. We look forward to many more years of serving in this way, and continue with God's path for us to **"Share the Good News."**

*Thank You!*



# The West Lutheran Legacy

*continues with you!*

## DONATIONS will go to help the following

OPERATIONAL  
NEEDS

BUILDING  
IMPROVEMENTS

MARKETING &  
RECRUITMENT

MINISTRY  
SUSTAINABILITY

SCHOLARSHIPS &  
TUITION ASSISTANCE

MISSION  
ADVANCEMENT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Association Church Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Alumni or related to? Graduating Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Me News and Events about WLHS \_\_\_\_\_

Please Make **Checks** payable to: **WEST LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL**

Enclosed is my gift of:

\$25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

OR Bill My Credit Card for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Discover ☐ Amex

Acct # \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_\_

**EASILY DONATE  
ONLINE!**

Scan the **QR CODE**  
or visit  
**wlhs.net/giving**







3350 Harbor Lane North  
Plymouth MN 55447

# UPCOMING DATES

8/6 - NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION NIGHT

8/18 - FRESHMAN FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

8/19 - GRADES 10-12 START DAY

9/22-9/26 - WALKING WITH THE WARRIORS WEEK

9/26 - GRANDPARENTS DAY

9/28-10/4 - HOMECOMING WEEK

10/12 - FALL CONCERT

SCHOOL EVENTS CALENDAR  
@ WLHS.NET

