

The Red Rider REVIEW



The **New** Faces of Weir

Get to know the latest staff members

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Upcoming Events

October

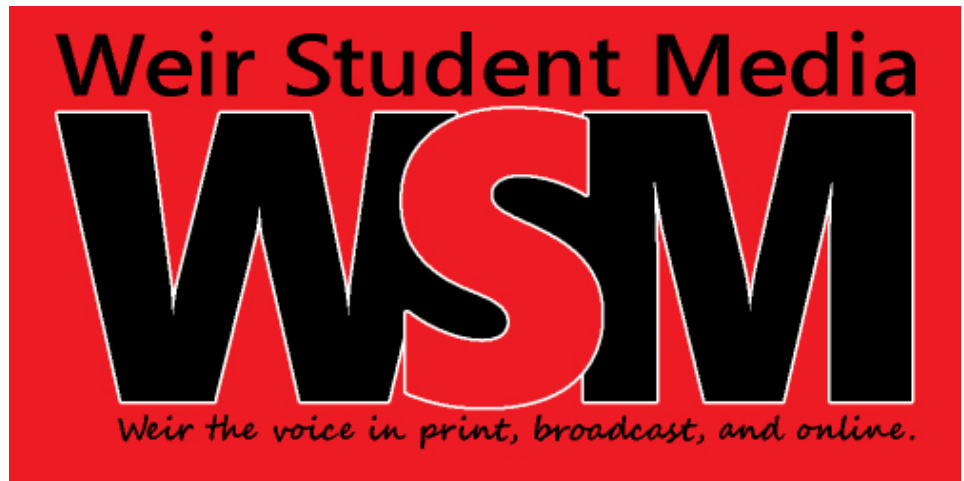
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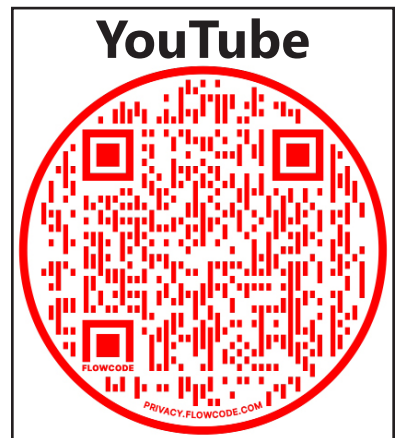
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Mission

Weir Student Media is a student-led journalism staff responsible for creating Weir High School's media publications. Through print, broadcast, and web, WSM students apply journalism skills to produce high-quality content that increases understanding and awareness of relevant news and current issues of importance and interest by covering the school's diverse perspectives with accuracy, fairness, and balance. Our publications provide an open public forum for and by the students of Weir High School. Perspectives expressed in the publications do not represent those of Weir High School or Hancock County Schools faculty, staff, or administration.



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Weir's Making Changes

Administrators adjust attendance policies



By Jordyn Ferguson

Over the summer administrators took action to make students happier. Administrators took into account the students input about how we felt about the rules. I talked to several students

about the matter and they all had strong feelings about the situation.

Senior Addison Mikula states, "I think the rules have improved a lot. Students are happier."

The major rule that was changed was the tardies and the absences. Students are now allowed to have five unexcused absences and tardies each semester. After the first semester, your tardies and absences will now reset. For example, if a student were to have seven absences at the end of the first semester, when they start the new semester, they will have zero. However, the rule for final still stands in stone. If students miss two or more days due to excused absences, they are still required to take finals. Over the summer, administrators worked

very hard to make sure that the rules were consistent and fair. At this time administrators are not looking at changing anymore rules

Another rule that was changed was the covid requirements. Students are now required to take finals if they miss two or more days due to Covid. However, this decision was made by the health department and not by the administrators of the school.

Overall, our administrators are trying to make this school year a fun and fair year.

Weir High Mourns Death of Chewy the Frog

By Addi Mikula

A couple years ago, Jason Bennett adopted four Albino African Dwarf Claw frogs, Chewy, Jimathy, Hopper, and Kermit. These unique class pets make a great addition to his class, both for him and the students.

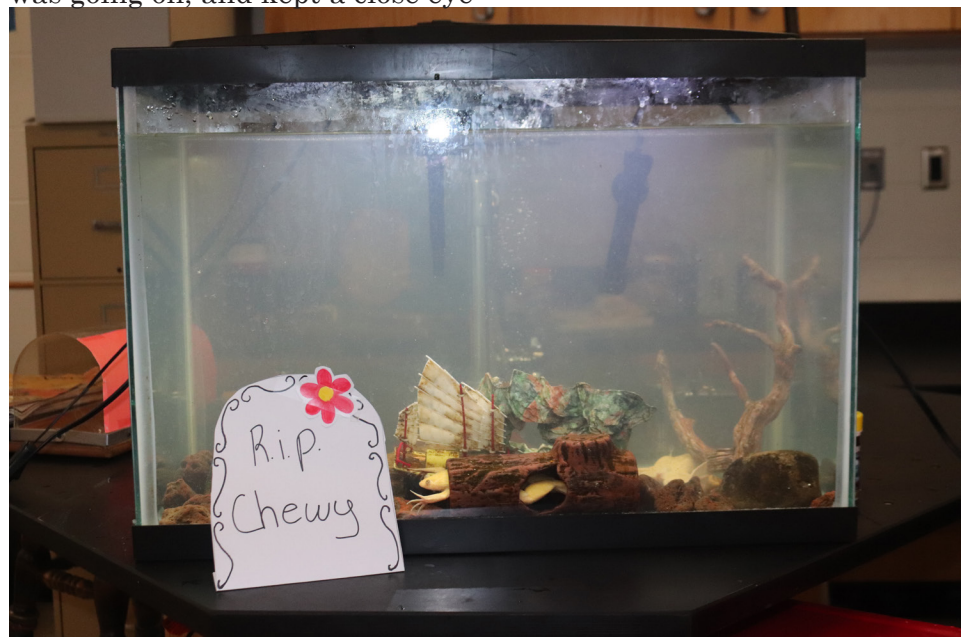
Although Hopper is the adventurous one, having leapt out of the tank and across the classroom multiple times, Chewy had an accident this summer. While school was out and Bennett had the frogs at home, his kids noticed that Chewy had swallowed a glass pebble from the tank. Hopper must've noticed too, as he kept squeezing her to try to help her get it back up. Unfortunately, he was unsuccessful, and Chewy passed away.

Not long after, Jimathy made the same mistake and ate one of the pebbles. Hopper's

amazing instincts kicked in again, and he had a "death grip", according to Bennett, on her the entire day, from five in the morning to seven-thirty at night. Luckily, this time, Bennett realized what was going on, and kept a close eye

on her. She passed the pebble and recovered from the incident.

Chewy will be missed by Bennett and his students, and everyone should thank Hopper for being a hero!



Parking Price Problems

They want us to pay how much?

By Izzy Bernola

For the first time ever, Weir allowed its seniors to paint their parking spots as a fun senior activity and a fundraiser for the Class of 2025.

The original fee was \$75. A third of the amount was to go to the Class of 2025, a third to the Weir High Beautification project, and the final third to paint removal at the end of the year. On top of the \$75, students also had to buy their own paint products and pay \$25 for their parking pass.

Due to many complaints about the cost, sponsor Kristen Palavis said she talked to head principal Kristin Bissett, and administrators and the Class of 2025 decided to change the price \$50 because the class sponsors were hoping to get more seniors to participate in the event.

About the lack of students participating, Palavis said, "It doesn't hurt our feelings. We just wanted something fun for seniors."

Many students thought that the pricing of the event was overpriced. It is hard for a lot of families to put money aside for special events like these, especially since the pandemic. Many jobs have gone downhill since then and have not fully recovered since.

The rate of child poverty is also increasing, according to a study by Columbia University. The rate increased by 12.1 percent at the end of 2021 to 17 percent in the beginning of 2022.

In a survey of seniors, Shaylah Arvin said, "It is completely and utterly overpriced. There are a bunch of people who would participate in it if we had more time and better pricing. As high school students we should not be charged that much, especially considering we only have 4 hours to do it and we must buy our own paint, which is also a very expensive thing."

Many other students agreed with her in the survey. When asked, most students said they would change the price entirely. On average, the price they would change it to would be around or near \$35.

Michael Bolinger explained that

he would change the price to \$25 because "that would be reasonable since you have to buy your own supplies."

The costs of the supplies are not cheap, so lowering the price to help the students to be able to buy what they need would be a very helpful, supportive effort.

Bailey Lorello stated she would change the price to "probably somewhere around \$30 or \$40 since we already gave money towards our parking spots."

"It was fun, and I was extremely excited to do it."
- Dominic Guiddy

Emma Fierro added, "I would change the price to be \$10 for each so \$30 total. That is way more affordable. It should not be a fundraiser for the younger grade. It should not be a fundraiser at all. It should just be part of being a senior."

A good number of the students have had something to say about this. Although the class of 2025 organized this whole event, most of the seniors believe the money should go to their class or to no one at all.

Alongside the price, there were many rules that went along with this event. Seniors were only allowed to paint their spot if they park in a certain section of the lot. The paint must have been water based exterior latex paint. Another rule is there is one set day for painting spots, and the time limit was 4:00 to 8:00. The administration must have approved the design as well.

Numerous students were worried that four hours in one day was not enough time for them to paint their entire parking space.

"I feel one day isn't enough time because for students who want to take their time or even need to paint over things need time for the paint to dry before beginning the next steps," claimed Breonna Parsons.

On the report of RemoveandReplace, their website states, "Exterior latex paint, like most paints, usually takes between four and eight hours to fully dry. It is a good idea



to allow for at least twelve hours of drying time before the rain starts." Meaning there may not be nearly enough time for anyone to get anything done due to paint drying issues.

The seniors were asked to give their own opinions on the parking situation. Callie Wood gave the idea, "If they're tearing down the Junior lot then we should have just painted up there for less money since they wouldn't have to pay for removal." With administrators' approval, this could have been the perfect idea, but it just depends on when they plan on tearing down the junior lot.

"I think it is a really great idea to allow the seniors to paint their parking spots and wish it would have been an option for seniors in previous years. I do believe some seniors got cheated out of participating in this event. It seems way too expensive, especially for the families that are less fortunate," declares John Wansack. He points out the unfairness towards families who are not able to afford to paint their spots and how it may affect them in a negative way by making them miss out on an important senior event.

In the end, approximately ten students participated. They were able to complete their spots in the time allotted.

Share your thoughts on how YOU feel about painting the parking spots by scanning the QR code below.



Foreign Exchange Experience: Noemi Salomone

By Paisley Tice

Weir High welcomes new foreign exchange students each year. This year, one of our exchange students is Noemi Salomone.

Noemi Salomone is from Milan, Italy. She has traveled to the United States with her parents her whole life. The first American city she fell in love with was Miami, because she vacationed there every year as a child.

She said, “I fell in love with that city but mostly with the American lifestyle. That’s why I wanted to focus on my English trying to improve more and more, because my vision of the future was to live here in America.”

She first decided to become



Salomone (M) in Miami with her sister and father

an exchange student when she saw a video of a girl online talking about her experience being a foreign exchange student in Texas.

“From that moment I understood that being an exchange student would be a goal for my future,” Salomone stated.

Salomone is excited for American high school because she wants to have new experiences and meet new people. She says that school is like it seems in the movies. She is also looking forward to joining the swim team in the winter.

She says, “I’ve been really lucky because I have the best host family I could ever wish for.” Although she misses her family, she feels very fortunate to have a host

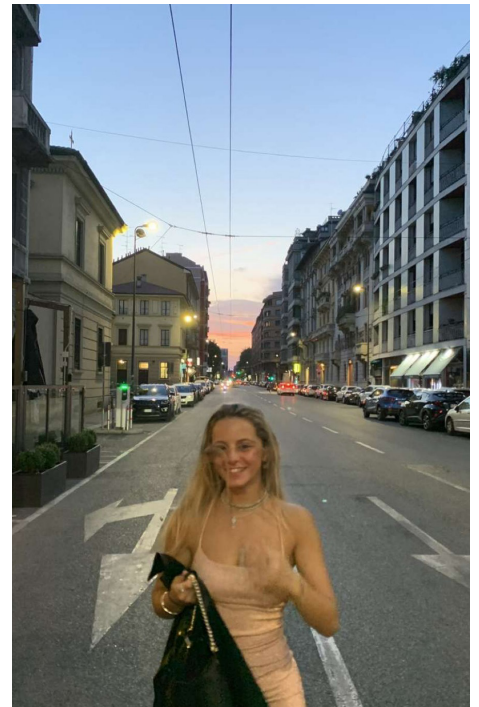
family that she feels comfortable with.

The hardest part of moving here is leaving her family behind. She says that it’s difficult to be a stranger to everyone and feel like you’re starting your life over.

Salomone is excited to see what the rest of the school year holds, and she is enjoying her experience so far.



The entrance to Salomone's home



Salomone on a street in Milan



One of the most luxurious buildings in Milan

New Faces of Weir:

By Elijah Anderson

This year, Weir has had an influx of new highly qualified staff members.

PRO Stevie Banannio



About Me:

PRO Stevie Banannio has been a police officer for 14 years, and this is her first year working in a high school. A Fun Fact about her is that she is only time she is serious is when she has to be, other than that she is a total goofball. A quote that Stevie goes by is "It is what it is, and everything is always as its meant to be in every moment."

Amy Durkin



About me:

Amy Durkin has been a teacher for 29 years. She teaches, Biology, Earth Science, and ELA 9-12. A Fun Fact about her is she likes all different kinds of music. A quote she goes by is "Everything happens for a reason. God always has a plan."

Amber Chappell



About Me:

Amber Chappell has been a RN for seven and a half years, But this is her first year as a school nurse. A Fun Fact about her is that she loves crafting and creating T-shirts, she even has a craft room in her home. A quote that Amber goes by is "You live and you learn."

Tracy Elo



About Me:

Tracy Elo has been a Paralegal/Secretary for the past 14 years, but this is her first year in the school system. A Fun Fact about her is she is a HUGE fan of 80's power ballads and 80's big hair! A quote that Tracy goes by is "It is what it is'."

Get to know the latest staff members

As it is the beginning of the year, some people may not have met them yet. So, who are they?

Steven Kettler



About Me:

Steven Kettler has been a teacher for 4 years, but this is his first year at Weir. He teaches Civics and AP Government. A Fun Fact about him is that he used to work in a minor league baseball before i started teaching. A quote he goes by is "Believe you can adn you're halfway there," from Teddy Roosevelt.

Danielle Porter



About Me:

Danielle Porter is new to teaching here at Weir High School. She teaches in the math department in Geometry and Financial Algebra. A Fun Fact about her is she has a soon to be five year old daughter. A quote that she goes by is "Whats meant to be, will be!"

Gina Reitter



About Me:

Gina Reitter has been teaching for 16 years. She teaches in Biology and Earth Science. A Fun Fact about her is that she played college basketball and is in the Hall of Fame. A quote she goes by is "Be the change; repititon breeds success; stay unapologetically committed to your goals."

Troy Whittaker



About Me:

Troy Whittaker is new to teching here at Weir High School. He teaches in the math department in applied statistics and algerba 1. A Fun Fact about him is that he likes to play volleyaball and golf in his free time. Troy does not go by a specific quote. He said, "No, i just try to take things one day at a time and see where things take me."

Kendahl Stanley



About Me:

Kendahl Stanley is new to teaching here at Weir High School. She teaches Social Studies. A Fun Fact about her is that she likes sloths. A quote she goes by is "Everything happens for a reason."



The kings court and football team congratulating the king, Cam Jones.

A Night on the Town

By Addi Mikula

To start off this year’s homecoming events, a pep rally finally occurred last Friday, September 30th, for the first time since 2019. The queen and king’s courts, dance team, and cheer team performed for the crowd. The kings’ court participated in multiple challenges, such as the water bottle game, the oreo game, the golf ball game, and finally, the tissue game, to decide the King. Malachi Strome announced Cam Jones as the winner. Jones said, “It felt great to win. It was the beginning of a good weekend, won king, won hoco game, and had fun at homecoming.”

After school on Friday, the court members, the dance and cheer teams, and the freshman through senior classes were in the parade. The freshman class won with the “Miami” float, covered in colorful, beach-themed decorations and accessories.

The football team played Richard Wright, and won, 49-2. At half time, the queens’ court received their roses. Rylie Baker was crowned Queen by last year’s winner, Caroline Pulice, and FBLA president, Rachel Ogbanna. Elli Cowden, who won princess, said, “When I opened my rose, I thought it was white and I didn’t even realize I won princess until my dad said my rose was pink, so I was

definitely confused, and then excited. As soon as I realized Baker won Queen, I was so happy for her and gave her a huge hug.” Congrats to both of them, and King Cam!

This year’s Homecoming Dance took place on October 1st. The theme was “A Night on the Town”, chosen by FBLA.

Although this was the club’s first year running Homecoming, they successfully worked together to plan, decorate, and every little detail in between. Ogbanna said, “It was stressful, and I didn’t know a lot of things that went into it, but I learned a lot.”. Thank you to all the FBLA members, and Mrs Dotson, for making this year’s dance one to remember!

Junior, Kevin Freeman, said, “It was pretty fun, everybody I know that went there had a good time.”

Junior, Megan Austin, said that her favorite part of the dance was the cupid shuffle.

Last year, students had some complaints about homecoming, as they had to wear masks, the bleachers were being redone, and the lights were on, but those problems seem to have been solved, and a lot of them had a great time!



Izzy Bernola and Anthony Earley.



Junior, McKenzie Carter, cheering at the pep rally.



Members of the queen's court congratulating the queen, Rylie Baker.



The freshmen homecoming parade float.



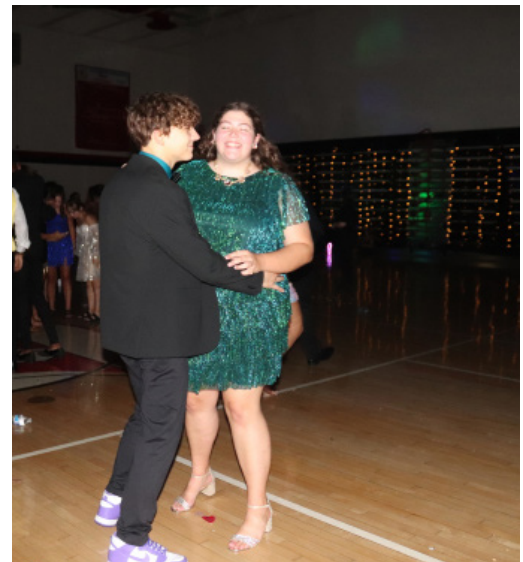
Freshman, Jaylynn Jimboy, dancing at the pep rally.



Josh Duffy and Niko Dimitriou.



Students dancing to the cupid shuffle.



Aleta Irvin dancing with her date.



The Class of 2026 Makes Their Debut: The First Month of the Freshman Experience

By Tanner Finsley

The 2022-23 school year has officially begun, bringing forth a new freshman class in the form of the class of '26 and embarking on their monumental transition from Weir Middle to Weir High.

Naturally, a change of this magnitude will cause a variety of differing thoughts. And when asking the freshmen what the biggest difference between Middle School and High School was, the answers did vary.

“The class times and the way you have more freedom.” - Megan Brinkley

While another freshman, Izzabeth Lawton, stated that the biggest difference in their mind was the time periods.

Throughout the survey, however, there was one constant stated amongst the group with that being

some variation of saying that High School has been less stressful than Middle School so far.

One possible factor adding to the overall lax nature of the first month could be the new experiences being granted to the freshman, with each response giving different answers for their favorite things about High School.

“My favorite thing about high school is that I can play the sports I want.” – Kalen Kuhns

“Getting to know other people and making new friends.” – Makenzee Sadler

Another possible factor could be the teacher’s enthusiasm to host the new freshman class with the Class of 2026 Co-sponsor, Emily Hores, stating,

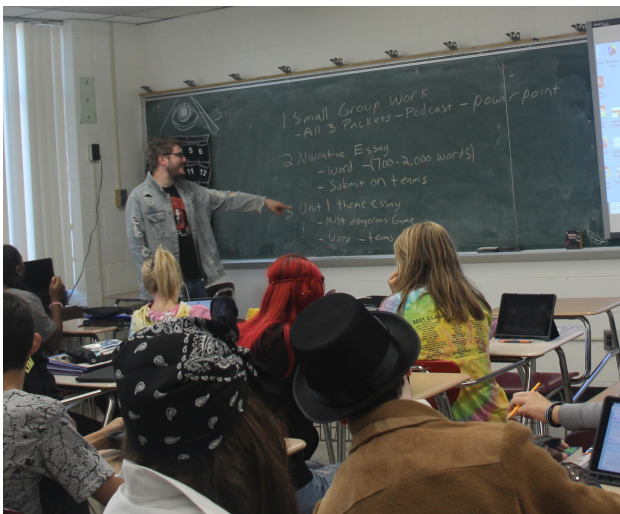
“I chose to be the class of 2026 sponsor because my life skills classes are mostly made of freshman students. I make it a goal of mine to work with

them to make their transition from middle to high school a smooth one. It will be nice to be part of their progression throughout their high school career.”

She isn’t the only person to welcome the freshman class with open arms, however, as freshman english teacher, Jamie Truax, had this to say when asked for his thoughts on getting a new freshman class every year.

“It is always exciting to get to (be) among the first to get to know each new freshman class. Each class is a different experience as I am growing as a teacher and trying to get the most out of each group. Every class is different and unique which provides a challenge for me.”

Weir High is happy to have the class of 2026, and hopes they have a great four years!



Truax assigns his freshman students a narrative essay



Hores teaching her third block class

Weir High Dance Team: The new team at school

By Angela Paull

Weir added a dance team to its extracurricular this year, and they hope to make their mark on campus.

The team started this fall and their season is all year long. They dance at football games, will appear at some basketball games, and might even get to compete.

In an interview their coach and digital computer teacher Kristen Palavis said that the team puts in so much hard work and dedication to learn new routines, even when others are in different activities and exhausted, and still give it their all. It has been such a long process to get where they are but it was worth it.

Palavis, said, "Even though it has been a lot of work for the students between raising funds for uniforms and learning new choreography, they do enjoy sharing their art at the school."

Senior Kiara Palavis had a goal to start a dance team when she was a freshman, but due to Covid it got pushed back. In the spring of 2022, Kiara decided to submit a request to administration for a dance team. So Kiara and her mom wrote a letter to the board of education with Principal Kristin Bissett's approval to send it. The Board of education approved it back in May of 2022.

A lot of the seniors wanted to start a dance team, including Elijah Anderson, who stated, "I really enjoy dancing and



Dance team L to R-Sophia Shafer, Mackenzie McDonald, Melina Upright, Ellie Totten, Elijah Anderson, Summer Ellis, Hannah Moore, Gabriella Spickard, Madison McDonald, Kiara Palavis, Melia Palavis, Jaylynn Jimboy, Lylia Soplinski, Lily Rocknich; Not pictured Arissa Waugh

wanted something new for the school."

To get started, they hired a choreographer, Christie-Siorota Jordan, for creating one of the routines. Assistant Liza Lee and Palavis created the other one.

Kristen Palavis said, "We both have been teaching dance for several years so it has not been difficult to choreograph for the team."

The team currently performs two routines, one during pre-game and another at halftime. Primarily, they dance jazz style

with some pom, hip hop, and contemporary moves. Their shows incorporate music from Missy Elliott, Spice Girls, Janet Jackson, and Pitbull among other musicians.

Recently, they have also performed with the marching band. They will do two numberse with them on Senior Night Friday, October 14.

To stay up to date, the Team can be found on Instagram @whs_dance_team.

The Loss of a Band Director: What is going on with the band now?

By Nick Parker

The Weir High Band has endured a lot this year.

After recovering from another COVID-19 year, the former band director, Joshua Garrett, left to be closer to his family, due to his father just overcoming cancer. Garrett informed the band of his departure in August during the Weir High Band's camp. He stayed until the band camp was fully over, helping them learn the halftime show music.

Then, the band was left with no director. But what now? Kelly Lawton, assistant principal, was a band and choral teacher for 13 years before she became an administrator. Lawton volunteered to instruct and help the band as much as possible, when she was not doing administrative duties.

Lawton stated, "I was asked to direct the band in order to continue the program and for the band to perform during marching season, while still doing my administrative duties."

Lawton couldn't always be there during the band class, so History Teacher Jason Angle chose to step up and help supervise and help where he can during the

second block class.

Angle stated, "I try to keep them on task and use coaching philosophy and strategies. I am limited with what I am able to do, but fortunately for them, Ms. Lawton is here."

Junior Savannah Moore, the Weir High Band field commander, is working her best as well to help guide the band in the right direction.

Moore said, "I'm trying my hardest to make sure the band is doing everything they need to do to succeed without the band director, and most of the members in band are working hard everyday to improve their playing skills and to be able to perform to the best of their abilities."

The Weir Band Boosters helped with many things as well. Everything from fundraising and doing the concession stand to helping to feed the band before games and after rehearsals.

Band Booster President Jessica Gray stated, "I coordinate with the school, students and parents for the games,

events, and all band related activities. I love and enjoy supporting the band and especially the students any way I can."

The band will still be performing at all of the home games, some of the away games, and at the homecoming parade. The band's halftime show this year is Lady Gaga.

Despite everything, the band has never given up and continues to prosper throughout this difficult time.

At the Hancock County schools board meeting on September 26, the assignment of Samantha Lash as the Weir High School band director was approved. Lash began instruction on October 3.



Meet The New Boys' Soccer Head Coach LeFever Takes the Helm



Coach Chris LeFever poses for picture taken by Newbrough Photo

By Alexander Orris

Coming off a strong season last year with a record of 16-2-2. The boys' soccer team has had quite a mix up on who would be leading them as coach going into their 2022-23 season.

Former coach, Matt Kopp, had been with the boy's soccer team since 2018 but officially resigned following the birth of his daughter at the end of last years season.

Any change in coaching is always a big shoe to fill, Coach Chris LeFever would be the one to fill that shoe, along with assistant coaches Chuck Tenaglio and George Martich.

In an interview Coach LeFever explains why he chose to take up such an important role, as well as what he plans for the season.

He said, "I was an assistant coach last year, and Matt (former coach) asked me to apply for head coach position, because he was resigning. I also wanted to be sure the boys (players) would be coached as they deserve and continue to strive for OVAC championship and WVS-SAC championships, which has been the Weir soccer tradition for over 20 years."

With a new head coach comes many changes for the soccer team, so what difference should they be expecting from the team with someone new in charge?

LeFever said, "Not that it's different, but I push a team concept, everyone plays offense and everyone plays defense, we move as a unit, communicate,

and support our teammates on the field. We win as a team and lose as a team."

When asked what he does other than soccer, he said,

"I have a construction and plumbing business which takes up most of my time, and I enjoy hunting, fishing, and vacation(s) with my family."

As for the goals for the season, LeFever hopes to win the OVAC 4A championship and WVS-SAC A/AA championship.

The Weir High School Boys Soccer team as of 10/3/22 have a record of 6-4-5. Their next game will be on 10/4/22.

