

# Veins of water

Family. It is a bond that is created the moment one is born. Swimming is something that strengthens that bond for one Xavier family.

Xavier junior Spencer Kramer and his brother Carter (X18) both have swam competitively for Kennedy High School. Spencer is finishing up his junior season. Both boys have done the 50 yard freestyle and were key swimmers in relays. Spencer's motivation from Carter and his commitment to the sport recently qualified him for the state swim meet, which Carter also achieved in high school.

"I watched him swim fast and my parents pushed me to go out because they thought I could be just as good," Spencer said. "So I went out reluctantly and ended up enjoying it."

Carter has gotten to see his brother have his moment to shine.

"Spencer has evolved to be more confident in himself and his abilities," Carter said. "We both have learned the life lesson of hard work and being able to stick with something to see it through, even if we did not always enjoy going to practice everyday."

Spencer and Carter's mother, Sherry Kramer, talked about how the two of them have grown not just as swimmers and athletes, but as people.

"Swimming is not always a glamorous sport," Sherry said. "Both boys have talked about the boredom of spending hours looking at a black line. High school swimming is also more team oriented than club swimming. This has taught them the value of doing your part for a team and the importance of creating a fun environment."

She has seen both of them improve their bond through swimming and their similar experiences.

"Since Carter started swimming first and most of our weekends were dedicated to being around the pool, it was natural for Spencer to show interest and participate," Sherry said. "They would often come home from practice, sharing stories about teammates or dreaded practice sets. After Carter graduated and Spencer started swimming at Kennedy, several of Carter's close teammates were excited to have Spencer on the team. This created an instant mentorship for Spencer. They still share stories from meets or practices."

Spencer recently competed in the state swim meet on Saturday, February 13 at the Linn-Mar Aquatic Center. Spencer set personal records in the medley and 200 free relay.

**Jack Delaney**  
Sports Writer

# Rally for Ali

Life is all about perspective.

Xavier girls' basketball player Ali Schuchmann has found a way to look on the bright side of things despite what she has gone through. The sophomore was diagnosed with stage III Primary mediastinal B-Cell lymphoma on April 29, 2020. She started her first round of treatments on May 1 and was officially in remission on September 15. During this time, Ali leaned on her family, friends, teammates and basketball to get through.

"My friends and family have been my biggest supporters and have helped me stay positive, even when times were tough. They were always there for me to have a shoulder to cry on or to just have a laugh with," Ali said.

The girls' basketball team found ways to support Ali despite the recent outbreak of COVID-19 during the spring when she was at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital for treatment.

"Upon Ali's arrival home after her first hospital stay, which was 36 days, a surprise parade of cars with teammates, coaches and friends showed her support. The basketball parents also sent many messages of support to me. A simple text saying they were thinking of us meant so incredibly much," Rita Schuchmann, Ali's mom, said. "Coach Stephanie Potts [assistant coach for the Xavier girls' basketball team] ordered bracelets with 'Rally for Ali' to be handed out



Dave, Rita and Ali Schuchmann being recognized at the girls' basketball game on Tuesday, February 9, 2021. **Photo Submitted.**

and the Arnold family [a Xavier girls' basketball family] helped design, order and deliver t-shirts with 'Big Al - Boxing out Cancer.'

Ali has grown so much throughout her diagnosis and rehab. "The crazy thing is Ali never had a pity-party. It is hard to admit, but Ali's attitude kept me in check when I wavered from the positive side. During her treatment, Ali often acknowledged how blessed she was that her body tolerated and responded so well to the chemotherapy," Rita said. "I am so inspired by how Ali looks at personal situations now. Even if a situation she is in is not ideal and she wants to be upset about it, she is fairly quick to notice others may have it worse off than her, which puts her situation into perspective."

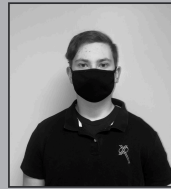
A big key to Ali's positivity was her ability to continue to play basketball throughout her treatments.

"Basketball has always been a

# Meet the '24 Boys Bowlers!

A. What is your favorite food?

B. What is your favorite thing about the team?



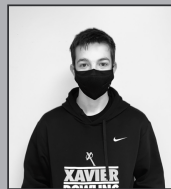
**Bryant Norris '24**

A. Pizza  
B. "It's really fun and we always encourage each other to do better."



**Carter Walton '24**

A. Anything made from a cow, pig, chicken and some fish  
B. "My favorite thing is that we have four people per lane."



**Marcus Camacho '24**

A. Mac and cheese  
B. "I like that we all can joke around and everyone is friendly."



**Max Bennett '24**

A. Steak  
B. "I like how tight knit the team is."

Design by Mary Kate Moeder. Photos by Ethan Williams.

huge outlet for me. This summer my doctors told me that I needed to stay active in between rounds of chemo. I thought what better of a way to stay active than to play basketball," Ali said. "So after a little convincing, my doctors agreed to let me play AAU basketball in between treatment. This was a great distraction from always being so focused on my health."

Ali's ability to continue to play basketball for Xavier this season has brought her and her parents joy.

"Ali knew the game was moving fast and worked outside of practice on shooting and agility. She embraced the opportunity to play on the JV2 team where she was able to get back into her rhythm. Coach [Erica] Kearns provided encouragement, which was exactly what Ali needed," Dave Schuchmann, Ali's dad, said. "We saw Ali's performance improve each JV2 game, which carried over to the JV1 games. Ali's confidence has increased and she now feels closer to her 'basketball normal' and is ready to contribute to the varsity team when called upon. The cancer is gone, but it left its fingerprints on Ali's game and confidence."

Emma Arnold, a sophomore on the Xavier girls' basketball team, has been playing with Ali on Team Iowa since they were in sixth grade. They immediately connected through their sense of humor and have been friends ever since. Basketball has been something they have both shared together for a long time.

"Ali is a true warrior and one of the strongest people I know. Nothing can get in the way of Big Al, through all of her treatments she has remained positive," Arnold said. "She continued to come to open gyms, train at CR Performance and attend Team Iowa practices and tournaments. I'm amazed by her dedication and strength to not only recover from cancer but grow as a student-athlete."

Ali was recognized at the Xavier girls' basketball game on Tuesday, February 9 against Kennedy High School. The players wore their 'Big Al - Boxing out Cancer' shirts for warm ups and the fans wore them in the stands.

Ali is looking to continue to spread positivity throughout the 11th floor at the University of Iowa Children's Hospital in the near future with her new puppy, Bentley. She has taken him to puppy obedience classes and plans to get Bentley certified as a pet therapy dog once he is old enough. She wants to be able to give back to the staff members that supported her throughout her journey and any patients who might be going through something similar.

Watch Ali continue to grow with the Xavier girls' basketball team in their postseason run against the winner of Walther Catholic vs. West Delaware on Saturday, February 20 at 7:00 p.m. at Xavier High School.

**Kya Loffswold**  
Sports Editor