

Durant siblings have shining relationship

By Shannon Head

Junior Elliott Fortin has played a huge role as a big brother to his sister Eden, a fourth grader.

Eden was born with Down syndrome, a condition in which she carries an extra chromosome. It can cause developmental delays, distinct facial appearances, and intellectual disabilities.

"Me and my sister's relationship is unique in my eyes," said Elliott. Eden and Elliott are full siblings while six other sisters are half siblings to them.

When Eden was born and Elliott found out she had Down syndrome, he wasn't phased. He knew he'd see and treat Eden the same as the rest of his sisters.

He also helps her with basic daily tasks that any big brother would since she is only nine years old.

"She still can't make her own lunch and dinner, so I help her with that," Elliott said.

He has always been willing to help her in any way he can. Throughout the years, he has enjoyed being there for her and being around her.

Some of Elliott's favorite memories with Eden have been playing catch with

her or playing in their swimming pool.

"It's impacted my life a lot. I try to treat everyone as equal as I can because it can be very hard for kids with disabilities," said Elliott.

Elliott and Eden's mom, Ms. Annie Barclay, said that Elliott has always been "incredibly helpful" since Eden was born.

"Eden had a lot of doctor's appointments when she was little," said Ms. Barclay. "Elliott would come and help hold my bags or do things to cheer Eden up. Even today, he helps get her ready in the morning and drives her to school."

Throughout the years, Eden has become more and more attached to her brother.

"Eden is Elliott's number one cheerleader," said Ms. Barclay.

"She loves to watch him play football and is always the loudest in the stands cheering for him."

Eden always wants to be doing what Elliott is doing. She always wants to be where he is.

"Elliott has taught Eden how to catch a football, and they are always tossing the football around to each other," said Ms. Barclay.

Since Elliott is a junior this year,

Seniors look to life after DHS

By Kiley Stineman

With graduation fast approaching, seniors are in the crunch time of college preparations.

The senior class of 58 students is scrambling to decide where to go and what to do with only a few months left before their time is up.

In addition to class work, some seniors are now filling out college applications and scholarships.

Although most seniors know where they're going when the year winds down, a few are still unsure of their future. Ella Mundt, who is planning to go to Iowa State University in the fall, has had a head start on applications and preparations.

"College preparations have been pretty easy, but scholarships have definitely been the most stressful thing so far," she said.

"Applying for my dorm room and roommates has been the easiest."

Getting ready for college has also given the seniors a wake-up call that their reign over the high school is almost over.

"Preparing for the payments has re-

ally made it real to me that I'm almost done with high school," said Mundt.

Kyle DeWulf is one of the few seniors who isn't very sure what his future school will be.

"Right now it's between either Wartburg, UNI, or the University of Iowa. I'm just not sure if I want the small-school environment for another four years or step out of my comfort zone at a bigger school," he said.

Ethan Woodhouse has already decided that the University of Northern Iowa is the one for him.

"I have been sure that I wanted to go to the University of Northern Iowa since first quarter started," he said. "It was just stressful waiting for my application to come back."

Other than applying for college, the process has been pretty easy for him.

"I haven't been as on top of scholarships as I should be, but aside from that, I have already filled out my housing contract and registered for orientation," he said.

"Even though my time in high school is coming to an end, I'm not too cut up about leaving. I've felt like an adult for a while now, and this is just another thing for me."

Sophomore plans to take over family business

By Karissa Hoon

Sophomore Olivia Alpen has set her sights on running a Durant car dealership that's been in her family for decades.

Her grandfather Ron Alpen bought the dealership in 1972. In 1986, her father Dan started working there and took part ownership with his brother, Steve. About 20 years later, they both officially took over the dealership in 2005.

Most of her interest in becoming part of the dealership comes from the fact



Photo by Kylie Meyermann

Junior Elliott Fortin and his sister Eden share a fun moment during the school day.

his time at Durant will be coming to an end soon. He believes it will be very difficult for him to leave for college knowing his little sister is back at home.

Over the years, he has become more and more protective of Eden as she grows up.

"My worst fear is not being there the whole time to protect her from getting

bullied, which I hope never happens," said Elliott.

They are both incredibly happy to have grown up with each other

"Elliott has never treated her differently because she has Down syndrome," said Ms. Barclay.

"He doesn't see that. He just sees his little sister."

Variety show starts Friday

By Madison Weber

The Durant Variety Show will be held in the auditorium on March 4-6 with 41 Durant students participating.

Three high school students will serve as emcees for the senior choir shows. These students are Elizabeth Daufeldt, Isabelle Mathis, and Ashley Shelangoski.

On March 4 at 7 p.m., the junior high choir will perform and include songs from the movie *Encanto*, *The Greatest Showman*, and *Hamilton*.

There will also be skits created by the students.

On March 5 at 7 p.m., the senior high choir will perform and include songs from Disney movies, the Beatles, Adele, and Billie Eilish.

Some guest musicians will also be joining some songs, including Mr. Jeff Trask, Spanish teacher, on acoustic and electric guitar, Mr. Joey Kramer, math teacher, on bass guitar, and Mr. Matt Toomey on the drums.

On March 6 at 2 p.m., both the ju-

nior and senior choir will perform with an intermission between each choir.

"There are so many awesome songs and skits," said Ms. Jeanine Link, choir teacher.

"You don't want to miss this. These students are so talented. They have worked so hard. I hope everyone can come out and see the show!"

The Durant choir program and music department are also putting on a fundraiser.

Michelle Tate, the owner of Michelle's Sweet Treats, is making cookies for the students to congratulate and compliment them for their performances.

Cookie flavors are monster, Reese's, chocolate chip, and snickerdoodle with each cookie costing \$2.50.

Personalized messages can be written on the cookies.

Cookies can be purchased for performers during the intermission on Sunday, and cookies will be delivered to performers after the Sunday show.



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