



**MANHATTAN
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

Connections

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.
2 Timothy 4:7

MARCH 2026

ISSUE 6

VOLUME 26

2026 Tulip Mania & Dutch Supper

*Tulip Mania
& Dutch Supper*

AT MANHATTAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
FRIDAY, APRIL 10



SILENT AUCTION OPENS AT 4PM • LIVE AUCTION BEGINS AT 7PM
ZOOTOPIA 2 SHOWING DURING THE LIVE AUCTION
AUCTION ADMISSION IS FREE

DINNER WILL BE SERVED FROM 4-7PM

2026 DINNER PRICES:
\$20/ADULT • \$10/AGES 6-14 • \$60/FAMILY • FREE FOR 5 AND UNDER

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March Contents

Annual Tulip Mania
& Dutch Supper

Capitol Art Show
Features Six MCS
Students

Rotary Student of the
Month

Employment Opportunities
for 2026-2027

History Lesson Series:
The MCS Memorial Sign

Expedition Yellowstone
2026

Lady Eagles Season
Recap

Senior Project
Spotlight

Follow Us on Socials

The MCS Foundation

*More information on
this exciting spring
event on page four!*

ROTARY

student of the month:
Cecilia Morrison



How long have you been at MCS?

I have attended MCS for 3 years. Before that I was home schooled and did online school.

What extracurriculars have you been involved in during your time here?

I lead the chapel band every Wednesday, participate in theater and choir, and do track.

What awards have you won during your time in those extracurriculars?

I was Academic All State for track and a 2025 All State Music Participant.

What have some of your favorite classes and teachers been while at MCS?

My favorite class at MCS was probably Public Speaking. Mrs. Taber made the class really fun and engaging, and I grew a lot in my confidence with speaking in front of people. My favorite teacher is definitely Mr. Kimm. While math is not my strong suit, Mr. Kimm has always been super encouraging and helpful to me in all my math courses, and he also pushes me to think critically and work hard.

What are some of your best non-academic memories?

My favorite memory at MCS isn't really anything specific. I have a lot of little moments that I think back on and smile, such as prom, drives to basketball games with my friends, and fun moments in class. Getting to go to All State Choir was definitely a blast, and it was really special to sing in such a big choir with such a talented group of people. Overall I have made a lot of small but meaningful memories here at MCS, and I am really thankful!

What goal have you set for yourself during your senior year?

My goal for this year is to continue to work hard in school and spend as much time with my family and friends as I can, making memories and having fun!

What are you working on for your Senior Project?

For my senior project, I incorporated my love for music with community service. There was three layers to my project. The first is that I am leading the chapel band at school which includes picking the songs and leading the musicians. The second thing I did was go into a homeless shelter and play a few worship songs and share with them, which was a very special experience for me. And lastly I will be having a music night in March where I will be singing some songs that have meant a lot to me in my life and sharing stories related to them.

What is one thing you think sets your education at MCS apart from at other schools?

I think it is really cool how personal the student-teacher relationship is. I feel very comfortable going to my teachers for things relating to school or things going on in my life. I feel like at other schools that isn't as much of a possibility, so I think we are really lucky to have that. I'm also grateful that I am able to talk about God in my assignments and essays, and that we pray together if things are hard.

What are your plans for after graduation?

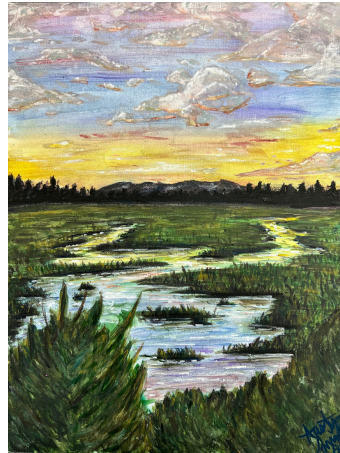
Next year I will be attending University of Colorado, Colorado Springs to study Nursing and sing in the choir.

What is your favorite Bible Verse?

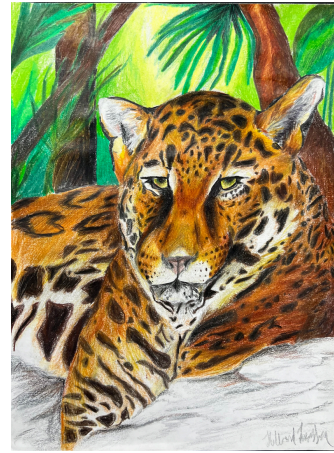
Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Capitol Art Show to Feature Six MCS Students

Six Manhattan Christian School students were selected to showcase their original artwork this month at the Capitol Art Show in Helena. We're so proud of our talented MCS artists! A special thank you to Mrs. Swanson for providing such a wonderful opportunity for our students to share their creativity.



Austyn Smith (10th)



Holland Triemstra (7th)



Emily Straatman (10th)



Alexa Van Kley (10th)



Jenae Young (9th)



Decker Flikkema (4th)

New Faithful Grounds Art Exhibit

We're excited to feature a new artist in the office coffee shop: MCS graduate Josh Wynia. Josh, a dad of five who now lives in Sioux Center, Iowa, still has deep roots in the Manhattan Christian community with lots of family still in the MCS school system. It's special to have his work back on campus! Next time you stop by Faithful Grounds, take a moment to check it out.

Now Hiring for 2026-2027

As we prayerfully prepare for the 2026-2027 school year, we are excited to continue seeking the individuals God is calling to join our team in the following open positions. If you feel led to serve in a Christ-centered school community, we would love to hear from you! Find the more complete job descriptions and apply on our website: manhattanchristian.org/employment/

- Substitute Teachers
- Spiritual Life Director
- Development Director
- Bus Drivers



History Lesson Series: The Manhattan Christian Memorial Sign

Don Vaniman, MCS Foundation Secretary



John N Schutter 1921-2000



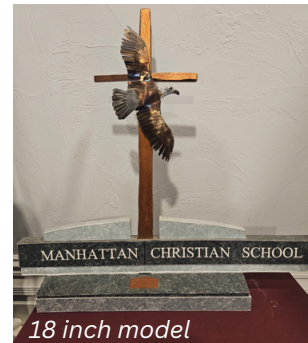
John and Grace Schutter came to Manhattan, Montana from Holland in 1947. Through much hard work, John became one of the largest Seed Potato Producers in the Gallatin Valley. John N Schutter went to His Reward in 2000. He was such a staunch supporter of Manhattan Christian School that his family wanted to honor him by creating a Memorial Sign in front of the school utilizing the school's logo of the eagle and the Cross. They Retained Cecilia Vaniman, Montana State University Facilities Architect and member of First Church, to design, create, and install the sign. Cecilia hired renowned Bozeman Metal Artist and Sculptor, Jim Dolan, who is famous for creating the Geese Flying Down the Stairs at Bozeman International Airport, to create the Eagle and Cross out of metal. Bozeman Granite Works brought in the granite base and inscribed Manhattan Christian School on it. The Bozeman Granite Works said this was the largest piece of granite they had ever seen. All of John N and Grace's children donated to complete the project. This included Sid and Deb Schutter, John K and Karen Schutter, Bill and Marian Kimm, Robert and Sharon Kamp, LeRoy and Wilma Logterman, Cliff and Laura Schutter, Nick and Susan Schutter, and Carl Schutter. Even some of John's grandchildren donated. They included Jason Kimm, Jodi Kimm, Mark Kimm, and Lori Kimm. The sign is lit at night, so stop by day or night to take a look!



Cecilia Vaniman



Jim Dolan



18 inch model



- **Spring Break: School & Offices Closed March 16-20**
- **Preschool Registration: Tuesday, March 24, 8am**
 - Find packets on our website or email admissions@manhattanchristian.org
- **MCS Spring Play, ANNIE: March 26-28**
 - Get your tickets at the door!
- **Good Friday: No School Friday, April 3**
- **Annual 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament: Saturday, April 4**
 - Register your team online; find the link on our website.
- **District Music Festival: April 9-11**
- **Tulip Mania & Dutch Supper: Friday, April 10**
- **Kindergarten Visit Day: Friday, April 24**
 - Let us know if you'd like to come!
- **Donkey Basketball: Monday, April 27**

SAVE THESE DATES!

Expedition Yellowstone: 2026

Michelle Nibbelink & Abbi Mulder, Middle School Teachers

This February, our 8th graders embarked on an unforgettable adventure through Expedition Yellowstone, hiking, exploring, and learning in the breathtaking landscape of Yellowstone National Park. In preparation for the trip, students memorized Psalm 8 in Bible class, grounding their experience in the words, "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" In science, they studied Psalm 104 and Genesis 1-3, reflecting on God as a powerful Creator who deeply cares for His creation. As they explored Yellowstone's towering mountains, diverse wildlife, and geothermal features, students brought classroom lessons to life by identifying animal tracks, tree species, thermophiles, and learning about the geology shaped by the park's hotspot. Being in the very places they had studied allowed them to deepen both their understanding and their sense of awe.

Beyond academics, the trip offered meaningful spiritual growth. Through daily devotions and a post-trip Scripture and Science reflection, students considered God's work in creation, what it means to be made in His image, and their call to care for His creation, demonstrating thoughtful engagement with both faith and learning. One student wrote, "Psalm 104 is similar to Psalm 8, showing how God rules over all creation and sustains everything by His mercy. This reminds us that God is in control, and we depend on Him, which calls us to praise Him and care for His creation. Learning about Yellowstone's supervolcano and hydrothermal features showed me that God is a God of detail—just as thermophiles need precise conditions to survive, God placed Yellowstone perfectly to display His glory. Yellowstone has often been described as the "Land That is Always Changing", but I feel like it is the land that is always displaying God's greatness." Another reflected, "Yellowstone is a great example of how God cares for all of His creation, from the smallest blade of grass to a geyser like Old Faithful. Even though He cares for everything, He cares about us even more, making each person special and unique. We are His crowned children, and we should see His hand in all of creation."

Expedition Yellowstone was more than a trip; it was an opportunity for students to connect faith and learning in a powerful way, returning home not only with unforgettable memories but also with a deeper appreciation for God's majesty and their responsibility to care for His creation.



Details on Our Annual Tulip Mania Auction & Dutch Supper Friday, April 10 at Manhattan Christian School

Dinner: 4-7 PM | \$20/adult • \$10/student (ages 6-14) • \$60/family • FREE under 5

Enjoy authentic Dutch favorites like Kippen Soep, Snert, Roggebrood with imported Kaas, Pot Eten/Stamppot, and a dessert table featuring Oliebollen, almond tarts, cream puffs, puff pastries, butter cakes, and chocolate-dipped strawberries. Come celebrate Dutch heritage, community, and a delicious meal with us!

We still need a few more Klont bakers! If you'd like to help, please contact the school office.

Tulip Mania Auction Admission is FREE

The silent auction starts at 4 PM, followed by the live auction at 7 PM. Check our website, Facebook, and Instagram early in the week for the auction catalog to go live.

If you have empty baskets, big or small, decorative or simple, we'd love to take them off your hands so we can offer more auction items! Please drop them off at the office.

Bring the Kids!

Bring the whole family; there's something for everyone to enjoy! Kids will love watching the traditional Fifth Grade Dutch Dancers, and during the live auction they can head to the band room for a free showing of Zootopia 2. It's a fun night for all ages!

Actual ticket not necessary for entry.



Lady Eagles Accomplish Both 2026 Season Goals

Lexi Glaus, Assistant Coach



I've always been an Eagle basketball fan. That's a lie; I've been an Eagle basketball fan for the last six years, but if you've seen me in the stands, you know I make up for lost time with my fiery antics. I (hesitantly) agreed to put my coaching hat back on this season to assist new head girls coach, Ryan Ruffatto. At first, I mourned the loss of casually rolling into games one minute before tip-off in sweatpants or lazily choosing to watch on NFHS from home. But this team and coaching staff showed me early on that the bench was exactly where I was meant to be this year. The 2025-26 season will go down as one of the most memorable in Manhattan Christian Lady Eagles history, not because it was easy, but because it was anything but. With a brand-new coaching staff, only a handful of returners with previous varsity minutes, a brutal early-season schedule (one we may never let our AD live down), and an 0-4 start, the outlook in December was grim and required some serious optimism. The goals were simple, but far from guaranteed: finish at or above .500 and punch a ticket to Divisionals in Butte. If you missed the postseason 5-3 run, spoiler alert: mission accomplished.

After battling to an 8-10 regular season record, our sweet Lady Eagles caught fire when it mattered most. A 5-3 Districts and Divisionals run pushed our final record to 13-13. They left Districts with a third-place finish and wrapped up Divisionals in fourth, placing them among the top 16 teams in the state out of more than 90 Class C schools. We came up just eight points short to Shields Valley (previous losses earlier in the season to the Rebels were by 21 and 26 points; if that doesn't scream improvement, I don't know what does) for third place and a chance to challenge West Yellowstone for a chance at State. Not bad for a group that started 0-4. Early on, we joked that we were giving fans whiplash. One night we'd take down Class B Three Forks. Another night, in front of a packed gym filled with Little Eagles and roaring home fans, we'd struggle to find our rhythm. There were injuries. There were growing pains. There were tough losses that stung. But through it all, the girls trusted the process. They committed to the little things. They didn't complain. They were kind and joyful to teammates, opponents, and officials. And when things got hard, they got gritty.

Our two sweet seniors, Brook and Addie, brought us to tears as they subbed off the court in the final minutes of their last game. They are two of the most selfless athletes I've ever had the privilege to coach, both in volleyball and basketball. Brook is pure grit: always handsy on defense, hustling every second she's on the floor. She loves a good jump ball and never fails to shrug with a smile at the bench when she accidentally catches an opponent's arm in the process and gets called for the foul. Addie is the quiet glue of the team, always putting others first. She rarely seeks the spotlight, yet she does all the little things coaches treasure, even when they go unnoticed. When it mattered most, she was down battling for offensive boards, giving us extra possessions that often made the difference down the stretch.

Coach Ryan Ruffatto, ultimate group selfie-taker and boys assistant coach, stepped into the program as the third head coach in four years. I am the wife of basketball junkie and boys Head Coach, Layne Glaus, so I am no stranger to vigorous basketball seasons and intense preparation for State tournament runs. But as our season began, I watched Ryan introduce some of those similar steely practice structures: film sessions in the classroom, defensive breakdown clips, terminology and schemes that made me quietly wonder if we were asking too much of this group. He quickly proved me wrong. The girls absorbed it and worked relentlessly towards execution. Their 2-3 zone soon became a problem for even the strongest teams in the state. Their man-to-man was just as tough. Divisional champions, the Drummond Trojans, scored only a fraction of their usual output against our half-court defense. That doesn't happen by accident. Ryan perfectly balanced high expectations with genuine care, and it yielded results. A clear girl dad, he pushed them hard but loved them so sincerely. He emphasized unity: bringing in guest speakers, facilitating team dinners, attending an MSU women's game together, allowing time for Christmas shopping for Love INC families, all reinforcing that basketball is about more than basketball. It was not uncommon to see him tear up while telling the girls how proud he was of their growth, their resilience, and their commitment to JOY: Jesus, Others, Yourself.

If there was ever a perfect JV coach pickup to match Ryan's energy, it was Travis DeHaan. Witty, patient, and wise, he quickly became adored by his squad and the rest of us coaches. After one standout performance midseason, he told the girls, "You've arrived." They quoted him for weeks, and in true team fashion, temporary tattoos of his face mysteriously appeared in the mail soon after, landing on their biceps during Districts. An ultimate girl dad himself, Travis led with grace and competitiveness, a balance honed by years of coaching his own young daughters. He always had a quick whiteboard draw-up ready, insider info from watching hours of film, and an encouraging word when confidence wavered. His steady leadership built belief in the next wave of Eagles.

Coach Johanna Eekhoff loves her people so well. Knowledgeable, patient, and steady, she carries a quiet authority that earns instant respect. Her "Mary Poppins bag" was legendary, stocked with whatever the girls needed at any given moment. She organized team outings, locker decorations, laundry, and countless details that often go unnoticed but matter deeply. Programs don't thrive without coaches like Johanna. I will dearly miss seeing her on the reg; we shared too many quiet giggles to count this season.

Assisting Ryan, Travis, and Johanna was such a joy for me. This group of girls is unmatched. Their coachability. Their grit. Their humor. Their affection for my two-year-old. Their willingness to grow. They trusted the process, finished .500, reached Divisionals, and represented Manhattan Christian with so much class. If you happened to see the MSU women's team ask the UM ladies to pray with them after their win earlier this season, I'll give you one guess which girls inspired them to do that.

senior project SPOTLIGHT

Cutler Edmundson

S.O.S. Serve Our Seniors began with a simple goal: help local seniors with tasks like chopping wood and mowing lawns. As he met with members of the community, Cutler discovered many were facing much bigger needs: home repairs, unsafe steps, and heating issues they couldn't manage alone. What started as a project quickly grew into a mission to help seniors stay safe and comfortable in their homes. If you'd like to donate, volunteer, or get involved, we'd love your support in serving our seniors. Visit serveourseniorsmt.org for more information.





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The Manhattan Christian Network on Spotify



Manhattan Christian School Foundation

Our mission is to lower tuition!

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- 3.0% for Term
- \$300 Annual Income
- \$300 Taxable Income
- 0 Tax-Free Income
- 0 Federal Deduction
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MCSF Gift Annuity:

- \$10,000
- 7.5% for Life
- \$750 Annual Income
- \$236 Taxable Income
- \$513 Tax-Free Income
- \$4,689 Federal Deduction
- \$1,876 State Deduction

MCSF gift annuities may offer more than money in the bank. Let's talk about the options that could work for you!

Contact Ron Hoekema at (406) 581-1460 with any questions or for more information.

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Mary Jones, Age 77

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\$10,000



7.0%
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MCSF

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\$4,689 (4.2%AFR)
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