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HIGH SCHOOL TRACK & FIELD

GOOD AS GOLD



RYAN TIMMERMAN, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

Spirit Lake's Lauren Travis (middle) stands atop the podium after winning the Class 2A girls' shot put at the Iowa high school state track and field meet at Drake Stadium on Thursday.

Area athletes rack up medals at state Iowa track & field

RYAN TIMMERMAN
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DES MOINES — Siouxland athletes brought home gold in nearly a dozen events at the Iowa high school state track and field meet to cap off the 2026 season.

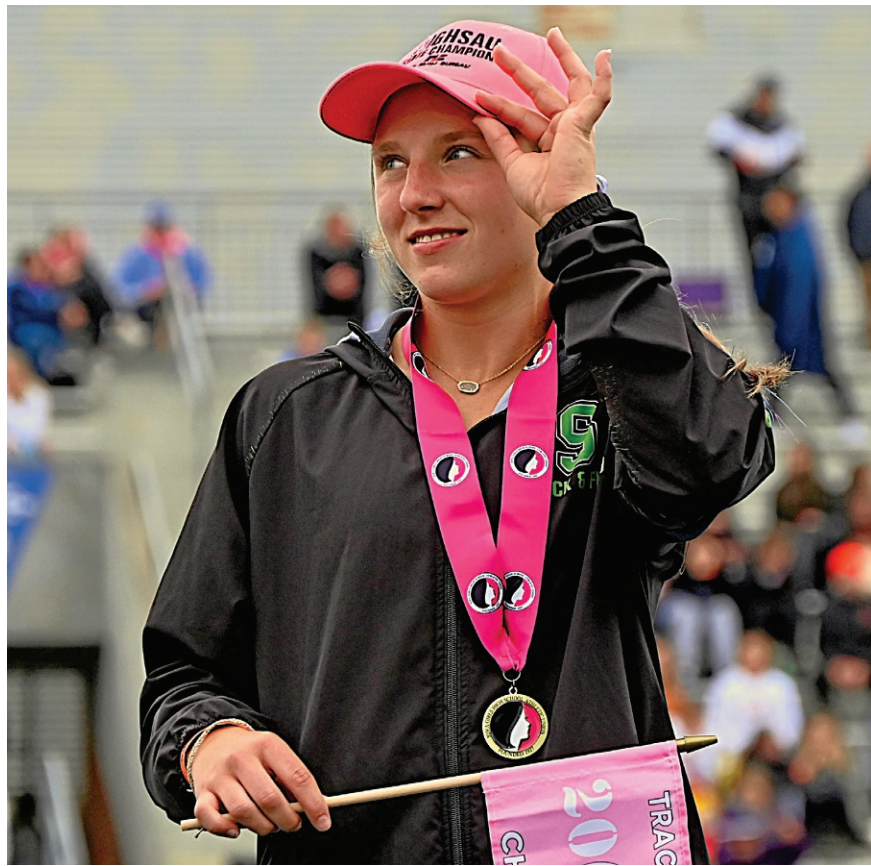
Three preps won two golds in North sophomore Kuma Gutema, Sioux Center senior Kolby Oldenkamp and Lawton-Bronson senior Landon Grell.

Oldenkamp was a part of two record-breaking Sioux Center relays as she ran on the Warriors' 4x800 and 1,600 distance medley relay.

Grell and Gutema earned their pair of golds within the matter of hours as each won two events on the final day of competition as the state meet wrapped up on Saturday at Drake Stadium in Des Moines.

Of the group that took home gold this season, only one athlete had previously won at state, MOC-Floyd Valley senior Kaleigh Tooker who was a part of a winning 4x200 relay as a sophomore for the Dutch.

Area athletes won gold in seven running events and four field events, and in total, tallied three dozen trips to the podium (a top-three finish).



RYAN TIMMERMAN, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

West Monona's McKenna Baker puts on the IGSAU state champion hat and holds the state champion flag while wearing her gold medal after winning the Class 1A long jump at state on Thursday at Drake Stadium in Des Moines.

Record area passengers forecast for Memorial Day

KEVIN COLE
Omaha World-Herald

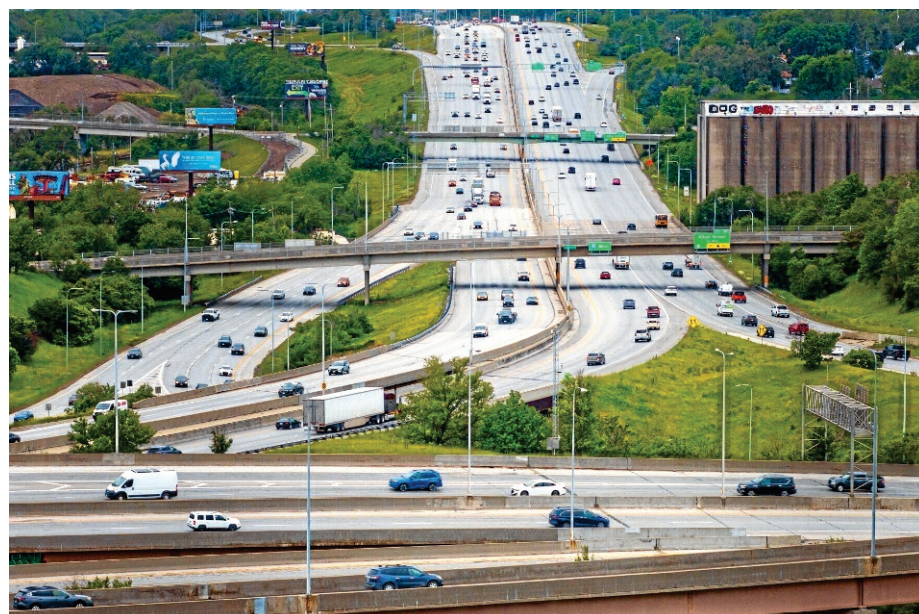
AAA Travel is predicting a record number of Memorial Day travelers, but a smaller increase than typically occurs, largely due to higher fuel prices.

Nationally, AAA expects nearly 45 million Americans to travel over the Memorial Day holiday, the highest total on record. The year-over-year growth, however, is expected to be less than 1% over the previous year.

The average travel growth year-over-year is typically between 2% and 4%. However, according to AAA's recent travel forecast, the 2026 growth estimation is only at 0.4% this year.

AAA said people might opt out of longer drives to distant states and instead go to attractions closer to home to save on fuel costs. However, even with fuel price fluctuations the expectation is that people will continue to make the effort to travel.

"Memorial Day travel is still reaching record levels, but with the smallest year-over-year increase in more than a decade," said Brian Ortner of Nebraska AAA.



CHRIS MACHIAN, OMAHA WORLD-HERALD

Looking over Interstate 480 to Interstate 80 westbound, traffic makes its way through Omaha on Tuesday.

"Although travel demand remains strong, higher fuel prices and persistent inflation may cause some travelers to shorten trips,

delay plan, or stay closer to home."

AAA projects more than 3.76 million travelers from the West North Central

Region, which includes Nebraska and Iowa, will travel at least 50 miles from home during the five-day Memorial Day weekend. That is 16,000 more than 2025.

The travel period begins on the Thursday before Memorial Day and concludes on Monday. Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, South Dakota and North Dakota make up the West North Central Region.

Most travelers from the region will take road trips, with more than 3.15 million expected to drive. Another 158,000 will fly, while nearly 406,000 will travel by other modes such as bus, train or cruise.

Nationally, driving remains the most popular way to travel for the holiday weekend. AAA projects 39.1 million people will travel by car, a slight jump over last year.

A holiday road trip will cost more at the gas pump this year. As of Tuesday, the average price for gasoline was \$4.22 per gallon in Nebraska and \$4.29 in Iowa. Last year, the national average price was \$3.17 per gallon on Memorial Day with prices of \$2.93 in Nebraska and \$2.96 in Iowa.

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