

Grand Ledge High School's

# The Comets' Tale



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820 Spring St. Grand Ledge, MI

Test your  
knowledge  
on all things  
spooky!

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*Graphic by  
Ellery Curtis*



# Letter from the Editors

**Isabella Dionise**

CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

**Madeline Gooley**

CO-EDITOR IN CHIEF

Dear Readers,

Hello! Thank you so much for picking up the fall edition of the 2022-23 Comets' Tale! We are so excited to present our first print publication of the year.

This is both of our second years in Newspaper, and we have loved it so far. The Comets' Tale staff has put so much work into this edition, and we can't wait for you to read it.

The Comets' Tale news program has come very far in the last year. We have a podcast, print publications and online publications.

To check out more from us, visit our website, [glcometstale.com](http://glcometstale.com). Thank you again and we hope you enjoy it!

-Isabella Dionise and Maddy Gooley

## The Comets' Tale

### Mission Statement

*The Comets' Tale*, a newspaper produced for and by students of Grand Ledge High School, will provide the student body with information pertinent to events, activities and issues that affect GLHS students.

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Letters to the Editor are encouraged by The Comets' Tale staff. Letters may pertain to an article written or simply act as a form of student expression. All letters must be deemed publishable by the Editorial Board including the adviser. They should be 200 words or less but may be edited for content of length. All letters to the Editor must be signed. To send a letter to the Editor students may drop them in the publications room (room 228).

# Remember Thom Sowle



**Carson Lemon**  
STAFF WRITER

People all over Grand Ledge are mourning the death of a prominent figure in the community. Thomas "Thom" Sowle, Mayor of Grand Ledge and part-time substitute teacher at

Grand Ledge High School, passed away on September 14th, 2022 at the age of 67.

Born in September of 1955 in Worms, Germany, Thom grew up in Mount Pleasant, Michigan and attended middle school and high school in Milan. After traveling around Europe, Thom came to the United States and met his future wife, Susan. Susan wasn't just known as his wife, many students at Grand Ledge High School today know her as Madame Sowle, a French teacher and head of the French Club.

"Probably anybody you talk to says the same, he was just the nicest guy you would ever meet," Madame Sowle said. "No matter what he did, even being the Mayor it was never about him, it was always about the people and the community. Whenever he would meet anybody, whether friends or family or City Hall, anything, the last thing he always said, or the first thing, 'what can I do for you?'"

"Certainly we thought of him as a wonderful person, but to have so many people come up to me all the time saying how... he'd always stop into peoples' classrooms and always ask them about their family," Madame Sowle continued. "And he was just... a really genuinely nice person who cared about his town and the people in it."

Mr. Sowle's passing leaves a huge footprint behind. He was appointed as Mayor in 2018 after the previous Mayor, Kalmin Smith stepped down. Mr. Sowle was then elected the next year in 2019, and served the city for three years until his passing.

He was not only the Mayor of Grand Ledge, but also stood as the President of the Grand Ledge Education Foundation. He spent time volunteering for Blessings in a Backpack, a non-profit organization that provides extra food for students in need.

Mr. Sowle spent a lot of time helping in his community, he was also a trustee on the Grand Ledge Board of Education for two years, and had spent the last twenty years substituting around the high school.

Not just a community leader, according to Madame Sowle, he was a model father. He worked as a Cub Scout leader, a soccer coach, and was always there for his kids. He could always be counted on to help for one of their parties or field trips, and even helped run



**Mr. Sowle is shown smiling at City Hall. He could always be found helping around the community.**

*Photo provided by the Sowle family*

the Mileage Club at Neff.

A ceremony was held on September 24th, 2022 to celebrate his life, and the family asks for money to be donated to the American Cancer Society or the Grand Ledge Education foundation in memory of Mr. Sowle.

## Hallo Löhne!



**Marisol Macias**  
NEWS EDITOR

What would it be like to stay in another country and join a community as a host student? This October, twelve exchange students and two teachers from Grand Ledge's partner

school in Löhne, Germany traveled 4,068 miles to do exactly that.

Grand Ledge and Löhne's partnership began with the National Association of Secondary School Principals, which allows students of both countries the opportunity to experience the differing cultures of the other host.

1981 was the first year that students from Löhne traveled to Grand Ledge. Since then, those from both schools have created a number of memories with each year's exchange. This year, many were excited to get back on track with the program, including GLHS German teacher, Frou Firtl, and even Mayor Thom Sowle before his passing.

"This year will be especially special because we're dedicating a tree in memory of former Mayor Thom Sowle, that's going to be planted by a 'Löhne Drive'

sign that he was behind, naming after our sister city, and it's out back by Beagle... because he was always a supporter of the program. He actually went and visited [Löhne's] mayor for the first time," Firtl said.

During the week of October 9th, the students and their two accompanying teachers, Jorma Froman and Christine Müller joined GLHS as 2022's German exchange group.

"I'm also like, going to the classes of Anna and then sitting there and also trying to get some input from the lessons but sometimes it's very difficult," exchange student Lea Böckenstette said. "In general, it's very different because we [in America] really have to participate in the lessons and say something with the teacher."

These observations continue when it comes to cultural differences like everyday practices, especially when it comes to the practices of an American student.

"I think school is harder in Germany; we're not allowed to use our mobile phones when we do lessons. All of us [in America] are using them and all the teachers are using them...and have headphones on. It's quite different from Germany," exchange student Tom Kenkel said.

Recognizing and embracing these differences is what



**Students and families bond at a kickoff potluck. This event had a combination of American and German food and desserts.**

*Photo by Marisol Macias/The Comets' Tale*

makes the Grand Ledge/Löhne program so memorable for all. School is really only a portion of the full experience.

"I think in the beginning it's very difficult because it's like a new family, and you really have to get to know new persons...and I think, very good for the personal development," Böckenstette said. Personal development is evident in both the exchange student and the hosts.

"You have to have a basic understanding of the language," GLHS Junior Caden Hoskins said. "...If there's a word that needs translated, you have to have a general idea of the concepts.... I can understand some basic ideas and stuff and it helps a lot."

After another successful exchange, future hosting opportunities are in the works! Ask anyone who's participated before and they're sure to recommend it.

# A Colorful Conundrum

A rainbow-laced terror haunts trick-or-treaters this Halloween



**Isabella Dionise**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Halloween is a holiday made for manufactured fear and fright, but a very real and present danger looms on the horizon this October, fentanyl.

Fentanyl is a highly addictive narcotic that is one of the easiest drugs to overdose on. Experts are warning trick-or-treaters and parents of “rainbow fentanyl,” a way for drug cartels to get America’s youth hooked on drugs. This candy-appearing substance has been described as “chalky and “colorful.”

The recent frenzy over fentanyl has called attention to a decades-long problem. Fentanyl has been used for years to lace into other illegal substances such as cocaine and methamphetamines. Doing this makes the drug far more addictive, and far less expensive for the dealer to manufacture, seeing as you can buy it in bulk for very low prices. However, it also makes the altered drug exponentially more deadly.

Fentanyl can be pharmaceutically prescribed for treating pain, but the fentanyl being referenced in this article is of the illegal variety, and highly dangerous as it is completely unregulated.

This drug is nearly impossible to detect, which is one of the factors making it so incredibly dangerous and putting children at risk this Halloween.



**Children will fill their bags with lots of different candies this year. It's important for parents to be aware of potential dangers as their children participate in trick-or-treating.**

*Photo by Isabella Dionise/The Comets' Tale*

This is not the first Halloween candy-related scare plaguing trick-or-treaters. Not-so-sweet scares have hit headlines since the 1970s. In the 70s, a father laced his own son’s sugary sweet with cyanide, beginning a mania over a “candy killer.” Rumors quickly ripped through the news of needles, spikes, and even razor blades found in children’s candy. None of these spiky accusations were ever proven or seemingly based in fact.

“Rainbow Fentanyl” is fentanyl-laced candy that may be spotted this Halloween. It resembles Sweet Tarts

or Smarties in its brightly colored innocent looking nature, but in reality, is a deadly drug being spread to get kids addicted to drugs.

This year, families and parents have to be extremely careful with what goes into their children’s Halloween baskets. It is recommended to only allow kids to trick-or-treat from trusted neighbors and friends, monitor what kids are receiving, and check Halloween candy before it is ingested.

(All fentanyl information found via cdc.org)

## Should Holiday Parties Be Canceled?



**Eibhlin Reed**  
STAFF WRITER

Just seventeen days before Halloween, East Lansing schools shared that they would be canceling classroom celebrations for both Halloween and Valentines Day. The decision was made due to upset parents and the concern of wasting learning time. The school argued that less fortunate students end up feeling left out, or don’t have access to cool costumes and fancy valentines gifts.

“East Lansing Public Schools are striving to be a district that is equitable and inclusive for all families”, Assistant Superintendent Glenn Mitcham stated in an interview with Lansing State Journal.

All in all, more schools across the country are making the same complaints, that holiday celebrations are problematic in elementary schools. Teachers and administrators are arguing that not enough kids are actually benefiting from these parties for it

to be worth the preparation and time. In fact, many families don’t allow their children to go to school for halloween, because they simply don’t celebrate or agree with it. And the ones that do show up for school face a lot of distractions and overstimulation, East Lansing believes.

Although the district has canceled these celebrations, they do plan on integrating holiday themes within their regular curriculums.

But this news has spurred questions from parents and kids of other districts as well.

When asked what their opinions were pertaining to classroom celebrations, one Grand Ledge elementary teacher stated;

“While we do feel that celebrations are so important in the elementary students’ experience, we also know that our personal opinions on this matter are not as

important as doing what’s right for kids”

As of now, the status of Grand Ledge’s stance on this years classroom celebrations remains unclear.

**Looking for a part-time job which will work around your school and sports schedule?**

**Apply at your local Grand Ledge or Delta Township McDonald's today!**



**Grand Ledge**

**W. Sag/Canal**



# A Hair-Raising Homecoming

## Spooky Trivia



**Kayla Ly**  
STAFF WRITER

Leaves, chilly weather, and...dancing? The fall homecoming dance is an annual tradition for Grand Ledge. With Halloween coming up at the end of the month, this spooky-themed dance brought both costumes and black-tie attire to the party.

The dance started at 7 p.m., and although it was chilly, people took their time taking pictures to remember the fun memories they would soon make -- music, dancing, snacks, and an overall good time with friends. Contributing to that, the cafeteria was decked out in Halloween decorations and dark lighting -- the mood was set and once the music started up people quickly headed for the dance floor.

The DJ played party classics like "Cupid Shuffle" by Cupid and even a remix of "Sweet Caroline" by Neil Diamond. The crowd jumped and sang along to "Don't Stop The Music" by Rhianna and "Die For You" by The Weeknd in delight.

Homecoming is the first dance of the year, making it also the first high school dance for freshmen students.

"I wanted to go to Homecoming to interact with my friends and my other classmates," Shelby Mercer, a

freshman at Grand Ledge High School said.

"I think I enjoyed [the dance] more because of the sentimental value it has this year," Kassie Diller said. "It's my senior year, and I enjoy being with my groups of friends in an upbeat environment and I wanted to make the most out of my last year of high school."

Everyone danced and made the most out of the night having fun and socializing with friends and peers.

"I think [I will miss the dances], just because I know the fun of getting together with friends and hanging out," Diller explained.

For others, there were some improvements that could've been made that would've made the night even better. There were some frustrations with the music chosen by the DJ.

Jasleen Kaur, a Junior in the Grand Ledge student council along with a few other students had made a playlist for the dance but the DJ ended up only playing a few of the songs.

"The DJ was not ideal but I had fun and everything turned out okay. It didn't turn out exactly how I wanted it to, but it worked out in the end so it was fine," Kaur said with a shrug.

Though the Homecoming experience may have been different for each grade, many people enjoyed their night. As some may say, it's all part of the high school experience!

- How long has Halloween been celebrated?
  - 2,000 years
  - 60 years
  - 4,000 years
  - 99,999 years

- What is the most popular Halloween costume worldwide?
  - Cat
  - Dinosaur
  - Witch
  - Vampire

- What is the most popular halloween candy in Michigan?
  - Skittles
  - Reeses Cup
  - Snickers
  - Twix

- How long is the worlds longest haunted house?
  - 3,564 feet
  - 200 feet
  - 8,923 feet
  - 1,751 feet

- What is the world's record for apples bobbed in a minute?
  - 20
  - 8
  - 13
  - 37

### ACROSS

- The owner of the Monster House
- The movie that features Pennywise the clown
- The number of deaths in the first *Scream* [Film]
- The movie where Michael Myers is the killer
- Dracula's voice actor in *Hotel Transylvania* [Film]
- The number of movies in the *Halloween* series
- The film that stars the Sanderson sisters
- The name of the evil warlock in *Halloweentown* [Film]

### DOWN

- The main character of *The Nightmare Before Christmas* [Film]
- Who you gonna call, \_\_\_\_\_
- The killer's name in *Scream* [Film]
- The oldest Sanderson sister
- What are eyes replaced with in the *Coraline* [Film]?
- 1988 Tim Burton Halloween movie
- The Daughter of Gomez and Morticia Adams

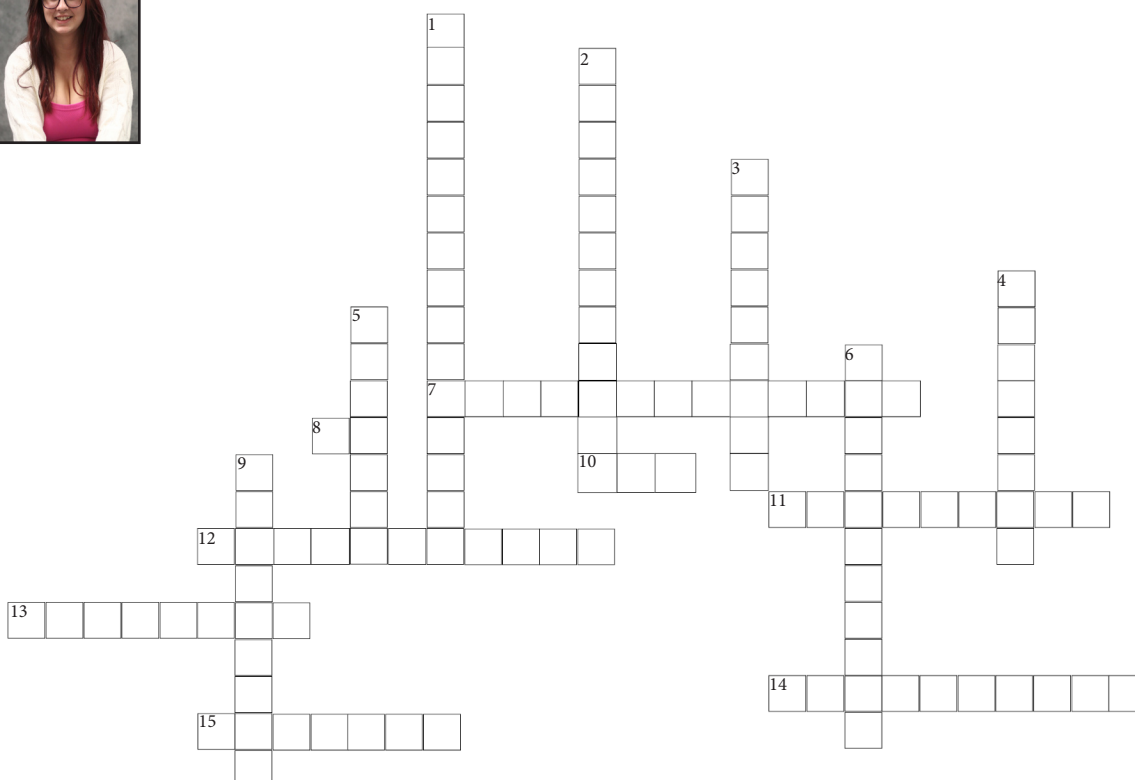


Scan For  
Crossword and  
Trivia Answers

## How Well Do you Know your Halloween Flicks?



**Ava Delaney**  
STAFF WRITER



# GLPS School Board Candi

*Three Board of Education positions are up for election on November 8th.*

**Ashley Oneil, Kim Laforet, and Jason Davenbaugh**



**Madeline Gooley**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Three candidates, Jason Davenbaugh, Kim Laforet, and Ashley Oneil, have chosen to run together in this election. 100% of their views about the district align.

"Because the three of us aligned on the same principles, we chose to run as a slate so that we can have better awareness... and focus on the issues," Laforet said. "Instead of focusing on an individual campaign because it's not about me, it's about changing what's going on and making Grand Ledge better."

For them, the issues are parental involvement, raising test scores, and "getting back to the basics."

"The general consensus between the three of us was just that we wanted to see that there was more parental involvement, there was more transparency, and we just wanted to see Grand Ledge be the district that it's always been and we wanted to see it excel," Oneil said.

"[Grand Ledge] used to [have a standard of excellence]," Davenbaugh said. "I would say that it has fallen off a little bit... They have kind of stepped back a little bit and the fact that test scores have fallen [show that loss]."

The candidates are concerned about the low test scores and are looking for ways to work with students to bring them back up.

"[Test scores] are just above state average... that is good, but not good enough," Davenbaugh said. "When you have certain demographics that are actually below proficient compared to others that are above proficient, we are not giving all of our students the same education that they need or the same help that they need to actually excel.. Especially when it comes to special needs students."

Jason Davenbaugh's children are students with special needs, so he focuses on that issue a lot on his platform.

"Looking back, we know about the detriment that masking did for the student's ability to learn, keeping them out of schools for as long as we did," Laforet said. "Seeing not only the loss of academic skills but social skills. We've heard from so many parents that are just heartbroken because their children have just regressed."

One of the candidates' largest supporters is Matt Wilk. Wilk is the director of a committee called Get Kids Back to School PAC, which works with school board candidates.

"We're a PAC organized around school board elections," Wilk said. "We've recruited candidates,

we tried to train and educate those candidates about school boards and school issues."

Wilk served on the Northville school board for 2 terms, but in July 2020 he was voted to be removed by the school board members 6 to 1 because of his controversial social media posts about COVID-19.

Get Kids Back to School PAC does not provide funding for the three Grand Ledge candidates, but his organization endorses them.

"We are supportive generally of candidates who put parental involvement in schools first," Wilk said.

This aligns with the main values of Davenbaugh, Laforet, and O'Neil.

"A couple of the things that we definitely want to look into as options is 'where exactly are the students struggling?'" O'Neil said. "Starting from there, we want to make sure that the teachers have the necessary resources... to give those students. Not just what they need to do here forward, but also to pick up what they have lost."

Another point that is important to the candidates when it comes to getting the test scores up is returning to "core values."

"I think we need to get back to the basics, reading, writing, and arithmetic," Davenbaugh stated. "Obviously science and social studies, but I think we've kind of fallen off a little bit on that."

"A problem I have with the way some of the contro-

versial issues are being addressed right now is the teacher's opinion is promulgating the conversation..." Laforet said. "Indoctrination versus education."

Classes like the LGBT Literacy class and African American studies class that are taught at GLHS have been somewhat controversial in the community and do not align with the candidates' "core values."

"As far as high school goes, I know there are certain classes you have to take that are mandatory in order to graduate... but I think with some of these other classes that they have thrown into the mix of things are not really preparing anyone for the real world..." Davenbaugh states. "As of right now there is only one [class] that I'm aware of and that would be that English class that is the LGBTQ literacy class. Not saying that it's not necessary, but I don't believe it... is needed in that aspect for an English credit."

The candidates have stated their opinion on this topic in other interviews.

"If we're going to get into English class, let's hone into English class. As far as an African American history class... black American history is important, but... maybe it's something that we put into a US history class we talk about for a week or two weeks."

These candidates will be individually on the ballot, but their views align and hope to "restore excellence" to the district, according to their websites.



**From left to right: Ashley Oneil, Kim Laforet, Jason Davenbaugh**

*Photo provided by Jason Davenbaugh*



# dates Gear Up for Election

Ashley Kuykendoll

Toni Glasscoe



**Marisol Macias**  
FEATURE EDITOR

Ashley Kuykendoll has been present in the Grand Ledge community as an involved mother of two Grand Ledge students and a public servant for over 15 years.

Ashley Kuykendoll strives to create an educational environment with an emphasis on accountability, transparency and integrity amongst all individuals.

“One of the ways that I like to show my face of transparencies is that I ask a lot of clarifying questions,” Kuykendoll says. “So I’m the person, instead of making assumptions about what I’m hearing, I would say, ‘Can you elaborate on that?’... just to make sure that I’m representing information or taking information in an accurate manner.”

“Especially a space as important and critical as school board, where your thought process, those critical thinking skills, and being able to articulate your standing...is so important as the skills we are trying to teach to young people,” Kuykendoll continues.

The well being, development, and safety of the young people within the Grand Ledge community is at the forefront of Kuykendoll’s priorities. If elected, Kuykendoll plans to create a community with a greater level of parent/guardian involvement, especially when it comes to safety.

“There’s never been a parent session that says, ‘As a parent, this is what you should know about an active shooter drill. This is how you should respond.’ Here’s how we plan to communicate with you...” Kuykendoll states.

Ashley Kuykendoll asserts her belief that parent involvement is crucial in creating positive change.



**Ashley Kuykendoll**  
Photo provided by Ashley Kuykendoll

“..Oftentimes as a community, we’re obtaining information on social media before you ever hear from a school district, and that incites chaos and fear,” Kuykendoll says. “I think we should be strategic about creating processes and systems and then advising parents and the public for what they are.”

Not limited to this, Ashley Kuykendoll works to represent the full spectrum of safety. “We have to be mindful that safety exists in various capacities, right? There’s the sense of physical safety ... there’s also a sense of emotional psychological safety....” Kuykendoll states.

“...In many cases, people are operating with the work in a binary state, meaning they see it one way or another,” Kuykendoll explained. “They want to see things as black or white and our human brains are designed to do that to identify and identify safety. But as societies and communities have evolved, the way we engage with one another has to evolve as well.”

**Mayra Cruz Santiago**  
STAFF WRITER



Toni Glasscoe, who is running for the part term against Kim Laforet, carries a personal mission statement in her wallet wherever she goes to remind her of her core values.

“I will cultivate, nurture, and sustain partnerships... that will promote lifelong learning, process improvement, and individual and collective destiny and success,” Glasscoe stated. “I value committed relationships that promote collaboration, personal integrity, and individual responsibility...” Glasscoe concludes.

Something that Glasscoe wants to bring to the board is the encouragement of collaboration.

“I want to be a peacemaker,” Glasscoe said. Now that doesn’t mean I always agree with everything that people from the audience or even my colleagues say and do, but I want to disagree in an agreeable way.”

Being a role model is important to Glasscoe, and she hopes that being on the board can inspire women of color to pursue positions like hers.

“When you see women in leadership positions.... women of color; it encourages you and it empowers you,” Glasscoe said. “I believe that I have conducted myself in a way that there are young people who have thought to themselves, I’m really proud to be able to identify with that individual...” Glasscoe says.

If re-elected, One of Glasscoe’s goals is to be part of the Grand Ledge District strategic plan.

“I believe that we [Grand Ledge] have a lot of healing to do, and I want to be a part of that....” Glasscoe stated. “Our strategic plan is very important... We put a lot of hard work into it... Our budget should also follow that strategic plan, so we invest in what we say is important to our district.”

*\*\*Request for photo was not responded to.*

Denise Dufort



**Braelyn Jackson-Pointer**  
STAFF WRITER

Board Member Denise Dufort is running for re-election this fall. After being an educator for several years in the Grand Ledge School District,

Dufort received her board position in 2017. Dufort decided to help improve the district so that it could look more appealing for new teachers, as there was a predicted teacher shortage coming up. She also mentioned how she felt her insight from the classroom could be beneficial to the board.

Dufort is a big believer in meeting children where they are in terms of learning, by helping them reach their goals whatever they may be. Whether college

or trade school, she wants to prepare the children to have a successful future.

Dufort’s core values focus on meeting children where they are in terms of education. “I think we should embrace the whole child, not just math, reading, and writing,” Dufort said

If re-elected, Dufort plans to advance the school board’s current plans, “academic and social-emotional concerns which include being inclusive,” Dufort said. This plan also includes addressing issues with diversity within the school district.

“Is a broad spectrum that includes everyone,” Dufort stated about diversity. Dufort also mentioned that “knowledge is power and if students want to take a course dedicated to certain subjects, we should have them.”



**Dr. Denise Dufort**  
Photo provided by Denise Dufort

# Roe v. Wade is the Turning Point of the Next Election

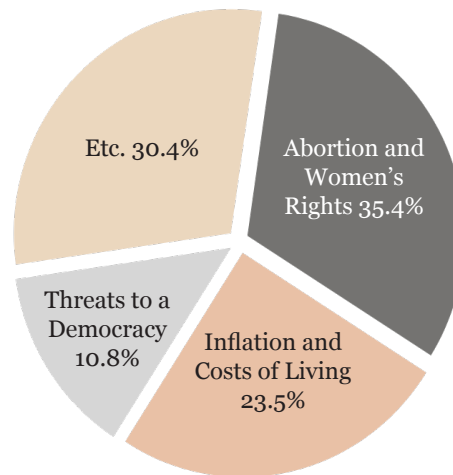


**Jade Schamehorn**  
STAFF WRITER

The upcoming Michigan governor election will be held on Nov. 8th, and people are eager to vote. A survey conducted by WDIV/ Detroit News Polls between Sept. 26th through Sept. 29th found that Michigan voters continue to feel motivated through these upcoming midterm elections.

Abortion rights seem to be the primary incentive for Michigan voters. In a different survey that was also administered, 35.5% of voters said abortion and women's rights are issues that would motivate them to vote in November. 23.6% of people said inflation and the cost of living would be most motivating, while 10.8% said threats to democracy were. The remaining voters said their motivation was education, jobs, the economy, and crime and violence.

Voters who oppose the overturning of the Supreme Court ruling Roe v. Wade favor Governor Gretchen Whitmer over her competitor Tudor Dixon. Among those who oppose, Whitmer leads Dixon 70.2% to 13.8%. Voters, who support the Roe v. Wade decision, however, favor Dixon over Whitmer, 71.4% to 10.9%.



**This chart shows the factors involved that are motivating people to vote. Voters participated in a study from Detroit News Polls to show what they valued most in the election.**

*Photo by Jade Schamehorn/The Comets' Tale*

Voting is organized with a host of positive benefits for individual voters and nonprofits alike. Voter engagement is a critical part of nonprofit work because

it not only helps people and their opinions be heard, but it empowers the people and the communities they live in. Compared to non-voters, voters are more likely to volunteer, contact their elected officials, and stay informed about local affairs.

Governor Whitmer was first elected into office in 2018. Before being elected, she was a member of the state house from 2001 to 2006, and the state senate from 2006 to 2015. Whitmer won after defeating Attorney General Bill Schuette, 53% to 44%. She also succeeded Rick Snyder, switching partisan control of the governorship to Democrats who held office from 2002 to 2010.

Dixon worked in steel sales from 2002 to 2017 before encountering news media and working as an anchor for America's Voice News.

Democratic Governor Whitmer continues to hold a lead over Republican candidate Dixon. Whitmer is currently estimated to win about 49.5% of the vote in November. Dixon's grasp among voters has continued to diminish. As of October the candidate is expected to win only 32.2% of the vote with the remainder of the vote expected to go to independent candidates.

# The Creation of Electoral Curveballs



**Elena Gallaway**  
STAFF WRITER

Political campaigns are always seen during election times, and with the midterm elections coming up in November, election ads are very important. There are countless platforms for candidates to spread messages across the state and even nation, but how important are they really?



**Political ad campaigns are found all over Michigan this time of year. This yard showed their support by planting signs for Dixon and Barrett.**

*Photo by Elena Gallaway/The Comets' Tale*

In correlation to Michigan's upcoming election, current governor Gretchen Whitmer is currently working past opponent Tudor Dixon in the 2022 Michigan governor election, and political advertisements could be why. In September, it was recorded that Democrats funded \$3.1 million into Michigan election ads featured on Hulu, YouTube, and more, unlike the Republican party.

These advertisements can completely change election outcomes and rally hundreds of voters, but just how much work is going into making them?

In 2008 Barack Obama was one of the first to use online ads, throwing 22.25 million dollars into their funding, causing a boom in the industry. Online ads rallied in a whopping \$1.4 billion from 2016 candidates.

Each year the amount spent on these political campaigns and ads increases by the hundreds. The 2020 presidential campaign was one of the most expensive races recorded in history, with \$8.5 billion spent across digital media alone. Campaigns this year putting in 6.4 billion dollars across social media and streaming platforms on 2022 advertisements.

Electoral advertisements put out millions of dollars and viewers each year and are meant for citizens to have the "completely uncensored version of their candidate" according to the American Bar Association. A political ad is defined as "any mass advertisement with the goal of influencing a political debate or election."

In fact, lying is even used as a tactic against opposing candidates. Political campaigns are considered political speech, and therefore, protected under First Amendment rights. The American Psychological Association shared that ads provoking fear with grainy, bad images or speeches influence people to get more information in comparison to happier heartfelt ads.

Even though candidates have the right to say what they want, restrictions are imposed on most platforms. Most social media platforms use microtargeting which uses someone's data to provide a targeted ad. These include political ads, but each platform allows different targeting or restrictions, making the media vastly different.

Along with different restrictions like social media, television stations have their own laws forbidding them to be sued for political advertisements. Since TV stations cannot choose what advertisements they air, and online ads must include disclaimer or disclosure language, only newspapers can be brought to court over an election ad.

Even though they take time, money, and effort around restrictions, election or political ads have held a high seated level of importance due to the swaying of voters and lasting effects they can have on elections. They might be a curveball thrown in the face of politicians, or they might just muster up enough voters to make a candidate win.



# Who is this 'Dr. Barnes'?

Grand Ledge has a new Superintendent - Dr. Bill Barnes



**Willow Nelson**  
STAFF WRITER

Grand Ledge has a new superintendent. His name is Dr. William Barnes. He was voted in by the school board with a 6-1 vote as the new superintendent of Grand Ledge Public Schools

on Aug. 8th. Barnes has worked in public education for 17 years. He used to be a teacher at Lansing Eastern High School and taught at Charlotte High School before becoming their principal for eight years. Barnes came to Grand Ledge in 2019 as an assistant superintendent for academic services.

"It is going really well," Barnes said. "...the school board, students, families, and the community have been very supportive as well, so I feel like we are heading in a really positive direction. I am learning a lot every day, but having a great time as I do."

Barnes graduated from Grand Ledge High School in 2000. In 2005 he earned his Bachelor's degree in English with a math minor and secondary education certificate from Western Michigan University. While working with schools, he earned a Master's degree in K-12 Administration and an Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership. Both degrees were from Michigan State University.

"All of these experiences helped shape who I am as an educator and a leader," Dr. Barnes stated. "In particular, I learned that educational leadership is about listening, seeking feedback, and making sure that all decisions are made with the best interests of students in mind. I also learned that engaging people in helping to make decisions that impact them (including students) is very important, as are celebrating successes, recognizing people's strengths, and always keeping a growth mindset so we are constantly improving."

As a superintendent, he has many plans. The school board approved a strategic plan, which includes improving academics and programs, the learning environment, communication and community engagement, operations, and personnel, as well as leadership.

"I firmly believe that all students can learn, grow, and thrive, and we need to make sure that our district is set up in a way to provide equitable support so that all students have what they need to be successful while they are in school and after they graduate," Barnes said. "That means ensuring that we have a district that values students' perspectives and identities and celebrates our diversity."

A topic that has been on everyone's mind is when the high school construction will be complete. "This round should be done in late March or early April. There are some more projects slated to be completed



**Dr. Bill Barnes stands next to a board that says "Forever a Wacousta Kid". Dr. Barnes attended Wacousta as an elementary student.**

*Photo provided by Dr. Barnes*

at the high school in later phases, but those will be more behind the scenes with heating and cooling."

Now, on a more personal note, who is Dr. Barnes' favorite musician? Well, he has many! Here is what Dr. Barnes said,

"I like a wide variety of music, and what I am listening to depends on what I am doing and the mood I am in. I enjoy classic rock, like Led Zeppelin, but I grew up in the 1990s, so I enjoy bands like the Smashing Pumpkins and Weezer... I also enjoy singer/song writer or folk music, with groups like Mumford and Sons and the Milk Carton Kids. Finally, I am not sure what category it fits into, but I have been a Jimmy Buffett fan since I was a kid!"

Barnes has lots of experience in teaching and leadership, as well as many goals to reach for better schools. The community is excited to see Dr. Barnes work to grow the Grand Ledge schools.

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# The Comets Defeat The Trojans



**Kaysen Strohaber**

STAFF WRITER

Last Friday night, the Grand Ledge Comets varsity football team took on the East Lansing Trojans, at East Lansing High School. This game was the CAAC Blue Championship game

and winning this game allowed the Comets their first league title since 2017.

The game started at 7:00 pm with East Lansing kicking it off to Grand Ledge. Within the first few minutes of the game, Shawn Foster had a long pass to Teddy Williams which gained them many yards to the endzone. Foster then ran the ball to the end zone for Grand Ledge to be the first on the scoreboard. The Comets were not able to score much more this quarter but Christian Legal kicked a 34-yard field goal to make the score 10-0, with Grand Ledge in the lead.

In Grand Ledge's next drive Foster passed the ball to Evan Shelby who continued to score a touchdown for the Comets. The Trojans then went on to score a touchdown making the score 17-7, following an East Lansing touchdown. Foster then made a run and got another throwdown, making the score 24-7. Just as the second quarter came to an end the Trojans scored and the half ended with the score being 24-14, Grand Ledge in the lead.



**Shawn Foster runs over to the student section after the Comets' big win on Friday night. The football team will play Brighton this Friday, Oct. 28th.**

*Photo by Kaysen Strohaber/The Comets' Tale*

As the third quarter began, the Trojans were stopped short of a touchdown by the Comet's defense. Even though they were stopped, the Trojans still scored a field goal, making the score 24-17. The whole third quarter was a back-and-forth game between the two teams, but as the third quarter was coming to a close, Mason Stocker scored a touchdown, making the score 31-17 at the end of the third quarter.

The last quarter of the night began with the Trojans scoring a touchdown and making the score 31-23. The Trojans did miss their chance for an extra point, causing the score to be 31-23. Within the next minutes, Stocker got another touchdown making the score 38-23. Following Stocker's touchdown, the Trojans scored and made the game close at 38-30. With less than two minutes left, Foster ran the ball and got another touchdown, making the score 45-30.

This led to the Trojans receiving the kickoff but fumbling the ball. By doing this, Grand Ledge obtained possession of the ball in the fourth quarter with less than two minutes on the clock, securing the win for the Comets.

Winning this game was big for the Comets. It allowed them to win the CAAC Blue Championship title which they share with Holt. The Comets' will play in the first round of playoffs this Friday, Oct. 28th in Brighton.

## Unfinished Business



**Olivia Navin**

STAFF WRITER

The Grand Ledge volleyball team has been fighting to overcome injuries since the season began. Just on the second day of tryouts, Senior captain, Grace Grew, went down with a torn

ACL ending her season. Grew was projected to be one of the top Lansing area returners, after being a well-known contributor in last year's district championship.

"My injury is one of the hardest things I will go through, it has impacted me and my team to a high degree," Grew said.

Even while losing one of their key players, the team still started off the season strong beating Holt in five sets. The girls went on to win three more going 4-1 in their first five games.

As more injuries arose, the team found themselves having to dig deeper and work hard at practices to overcome more challenges.

"One of our big goals is that we want to come into practice every day and be ready to work hard," Grew mentioned.

After having high expectations this year, team bonding has also become a huge part of this year's goals and trying to adapt to new players coming in this new season. As the girls strive to repeat their district title from last year, they focus heavily on new chemistry and winning a new title.

This 2022 season, Grand Ledge has the home-court advantage and is hosting districts starting on the Nov. 1st. The girls will face school rival, Holt High School, for their first tournament game. The team has faced Holt twice, beating them once, and losing once in a tough match.

"Moving forward, we are all trying to work together better and make sure we build on our performance. Holt will be a tough match for us to start the tournament off, but we know we are capable of beating them and are looking forward to that game every day as it approaches," GLHS Junior and the team's middle blocker, Jayda Stocker said.



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# Arguably the Best



**Jayda Stocker**  
STAFF WRITER

## Michigan State

East Lansing, home of the MSU Spartans, is right out of our back-door! One of the top rivals of MSU, is U-of-M Wolverines. While these teams match up in the stadium, the bandwagon fans of U-of-M dress in their displeasing school colors of blue and mustard yellow, along with their rabid wolverine university mascot.

Spartans on the other hand, have their aesthetically pleasing color combinations to represent the best school mascot in the Big10, Sparty. The fanbase of MSU comes from deep in the heart, where fans are loyal to the Spartans no matter the outcome. Grand Ledge students enroll at MSU with it being close to home and their loving family nearby. Tailgating every weekend with parents and college friends, the students at MSU live life to the fullest knowing they're not a wolverine.

U-of-M fans have been tagging along each year hoping that their sports team does something worthwhile. Their fanbase may turn to Michigan State when the MSU packaging program gets its true recognition. With the program being number 1 through-



**Grant Dorland**  
CO-EDITOR

## Michigan

Michigan and Michigan State, one of the most heated rivalries in all of sports. But which one is better? Clearly, it's Michigan.

The University of Michigan is one of the most renowned public universities in the country. Campus life provides a fun and exciting environment while you are learning from some of the best professors in the world.

Outside of the classroom sports are an essential part of the college experience and Michigan doesn't disappoint in the athletic department. The Wolverines sport a top 5 football program fresh off a Big Ten title win and a College Football Playoff appearance. Not to mention the one-of-a-kind atmosphere The Big House provides as it's the biggest stadium in the country.

The hockey team just had four of the top five draft picks in the NHL draft and are ready to make another Frozen Four. The women's gymnastics team is only two years removed from a national championship victory. And the men's basketball team has been to five consecutive sweet 16s the longest current stretch in the country.

Outside of athletics, the city of Ann Arbor is live-

out all Michigan colleges, it puts loads of light on to mechanical engineering. The program offers twelve different scholarships available to the PKG students awarded by the packaging industry organizations.

Scholarships that are available have been made possible by the donations from the MSU alumni and the corporate and association partners. Along with the number 1 packaging program, MSU Spartans have a Division I NCAA men's soccer team. The team has

made nine appearances in the NCAA Division I men's soccer tournament. Just recently in 2022, Farai Mutatu, a MSU men's soccer player, was drafted in the first round as the 21st overall pick to the Los Angeles Galaxy.

As MSU's football season comes up on its final games, tune in on October 29th when the Spartans are set to face off with the Wolverines at the Baby house.



**The Comets's tale is divided on this in state rivalry. The two teams face off this Saturday, October 29th at 7:30pm.**

*Photo by Mayra Santiago/The Comets' Tale*

ly with a lot of activities surrounding the needs of day-to-day student life. Post-game dinners would be no problem as the city is home to many 4 and 5-star restaurants and bars perfect for filling your tailgate appetite.

Academics are nothing easy at the school and it's a challenge to even get in, only twenty-two percent of applicants are accepted. Michigan has a top-ten nursing program, law program, and engineering program, getting into those is even harder than the school itself.

The connections that the school provides for students looking to go into to job after graduation is unmatched. The university has one of the largest alumni bases in the country and is a prime reason why many students are able to be successful right after gradu-

ation. Some of the most esteemed alumni are Tom Brady the best quarterback in NFL history, Derek Jeter a hall of fame baseball player, and Stephen Ross the owner of the Miami Dolphins.

If you care about athletics and academics then U-of-M is clearly the better school and MSU sucks.

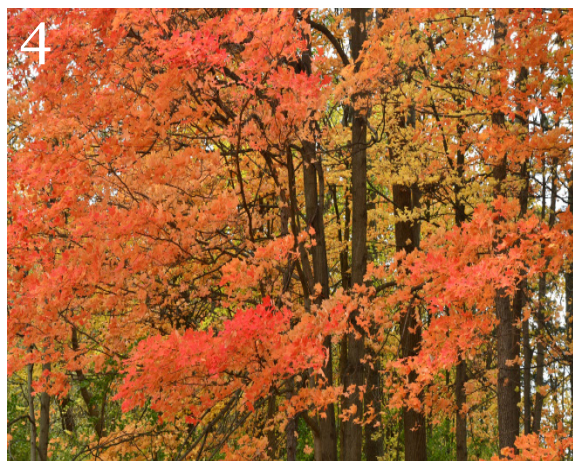




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THE COMETS' TALE PAGE 12 PHOTOSTORY

# A Flourish of Fall Color



**1. The town of Grand Ledge is bursting with colors this fall season. Trees that ranged from orange to green surrounded and decorated the school's band parking lot, which gave staff and students a taste of fall each and every morning.**

*Photo by Ava Delaney/The Comets' Tale*

**2. During this chilly season, it's very common to see plenty of warm colors lining the streets. Throughout Grand Ledge many trees have kept their green pop of color for the start of fall time.**

*Photo by Marisol Macias/The Comets' Tale*

**3. The first of many changes! Outside of the High School this fiery orange tree was the first of its bunch to sport those classic autumn colors.**

*Photo by Madeline Gooley/The Comets' Tale*

**4. The trees surrounding the school display a beautiful glow for all to enjoy. These gorgeous colors were only a piece of the autumn beauty in Grand Ledge.**

*Photo by Marisol Macias/The Comets' Tale*

**5. Autumn colors decorate the entire Grand Ledge community. These trees showed their robust colors over the past few weeks.**

*Photo by Marisol Macias/The Comets' Tale*