

Grand Ledge High School's

The Comets' Tale



Volume 57 Issue II December 2024 820 Spring St. Grand Ledge, MI



Check out page 4 to learn about the new changes to FAFSA

Check out page 7 to learn about students' holiday traditions

Check out page 8 to see how Grand Ledge's Boys and Girls' Basketball Teams are doing

Letter from the Editors

Kaysen Strohaber

EDITOR IN CHIEF



Hey readers!

Welcome to The Comets' Tale Newspaper. This publication is the second of the five publications. We try to include new voices in each publication, so be on the lookout for that. This edition features students' favorite holiday movies and traditions, offers important updates for GLHS Seniors, and talks about some of the most popular events in our community, like the Collage Concert and the Silver Bells in the City parade.

We love to hear feedback from our readers, so if anyone wants to reach out or ask questions, please do. We are always looking for story ideas that our readers would like to see!

Be sure to check out our website, glcometstale.com, for exclusive articles, and follow The Comets' Tale on Instagram and Facebook.

Thank you all for reading, and have a happy holiday and winter break!

Kaysen Strohaber
Editor-in-Chief

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).

Global Warming In Action



Ava Delaney
COPY EDITOR

This year the first day of snow in Michigan was November 21st. Other noticeable differences are the temperature; some say they've experienced way cooler temperatures around this time in previous years.

Another noticeable difference is the ice on Michigan's Great Lakes is forming later and melting sooner; this could harm the fish and water life population and also worsen water quality.

Global warming is the long-term heating of the earth. Heating from the sun is natural, however, due to excess Greenhouse gases and an increase in carbon dioxide, the earth is experiencing a gradual increase of earth's temperature. This will cause long-term temperature changes and shifts in weather.

Jeff Darden, a Science teacher at Grand ledge High school explains the causes of Climate change

"Climate change mainly comes from the problem of burning fossil fuels which puts more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and then traps more heat so temperatures are going up and it creates a runaway effect," Darden said.

While global warming can seem like an overwhelming topic, there are things people can do to help the environment overall, such as reducing their carbon footprint. During the holidays, there are multiple ways to reduce waste. Science Department Chair, Courtney McDonnell shares how you can help lessen the effects of global warming.

"There's so much, monitoring our own electrical consumption and the use of fossil fuels in our transpiration as well as silly little things like turning off lights or not running the car when it's just sitting

there. Bigger things we can do like biking and walking instead of driving someplace," McDonnell said.

There are things done daily that also affect climate change.

"Something's you don't even consider like how much we consume, and how much we purchase from the stores. That has an effect that we don't even imagine, like transportation of those goods to the store, and every time we order from Amazon, the more boxes and shipments and the more we are utilizing those services causes more omissions to happen," McDonnell said.

McDonnell spread awareness on what climate change is.

"As we add more greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide and methane into the atmosphere more heat energy is trapped."

"We are having higher than average temperatures monthly every year," McDonnell said.

There seems to be a small amount of awareness when it comes to global warming in education. Currently in GLHS, there is no course or elective that focuses on climate change or its effects. Still, McDonnell believes this topic should be a main focus in science courses.

"Climate change is and should be taught. In biology, students look at scientific data, analyze the impacts and predictions of climate change, and learn actionable steps they should take to combat climate change."

As of now, there is no plan to create an elective science course that focuses exclusively on climate change.

Other places in the United States like Washington DC and Boston have seen temperatures of 80 degrees or more in November. The average temperature for

those areas is 30-50 degrees. Overall signs of global warming are starting to be more apparent.

How Does a Snow Day get Decided?

During the Winter, having snow days is one of the students' biggest wishes. So how does it get decided?

Typically during the winter, Grand Ledge Public School's Superintendent, Bill Barnes, and three other district leaders get up at 4:00 am to drive around and test out the conditions of the roads. Dr. Barnes, Dr. Gabriel, the assistant superintendent, Mr. Buckles the transportation supervisor, and Mr. Root, the operational manager, split the district into four areas and each take a section to investigate road conditions.

Other local school districts do the same thing and meet up to decide if the conditions of the roads are too risky for students. This decision is often made around 5:00 am. In extreme cases, when the forecast is predicting horrible conditions, district leadership may decide to call a snow day on the night before.

Eco Club's Initiative to a Create a Healthier Environment



Cecilia Arredondo
STAFF WRITER

The Environmental Club (Eco Club) is a club here at Grand Ledge High School (GLHS) where students work on projects that benefit the environment. The club has many members, as students can craft things that are healthy for our community while also being fun to make. "We're dedicated to making environmental issues known, spreading the word about different issues, and doing fun crafts to help support it," Eco Club's vice president, Nellie Wernet, said. Creating "bug hotels", terrariums out of reused milk jugs, and carv-

ing pumpkins are all things that the club has done to involve students in a good cause.

Eco Club's board members are aware of issues such as global warming and have been coming up with ways to make a change with club activities. "We really want to plant wildflowers around the school to help promote pollinators. Planting trees and plants helps reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere," Wernet said. "We've also gone around and picked up trash outside the school, which can help with global warming and just keeping the planet cleaner in general. Reusing materials, like last year, we made reusable bird feeders out of old materials and that was a really fun thing to do."

Students have busy lives, they drive to school every day, attend local sporting events, get ready for the holidays and much more— all of which might con-

tribute to global warming. It's helpful for students to know what they can do to improve their actions. "Make yourself aware of the issues, do research and find a lot of information out, and see what you can do personally to make an impact," Wernet said. "Ride your bike to school, if you can, carpool with people, do things like that just to make a small impact every day," Wernet stated.

It may be beneficial to be mindful of your actions, as trying to make a small change every day could be useful for the future. "It's something that wasn't necessarily this generation's fault, but it definitely is going to impact the world in the years to come. And so, trying to make a change and make a difference is a really huge thing that needs to happen to keep our world healthy for the future generations," Wernet said.

FAFSA Opens To Seniors



Kaysen Strohaber
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Major changes may be coming for high school students when it comes to applying for financial aid for post-secondary education. FAFSA, which

stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid, is a form that allows high school seniors to apply to be eligible for federal student aid, such as grants, work-study funds, and loans.

For previous graduating seniors, completing the FAFSA has been optional, but a new proposed bill could make completing the FAFSA a requirement for future classes of graduating students. Senate Bill 463 has recently been voted on by the House Education Committee in Michigan, and will now move to the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote. If passed, FAFSA completion would become a graduation requirement for the class of 2026.

"FAFSA for seniors is the gateway into college access. [For] any two-year school, [or] four-year school, FAFSA allows you to access scholarships, funding and grants...to help support you," GLPS Superintendent Bill Barnes said.

Despite the advantages that a completed FAFSA offers students, it can often be seen as a mystery to students. Many students don't even know why they are filling it out, and what it does for them once it is filled out. The high school wants the students to know about FAFSA, but they also want their students to understand why they are filling out the applications.

"I think it's important for students to complete it, but it's important for students to know why they're completing it. There are a great number of postsecondary that don't require a college education/FAFSA," Barnes said.

To some, completing the FAFSA may seem pointless, as post-secondary education is not the only option available to students.

"What we don't want to diminish is the non-college option. Going to college, going into the military, etc. are all of equal value at the end of high school...Our job as a school district is not to make you college or career-ready, but to make you choice-ready," Barnes said.

While there have been concerns raised about the potential consequences that this law could have on Michigan students, there has also been a push to ensure the equitability of this law.

"This will not stop the student from graduating but it will require them to fill out the FAFSA paperwork, which will be better for them in the long run," State Representative, and chair of the House Education Committee, Matt Koleszar said.

Making the FAFSA a graduation requirement for Michigan students aims to provide students with better access to financial aid.

"They will get more money for a post-high school education whether that be college or the trades they will hopefully have more money that they will have access to, that will help them pay for that," Koleszar said.

With FAFSA completion not being a requirement for the graduating class of 2025 or prior graduating classes, there has been less emphasis on this topic,

which has led to money available for financial aid going unused.

"Michigan ranks very low in FAFSA completion which means there is a lot of money out there from the federal government that could help kids reduce their student loan debt could help them get to a post-secondary education easier," Koleszar said.

Lawmakers and educators alike hope that this new law could help more Michigan students have access to post-secondary opportunities.

"This could be a real homerun for Michigan students and help unlock a lot of access to college and trades, it can relieve a lot of financial barriers," Koleszar said.



Ava Delaney
COPY EDITOR

Senior Season

Hey Seniors! Winter has arrived and there are some important upcoming dates to add to your

calendar.

First, December 20th is the due date for Senior Pictures. You must submit these to the yearbook staff in order for your senior photo to be included in the yearbook. Senior Advertisements must be purchased by December 20th. Family members can purchase these advertisements to include fun pictures, words of wisdom or memories of their seniors.

Now that it's December, FAFSA has opened. If you plan on attending college after high school or are not sure what to do, it's always a great idea to fill out FAFSA for more future opportunities. Check out the FAFSA article in this publication for more information.

With break approaching it can be a time full of Senioritis. To combat possible senior drought, consider participating in school and other activities. Make sure to enjoy your senior year and the winter break to come. Some fun events around are Boys and girls basketball has started, enjoy dressing up for the student section and supporting the Comets. Other winter sports that have started that would love some student support are Wrestling and Swim.

Even though it's senior year, don't be shy to check out some clubs or activities through the school. Certain clubs are still open to everyone and would enjoy participation.

Overall Seniors enjoy your last year at Grand Ledge High School, and have fun on the upcoming winter break!

SALON 219

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20% off all Teen Facials

*Mention coupon when booking appointment

GL Non-Profits Strives To Care For The Community



Kaysen Strohaber

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

GLEAP, the Grand Ledge Emergency Assistance Program, helps community members with short-term emergencies, who are in need of help. These emergencies can include

losing a job, needing help paying a bill, or even just getting groceries.

"If someone loses a job or needs help, we will help with water bills, utilities, housing and we also have a unique partnership with the Grand Ledge Food Bank. We give the food bank money for food that they can give out to the community every month," Michelle D'Alessandro, Grand Ledge High School (GLHS) librarian and GLEAP board member said.

The community gives to this organization in order for the organization to give it all directly back to community members in need of help.

"Each year we take in about \$65,000 and give out \$60,000 right back to the community," D'Alessandro said.

With the holiday season in full swing, the community tends to have a higher need for more supplies and help with families. Many of these families want to be able to give more to their family members but don't always have the opportunity to. So families in the

community want to give back to an organization that could have once helped themselves.

"We have had people say 'well I'm going to donate once I'm back on my feet, you know you've helped me and I understand what this is about'," Angel Landis a GLHS English teacher said.

The board includes very few people to keep the confidentiality of their clients a priority. The confidentiality of the clients is so important so it is very hard for students to be involved in the program. If students are interested in being involved there are a few ways that they can help, such as getting the word out about GLEAP as well as helping with social media accounts, especially the designing of the website that GLEAP has.



A shopper looks through the womens clothes to find an outfit for her new job. KC3 has be open to the community for years.

Photo by Kaysen Strohaber/The Comets' Tale

Ken Clark's Coat Cloest Spreading The Warmth

Ken Clark's Coat Closet (KC3) has been opened up for the holiday season once again. The annual Grand Ledge Shopping Tour has been a hit at KC3 for many years, and many families use this event in order to meet their winter needs.

The shopping tour is where families are given a specific day and time to come in and get all the winter essentials like winter coats, boots, gloves and hats.

"We have been trying to do more outreach to Pure Heart of Michigan where even then they can come in on days that we aren't necessarily open and bring large groups of people that are the most in need," Eaton RESA, GECKO Coordinator Sarah Mida said.

KC3 was started by Midas' family and they have been doing everything they can in order to keep KC3 open. They pay out of their own pockets, so a lot of times anything helps.

"We got a \$5,000 grant this year from Meijer for the Community Service Award for the area, that was a pretty big deal because without that, my family just pays the rent and expenses and that will pay utilities for ten months," Mida said.

The main goal of KC3 was to give kids with disabilities more work and social opportunities. There are no paid employees at KC3. Instead, they involve kids from the Eaton County area with disabilities to come and get experiences that they might not get anywhere else.

"The hope is here that the students learn the skills on how to interact with customers, how to follow directions, inventory, and learn a lot of skills that they can take to other jobs in the community," Mida said.

The involvement of different schools in Eaton County allows students to meet other peers that they might have not had the opportunity to meet before.

The friendships that are created are real friendships that are being formed. KC3 is all about inclusion of students with disabilities and the friendships that are made are just one of the perks of working at KC3 along with the life skills that are learned that

Key Club: A Place Of Service and Community Impact



Elizabeth Garcia

STAFF WRITER

Key Club, a student-led volunteer organization, continues to make change at Grand Ledge High School, offering students a fun and impactful

way to give back to both their school and the larger community.

For many members, the club is more than just a place to complete volunteer hours, it's a community where friendships are built, and a shared passion for service thrives.

Juniors Rima Hafez and Hayley Thomas (Vice President), both active members of the Key Club, shared their insights on how the club operates and how it has impacted them and others. For Hafez, Key Club has completely changed her perspective on community service.

"Key Club has impacted me by showing me that community service doesn't have to feel tiresome or burdening like a job, but instead it's something really fun that you can do with your friends," Hafez said.

The sense of fulfillment that comes with volunteering is something Hafez deeply values, and it's an outlook that resonates with many members of the club.

Thomas echoed this sentiment, explaining how the club is designed to make participation easy and accessible for everyone.

The welcoming nature of Key Club is one of the reasons students feel comfortable joining and staying involved.

"The atmosphere is very welcoming and encouraging. The club leaders are very kind and positive, which makes the overall environment refreshing and fun!" Hafez said.

The primary mission of Key Club is to create opportunities for students to make a difference, whether it's through local projects or larger initiatives.

"Key Club is all about volunteering," Thomas said. "We try and find as many opportunities as possible to help in the community, whether it's making dog toys



Key Club students decorate dog toys in one of their meetings. Key Club meets every other Wednesday.

Photo by Kaysen Strohaber/The Comets' Tale

for a local shelter or writing appreciation letters to teachers."

This variety of projects not only helps those in need but also gives club members a chance to see the impact of their efforts, keeping them motivated and excited for future volunteer opportunities. One of Thomas' most rewarding experiences has been organizing events like the MSU Hockey Game Concessions, where Key Club members help run concessions during games.

"I'm in charge of organizing and handling this event," Thomas said. "I feel like my job is really just helping relieve some of the pressure off of everyone however I can."

The club's collaborative environment means that everyone plays a part in making these events a success. Keeping members excited and engaged throughout the year is a priority for the club's leadership.

"I plan on finding as many fun and interesting volunteer opportunities that aren't necessarily difficult but enjoyable enough to keep members excited to come to meetings," Thomas said.

The club also participates in upcoming holiday events like the Grand Ledge shopping tour.

During the event, Key Club members can shop for less fortunate children and families, making the holiday season brighter for those in need. For Thomas, this initiative exemplifies the heart of Key Club—volunteering in a way that's both fun and meaningful.

The End of an Era



Andy Sequoia
STAFF WRITER

This year is the 16th annual Grand Ledge High School Collage Concert, and the last one for choir director Mrs. Sheri Petersen. After 16 years of being the head choir director here at Grand Ledge High School, Petersen officially announced at the beginning of 2024 that she will retire after this school year.

The Collage Concert features the Grand Ledge High School (GLHS) band and choirs. "Collage is a spectacular arrangement of all the musical arts to be presented in front of a crowd," junior Madrigal choir member Xander Lieb said.

While Collage displays both the choirs and band, it also showcases many soloists and small groups, whether it be with instruments, singing, or even both.

Mrs. Petersen and band teacher Mr. John Szczerowski, who both started teaching in Grand Ledge in 2008, formed the idea of Collage to bring unity to the music department.

"The old band and choir director did not get along, and we were like 'You know what? We're gonna get along' and 'Hey, let's do this Collage Concert'. And so that's where it started, and in 2008 was the first Collage Concert," Petersen said.



Choir director Sheri Petersen directs Vocal Ensemble during the Collage Concert. They performed Santa Baby for those in the audience.
Photo by Kaysen Strohaber/The Comets' Tale

With Petersen retiring after the 2024-2025 school year the responsibility as head choir director has been confirmed to be passed on to Mr. Kenneth Bedwell.

"Next year I will actually be here at the high school primarily teaching all four choirs (Vocal Ensemble,

Concert Choir, Bel Canto, and Madrigals). So we will be looking for another 'me' next year, someone to co-teach and fill my current positions," Bedwell said.

While anticipating his role next year, he currently co-teaches two choirs at the high school, co-teaches the Beagle Middle School Boys Choir, and teaches exploratory choir at Hayes Intermediate.

With Bedwell taking over next year, many students have been wondering what will happen to the annual concert.

"I would love to see Collage continue on. I see it as a tradition of GLHS' fine arts and I believe this is one of the many traditions we have that should stay," Lieb says.

Petersen agrees with Lieb in that she would like to see the tradition continue, along with the traditions that have formed within the concert.

"I certainly hope that he keeps the ending piece and it doesn't always have to be the same as we know but it's a wonderful way to end," Petersen said.

Acknowledging how important Collage is for students, parents, and community members, Bedwell is excited to take over and continue the tradition.

"I would think in the first couple years after Mrs. Petersen leaves, keeping current traditions is probably the best way to go because especially if the traditions have been there for a long time it's really more for the students and the community, so definitely, Collage has to happen," Bedwell said.

Door Decorating Embraces DEI Principles



Kameron Yang
STAFF WRITER

Over the past year, Grand Ledge High School (GLHS) has been implementing changes to promote diversity in the school.

This year, as the holiday season approaches, GLHS' Student Council decided to take the initiative on the annual door decorating contest and collaborate with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) board to incorporate culture in the doors and spread awareness of inclusivity.

As they moved forward with decorating plans, Student Council and DEI aimed to use this opportunity to celebrate diverse cultures. They were encouraged to continue their plan when teachers expressed enthusiasm about the change that would be taking place.

"I think that it is a good idea, not a lot of people know about other cultures so it will give kids a chance to learn about them and the adults too," Spanish teacher Brenna Corby said.

By advancing with this collaboration, Student Coun-

cil's Student Involvement Chair, senior Kylie Goodman, had worked with DEI's students and teachers regarding how they want to move forward with door decorating and this initiative.

"This is the first year that the student council has taken door decorating on but I think it is really nice," Goodman said.

When this plan was proposed to the students of the DEI board, they all expressed excitement that this new step would be taking place for them as a whole.

"Grand Ledge is not known for being diverse, so by incorporating cultures into door decorating this year it is showing us that we're taking that step forward and I think that is amazing," Hispanic & Latino Student Union (HLSU) President, junior Elena Solanzo said.

With this change now in place, both DEI and Student Council hope that it will continue to thrive and help raise awareness for students and teachers on this subject.

"Even though it's not a huge thing it is still a small step to creating more inclusivity and raising awareness for things that people might normally think about," Goodman said.



Students Addison Sklapsky, Kailynn Stricker-Batson, and Mariesa Stover (left to right) creating the design for their door. The group successfully completed this by bringing their ideas together.

Photo by Ashlee Whitten/The Comets' Tale

Holiday Cheer

Students and Teachers Share their Favorite Christmas Traditions



Raegan Ward
STAFF WRITER

As the holiday season approaches, Grand Ledge High School students are reflecting on the unique traditions that make the holidays special to their families. From Christmas Eve rituals to festive family activities, these traditions highlight how the season brings people together.

For junior Maya Cool, the holiday season starts with the smell of pine. Her family has been picking out a real Christmas tree for 16 years, always heading to Reverman Farms to find the perfect one.

“What makes it special is that it’s a time where just my family and I can spend time together. A lot of people I know get fake trees, so it makes it special to my family,” Cool said.

The process of selecting and decorating the tree



brings her family together in a way that feels unique to them.

Every family has a tradition or two that make the holiday season special, and for Amy Heriford, one of Grand Ledge’s math teachers, Christmas Eve is about staying active and embracing her faith.

Her family begins the day by lacing up their running shoes to participate in the Playmakers Holiday Classic 5k Run, an event that holds personal significance to the family.

“We run the Playmakers Holiday Classic 5k Run every Christmas Eve because my brother is one of the owners of Playmakers,” Heriford said.

After the race, the festivities continue with her family spending the rest of the night at their church where they have been going for years. Heriford notes that it is a great way to end the day with her family and friends.

Senior Katelyn Roberts’ holiday traditions center around Christmas Eve and Christmas morning. Every December 24th, she gathers at her uncle’s house to celebrate. Later that night, Roberts and her family bake sugar cookies for Santa, with The Polar Express playing in the background.

“Every Christmas morning, we eat cinnamon rolls before opening presents,” Roberts said.

She and her brother often wake up early, sneaking a look at the gifts under the tree before the rest of her family is awake. These moments are what make the holiday season special in her home.

For English teacher Jay Skeen, Christmas Eve always begins the same way: gathering with family to watch the movie, Annabelle’s Wish. It is a tradition that has been passed down since he was a child.

On Christmas morning, the traditions continue with a memorable dish.

“My mom has made sticky buns every year since I was a kid,” Skeen said. Now that he has a two-year-old son, Skeen’s values on Christmas have changed.

“It’s all about watching my son get his presents and seeing his excitement during Christmas. We even work out in our Christmas PJs,” Skeen said.

Most Grand Ledge High School students and staff can agree that traditions are about celebrating with our family and friends. As Maya Cool put it “It’s not the act of cutting down a tree and placing it in my living room that’s special, it’s the fact that I get to do it with my family every year that makes the tradition worth keeping alive.”

Maya Cool’s family cuts down their Christmas tree at Reverman Farms. For the past 16 years, this outing has been a special way for her family to celebrate the start to the holiday season.

Photo provided by Maya Cool/The Comets’ Tale

Pop Culture Column



Abbie Perri
PHOTO EDITOR

As the holiday season begins, students’ minds are one one thing: what to add to their Christmas list. As a teenager, it’s one of the most fun parts of the holiday. Creating a Christmas list is one of the first things to get done. In the past

years, social media trends have had a major impact on Christmas list.. One thing going viral and everyone wants it. This year I have personally seen a lot of the same big things on the Christmas list, and I’m guilty of having my list be filled with trends.

Fashion has always been a major staple on Christmas lists.

“My Christmas list consists of a lot of clothing, clothes are my top items on my list this year” senior Addison Burke said.

Some of the most popular clothing brands on Christmas lists this year include Lululemon, Brandy Melville and American Eagle. For shoes and accessories, we see Uggs, small purses, and jewelry, especially with gold jewelry making a comeback. All of those are seen a lot on the list this year.

Skin care is another really big category on Christmas lists this year. Last year, skin care tutorials became viral and hit social media hard. Since then there have been even more trendy health and beauty items on the Christmas list. Some popular brands this year include Summer Friday, Drunk Elephant, and Lainage.

Even though teens are growing up they still have some childhood items on their list. If you haven’t heard of JellyCats yet, I’ll tell you about them. They are a very popular stuffed animal brand becoming big. They are personally my favorite item on my Christmas list.

“One thing for sure I’m going to be having on my list are JellyCats, they are one of my favorite big trends right now,” senior Faith Landers said.

Another childhood item coming back is Legos, with some of the popular sets having a mature look now. Lego flowers have become some of the most popular Lego sets on Christmas lists this year. Their botanical collection has brought the popularity of Legos back. Not only are these sets beautiful, but they come without the unfortunate short-term life of real flowers.

As you think of what to ask for Christmas, think about what matters the most to you. Remember, sometimes what you like the best might not be super popular on Tik-Tok or Instagram. The best presents come from the heart, not social media.



SCAN ME!

Varsity Basketball Team Looks Ahead as Senior Players Lead the Charge This Season



Maansi Budapanahalli
STAFF WRITER

This season GLHS Varsity Boys Basketball has a majority of senior members. The team consists of 12 players; of the 12, only five members are either sophomores or juniors.

With the future ahead, seniors are getting ready to plan for their future. Four of the seven members have already received offers to play basketball in college.

"I have been offered and am [now] committed to play basketball at Northwood University this following year," Senior Carson Daly stated.

Apart from the seniors, the upcoming grades of freshmen, sophomores, and juniors are preparing for the years ahead of them while they keep their goal of making the varsity team.

"I think we can still build a good team around [upcoming seniors] because we have a lot of good leaders in my grade and I think we have a good future ahead of us," junior Jace Conaty said.

Coach Luke Charter who has been coaching for 3 years explains how he has been training the younger grades for their potential future on the varsity team.

"I have my Freshman and J.V. coaches running the offense that I want to run at the Varsity level,"

"I think the future is really good. We have a lot of seniors right now, but the class below us are very talented and I think they'll be great," Millbrook said.

Seniors have continued to work hard and dedicate their time to this sport, but this same passion and motivation are shown in the juniors and sophomores.

"I think we're going to get better and better, we have a lot of talent this year and we have a lot of potential to have a good season, so as the games go on we'll get better," Conaty expressed.

As the senior members head into their final season at the high school, they reminisce on the years before.

"My favorite memories are the rival games, I like how packed the gyms are and how intense the game is. That's my favorite [memory]," Carson Daly said.

The players have also developed friendships and bonds over the years. While these bonds have been

developed through basketball, they have also expanded outside of the sport.

"My favorite memory would be when we went up with the team to Petosky for a tournament, just being up there with the team was fun," Millbrook said.

This upcoming season has been a lot of preparation for the team, not just practices but also working in the off-season and in the weight room.

"I'm excited to get back to basketball and watch these guys grow, over the summer they took a lot of steps and we now have four guys [right now] that have college offers to play basketball, so that's pretty exciting," Charter said.

As the seniors approach their last year, they have been the first class to experience all four years with Charter.

"This senior class is important to me because I was the freshman coach when they were freshmen, so I've had relationships with them and their families for a long time now, so it will be pretty hard to watch them go," said Charter.

New Coaches Lead The Girls Basketball Team



Mayson Morgan
STAFF WRITER

The Grand Ledge Girls Basketball season is here, with new coaches, new players, and, for the first time in 2 years, a girl's freshman team.

Ara Parseghian, a chemistry teacher, is the new head coach for the Girls Varsity team. Brandon Lawler, a Spanish teacher is the assistant. The new Junior Varsity coach is Allison Miller, who is also the varsity softball coach. Casey McDonell, another science teacher, will lead the freshmen as their new coach.

Parseghian has coached since 1998; first coaching middle school girls, continuing his career of coaching in Georgia, then Hayes Middle School, and now re-joining the Grand Ledge High School girls team after already having experience with the Grand Ledge girls team Parseghian had coached in the past. Parseghian has had much experience with the game of basketball, and has continued to follow the passion of coaching for this upcoming season.

"I want to create a great experience for the girls that are on our team. My number one priority is that when these girls are done playing basketball I want it to be the best or one of their best experiences in high school." Parseghian said.

The team is most excited to play Dewitt this year. Dewitt had always been a game that makes the team

work. Dewitt has good communication skills, and is good at getting the ball up and down the court.

"I always respect a good team. Dewitt is a challenge, but the good thing about a challenge is that it brings out the best in us." Parseghian said.

The team will be going up against Dewitt on Dec.10 at Dewitt high school. The team is prepared to bring all they have learned in practice onto the court.

The Grand Ledge girls team is full of positive, reinforcing mindsets. The players are dependent on themselves and one another to create a bond between each other. One of these key players is Gianna Naccarato.

Naccarato has played on varsity all four years of high school. When Naccarato first started high school her biggest goal was her confidence in the game, being such a young player on the team with older girls.

The Grand Ledge girls team will have to prepare for this season by working hard and dedication themselves to the game. Motivation is what pushes a team to be better, and the Grand Ledge girls are full of it. Lexi Raska has played point guard on varsity since she was a freshman. Raska is now entering her junior year and strives to lead her team to a district championship. In doing so, she practices by spending time outside of the season going to individual training sessions five to seven times a week.

Raska has had an ongoing passion for the game of basketball, she practices, learns and dedicates herself daily.

This season the JV players strive to create a bond

between the team, while learning the game at the high school level. Players on this team have a goal of making varsity next year, and the way they plan on doing so is by staying consistent.

"I have played since I was little, I love the game and I want to push myself to make varsity next year." MClean voiced.

MClean is a freshman point guard on JV. She has played all throughout middle school with the same girls she is entering high school.

"It has been very helpful and comforting playing with girls I already know, I also know how they play the game which is always good for the game," MClean said.



Varsity Girls Basketball players huddle up during a time out. The girls lost their game to Dewitt.

Photo provided by Mayson Morgan/The Comets' Tale

'24 - '25 Boys Wrestling



Erin McGinnis
CO-EDITOR

Boys wrestling at Grand Ledge High School (GLHS) has once again started up for the season. Coach Mark Buckland is returning for his fifth year as varsity head coach and 16th year in the program. Both varsity and junior-varsity are coached by Buckland.

Coach Buckland had the boys doing pre-season conditioning by running, lifting, and competing in scrimmages to kick off their season. The first scrimmage was held at Lakewood High School on Nov. 27, 2024 and the other on Dec. 30, 2024 at Dewitt High School.

The first official meet was on Dec. 4, 2024 held at Caledonia High School. Two juniors who have been a part of the team since freshman year set personal and team goals for the '24-'25 season.

"My goals are to win a state title and to help lead my team to qualify for the team state tournament. We only lost a couple seniors last year so we should be a

solid team overall," junior Eben Abdo said.

Another junior, Logan Tollison, who recently ranked first division 1 at 285 for the '24-'25 season, spoke of areas for his personal growth this season.

"My personal goals this year is state champion but for the team, I'd like to make it to states and I expect a state title moving into next year."

During his sophomore season, Tollison finished second in states and wants to continue to grow as he gets further into high school.

Both players qualified for the '23-'24 state championship held at Ford Field as Tollison (215 lbs) finished second in his class and Abdo (120 lbs) with a 1-2 for the day but an overall win of 50-6 for his season. Points scored can range anywhere from 2-15+ and are put toward your ranking individually. 5 points or more won in a match will go towards the team ranking. Points can be won by the following wrestling moves; takedowns, nearfalling, escapes, or reversals.

Districts are February 6th at Grand Ledge's main high school gym to determine who will move onto states. Team State Finals for the '24-'25 year will be held at the Wings Event Center in Kalamazoo and Individual State Finals will be held at Ford

Field. Both events will take place in February. The boys will have to remain undefeated in districts to move forward to states. In recent years the Comets have worked hard to get where they are now and are determined to leave a mark in the school records.

"This year I expect our team to do pretty well. We are ranked number 9 in the state right now and we wrestle a lot of tough competition this year," junior Eben Abdo expressed.



Eben Abdo celebrates his victory gaining a point for the GL team. The boys won second overall as a team.

Photo by Ava Delaney/The Comets' Tale

Senior Spotlight: TJ Baumer's Swim Journey

Senior TJ Baumer has spent the past four years swimming, making an impact both as an athlete and as a leader on his high school swim team. His journey from a beginner to a top performer has been filled with growth, dedication, and a passion for the sport that has carried him through countless practices and meets.

TJ's entry into competitive swimming began unexpectedly when he was inspired to join the team because of mutual connections.

"My sister's boyfriend was a swimming coach," he said, explaining how he first became interested in

the sport. With no prior experience in the water, TJ was introduced to the world of swimming during his freshman year, ready to see what he could accomplish.

"I started out not knowing how to swim, and I quickly progressed, but it did take a lot of work," he admits. This early dedication was just the beginning of a rewarding journey. One of TJ's most memorable milestones came in his freshman year when he was awarded the "Most Improved Swimmer" title. This recognition set the tone for his high school swimming career, and he continued to improve year after year, driven by a desire to be the best swimmer he could be.

As his skills grew, so did his leadership abilities. By his junior year, TJ had earned the title of team captain—a role he embraced fully. He continued as captain in his senior year, guiding his teammates through the ups and downs of the season.

In addition to his leadership, TJ's athletic achievements have been significant. He's made his mark in school history by earning a spot in the top 5 for two events.

"Making it into the top 5 in two events in school history was definitely one of my biggest accomplishments," he says with pride. These accomplishments didn't come easily—TJ's journey was filled with challenges—but his perseverance and passion for

Elizabeth Garcia
STAFF WRITER



swimming pushed him to the top. Despite the demanding nature of swimming, TJ has been able to balance the sport with his academic and personal responsibilities.

"I don't think I struggle," he said when asked about managing schoolwork and extracurriculars. Looking ahead, TJ plans to attend college and possibly continue swimming at a recreational level.

"I think even if I don't go to college for swimming, I'll be part of a swim club," he said. Regardless of where he ends up, TJ is determined to stay connected to the sport he loves.

"Probably not professionally, but there's always a possibility," he stated, leaving the door open for future opportunities in the sport. Outside of swimming, TJ has also found time for other activities, including playing football.

The bond he shares with his teammates has been one of the highlights of his high school career, and it's something that will stay with him long after graduation. "The friendship with everyone on the team is what I'll miss the most after I graduate," he reflects.



Grand Ledge High School's Boys Swim team poses for a group photo. The boys season started this fall.

Photo provided by TJ Baumer/The Comets' Tale

Holiday Favorites: What Students Are Watching This Season



Caitlynn McKelvey
STAFF WRITER

The upcoming holiday season welcomes in returning holiday movies from over the years, bringing controversial opinions based on holiday movies during the approaching

festive season.

Grand Ledge High School students share their opinions on what their favorite holiday movie is, whether or not they watch holiday movies after Halloween or after Thanksgiving, and if they believe that *Die Hard* and *Nightmare Before Christmas* are holiday/Christmas movies. But what do the students think themselves?

Freshman Emiliano Zavala says his favorite holiday movie is *Home Alone* because “Kevin has the IQ of a genius.” Zavala comments by stating he doesn’t watch movies that often.

“I don’t believe *Die Hard* is, but *Nightmare Before Christmas* is a Christmas movie, because it is a mix of Halloween and Christmas.” Zavala said. Stepping into sophomore year.

Sophomore Ella Anderson said her favorite holiday movie is the Christmas story mainly because of “the leg lamp.”

Anderson watches holiday movies after Halloween as she recently just watched *Nightmare Before Christmas*. She shares her opinions of *Nightmare Before Christmas* by saying

“I think they are a mix of both between other holidays.” Anderson said.

She has not watched *Die Hard* but “My dad loves the movie.” Anderson said.

Shifting into junior year.

Junior Lavell Jones says his favorite movie is *A Charlie Brown Christmas* because he loves *The Peanuts*.

Junior Logan Stanley said he watches holiday movies after Thanksgiving because, “they’re not usually advertised that soon so why watch them.”

Stanley agrees that *Die Hard* is a holiday movie because

“It is placed in Christmas, and he’s there for a Christmas party.”

He has never watched *Nightmare Before Christmas* but he believes it is a holiday movie because

“The title strikes it as a Christmas movie.”

Entering senior year.

Senior Teddy Hinkle said her favorite holiday movie is *Die Hard* because

“It is a Christmas movie and it is violent.”

Hinkle comments that she watches Holiday movies after Thanksgiving, because

“It’s a tradition in my family to not start Christmas movies until Thanksgiving.” Hinkle says.

She believes *Die Hard* and *Nightmare Before Christmas* definitely are holiday movies. *Nightmare Before Christmas* is because it is

“a grinchy kinda, stealing Christmas and the other one, it happened during Christmas time, and that’s Christmas enough for me” Hinkle said.

It’s that time of year again, watching holiday movies during this festive time with your favorite drinks and snacks. Gather with family and friends to begin a holiday movie marathon while watching your favorite holiday films. “The holidays are a time for reflection, and just like our favorite movies, they continue to grow and change every holiday season” Stanley said.



Grand Ledge Sun Theater displays their first holiday movie of the year. They chose to show *The Best Christmas Paegant Ever*.

Photo by Caitlynn McKelvey/The Comets' Tale

How Early Is Too Early?



Andy Sequoia
STAFF WRITER

In the early centuries, Pagan folk--individuals who did not practice a specified religion--would hang evergreen branches decorated with their

choice of nuts and fruit to symbolize hope during the winter months. Nowadays, many Americans and others worldwide put up a tree, lights, and other decorations to celebrate the winter holidays.

Modern-day holiday decorations are pre-packaged and set on shelves for people to buy; a small price for large amounts of joy. But with modern takes on holiday decorations and holiday music playing at your local grocery store as soon as Halloween is over, a question that is proposed almost yearly has become a great topic of discussion at family gatherings and on social media: How early is too early to decorate for the winter holidays?

With the urge for holiday joy, some people will put up their decorations as early as the day after Halloween.

“I think the best time to [put up Christmas decorations] is right after Halloween because usually Christmas decorations take a lot longer to do than like other ones. You kind of have to just do it little by little over

the course of November and December because then when December comes around you basically have everything already up,” sophomore Logan Hansbarger said.

Since Christmas is the most popular holiday in the United States, many people like to spend a lot of time and money on decorating. This extends to trees, small knick-knacks, and even light displays.

Light displays, extending from the tradition of lighting up trees and houses during the winter months with candles, have become a staple in decorating for the holiday season.

“I do this tradition with my mom, my sister, my aunt, and my grandma where we all go on a little Frankenmuth trip and when we get home, my dad has the lights set up for us when we get home so it’s like ‘oh what a surprise’ because I don’t put my lights up before Thanksgiving,” junior Fern Sigurani said.

Although some want to put their decorations up before Thanksgiving, many say it is too much time to have these decorations up.

“I feel like it’s too early [before Thanksgiving] because if we do it after then we have a whole month where our lights will be up, so it makes sense to put our lights up the day right after Thanksgiving,” Sigurani said.

For most, the week after Thanksgiving is the prime time for Christmas decorating.



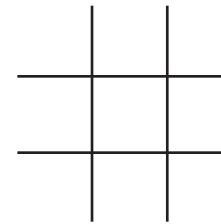
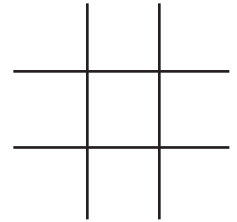
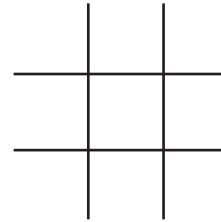
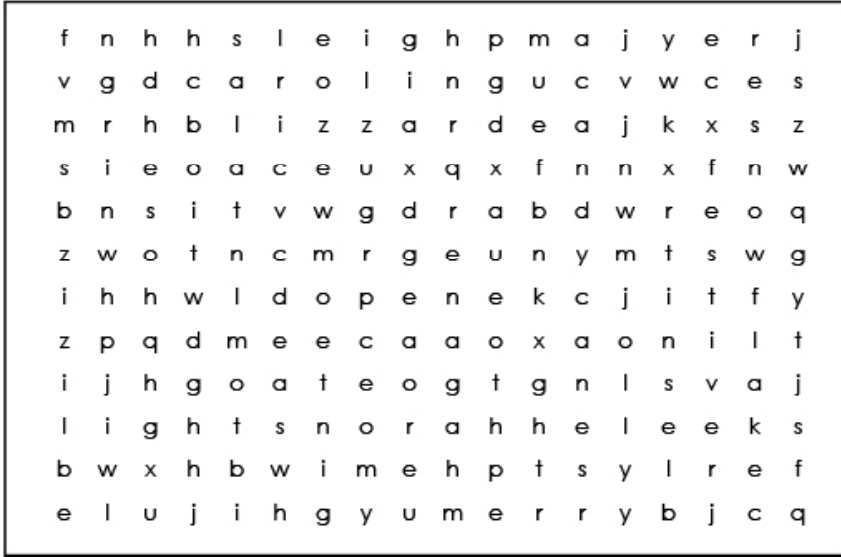
Mrs. Hengesbach has students decorate her classroom Christmas tree with lights and bulbs. The students had a great time with helping her commerate the holidays.

Photo by Andy Sequoia/The Comets' Tale

“We put up decorations around December 7th every year. It’s the perfect time for decorating because it gives you a break between Thanksgiving and Christmastime,” freshman Caleb Miller said.

Though students may not agree on exactly when to put winter holiday decorations up, many can agree that the budget-busting, flashy holiday season is a great time for wintery fun with your loved ones.

Holiday Games



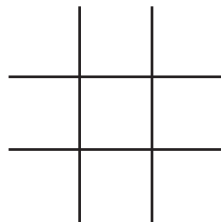
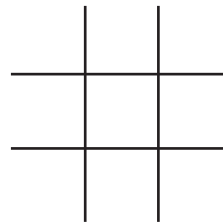
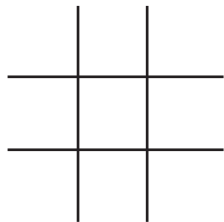
Find the following words in the puzzle.
 Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

candy canes
 mistletoe
 snowflake
 hot cocoa
 blizzard
 caroling

reindeer
 snowman
 festive
 wreath
 eggnog
 tinsel

sleigh
 lights
 jolly
 merry

Word Scramble



TEIEOSMLT

GBREGRINEAD

CHIEYMN

NSOANMW

PEESTNRS

CRHSSITMA

EFL

ORTHN PELO

ASANT

NGOITCKS



The 38th Michigan state Christmas tree, 60-foot spruce donated by Rich and Dorcas Albertson. The tree sparkles with dazzling red lights and a bright white star. "The official state Christmas tree has over 10000 lights."

Photo by Caitlynn McKelvey/The Comets' Tale



Petoskey Steel Drum Band comes to Silver Bells every year. "This group of about 40 students performs a blend of Caribbean steel drum music with contemporary tunes." Those in the band are from Petoskey High School.

Photo by Caitlynn McKelvey/The Comets' Tale



A Lansing Tradition, "Silver Bells celebrates 40 year milestone." Nov. 22nd 5-9:00pm, Lansing celebrates the upcoming holiday season with Silver Bells in the city. With millions of lights and thousands of people.

Photo by Caitlynn McKelvey/The Comets' Tale



(Coupon also good for Refresher's)

This year's official Christmas tree donors, Rich and Dorcas Albertson saw an ad on TV which influenced them to donate their tree. "After Silver Bells looked at many other trees they decided to pick this one." The tree came from Eagle Michigan.

Photo by Caitlynn McKelvey/The Comets' Tale

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