

The Grand Island Central School District BRIDGE

www.grandislandschools.org

The Community Newsletter for the Grand Island Central School District

GIHS Student is National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist

Congratulations goes out to Grand Island High School senior Kevin Rogoza, who was selected as a semifinalist for the National Merit Scholarship Program!

Kevin joins approximately 16,000 semifinalists across the nation for the 66th annual scholarship program, which honors individual students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. The semifinalists will continue in the competition for thousands of scholarships worth more than \$30 million, which will be awarded in the spring.



Kevin Rogoza

According to the National Merit Scholarship Corp., over 1.5 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2021 competition by taking the 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of semifinalists represents less than 1% of U.S. high school seniors.

Two additional Grand Island students – Eleah Leng and Vincent Ricotta – were also commended as part of the competition. Commended students placed among the top 50,000 scorers for the PSAT/NMSQT.

New Sidway Playground Gets Community Touch

After three years of fundraisers, extensive planning, meetings and moving major mountains of engineered wood fiber chips, Charlotte Sidway Elementary School's new playground is complete!

The Sidway playground was beginning to show its age after 26 years of providing fun and physical exercise for students and families across Grand Island. In the fall of 2017, Principal Denise Dunbar brought a committee of dedicated and enthusiastic teachers and parents together to begin planning for a new playground. The committee, under the direction of chairperson and teaching assistant Linda Samland, got right to work looking at multiple sources for design, enlisting presentations from a variety of companies, researching appropriate and safe equipment and planning fundraising opportunities.



The first fundraiser was the Monster Mash! Although the committee was not sure how a Halloween dance for Kindergarten and first-grade students would go, it was nothing short of a huge success, raising over \$2,000! Many faculty and staff volunteered their time, dressed in costume and provided safe and fun activities for the students to celebrate Halloween 2017.

Additional fundraising events included a coffee sale, a Holiday walk, a pizza night, a basket raffle, furniture hand painted by the teachers, Bills tickets, and even a jet ski was raffled off at the Kick Off to Summer event! All of these events, coupled with a generous grant from then-Sen. Chris Jacobs, a matching grant from GameTime (the manufacturing company) and many donations from the community, enough money was raised and a community build date was set.

Continued on page 2

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Sidway Playground

continued from page 1

A huge thank you goes out to the many community businesses and organizations that helped to make the playground build a success, including but not limited to Anchor Marine, WNY Services LLC, Wheelfind Automotive, Premier Sound, Marston Power Equipment, Grand Island Ship Center, Grand Island Chamber of Commerce, Grand Island Lion's Club, Leaping Beauty Bounce House, the Grand Island School District School Related Personnel (SRP), Shawn Sweet and the Grand Island Technology students and many, many additional community members. After many hours and many generous donations, we look forward to seeing children enjoying the new playground for years to come.



The final event took place on Oct. 24, 2020, when many faculty and staff members and parents came together to move three gigantic mountains of engineered wood fiber for the surface. Members of the Buildings and Grounds Department volunteered their time and resources to mix concrete and set benches and signs prior to the other volunteers coming out on a cold October Saturday to move and rake the wood chips.

Despite the arrival of COVID just as a community build was being organized, the District worked with the committee to see that the playground became a reality, and it is now complete! Very thorough inspections have been conducted, and the final steps involve receiving documentation and approval to open it to play!

"It was important to us for SRP to have the opportunity to participate in the completion of this playground project because every member of the union cares deeply about this community," said Scott Perry, Grand Island SRP union president.

Message From The Superintendent

Dear Grand Island Families:

On March 15, 2020, school districts in Erie County closed due to 3 cases of COVID-19 being identified in the region. Since then, it is hard to believe we have been dealing with the pandemic for the past 10 months. During that time, we have experienced major changes within our lives that we hope will never become permanent. Mass gatherings such as weddings, graduations, birthdays, religious celebrations, wakes, funerals, sporting events, theatrical performances, concerts and vacation travel have been altered in a way to reduce the spread of a virus that has killed over a quarter of a million people in the United States. It is likely that all of us experienced the imposition of lockdown as a shock to the system, whether it made us feel uncomfortable, isolated, lethargic, anxious or scared. As individuals, we've all had to make significant changes to our everyday lives in order to cope with this significant public health crisis.

While being extremely disruptive and painful, a crisis such as a pandemic also consistently nurtures the development of a great common purpose. We often find solidarity, encouragement, and creativeness cultivated in such a manner that our society has the potential for becoming inspired.

Here in our school system, we have seen that our ability to be adaptable has allowed us to respond quickly to changing concepts, responsibilities, expectations, trends, strategies and other practices that relate to the teaching and learning of students in-person or virtually, with a sincere willingness to do what is best. Although we are always looking for ways to improve, I have been incredibly inspired by our District's administrative and supervisory team, our teachers, staff, students and Board of Education who have modeled these traits of adaptability. I have witnessed our entire organization become more collaborative, flexible, and open to doing things differently all for the betterment of our students.

During this challenging time, please contact your child's teacher, a school counselor or social worker, one of our psychologists or an administrator if there is anything you feel we can do to assist you or your child. Looking ahead to a brand-new year, I am sure you will join me in saying goodbye to 2020. As we prepare for 2021, I am hopeful that a vaccine will be ready for massive distribution and we will be a safer and healthier society as a result. Additionally, I would like to wish all of you a safe year filled with great health, love, laughter and the creation of wonderful memories.

Sincerely,

Brian Graham, Ed.D.



*Brian Graham, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools*

"Considering all the things that have been taken away from students and families in 2020, we really wanted to play a role in a situation that would allow us to give them something new. The playground looks great, and I'm so proud of the volunteer turnout."

The final stage will be the construction of a brick pathway. Bricks continue to be sold through the playground committee and can be individualized for businesses, families, or individuals. Please contact lindasamland@gicsd.org or visit the Sidway Playground Facebook page for ordering information. Bricks will be sold into the spring and a date for installation will be publicized in 2021.

Thank you to all who contributed to the success of the project, be it financially, physically, or both. On behalf of the Sidway Playground Committee and all the children who will benefit going forward, we thank you!





Message From Your BOE President

Happy 2021, fellow islanders! Thank you for reading the winter edition of The Bridge. This is proving to be a school year full of adaptations as we began implementing a hybrid instructional mode and were required to pivot quickly to our remote learning plan. I know the 100% virtual learning environment creates significant challenges for our families and students alike. As a public school district, we must comply with the Micro Cluster Action Initiative while continuing to advocate for necessary adjustments to state mandates.

During a Red/Orange Zone designation under the initiative from Gov. Andrew Cuomo, it was impossible for the Grand Island CSD to test 100% of our school population upon reopening under the original requirements. First, the District would not obtain 100% parental permission to perform such testing, and we are not a public entity with the infrastructure to support such a burdensome, unfunded state mandate. There has been and continues to be vigorous advocacy on numerous fronts for school districts to act as partners with our state and local public health organizations for COVID-19 monitoring efforts. At the virtual legislative breakfast hosted by Erie County Association of School Boards on Nov. 14, I advocated for targeted monitoring that requires smaller percentages of students tested given the less than 1% infection rates we have seen in schools across Western New York. This would be doable for most school districts throughout Erie County. Since then, testing requirements have changed to 20% and 30% in a month for orange and red zones, respectively. We are thankful the state has changed these rules, allowing us to return to our hybrid model of learning.

The board has received questions and emails from parents regarding the full reopening of schools, and many community members have attended our meetings. Several parents have asked why Chromebooks were not in, and one parent started a funding page. Please know the inability to obtain Chromebooks is not a funding issue. We do have a technology grant to purchase personal devices for students, however with every school district in the country ordering the devices this past spring and summer, these electronics were on backorder for several months now. Thankfully, they are finally starting to come in and our Technology Department has been working as quickly as possible to get these devices in the hands of students.

Another statement I have heard at our meetings is to think creatively, and lead, by renting spaces across the island so all students can attend school every day while maintaining 6 feet of social distance. In addition to needing more nurses, administrators, special area teachers and many other staff members for each space, the approval process required by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) is extensive and very costly. For example,

the Commissioner must approve each leased space, and certification by a licensed architect and engineer must be sought to determine that the whole building is – in addition to the space being rented – in compliance with NYSED's Uniform Fire and Prevention Code. There must be a site plan, floor plan, certificate of occupancy, and many other documents prepared for each rented space.

In summary, it is not as simple as paying for a leased space somewhere on the island and bussing our children there the following week.

A seemingly easy task like erecting a tent outside also has training procedures, approvals, and paperwork that must be completed to remain in compliance with legal requirements and mandates in place to keep children safe.

I can say with confidence that Dr. Graham, his administrative team, teacher and SRP leaders, and the school board have worked diligently to put measures in place to ensure everyone's safety. Since last spring, all parties have planned carefully alongside other community committee members for hybrid, remote, and full in-person learning. Please know that our board continues to focus on reopening efforts as well as reviewing our hybrid and virtual models intently at our meetings and at additional committee level meetings. More than 12 in-person or virtual workshops have been presented to our school and community by Dr. Graham individually or with the board. During these events, documents reviewed can be accessed on the Reopening tab of the District website or by visiting www.grandislandschools.org/reopening.

In closing, I look forward to continued feedback as we navigate through these challenging times together. Please understand that we all want the same thing; we want our schools opened Monday through Friday, to see athletes continue to play sports and to watch performances of our talented musicians again. The health and safety of each and every student, teacher, and staff member is at the forefront of decision-making, and the District has been working diligently to prepare to meet state-mandated Micro Cluster Action Initiatives in order to return to and/or continue with in-person instruction. Thank you again for your cooperation and understanding and for sending your children to the Grand Island School District. I hope that you and your family have a safe and blessed new year.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashli Skura Dreher
School Board President



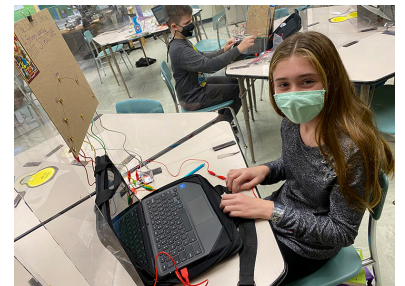
Ashli Skura Dreher
School Board President

STEM Meets ELA Class in Sixth Grade

Students in Mary Howard's sixth-grade ELA class at Veronica E. Connor Middle School used a Makey Makey device to control virtual worlds that they designed on CoSpacesEDU.

Their virtual worlds showed the settings of the novels that they had recently finished and included animated items and characters. They then coded their scenes to display the plot structure of their stories. This code "talked" to the Makey Makey device so that they had essentially created a control panel for their computer, allowing a user to touch a button to reveal the exposition, rising action, climax and resolution to their novels.

Students completed the project and then shared their work with one another through a gallery walk experience.



UPK Registration Begins March 1

As we move into spring, please note the Grand Island Central School District will begin accepting Universal Pre-Kindergarten 2021-22 registrations for the annual UPK Lottery on March 1, 2021. To be eligible for the UPK program, children must be 4 years old on or before Dec. 1, 2021.

UPK is a grant-funded program which is dependent upon state aid. The amount of aid extended to our district will be the determining factor on the number of students served.

The UPK program within the Grand Island Central School District is on track for another successful year. Each year, the District runs two UPK sites. In addition to our Charlotte Sidway Elementary School location, which runs a morning and afternoon session, we will be working with Kiddo's Korner Preschool for the 2021-22 academic school year. Kiddo's Korner Preschool will be providing an afternoon session as our community-based provider and is located at 2728 Stony Point Rd.

Our education centers provide an excellent program for 4-year-old preschool children within our community. Currently, as a group, they are servicing 43 children adhering to a New York State Education Department-approved pre-K curriculum. The program requires attendance five days per week, 2.5 hours per day and follows the District's academic calendar. Transportation is NOT provided by the District.

Please be sure during these ever-changing times to continue to check our website, www.grandislandschools.org, for any additional updates. If you have any questions relating to the UPK process or registration, please call 716-773-8818.

The 2021-22 UPK lottery draw is tentatively scheduled for May 19, 2021. The registration deadline for the lottery will be Friday, May 14, 2021 at 2 p.m.

Kindergarten Registration Begins Mid-February

To effectively plan for the 2021-22 school year, the Grand Island Central School District would like to know how many children reside on Grand Island who are eligible for kindergarten in September 2021.

Kindergarten registration for the 2021-22 school year will begin mid-February. If you have a child turning 5 years of age on or before Dec. 1, 2021, please call the Grand Island Central School District Office at 773-8800 x0. Student registrations are done by appointment ONLY.

2021-2022 GICSD enrollment packets will be available on our website, www.grandislandschools.org, as well as at our District Office, located at 1100 Ransom Rd. Registration packets will be available for pickup daily between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

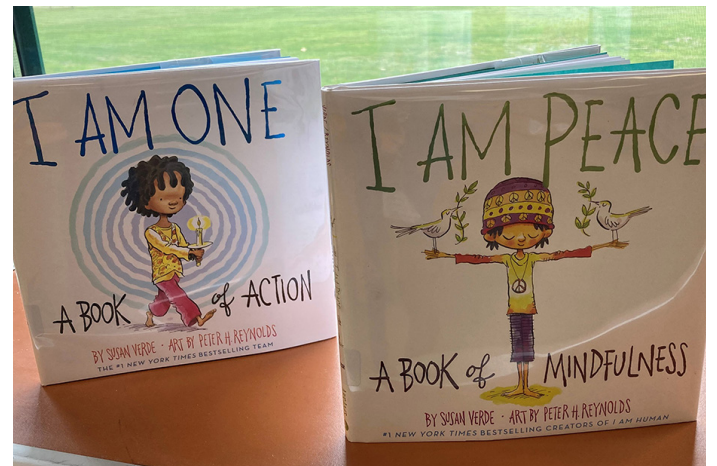
If you plan on sending your child to a private or parochial school, you will need to register with the District. The out-of-district enrollment packet will need to be completed and can be found on our website, www.grandislandschools.org. This information will assist our transportation department as well as state and federal funding.

Fund Helps Libraries Purchase Social-Emotional Learning Books

Each year, one of the school libraries in the Grand Island Central School District receives a donation of \$500 from the Leslie R. Morris Memorial Philanthropic Fund. The fund was established by Dr. Sharon Cramer in 2010 to honor the memory of her late husband. Mr. Morris was a long-time Grand Island resident who was a voracious reader, librarian and book lover. Over the last decade, the funds have been used to purchase books about several topics like history, geography, animals, sports and biographies. The libraries are thankful to be the recipients of this generous donation.

Given the unusual nature of this school year, the annual donation is being shared between all five libraries. Each school library received \$100 to add materials that support social-emotional learning for students, faculty, and families. At the secondary level, books that were purchased include topics that address developing coping skills and resilience in challenging times. Other materials include books that illuminate societal tensions. At the elementary level, books that were purchased include picture books that promote empathy, compassion and kindness. Teachers will use these materials to connect with students and help them to share their feelings and emotions.

Stories are a powerful way to connect students to their feelings while encouraging them to discover the power within themselves. These resources purchased through the Leslie Morris Book Project will provide an opportunity for teachers to foster positive learning environments and respond to students' concerns during these challenging times.



A few of the social-emotional learning picture books purchased through the fund are on display.



Putting Craft Stuffing to Good Use

Veronica E. Connor Middle School was happy to donate four boxes of craft/sewing stuffing to the Grand Island Golden Age Center. Because of the curriculum change from FACS (Family and Consumer Science) to CTE (Career and Technical Education), the middle school found themselves four boxes of crafting/sewing stuffing that will not be used anymore.

Thanks to Mary Jane Fonte, Mary Gentz and Steve Piershalski (pictured loading up the van), the Grand Island Golden Age Center will be putting this to great use and creating wonderful hand-sewn projects.



Learning with Chalk



Spotted on a warm day, Charlotte Sidway Elementary School first-grader Gavin Mank practiced sight word writing with driveway chalk!

FACS Fabric Repurposed

They often say, "Out with the old, in with the new." However, holding on to the old sometimes is very special!

As you may know, the FACS (Family and Consumer Science) curriculum at Veronica E. Connor Middle School is now a CTE (Career and Technical Education) curriculum. That being said, all of the wonderful projects and lessons learned in FACS found the CTE teachers left with some fabric that was able to be put to good use at Charlotte Sidway Elementary School.

Mrs. Marie Mergel is known as the "super school seamstress" at Sidway and is the go-to person when an art smock needs to be made and ordered for a new kindergartener. What better way to share our FACS fabric than to pass it on to Sidway for district student use?

Although Mrs. Fonte has retired, it is nice to know that the fabric she purchased in days gone by has now been repurposed for the students at Sidway! Mrs. Fonte continues to "wear it well!"



School and Community Partnership for a Great Cause

Members of the Grand Island High School and Veronica E. Connor Middle School Business departments partnered with local community business leaders to facilitate a food collection drive for the Grand Island Neighbors Foundation.

Teachers Christopher Simpson, Cheryl Chamberlain and Leanne Wills worked alongside Rebecca Simpson (Hunt Real Estate/Sherry McDonald Sales Team) and Vienna Haak (Howard Hanna Realty), as well as students from both the high school and middle school to collect various non-perishable food items and toiletries. The drive took place at the Grand Island Market/Marco's Deli on the corner of Stony Point and Ransom roads one recent Saturday. Two truckloads of food were then delivered to the hard-working people at the Neighbors Foundation, located at St. Stephen Church.

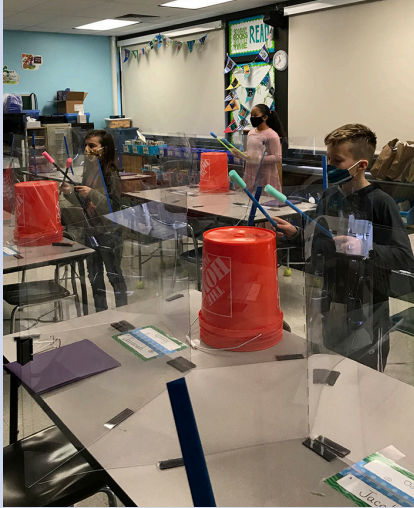
Students from both the JV and HS DECA clubs helped collect items that Saturday, along with donations from the three Grand Island teachers and the local real estate agencies (Hunt, Howard Hanna, WNY Metro and Century 21). Mr. Simpson's "Venture" Yearbook Club also contributed over \$200 in food items and monetary donations from the sale of some of its older yearbooks.



Some of the volunteers at the food drive.

Kaegebein PTA Donates Funds for “Drumming Karate” Unit

The Kaegebein PTA has graciously given the general music students the funding to purchase new materials for a “Drumming Karate” unit. Every student will have an opportunity to try out new bucket drums, drumsticks and light sticks as they master nine levels of percussion playing! The students are having a great time with this new unit in music classes!



A Wishy-Washy Halloween

For Halloween, the Charlotte Sidway Elementary reading teachers and speech teacher portrayed a beloved children’s book, “Mrs. Wishy Washy,” as students paraded through the hallways while socially distant!

Students had a “fa-boo-lous” time walking in the parades. Each classroom had a sign announcing the class as they paraded in the halls and Halloween music was piped through the loudspeakers.



Pictured, from left: Mrs. Joanne Johnson (Mrs. Wishy Washy), reading specialist; Mrs. Stephanie Powers (pig), reading specialist; Mrs. Kristin Sweet (cow), speech language pathologist; Mrs. Kari Camaps (duck), reading specialist; and Mrs. Alicia Szykowski (cat), reading specialist.

Kaegebein Students Create Paper Quilt Display

All in-person students at William Kaegebein Elementary School found a way to collaborate in art by creating a giant paper quilt! The quilt was inspired by contemporary artist Tula Pink and will color the hallway all year.



Kaegebein Students Partner with Grand Island Memorial Library

Third graders at William Kaegebein Elementary School partnered with the Grand Island Memorial Library once again this year. Every student was given a new library card, which they can use to check out physical books, eBooks and/or digital audiobooks. The public library also donated a new book, pencil and sticker to each student.

The teachers at Kaegebein are

thankful for this partnership, especially this year with the COVID-19 restrictions. The Grand Island Memorial Library has provided students many ways to read at home and helped foster the love of reading.



Mrs. Wood's third-grade class with Ms. Edholm from the Grand Island Memorial Library. Pictured, from left: back row – Mrs. Wood, Natalie Gordon, Carter Dawson, Ms. Edholm; middle row – Christian Bell, Ethan Kreitzbender, Jaxen Fittante; front row – Harper Kisloski, Cameron Duscher, Kelsey Hall.



Browser Bin Book Boxes for Younger Students

Most of us have heard the saying, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” At Huth Road School, officials want the students to be drawn to a book by its cover, but often the books are shelved where you can only see the spine. So, what if you could see the books’ covers?

Through a teacher mini grant from the Huth Road PTA, the library was able to purchase new Browser Bin Book Boxes where the books lay flat and their covers are easy to see.

“We believe that when students see the illustrations and the art on the cover of a book, they will be more likely to pick up the book to look inside,” Huth Road Librarian Freda Orosz said. “Then we know what happens – if you pick up a book and look inside, you might be more likely to want to read the book.”

Orosz thanked the Huth Road PTA for partnering with the library to get children excited about reading.



Making the Most of Virtual Learning

While we may not be living in the most ideal of times when it comes to education, the students at Grand Island High School, Huth Road Elementary School, and Charlotte Sidway Elementary School are making the most of virtual learning.

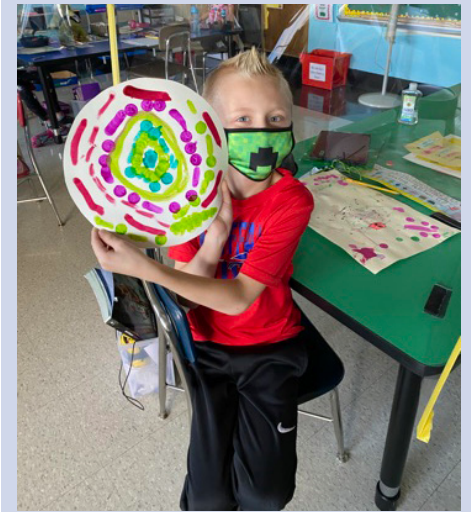
Students and teachers recently embraced the opportunity for collaboration across the grade levels during their Viking Virtual Wednesday meetings. The 10th grade students in Mrs. Podlucky’s class participated in a short story unit, and the final product was the creation of a piece of children’s literature which demonstrated their understanding of how professional authors employ various writing techniques in order to get a message across to their readers. Even more educational was the extra credit opportunity to read their stories aloud to the classes of their former teachers, Mrs. Morris (Huth Road) and Mrs. Locar (Sidway), during their Wednesday morning Google Meet sessions.

Not only did high school students Joseph Fatta, Riley Decker, Aiden Maroni, JP Szczublewski, Jacob Pangborn and Aubrey Zdarsky have the additional learning experience of conducting a Google Meet presentation, but the elementary students had the unique and memorable experience of realizing what they will be capable of someday, as they are currently explore the beginning stages of the Lucy Calkins Reading/Writing Workshop in their own classes.

Overall, it was an enjoyable experience which brought smiles to many faces during these otherwise hectic times.

Kaegebein Students Create Art with Bingo Dabbers

Thanks to a generous grant from the PTA, students at William Kaegebein Elementary School are creating safely in their classrooms with Mrs. Schlageter and exploring new supplies for making art! Students in second grade used bingo dabbers as painting tools.



Salvatore Pellitieri with his artwork.



Mrs. Schlageter put together a display of the students’ artwork.

Celebrating Reading at Huth Road School

Over the summer, the students at Huth Road Elementary School were invited to take the Summer Reading Challenge and HAVE FUN READING!

Due to the move to at-home learning last spring, officials weren’t sure how many students would participate. They are delighted to report that several students (more than half) chose to accept the challenge. This fall, the traditional bingo party celebration was not able to take place, so instead, this year’s participants will be given a coupon for a free Hershey treat from the cafeteria provided by the Huth Road PTA.

“We are happy to know that even these difficult times did not deter our students from making reading a priority,” Huth Road Librarian Freda Orosz noted. “We are hoping the students continue to find the joy in reading and even more students take the challenge next summer.”

Outstanding Athletes for 2019-20

The Outstanding Athletes of the Year designation is a tradition that recognizes Grand Island's student athletes annually at the Homecoming Spirit Assembly with a plaque award. The seniors are honored at Class Day with a plaque award, which is placed in the Viking Mall showcase with all senior honorees starting with the first Grand Island graduating class in 1965.

Congratulations to the 2019-20 Outstanding Athletes honored and to all the Outstanding Viking Athletes that participated on a 2019-20 sports team.

Grade 9

Lilly Koslowski, Ella Rudney, Evan Russo

Grade 10

Riley Joseph, Ella Koslowski, Brian Bielec, Tyler Figliola

Grade 11

Grace Carey, Zach Cramer, Bill Wieberg

Grade 12

Abigail Blair, Lydia Sweeney, Blake Bielec, Ben Moskala

2020 Athletic Fall Standings

Boys Soccer (9-2-1) (11-3-2)

- NFL Champions
- Section VI Champions
- Rank #5 WNY

Girls Soccer (11-0-1) (11-2-1)

- Second NFL
- Rank #7 WNY

Girls Tennis (6-1)

- Second NFL

Girls Cross Country (12-4)

- Second NFL
- Third Section VI Class B1

Boys Cross Country (12-4)

- Second NFL
- Second Section VI Class B1

Golf (3-11)

- Seventh NFL

GIHS Sees Five College Signings & Verbal Commitments

Congratulations goes out to the following Grand Island High School student athletes for their college signings and verbal commitments: Bill Wieberg, Carissa Hoover, Camille Burruano, Zach Cramer and Brooke Eichel.

Bill Wieberg – Boys Volleyball (Daemen College)



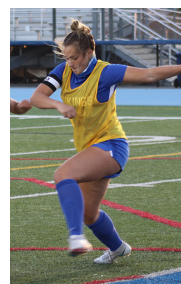
Billy has committed to playing Men's Volleyball at Daemen College. Billy is an outside hitter who has been a starter on the varsity team since his freshman year. He is a powerhouse athlete who holds a school record for number of kills in a single match (36) and number of kills in a season (540). He is the type of athlete who always keeps his composure during high-pressure situations and who the team turns to when they are down. He led the team to two consecutive sectional titles, one regional title and one state championship in 2019. Billy has an impressive list of accolades, including First Team All NFL, First Team All WNY, NYS MVP of State Tournament, Prep Talk Boys Athlete of the Week and voted 2019 Player of the Year by the Niagara Gazette. Billy is an honor roll student who plays hockey and baseball at Grand Island.

Carissa Hoover – Girls Lacrosse (Lewis University)



Carissa Hoover is signing a National Letter of Intent to play Women's Lacrosse at Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois. She will be studying Graphic Design at Lewis University. Carissa plays defense for Grand Island and has been a four-year starter on the varsity team. She has been a leader on defense every year and the team would not be the same without her. Her speed and agility are the best seen for a defender at Grand Island. Carissa has been on the honor or high honor roll every quarter in high school.

Camille Burruano – Girls Soccer (LeMoyne University)



Camille has been a three-year starter on the Girls Varsity Soccer team. She came in as a sophomore and stepped in immediately to contribute defensively on a team that came off a year with a record of 19-2, with 14 shutouts and only seven goals against. In her three-year tenure, the team had a record of 4-3-7-3, with 30 shutouts and 38 goals against. These defensive stats are largely in part due to Camille's physical presence and athletic ability on the center of Grand Island's defensive line.

Camille's soccer accomplishments include NFL Third Team as a sophomore, NFL Second Team as a junior and NFL First Team and All WNY Second Team as a senior. As a captain, Camille led by example both verbally and with her play on the field, which made the GI team even better. Camille's leadership, physical ability and love for the game and her teammates will be missed as she moves on to play at the next level.

Zach Cramer – Boys Volleyball (Belmont Abbey, NC)



Zach Cramer has committed to playing Men's Volleyball at Belmont Abbey in North Carolina. Zach is a team captain and setter who has been on varsity since his freshman year. Zach is a great leader who runs a fantastic offense. He holds a school record for number of assists in a single season (1,179). He led the team to two consecutive sectional titles, one regional title and one state championship in 2019. Zach has received several awards including First Team All NFL, First Team All WNY and All-Tournament team of the NY State Championship Tournament. Zach is an honor roll student who also plays basketball, baseball and golf at Grand Island.

Continued on page 9



Section VI All WNY All-Stars



First Team

- Avery Mondoux
- Ella Rudney
- Josh Hunt

Second Team

- Camille Burrano
- Payton Khadra
- Joe Knight
- Sam Carpenter

NYS Girls Soccer Team Includes Two GHS Students

The New York State Girls Soccer Team for this school year includes two of Grand Island High School Lady Vikings:

- Second Team All-State Class A – Ella Rudney, grade 10
- Third Team All-State Class A – Avery Mondoux, grade 11

Congratulations goes out to both students!



All Fall Sports Teams Honored as Scholar Athletes

The 2020 Fall Scholar Athlete Teams recognized by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) include the following from Grand Island: Girls Tennis, Girls Soccer, Boys Soccer, Girls Cross Country, Boys Cross Country and Golf.

To qualify for this honor, an individual on a varsity team must hold at least a 90 GPA. They are then recognized with a NYSPHSAA Scholar Athlete pin. Additionally, any individual with a 90 or above GPA whose team did not qualify for the team award are eligible to receive a pin and considered an Individual Scholar Athlete.

Congratulations goes out to the following student athletes:



Boys Soccer:

Coach: Frank Butcher • JV Coach: Brian Ailinger

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| • Angelo Aiello | • Sam Jayme |
| • Anthony Amato | • Jackson Jones |
| • Thomas Banas | • Joe Knight |
| • Sam Carpenter | • Kyto Magee |
| • Brandon Farquharson | • Jonny Minton |
| • Sean Graham | • Dennis Misko |
| • Gear Howell | • Abishek Selvakumar |
| • Josh Hunt | • Marcus Tittle |
| • Jacob Jayme | • Evan Walowitz |

Boys Golf

Coach: Craig Warthling

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • Kyler Butcher | • Xander Kisloski |
| • Zach Cramer | • Ryan Pinzel |
| • Tyler Dworak | • Zach Przybyl |
| • Tyler Figliola | • Evan Russo |
| • Kam Greene | • Mitchell Samplinski |
| • Jason Hill | • David Squires |
| • Nicholas Karnarth | |

Girls Soccer

Coach: Dave Bowman • JV Coach: Ben Gallegos

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| • Emma Besl | • Noelle Linenfelser |
| • Camille Burrano | • Avery Mondoux |
| • Giuliana Congi | • Jolie Mondoux |
| • Natalie Carter | • Alexis Nguyen |
| • Adiana Cotroneo | • Ella Rudney |
| • Kayleen DiCarlo | • Rebecca Schultz |
| • Renee DiLaura | • Callie Sommer |
| • Addison Fike | • Victoria Thauer |
| • Morgan Khadra | • Jessica Whitfield |
| • Payton Khadra | • Kiersten Winstel |

Boys Cross Country

Coach: Jason Bibler

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| • Daniel Hawkins | • Alex Szczepankiewicz |
| • Jack Mandura | • Connor Tribby |
| • Kosmo Sarigiannis | • Alex Wright |

Girls Cross Country

Coach: Michelle White

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| • Isabel Buckingham | • Hannah Martinez |
| • Faith Caldwell | • Liberty Novak |
| • Berin Celik | • Hayley Pizur |
| • Riley Decker | • Audrey Satterlee |
| • Miranda DeCoursey | • Hope Sedita |
| • Alexandra Jensen | • Abbey Schneller |
| • Riley Joseph | • Rayna Wallens |
| • Hailey Martinez | • Sophie Zentz |

Girls Tennis

Coach: Don Pray

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| • Allyson Bellinger | • Cecilia Nowak |
| • Kiersten Brown | • Megan Pinzel |
| • Haley Coombs | • Grace Samplinski |
| • Lauren Coombs | • Mia Schiffmacher |
| • Natalie Gojmerac | • Amanda Spaulding-Kellner |
| • Allison Hill | • Morgan Tollner |
| • Alicia Hunt | • Riley Weber |
| • Rose Meaney | • Grace Wenner |
| • Nicole Nguyen | |

GIHS Sees Five College Signings & Verbal Commitments

continued from page 8

Brooke Eichel – Girls Swimming & Diving (Cleveland State)



Lady Viking Brooke Eichel signed a Letter of Intent Division 1 Athletic and Academic Scholarship to Cleveland State University. Brooke has been a member of the Girls Swimming & Diving team since seventh grade and holds the Lady Viking school record for 11 dives with a score of 454.60. Brooke has been the #1 diver in the Niagara Frontier League and Section VI Class B since ninth grade. She also qualified to the New York State meet all three years and was the only diver in her class to make the cut, finishing 20th her sophomore year with an overall score of 409.70. Brooke's outstanding career and accomplishments has ranked her at the top of all Lady Viking divers in school history. Congratulations to Brooke and hopefully we can watch her compete her senior year this spring!

GIHS DECA Shines Virtually

The Grand Island High School DECA Club competed in their first ever virtual regional competition this school year. Over 45 students took an online test in business finance, marketing, hospitality, management or entrepreneurship. The following week, they had a timed scenario to complete in their competitive event area. Single participants or teams of two generated and uploaded a video in sports management, business finance, automotive marketing, and many other event areas to a virtual judge. The competition was made up of 15 schools and 25 Grand Island students placed in the top four of their event.

A huge thank you goes out to former students Yusuf Mojawalla and Yaling Chen for judging, along with Grand Island School and Business Alliance (GISBA) member Mary Cooke. The GIHS DECA Club looks forward to competing online in a virtual state competition in February.



Pictured, from left: Alyson Czerwonka, Tommy Fabiano, Natalyn Cordero and Eden Johnson.

National Honor Society Induction Ceremony Held Virtually

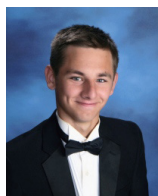
After a delay due to the school closure last spring, the Grand Island High School chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) was able to induct 23 members of the Class of 2021 in its first-ever virtual ceremony, organized and hosted by NHS advisor Kevin Murray.

The ceremony included the traditional candle and tapping ceremonies, plus special messages by Superintendent Dr. Brian Graham and GIHS Principal Michael Lauria.

Congratulations goes out to all the inductees and their families! The honorees are pictured next to this article. We are hopeful we will be able to induct our eligible Class of 2022 members in a separate ceremony this spring.



Camille Burrzano



Samuel Carpenter



Emily Cohen



Haley Coombs



Zach Cramer



Alyson Czerwonka



Sarah Dodge



Mara Ellsworth



Thomas Fabiano



Carissa Hoover



Josh Hunt



Eleah Leng



Thomas Lockett



Abigail Marlow



Rose Meaney



Alyssa Nelson



Maya Pecoraro



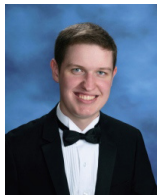
Ryan Pinzel



Mark Ramsperger



Vince Ricotta



Kevin Rogoza



Hannah Schiffmacher



Alexander Wright

Learning About Veterans



Students in Mrs. Allison Porter's kindergarten class at Charlotte Sidway Elementary School spent time reading about Veterans Day and making patriotic, heart-shaped flags.

Sign Up for Community Ed Online Classes

The Community Education Department is excited to offer a number of virtual classes for the Winter/Spring 2021 season. Courses are available in the categories of Career Opportunities & Certification, Just For Kids and Special Interest & Self-Improvement. Topics covered in various classes include babysitting basics, healing with energy, SAT and ACT test prep, and Medicare 101.

Registration is available online or by mail. For complete registration instructions and to view information on individual classes, visit www.grandislandschools.org/communityed. For questions, please contact us at amyboutet@gicsd.org or (716) 404-1302.



GIHS Students of the Month Named for October Through December

Grand Island High School Principal Michael V. Lauria, Assistant Principal Karen Surdyke and Assistant Principal Hillary Kretz-Harvey are proud to announce the GIHS Viking Values Students of the Month for October, November and December 2020.

The students and their corresponding departments that nominated them are as follows:

October 2020

- Grade 12 – Kevin Rogoza (Music).
- Grade 11 – Mikayla Bukowski (Math), Tyler Figliola (Physical Education), Riley Joseph (Science), Megan Lavis (Business), Christian Pendola (English), Kyle Phillips (Technology) and Victoria Thauer (Language).
- Grade 10 – Michael Christensen (Social Studies) and Kayleigh Vanderzell (Art).

November 2020

- Grade 12 – Eleah Leng (Music), Carissa Hoover (Art), Brett Kowalczewski (Technology) and William Worrall (Social Studies).
- Grade 10 – Julia Capage (Science).
- Grade 9 – Hailey Lee (Physical Education), Patrick Kruse (English), Zainab Masoodi (Languages), Alexander Sandford (Math) and Pearl Sciolino-Coffey (Business).

December 2020

- Grade 12 – Maisie Mrkall (Business) and Cecilia Nowak (Physical Education).
- Grade 11 – Hannah Moore (Social Studies), Alessandra Smith (Music) and Evan Walowitz (Math).
- Grade 10 – Amanda Gula (Art) and Samuel Jayme (English).
- Grade 9 – Jenna Hecht (Science), Brady Hillman (Technology) and Sophia Todaro (Language).



Tyler Figliola



Riley Joseph



Megan Lavis



Christian Pendola



Kyle Phillips



Kevin Rogoza



Victoria Thauer



Kayleigh Vanderzell



Mikayla Bukowski



Michael Christensen



Pearl Sciolino-Coffey



Julia Capage



Carissa Hoover



Brett Kowalczewski



Patrick Kruse



Hailey Lee



Eleah Leng



Zainab Masoodi



Alexander Sandford



William Worrall



Maisie Mrkall



Cecilia Nowak



Hannah Moore



Alessandra Smith



Evan Walowitz



Amanda Gula



Samuel Jayme



Jenna Hecht



Brady Hillman



Sophia Todaro

Fall NFL Athletic All Stars

Girls Tennis:

- Singles: 1st Team – Kiersten Brown (11) and Riley Weber (11)
- Doubles: 1st Team – Haley Coombs (12) and Mia Schiffmacher (11)

Golf:

- 3rd Team – Zach Cramer (12)

Girls Cross Country:

- 1st Team – Liberty Novak (8) and Faith Caldwell (11)
- 2nd Team – Alex Jensen (9)
- 3rd Team – Hayley Pizur (11), Rayna Wallens (11) and Hannah Martinez (11)

Boys Cross Country:

- 2nd Team – Connor Tribby (12) and Jack Mandura (12)
- 3rd Team – Austin Childs (12)

Boys Soccer:

- 1st Team – Josh Hunt MF (12), Sean Graham MF (11), Joe Knight D (12) and Sam Carpenter GK (12)
- 2nd Team – Anthony Amato D (11)
- 3rd Team – Abishek Selvakumar F (11), Jacob Jayme MF (11) and Angelo Aiello D (11)

Girls Soccer:

- 1st Team – Avery Mondoux F (11), Payton Khadra F (11), Ella Rudney M (10) and Camille Burruano D (12)
- 2nd Team – Adiana Cotroneo M (11), Victoria Thauer M (11) and Adison Fike D (11)
- 3rd Team – Jessica Whitfield M (11), Callie Rose Sommer D (12) and Rebecca Schultz GK (11)



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GISBA Holds Virtual Raffle Fundraiser

The Grand Island School and Business Alliance (GISBA) held a successful virtual raffle drawing to raise funds for scholarships and student program support. The raffle included several major prize packages, including a Buffalo Bills backyard tailgate package and a tiki cruise and night out for 10. Winning tickets were drawn at the Grand Island Chamber of Commerce office and were livestreamed on the GISBA Facebook page.

Thanks goes out to everyone who bought tickets to support GISBA, as well as the many sponsors. Scholarships through the organization are available to Grand Island graduates entering colleges, the trades/trade schools, military programs, those starting up businesses and those directly entering the workforce. GISBA also provides financial support for several educational programs like DECA, Job Shadow Day, the Middle School Emerging Leaders Student Conference and more.

GIHS Students Selected for NYSSMA All-State

Congratulations goes out to the following Grand Island High School seniors for being selected as participants for the 2020 NYSSMA All-State Performing Ensemble!

This year's selections include:

- Kristina Joseph - Soprano 2 - Mixed Chorus
- Eleah Leng - Cello - Symphony Orchestra
- Savanna Lenze - Soprano 2 - Mixed Chorus
- Ryan Michki - Tenor 2 - Mixed Chorus
- Kevin Rogoza - Tuba - Symphonic Band

"We are especially proud of each of these students' unique skills and accomplishments. We look forward to following their future success both musically and academically," High School Principal Michael Lauria noted.



Kristina Joseph



Eleah Lang



Savanna Lenze



Ryan Michki



Kevin Rogoza