

The Grand Island Central School District BRIDGE

www.grandislandschools.org

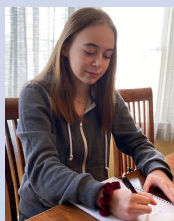
The Community Newsletter for the Grand Island Central School District

Interact Club Adopts Pandemic Pen Pals

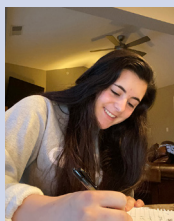
Given the current pandemic, the Grand Island Interact Club was looking for ways to help others while maintaining the state protocols. Through the help of staff, it was brought to the club's attention that the younger students felt disheveled, unmotivated and unhappy given everything going on in the world. These were similar feelings to some high school students, so during one of the club's Google Meet meetings, members decided to adopt a pen pal.



Grace Ahne



Kaylee Boyle



Sophia Terlecky

Through the pen pal letters, Interact Club members are able to connect with younger students throughout the district. Many members have said the letters bring such a smile to their faces as well as cheer them up. The biggest goal of the letters is to let the students know that they are not alone, as well as to show them that we can all get through this time together!

Follow Us!

For the latest school news and information, follow us on Twitter, @GrandIslandCSD. You can also visit our website, www.grandislandschools.org.

Officials Cut Ribbon on Multi-Sports Complex

Crews have been wrapping up sitework on a new, state-of-the-art multi-sports complex behind Grand Island High School.

District officials cut the ribbon on the complex recently, celebrating the opening of the facility to student sports programs. The new additions include a synthetic turf field for baseball, softball, lacrosse, soccer and football, as well as a concession building and new lighting. The tennis courts adjacent to the high school were also replaced.

"Our students as well as our community youth sports programs will have the best facilities to utilize for many years to come," Superintendent Dr. Brian Graham stated.

The multi-sports complex was built as part of a \$24 million capital improvement project approved by voters in 2019. The project was designed to address District needs in the areas of building repairs, heating, instruction and safety.

With synthetic turf, drainage is improved so home games are not canceled due to poor weather. Officials hope this will result in less frequent canceled home games for baseball and softball.

Work for the capital project also included visible interior renovations to both Veronica E. Connor



The new concession stand.



The new addition to the VCMS entrance.



An aerial view of the new multi-sports complex.

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GITA Donates to Neighbors Foundation

The Grand Island Teachers' Association (GITA) donated \$5,125 to the Grand Island Neighbors Foundation recently. The Neighbors Foundation helps residents on Grand Island that are in need of food and other support.

This donation will go a long way in assisting residents during these challenging times.



Pictured from left, starting with the top/back row: Natalie Gallagher (GHS), Michelle Graziano (Huth Rd. Elem.), Jillian Stapleton (Connor MS). Middle row: Dana Santospirito (Kaegebein Elem.), Cynthia Booker (GITA Executive Board member), Alicia Szyrowski (Sidway Elem.). Bottom/front row: Mike Grosso (GITA Vice President), Dave Conboy (GINF President).

Academy of Finance Makes Money Moves

The Grand Island Academy of Finance was proud to participate in the WNY Junior Achievement Stock Market Challenge.

Cheryl Chamberlain's three Financial Planning Classes competed against 15 other schools in the "How the Market Works" game, sponsored by Junior Achievement of WNY, Northwest Banks and Tops Markets. There were 495 students participating and the top 10 in the game received prizes. Joseph Christiano, a senior at Grand Island High School, placed third in the contest.

Amy Boutet, Academy Director, said, "This is the first year Grand Island participated in this challenge and one of our students led the leaderboard for three days with great investments. We are so proud of the program we offer through the Academy for our students."

Message From Your Superintendent

Dear Grand Island Families:

As I begin my sixth year as superintendent, I have been extremely impressed with this wonderful school system and our amazing community. Each school district across the globe faced immense challenges due to the world-wide pandemic. I am very proud of our teachers, staff and administration who all worked exceptionally hard to provide the best possible educational program during this unprecedented crisis.

Furthermore, I really consider myself fortunate to be able to attend many special "end of the year" events all across the school district. Events such as the Universal Pre-Kindergarten celebration, 5th grade moving up days for Huth and Kaegebein, the Academic Achievement celebration at the Middle School and our amazing High School graduation. Each of these special moments are filled with excitement and recognition of the hard work associated with our students' educational journey. As you are aware, our students had to endure multiple changes in their social and academic lives that have resulted in a variety of instructional models such as Hybrid and 100% Remote. Moreover, these changes encompassed new regulations for mask wearing, physical distancing, hand hygiene protocols and included a reduction in their overall social connectedness. Every activity our children enjoyed pre-COVID changed. Everything from birthday parties, play dates, sleep overs, academic courses, athletic contests, dance recitals, theatrical and musical performances and getting your haircut all either stopped or became a new and revised experience in their lives. Through all of these changes, our students have demonstrated the ability to accept uncertainty and continue adapting as appropriate.

Additionally, it is evident that the entire Grand Island community deserves to be applauded for demonstrating the skills and dispositions related to flexibility, adaptability, resilience and compassion. All throughout the pandemic, our Grand Island Community has stepped up to support each other on various levels. I have seen food and toiletry drives, meal giveaways and cash donations generated to support many of our Grand Island residents. These types of altruistic moments speak volumes about who we are as a community.

As we look ahead to this summer, our district will be offering students, from grades K to 12, opportunities to receive social/emotional support, academic intervention, and formal summer school instruction in an effort to close learning and social skill gaps. We will be providing in-person teaching and learning throughout the summer for approximately 300 elementary students and we have doubled the capacity for summer academic intervention at our middle school. Also, we will be offering enrichment opportunities over the summer and during the next school year.

It is without a doubt that our school system values the partnership we have with our families. We are fortunate to have the support of our Parent Teacher Organizations who devote their time, energy and talents to enrich our students. We remain blessed to have wonderful teachers, school-related professionals and administrators who are committed to each student's success.

As we look ahead to the 2021-22 school year, I am filled with excitement and great anticipation as we continue to build a championship school district together. Our plans will continue to focus on assisting children through enriching activities, interventions to circumvent learning loss, and a tremendous focus on social emotional skill development.

Thank you for your support as we work to continuously improve as a school system. I hope you and your family enjoy the summer and that your children come back in September energized and committed to growing academically, socially and emotionally.

Sincerely,

Brian Graham, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Brian Graham, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Message From Your BOE President

Hello fellow Islanders! Thank you for reading this edition of The Bridge. This has been a school year full of adaptations as we chartered new instructional territory to implement a hybrid instructional model and remote learning model during the pandemic.

We were thrilled to be able to bring students back for full-time instruction in recent weeks. As we look forward to the summer months, there has been a great deal of planning for additional opportunities and events. Reopening committees were reassembled to determine whether we could increase the number of in-person days for students with special needs on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Additionally, the board heard budget plans which included running in-person summer school opportunities for K-12 students while following any required NYSED guidance on physical distancing, mask wearing and hand hygiene protocols. The Community Education program will also be in session this summer with offerings that can also follow the same risk mitigation protocols. Please see the district website for the summer catalog of offerings.

The new multi-sports complex was recently completed. The Board held a ribbon cutting opportunity to open the new complex with some of our coaches, players and community sports leaders. Thank you to the entire community for all of your support with our Capital Project to secure this wonderful new space for Grand Island athletes!

During one of our recent Board of Education workshops, the elementary school principals updated the Board on the Strategic Plan progress at Charlotte Sidway, Kaegbein and Huth Road Elementary Schools. Mrs. Pallaci and Mr. Pikula led curriculum work with teachers to align the mathematics and English language arts curriculum at Huth and Kaegbein, and common formative assessments are being developed. We will continue to monitor the progress made on the five-year plan over the next few years across the district.

In closing, I look forward to continued feedback as we navigate through these challenging times together. 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 enjoy the warm summer months ahead.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashli Dreher
School Board President



Ashli Skura Dreher
School Board President

Register for Summer Community Ed

Looking for something fun for your family to do this summer? Check out the Community Education Summer 2021 Enrichment program! Registration is now available online, by mail or over the phone.

The summer session begins the week of June 28. We are excited to be back in person this summer, providing everything from weekly sports camps to engineering and music classes for children.

If you are interested in learning more about community education, please visit www.grandislandschools.org/communityed or contact the office at 773-8864.

Multi-Sports Complex

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The acoustical enclosure in the GIHS auditorium.

Middle School and Grand Island High School. An acoustical enclosure was installed in the GIHS auditorium and the VCMS main entrance was added on to, among other improvements.

Music at Huth Road Elementary

Despite some challenges we've faced regarding COVID-19 guidelines, Huth Road Elementary is still finding unique and creative ways to explore music!

Thanks to the PTA, the music program was able to purchase multiple classroom percussion instruments for students to enjoy. Using the percussion instruments as a catalyst, the students dove deep into rhythm performance as well as notation reading. Hands-on experiences making music is a vital component in the curriculum as these young students continue to grow into musicians!



Second-grader Shawn Pickering.



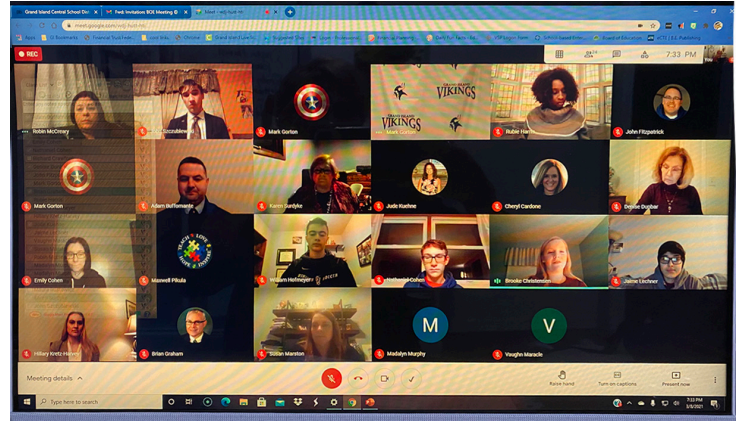
Second-graders Dominic Patti and David Patti.

GI DECA Brings It to “The Next Level”

The DECA theme “The Next Level” was truly what competition was all about this year for a virtual New York State Conference. In any other year, students would travel to Rochester, NY, to compete in over 60 areas of business competition. This year, students logged onto a platform and then uploaded a video of their presentation to a judge.

It was a different experience for the students, but Grand Island DECA always is willing to learn and grow in the field of business. Overall, 21 students went to competition and the following students were awarded top 10 medals in the state: Emily Cohen for Retail Merchandising, John Paul Szczublewski for Quick Serve Restaurant Management, and the team of Nathaniel Cohen and William Hofmeyer for Buying and Merchandising Team Decision Making. The team of Justin Horvath and Evan Walowitz earned fourth place in Sports and Entertainment Team Decision Making and became eligible for competition at the national level.

Advisor Cheryl Chamberlain would like to commend the DECA students for always giving their best and being amazing leaders in the school and community.



The Grand Island School Board recognized DECA participants for their efforts.

Kaegebein Concert Band Students Participate in Solo Festival



Earlier this school year, 16 Kaegebein Concert Band students were evaluated in the first-ever Erie County Music Educators Association Virtual Festival. The students performed extremely well, with every student receiving a grade of either A or A+. Congratulations goes out to the following students who participated:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ■ Austin Clause, trombone | ■ Claire Kucinski, saxophone |
| ■ Braden Cudzilo, saxophone | ■ Hercules Leary, tuba |
| ■ Isaac Gearhart, trumpet | ■ Jack Mezhir, trumpet |
| ■ Jayden Golden, snare drum | ■ Madelyn Obarka, snare drum |
| ■ Ian Joseph, trumpet | ■ Kate Stancliff, flute |
| ■ Jocelyn Jung, saxophone | ■ Madison West, clarinet |
| ■ Liam Kineke, mallet percussion | ■ Amelia Westlake, oboe |
| ■ Eve Kolesar, baritone | ■ Katie Wilson, flute |

Theater & Acting Students Learn from College Professor

The GIHS Theater and Acting students participated in a guest teaching series with Niagara University professor Doug Zschiegner recently.

Professor Zschiegner gave a lecture via Google Meet on self-taping auditions, a skill that is necessary in film and theater today. Then, students self-taped monologues in class and at home. Professor Zschiegner rejoined the Wednesday Google Meet to give students feedback on their work. It was a great experience led by a seasoned professional.

Viking Athletes Commit to Sports in College

Around a dozen Viking athletes this year have already signed and committed to play a sport in a Division 1, 2 or 3 college. The seniors and their college/sport are as follows:

- Bill Wieberg – Daemen College, Volleyball
- Carissa Hoover – Lewis University, Lacrosse
- Camille Burruano – LeMoyne College, Soccer
- Zach Cramer – Belmont Abbey College, Volleyball
- Allison Hill – Paul Smith’s College, Hockey
- Logan Sionko – SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Basketball
- Grace Carey – Buffalo State College, Basketball
- Jenna Doctor – Lake Forest College, Lacrosse
- Haley Coombs – SUNY Geneseo College, Softball
- Jake Miller – St. Bonaventure University, Rugby
- Sam Carpenter – Houghton College, Soccer





All-County Musicians Announced

Congratulations to our 2021 All-County musicians! Earlier this year, musicians across Erie County submitted audition videos to be listed as a top musician in the county. Grand Island was well-represented, with around 70 students chosen. The following students were selected:

Kaegebein

- Hercules Leary, tuba
- Eve Kolesar, euphonium
- Grayson Shelp, double bass
- Madison West, clarinet

Huth Road

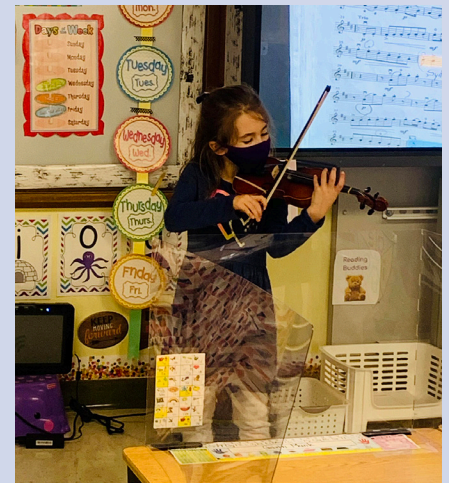
- Brock Hillman, tuba
- Mia McGowan, soprano
- Grant Law, trumpet
- Sienna Lenze, French horn and soprano
- Eleanor Murray, soprano
- Avery Sheehan, alto
- Matilyn Wolski, alto

Veronica E. Connor Middle School

- Lydia Amato, soprano
- Max Broeker, tenor
- Lily Buckingham, bassoon
- Owen Cioppa, trombone
- Alper Celik, euphonium
- Molly Fiebelkorn, French horn and soprano
- Anthony Fiebelkorn, mallets
- Mackenzie Gallagher, soprano and cello
- Malcom Hannibal, alto sax
- Camryn Harding, cello
- Xander Heckman, euphonium
- Carson Hinkle, trumpet
- David Hoover, trumpet
- Annabelle Linenfelser, soprano
- Leah Kephart, alto
- Carson Kwiatkowski, trumpet
- Caitlin Maurer, alto
- Avery McNulty, alto sax
- Giada Mendel, oboe
- Claire Neuhaus, soprano
- Brianna Rejewski, soprano
- Evan Pickering, viola
- Colin Pinzel trumpet
- Ava Satterlee, alto
- Brianna Schiffmacher, oboe
- Ava Schnepf, clarinet
- Harini Selvakumar, trombone
- Kennedy Ulrich, alto
- Madelyn Urbaniak, alto
- Annabelle Vandriel, soprano
- Brooke Warner, soprano

Grand Island High School

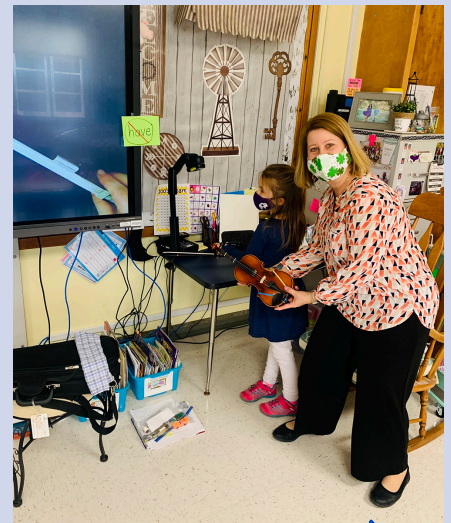
- Jenna Gorton, soprano I
- Samantha Buckingham, oboe
- Kelsey Burns, soprano I
- Berin Celik, clarinet
- Ian Cioppa, bass II
- Noah DeCoursey, tuba
- Leah Dylag, double bass
- Brandon Farquharson, trumpet
- Leah Harper, soprano II
- Jenna Hecht, flute
- Jacob Jayme, euphonium
- Zachary Leng, violin
- Eleah Leng, cello
- Connor Lenhard, clarinet
- Savanna Lenze, soprano I
- Isaac Mulholland, trumpet
- Ryan Michki, clarinet
- Hannah Moore, alto I
- Arianna Nasca, clarinet
- Cecilia Nowak, alto II
- Brett Nowocien, tuba
- Ryan Pinzel, trumpet
- Kevin Rogoza, tuba
- Abishek Selvakumar, trombone
- Alessandra Smith, clarinet
- John Paul Szczublewski, tenor I
- Lidya Weng, clarinet
- Catherine Zach, flute



Sidway Student Plays Violin for Class

Sidway Elementary music teacher Mrs. Clendening invited first-grader Evelyne Belisle to play her violin for music class.

Evelyne has been taking Suzuki violin lessons from her aunt since she was three years old. She taught her classmates about the parts of the violin, how to play it, and performed several pieces for her classmates, her teacher Mrs. Schroeder, principal Mrs. Dunbar and Mrs. Clendening. Evelyne even taught her classmates how to perform a little socially-distanced dance along with one of her songs. Great job Evelyne, and very inspiring!



Register Your Child for Kindergarten Today!

Spring is here and that means if you have a child turning 5 on or before Dec. 1, 2021, it is time to start thinking about kindergarten! Here are a few important steps for you to be taking now!

Registration

Registration is open at the District Office. Please call 773-8800 for an appointment to register. It is easy to access all the necessary paperwork online and fill it out prior to your appointment. You must be registered to begin receiving important information about kindergarten. You must register even if your child was in UPK and/or if your child received special education services as a preschooler. It is very important to register, and you can do that now!

Screening

When you register, you will be given an appointment for kindergarten screening. We hope to conduct screenings in person this summer. It will take place Aug. 17, 18, 19, 20 and 23. Screening takes about an hour, it takes place at Sidway Elementary and you are expected to stay with your child. You will have an opportunity to meet some teachers, our school nurse and some members of the PTA.

Orientation

Orientation typically takes place in early June. You would typically attend Sidway on an afternoon with your child. Both of you would have an opportunity to meet several faculty and staff, experience part of a typical day and even have a bus ride.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we cannot do those things this year. We will post an orientation video this school year, as we did last year.

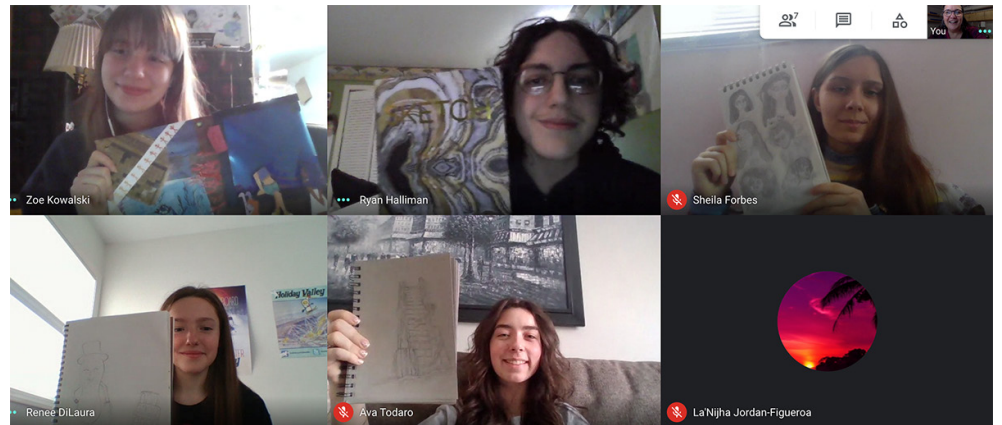
Our kindergarten supply lists are posted on our website; check for the 2021-22 list as sometimes they do vary slightly. In addition, any information regarding starting school will most likely be found on our website. Once you are registered, you will be able to receive important information with dates, reminders and more via email and text.

If you have any questions about kindergarten or Sidway, please call the school office at 773-8870.

Students Able to Explore Passions in Art Club Despite Pandemic

By Ava Todaro & Renee DiLaura

Without question, this pandemic has not only impacted our lives at school but has also challenged our minds, forcing us to think outside the box. The biggest hardship has been staying connected through today's disconnected world. Maintaining normalcy and continuing to partake in our extracurricular activities, including Grand Island High School's Art Club, has been a number one priority.



Our advisor, Cynthia Wynne, found creative ways to keep us engaged. She let us explore the history of artists Thomas Cole and Frederick Church from the comfort of our own home by orchestrating a virtual field trip. Through a live video call, we joined her excursion to the Catskill Mountains where we discussed the landscape and its implications in art. Aside from that, we have done drawing prompts each week to explore meaning behind words and our varying perspectives within art. Recently, we have been researching different styles as well as pieces of artwork which have inspired us to interpret and reimagine them as our own.

Our meetings had begun this past fall virtually each Wednesday at 2 p.m. We meet for about an hour and discuss various aspects of art history as well as discover new ways to incorporate art into our daily lives at school. We invite anyone who wishes to contribute as we prepare to partake in Albright Knox's "Art Alive" this summer.

Art Club members include Renee DiLaura, Ava Todaro, Ryan Halliman, Zoe Kowalski, Angelina Marinello, Faith Marsala, La'Nijha Jordan-Figueroa and Sheila Forbes.

Huth Road Holds Virtual Talent Show

Huth Road Elementary School held its 2021 Spring Virtual Talent Show recently. This year, the talent show was open to all students in grades 2-5. Over 60 students shared their talents and are featured in the video. From dancing, to singing, to sports demonstrations and more, we know you will be delighted by our incredible Huth Roaders!

To view the talent show video, visit the Huth Road page on the district website, www.grandislandschools.org, and scroll down to Huth Spotlight. Thank you to all the students and families who participated!



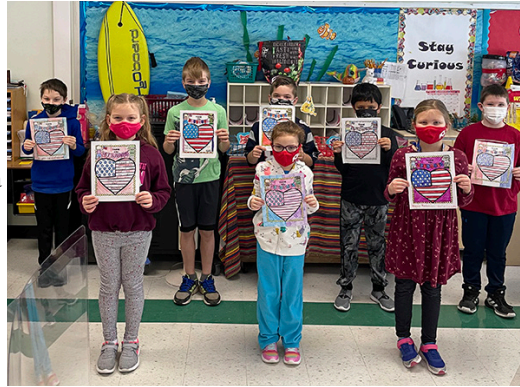


Valentines for Veterans at Huth Road

Several teachers at Huth Road Elementary asked their students to create Valentine's Day cards and letters for veterans in response to a request from Buffalo Niagara Honor Flight.

Mr. Pikula, the principal, was asked by retired, former teacher Kathy Brown if he would ask the teachers if they would like to have their students participate in making cards and letters for Buffalo Niagara Honor Flight's postponed veterans. These are the veterans who were supposed to go on the honor flight's spring 2020 flight and were recently told that they will have to postpone again for this 2021 spring trip! The Buffalo Niagara Honor Flight organization has been trying to maintain contact with these veterans as they wait patiently for it to be safe enough for all of them to travel to Washington, DC free of charge to visit the memorials in their honor.

The group put together some mail packets for these veterans so they know they are not forgotten! Many of the teachers stated that their students enjoyed doing this act of kindness very much.



Third graders from Mrs. Robinson's and Mrs. Vandermeij's class with their valentines for veterans.

Just for Kids Going Strong Despite Pandemic

The children participating at one of the Just for Kids programs successfully reached the one-year mark of operating under the pandemic-related safety regulations. Across WNY, children attended the free emergency program for children of essential employees last March through June 2020, summer day camp, and during the current school year, a choice of before- and after-school programs housed inside the three Grand Island elementary schools. In addition, Just for Kids developed, in partnership with the District, a Full-Day Virtual Learning Support Center based at Ecology Island on Staley Road, and funded in part by the Erie County Live Well grant which offered free programming options for Grand Island families.



Students at the Eco Island Full-Day Learning Program participating in a "Brain Break" movement activity.

Looking ahead, Just for Kids will continue to provide its academic enrichment programming, STEM investigations, and physical engagement through a new partnership with Buffalo State's Office of Civic and Community Engagement via the Teaching Creative Movement course. The nonprofit geared up for a fun-filled April Break Camp and will be offering summer day camp programming as well. For additional information, visit www.justforkidsonline.org.

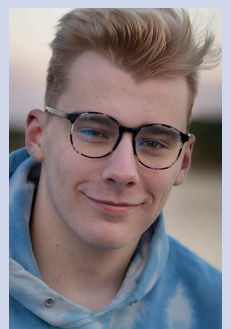
GIHS Seniors Selected for Regional Honor Ensembles

Grand Island High School seniors Ryan Michki, tenor, and Savanna Lenze, soprano, were selected to be part of the National Association for Music Educators (NAfME) 2021 All-Eastern Honor Ensembles. This is a prestigious honor, as they are among 719 of the finest high school musicians from Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont.



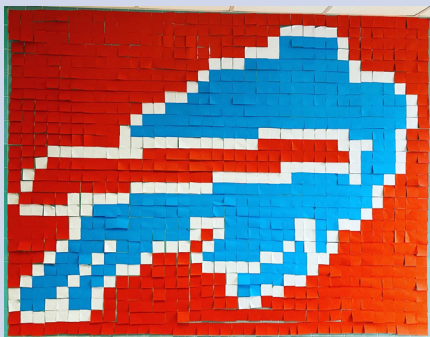
Savanna Lenze

Ryan and Savanna were able to participate in a "virtual weekend" experience. The weekend included keynote speakers, master classes with professional musicians, rehearsals with their conductors, opportunities to interact with colleges and universities of various types, and mock auditions. Ryan got to work with Dr. Cory Ganschow, Bradley University, for the Mixed Chorus and Savanna worked with Dr. Amanda Quist, Miami University, for the Treble Choir.



Ryan Michki

Both students individually recorded their performance, and then the recordings were edited together to produce a virtual ensemble for the concert performance.



Bills Pride at VCMS

Students and staff at Veronica E. Connor Middle School showed off their Buffalo Bills pride by making a collage of the Bills logo using Post-It Notes. Over 2,770 sticky notes were used for the 8' x 7' collage. The project was part of a lesson on pixel art.

Huth Road Students Hear from Author

All of the fourth graders from Mrs. Schauger's, Mrs. Reid's, Miss Graziano's and Mrs. Centola's classes at Huth Road Elementary read "Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library" by Chris Grabenstein, with help from Mrs. Leahy, Mrs. Siebert, Miss Robinson and Mrs. Covatto. Mrs. Orosz, the Huth Road librarian, and the PTA were able to secure a virtual author visit with Mr. Grabenstein as a Google Meet so all the students could learn more about him.

Mr. Grabenstein has been writing since he was in fifth grade. He grew up in Buffalo, but moved to Tennessee when he was in middle school. He has written over 67 books for children, including all of the Mr. Lemoncello series, the I Funny series with James Patterson and the Welcome to Wonderland series. He was able to share what it took for him to become a published author. His advice was "never stop writing," "write about things you wonder about," "never take no for an answer," and, "never give up!" The students had a great time.

Sidway Students Perform Random Acts of Kindness

Sidway Elementary students, in honor of National Random Acts of Kindness Day, took part in a Kindness Challenge! Kids learned that a random act of kindness can cause a wonderful ripple effect of good feelings and more kind acts.

Teachers created a video to help inspire students to go out and be kind!



Over break, each child was asked to do his/her act of kindness and record it on a paper heart. Upon their return from break, all of the hearts were added to a display for all to see.

NTHS Welcomes Grand Island Seniors

A total of 215 students from 27 Western New York high schools have been inducted into Erie 1 BOCES' chapter of the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS).

This year's cohort includes 15 seniors from Grand Island High School. Those seniors include – with their Erie 1 BOCES Career and Technical Education program – Olivia Alvarado (Digital Media), Alaina Cameron (Health Careers/Basic Nursing), Dannel Cleveland (Video Production and Recording Arts), Ava DeFranks (Cosmetology), Kaylin Frost (Cosmetology), Carolyn Ginsburg (Criminal Justice), Tyler Grant (Culinary Arts), Allison Hill (Baking & Pastry Arts), Matt Meranto (Animal Science), Emma Pressley (Sports Science Careers), Joseph Seifert (Sports Science Careers), Callie Sommer (Sports Science Careers), Anisa Todaro (Criminal Justice), Edward Verost (Electrical Systems) and Madison Zaccaria (Animal Science).

In lieu of the traditional in-person induction ceremony, Erie 1 BOCES put together three separate videos honoring the inductees of the Harkness, Kenton and Potter career and technical centers. Each video includes remarks by administrators and a candlelight ceremony. Visit www.e1b.org/NTHS2021 to watch.

In order to qualify for acceptance into NTHS, a student must be nominated by his or her teacher, have a 90 percent or higher average in their career and technical education (CTE) course, and maintain an overall grade point average (GPA) of 85. Furthermore, students must demonstrate skill development and leadership and hone their responsibility and good character. NTHS takes a holistic approach to evaluating students' success in the classroom.





Grand Island Academy of Finance Grows

Just last year, Amy Boutet and Cheryl Chamberlain were worried about building a national academy at Grand Island High School during a pandemic. “We just didn’t know if students would be receptive to a new business program during these trying times,” Amy Boutet, academy director, said.

The worrying was over during a recent virtual meet and greet as over 40 eighth-grade students tuned in for their official

acceptance into the growing program. Boutet said the High School now boasts over 100 members of this cutting-edge business academy. In addition, Boutet and Chamberlain will monitor the first paid internship program this summer for academy members who will graduate in next year’s cohort. “It is an exciting time for sure and Grand Island businesses are ready and willing to take on our interns,” Chamberlain added.

The Grand Island Academy of Finance has a well-rounded board of directors from the business community who will also serve as mentors to the academy students. This program is successful at other schools in the region, including Hamburg and Orchard Park. “Our academy provides the ‘school within a school’ concept and students enjoy being a part of this highly regarded program,” Boutet noted.



GRAND ISLAND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
BE FUTURE READY
ACADEMY OF FINANCE

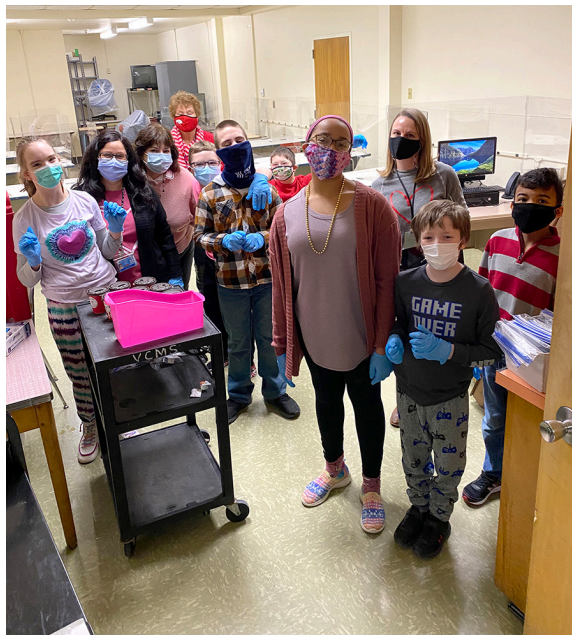
VCMS Life Skills Class Launches Coffee Cart

The Veronica E. Connor Middle School Life Skills class typically runs a “Connor Cafe.” However, due to COVID-19, their options have been limited.

In order for the class to work on money, social and life skills, it has started a coffee and hot chocolate cart! The students receive orders through a Google Form, then they determine how much coffee and/or hot chocolate, creamers, sugar and cups they need. Afterwards, they deliver all the orders in two groups, then they determine the profit made and discuss what they would like to purchase with their money.

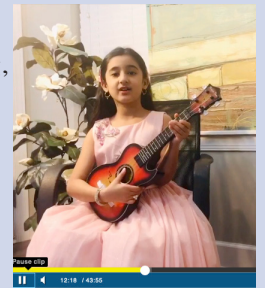
The students and teachers have had an amazing time doing this. They have received many reviews, such as: “I look forward to my Friday coffee every week,” “Service is outstanding,” and, “The coffee and hot chocolate cart really makes my Friday.”

The Life Skills students say thanks “a latte” for the support!



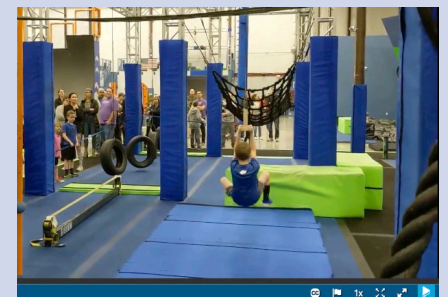
Kaegebein Goes Virtual for Talent Show

This year, Kaegebein Elementary held its first virtual talent show. Students in grades 2-5 were able to showcase their talents in a socially distant way. Some of the amazing acts included singing, dancing, instrument playing and magic. The virtual element of the show also allowed many students to share talents that would be difficult to perform on a traditional stage. Acts like diving, cooking, a ninja warrior routine and roller skating were awesome new additions to this year’s production.



Great job, Kaegebein students!

Students in the show included Molly Donnelly, Ashlynn Becker, Zechariah Goss, Emma Chiddy, Olivia Rutowski, Sydney Forsyth, Alessandra Perez-Rosario, Jack Beck, Aemen Faraz, Colin Robey, Harper Kisloski, Gemma Murgia, Lily Neuhaus, Kendall Peterson, Kelsey Hall, Caden Kloepfer, Carter Dawson, Luke Giambra, Claire Bonnevie, Elizabeth Lehman, Madelyn Lehman, Kady Howitt, Malia Wild, Sophia Chalfant, Keira Bruno, Ava Giglotti, Gianna Giglotti, Leanna Johnston, Yousurr Ahmed, Natalie Gordon, Kate Stancliff, Katie Wilson, Amelia Westlake and Madelyn Obarka. The video for the talent show can be found online on the Grand Island CSD SchoolTube channel.





JV DECA Holds Pet Food/Toy Drive

The Veronica E. Connor Middle School JV DECA chapter held a pet food/toy drive at Island Pets and Feed.

The pet food/toy drive was an idea generated from the student leaders in the JV DECA program and was implemented by the students who contacted the SPCA Serving Erie County and Island Pets and Feed owner (and former Grand Island student) Samantha Gieselmann-Bedell. The students created the flyer and really enjoyed brainstorming the “Paws for a Cause” event!



Sidway faculty and staff cut the ribbon on the new playground.

New Sidway Playground Now Open

Faculty and staff of Sidway Elementary School celebrated the official opening of the new playground recently. After three and a half years of fundraising and waiting to build due to COVID-19, children are finally playing and having fun!

The faculty and staff would like to thank the community for all the support shown throughout the past several years, as well as U.S. Congressman Chris Jacobs for providing a generous grant.

As part of the finishing touches on the playground, staff volunteers laid 260 bricks along the sidewalk. Engraved brick pavers were sold to help raise money for the playground. Simone Landscaping headed up the installation.

High School students under the direction of teacher Shawn Sweet made the sign, and many members of the buildings and grounds department helped by setting benches, planting a tree and helping to move the mountains of mulch.

VCMS Gets New Main Office & Student Services Area

Veronica E. Connor Middle School officially opened its new main office and student services space recently. This construction was part of the capital project that renovated the main entrance and will create two new classrooms and a middle school sensory room.

Further improvements are being made to the high school main entrance and athletic facilities, among other improvements throughout the school district. The VCMS main entrance was created to improve the overall safety for entering and exiting the school. The main office and student services area is designed to be more conducive for student, faculty, staff and parent use. The conference room has been updated with current technology so it can become an effective place for meetings and future professional development.

“We are all pleased with the outcome of this space and proud to present it to our school and community,” VCMS Principal John Fitzpatrick noted. “We are also delighted that some of our more seasoned members of our school community can experience a new and fresh working environment. It’s been a long time coming!”



From left, Sue Gizzo and Anna Bruno, main office clerical staff.



GIHS Students of the Month Named for January Through April

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 January, February, March and April 2021.

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

January 2021

- Grade 12 – Haley Coombs (English), Ryan Michki (Music) and Mark Ramsperger (Social Studies and Technology).
- Grade 11 – Alex Vazquez (Art).
- Grade 10 – Taylor Evans (Business), Lily Koslowski (Science) and Zachary Przybyl (Physical Education).
- Grade 9 – Marissa Mrkall (Mathematics) and Brayden Willats (Language).

February 2021

- Grade 12 – Tristan Chaffee (Physical Education) and Emily Cohen (Social Studies).
- Grade 11 – Michael Foglia (LOTE), Samantha Hoerner (Technology), Marissa Mistriner (Business), Mia Schiffmacher (Art) and Tereska Sorel (Science).
- Grade 10 – Maia Nowak (Music).
- Grade 9 – Talan Del Monte (English) and Dominic Leone (Mathematics).

March 2021

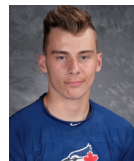
- Grade 12 – Savanna Lenze (English) and Havvanur Savas (Physical Education).
- Grade 11 – Justin Horvath (Business) and Ian Pachura (Language).
- Grade 10 – Emma Besl (Math), Samantha Buckingham (Music), Berin Celik (Science and Social Studies) and Cameron Kitchen (Art).
- Grade 9 – Trevor Augustine (Technology).

April 2021

- Grade 12 – Ian Cioppa (Music), Zachary Cramer (Math), Rose Meaney (Physical Education) and Jenna York (English).
- Grade 11 – Faith Marsala (Art) and Aidan Mingoia (Social Studies).
- Grade 10 – Makayla Bender (Language).
- Grade 9 – Lorenzo Buscaglia (Science), Jenna Gorton (Business) and Cameron Pachura (Technology).



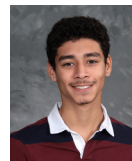
Haley Coombs



Ryan Michki



Mark Ramsperger



Alex Vazquez



Taylor Evans



Lily Koslowski



Zachary Przybyl



Marissa Mrkall



Brayden Willats



Tristan Chaffee



Emily Cohen



Michael Foglia



Samantha Hoerner



Marissa Mistriner



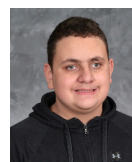
Mia Schiffmacher



Tereska Sorel



Maia Nowak



Talan Del Monte



Dominic Leone



Savanna Lenze



Havvanur Savas



Justin Horvath



Ian Pachura



Emma Besl



Samantha Buckingham



Berin Celik



Cameron Kitchen



Trevor Augustine



Ian Cioppa



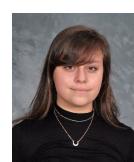
Zachary Cramer



Rose Meaney



Jenna York



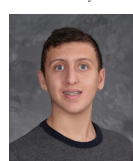
Faith Marsala



Aidan Mingoia



Makayla Bender



Lorenzo Buscaglia



Jenna Gorton



Cameron Pachura



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Annual Author Visit at Kaegebein & Huth Road

Students at Kaegebein and Huth Road elementary schools had the opportunity to spend time online with children's advocate and award-winning author Trudy Ludwig.

In her presentations, Ludwig read one of her books to the students and discussed the story and the characters' roles. The students learned important life skills related to friendship, empathy and inclusion.

Ludwig wrote her first book, "My Secret Bully," to help kids who have experienced bullying. Since then, she has become a sought-after speaker, presenting at schools and conferences, educating students, parents and teachers on relational



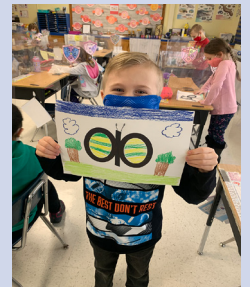
Kaegebein students learn about Trudy Ludwig's Empower Tools to respond to someone who is bullying them.

aggression. Her best-selling book, "The Invisible Boy," shows how small acts of kindness can help children feel included and allow them to flourish. Her newest book, "The Power of One," shows how one act of kindness begets another, creating a chain reaction of kindness that ripples throughout a community. She has received praise for helping children connect and engage with their peers in kind, caring ways.

Thank you to the Kaegebein PTA, Huth Road PTA and the District for working together to bring this special event to our students!

Sidway Marks 100 Days of School

Students in Mrs. Schroeder's first grade class at Kaegebein Elementary celebrated the 100th day of school with some fun arts and crafts projects. The projects included making portraits of their 100-year-old selves and making a picture using the shapes of the numerals in 100.



Bryce Willats with his art project.

Learning About Bridges at Huth Road

The third graders in Mrs. Lipp's class at Huth Road Elementary learned all about the science of bridges in Mystery Science.

After viewing a video, the students made their own bridges using popsicle sticks and masking tape. They worked together to build the bridge, which was then tested with some weights. These third graders love Mystery Science!



Dylan, Evan and Simeon with their bridge.