FIND ME IN THE PAPER

- This picture will be hidden in the Blue Ink somewhere.
- Look for it throughout the issue as you read the articles and browse the pictures.
- Thank you Mrs. Granberg for creating the Blue Ink dragon

WORTH MENTIONING

- There are just 3 days left of class as semester tests are next week. Please make sure you are on top of your assignments and having conversations with teachers if needed.

May 15, 2026
Volume 13, Issue 37
Garretson High School
Garretson, SD

GARRETSON
BLUE DRAGONS

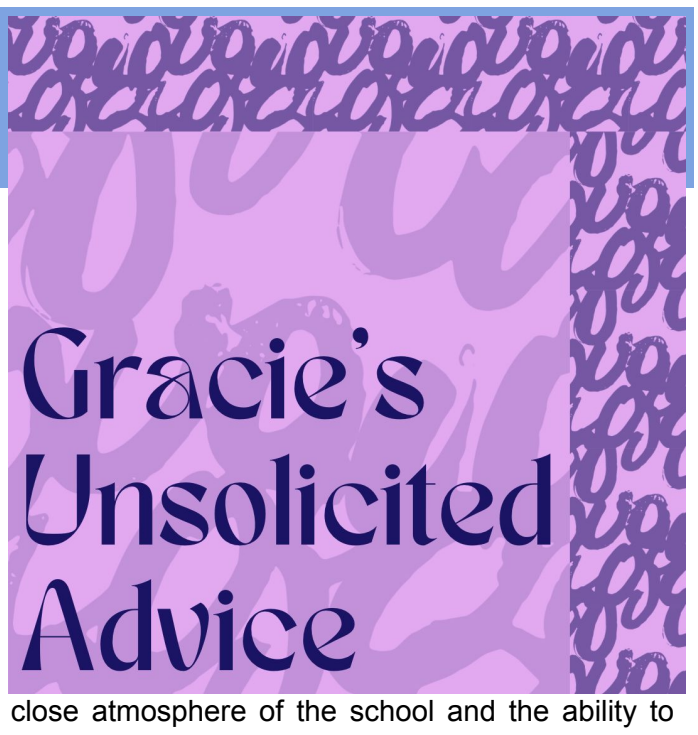
Blue Ink



Goodbye to Garretson

by **Gracie Fiegen**
staff writer & infographic creator
editorial

Seems like just yesterday that it was Kindergarten and now the end of senior year is here



The day the class of 2026 has been waiting for is finally here, our graduation day. Some people get sentimental and assume that these last few days are time for tears. That's not how it feels for me. Instead of sadness, I have been feeling utter awe at how far my classmates and I have come. At every "last," I have taken a look around and smiled at the idea of our success.

I, Gracie Fiegen, have attended Garretson School for 13 years, but as the sixth out of seven children, it's been a part of my life since the day I was born. Although I will be off to college, I am not leaving this town for good. This community has built me to be the person I am today and for that, I am eternally grateful. After 13 years in this building, I am finally ready for some change. I truly believe Garretson High School has prepared me to take this next step. It doesn't feel like this is a big leap but instead the take off I have been waiting for.

What's a Gracie's Unsolicited Advice column without a little advice, so here are my final tips. I believe high school, like everything in life, is only as fun as you make it. Take every opportunity given to you for your career or just fun side quests. Having this mindset led me to meeting so many different individuals that changed my perspective on life.

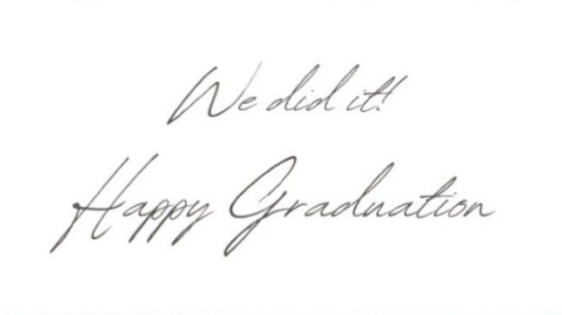
There are plenty of things I will miss about Garretson High School, specifically Mrs. Buchholz class, the confetti cookies from the lunchroom, and being at the same school as my sister, Cece. The close atmosphere of the school and the ability to walk down the halls while knowing everyone made this the perfect place for me to grow up. This school has served me well and I am proud to be a Blue Dragon.

Goodbye Garretson High School,
Gracie A. Fiegen














GARRETSON
BLUE DRAGONS

After having their schedules and classes set for them for years, seniors are now able to branch out and explore their passions on a deeper level

Seniors leave their mark on school

by **Bence Bonte**
staff writer

With the Garretson school year coming to an end, it also comes with graduation. Whether the seniors are sad or happy about it, is a great thing that happens every year. It's a celebration of a new beginning for all the seniors. The seniors last day was Wednesday, but they have to come in Friday to rehearse for the ceremony, which is Saturday and starts at 1:00 PM. Most of the graduations will start at 3:00 PM and go till 8:00 PM, and all the seniors wish to see everyone they can at their graduations.

Here's what some of the seniors have to say about graduating and what they are going to do after they officially graduate and where they see themselves after graduating college, if they attend.

Brecken Weir said, "Going to Lake Area Tech for AG Production, and farming back home on the family farm."

Cole Schleuter said "Going to Lake Area Tech for welding, and eventually welding for my brother's company full time."

Drew Chester said, "I am going into the workforce, but I'm not sure what I'm going to do yet".

We could all go on and on about how great the senior class was this year from how close they all are, to the awesome Splashin' game they had, but in the end these seniors will be some of the best and absolutely no doubt the most missed ever.

Cruise ship virus spurs fear of another outbreak

by **Chase Arend**
staff writer and infographic creator

Fear of another "COVID" is resounding as people work to contain the hantavirus

The new virus from the cruise ship is called the Andes virus, which is a type of hantavirus. Health officials say the first person got infected after being around areas with rodent droppings during a birdwatching trip in South America before getting on the cruise ship. The virus then spread to other passengers on the ship. Right now, there have been 11 reported cases of the cruise, and 3 people have died from it.

Doctors and health officials are still watching the situation, but they say the risk to the public is still very low right now. There are a few ways people can stay safe from the virus.

Health experts say it is important to avoid contact with rodents and places where rodents may live. Washing your hands often and keeping areas clean can also help stop the spread of germs.

Doctors are also telling people. who may have been exposed to stay home and avoid close contact with others for a while. Right now, the CDC is monitoring people who may have come in contact with the virus to make sure it does not spread more.

Overall, the Andes virus outbreak on the cruise ship has made a lot of people worried because it is a rare and serious disease.

Even though some people have gotten very sick, health officials say this is not another COVID pandemic and the chances of it spreading everywhere are low. Scientists and doctors are continuing to study the virus and keep people safe.

This situation shows how quickly diseases can spread in crowded places like cruise ships and why it is important to follow health and safety rules.



Personality Quiz: Spiderman

On the heels of another movie release, which Spiderman do you relate to the most?

by **Cece Fiegen**
staff writer

1. What vibes do you bring to the function?
   A. Quirky B. Cool
   C. Friendly D. Rebellious
2. Who do you spend most of your time with?
   A. Cool best friend
   B. Significant other
   C. Funny best friend
   D. Lots of friends
3. Pick a color:
   A. Navy B. Olive green
   C. Scarlet D. Charcoal Grey
4. What is your hobby?
   A. Writing B. Skateboarding
   C. School activities D. Art
5. What's your dream job?
   A. Journalism
   B. Science lab
   C. Helping people
   D. Music production or visual arts
6. What's your music taste?
   A. 2000s or rock B. Indie or grunge
   C. Pop or modern D. R&B or Hip-hop
7. How do you spend a Saturday?
   A. Catching up on homework
   B. Cruising in the streets
   C. Volunteering out locally
   D. Hanging family and friends



Senior Spotlight
Ava Adkins

Activities Involved In:
Independent and Creative Arts

Who/What Will You Miss Most:
Everyone here and all of my classmates

Favorite School Lunch:
Tator Tot Hotdish

Favorite Class You've Taken:
Creative Art

Plans for Next Year:
Planning on becoming an artist



This Week's Need to Know

Upcoming Events

Friday, May 15
- Softball Triangular v. Alcester-Hudson/Centerville (3:30/6:30)

Saturday, May 16
- Graduation (1:00)

Monday, May 18
- Golf @ Pre-Region in Dell Rapids (9:00)
- Golf @ Sioux Valley (9:00)
- 3-5 Field Day @ Complex
- 1st & 2nd Period Semester Tests

Tuesday, May 19
- Softball @ Colman-Egan (4:00/5:45)
- 3rd, 4th, 7th Period Semester Tests

Wednesday, May 20
- 8th & 5th Period Semester Tests
- Last Day of School

Thursday, May 21
- Golf @ Region in Dell Rapids (9:00)
- Track @ Tri-Valley (10:00)

Saturday, May 23
- JV Golf @ Chester (9:00)
- Softball @ BEC Tourney in Beresford (10:00/12:00/2:00)

Worth Mentioning

END OF SCHOOL is just three days away. Please make sure you are staying on top of your school work and check your email frequently for important notifications and the semester test schedule.

ORDER YOUR '25-'26 YEARBOOK today. They are $30 each, a steal for the millions of memories made this year. You can order online at ybpay.lifetouch.com. Please come find Dr. Buchholz if you have any questions.



How to be an outstanding member of the public

by **Bence Bonte**
staff writer
editorial

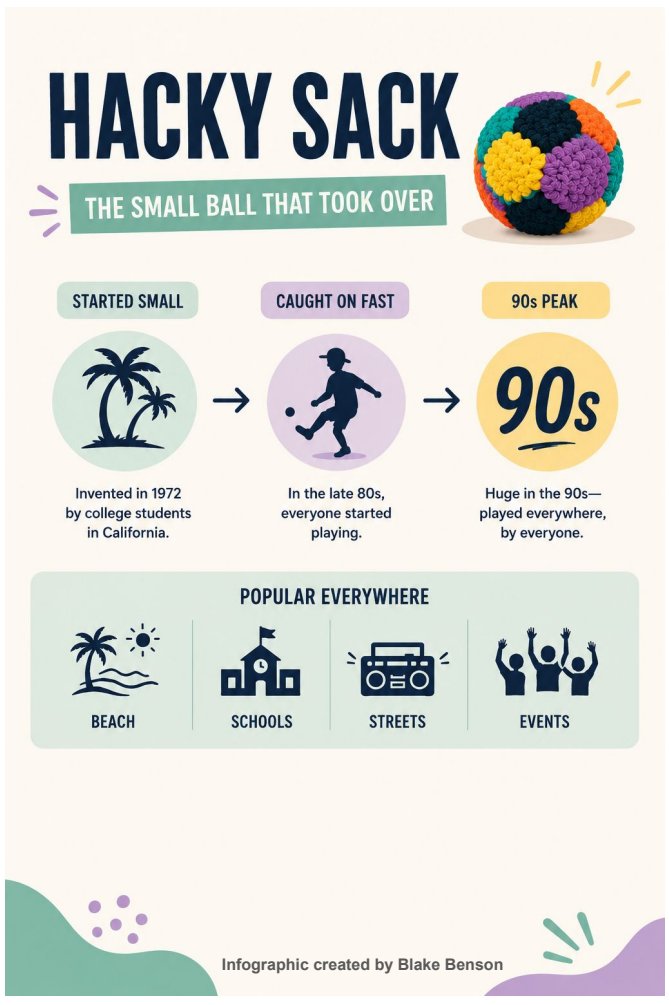
Little actions can make a big difference

Being an outstanding member of the public means helping others and making your community a better place. You don't have to be famous or rich to make a difference, small actions can have a big impact on the people around you.

One way to be a good member of the public is by showing respect and helping others when they need it like, respecting teachers, classmates, neighbors, and even strangers helps create a positive environment. Simple things like saying "please" and "thank you," helping a friend, or cleaning up litter can show people how respectful you really are in the community.

Being responsible and having a positive attitude are also important. Following rules, like things at your school or job are good things to do, being honest, and taking care of public places shows maturity, like working seasonal maintenance or even just picking up garbage you find on the ground. Being kind and encouraging people can influence other people around you to do the same. So that is how to be an amazing member of the community and show people how to be treated and clean up, so go and show people how amazing you are!





The surge of hacky sack

by **Cade Risty**
staff writer

Do you remember the popular game called "Hacky Sack?" Well all of a sudden, the fun hobby from the 1990's has resurrected. Becoming one of the most popular trends in America in the blink of an eye.

"Hacky Sack" is a game with a small ball made out of cloth filled with beads. The main goal of the game is to prevent the ball from hitting the ground, but you are only allowed to keep the ball up with your legs, back, and head, just like soccer.

The reason is not clear on why the "Hacky Sack" just randomly came back into existence. But it is very popular and loved by students in America.





A record setting season and it's not done yet

by **Zach Hermanson**
staff writer & infographic creator

Track and field continues to make history this season, athletes climbing to the top in the records and earning spots in the top 10. Multiple relay teams and individuals have already made it this year.

The biggest accomplishment came from the medley relay team with Jack Adler, Carter Siemonsma, Collin Olson, and Jackson Arend. They set a new school record with a time of 3:39.74, breaking the previous record by .2 seconds. Breaking a school record is one of the hardest things in track, and they now have a place in Garretson history.

Other people also moved into the school's top 10 rankings. The boys' 4x800m relay team of Siemonsma, Ethan McGregor, Chase Costello, and Arend ran an 8:27, putting them 7th all-time and only six seconds from the school record.

The boys 4x400m relay team of Olson, Siemonsma, Chase Arend, and J. Arend also entered the record books with a 3:35, placing them 8th all time and seven seconds off the record.

Individually, J. Arend earned a spot top 10 with a 52.23 second 400m, placing him 10th and only three seconds away from the school record. Ava Peters had a strong run in the 200m, running a 27.47 and placing 5th. Harper Andera reached the top 10 in the 300m hurdles with a 51.6. While Annalise Hoeck jumped 4'8" in the high jump to place 4th all time.

Doing more than just school activities

by **Harper Hanisch**
staff writer and infographic creator

Between education and activities, GHS students have a busy school year. Therefore, when summer break rolls around, students are left with a lot more free time. Many use this time to engage in activities they aren't able to in the school year.

Let's begin with Natalie Brazee. She is a junior here at GHS. Recently, Brazee has picked up figure skating! She attends weekly lessons at the Scheels IcePlex in Sioux Falls. Natalie said that she doesn't plan to compete, but she loves advancing in this sport.

Moving on, Blair Ellefson partakes in rodeo. Rodeo is mostly prominent in the summer season. Blair stated "My family enters a rodeo almost every weekend." She competes in the events of barrel racing and pole bending. Throughout the summer, as she attends events, she will gain points for high placings. At the end of the season if she has enough points, she will advance on to state.

Next up, Anna Ebbing dances! She has been dancing for 10 years. Anna stated "dancing is a good way to express yourself and I've created great friends through dance" She practices once a week at Just For Kix in Sioux Falls. Although the summer is just for practicing, competition will pick back up in the school year.

Lastly, Brielle Weir competes in gymnastics. She started when she was 10 but took a break as school sports occupied her time. Now, she is getting back into the rhythm. Weir participates in weekly lessons at Power & Grace in Sioux Falls. Brielle says that "gymnastics is a fun sport that is different from a lot of the activities that are provided in the school…it keeps me in shape and is a way to meet new people." Weir says she's glad that summer gives her an opportunity to get back to a sport she loves.

From rodeo to dance, students here at GHS use their summer to the fullest potential.







Rolling on the radio

Airplay may need some adjstments

by **Colton Buchholz**
staff writer and infographic creator

Every year brings a new wave of songs that define the sound of the moment, and 2026 is no exception, with genres from pop and hip-hop to country, Latin, and Alternative each producing popular tracks that dominate charts, playlists, and social media. But popularity doesn't always equal the quality of the music... I am taking a deeper dive into the top songs of 2026 and find out which songs were worth the hype, versus which songs need to kick the bucket.

Pop music has been primarily dominated by the same 5 artists for a while now, but are these artists actually fun to listen to? Primarily, 2026 has been dominated by three pop songs: Manchild by Sabrina Carpenter, I Just Might by Bruno Mars, and Opalite by Taylor Swift. Manchild is an average song with a very catchy chorus. There is not particularly something that makes the song stand out, but nothing that sets the song back from others. I would rate it a 7 out of 10 just because of the chorus but please don't put this song on repeat. It is good for a little, but not on repeat.

Next is I Just Might. This song automatically gets played on the aux. It only brings good vibes and super catchy. 9 out of 10 song and will be played more than once. Lastly is Opalite. I don't see the hype. There isn't anything to the song. Taylor Swift has made so many songs that sound the same, it falls into the mix. It's a 5 out of 10 song that just doesn't deserve to be willingly played. If it comes on the radio, so be it and you can leave it, but definitely not in my car. Pop songs have kind of been the primary genre, but in total, there needs to be some artist that needs to burst onto the stage and go on a generational run.

Country music is the most commonly heard music throughout our town. Along with that are three major songs that have emerged in 2026. Choosin' Texas and Be Her by Ella Langley, and Plastic Cigarette by Zach Bryan. Choosin' Texas to me, (the right opinion) is overrated. The song is played way too much for a song that isn't that great. A 7 out of 10 song shouldn't be played so often. Along with this, Be Her also by Ella Langley is underrated to me, but still not a top tear song. In total a better song than Choosin' Texas, but still a 6 out of 10. I think it flows better and sounds like a pop song a little bit, but still could be better. Lastly for country music is Plastic Cigarettes by Zach Bryan. It isn't great but could be on the aux. Zach Bryan is a very chill, and also relaxed singer that I think could be good to play with friends. My rating is a 7 out of 10 and not a terrible song.

Maybe the most popular genre between the high school is hip-hop/rap. 4x4 by Travis Scott, E85 by Don Toliver, and What You Saying by Lil Uzi Vert have led the way for this genre in 2026. 4x4 has been on social media a lot in the past year or so and I can see the reason. It's not terrible and can be played at parties, but still a 7 out of 10. Next is E85. Don Toliver has blown up the past couple of months for a good reason. He has a very unique voice but this song I don't think is "it." Still with the voice and lyrics, an 8 out of 10 seems right. Tik Tok has made a ton of songs famous and What You Saying by Lil Uzi Vert is a perfect example of that. This song has a fun dance and trend but overall not a good song. It's too repetitive and not a song to jam out to. Overall a 6 out of 10 song.

Lastly is the other genres that aren't always in the spotlight like Latin or Alternative. Bad Bunny has headlined this category. DTMF might be a top 15 song of all time. Even though I can't speak or understand Spanish, it is just a song to vibe to and even dance if you are in a good mood. 9.9 out of 10 just because I don't believe there is a perfect 10/10 song but this might be it if there was. Sombr isn't my type so I rated Homewrecker a 6 out of 10. Not overall a great song but could be worse I guess. Lastly is Anxiety by Doechii. It's super catchy and danceable. 8 out of 10 feels right. It's not a great song lyric wise, but is a presentable and respectable song.

2026 has been a wild time for music especially with Iceman coming out today. By the way a great album. But in total 2026 needs to have some sort of magic happen during the summer to revive the music for this year.