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

- Due to cold weather, the softball and baseball games scheduled for today are postponed.
- *The Little Mermaid* musical premieres on Friday with a 7:00 performance. Then there will be two on Sunday, April 26.

April 17, 2026
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Garretson, SD

GARRETSON
BLUE DRAGONS

Blue Ink



Steineke honored with teacher of the year

by **Shea Smidt**
staff writer and infographic creator

Teacher of the year is a prestigious award that goes to the teacher that has shown strong dedication to and innovation with their students, colleagues, and school community. This year that teacher is Mrs. Tori Steineke. She was nominated by her peers and ultimately chosen as Garretson's teacher of the year.

Mrs. Steineke is the 3rd grade teacher for the elementary. She has been teaching in Garretson for three years.

She chose Garretson because it is a small town and she enjoyed the small town feel. "When I taught, and I taught in a bigger school, I didn't feel like I got to know the kiddos," Mrs. Steineke said.

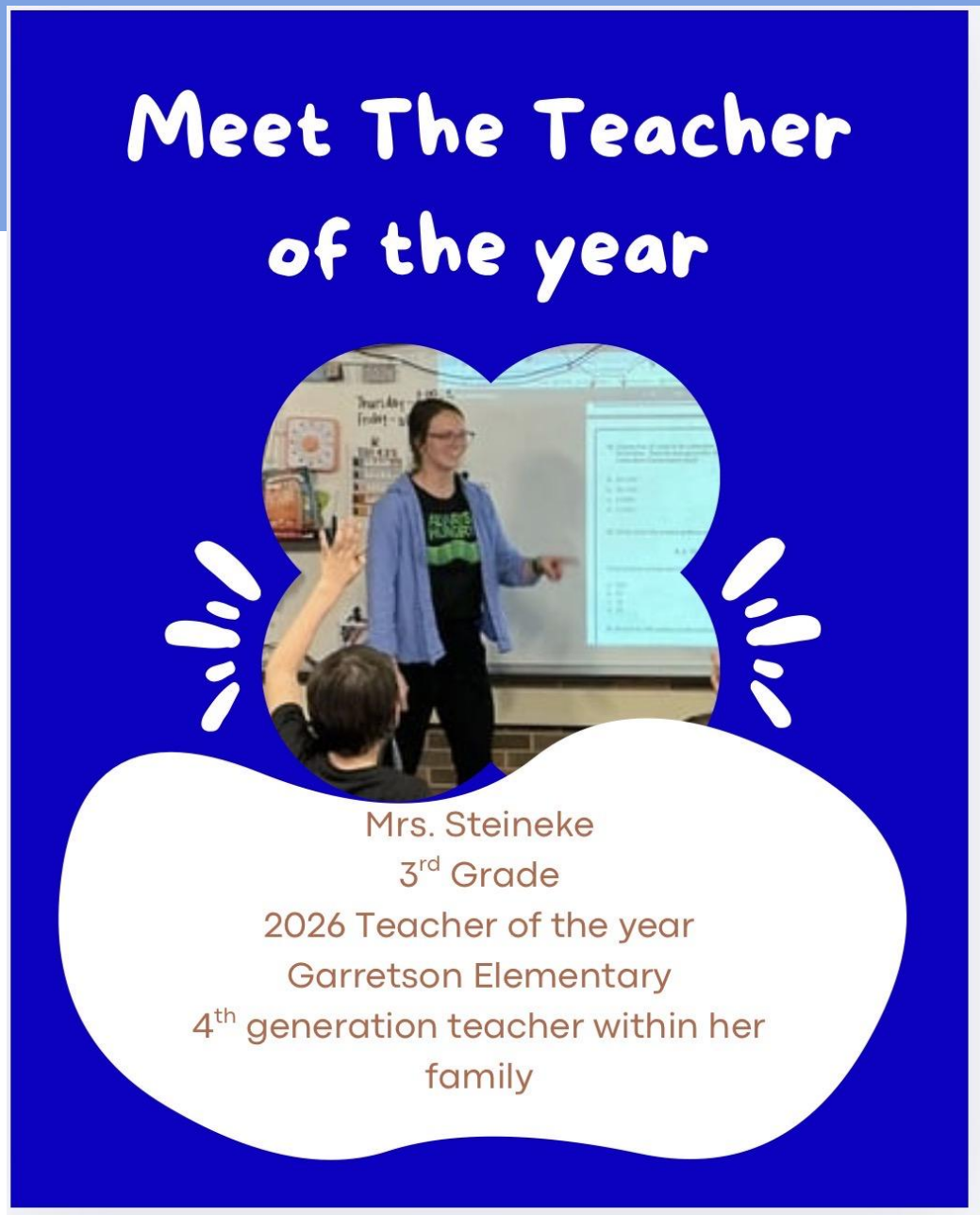
Steineke has also always wanted to be a teacher even though her parents tried to convince her otherwise. She is a 4th generation teacher so it is in her family blood.

She is great at teaching but she also cares about her students. She said, "I hope that all the students in my classroom each and every day feel that they are valued and I hope my teaching makes sense," Steineke said.

She cares for her students and is almost always enjoying her job. Her favorite part about teaching is helping the kids realize their potential. She enjoys seeing them realize they can do hard things, inside or outside the classroom.

That's the 2026 Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Steineke. "It's the best profession in the whole world, it's hard some days but the highs way out way the lows," said Mrs. Steineke.

Congratulations!



Forever in our hearts

by **Chase Costello**
staff writer

Even after his passing, Howe's imprint in the community is still felt



April 15, 2026 marked four years after Benton Howe passed. He would now be 15 years old and a freshman in high school.

For those who didn't know Benton, he was raised on a farm just out of town. He loved to hunt, fish, ride dirt bike, play sports, hang out with friends, and so much more.

In Garretson he wasn't just a student, he was a best friend, a brother, he was a kind young man that knew so meany people.

Every year since he passed River Ridge Golf course has done the Benton Howe Golf Tournament. The earnings from the tournament go to the Benton Howe Memorial Scholarship, it supports students and continuing Benton's legacy.

Betsy Howe explained that the Benton Howe golf tournament is different from the rest. She said, "it holds a special place in my heart because it helps raise money for kids."

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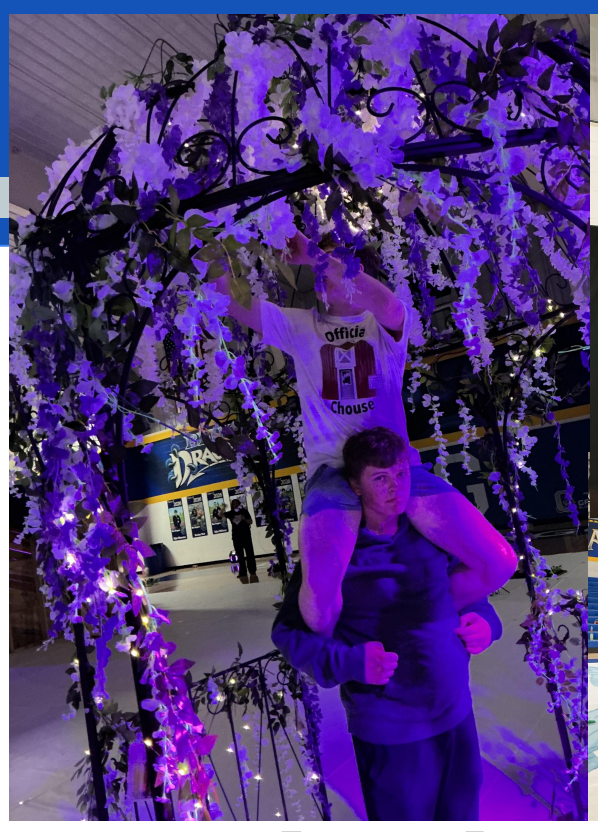








Prom details and sneak peeks

by **Bence Bonte**
staff writer

Juniors spend today decorating in preparation for a full day of Prom fun on Saturday

Garretson High School's prom is finally here, and everyone is getting excited for one of the biggest nights of the year. This year's theme is Rapunzel, so the whole place is going to look like a fairytale with lights, towers, and decorations that make it feel magical.

The doors open at 6:30 pm, so students can come in, take pictures, and hang out before everything starts. Then at 7:00 pm, the Grand March begins, where everyone walks in and shows off their outfits. This is one of the best parts because the public get to see what everyone is wearing and cheer each other on.

The Rapunzel theme will make the night feel really special with glowing lights and a cool atmosphere. Whether people go with friends or a date, it is a night to have fun and make memories.

The conclusion of the evening will be held at the school for after prom with games, laser tag, and a hypnotist.

Overall, Garretson's prom is going to be an awesome night that students will remember for a long time.



Senior Spotlight
Brecken Weir

Activities Involved In:
Basketball
Baseball
FFA

Who/What Will You Miss Most:
Seeing friends everyday

Favorite School Lunch:
Taco in a Bag

Favorite Class You've Taken:
Consumer Math

Plans for Next Year:
Attend Lake Area Tech for Ag Business or Ag Production

Class Of 2026



Speaker comes to Garretson

by **Cade Risty**
staff writer

Henry G. Fix Post 23 sponsored V. J. Smith's public speaking to help celebrate America's 250th

On Thursday, professional speaker, VJ Smith, came to Garretson, South Dakota to speak to the middle school and high school as well as community members.

Smith, a resident of Brookings, is a former member of the South Dakota State Senator, an author, and has been speaking for more than 25 years. He came to speak about America's 250th birthday and the gratitude for sacrifices made by many people and had lots of good stories and information.

Smith talked about respect to U.S soldiers and having good manners. His stories ranged from small acts of appreciation to talking to those people who may seem like "shadow people" to setting a good example for others through words and actions.

Dr. Buchholz said, "I was pleasantly surprised…I thought his talk might connect more with the older generation, but he brought the students into his message, made it relevant, and had lots of good points."

VJ Smith looks to keep speaking for as long as he can and wants to come talk to Garretson again sometime.

This Week's Need to Know

Upcoming Events

Friday, April 17
- Softball v. Elk Point-Jefferson (5:00/6:30)

Monday, April 20
- State FFA @ Brookings
- Golf @ Flandreau Meet in Brookings (10:00)
- Softball @ Chester (4:00)

Tuesday, April 21
- State FFA @ Brookings
- Golf @ Chester (9:00)
- Track @ Beresford (1:00/2:00)
- Softball @ MCM in Montrose (4:00/5:30)

Wednesday, April 22
- State FFA @ Brookings
- Large Group Band & Choir Contest @ Harrisburg

Thursday, April 23
- JH Track @ Garretson (3:00)

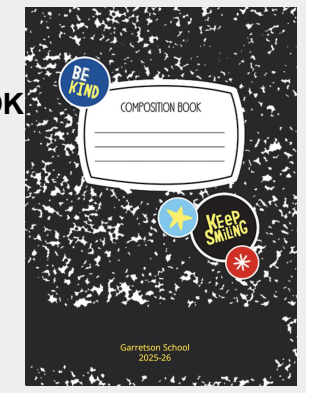
Friday, April 24
- JH Golf @ Deubrook (11:00)
- JH Track @ Parker/Marion (3:00)
- Spring Musical Performance (7:00)

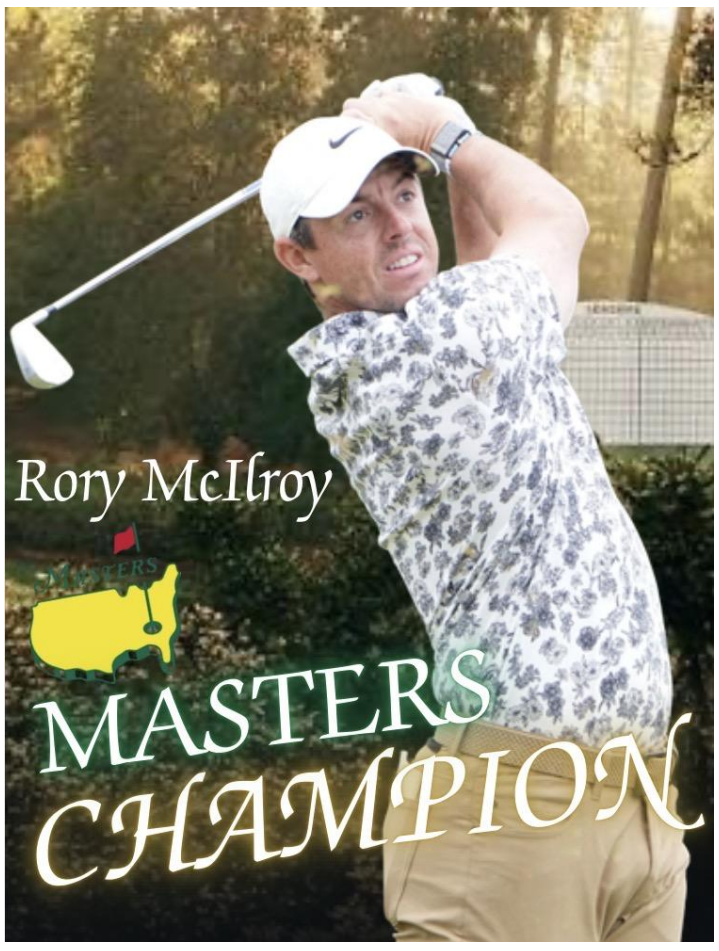
Worth Mentioning

PROM is tomorrow. Please be aware of gym space being in use. Doors for Grand March open at 6:30.

NEXT WEEK features a full week of activities including all sports in action and the debut of the school musical, *The Little Mermaid* with performances on Friday and Sunday.

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.





Masters drama unfolds while history is made

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

The 2026 Masters Tournament was one of the most dramatic finishes in golf history, with Rory McIlroy winning his second straight green jacket.

McIlroy became the first back-to-back champion since Tiger Woods in 2001 and 2002, making him with the fourth back-toback winner in Masters history.

What made this win really cool was how chaotic his final round was as he entered the weekend with a huge six shot lead, then lost it during a few rough holes, and then fought back to win by a single stroke.

There were a ton of exciting moments beyond just the winner. Scottie Scheffler nearly pulled off a comeback and finished just one shot behind, while Cameron Young finished in the top even after being far back earlier in the tournament. Justin Rose also stayed in the mix, making Sunday feel wide open.

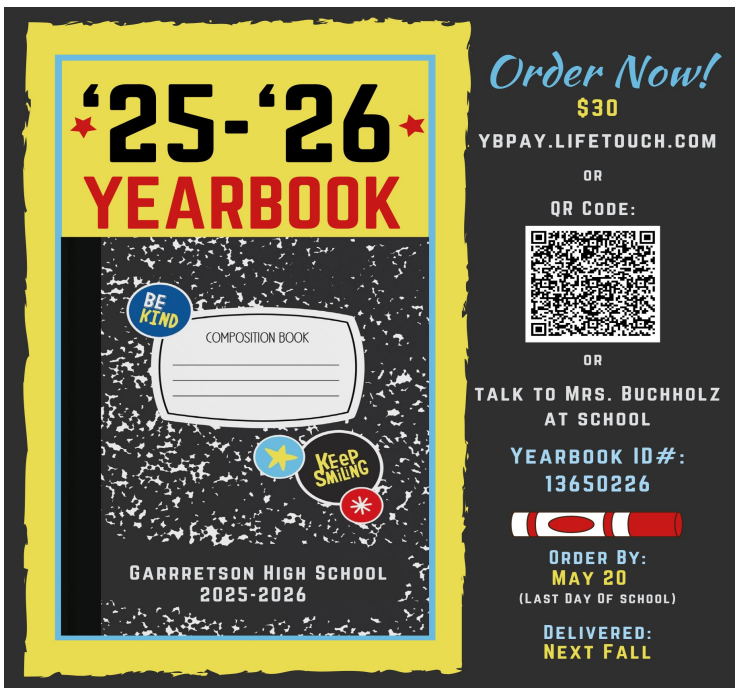
The course itself played differently than usual too dry, fast conditions led to aggressive scoring and big swings on the leaderboard, especially on Saturday when players went unusually low.

Another cool part of the 2026 Masters was everything happening around the tournament. The Par 3 Contest became one of the most-watched in years, with fun families and even a hole-in-one that got fans excited.

The event also had record breaking prize money, with a $22.5 million purse and $4.5 million going to the winner.

On top of that, TV ratings for the final round were the highest in over a decade, showing just how big and entertaining this year's Masters was for fans around the world.







Trip Recap

by **Colton Buchholz**
staff writer



Day 1

The band and choir met at the school on April 7 to load the bus and left the school around 6:30 am. The rest of the day, we were on a bus ride that took us to Denver for lunch, and then we kept on our way to Los Angeles.

Day 2

At 4:00am, we stopped in Las Vegas for a quick walk and drove down The Strip. We continued on our route to California until about 11:00 where we finally arrived at Redondo Beach and stayed there until 6:00 pm. After the beach, we went to our hotel and relaxed for the rest of the night.

Day 3

We woke up bright and early for our breakfast and left for Disneyland. We would end up staying from 8 am to 11pm. Some of the most popular rides were Indiana Jones, Pirates of the Caribbean, and Space Mountain.

Day 4

Friday was the sight seeing day as well as performance day. We started off the day as normal with breakfast but immediately went onto the bus to see some of the sights of L.A. like, Space X, Sofi Stadium, the Grammy Museum, the Griffith Observatory, and Hollywood.

We ended the day off in downtown Hollywood shopping, eating, and taking in the sights, smells, and sounds of Hollywood.

Day 5

Saturday was our last full day in Los Angeles. And we again, spent the whole day at an amusement park. Universal Studios in Hollywood. At Universal, we spent from 9am to 7pm riding rides, trying different food, and seeing how movies are actually made behind the scenes. Some of the favorite attractions included Harry Potter, Jurassic World, and The Mummy.

Day 6

Sunday we finally packed our belongings and got on the 28 hour bus ride back to South Dakota. Along the way home on Sunday, we made one stop in Las Vegas for a lunch and continued our journey back home.

Day 7

Monday we stopped in Omaha for a quick bite to eat for our lunch, but still made great time getting home ahead of schedule. The trip came to an end at around 4:00 pm on Monday where the bus rolled to a stop at the Garretson High School right where the trip began one week prior.



High school trapshooting season gets underway

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

Trap shooting is a sport of precision and concentration. It takes time and patience to get good. In trap participants shoot at small flying disks known as clay pigeons or clays.

Each week you shoot one round of 50 shooting at clays. The regular season lasts five weeks. State is open for all who sign up. At state, participants shoot two rounds of 50. For awards there is individual and team. For individuals it's simple, the person who hits the most wins. For team, it's also simple, the team who hit the most. Trap is one of the only sports that an individual can not hurt the team in any way.

Garretson shoots at the Garretson Sportsmen's Club, south down the Valley road.