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

- Powerlifting has one more meet before state. It is tomorrow at Canton.
- Girls wrestling had state qualifying yesterday: congrats Macie and Amaya, and boys work to qualify tomorrow.

February 20, 2026
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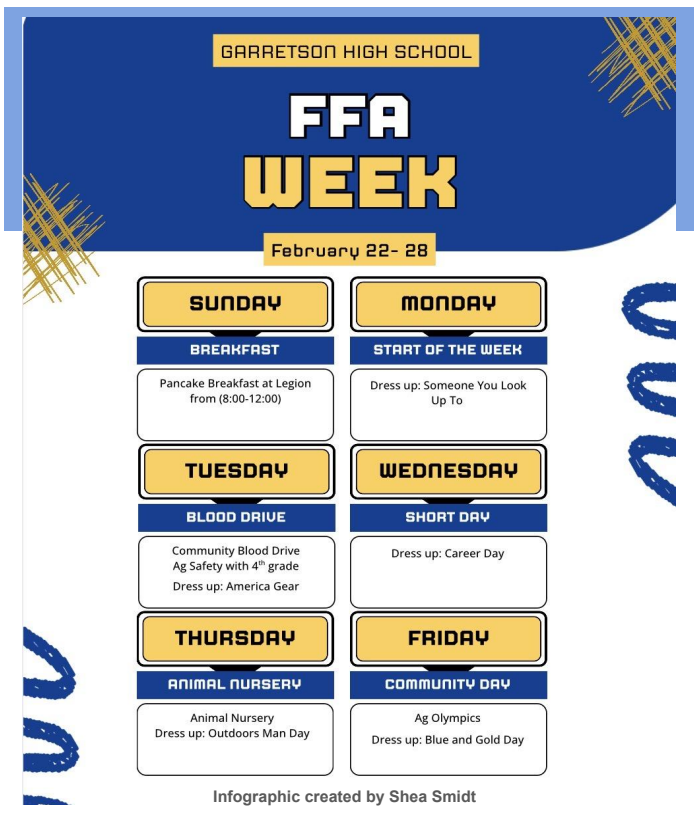
Garretson High School
Garretson, SD

Blue Ink

GARRETSON
BLUE DRAGONS





Infographic created by Shea Smidt

by **Harper Hanisch**
staff writer

February 22-28 highlights agriculture, service, and education

Next week is the long awaited National FFA Week. Garretson FFA is notorious for going all out with activities. They have planned a week full of games, dress up days, and service projects.

Starting on February 28, a community wide breakfast will be held at the Legion. Throughout the week, AG- related dress up days will be held. On Thursday the animal nursery will be open to grades K-12. Also, AG Olympics on Friday will bring GHS together for a friendly competition to round out the week.

NBA tanking

Teams sit star players in critical moments in hopes for better draft picks

by **Colton Buchholz**
staff writer

The National Basketball Association is taking action against teams that are accused of "tanking," which basically means losing on purpose to get better draft picks. Recently, the league fined the Utah Jazz $500,000 and the Indiana Pacers $100,000 for what it called actions that "hurt the integrity of the game."

Tanking has been a hot topic in the NBA for years. Teams in the past, like the Clippers and the Suns, have been caught tanking. These are teams that are already having a bad season and then sit their best players or limit their minutes so they lose more games. The worse a team's record gets, the better the odds are to get a high pick in the NBA Draft. And in the past, high draft picks have been turned into future superstars like Cooper Flagg and Victor Wembanyama.



Infographic created by Chase Costello

Over the past weeks, the Jazz and Pacers have been reported to bench their best players in critical moments of the game to purposefully lose. Although this isn't illegal, the NBA still looks down upon this action because it is viewed as unfair to the competition.

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver spoke out about the fines and made it clear that the league wants every team competing as hard as possible.

He said tanking "undermines" the game and hinted that even tougher punishments, like taking away draft picks, or possible suspensions could happen if teams keep tanking.

The bigger issue may be the draft lottery system itself. The NBA created it to help struggling teams get better, but it also gives teams a reason to lose on purpose. Some people think the league should change how the draft works so there's no advantage to having the worst record.

For now, the NBA is trying to set one thing straight: teams need to start competing every night. None of the fans pay good money to see their favorite player sit on the bench during a close game. People still question whether the fines will stop teams, or if they are determined for a higher draft pick. NBA fans will be watching a little more carefully the rest of the season.



The Henry G Fix American Legion Auxiliary Unit 23 is an active unit and have a great rapport with the school including offering a poem and essay contest every year. This year students from all levels of the school participated in the contests. A poem option is available for elementary students and 21 poems were submitted. For the essay contest 200 writings were entered in the elementary through high school. This year's prompts focused on the semiquincentennial that will happen this year. The poem's prompt was "Happy 250th Birthday America" while the essay's was "Celebrating America's 250th Birthday and the Veterans who Fought for Our Freedom".

This year's winners were just announced on Tuesday. **Front Row:** Kade Hoeck, Harper Johnson, Allison Schmid, Lauryn Stiefvater, Andrew Wynia, Emmalyn Garcia, Kathy Evenson; **Middle Row:** Cheryl Lyngen, Caylix Buchholz, Elsa Jacobson, Avery Zweep, Elijah Winterton, Kendra Jessen, Blake Benson; **Back Row:** Harper Hanisch, Annalise Hoeck, Lydia Frerk, Brielle Weir, Stella Frewaldt, Ashtyn Nelson, Colton Buchholz, Collin Olson

CONGRATULATIONS

AMERICAN LEGION ESSAY WINNERS

Garretson elementary, middle, and high school students participated in the essay and poem contests sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary.

POEM: *"Happy 250th Birthday America"*

Grade 3: Harper Johnson (1st), Lauryn Stiefvater (2nd); **Grade 4:** Allison Schmid (1st)

ESSAY: *"Celebrating America's 250th Birthday and the Veterans who Fought for Our Freedom"*

Grade 3: Carson Hanson (1st), Andrew Wynia (2nd); **Grade 6:** Emmalyn Garcia (1st), Kade Hoeck (2nd), Elsa Jacobson (3rd); **Grade 7:** Kendra Jessen (1st), Caylix Buchholz (2nd); **Grade 8:** Lydia Frerk (1st), Stella Frewaldt (2nd), Avery Zweep (3rd); **Grade 9:** Colton Buchholz (1st), Annalise Hoeck (2nd), Harper Hanisch (3rd); **Grade 10:** Ashtyn Nelson (1st), Blake Benson (2nd), Brielle Weir (3rd); **Grade 11**: Juul Heggen (1st), Collin Olson (2nd); **Grade 12:** Elijah Winterton (1st)

Ilia Malinin: Olympic Icarus

Gold medal favorite hits for team, misses on individual opportunity

by **Cece Fiegen**
staff writer & infographic creator

American sweetheart, Ilia Malinin, came to the 2026 Winter Olympics as a highly favored figure skater hoping to take home gold. Unfortunately, that is not the outcome that came to be for the “Quad God”. Just five days after leading teaming USA to gold in the team skate, Malinin was unable to secure victory for himself in the men’s free skate.

After many consecutive mistakes during his free skate, it all came crashing down after Malinin’s second fall on the ice. It was obvious to many fans that the “Quad God” was not performing to his full capability. This unfortunately put him in 8th place for his first Olympic free skate.

Later Malinin opened up about what was going through his head on the ice on his Instagram, “On the world's biggest stage, those who appear the strongest may still be fighting invisible battles on the inside.” He shared that the pressure of the Olympics and “vile online hatred attacks” were something that he was not prepared for and led to his downfall.

While the “Quad God” is done competing in the Olympics, he will still be at the figure skating exhibition gala, despite finishing in 8th. Malinin stressed that he would not dwell on his shortcomings and wanted to continue to push the boundaries of figure skating.



CONGRATULATIONS

REGION 2 WRESTLING STATE QUALIFYING

Girls Wrestling competed at Elk Point-Jefferson Thursday, February 20. Two of Garretson’s three wrestlers were able to notch their place in the state tournament next weekend in Sioux Falls.

MACIE MILLER (120 LB)

AMAYA MILLWOOD (235 LB)

Geometry Dash

Levels ranked from most to least difficult



Infographic created by Bence Bonte

Senior Spotlight
Braxtan Skinner

Activities Involved In:
Basketball, Track, Boy Scouts

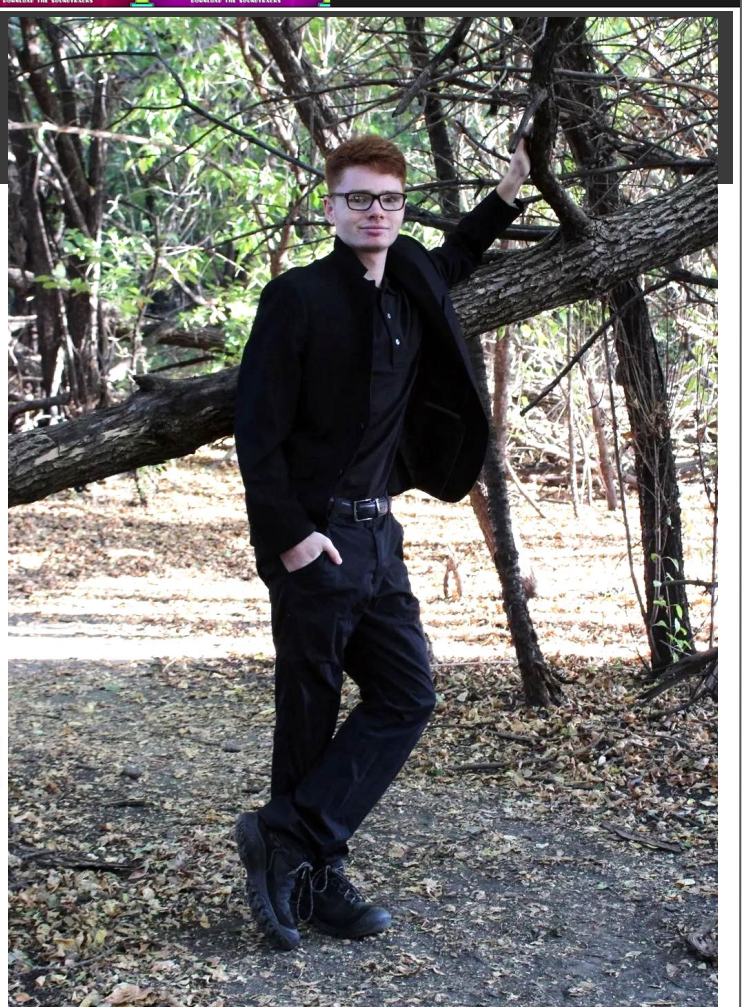
Who/What Will You Miss Most:
Kennett

Favorite School Lunch:
Orange chicken and rice

Favorite Class You’ve Taken:
Multimedia

Plans for Next Year:
National Guard

Class Of 2026



This Week’s Need to Know

Upcoming Events

Saturday, February 21
- Wrestling @ Regions in Elk Point (9:30)

Sunday, February 22
- National FFA Week
- Community Breakfast @ Legion (8:30-12:00)

Monday, February 23
- BBB @ Dell Rapids (4:30/5:30/7:00)

Tuesday, February 24
- FFA Hosts Bloodmobile (7:30-2:30)
- GBB @ Regions 1st Round v. TBD (7:00)

Thursday, February 26
- Animal Nursery @ Ag Barn (8:30-3:00)
- GBB @ Regions 2nd Round v. TBD (7:00)
- State Wrestling @ Sioux Falls (All Day)

Friday, February 27
- Ag Olympics @ Old Gym
- SDSU Honor Band
- State Wrestling @ Sioux Falls (All Day)

Saturday, February 28
- State Wrestling @ Sioux Falls (All Day)

Worth Mentioning

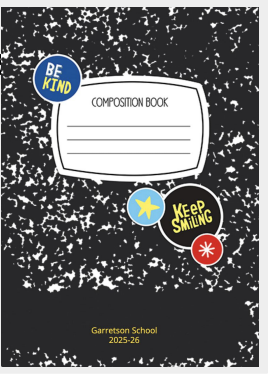
MUSICAL AUDITIONS for *The Little Mermaid* are February 26 and 27 at 7:30 AM or 3:30 PM. Students only need to come to ONE of the auditions.

THREE GARRETSON STUDENTS participated in the USD Honor Band last week. Congratulations to Anna Ebbing, Caiden Maack, and Aiden Johnson.

MIDDLE SCHOOL hosted their own Olympics competition with their STET classes.

CONGRATULATIONS to all of the students who have been recognized for showing positive ACE qualities (Attitude, Character, Effort). Keep doing the right thing and helping out your fellow students and our amazing school!. Show that Blue Dragon Pride!

ORDER YOUR ‘25-’26 YEARBOOKS 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.



Dangers of AI

by **Cade Risty**
staff writer - editorial

Does its helpfulness outweigh the drawbacks and deception it may cause

First Impact

In November 2022, Chat GPT made its debut and instantly impacted the world. Students used it to write essays, for ideas, and it became popular around the world, like Google on steroids. Some would say it has been very helpful to the development of our country, but it can also be very dangerous, here's why.

Potential Dangers

Despite people using AI to write their essays, AI also became able to create videos, voices, and more. Which was a harmless joke or used for fun in the beginning. As time went on, AI started to get way more advanced, and now, sometimes you can't even tell if a video is real or fake. Although it's pretty cool, it has also become dangerous. People can use this software to deceive others and spread lies and rumors.

What Should We Do?

I believe that there should be a limit to what we are allowed to do with AI. There are a lot of bad people in the world that can do bad things with AI and that needs to be put to a stop. Putting limits on AI software could be a big step in the right direction and would keep the world safe from possibly a lot worse.

Powerlifting pushes forward

by **Blake Benson**
staff writer

The Garretson High School powerlifting team traveled to Dell Rapids on Saturday, February 7, and they had a great showing with multiple top 5 placers and one taking 1st: Wyatt Potter!

In powerlifting, an athlete's total is the combined weight of their squat, bench press, and deadlift. The highest total wins.

Ava Peters finished 2nd with a total of 480 pounds. Delilah Johnson placed 5th with a 460 lb total. Jordyn Graff earned 2nd place totaling 470 pounds, and Amaya Millwood earned 2nd lifting an impressive 575 pounds.

On the boys side, Jack Adler placed 4th with a 735 lb total. Aiden Johnson totaled 865 pounds which placed him 2nd. Wyatt Potter had an amazing performance, taking 1st with a total of 825 pounds. Blake Carmody placed 4th with a 825 lb total, and Jacoby Costello earned 2nd place lifting 735 pounds.

Overall, the powerlifting team gave a solid performance in Dell Rapids as they racked up many top finishes and proved that their effort was well worth it.

The next challenge for Garretson powerlifting is tomorrow February 21, in Canton, South Dakota.

JV Highlight

Girls and Boys Basketball play well as of late



Left Side:
Top: Aubrey Sikkink at the key, passes the ball. The girls pulled out the win with good team play and strong ball movement.
Middle: Harper Hanisch, snags a steal, then converts for two with a hand in her face.
Bottom: Brenna Smith spins towards the paint and looks for a teammate. She passed to Brooklyn Schwebach who sunk the layup.
Right Side:
Top: Brecken Honey reached high as he went to block the shot. In the process he gave him a high five.
Middle: Ethan McGregor pops a three. He hit multiple threes to keep Garretson in the game and end up with the win.
Bottom: Gavin Coburn looks above as his layup falls in. He used his speed and skill to make the contested shot.

Photos by Zach Hermanson



North Dakota State University is leaving the valley for the mountains.

The Bison have been at or near the top of the Missouri Valley and NCAA D1 FCS groupings for almost two decades. Now they are taking their talents to the NCAA D1 FBS conference, the Mountain West.

This means that after their two-year transition period, which typically happens when a school moves from one level to another, NDSU will be eligible to participate in Bowl games in the postseason.

The Mountain West currently is home to Northern Illinoi, UTEP, Air Force, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, San Jose State, UNLV and Wyoming.

NBA All-Star weekend

