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Student Spotlight

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Engle shares new updates

Elementary school still on the table

By Angela Messere

In 2020, Principal Jordan Engle announced that a committee had been formed to investigate the building of a Catholic elementary school tied to Grand Island Central Catholic (GICC).

As plans begin to finalize, members of the GICC community excitedly await updates regarding the addition of a Catholic elementary school.

Engle has been working diligently in conjunction with Bishop Hanefeldt to provide all of the information necessary for building a new elementary school in a timely manner.

"In December, I submitted all of our findings to the bishop for consideration, so really right now, we are giving him the space and time that he needs to consider because it is a lot of information that I presented to him. As soon as he is done making his considerations, I am sure he and I will sit down and chat about specifically what the next steps will be," stated Engle.

As the plans for the new school finalize, Engle shared his focus of including both the interests of the new elementary school as well as those of GICC.

"...Obviously, I have skin in the game because I have small children, and I want them to go to a Catholic elementary school. My focus on this is that I am very in favor of having a Catholic elementary school, but I also have to keep the best interests of this school in mind, being GICC. Financially, obviously, it is going to be quite a burden to have an additional

seven grades worth of kids, so we want to make sure that we can still be a financially solvent school but also offer that extra service if it's possible," said Engle.

With the initial announcement of the school, many wondered about the financial funding and its impact on individual families. Engle was quick to express that the tuition for current students would not be raised in the years to come to help support the finances of the new school.

"No. [Tuition will not be increased.]," stated Engle.

Engle shared construction plans with the public, saying that the location of the new elementary school would be on GICC property. The school will be built on the northwest corner of the building and will accommodate seven additional grades worth of students.

"We looked at two options. We had an option where we update the Blessed Sacrament elementary school that used to be open... And we also looked at what it would cost to add on additional classroom space to the current school building... It was just a little bit cheaper to add on classroom space at GICC. If we were to build onto the school... it would be off of the northwest corner of the building," described Engle.

With the addition of a new school, one main concern is enrollment, as financial stability is contingent upon the enrollment of students in sustainable numbers, and, as is the current situation,

Engle is happy to work with any family who wishes to enroll.

"Obviously, the better the numbers are, the more financially stable it is going to be. We will take anybody who wants a Catholic education and work with them as best as we can," said Engle.

Many parents in the GICC community excitedly await the construction of the school. Spanish teacher Amy May shared her excitement about the addition of a Catholic elementary school for her own children.

"I attended Catholic schools, K-12, and now teach in a Catholic school. The ability to express my faith at work, the ability for my children to experience God in the school setting, and the common values shared as Catholics and Christians attending school together, playing sports together, participating in band/choir/etc. together, is something that I would love for my children to experience at the elementary level," shared May.

Science teacher Ryan Smith also expressed his belief in the importance of a faith based education in the lives of his children and of the children of the community.

"I would love to have the opportunity to send my children to a Catholic grade school... it would greatly benefit them in their spiritual lives to have the faith and our family values taught to them, not only at home and at our church, but at their school as well," said Smith.

Teachers await needles to the arm

By Koby Bales and Hayden Price

On Friday, January 29, 2021, teachers throughout the Grand Island area received the first COVID-19 vaccine dose.

At least ten Grand Island Central Catholic (GICC) teachers were shuttled to and from Grand Island Senior High and received their first of two COVID-19 vaccine shots. Principal Jordan Engle was pleased with the prioritization of teachers within the distribution plan, and happy he and his staff were scheduled to receive the vaccine.

“I have made vaccines available to the staff. Technically, I’m not a medical professional, so I can’t encourage or discourage

anything, so what I did encourage was for the staff to talk to their physicians and use whatever resources they need to make the most educated decisions they can,” Engle remarked.

Teachers also looked forward to eventually see students without masks on their faces. Business teacher Colleen Childers planned to receive the vaccine for her family members’ safety.

“The main reason I’m getting vaccinated obviously is to protect myself... I live with a high-risk husband, so I want to try to protect him. My mom is high risk, and I see her a lot, and I want to try to protect her. And obviously, I want to

protect the kids I teach,” said Childers.

Teachers planned to also return to normal teaching circumstances once the vaccine is distributed, and restrictions from the Central District Health Department are lifted. They hope to reinstate more active and engaging types of learning rather than the social-distance based learning that is taking place right now. As teachers began to receive the first of two vaccine doses, some teachers felt relief.

“I’ve seen what this has done to some of our teachers, and I know that a lot of them feel relieved that they have the opportunity to protect themselves,” Engle concluded.

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GRAND ISLAND

optical
EYECARE PROFESSIONALS

Speech team speaks loud as season begins

By Koby Bales



Photo By Barb Yager-Wach

Celia Sutherland (12), Sheridan Puncocar (9), Brandon Hollister (11), and Molly Mueller (12) practice their Oral Interpretation of Drama (OID) piece prior to the first home meet on Saturday, January 28, 2021.

The school's speech team squared off against the Hastings High School Tigers in a duel on Saturday, January 16, 2021.

The team practiced for two months before this meet; these practices consisted of team members gathering during off hours or after school with the coaches and practicing their speeches multiple

times. These practices were beneficial early on in the season as it gave the participants time to memorize and edit their speeches. The week prior to the duel against Hastings, GICC also participated in a virtual meet against Adams Central, but not everyone on the roster competed that day.

"I practiced it [my speech] a lot

until it was memorized, and I mentally prepared myself for the rigorous competition," Gracie Woods (10), a first-year speech team member who participated in Persuasive speaking and Oral Interpretation of Drama (OID), remarked.

The speech team performed well at the meet against Hastings, although the meet was more of a practice with judge feedback. Each member of the team performed their speech twice, which was good experience for the individuals. Overall, the team was happy with the outcome of the meet.

The team looks to take what they learned from this meet and continue to improve upon it through the duration of the season.

"The feedback I got back from the judges was very helpful and showed me what I needed to work on," Woods said.

The team was back in action on January 30, 2021, with their first home meet of the season. Collectively, in the meet against nine other schools, GICC had eleven medalists and two event champions.

NSAA issues new rules; student sections return to gyms

By Payton Gangwish

On January 4, 2021, the Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) announced that the then-current restrictions on in-person attendance of extracurricular activities would be loosened.

The announcement shared that attendance at events would no longer be limited to just family members of athletes. Instead, half of the maximum capacity of

a venue could be filled, which meant the return of the student section for the first time since volleyball season.

"It was sad because we have always had a student section to support our players... I am stoked to be able to come to games and be a part of the student section," said Creighton Mehring (11).

With the return of the student section and non-family Crusader fans, Athletic Director Dick Ross worked to adjust within the rulings.

"The parameters are that we can have up to 50% capacity in our gym. We are allowing the visiting team to have 200 fans on their pass list. We aren't having a pass list of our fans, but to be able to come

to the games, the fan must have something with GICC... We can have 1,200 fans, so our capacity is at 600 right now. We just look at

the crowd and estimate how many people are in the stands," said Ross.

As of January 19, 2021, no changes were made to these deregulated COVID-19 rules. Across Nebraska, in general, daily COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations are down.

In a report published by 10/11 NOW on January 21, 2021, the NSAA's board of directors voted unanimously to keep the girls and boys basketball state tournaments in Lincoln in a new five-day format.

With this new format, classes A, B, and C-I will have all tournament games played at Pinnacle Bank Arena (PBA).

**"I am stoked to be able to come to games..."
Creighton Mehring (11)**



Photo By Kajetan Hubl

Tanner Turek (12), Reid Martinez (12), and Brayton Johnson (11) cheer on the girls volleyball team. As part of the new attendance rules students are welcome back to cheer on their teams as long as they are masked.

Winter Ball breaks monotony of COVID-19

By Koby Bales

The annual Winter Ball dance took place at Grand Island Central Catholic's (GICC) Schumann Gymnasium on Saturday, January 16, 2021.

The dance was a perfect night for students to kick back and relax from their all-so-busy second-semester schedules. Winter Ball was a Sadie Hawkins dance, which meant that the female students asked the males to the dance, which led to the creation of many creative signs used to pop the question. One notable sign was used by Kylie Gangwish (10) when she asked Ishmael Nadir (10) to the dance. The sign said, "I know you may not have 20/20 vision, but I can see you and me at winter ball!"

Royalty was crowned at 8:15 p.m., with Dei Jengmer (12) and Raegan Gellatly (12) winning king and queen. Per tradition, a slow dance was shared by the king and queen to start the night.

"It felt good to win the queen. It is an honor that I will remember for the rest of my life," Gellatly said.

Emery Obermiller-Snyder (10) took her turn as a disc jockey and had the dance floor bumping with some of today's top hits along with some hits from the past. Many pop songs with

funky beats were played along with some trendy hip-hop music that had everyone grooving to the music. When the artist DJ Casper's hit song, "Cha Cha Slide," came on the loudspeakers, the students filled the dance floor and began grooving. Students from all grades were popping and locking all night long on the dance floor regardless of what music was being played.

"Honestly, I thought that Emery put great effort into the music and I commend her for that. It was great to see everyone singing and dancing. That's something we wanted to see last spring, but at least we got it in January," Will Goering (12) exclaimed.

While the music blared, the students gathered together in the center of the dance floor to create a mosh pit.

"The mosh pit was crazy... It was a lot of fun," said Tanner Turek (12).

The always rowdy junior boys led the way involving the majority of the students present, as they jumped up and down, singing along with the songs. In more relaxed parts of the night, couples joined together and shared a slow dance.

As the dance concluded, students were left with a sense of satisfaction as it

was a night full of fun and great moments. Juniors and seniors were also left with a sense of anticipation for Prom in April. Until then, the students will remember the excellent night at the Winter Ball.



Photo By Gavin Langer

Jackson Henry (11) gives a congratulatory high-five to date Raegan Gellatly (12) after she won the Winter Ball queen honors. The dance was held on Saturday, January 17, 2021, in the Schumann Gym.

My New Year's Resolution

stay calm and study on!

be nice to everyone

Not as much social media, and doing more active things

I would like to grow in my relationship with God this year and every year on

go out of my comfort zone

Play more Fortnite

Spend more time with family and friends

To tell the people around me I love them more, and to read at least 20 minutes each day.

Finish strong through the last semester.

2021

Let's all be more like...

Lidia

By Hayden Price

Many students come from varied backgrounds at Grand Island Central (GICC), and Lidia Ramirez (12) is no exception. Ramirez has attended GICC for four years and she has excelled in academics and athletics. Her large family and humble upbringing have shaped Ramirez into a selfless individual.

Prior to attending GICC, Ramirez went to Walnut Middle School. She was going to attend Grand Island Senior High, but her family determined it would be best for her to attend GICC. The Catholic component of GICC drew the Ramirez family to the school.

Ramirez is far more than just a student at GICC, she contributes significantly to the fine arts and athletic success of the school, and participates in many extracurricular activities, including: cross country, basketball, band, pep band, jazz band, and musical crew. Ultimately, she thinks that the hard work she has put into her activities has benefited her. Having to break into a new school atmosphere led to new opportunities for Ramirez.

"I was just trying to get myself more involved in the school and see where I could help out," said Ramirez.

Beyond being a dedicated teammate and participant in activities, Ramirez is passionate about her family. Ramirez's parents and eldest sister immigrated to the United States, before Ramirez was born, from Guatemala. Ramirez has learned not to take things for granted. She believes her parents sacrificed a great deal to make her life better.

"It was a little difficult, especially starting from where we started from, and seeing the struggle that our parents had to go through," stated Ramirez.

Ramirez's family is also unique in terms of its size. She has seven siblings: four sisters, and three brothers. As the second-oldest child, she also has become a mentor to her younger siblings. Her siblings and parents are strongly bonded, and she has great respect for her parents, who sacrificed everything for their children.

"To give us a better future and a better education. They [Ramirez's parents] want the best for our family," shared Ramirez about her parent's reasoning for immigrating.

Guiding Ramirez through school and tough times has been her steadfast faith. Ramirez is heavily involved at Saint Mary's Cathedral. Her ultimate priorities lie in her faith and relationship with God, which is evident in the amount of time she spends at her parish.

"I've been an altar server for eight years, a reader for four years, a music leader for two years, and I also help out with Divine Mercy Ministry, helping out as the assistant secretary," said Ramirez.

The Ramirez family has become well known for their dedication to the Cathedral. Father Jim Golka, pastor of Saint Mary's Cathedral described that they are seen as leaders by others in



Photo Courtesy: Lidia Ramirez

the parish. Golka appreciates Lidia's exuberant joy and contagious smile.

"It is apparent to me that Lidia has received many gifts from God. It is also apparent that she is sharing those gifts with as many people as possible," described Golka.

Through Divine Mercy, Ramirez is able to help people in need, organizing prayer nights and retreats. Ramirez plans to continue a life of service. She intends to study at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and major in construction management and business administration. She hopes to own a construction company that can help others.

"The hope is starting a construction company to be able to help the community to build safer, better facilities around here," said Ramirez.

Ramirez will bless GICC for a few more months before she goes on to change the world in her own way. In the meantime, even with masks, it is clear that Ramirez's smile is shining bright. Through her dedication at school, church, and at home Ramirez has inspired numerous individuals. The amount of time she spends to build others up can be an example to us all.



Hayden Price (12), Editor-in-Chief, The Lance

An era has officially come to an end. Donald Trump is no longer the President of the United States. The Trump presidency was thrilling. Ultimately Trump had some successes but was plagued by his domineering personality. Trump began his term in an encouraging way, with the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. This law was promising for many steadfast Republicans and non-Republicans alike. The Tax Foundation describes that this piece of legislation will increase the long-run GDP by 3.5%. Furthermore, over ten years, wages will likely increase by 2.7% because of this legislation. This bill is arguably the best legislative achievement during the Trump presidency.

Foreign policy dominated 2018 for Trump's administration. Trump met with North Korea's Kim Jong Un and pulled

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Any and all submissions must be signed to be considered for publication, and the editor reserves the right to edit or print any submissions.

The Trump presidency in review

By Hayden Price

out of the Iranian nuclear deal. He also withdrew the United States from the Paris Climate Accord.

Although Trump was willing to either call nations out or work with them, he proved somewhat ineffective in implementing international change. One could argue he was more of a domestic president. After all, he ran on an America first platform.

Trump's first impeachment defined 2019. House Resolution 755 describes the reasoning for Trump's impeachment as being abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. Through his administration, Trump was found to have pressured the Ukrainian government into opening investigations on current President Joe Biden. He did this by threatening to withhold \$391 million in military aid to Ukraine. He was impeached on the second charge because he then encouraged individuals in his administration not to cooperate with a congressional investigation. Despite the house successfully impeaching Trump, the Senate acquitted him.

Lastly, the Trump administration ended with 2020 and 20 additional days in 2021. COVID-19 plagued this time. Trump took fire for pulling out of the World Health Organization and publicly criticizing health professionals. My views are evident on his handling of the virus. I have written about this before. No president would have handled the situation perfectly. That goes to say that Trump indeed handled it imperfectly, but as he saw fit.

The last 20 days of 2021 were regrettable for Trump. He became the first president to be impeached twice because he incited a riot at the nation's capital. This riot and Trump's comments right before it occurred will plague his legacy. NPR describes that Trump, at a rally in DC right before the riot, used words like "fight" and "fighting" at least 20 times in a speech in which he insisted the election was rigged. To say Trump didn't have a role in the events that later unfolded and took five lives would be a blatant lie.

I view the Trump presidency as

bittersweet, as I think many Republicans do. Trump was a man who encapsulated my party, and me, but ultimately tore the nation apart. Trump's economic policies and appointment of three supreme court nominees and many federal judicial nominees are why I, along with others, will hold a certain appreciation for him. Pew Research shares that Trump appointed 226 judges in his first term, and of these 226, 54 were federal appellate judges. Pew Research further shared that Obama in eight years appointed only one more federal appellate judge than Trump. I am thankful for Trump's appointments that will lead to conservative rulings for decades to come. Pro-lifers all across America should appreciate Trump's dedication to appointing pro-life officials.

Other than his economic policies and judicial appointments, I find myself unimpressed by this president. I was hopeful that Trump would thrive with the tragedy of the virus behind him given another term. If not for COVID-19, I believe he would have soared to a second term and ultimately would have continued to grow our economy.

In the end, I believe Trump's policies are better than Biden's, but Biden is far more civil. That's what this nation needs. We need cooperative-bipartisan relationships like President Reagan and Speaker O'Neill had in the 1980s. If Trump had surrounded himself with people who were willing to stand up to him and temper his rhetoric, he would have been remembered far more fondly.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,
Having fans at games and events again has brought a lot more excitement into the Winter sports season. Our basketball players were especially delighted about this change, as the extra people in the gym added a lot of energy into the atmosphere at the games versus our cross-town rivals, Grand Island Northwest. It was really fun to see students such as Reid Martinez and Gage Steinke actively participating in chants and cheers and getting our student section riled up. I hope that fans' attendance will continue to be allowed, and that our Winter sports and activities all continue to have success!

Sincerely,
Grace Herbek

Crusaders learn in loss against Kearney Catholic

By Payton Gangwish

On January 8, 2021, the boys basketball team was handed their first loss by the Kearney Catholic Stars; however, this loss isn't all doom and gloom. Both the coaches and the athletes understand the lessons learned will last the remainder of the season.

After the first quarter, where Grand Island Central Catholic (GICC) scored only seven points to Kearney Catholic's 15, the Crusaders didn't score the rest of the first half as the Stars went up 30-7.

"Shot selection was extremely bad on our part. We took quick shots, bad shots, which allowed Kearney Catholic to get rebounds and go down the court and push the pace a little bit on us," said Assistant-Varsity Coach Terry Fredrickson.

By the end of the game, even though the Crusaders outscored the Stars 28-26 in the second half, Kearney Catholic captured the momentum all the way through the last buzzer. While the Crusaders learned a few things about themselves through winning, Fredrickson thought that the loss was a blessing in disguise.

"...When you lose, you do more things wrong, and you learn from your mistakes. In that game, we learned better shot selection. We need to run our offense and pass a little better. We don't



Photo By Hayden Price

Ishmael Nadir (10) reaches for the layup against two York defenders. The Crusaders won the non-district battle 61-43 on January 12, 2021, at the Five Points Bank gymnasium.

just want to jack up shots right away. We learned that. We learned that it's better to play defense when you're set up rather than trying to run back, transition wise," Fredrickson said.

While the loss may be more vividly remembered by the fans, Fredrickson stressed to the team to learn from their mistakes and move on.

"Well, first off, you can't just stay in one spot and dwell on your loss and

think about why you lost, so you work on the things that created that loss, and you just keep moving on; you keep moving forward. Moving forward and looking forward to the next game is how you move forward," concluded Fredrickson.

With an undefeated season now out of the realm of possibility, the Crusaders continue to plug away for another chance to play at the State Championship.

Lady Crusaders win statement game

By Koby Bales



Photo By Payton Gangwish

Chloe Cloud (11) drives past a Northwest High School player on Tuesday, January 5, 2021, at the Five Points Bank gymnasium where the Crusaders won 43-36.

A top-ten battle took place between the Grand Island Central Catholic (GICC) Crusaders and the Wood River Eagles, where the Crusaders won 43-34 on January 19, 2021, in the Five Points Bank Gym.

GICC came into the game on top of the Lincoln Journal Star's C-1 rankings with a record of 12-0. The Eagles (13-1) were ranked third in C-2 in that same paper.

In a hard fought, physical game, the Eagles were able to take advantage early and control the first three-quarters of the game. Wood River found success early by getting to the free-throw line, where they made 17 out of their 18 attempts.

The Lady Crusaders found a spark in the fourth quarter coming

from Carolyn Maser (9). Down 28-22, the Crusaders went on a 12-2 run to open the quarter. In that run, Maser scored on back-to-back possessions, with her last bucket giving GICC the lead. Maser finished with a career-high seven points. Wood River was then forced to foul which iced the game for GICC.

Chloe Cloud (11) paced the Crusaders in points scoring nine, while Grace Herbek (12) scored five coming off the bench.

Though the lady Crusader's perfect record came to an end in the first round of the conference tournament, they won against the Archbishop Bergan Knights on January 29, 2021, under Interim Head Coach Kevin Mayfield and Assistant Coach Makenzie Dunham.

Crusader swimmers earn state meet qualifications

By Hayden Price

On Saturday, January 16, 2021, the Crusader swimmers competed at Lincoln High School, in Lincoln, NE. As part of the co-opt Grand Island Senior High (GISH) swim team.

Jonathan Novinski (12) won the 50 meter freestyle, Kate Novinski (9) placed second in the 200 meter freestyle and won the 100 meter backstroke, and Michael Sambula-Monzalvo (10) placed second in the 200 meter freestyle and the 500 meter freestyle. Overall, the Grand Island Senior High girl's team placed first, and the boy's team placed second. Both Novinski's posted automatic state qualifying times.

Sambula-Monzalvo, whose 200 meter freestyle timed in at 1:50.3 and 500 meter freestyle timed in at 5:02.4, began to hone in on his technique to reduce his times, and also focused on his splits at the meet.

"Some advice I was given was that my turns were too tight into the wall, meaning I needed to turn earlier/farther away into the wall. For this meet, I tried focusing on getting controlled splits in



Photo By Angela Messere

Michael Sambula-Monzalvo (10) comes up for air during a January swim practice at the YMCA in Grand Island.

my races and PRs [personal records]," shared Sambula-Monzalvo.

Damien Glass (9), a swim team newcomer, also focused on technique. Glass competed in the 50 meter freestyle and the 100 meter backstroke. Glass hopes to qualify for state as a freshman and in order to qualify for the state swimming tournament every detail counts.

"To keep my head back and keep my arms moving," stated Glass of his technique goals.

The team continues to work towards state tournament qualifications and state tournament training. The next swim event scheduled is a duel against Kearney High School on February 2, 2021, at the Grand Island YMCA.

Senior wrestler medals at Shelton meet

By Angela Messere

On January 16, 2021, the boys wrestling team performed well at the Shelton Wrestling Invitational in Shelton, Nebraska.

Notable finisher, Jackson Farias (12), won his third round match, and finished third in his bracket overall. Farias, Hunter Borges (9), Barret Obermiller-Snyder (9), and Sam Mueller (9) all wrestled in the tournament.

Farias was impressed by both his and the team's performances.

"I thought we wrestled the best we had at a meet so far. It was a pretty small meet so we had a lot of kids that were around our skill level so it was really good to wrestle those kids," stated Farias.

Head Coach Zach Schroder also had confidence in the boys' skill improvements as the season has continued.

"We have gotten so much better since the beginning of the season, and all the kids are working their butts off. Sam Mueller and Jackson Farias have been pushing each other," explained Schroder.

There have been COVID-19 precautions the team has made, which made them more cognizant that they were fortunate to wrestle this season.

"We have had to sit out a meet due to COVID precautions. If anything it made us realize that we can't take meets for granted and we need to take each meet like



Photo By Angela Messere

Jackson Farias (12) fights against a David City High School wrestler during the conference wrestling tournament on Saturday, January 23, 2021. The tournament was held at David City High School.

its our last" said Schroder.

Schroder's focus for his team in future meets is quite simple—to get on the mat and do their best.

"Our focus is just to go out there and leave it all on

the mat. We have all the tools to win each match," stated Schroder.

The wrestling team's district meet will be held on February 12, 2021, at Boone Central High School.