



State wrestling starts tomorrow. G-Town qualified three grapplers: Jack Konechne, Keaten Wagner, & Hayden Pierret

Blue Ink



FFA engages entire school during short week

National FFA Week brings awareness to importance of agriculture in community

by Heather Huether
staff writer

While National FFA week officially kicked off on Sunday, the Presidents' Day weekend delayed Garretson's festivities until Tuesday, February 20th. The Garretson chapter actively participates in the week offering fun events and activities, dress up days, and daily trivia for all ages. It even includes the annual petting zoo.

Tuesday was Flannel day, and the Community Blood Bank came to host the biannual blood drive. It was also the middle school mock contest, and it happened to be teacher appreciation day.

Wednesday was Brand day, where everyone wore their favorite brand of clothing to school. People had the opportunity to drive their tractors to school too; however, the cold weather turned quite a few away from that. There was also the MS/HS barnyard activities held on Wednesday.

Today many people dressed up for Western/Farmer day, and everyone's favorite, the petting zoo, will go on throughout the day.

In addition to animals they have the Ag-tivity center open, Events are capped off today by an assembly at 2:45.

Even after the week ends, the FFA fun continues on Saturday March 3rd, with the community appreciation breakfast at 7:30-10 am at the American Legion.

Left: FFA members Tessa Pederson and Kennedy Houghton show off two of the animals featured in the petting zoo, a perennial favorite, runs until 2:00 today.

Top Right: Emily Erickson settles into the chair to give her first ever blood donation during the blood drive on Tuesday.

Bottom Right: Hailey Shepard found a way to calm the baby piglet while visiting the petting zoo earlier this morning..



McKenzie Decker hosts daddy-daughter dance

by Peyton Sage
senior writer

On Saturday February 17th, senior McKenzie Decker hosted a daddy daughter dance for her senior experience project. The dance was for grades K-5 and ages 5-9 years old.

There were 90 people that RSVP'd to the dance via Facebook and approximately 120 people that showed up overall.

McKenzie Decker and Elizabeth Schmidt decorated the American Legion on Saturday morning and returned at four o'clock to make sure

everything was set up and ready to go.

When five o'clock rolled around, there were already excited little girls and their dads standing outside of the Legion. Decker's mom made the appetizers and helped supervise in a separate room while Decker oversaw music and took requests from the attendees on the dancefloor.

McKenzie said of the dance, "One of the cutest things was seeing little girls wearing cute dresses and corsages come in with their dads wearing matching boutonnieres."

McKenzie wanted to do some-

Decker hopes to make dance an annual occurrence

thing that wouldn't just be about her, as she really enjoys making other people happy. She chose this project because she thinks it is incredibly important for a little girl to have a strong and healthy relationship with her dad.

Decker said, "I would definitely recommend someone doing this as their senior project in the future because it was a great experience for everybody,".

"I also think this is something our town needs to do more often because so many dads and even their daughters thanked me for doing this," Decker added.

This Week's Need to Know

FACT OF THE WEEK: Fish cough. They also yawn and burp.

LIFE HACK OF THE WEEK: The most effective cough syrup that exists is honey.

JOKE OF THE WEEK: Did people laugh when the lady fell on the ice?

BRAINTEASER OF THE WEEK: The number 8,549,176,320 is a unique number. Why?

Answers to joke and brainteaser are on the bottom.

Upcoming Events

Thursday, February 22

- FFA Petting Zoo (2:00)

Friday, February 23

- No School

- FFA Chapter Meeting (1:00)

- State Wrestling @ Sioux Falls

Saturday, February 24

- State Wrestling @ Sioux Falls

Monday, February 26

- FFA Local Ag Fair Project

- Middle School Science Fair

Tuesday, February 27

- Region 3A Boys Basketball Rd 1

Friday, March 2

- Region 3A Boys Basketball Rd 2

Saturday, March 3

- FFA Breakfast @ Am. Legion

Worth Mentioning

Girls Basketball ended their season on Tuesday with a tough loss to Tri-Valley. #5 Garretson held the slight lead with just minutes left in the game and were within one with under a minute to go. However, the #4 Mustangs edged out a 48-45 victory and advanced in region play. Tri-Valley plays #1 West Central today; winner moves on to the Sweet Sixteen.

Boys Basketball finished their regular season Monday night against Sioux Falls Christian, ranked #1 in the state for Class A. The boys suffered tough losses against the Chargers and the Cossacks (Friday night) and are slated to play Tri-Valley in the first round of regions.

#NeverAgain

As Parkland victims rally for change, many republicans refuse to accept the facts

by **Sylvia Larson**
staff writer—editorial

“No way to prevent this’ says only nation where this regularly happens” reads satire news site The Onion every time a mass shooting happens. It’s pretty accurate; many Americans choose to ignore a quite obvious solution to America’s excessive firearm violence: basic gun control.

On February 14th, a 19 year old white supremacist with a neo-Nazi past and an AR-15 rifle that America’s flawed second amendment allowed him to own was rightfully charged with 17 counts of premedi-

tated murder after he gunned down 17 people at a high school in Florida. Although this happens just about every time there is a mass shooting in the states (which is way too often), people are talking about guns and how to prevent school shootings. The government and a majority of civilians spew uninformed and misguided opinions that further skew the public’s idea of the second amendment and the safety of firearms.

Since the 1970s, more Americans have committed suicide using guns, been murdered by someone with a gun, or were accidentally shot and killed by guns than every American

killed in every war in American history. 92 Americans die via gun each day, and there’s a mass shooting in America roughly every single day. Over 40% of gun violence is suicides, but based on data and statistics surrounding the time it takes for people to die from suicide after deciding to do it, if all guns were stored properly and that number would go down astronomically, slashing the total amount of gun deaths per year.

Basic things like small compromises and safety steps have proven to be effective for keeping shooting incidents down in virtually every country that implements and enforces them. The US has even seen it work in small cases when states have passed specific regulations, but when the whole country isn’t on the same wavelength it’s hard to enforce. Background checks, safe storage units, higher age limits, banning bump stocks, banning military grade assault rifles, and tightening rules on buying with the intent of selling would all SUBSTANTIALLY reduce the amount of gun violence in America. Enough to save hundreds, if not thousands of lives. A government buy-back of firearms would also be

an incentive for people to lose the pistols and get handsy with a baseball bat instead.

I’m not proposing that everyone’s guns should be taken away. I have very little against basic self defense weapons and hunting rifles, but nobody needs an AR-15 to keep themselves safe. In fact, firearms are rarely ever used in a self-defense situation, and when they are available, they are more often than not snatched by the attacker before the victim even thinks about shooting. Arming more civilians is NOT the answer.

When the second amendment was drafted, the most advanced firearms were large muskets that shot one bullet, not very accurately even at a close range, and then took eight minutes to reload. Today, some firearms have the power to spew hundreds of bullets in seconds from hundreds of feet away and can be reloaded just as fast. When our founding fathers created that amendment, did they assume guns would come this far? Would they have made the same laws with today’s artillery?

Frustrating word search

by **Isaiah Miles Mader**
staff writer

GDNJ

LSTER

MOY

HTJJ

PPAKHF

MMR

DUFAKDYN

BZITK

JPQXDST

HGM

SANHS

MTVH

VWISVYBMS

DWVM

ALBQO

UHX

GAZVT

NSAG

ROGVCSELP



The start of a new year has led to a horrific new trend...

by **Mason Hofer**
staff writer

The start of a new year has led to the start of a horrific new trend, school shootings. 2018 is on track to have the most shootings in history of the course of a year and January had the most its ever had.

Every negative action that happens, along with positive things, actions have effects on there surroundings. In light of the Parkland shooting, the acting mayor of Dallas has asked the NRA to not hold their convention in that city.

In addition, President Trump is now holding listening sessions about

school safety, recent shootings and attacks, and how to improve both school safety, mental health awareness, and requirements and stricter access to guns.

Even though this is a horrible event society will learn and grow from this. A very recent event that came into place is the state of Alabama now allows teachers to carry a gun in the classroom, similar to what tri valley has. There is lots of controversy about this because people feel it gives students easier access to a weapon. South Dakota did pass a similar sentinel bill back in 2013 after the Sandy Hook massacre.

Senior Spotlight Mikayla Bottelberghe

SENIOR PROJECT:
Building a house

ACTIVITIES INVOLVED IN:
Soccer
Color Guard
National Honor Society

WHO/WHAT WILL YOU MISS THE MOST:
My soccer team

PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR:
Undecided



Olympics 2018

by **Isaiah Miles Mader**
staff writer

The Olympics are in full swing in Pyeongchang, South Korea where winter specialists are showcasing their skills on the world’s biggest sports stage. The games close this Sunday.

The U.S. has achieved stellar results in sports they were projected to perform well in, but also has seen some shocking performances. The U.S. Women’s Cross Country team acquired the first medal in cross country for men’s or women’s.

Norway currently tops the medal count with 33 total medals. They are followed by Germany with 24 and Canada who has acquired 21 thus