

THE KOOTENAI CHRONICLE

A PUBLICATION OF THE 2022-2023 KOOTENAI JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM PROGRAM



Liam Gentry and Emma DeBoer, pictured with Mr. Nolan Kerby, Principal, were awarded as the 2023 Top Scholars. (Photo Credit: Michael Stroh)

Alumnus Returns as Para

MARIAH GEORGE

As the need for paraeducators has increased, Kootenai was thankful to welcome a new para this spring—alumnus, Bella Defoort (Class of 2022). She has enjoyed being back in her old school and she knows her way around.

Although Bella Defoort is a recent graduate and only 19 years old, she loves the idea of helping kids and supporting inclusivity. Defoort said that the best part of her job is seeing the kids and being able to play a part in their lives and making them smile. The biggest struggle in the job is remembering that bad days are, in fact, just bad days. She also has to remind herself that there are plenty of better days ahead of her.

Defoort said that her co-workers help her move forward and keep doing what she loves. All the staff and co-workers play a big part in making Defoort happy and making her want to come to work every morning.

While simultaneously working at Kootenai, she also plans on getting a college degree in education or social work.



Para-Educator Bella Defoort in the home-ec room with students, David and Nick Brocke. (Photo Credit: Mariah George).



Rene Barros, long-time and beloved High School English Teacher, gave the commencement address to the Class of 2022. (Photo Credit: Susan Rodgers)

Kootenai Says “Bye Bye” to Barros

BROOKLYNN KAHN & IVA HUGO

“There have been too many good moments in the past 29 years, and that has been an honor,” said Rene Barros as she reflected on her upcoming retirement.

Rene Barros has been the English teacher at Kootenai Jr/Sr High School. Throughout her time as a teacher, Barros has found that her favorite subjects to teach were Junior English and American Literature. However, Barros has also taught speech, history, drama, home EC, psychology and leadership.

Behind every teacher, there has to be a great inspiration. Back when she was in college, Barros was known for reading lots of books. She remembers her teacher looking her in the eyes and telling her “Rene, the only reason English Teachers become English Teachers, is to sit around and read books, so you better become an English teacher.” That instantly inspired her to pursue teaching, and English.

Barros did not begin her teaching career at Kootenai. She spent 5 years teaching at the Lewiston School District before she began teaching at Kootenai in 1993. It is safe to say that she has enjoyed every moment. Throughout the 29 years that she has been at Kootenai, she has learned a lot of valuable lessons, and has met a lot of wonderful people. Barros says the best part of teaching was the students that she got to meet along the way.

If the students could be summed up in a few words, she would describe them as optimistic and positive. She doesn’t just hope, she knows that all of her students will change the world someday. Alumnus Bella Defoort reflected on how Barros always encouraged her to be strong— “A smooth sea never makes a skilled sailor,” she was reminded.

Thanks to all the students and staff at Kootenai, Barros found a supercharged immune system that gave her the motivation to come teach every day. It even kept her coming back, years after she was due to retire. Barros has been teaching past her due retirement because she has always been wanting to teach the next class.

Barros says that something that she will miss the most is her co-workers, and they will miss her too. Michael Stroh, another teacher at Kootenai, said “Barros is the greatest person you’d ever know, she should work here until she dies.” Another one of her coworkers, Matthew Greer, says “She is the best person I know, and we’ll miss her like crazy.” Sophomore student Caylee Wilcox commented, “She is the heart of Kootenai.”

As her final goodbye, Barros has hidden items throughout her classroom and around the school, as a gift to students and staff in the future. She concluded, “It has been a privilege to work here. I will carry my pride until the end. Kootenai High until I die.”

IDAHO EDUCATION

Kootenai Plans for Academic Changes

New Curriculum for 2023-2024

AIDEN BRAZ & ALYCE BREDE

With new laws and policies recently passed by the Idaho State Legislature, and direction for funding given to school districts, the Kootenai School district will see several changes for the 2023-2024 academic calendar—a new curriculum will be adopted to assist with dyslexia recognition, a new math curriculum will be introduced, and a financial literacy course will be required of graduating Seniors.

The district will be adopting a new curriculum to assist with dyslexia recognition and diagnosis. Tier 1 and Tier 2 testing will help indicate eye-tracking issues that a student might be experiencing. Results will determine the need for special education services.

Harrison Elementary and Kootenai Jr. High will also be introducing a new math curriculum. “Our Go Math curriculum that we have been using for many years has changed,” explains Jr. High Math Teacher, Mary Nelson. “We are trying to find a new curriculum that includes both paper and electronic resources and meets all the content standards for grade levels.” The Curriculum Committee will continue to meet with teachers and make a recommendation to the administration and school board before the next school year. The administration recognizes that new textbooks might present a challenge to teachers but they are hopeful teachers will help the students learn, understand, and adapt to the changes.

Kootenai Sr. High School students will also have a new graduation requirement—Financial Literacy. Idaho Legislatures made this decision during the spring session. According to Samantha Martinez, Idaho Reports, “Rep. James Petzke, R-Meridian, and Superintendent of Public Instruction Debbie Critchfield proposed this bill with the intention of preparing Idaho’s high school graduates to make educated financial decisions in adulthood.”

The Idaho State Department of Education outlines the requirements and standards: “Students must recognize money’s influence on human behavior, learn about various types of bank accounts, evaluate investment options and calculate net worth, learn about different types of credit, and how credit is determined. [They should also be able to] understand the essentials of financing a college education, evaluate different types of insurance associated with independent living, recognize the purpose of the tax system, how it relates to citizen’s income, build a budget for independent living, and recognizing and utilizing modern consumer skills.” Students at Kootenai High School will receive this instruction as part of their Social Studies curriculum.



THIRD GRADE students help clean up garbage around the Kootenai campus to celebrate Earth Day. (Photo Credit: Tess Davis)



GAVIN TILLER, Junior welding student, pauses in the middle of a welding class project for a photo opportunity. (Photo Credit: Tony Pfeiffer)



6th GRADE STUDENTS show off their Greek Mythology WANTED posters as part of their Social Studies curriculum. (Photo Credit: Jerry Brown)



KRIS BUCHANAN, RON NELSON, MARY NELSON, JESSIE BUCHANAN, SHELLEY BRESNEN, AND ELLIE GETCHIUS represented Kootenai School District at the Idaho Lottery Scratch for Schools event raising a total of \$530 for the school district. Idaho Lottery Classroom Wishlist also awarded Mary Nelson over \$500 for the 2023-2024 Jr. High Math Olympiad programs. (Photo Credit: Idaho Lottery)

ADVICE

COPING SKILLS TO STAY COOL DURING SUMMER

KATIE AMES, COUNSELOR

Whether you have mastered self-regulation skills or not, here are some great ideas to try if you feel yourself getting upset or feel as if things are out of control.

- Go for a walk or move your body
- Call a friend or close relative
- Pet a cat or dog
- Recognize what emotions you’re feeling
- Turn off all electronics
- Read a book
- Engage in small acts of kindness
- Make or listen to some music
- Climb a tree
- Watch a movie
- Meditate
- Write in a journal
- Paint or draw
- Think of a funny memory
- Use positive self-talk
- Take deep breaths
- Make a list of choices
- Drink a glass of water
- Take a nap

We value you, and what you bring to this world. Take care of yourself and great things will follow.

Remember your Strengths! Wherever you are, you can use the Sources of Strength as a tool for fighting negative thoughts and emotions.



If you are struggling with a mental or emotional problem, having trouble with drugs or alcohol, or having family or relationship problems – reach out. Someone is always here for you on the other end of the line.

You can call for yourself, or you can call for someone you care about.

Help is waiting.
Call or text - 988

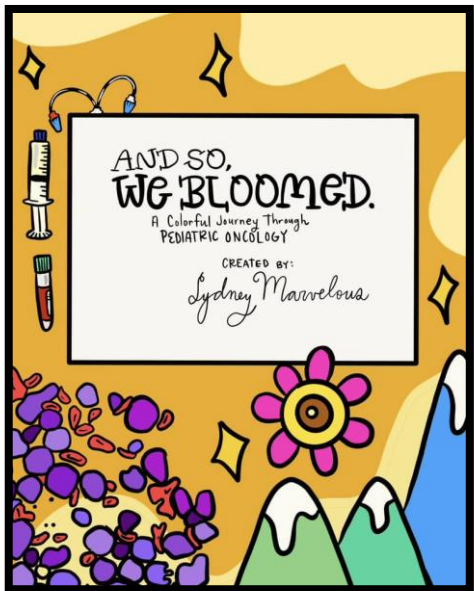
HARRISON COMMUNITY

Donohoe Publishes Memorable Coloring Book

BROOKLYNN KAHN

Sydney Donohoe, a Kootenai alumni and Harrison community member, has recently published a unique coloring book. In a brief interview, Donohoe explained, “Harper [my daughter] was diagnosed with cancer when she was a baby.” During her time at the hospital, in between treatments and appointments, Donohoe spent much of her time reflecting through art. Later, when Harper was in remission, Donohoe decided to compile the art, drawings, quotes, and reflections into a coloring book that could be shared with others. The quote “Bloom Where

You are Planted” became the foundation to the book—And So We Bloomed. Donohoe shared, “This quote is closely associated with what happened because I didn’t get to choose what was going to happen to my daughter, or what would happen in life.” Donohoe’s favorite page in her coloring book is the one that says “many people are alive but don’t touch the miracle of being alive.” And to anyone going through a similar situation, Donohoe encourages, “keep showing up, do what you need to do for the day, and lastly, don’t forget to breathe.” Donohoe’s coloring book can be purchased on Amazon or at Valley Mart.



HARRISON COMMUNITY

Local 4-H Club Increases Members

HAZEL STEVENSON

The Harrison Explorers, a local 4-H club, has seen some significant growth in the last few years—from 3 participants in 2019 to over 25 participants this year.

Thanks to the addition of new leaders and a diverse range of projects, Harrison Explorers members are able to explore their interests and talents, and develop new skills, all while having fun. Harrison Explorers is led by Ron and Mary Nelson (Market Swine and Market Sheep), Jill Stevenson (Veterinarian Science, Market Beef, Rabbits), Kris and Jessie Buchanan (Poultry), and Krista Anderson (Rabbits).

Harrison Explorers is one of many clubs within the Benewah County 4H Program. All of the students, ages 5 to 16, are eagerly looking forward to their participation in the upcoming Benewah County Fair of 2023. Sadie Rose Davidson, who shows Market Swine and Market Sheep, says, “I can’t wait to show my lamb during the fair and spend time with friends and family.”

The Benewah County Fair will take place from August 17-20, 2023. The theme is “Idaho: Our Heritage.” The hard work and dedication of these young members will be on display, showing their animal

projects such as market swine, pet rabbit and family flocks (poultry), as well as their indoor projects in Veterinary Science.

Mary Nelson, this year’s Harrison Explorers organizational leader, is ready for the 2023 fair. She says, “I am excited to see our new members experience the fun of the fair for the first time. I am also excited for our more experienced showmen to continue growing in their projects and showmanship.”

For more information about 4-H and the upcoming fair, interested parties can contact the University of Idaho Extension Office, Benewah County at benewah@uidaho.edu or by calling 208-245-2422.

KOOTENAI HIGH SCHOOL

Class of 2023
Graduation, Goals, and Goodbyes

Iva Hugo and Maddy Swisher

The Class of 2023 is set to graduate, tomorrow, Saturday, June 3rd, at 1:00 pm. The community is invited to attend and celebrate. The graduating class consists of six females—Keauna Andrews, Jazmen Armas, Tuesday Glessner, Callie Smith, Serenity Reum, and Kyra Wine.

Although it is a small class, this group of seniors has been hard working and looks forward to celebrating a momentous occasion. “I feel like the only reason why I am graduating is because the teacher’s pushed me so hard. And I will definitely miss Kootenai,” says graduating Senior, Kyra Wine.

Each of the Seniors are pursuing different careers, education, and goals after graduation. Wine shared that she will be attending Spokane Falls Community College and studying prosthetics and orthotics.

Not only have these students been dedicated to their academics, but they have also been committed to Kootenai Athletics. Callie Smith and Jazmen Armas both participated in volleyball for four years. Wine participated in Track & Field for two years. Tuesday Glessner played both volleyball and basketball and was awarded by the North Star League for her efforts.

For these seniors, this marks the end of an era and the beginning of a new chapter. It’s time for these seniors to reflect on their high school experiences, celebrate their accomplishments, and look forward to the future.



THROWBACK to the Class of 2023 when they were in the 8th Grade with Mrs. Whipple as their math teacher. Although not all of their original classmates have remained at Kootenai, Jazmen Armas, Tuesday Glessner, and Kyra Wine will be graduating on Saturday. (Photo Credit: Unknown)



KYRA WINE AND TUESDAY GLESSNER, Senior class Valedictorian and Salutatorian, honored teachers Matthew Greer and Michael Stroh at the NISTAR banquet in April 2023. NISTAR is the North Idaho Student Teacher Achievement Recognition. (Photo Credit: Unknown)

“EDUCATION IS THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON FOR
CHANGING THE WORLD.” ~ NELSON MANDELA

FUNDRAISING UPDATES BY AIDEN BRAZ

Kootenai Jr. High and High School classes have been working diligently this year to increase their class funds. Numerous fundraisers have been held with successful increases for all classes.

The 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes combined their efforts by selling tickets for a Christmas raffle basket, selling candy canes of all sizes, and by selling water bottles throughout the year. The 6th grade has finished off the year with \$478 in their account, the 7th grade class with \$691 in their account, and the 8th grade with \$1058 in their account.

The Freshman (2026) class also sold tickets for a raffle basket at Christmas time, sold “green” pop for St. Patrick’s Day, and sold snow cones during Kindness Day. Currently, they have \$926 in their account.

The Sophomore (2025) Class has been working hard to increase their funds in preparation for Prom next year. They hosted the face painting and turkey shoot at the Harvest Bazaar, hosted a winter dance, sold numerous raffle basket items, and even led a fundraiser to crack eggs on the heads of “willing” teachers. At the end of this year, the Sophomore class has raised \$1125.

The Junior Class (2024) was responsible for hosting Prom this year so they were very focused on fundraising and events. They sold red bulls and specialty coffees at the Harvest Bazaar and during Kindness Day. The Juniors finished the year with \$1,886.82 in their account.

The Senior Class (2023) sold a raffle basket at Christmas time, sold “Crushes” during Valentine’s week, and held the traditional pie smear on May 24th. They are going out with a bang with \$3025 in their account. Their funds will go towards graduation decorations, the graduation speaker, and the Safe and Sober party.

RECIPE

Almond Joysicles

GABE BORNITZ

Like frozen candy bars, these Almond Joy Popsicles (Almond Joysicles for short) get a little extra flavor, spice, and texture from a coating of toasted almonds. It’s the best popsicle you’ll ever have.

Ingredients:

- 1. 1/3 cup chopped almonds
- 2. 1 cup unsweetened or vanilla almond milk
- 3. ¼ sweetened cream of coconut (the ingredient often used in Pina coladas)
- 4. ¼ cup thick Hersey’s chocolate syrup sundae dream (or regular chocolate syrup)
- 5. ½ cup sweetened shredded coconut

Preheat the oven to 360 degrees. Spread the almonds on a baking sheet and toast them for 8 to 10 minutes, until light brown. Set aside to cool.

In a blender, combine the almond milk, cream of coconut, and chocolate syrup. Blend until smooth. Stir in the coconut shavings. Pour the mixture into popsicle molds. Add sticks and freeze for 6 to 8 hours.

Before eating, spread the toasted almonds on a plate. Unmold the popsicle and let them sit at room temperature for 1 minute. Roll and press the popsicle into the nuts to coat the outside of the popsicle.

Eat immediately or freeze again until needed. Enjoy!

KOOTENAI TRAP TEAM

Defending State Title

The Kootenai Warriors Trap Team won the Idaho Clay Target 1A Conference 2 Award for the Spring 2023 season! This is the 3rd season in a row that Kootenai has won the conference title.

Brooklyn Charles won the Conference 2 Season Average Female First Place Award and the Idaho Individual Season Average Overall Female First Place Award. Keira Bohannon won the Conference 2 Season Average Female Second Place Award, and Sadie Rose Davidson won the Conference 2 Season Average Female Third Place Award.

On June 10th, twenty of the team’s athletes will travel with their families to Boise, Idaho to compete at the Idaho Clay Target State Competition and defend their 2022 State Title.

A handful of shooters will also be invited to the National Tournament in Michigan in July.

KOOTENAI SPORTS

Warriors Run, Jump, and Race the Wind

IVA HUGO & MADDY SWISHER

Warmer weather mixed with rain, wind, and lightning—tall tale signs that Track season has come to North Idaho. Kootenai Jr./Sr. High School fielded two teams this year—Jr. High and High School.

The Junior High team grew quite a bit this year, just about doubling the size of last year’s team. There was also a new coach this year, Coach Vince Wilcox, assisted by parent volunteers Jason and Sarah Strobel.

The Junior High team had 5 meets, with their season ending on May 5th. Their very last meet was the District Tournament at Timberlake, ID

on May 5th. Several of Kootenai’s athletes placed—Hazel Stevenson placed 2nd in the 7th Grade Girls 800, Juni Stevenson placed 3rd in the 7th Grade Girls 800, Harleigh Dutton placed 1st in the Girl’s 7th Grade Shot Put, Logan Strobel placed 3rd in the 8th Grade Boys 1600, and Dylan Gentry placed 1st in the 7th Grade Boys High Jump.

The Kootenai High School Track and Field team also had a great season, ending after regionals on May 12th and 13th. Their coach, Ashley Rauch, said she was very proud of the team, and how much they had improved that year. There were only 3 returning athletes, and some of the athletes had never done track before. This made their accomplishments even more admirable.

Athletes tried events that they had never done before. Rauch said, “We accomplished many of our goals this season.”

The High School Track Team was also assisted by Kris Buchanan and Doug Napierala.

The Meet of Champions took place in Post Falls, Idaho, on the 4th of May. Kootenai had two attending athletes: Christopher Moore and Maddie Murdock. Each athlete was invited for different events. Moore was invited to participate in Pole Vault, and Murdock in the two-mile.

KOOTENAI JR. HIGH SCHOOL

AVID & Journalism Students Travel

JENNICA OGDEN

On March 12, 2023, the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) students traveled with Allison Brown and Nolan Kerby to the University of Idaho. They took a tour through the campus and learned about different programs. They were also invited to dine in the cafeteria and enjoyed pizza, salads, scones, and donuts with coffee. Hunter Charles, a sixth-grade student said, “It was fun. We should do it again.” Dani Davidson, also a sixth-grade student, commented, “I was excited to tour the campus and explore new things.”

On May 17, 2023, the Journalism class traveled to Coeur d’Alene with Mary Nelson and toured the Coeur d’Alene Press. They toured the offices where the journalists work and also toured the printing press warehouse. Students learned that the CDA Press had been in publication since 1882. They also were able to see the large amounts of paper used, the barrels of ink, and all of the mechanics. Lastly, they were able to interview a journalist, Devin Weeks, about her writing experiences.

Nelson explained, “It is important that our students receive opportunities to see the world outside of the classroom. They can learn about careers and possibilities for their future.”



JOURNALISM students toured the Coeur d’Alene Press printing warehouse and stood by the towers of paper. This total amount of paper is used by the Press in less than two weeks of printing newspapers. (Photo Credit: Devin Weeks, CDA Press).

KOOTENAI JR. HIGH SCHOOL

Students Pursue Passions

ANNABELLE PARRISH

In recent years, a new trend has emerged in education: passion project classes. These classes provide students with an opportunity to explore a topic they're passionate about, and create something meaningful and unique. From music production to app development, students are given the freedom to pursue their interests in a structured and supportive environment.

Passion project classes are often offered as an elective or enrichment course, and are typically open to students of all ages and abilities. They're designed to encourage creativity, critical thinking, and innovation, and to help students develop skills that can be applied to a wide range of fields.

One of the key benefits of passion project

classes are that they allow students to take ownership of their learning. Rather than being told what to learn, they're able to choose a topic that resonates with them, and to explore it in a way that's meaningful and relevant to their lives. This can lead to increased engagement and motivation, and can help students develop a sense of purpose and direction. “Schooling is mainly focused on what the teachers or curriculum want the students to learn about, but in passion they get to learn about what they choose to research,” states Allison Brown, Kootenai Jr. High ELA teacher, who has been teaching the passion project class for four years.

Another benefit of the passion project class is that it encourages collaboration and community building. Students are often grouped together based on their interests, and are encouraged to work together to achieve a common goal. This can help build social skills, and can foster a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Passion project classes can also help prepare students for the workforce. By allowing them to explore their interests and develop skills in a specific field, they're better equipped to pursue careers that align with their passions and talents. They can also learn valuable skills such as project management, problem-solving, and communication, which are highly valued by employers. Overall, passion project classes are a valuable addition to any educational program. They provide students with an opportunity to explore their interests, develop important skills, and build meaningful connections with their peers. As education continues to evolve, it's clear that passion project classes will play an important role in inspiring creativity and innovation in the next generation of learners.

HARRISON ELEMENTARY

Friday Foot Day & Walking Wednesday

ALYCE BREDE

Introduced by Tess Davis, Harrison Elementary 3rd Grade Teacher, and also adopted by Ashley Rauch, Harrison Elementary 2nd Grade Teacher, Friday Foot Day (FFD) and Walking Wednesday (WW) are used to make walking and running fun for students who don't normally like to exercise or stay active.

At the beginning of the day, on Wednesday or Friday depending, students walk or run and

track how many miles they earn. Each student gets a lanyard to keep track of their feet and they earn a plastic 'foot' to put on their lanyard with each mile. Once a student gets to five feet, they earn a red octagon on their lanyard. Last year's 3rd grade class completed over 350 miles collectively.

FFD and WW have several benefits to them. Of course, other than as a fun competition for the students, WW and FFD gives the students more physical exercise and helps them learn math at the same time. They learn how many feet and how many

laps are in the multipurpose gym and they track what makes a mile. The lanyards help the students with counting fives, addition, and multiplication.

Incorporating activity like this into a student's schedule is important for their overall health and well-being. With things like Walking Wednesday and Friday Foot Day, students have the opportunity to engage in healthy habits while having fun at school.



JESSIE BUCHANAN, educates elementary and junior high students about the importance of dental hygiene and brushing teeth. With a large toothbrush and volunteers, Logan Wilcox, Aiden Braz, Logan Strobel, and Brennen Derry, Buchanan taught students how to brush in a circular motion and remove all of the food from their teeth. (Photo Credit: Mary Nelson)

"For our Lead Safety and Awareness presentation, we [showed] the 3rd through 8th grade groups that items today can still contain lead. We have a machine that can take readings for lead and other heavy metals."
~ Emily Hasz, Panhandle Health District

HARRISON ELEMENTARY

Health Fair Educates Students

AALIYAH BECKMAN

On March 10, 2023, students at Harrison Elementary and Kootenai Jr. High had the opportunity to learn about their health and more. Organized by local EMT, Laura Andersen, the Kindergarten-8th grade students were given a chance to tour different stations and learn about their health and how to stay healthy in different ways.

The first station, run by the local EMT services, was with a gurney. They lifted children up onto it and showed them the ambulance. The second station was with the fire department. They taught students about the best ways to get out of rooms when there is a fire in their homes.

The third station was with the forestry department. They talked about trees and insects. They brought samples of tree stumps and beetles in oil bottles to keep the bodies together.

The fourth station was educating students about their dental hygiene. They were talking about how you should take care of your teeth everyday. They dressed some kids up as teeth and she showed how to take care of them. Some students have been brushing their teeth twice a day now.

The fifth station was led by the local search and rescue. They talked about what to do when you get lost. They explained the tools that they use.

The sixth station was talking about lead and the bad things it can do in soil, food, and water. The speaker explained what to do to prevent lead from going into your homes. The seventh station that was talking about germs. They had kids put glitter on their hands and rubbed it all over their friends. Students then tried to wash their hands and wash away the glitter.

At the eighth station, representatives from the 4-H program taught about nutrition and made smoothies for the students.

HARRISON ELEMENTARY

Rock n' Roll is Here to Stay

ISAIAH GALLE

On Thursday, May 18th, at 6:30 pm in the Harrison Elementary Multipurpose Room, I was able to see another amazing performance from Anna Whipple and her music students.

Whipple has been the music teacher at Kootenai School District for several years now and has put on many performances and concerts. This year she brought the History of Rock and Roll to Harrison.

The audience enjoyed a walk down memory lane with classic songs such as Surfin' USA, Rockin' Robin, Blue Suede Shoes, I Want Hold Your Hand, and Tutti Frutti. 2nd through 5th grade students played various historical music parts—The Beatles, The Beach Boys, Elvis, and Ed Sullivan. Their performance included great costumes, fun and energetic dialogue, and dance moves—a few Elvis hip shakes and swing dancing with partners.

Overall it was a great show and a reminder that Rock n' Roll is here to stay.



(Photo Credit: Susan Rodgers)

KOOTENAI SCHOOL DISTRICT

Maintenance Projects Planned for Summer

JENNICA OGDEN

This summer, Kootenai School District has a number of maintenance projects planned. The main project this summer is to replace the boiler located underneath the cafeteria in the Junior High building. The building is still currently heated by the original boiler. McKinstry Engineering is providing options on replacement for a new boiler or another heating

system for the school. The school board will review options and provide a final decision this summer. The district also has plans for outdoor improvements. A greenhouse will be built for the agriculture programs. The elementary playground will also see improvements—mushroom play equipment, lowering of the basketball hoops, and installation of park benches. “I think it will be a lot of fun and special for everyone to look forward to,” said Scott Davis, Superintendent and Harrison Elementary Principal.

Bob Dionne, responsible for maintenance with the district, will be cleaning carpets and waxing the tile floors from top to bottom. His work through the summer will also include safety inspections and general grounds maintenance. Minor repairs will also be done on the roof and the football field will be prepared for the fall season.

KOOTENAI SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Families Welcome New Babies

AALIYAH BECKMAN

The Kootenai School District community is welcoming two new babies—Charlie Jo Ames and Kinsley Jene Kerby. Katie Ames, the school counselor, recently gave birth to a baby girl on May 10, 2023, eight days early. Charlie is a very healthy baby and recently visited the students and staff at Harrison Elementary and Kootenai. Katie was in the last month of her pregnancy when Charlie was born. She said, leading up to delivery, “It feels like it has been forever”. Ames and her husband, Curtis Ames, were both very excited and ready for her arrival. She said before the birth, “We have the car seat loaded in the car and prepared to bring her home”. The Ames also have one other little girl who is 2.5 years old. Her name is Abby. Ames is excited to have 2 girls and to watch them grow up together. High School and Jr. High Principal, Nolan Kerby and his wife, Megan, are also expecting a little girl—Kinsley Jene Kerby. Kinsley is very healthy and is expected on July 17, 2023. The parents are very excited for their little girl, their firstborn, to arrive. The district employees held baby showers at the school for both the Ames family and the Kerby family. This was a time for the staff to dote upon the parents and share the joy of welcoming new Warriors!



ABBY AMES welcomes her new baby sister, Charlie Jo Ames. Both girls are the daughters of Curtis and Katie Ames, Kootenai School District employees. (Photo Credit: Katie Ames)

KOOTENAI SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bus Stop Hero Provides Safety

OLENA GOODMAN

Jimmy Loucks, the father of Maddie and Nolan Loucks, has been volunteering down at the Mission Point bus stop for several years, making sure students get to and from the school bus safely. The location of this particular stop is along Highway 3, at the Mission Point turn off. This stop is a corner that when speeding vehicles come down the hill, cannot see the children getting to their cars or crossing the road to get to their homes. This creates the potential for much danger—for students, the bus driver, and for drivers. Loucks explained, “The semis come hot around the corner and on one occasion, a student was almost hit.”

This was the final straw for Loucks, whose son was in the second grade at the time. He recognized that there had almost been too many accidents and starting talking with other parents and the bus drivers. He decided to take initiative to make safety happen. “One of the last things we would ever want to see is one of our children hurt,” says Loucks. Loucks would originally put out orange cones alongside of the pullout to discourage people from parking in the pull out. Over time, parents understood where they needed to park. “I act as the bus driver’s rearview mirror in some ways,” explained Loucks. John Barnes, a long-time employee of Kootenai School District and most recently a substitute bus driver explains— “Loucks is very helpful in the mornings because he has the students organized and lined up and ready to get on the bus. In the evenings,

he is helpful because he lets us [bus drivers] know that every child has a vehicle there to pick them up. It is wonderful that he is willing to give freely of his time.” Loucks is not paid for his services to the Kootenai community, but occasionally receives a thank you from the parents and bus drivers. Community members and staff have commented on more than one occasion that Loucks should be paid by the school district for his services. Highway Patrol and Benewah County officers have also patrolled the area in support of Loucks. Barnes concluded, “As a substitute driver, I feel lost on the days when he is unable to be present.”

OPINION

A Different Kind of Baseball

GABE BORNITZ

America’s favorite pastime has seen a new twist in the last few years—Banana Ball. In 2022, the Savannah Bananas left the Coastal Plain League in order to play Banana Ball year-round.

So, what is Banana Ball? As a fan of baseball and a player myself, I had to find out. After being introduced to this unique take on my favorite sport, I spent a number of hours watching YouTube footage from the Banana Ball season. Let’s just say, Banana Ball is a wild baseball circus. “Banana Ball was born out of the idea of making baseball more fast-paced, entertaining, and fun,” explains the Savannah

Bananas website. The Savannah Bananas did the normal baseball thing that most of us know today. But they ended up making some of their own rules—every inning counts, a two-hour time limit, no stepping out of the batter’s box, no bunting, no walks, and foul balls can be caught by fans for an out.

The Bananas also field their competition, the Party Animals. Both the Bananas and Animals will do some crazy things on the field—flaming bats, a player batting on stilts, outfielders catching pop flies while doing a backflip, and running through the crowd giving high-fives to the fans. Both teams also have choreographers that help coach baseball and teach the team fun dance moves.

Overall, Banana Ball is entertaining and definitely a must watch.

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

- June 2 – Last day of School
- June 3 – Kootenai Graduation Class of 2023
- June 10 – Kootenai Trap Team State Competition
- June 24 – Pig in the Park
- July 4 – Harrison Fireworks
- July 28-30 – Old Time Events, Parade & Picnic
- August 29 – First Day of School

NORTH IDAHO WEATHER UPDATE by Olena Goodman

With the winter weather finally coming to an end, it seems as though spring arrived late this year. In April and May, North Idahoans were experiencing warm temperatures already up to 70 - 80 degrees and then continuing with the colder nights. Recently, the temperature has risen significantly, reaching up to about 80 - 90 degrees. Warmer temperatures bring more fun, according to many of the students in Kootenai, and the sandy beach at Harrison has already become a local favorite.

Following the winter weather, snow has begun to melt and flood into local lakes and rivers, causing the rivers and lakes to become larger in size. We have also experienced more rain in this later spring leading to flooding in some areas. This flooding has caused the local lakes to be littered with a lot of driftwood, scraps of docks, whole docks, and some garbage. Many boats risk damage in areas with heavy debris. To add on, there has also been some minor flooding in fields near St. Maries. Flooding can be seen in some areas along Highway 3.

ANNABELLE PARRISH

The First in History – A Fictional Tale (Part 3 – The Finale)

Previously in *The First in History*... I explained to them my plan. “And that’s what I’ve come up with to be able to be a knight with you guys!” I told them excitedly, “Also” I added, “Call me Mere from now on, because I really don’t want to get caught, and if I have a feminine name they might get suspicious.” They both agreed and then we headed out to see which knight would take us in. “My mom should have put a paper with Mere Katz on it in the box of names,” I told Lucan. “Best of luck” he replied.

After about twenty or so names had been called, the man calling names called out, “Is there a Mere Katz here?” I raised my hand and walked up to the stage. There were four fierce looking knights that stood before me. One had a purple uniform, one a yellow, one red, and finally the last man, who looked perhaps a bit bored, was wearing cyan. The man called out again, “You will be placed in the possession of Sir Gareth.” The knight with the yellow uniform stuck out his hand and I shook it. “Welcome aboard son.” He said. I got in a wagon full of about six others, and after what seemed like eternity the last name was called and the wagon started to move. I could see my mother in the crowd and waved goodbye to her.

It was almost dark by the time we made it to the castle. It was huge but I didn’t have much time to look around. As soon as the wagon stopped they ordered us out and into the castle. I have to say it was very dark, and not as majestic as it was on the outside. They showed us our living quarters, and then we were off to the kitchen to make dinner for our Knight. I was luckily in charge of the bread, because that was almost the only thing I knew how to make. We finished making dinner and served it to our Knight and his guests. Finally, we all were given a piece of parchment with our daily chores and assignments on them. My tasks were basically brushing the horses twice a day, and cleaning the barn and stables, which I was completely fine with.

My life was basically that repeating cycle every day for the next seven years. Twice a week we would do some training with wooden swords and little shields. After a while, I got pretty good and was called the best in my class. Then finally, marking the almost seven-and-a-half-year mark, I was crowned the honors of being a knight.

All this time I was able to hide my real identity. I would go on to be the first woman to become a knight, and the army that I fought in won over twenty battles—I survived them all. Finally, though, I would get shot with an arrow in my foot and die due to the infection. Only then, would they realize that I was a woman. And my descendants would carry on my legacy of being women that would fight alongside men out on the battlefield.

Would you like to see your article, writing, letter, photo, or comic be featured in the Kootenai Chronicle? We are accepting submissions for future print editions. Please send submissions to Mary Nelson at mnelson@sd274.com