

Tigers shredding into new year



Volume 106 | Issue 2 | Dec. 2023



Table of Contents

4 New year, new prices for AP	5 Winter is here	6 Inside Ditching
8 Brand new lunch spots	10-11 Winter Sports	12 Getting to know a foreign exchange student
14-15 Ain't no mountain high enough	16 Book it to Book Club	18 Shredding Pow
19 School lunches are free	20 Social media at GJHS	22 Opinion: Putting the teach in teacher

Letter from the editor

Are we there yet?

The three-week stretch has begun where we all ask ourselves: “Are we there yet?”

The onset of cold weather and finals around the corner has us wishing away the days until winter break. Adding to all of that we returned from Thanksgiving week off to find construction crews tearing up the ground in front of the main gym.

Some students may be working holiday hours, and it seems like everyone is sick. As a mental health reminder it is important to pay attention to your own well-being

and be mindful that stress is normal and it is important to learn how to cope with it.

Despite all of that and even the unfortunate cold weather and inevitable winter depression, remember that just around the corner is the start of a new year. It’s an opportunity to spend time with loved ones.

Signed,
miah **hines**, O&B Editor in Chief



Miah Hines
Editor in Chief



Maddy Parkurst
Managing Editor



Alex Kirch
Promotions Manager



Marie Calkins
Copy Editor



Serenity Schmidt
Photo Editor



Connor Kinser
Reporter



Alexia Bailey
Reporter



Eli Schultz
Reporter



Lila Mottram
Online Editor



Matthew Chacon
Reporter



Elizabeth Wasnik
Reporter



Ramona Ripple
Reporter



Spencer Penkaty
Reporter



Paiten Brown
Reporter



Chloe Carpenter
Reporter

ORANGE & BLACK STAFF

New year, new prices for AP

Tests to earn college credit are \$22 more than last year

story and photo by alexia bailey

College Board's AP Tests, the most important part of every Advanced Placement student's May, are now more expensive.

AP classes are an integral part of the high school experience for students who want more rigorous classes. GJHS offers roughly 22 AP classes, such as AP US History (APUSH), AP Biology, and AP Language and Composition (AP LANG). These classes are often at a faster pace and aim to prepare students for an exam in May in which they have to get a 3 out of 5 for a chance to earn college credit.

"Any student can take AP Classes if they want to get college credit," said GJHS Vice Principal Josh Warinner.

The exams, held in May, now cost \$110, which is \$22 more than last year. For students who take multiple AP classes, the costs of exams add up. Although the exam cost pales in comparison to the college classes for the same credit, the \$110 can still feel like a lot.

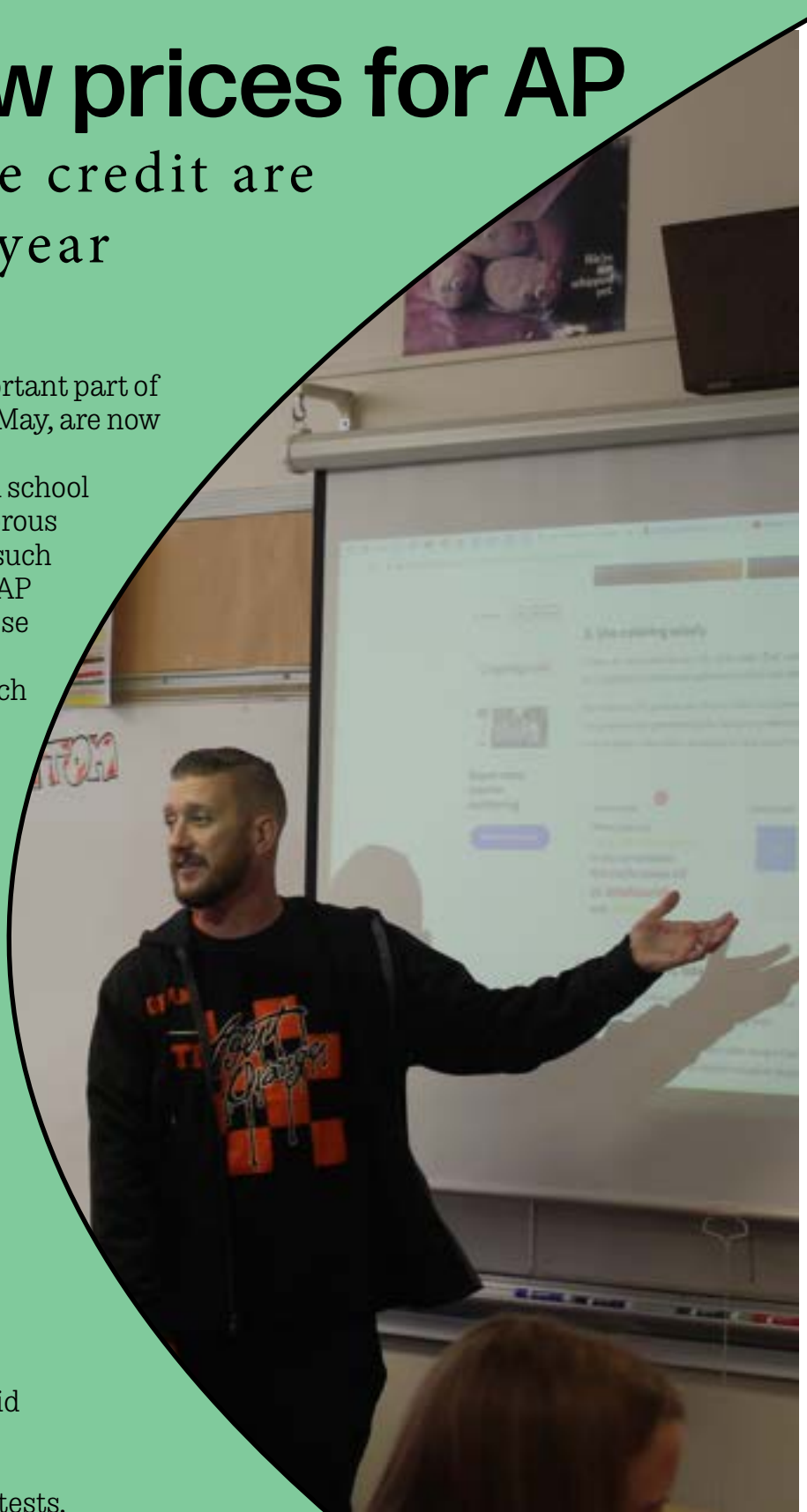
"I would rather pay the money [for the test] rather than pay for the actual college class," said GJHS Senior Emma Ryan, who is currently taking two AP classes.

Many returning students have noticed the change with pricing and feel like the price is simply too high.

"I feel like it discourages people from taking the (Advanced Placement) tests," said GJHS senior Samuel Guddat.

The cause of the prices being raised is because of the influx of students taking the tests. GJHS, along with the rest of the high schools in the district, raised their prices in response to the College Board's price increase.

Tests can be paid for in the school's Main Office. Students who are struggling to pay for an exam should talk to their teachers or Warinner.



GJHS teacher Cody Brunton presents new material to his 5th hour AP Seminar class during a Wednesday block class.

Winter is here

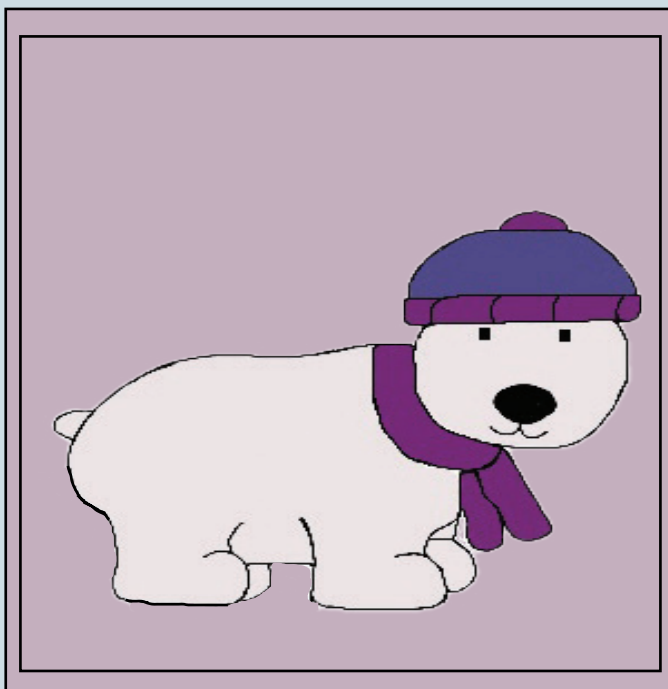
As winter approaches there are many things to do in your free time

story by spencer **penkaty**

graphics by maddy **parkhurst**

Once winter break starts you might not have any plans on what to do, so if you don't know what to do here is a list of ideas.

- Build a gingerbread house
- Make hot chocolate
- Play board games
- Skiing or snowboarding
- Snow shoeing
- Ice fishing
- Cross country skiing
- Go make Snow angels with friends
- Have the best snowball fight ever
- Build a snowman
- Build any snow sculpture



- Go sledding at old powderhorn
- Build an igloo by yourself
- Read a book next to a fireplace
- Go snowmobiling
- Eat ramen noodles
- Catch up on sleep before school starts again
- Watch holiday movies
- Lay on the couch and do nothing
- Binge watch all Christmas movies
- Make a Christmas list
- Relax with family
- Chill with friends

INSIDE DITCHING

What really happens when you skip class?

story by serenity **schmidt**

Attendance rates in the 2023-24 school year are improving. Attendance has gone up more than 5% since 2021. It is known that many GJHS students ditch, but there is never really a clear answer for why these people are not coming to class. There are various reasons for students to ditch, some are reasonable and some not so much.

“There are some kids here who are homeless, living out of cars. And when you don’t know where your next meal is coming from, or you only have two pairs of clothes, going to school is kind of the last thing on your mind,” said GJHS assistant principal Heather O’Brien.

This doesn’t go for all students who ditch. Some ditch simply because they don’t want to go to their classes. A common ditching

spot is Sherwood Park. During the warmer weather, students often ditch their classes to go sit at the park. Students also commonly ditch at nearby restaurants or in their cars in the parking lot. “I ditch sometimes, because some of my classes are just boring,” said an anonymous GJHS junior.

School data shows that GJHS attendance has noticeably increased. During 2021, attendance rates were lower because of COVID-19. The pandemic is linked to having a large impact on students and their desire to attend class. The overall average attendance rate was 79.04% in the 2021-22 school year. In the 2022-23 school year, the overall average was 81.24%. Attendance rates now have gone up steadily by more than 5%, leaving

the current rate at 84.65%.

“In the new building, I’m hoping poor behaviors decrease, and attendance increases. I have a theory that for the first several years of the new building, everyone’s going to get better [at attending classes],” said O’Brien.

In the new GJHS, the building is scheduled to be ready by August for the 2024-25 school year. The building is going to be more connected as opposed to many isolated buildings and it will be more locked down and secure.

The hope is that students will come to class rather than get caught and in trouble for ditching. GJHS staff is also striving to have students come to class more because they want to, not because they have to.

Below: GJHS students are often seen ditching at Sherwood Park during the warmer months. Students frequently come to the park rather than going to their classes.



Two GJHS students walk out of the school during a class period. Attendance has gone up since the start of this school year.

photos by serenity **schmidt** and connor **kinser**



ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST INSURANCE

We are headquartered in Grand Junction and have been serving the local community and thousands of clients nationwide since 2005. With over 250 affiliated locations we offer small town agency service with national strength

If its been a while since you've reviewed your coverage contact us today to see how we can help.



**627 Grand Avenue
970-778-6000
www.rockyquote.com**





Brand new lunch spots

Popular new businesses come to GJ following a surge of population

story and photos by eli schultz

Grand Junction High School students see new lunch spots following a surge in businesses and population growth.

New companies and expansion has taken place in Grand Junction causing a huge surge in population and in options when shopping. New businesses that have moved into town have been Culvers, Five Guys, Mod Pizza. Rumors of Costco and Panda Express have been verified to be coming soon. Burlington Coat Factory also came to GJ.

All of the new businesses are new lunch spots and shops for students to shop at. Students with vehicles have a bigger variety of places to eat during lunch time.

A senior at GJHS, Creagor Gould, said, "I'm excited for the Panda Express. The Costco also sounds pretty sick."

The increase in companies around GJ also follows the population increase. According to the World Population Review, ten years ago in 2013 the population of GJ was around 60.7 thousand people. Today in 2023 the population has grown to 69.3 thousand people.

Alex Guerrero, a sophomore at GJHS and a resident of GJ for ten years said, "I think people like [Grand Junction] because of the mountains, and the nearby towns."

Some locals have shown some concern. Many enjoy the new variety of businesses and parks in GJ, however they feel as though they are overcrowded and too expensive.

GJHS sophomore Zachary Ridpath has lived in GJ for his entire life. He said that even though there is a good accessibility to things and various outdoor places to enjoy, the new growth of people has made things more expensive.

However, other students enjoy the new growth in the Valley. GJHS junior Brendan Schwarz said that he sees no problem with the growth besides added traffic.

Many GJHS students, including Schwarz, said the increased population might be because of the recreational opportunities around GJ.

"[The growing population] might be because of recreation. We have the Monument on one end and the Mesa on the other. CMU might also draw students here," said Schwarz. "I think the only thing is travel time with all the construction, but we still preserve the community."

Other rumors of new places coming to GJ include In-N-Out Burger and Trader Joe's.

A group of GJHS students in line at Jitterz during lunch.

OPINION: “GJ” mural

It is one of the better features of the old building

story and photo by lincoln **mcquade**

The GJ mural is a small painting on the outside walls of the weight room, and it is a very charming feature of the school.

Painted in 2019, this mural depicts the school’s “GJ”, a logo with the letters G and J interlocking. The logo is black and has a thick orange outline. The mural was painted by the class of 2019 to leave their mark on the old building. Surrounding it is the text “all day” and dozens of black and orange handprints. The mural is visible from the main student parking lot on the NorthSide of school.

I like this mural because it doesn’t look too busy. The massive Tiger mural on the north side of the gym is cool, but it does look complicated and it’s hard to take in all of the details. This can be a little overwhelming, and it can make the Tiger mural almost look out of place.

The GJ mural manages to be eye-catching despite not being huge nor overly colorful. The logo, for example, is simple, but it represents the school’s history. It’s been around for decades. The handprints add a unique flair. They show that the mural was made by people who put

authenticity into the mural, and it makes for an unusual but interesting addition. They assert that real people painted this, making it feel personalized. Every little detail adds a subtle amount of appeal to a school building that is otherwise devoid of such appeal.

I’m not here to talk about the school building, though. You can talk to anyone in the school building and hear hundreds of remarks devoted to talking trash about it. I wish there were as many people fond of the mural as people who hate the current school building.

Basically, I like the mural because it is unique, simple, striking and pleasant. When the new building goes up, it’ll be great, but very sterile. There won’t be much character, and that’s an example of the character that the current building has with the mural.

There is basically no chance of preserving the mural after the current building’s demolition. I hope the school recreates it somewhere in the new school building.

That probably won’t happen, but I would be very happy to see it again.



This GJHS mural, created by studnets in 2019, is featured on the north side of the gym that is scheduled to be torn down when the old building is demolished next year.

Winter Sports Preveiw

New season
begins with
hope for
Tigers

GJHS players prepare for a rebound during a scrimmage held Nov. 21 in CMU's Foster Fieldhouse against Rifle High school.



story by ramona **ripple**
photo by serenity **schmidt**

Girls Basketball

GJHS girls basketball is starting off the season with a hopeful team and determined coach.

GJHS gym teacher Sydni Brandon is head coach of the girls basketball team. This is her second year as a coach for the Tigers team that she played for before going to have a stellar college career at Colorado Mesa University.

This year's returning senior players include Nerea Sills, Katelehn Abbath, Miah Hines, Caydence Lusher and Jaelyn Hanson.

"I think that [this season] will go well. I think we have some pretty strong players and we have been improving a lot and putting in a lot of hard work," said Abbath.

Coach Brandon was hired to help turn around a program that has one win at the varsity level in the last two seasons. The Tigers had a record of zero wins and 23 losses last year.

story by miah **hines**

Boys Basketball

The GJHS boys basketball team has undergone a coaching change heading into the 2023-24 season.

Gym teacher Dutch Johnson is the new boys head coach and hopes to see lots of measurable improvement this season.

"In the last eight weeks it's been a lot of building our foundation on offense and skill development," said Johnson.

Last year, the team had a total of 8 wins and 15 losses under previous head coach Issac Madison.

"I want us to win a lot of games, maybe make it to

playoffs this year. Just keep progressing as a team," said GJHS sophomore Andrew Henderson.

The assistant coaching staff consists of GJHS teachers Andrew Hansen and Dan Schmalz, as well as non-teacher coach Trenton Soriano.

"So far we've had an amazing culture and attitudes," said Johnson.

The first league game will be 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 19, at Fruita Monument High School against the wildcats.

Wrestling

The GJHS wrestling team hopes its off-season work will pay off under second-year head coach Tanner Ridgeway.

“We’ve been working all summer and a bunch of us have been putting in a lot of extra work [like] going to camps and I feel like we’ve really come together as a team. I think we’ll have a lot of people going to state this year,” said GJHS senior Tanner Roahrig.

Returning Tiger wrestler and senior Murphy Harris qualified for state last year.

Other returning senior wrestlers this season include Jayden Ritche and Amadaeus Gurule-Valles.

The first meet of the season was held Saturday, Dec. 2, at CMU.

More upcoming meets include a duel against Fruita Monument on Wednesday, Dec. 6, and a tournament at the Montrose Rec Center on Friday, Dec. 8.



Amadaeus Gurule-Valles and Matthias Martinez practice wrestling moves during preparation for their first meet.

story by miah hines

photo by maddy parkhurst

Girls Swim and Dive

The GJHS girls swim and dive team starts off another season as a combined team with three other schools in the valley. This includes Caprock, Central and Palisade high schools.

“As a coach [I hope to help] all the athletes have a great experience, learn something about themselves, and meet new, life-long friends. Other accomplishments: Having athletes reach their goals and making state qualifying times - or just personal best times. Being the best they can be and enjoying the experience,” said head swim

coach Denise Thompson.

Assistant coaches are Carter Anderson as assistant swim coach and Adam Dietrich as head dive coach.

Returning this season is first-place winner for a number of events last year, GJHS junior Whitney Stortz.

“I’m hoping to learn to balance my life out better, like my sports life and my family life and my homework,” said Stortz.

story by miah hines

Fall All League List

Softball

- Lindsay Cooley
- Kaylie Kellerby
- Jaxon Clark
- Alexis Walpole

Boys Soccer

- Bryan Aguirre
- Gerardo Hernandez
- Luis Mendez

Boys Tennis

- Isaac Boyer
- Jameson Boyer
- Nikolas Miller
- Jack Welling
- Gareth Keller
- Joey Hanson
- Jacob Smith

Cross Country

- Bryce Flanagan
- Albert Booth
- Tycen Lefebre
- Bailey Pommarane

Volleyball

- Olivia Kimmel

Boys Golf

- Jack Kaul
- Hunter Simmons
- Ky Korte
- Maddox Lovato

Football

- Will Applegate
- Tanner Roahrig
- Isaac Baca



Foreign Exchange Student Q&A

Celeste Vaversund from Sweden gives insight on what it's like living abroad in the U.S.

story and photo by eli **schultz**

Celeste Vaversund is one of the foreign exchange students visiting Grand Junction High School this year. Vaversund is visiting the United States for a year. She is from Stockholm, Sweden. The population of Stockholm is approximately one million people. It is the largest city in Sweden.

O&B: What is the most exciting thing about living abroad in the United States?

Celeste: I think it's just meeting new people, and making new friends.

O&B: What have you learned while living in the United States

Celeste: I learned more English and I got to learn more about cultures.

O&B: Has your language skills changed while living in the United States?

Celeste: Yeah I think so, a little bit.

O&B: What is different about your home and where you are staying?

Celeste: People are a lot more welcoming here. People talk crazier than they do in Sweden like in Sweden we

don't sit next to people on the train. It's kinda weird to do that and here everyone's just talking to each other like in the grocery store. That's kinda a bit different.

O&B: What is your favorite or least favorite part about living in the United States?

Celeste: I think my least favorite is that they don't have as many buses and the local transportation system is better in Sweden. I don't know, I like the weather here more.

O&B: What is your favorite class at Grand Junction High School?

Celeste: Probably my Comp' Lit' class because I like my teacher.

O&B: Do you ever get homesick being away from home?

Celeste: Yeah a lot. I'm homesick a lot right now just being away from home during Christmas.

O&B: What city are you from? What is it like?

Celeste: I'm from Stockholm. It's very pretty. I don't know how to describe it. It's a beautiful city. It can be busy but not like New York or anything.

GJHS foreign exchange student Celeste Vaversund is from Stockholm, Sweden. She has enjoyed meeting new people and friends.



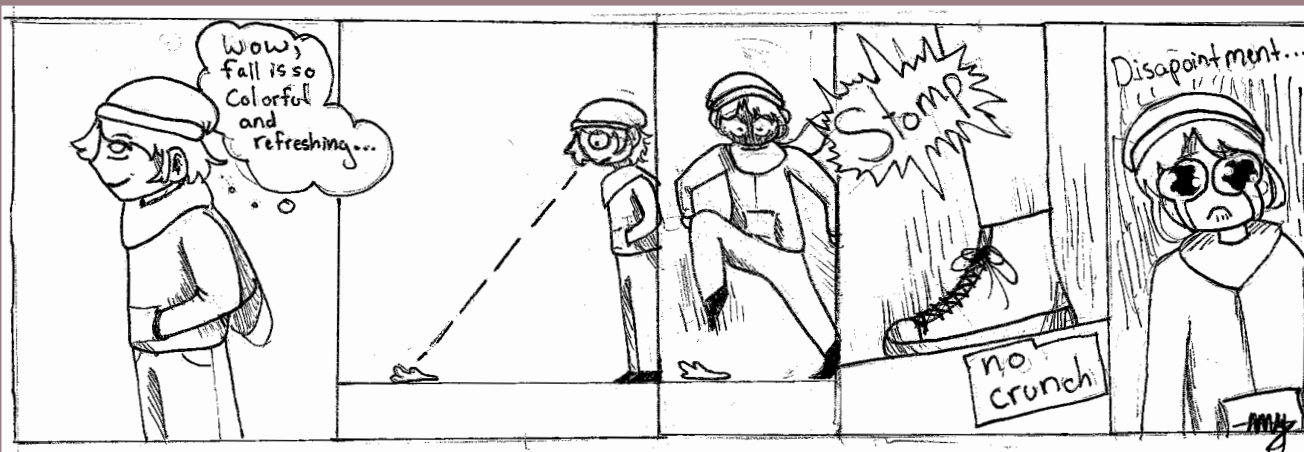
ART CLUB COMICS

Editor's note:

In collaboration with the GJHS Art Club, the O&B is proud to print student created cartoons. If you are interested in contributing your artwork in a future edition, contact us.



comic by charlie **chandler**



comic by abigail **young**



comic by madelyn **woodring**



comic by sophia **candland**

Ain't no mountain

The GJHS mountain bike team takes home victories and fresh starts

About ten years ago, the Grand Valley Youth Cycling organization started a composite high school team that included all the Grand Valley high schools. The team quickly grew leading to a split into the respective high schools.

Now, about three years after the split, Grand Junction High School is home to the largest mountain bike team in the valley with 24 members.

"We have an incredibly strong team that will be back next year, with most of our riders returning. Many of the racers will be moving up a category or two, meaning a stronger overall presence in the team standings," said Mah-Withers, "I personally would like to see more students join in on the fun, whether they want to race or not."

During the season, the team would practice three

times a week in the Lunch Loop and Gunny Loop areas, with the team broken into smaller groups based on speed and skill abilities.

"Some of the racers were riding 50+ miles on dirt and pavement a week," Mah-Withers said.

This Fall, GJHS was recognized as the 2023 regional champion and finished third in the state, but winning isn't the only fun.

"The team is very close. All the kids are friends and the coaches are there for us," said Regional Sophomore Champion Alma McGowen. "Practices are always fun even if we're doing intervals."

Though it may not always be easy, there's always a bright side.

"Uphill is not my favorite, but if it means I get

to go downhill fast after, then it's fun," said McGowen. Through the difficulties, the team continues to push each other to new heights.

Next year the team aims to expand even further.

"I hope that we can bring more girls on the team. Although there are many girls right now, there are not nearly enough girls mountain biking," added McGowen.

With a new year just around the corner, the mountain bike team looks forward to strengthening their presence and expanding the team.



GJHS junior Rowan Ferguson and senior Ty Gardner biking in jorts on the clubs costume day.

high enough

story by lila **mottram**



Left: Members of the GJHS Mountain Bike Club celebracte a victory after winning their division.



Above: The competitive start of a race at state near Glenwood Springs creates clouds of dust.

Right: GJHS freshmen Cade Gardner, Talen Hoffman, Oliver Gustafson and Max Xu cheer on teammates at a race.



Book it to Book Club

Book club members book clubbin' it

story by connor **kinser** & photo by maddy **parkhurst**

Books have been something that have been in all of our lives since preschool; and for some of us that passion sticks though high school.

Some have different sports, different hobbies, and different interests. But one thing all students have in common is before lunch they occasionally hear the announcement that Book Club will be meeting in the library today.

Book Club meets up twice a month during lunchtime in the library.

It is a time where students with reading interests can meet with each other and talk about the book they are reading. They can discuss their book and give comments about what other people are reading.

“So book clubs are basically people who are

interested in books or just want to really talk about them. We get to come together and discuss and rate. About the series, their reading and discussion about the series together,” said Mikayla Veldman member of GJHS book club.

This book club is also unique because you have the freedom to read whatever you want.

“There are a few points of book club. I think it’s important because you can read whatever you want to read without anyone telling you what to read,” said GJHS librarian Pam Middlemass.

But book club is not only just a place for reading but it is also a place for Community and bonding.

“It’s a chance for people that have that interest to get to meet together,” said Veldman.



Members of the GJHS Book Club gather for a recent meeting to discuss what they have been reading. The Book Club meets Wednesdays at lunch time in the Library. The club adviser is librarian Pam Middlemas.

Lights, Cameras, Action!

New teacher Bryan Carlson brings new opportunities for students in theater

story by paiten brown & photos by matthew chacon

GJHS theater has two plays planned for this year, giving many students opportunities to be involved.

“The sense of community that theater has as a whole,” said a senior stage manager Alyssa Harvey.

“All the people are really nice, and really fun to be around,” said freshman Osker Chamberlain, who is the assistant stage manager.

First year GJHS theater teacher Bryan Carlson is the main facilitator, he picks out students where they are gonna be and what role fits them the most. He went to Central High School then got his acting and directing degree from Colorado Mesa University.

Theatre has changed a lot this year with having a new director and a much smaller group of students involved.

“The vibe of the theater department has changed this year, and I think that both having a new teacher and also having a smaller group this year has affected the feel of the theater department as a whole,” said Harvey.

Other students agree with Harvey such as sophomore Lillian Goldberg.

“There are a lot of factors with theater changing in general this year because half of our department left last year and so it’s mostly new people. Carlson is honestly really good. He’s totally prepared...the vibe has changed a little bit and I would say it’s in a positive direction,” said Goldberg.

Theater in general is very important to Carlson.

“Theater to me is the truest form of

what is to be human... It’s just a very humanizing and beautiful experience,” said Carlson.

The fall play, *Airness*, is a comedy play that is about an air guitar competition that gets mixed with other outside drama in the competition.

It was performed in GJHS auditorium November 10th-11th.

Tickets for students cost \$7 presale, and \$10 at the door. Adults were \$10 presale, and \$13 at the door. They will be holding another play, *Matilda*, in the spring.

Students have many opportunities to be involved in Theatre club, from acting in the plays to building sets, designing costumes, or controlling sound or lighting.



SHREDDING POW

GJHS' Rocky Mountain high

by marie calkins



Grand Junction High School only has one club that has desperate kids up and out of bed at 4 a.m. on a school day in hopes of being a member.

GJHS' Ski and Board Club was established in 2011 and has become the school's most popular, boasting nearly 130 members for the 2023-24 season

The club was started by GJHS social studies teacher Justin Whiteford, counselor Dustin Giesenhagen, and English teacher Steve Brown.

"In other schools I worked at, they always had ski clubs because I lived in Wyoming, but we're in Colorado so I thought we had to have one... I spoke with Brown and Whiteford, 'cause they'd been wanting to do one as well. We got it going," said Giesenhagen.

Since 2011, the club has grown in size and in popularity. While the goal for this year's season was an 80 member capacity, the amount of interest made this goal hard to maintain.

"The problem we have is, so many kids are committed. How do you turn a kid away that shows up at 4 or 5 in the morning? So we raised the capacity to 120," said Whiteford.

The club's officers are senior Evan Pipkin, and juniors Finn Sharp, Izabella Barney, Hannah Burton, Lia Bunnell, and Adam Pramenko.

"Officers and upper classmen provide structure and leadership. Brown and I lay the foundation but they lay the tone, they set the track," said Whiteford.

"It's fun being able to kind of shape a club. You get to do what you want. You can choose how you want it to be ran...I like being able to make changes where you see a change needing to be made," said Burton.

"You have to set a good example for everyone," said Pramenko.

"You have to be looking out for everyone," Burton responded.

The club goes on several trips throughout the season, as well as the benefit of discounted Powderhorn Ski resort passes. They have multiple overnight trips including a trip to Western Colorado University where

they ski at Monarch Mountain Ski Resort and Crested Butte Mountain Resort.

"At Western they have a competition called the Rail Jam. There's usually 500-1000 people. What was at first a joke, became Junction students first, second, and third... taking They would pat us on the head and say 'Oh yeah, your kids can compete. We don't want them to get hurt. Make sure they wear padding and helmets.' Whatever. We beat their ass," joked Whiteford.

This year, they will return to Rail Jam again February of 2024.

"We had 80 Junction kids there, and we're gonna do it again. We'll defend our title," Whiteford added.

GJHS' Ski and Board club popularity expands outside of GJHS.

"We averaged anywhere from five to 10 kids who would transfer to Junction just for the club itself," Whiteford said.

Even the idea itself gained traction throughout the valley.

"We're the best one in the valley, no doubt. We kind of established it, then Fruita [Monument High School] stole our idea," said Giesenhagen.

The club's goal is to make the slopes fun and available for all students.

"I am really glad to see all these other people get to join our club... Our goal is to make skiing and snowboarding more accessible," Sharp said.

"It's a club that we created for fun... we're about having fun," said Brown.

Despite the amount of fun the club can be, Whiteford credits its success to the structure of the club.

"We've had strict but understandable guidelines right off the bat. Kids get it and they love it. We have a lot of structure and a lot of rules in place so that kids can be safe but it has allowed kids to thrive," Whiteford said.

GJHS' Ski and Board Club's first trip will be sometime in January.



The first GJHS Ski and Board logo

School lunches are free

Every kid in the state of Colorado gets free school breakfast and lunch

story by liz **wasnik**

photo by miah **hines**

Voters passed free school lunches for all students in the state of Colorado in November 2022.

This includes free school breakfast as well. Every student that comes to school in the morning is welcome to grab food from the cafeteria.

“Yes, this has been a long time coming and I hope that other states follow suit so that every child in the United States has unrestricted access to nourishing food.” Said GJHS teacher Cheyanne Gentry.

Before the vote, parents paid for kids to eat lunch at school unless they qualified for free or reduced lunches. Many families didn’t qualify or even take advantage of applying for free lunches for their kids. Now with this bill being passed

that eliminates that problem.

Starting this school year Colorado joins other states that also have free lunches like California, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Maine, New Mexico, Massachusetts, and Vermont. About 57% of voters in Colorado said yes to the bill.

Freshmen at GJHS David Bruens eats school lunches quite frequently. He says things along the lines of the food has gotten better and has improved in many ways. But there are still some foods that need to be improved.

“Better, like the Frito chili pie, is my favorite...The hamburgers I do not trust,” said Bruens.

Colorado had to jump through many “hoops” to get free lunches for every child at school.

For Colorado to participate in the free meals Colorado school district had to get help from the Community Eligibility Provision.

Community Eligibility Provision helps cover the cost of universal free meals at schools with a large sum of student families that receive government benefits. Colorado did get the help from Community Eligibility Provision to get free school lunches to every student in the state.

“What a blessing! As a single parent back in the day, if my family did not qualify for free lunch, it would have been a great hardship. Everyone deserves to eat, no one should go hungry for a single day so I feel that Colorado really stepped up to protect and care for its students,” Gentry said.



Many students often take advantage of the free breakfasts in the morning at GJHS, as well as free lunches, due to a statewide ballot initiative approved by voters in 2022.

Social Media at GJHS

The negatives and positives of social media

story and photo by chloe **carpenter**

Recently, many school accounts have surfaced on social media, acting as a public story for anyone from the school to post on. GJHS currently has two of these accounts on both Snapchat and Instagram.

Drama, including some cases of students picking fights with other schools, is frequent on these school social media pages which doesn't reflect well on GJHS.

At one point, Palisade student council got called out for copying a video on TikTok by the GJHS student council. This pointless drama has caused some of these platforms to feel less inviting to students.

GJHS sophomore Aubriel Guillen feels uncertain about how this drama or information is going to be better for the school.

"The [social media posts] are not the best thing in the world, but they're interesting. A lot of drama with just people in general you know. I think this has been the worst idea for the school," said Guillen.

But the school's involvement in social media isn't all bad. Student council posts overviews of the week on

TikTok, Stuco interviews teachers about sports events, school accounts hype sports teams up before games, some post rules regarding school events or dates for upcoming events.

GJHS social media pages such as Snapchat accounts for classes of 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028 were originally made for people posting updates about the school.

Instead, they create drama between each other or even post pictures of feet in the bathroom or post about fake drama within the school.

Some students feel safe posting and interacting on social media, but many others are fearful of cyberbullying.

"I personally don't like [school social media] because people from different grades try to get in on them. It's just not very fun," said

GJHS senior Carter Stehman. "I'm pretty safe on social media. I feel like there's a lot of scams going on there, and I feel like there's a lot of cyberbullying going on."

More students are engaging in social media and taking less time to do schoolwork. Social media is becoming something that high schoolers can't live without.



Students frequently use class time throughout the day to keep up on social media rather than their classwork.

Teachers prepare to be on the move

GJ teachers will be roaming the halls more starting in 2024

story and photo by maddy **parkhurst**

In the new Grand Junction High School building, teachers will be working under the new implementation of roaming teachers.

In August of 2024 students and staff will be moved over to the new \$144.5 million high school. The reason behind roaming teachers in the new building is to put as many classrooms as possible to use throughout the school day.

GJHS Principal Jory Sorensen said, "When teachers share they won't be sharing four or five rooms. If they share, it will be two different rooms. There will still be some [teaching supplies] in the classrooms because they are only

sharing two classrooms."

Instead of teachers being in an empty classroom during their plan periods they will be in a designated shared office area during their plan time. The area is similar to a teacher lounge, but this teacher lounge will have cubicles. The cubicle office areas on each floor of the building are designed with enough room for 24 teachers.

Sorensen said, "They also have a work space in a teacher office. There will be a big space with a table and teachers working."

Sorensen also stated the new building design is eight classrooms short from every teacher being able to have their own designated

classroom like they do now. Within the classrooms teachers will be able to leave some items, and in the cubicle areas teachers will have bins where other items can be kept.

Some teachers expressed concerns about students not being able to find their teachers throughout a school day. Some students visit teachers' classrooms during their plan period to make up a test or catch up on work they missed.

"I think it's a little weird because it seems like they have better things to do instead of just walking around the school [to get to their next classroom]," said GJHS junior Mason Znamenacek.

Many students showed little interest when asked about roaming teachers in the new building.

"There are definitely going to have to be some things that are going to have to shift just based on not having certain materials in the classrooms and we might have to shift being a little bit more online," said GJHS history teacher Stephanie Johnson.

In the new building there will be specialized classrooms still setup for specific classes like physical education, orchestra, art, and some science. These classrooms may still have roaming teachers but will be set up for those specific curriculums. Some of the special education programs will also have designated classrooms.



Grand Junction High School ELA teacher Carla King walks down the hallway carrying a bin of binders to her class. In the new building, teachers will sometimes switch classrooms twice a day.

OPINION:

Putting the Teach in Teacher

A deep dive into what makes a good teacher at Junction

story by connor **kinser**

photo by maddy **parkhurst**

I believe that it is not a subject that makes a class boring but a teacher who decides that. Everyone has to go to school and get an education, whether you like it or not. A key part of our education is the teachers.

The Teachers are the whole reason we go here. School has to almost come to a complete stop.

For example, I hate math and I think it's the most confusing thing in the world. But Russel Gregory, a math teacher at GJHS, helps a lot. I don't think science would have been as fun without the help of teachers Chelsea Kraniak and Michelle Davis.

They not only bring a lot of life into the classroom but they are also just some nice people to have conversations with. Davis always opens up her class with good things and asks a fun "would you rather?" question. This can help with opening a class and getting more students engaged. Instead of some teachers just opening class by reading a book. It doesn't even have to be a game or good things. It can just be a bit of engagement from the teacher at the beginning can go a long way.

It also just helps if your teacher is a genuine person. It can be hard for someone to learn if they feel like the teacher is just a robot repeating what a book says. I feel like a good teacher doesn't just use a textbook and comes up with their own lessons or is more interactive with the students. Instead of just saying, "Hey students, read all of this for



GJHS math teacher Russell Gregory usually is very engaging with his students.

a lesson you have never heard of before."

Teachers who read with the class help a lot more than independent reading. I have a very short attention span especially for things that don't interest me. (Cough Cough like 90% of School). So it is very important that teachers try to make a class interactive or fun.

It also helps if a teacher can take responsibility. I know this sounds weird to say that adults don't take responsibility but I find that some teachers just blame the students.

I had a teacher once who blamed the class for all bombing the test. I

understand if it's a hard test but she was acting like it was the easiest thing and we were all idiots for not getting good scores on the test.

In comparison, Gregory saw that we were all struggling on a math test. He decided to scratch the test and give us more time to study.

A teacher doesn't need to be your friend. They just need to be someone who you wouldn't mind being around and you can actually learn from.

You're forced to do school and there is no way around it. A teacher can make that a good thing or a bad thing.

New playing fields coming soon

GJHS getting new athletic fields with new building

story by alex **kirch**

photo by maddy **parkhurst**

GJHS will be getting new fields that will be able to host varsity games. Most of the land where the building is currently will be turned into athletic fields. Tennis courts, practice football area, baseball field and marching band practice areas were all demolished for construction.

The current GJHS building has been in place since 1956. GJHS students have been playing on the same fields for decades. The fields have held JV games and have served as practice fields for marching band, football, lacrosse, soccer, tennis, track and field, and baseball.

These fields will all be replaced in the coming year. The fields will be located mostly where the current main building is. Some of the new fields are scheduled to be ready for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. The fields that are going in

include all the same fields and courts that have been demolished over the last two years.

“Baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse for games, we are trying to get varsity games with those. Tennis but just practice,” said GJHS athletic director Steven Woytek.

Spaces for stands have already been being created as can be seen by the track

The baseball players have played and practiced at Canyon View Park over the last few years as our old baseball field was demolished for the construction of the new school.

“I’m pretty excited, [it’s] been a couple of years since we’ve played on an actual home field since we are at Canyon View right now,” said GJHS junior baseball player Benjamin Noble.

The current art building and the current auxiliary gym are going to be used along with the new building

because they are the newest of the current buildings. The future use of the art building is currently unclear but is being talked about for various things.

“[The use of the art building is] still being discussed and negotiated ... It’s going to be used, we’re just not sure what specifically yet for what yet,” said Woytek.

The art building is staying as it was built in 2005 and will serve as a good building for whatever it ends up being used for.

Many GJHS students are questioning how much parking lot space there will be at the new school. The parking lot will be larger than the current one as it will expand to the south. The teacher parking lot will also expand. The new sections of parking are currently being paved in certain sections.



With a new GJHS coming for the 2024-25 school year new sports fields are expected, too.

Thank You to our Sponsors

For making the Orange & Black possible



The American democracy depends on a free and objective press. Our sponsors help enable GJHS student journalism that has been operating since 1918.

*To support the Orange & Black, contact promotions manager
Alex Kirch at gjoandb.newspaper@gmail.com*