

COMET NEWS

DECEMBER 2020



Goodbye
2020

Merry Christmas!



From the Fall 2020

Comet News Staff

The Fall 2020

Staff:

Zoe Beall

Renee Cross

Tianna Dwyer

Randall Gowing

Hunter Hanig

Presley Powell

Colbie Rosco

Cayle Rykhus

Samantha

Turnquist

Savannah Wasik

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What Do You Want for Christmas?

Savannah Wasik & Cayle Rykhus



Lohgan Hanna from the 7th grade would like new clothes.



Alexander Allenbrand from the 1st grade would like Legos.



Ava Ross from Kindergarten would like My Little Ponies.



Presley Powell from the 10th grade wants a tiara for her favorite new pony.

School
Resumes on
Monday,
January 4

Done With Covid

This mask...it reminds me of everything that has changed in our lives as a result of coronavirus. I can't see my kids if they are feeling unwell, nor fly home to see my family, nor stand near any of my students without masking up first, because I'm scared of contracting a potentially deadly virus. I think the skin on my hands has developed an immunity to the caustic effects of hand sanitizer due to constant disinfection.

I am done with COVID. I am done with lockdowns. I am done with my classroom being turned upside down. I am done with my

students losing out on co- and extra-curricular activities because of this virus.

I've talked to many people who wonder what good could possibly come out of all of this. Thankfully, a look into the past provides a hopeful answer.

COVID-19 is not the world's first pandemic, and prior quarantines throughout history helped to shape some of mankind's most important achievements.

While quarantining:

-Sir Isaac Newton invented calculus.

He also explored the nature of prisms, which eventually evolved into examination of the stars.

-It is believed that William Shakespeare wrote *King Lear*, *MacBeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*.

-Artist Edvard Munch painted *Self Portrait with the Spanish Flu*.

-Giovanni Boccaccio wrote *The Decameron*.

So, while it seems that all is frustratingly bleak, there are some positive consequences to forced time alone. Modern life would not look as it does now without quarantine.

Staff Spotlight



Mrs. Hankins is one teacher we all love, and will be sad to say goodbye to. She is originally from Oregon City, Oregon, and has been teaching here for 5 years! She actually chose to work here because it was closer to home than her old workplace, teaching in Watford City. "A little birdie" told her about an opening here at Alexander. Mrs. Hankins originally chose to teach because she was a special education aide, and her school district needed a stable teacher for that position. Teaching gives her personal fulfillment and direction now that her kids are all grown up. Her goal for her class this year is to help her kids be confident going into first grade. She has also said she is going to miss Alexander.



Sandra "Sassy" Crusch is one of the two Kindergarten teachers at Alexander. Ms. Crusch grew up in Bainville, Montana, but has been living in Watford City for 20 years. Before Alexander, she taught Kindergarten and 3rd grade in Watford. She chose to come to Alexander because of the smaller class sizes. "The smaller the class, the better job I'll do," she believes. She also mentioned that Alexander is a great small community. This is her third year teaching here, and she loves to teach Kindergarten because the kids are excited to be at school and learn. "You can see," she commented, "an astounding amount of growth within the children." Ms. Crusch believes that it's rewarding and fulfilling to be a teacher, due to the fact you get to see your students grow more and more everyday. She hopes to help kids learn to love learning, and to be able to problem solve independently.



Mrs. Gowing came to Alexander Public School to teach 4th grade from Northside Elementary School in Wolf Point, Montana, where she taught 6th grade. She said that she picked Alexander because it seemed like a good fit with her family. She also stated, "There were opportunities for my son, and my husband had a job in Williston." She enjoys teaching because she loves opening the minds of students. She tries to inspire them to be successful. Mrs. Gowing was born in Georgia, but grew up in Great Falls, Montana. She lived there until she was 23. Mrs. Gowing has been in Alexander since the summer of 2013. Her goal is to help the kids transferring up from elementary into junior high, to have a better experience than she did. She stated, "It is a difficult time in the life of a young person, not only with their education, but life in general. I also have a goal of helping those who struggle in school to know that they can succeed."

Ridiculous Randoms with the Fam

Savannah Wasik: Sick 'Em: Once, when I was little, my cousin, my sister, and I wanted to get back at my brother for something he did. So, we went outside, found a long, thick branch and poked at an underground hornets' nest, near where Dawsen was playing. The three of us ran inside and locked the doors so he couldn't get in. After that, we sat at a window and laughed while Dawsen endured multiple stings.

Tianna Dwyer: Horse Tag: My sisters and I would play a game called Horse Tag more than a lot. The game is quite simple: it's the game tag, but on horses. We would play it on the rides home after moving, or gathering, cows. Sometimes we would get so into the game, that we would lean too far off the horse's side and almost fall off. At times, just to avoid getting tagged, we would almost run into each other on our horses.

Hunter Hanig: The Pizza Hut Experience: When Dayden was ten we went to Pizza Hut to have dinner. When we were about to leave, Dayden had to go to the bathroom, but the men's room was occupied. My mom told him to just go use the women's bathroom. He locked the door, but then realized he couldn't unlock it. The employees had to use a fork to unlock the door.

Comet Count

Which is better on hot chocolate?

Marshmallows

Whipped Cream

22

30

WINNER!

Christmas Colors from the Staff



The Rosco's Tree



The Beall's Tree



The Powell's Tree

Colbie's Corner Colbie Rosco



Question 1

PuTaRiNgOnIt2937

I just got married and now I have to live with a boy. Can you give me any advice?

Answer 1

Well, just so you know, boys have this theory that there are magical house fairies that clean up everything. They do the dishes, clean up the dirty laundry, buy the groceries, and all the other house chores. Cough Cough, he doesn't know that it's you.

Question 2

FAithFuIRieNd101

So, I just got this boyfriend, but a guy that I really like is texting me, What do I do?

Answer 2

Well I mean, it depends on who is better looking. Just kidding, kind of. It really depends on who treats you better, and who you like more.

Recommendations: Netflix Suggestions For the Family Colbie Rosco

Bunk'd - Rated G: The show *Bunk'd* is a show that consists of three characters from the show, *Jessie*, and two new characters, Lou and Xander. Ravi, Zuri, and Emma are the three characters from *Jessie*. The episodes mainly consist of crises and events that happen at their camp on Lake Kikiwaka.

Cobra Kai—Rated TV 14: This show is set decades after a tournament that changed lives, and the one that established the famous rivalry between Johnny Lawrence and Daniel LaRusso. This unfriendly rivalry reignites in this sequel to the "Karate Kid" films.

Staff Spotlight



Mr. Mrachek, the high school science teacher, has been working here for 3 years. Before working here, he worked for 10 years as an oilfield engineer. Then he began working at Williston High School, for a year. While working there, he taught one hundred fifty 7th graders. Mr. Mrachek is originally from Sidney, and was raised between Sidney and Williston. He began working at Alexander because he liked the small school, working with smaller classes, and the nice community. He hopes to inspire his students and teach them an understanding of science.



Mrs. Obermeyer, the Preschool teacher at Alexander Public School, has taught here for 5 years. Before this, she worked at Sidney Public School. While working at Sidney, she taught grade 4 and she was an RTI/Title 1 coordinator. Mrs. Obermeyer is originally from south Sioux City, Nebraska. She has lived in Sidney for 33 years. Mrs. Obermeyer chose to work at Alexander because she received an opportunity to do a new job, teaching Preschool, which she had never done. She chose to teach kids because she likes "the littles;" they make her laugh, and they never get boring. This year she would like to get her class ready for Kindergarten, because there is a great deal of curriculum at their next level, so it is easier if they already know the basics. Mrs. Obermeyer likes the creativity of teaching and how you can accomplish learning standards in many ways.



The school's grade 4 teacher, Terrille Jacobson, began her time at APS as a student teacher. She also started her career here, but when enrollment started to sharply decline, she left to teach 4th grade at Watford City Elementary School. When our enrollment began to increase again, she came back, and is teaching 4th grade in the same classroom she used to occupy. She chose this school because Alexander is her home, and is the community her husband came from. The reason she wanted to be a teacher was because she saw her parents (who are teachers) have an impact on kids; to her, it made sense to do the same thing. Mrs. Jacobson is originally from Froid Lake, Montana, and she has been in Alexander for 28 years. Some of her goals this year include being "face to face," and having quality learning and projects to do. She also wants to build connections and have fun. Mrs. Jacobson likes Alexander because it's a great place to live and work. She also likes that Alexander is a small, family town.

"Merry Christmas, ya filthy animal! And a Happy New Year."

—Home Alone 2: Lost in New York

Gamers Corner

Hunter Hanig & Randall Gowing

The Jackbox Party Pack is a 5 game bundle pack! You can play the games on almost any platform, but some mobile devices can't support it.

The Jackbox has a wide variety of games

to choose from. They don't have physical copies you can purchase in a store. Only one person needs to buy the games and all the players need a smartphone or a web-enabled device.

Playing Jackbox

games with others remotely is very possible, as a game host. It's up to you to allow your remote friends to see your game screen.

This Month's Recipe: From Great, Great Grandma Zoe Beall

My Great, Great Grandma's Patchwork Cookies

My Great, Great Grandma was born 1912-1917 and died 1993. This recipe has been passed down in my family ever since.

1 cup butter
 1 cup flour
 1 cup brown sugar
 1 egg
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1 12 ounce package chocolate chips
 3/4-1 cup walnuts or crushed peppermint

Step 1: Cream butter, gradually add sugar and beat until well blended.
 Step 2: Beat in eggs and vanilla. Blend in flour.
 Step 3: Spread evenly in a well greased cookie sheet.
 Step 4: Bake at 350 degrees for 15-18 minutes or until lightly brown.
 Step 5: Remove from oven and quickly sprinkle chocolate chips on top.
 Step 6: Return to oven until chocolate chips are soft enough to spread.
 Step 7: Spread chocolate chips and sprinkle with nuts or peppermints. Chill and cut.



Sports Update Samantha Turnquist

At the Class B State Volleyball Tournament, Linton/HMB took home the first place title. The L-E-M area took home second place, leaving Thompson in third.

At Alexander High School, junior high and varsity wrestling has been

canceled, but elementary wrestling season is still on.

Basketball started on November 30 for both girls and boys. Because of the delay from Covid-19, the earliest date available for a game is Decem-

ber 14. This is the varsity girls' first game. Our Comet boys' first game is on January 4. Good luck to our Comet teams, and stay safe!

First Semester for Freshmen Renee Cross

Being a freshman can be very unnerving; unexpected events are bound to happen. As their first high school semester rolls to an end, the Comets News team decided to interview the class of 2024 to ascertain their experiences so far.

The biggest problem this group has faced, so far, is their inability to remain silent when the time is appropriate. They stated that they do not believe they are on any favorites list, due to this reason and certain others.

The class reported that high school expectations felt much higher than in middle school.

Brycin O'Dell stated that the only thing that has not changed is that he is "still the shortest."

“Let Us Play” Movement



Public objections, such as the 'Let Us Play' profile frame from Facebook, are allowing high school athletes, parents, coaches, and fans to express their frustrations about COVID-related

interruptions to yet another sports season. The NDHSA has now authorized the re-opening of sports practices. In addition,

most competitions are now slated to begin on December 14.

The pandemic has brought any number of unwelcome interruptions to our lives. Everything from school days to family gatherings have been impacted by the renewed need to socially distance. High school sports seasons are no exception. JH and HS wrestling have already been cancelled altogether, and both first practices and seasons for other

sports were delayed.

During the spring sports season of last school year, local, regional, and state competitions were cancelled, and sports seasons were sacrificed in an effort to slow the spread of the virus. Fall sports, such as volleyball and football, saw cancelled and rescheduled games due to player or coach quarantine requirements.

December Fun Fact Zoe Beall

*Celebrating Christmas was once illegal?! When Puritans first settled in Boston, they outlawed celebrating Christmas from 1659-1661.**

*goodhousekeeping.com

Artist of the Month: Joseph Cornell Zoe Beall

Joseph Cornell was born on December 24, 1903 and grew up to be a famous American artist and filmmaker. Cornell was self-taught and widely known for his shadow boxes, collages, and films. This artist actually was a mastermind of a new art form. He united objects in an artistic way and called it 'assemblage.'

Cornell lived in Manhattan, New York for around 10 years,

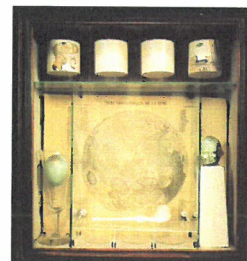
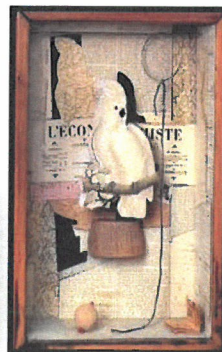
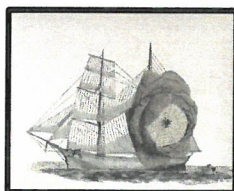
which exposed him to different visual arts. Cornell discovered dance, literature, film, and opera, and was greatly influenced by the work of

sur-
real
art-
ists.

Cornell took images from old books and made what we know as a collage. His first collage went by the name *The Schooner* which was stimulated by Ernst's collage-novel *La Femme 100 têtes* (*The Hundred Headless Woman*.)*

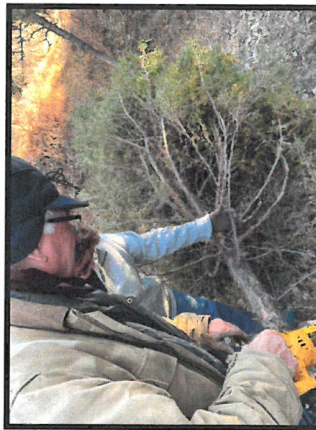
From left to right, *The Schooner*, *A Parrot for Juan Gris*, *Soap Bubble Set*, and *Tilly Losch*.

*Britannica.com



Dwyers' Tree Cutting

Over the Thanksgiving break, our family went out on a little adventure to find the perfect Christmas tree for this year. We traveled out into one of our pastures, where we had scouted the tree previously that summer. With just family and two dogs, we managed to cut down and load up the chosen tree with no trouble. The tree was a perfect fit in the house and smells great!



The Alexander Christmas Parade Cayle Rykhus

Mrs. Faller, our principal, has decided to move ahead with a Christmas Parade for the community on December 17. Due to an extension of Governor Burgum's mask mandate, the annual Christmas concert has been replaced by this parade celebration. Participants will be taking Covid-19 precautions and will walk the route and socially distance. Students will be asked to wear masks, along with their winter clothes.

The parade will start on Simpson Ave, following onto Elk St, and down onto Manning Ave, ending at the park. Santa will be waiting at the park to hand out treats and take pictures. The parade will start at 6:00 and parents can drop their kids off at the school door at 5:30. Teachers will be supervising each class, and parents can check out with teachers after the parade.



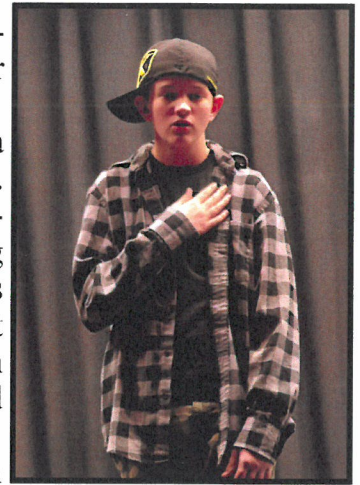
Alex Drama Team Wins Big

Zoe Beall



This has been an award-winning year for the Alexander Drama team!

Sandra Crusch, the drama coach, led the hard-working team. After their 1st place win in Regionals, and multiple Superior Acting Awards for the cast, the team was awarded 5th place for Drama at State. All members of the team were over-the-moon ecstatic and



proud of themselves after their victories.

Crusch admitted that, "The team spent a lot of time practicing in and out of school, and it really showed."

...*And Others* by Dennis Bush was the team's final choice, after considering several other plays. The team felt that it was a nice change from their usual humorous selections. Most members stated that it was a good chance to get out of their "Comfort Zone."



The team faced quite a few challenges, like quarantined kids, as well as other non-pandemic related issues. Many actors and actresses admitted that it was hard to memorize lines, and to schedule everybody together for practice time. Zoe Beall, who played the child-like personality, agrees that it was very challenging to get everyone together, but the real challenge for her was having to smile so much. There were also some difficulties for team members when getting into character. Every cast

member had to do something different to get into their assigned character's personality.

Tayla Ybarra, the anxiety personality, and Mercedes Dybas, the annoyed personality, probably had the hardest time getting into their personalities because each required a good deal of interpretation. Tayla put her own twist on the character, and Mercedes took inspiration from her sister. Another hardship was getting Jacy Tow, the gangster-like personality, ready for Regionals. Jacy only had 2 days to practice on stage!



Even though the team faced a lot of troubles, they persevered and did a fantastic job! Once again, Congratulations Alexander Drama Team!!!!



Dear Santa,

Letters from Pre-K



<p>My name is Chase. I want monster trucks for Christmas.</p>	<p>I want a Transformer that can change into a person and a car. My name is Linder.</p>
<p>My name is Harper. For Christmas I would like a kitchen, a necklace, lights, food, and a toy.</p>	<p>My name is Easton Martin Barnes. I would like a shotgun and a toy scar gun for Christmas. I would also like a racecar, skateboard, and hoverboard.</p>
<p>My name is Axyl. Most of all, I want cars for Christmas.</p>	<p>I am Cora. I want a guitar and a Barbie for Christmas.</p>
<p>My name is Porter. I want a remote control car that is like a Hot Wheel and Nintendo Switch Light with a Mario game and a ninja game.</p>	<p>I'm Stetson. For Christmas, I want a toy monster truck with a remote control that can go super fast and run over a tree branch.</p>
<p>My name is Maddy. I want Barbie everything.</p>	<p>My name is Charitee. I want a cowgirl pink hat for Christmas.</p>
<p>I want a new birthday for Christmas. My name is Aryn.</p>	<p>My name is Emma Marie. I want a toy kitchen for Christmas.</p>
<p>My name is Olly. I want a PlayStation 5 for Christmas. I would also like a trampoline.</p>	<p>My name is Jackson. What I want for Christmas is a remote control Power Wheel.</p>
<p>My name is Amelia. My favorite toys are a yo-yo and a skateboard.</p>	<p>My name is Naivea. I want a toy kitchen and a toy fairy for Christmas.</p>
<p>My name is Trevor. For Christmas, I would like a robot with a body, and a normal head, feet, and ears.</p>	

JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4 BREAKFAST FOR LUNCH	5 TACO IN A BAG	6 MEATLOAF CHEESY HASH-BROWN BROCCOLI WITH CHEESE	7 WINGS AND RINGS	Breakfast is served daily from 7:30-8:00 Hot Breakfast (served Tuesday & Thursday) is as follows: 01/07: Pancake Wrap 01/09: Breakfast Burrito 01/14: Dutch Waffle 01/16: Biscuits & Gravy 01/21: Sausage Breakfast Sandwich 01/23: Eggs to Order & Hash browns 01/28: French Toast & Sausage Patty 01/30: Breakfast Pizza	
10	11 POPCORN CHICKEN OR FINGER STEAK MASHED & GRAVY CORN	12 SLUSHBURGER SUN CHIP	13 BUILD YOUR OWN PIZZA	14 PULLED PORK OR PHILLY STEAK BAKED BEANS COLESLAW	15	16
17	18 GOULASH PEAS BREAD	19 BUILD YOUR OWN BURGER CURLY FRIES	20 CRISPITO GRAVY RICE	21 CHICKEN NUGGETS OR FISH NUGGETS FRIES	22	23
24	25 PORK FRITTER ON A BUN FRIES	26 SWEET & SOUR OR TERIYAKI CHICKEN FRIED RICE FORTUNE COOKIE	27 SUPER NACHO	28 CHILI CHEESY BREAD-STICK	29 TATOR TOT HOTDISH GREEN BEANS BUN	30
31	HIGH FIVE MENU: BREAKFAST: NOTABLE (CEREAL, CRACKERS, JUICE) & MILK LUNCH: SANDWICH, CHIPS, FRUIT, VEGETABLE, MILK					

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER. MENU IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.
 WE OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE ENTRÉE CHOICE DAILY, ALONG WITH A COMPLETE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE BAR.