

ALEXANDER,
ND

COMET NEWS

VOLUME 10, ISSUE #10

MAY, 2021

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GRADUATION ISSUE

It's Been A Year...The Best & All the Rest The Comet News Staff

The school year has gone by fast, with some bumps along the way. With the multiple changes to the school, the year has been hard for many. No matter what happened, we did not let anything get in the way of what we knew we could accomplish.

Because of COVID 19, everyone was quarantined at one point after sports started. Even whole classes began getting quarantined. Floor space was measured out to make sure desks were 6 ft apart between students. This meant that students were no longer allowed to do group projects. In accordance with social distancing, elementary kids weren't allowed to participate in the Halloween trick-or-treat parade around the school. A month later, winter sports were postponed due to the pandemic. As the end of this crazy

year approaches, students are sad about having to say goodbye to so many staff members.

All the news this year hasn't been bad, though. Despite the volleyball team being quarantined, they still went on to tournaments. Unlike the volleyball team, the drama team did not get quarantined, and even went to state and came away with some top finishes. Another celebration was Homecoming, complete with dress up days and an outdoor dance. We all had fun decorating the halls and classroom doors for the occasion.

Once we actually started winter sports, the basketball season went well. The girls went to regionals and boys went to districts. Once the season was over, then came prom, which we

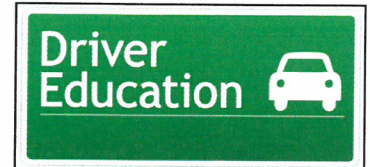
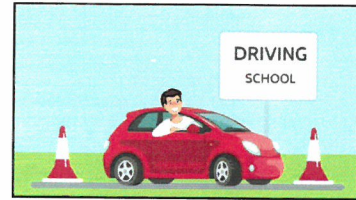
were thankful to have after last year's COVID cancellation. Around April, Tayla Ybarra and Brianna Yancey earned 2nd place at state speech, and the FTC team won 1st place at regionals. Not too long after, we had a spring concert in the gym, for which we were again grateful because we couldn't have a Christmas concert due to the pandemic restrictions.

Now all we have left is graduation. This event will take place in our old gym on Sunday, May 23 at 2 PM, and at this time, no attendance restrictions will be in place.

HAPPY SUMMER 2021!

Drivers' Ed Scheduled

This year's Drivers' Ed class is full. There are some pieces of information parents and students need to know. The Drivers' Ed class begins on August, 2, 2021. Each student can NOT miss a single class, or they will not pass. The driving lessons will begin on the first day. For the first time in our school, passing both the class and the behind-the-wheel tests will result in a certificate from the school, making the student exempt from taking the actual DMV Driving Test.



Staff Spotlight



Our school custodian, Shelley Hayes, is originally from Arizona. She has been in ND for almost seventeen years. Shelley Hayes worked at the Hi Way Lounge and Dakota West Credit Union before coming to work at the school. Shelley likes working here because she's "a clean freak." Shelley chose to work here because they sold their business, and Alexander had an employment opportunity.



One staff member you can find roaming the halls of our school is bus driver, Luke Holen. He originally worked in Williston, but moved to Alexander because his wife was from here. He likes working here because bus driving is a good job and he enjoys it. Originally from Walhalla, North Dakota, he has lived in Alexander for 10 years. His goals for the future include just continuing to do what he does.

Artist of the Month Zoe Beall

Henri Rousseau was born May 21, 1844 in Laval, France. He was said to be the model of a modern naïve artist. Rousseau often used rich colors and accurate details. He painted exuberant jungles, wild beasts, and exotic figures. In 1905, after exhibiting with Fauves, Rousseau even received admiration from original and experimental artists.

Before becoming an artist, Rousseau didn't finish his studies. Instead, he joined the military. During his 4 years of service, Rousseau was inspired by other soldiers' stories of the tropics. These stories turned

into artworks. Once released from the military, he got married and became a tax collector. Although he was busy with work and family, he still managed his time well so he could draw and paint.

In 1886, Henri Rousseau showcased his first paintings at a non-official Salon: Salon de Indépendants (gallery for beginner artists for no charge.) He exhibited around 20 of his artworks at this gallery.

A while later, Rousseau retired from tolling and tax collecting. He decided to use the new free time he found in retirement to create more art. In 1908, Rous-

seau's art was even honored in Picasso's Studio banquet.

Henri Rousseau died on September 2, 1910, but his reputation continued to grow.*

*Britannica.com



Mandrill in the Jungle



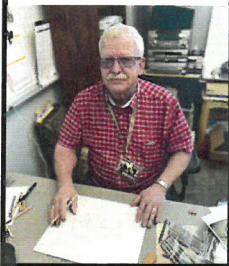
Self Portrait from L'île Louis Saint Louis



The Flamingoes

Farewell: Alexander Says Goodbye

Mr. Clark
5 years



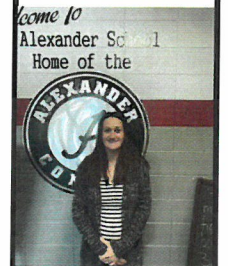
Dr. Gabbert
1 year



Mrs. Hall
10 years



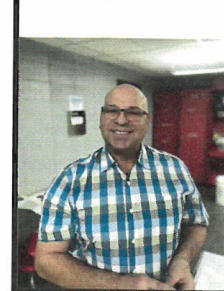
Ms. Bieber
6 1/2 years



Mrs. Heck
4 years



Mr. Mrachek
3 years



*Thank you
for your
years of
service to
the Alex
community
and good
luck!*

Answers With Eeyore Santos Riggs

Did you graduate this summer?

Well... I'm a donkey... so probably not.

Have you been working on your summer body?

I spend most of my summers inside. I like the cold, dullness of winter more, so no.

What are you doing this summer?

Cry about my life as Tigger hops around me trying to cheer me up...most likely.

What do you like most about the beach?

The sand. Sometimes, if I sit on the sand long enough, the warmth spreads to my heart and actually makes me feel...happy. Then I remember my tail is gone.



Tina's Green House

Tina's Greenhouse, located at **316 Richards Avenue East** in Alexander (across from the school's football field,) is officially slated for its Summer 2021 opening on May 20, but they have some goodies available right now!

Right now, Tina has veggies, as well as some perennials, hanging baskets, and 4-packs ready to go! She has petunias, spikes with red edges, and moss roses available immediately. Tina also has some 1-foot tall lodge pole and blue spruce trees available, as well!

Stop in to Tina's Greenhouse from 9 AM-7 PM (perhaps a bit longer if needed) any day of the week!



The Great Western Cattle Trail to Make Its Way Through the Area Presley Powell

The Great Western Cattle Trail is a trail that millions of cattle and horses were driven along during the 19th century, from 1870's through the 1890's. It began in Texas and ran north near present day Williston.

In Texas and Oklahoma, the historic trail has been marked every five or six miles with concrete obelisks. North Dakota has joined in the efforts, and is the third state to mark the trail.

In North Dakota, volunteers placed the markers from the South Dakota border to Belfield last summer. They are planning to finish the trail to Fort Buford the last weekend in June. To finish the trail, they need to mark a 100-mile plus stretch.

The first trail marker, placed by former NDSU President Jim Ozbun, was placed at the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame in Medora eight years ago. Ozbun's grandfather rode the Great Western Cattle Trail in the late 1800's as a drover. Ozbun is a key player in getting the trail marked in North Dakota.

Spots have already been committed from Belfield to Watford City. Work with ranchers and landowners to get markers on their property will begin in April. Land still needed for the trail is between Watford City to Williston.

The obelisks are made and have been donated by Dickinson Ready Mix. The organization responsible for the Great Western Cattle Trail is the Red Cloud Indian Agency.

Staff Spotlight



Ms. Bieber is the current Superintendent of Alexander Public School. Before joining us, she was the ITV Spanish teacher for north west North Dakota and north eastern Montana. She also taught at the collegiate level, teaching in colleges across the state. She worked as the elementary principal for Grenora before accepting her position here. Ms. Bieber chose Alexander because she has always liked it here, and had already worked here for 7-8 years previously. She loves being superintendent. She never has a boring moment, and says "There is no feeling in the world that compares to watching a student succeed." Her end goal is always student success. Ms. Bieber grew up in Sidney, Montana, but has lived in Alexander for 11 years total. Regarding her future goals, she always goes back to the school's original mission, "To promote student growth and improve work ethic." She states, "We are preparing kids to enter a world of unknown technological changes. The only way to prepare students for their futures is to teach work ethic, and expose students to as much as possible. Our goal for students is to sit behind a computer, fix what needs to be fixed, and still be able to put gloves on and go out into the working world."



We all know Terri Leiseth because, when you dump your tray, she's there to greet you, and she's also a jokester. Ms. Terri used to work at Badlands Hardware Store in Watford City. She chose Alexander because it fit perfectly with her schedule and it gave her time off in the summer. Ms. Terri does what she does because it was the easiest job in the kitchen. Originally from Watford City, Ms. Terri has lived here all her life. Ms. Terri has a goal and that is to help kids cheer up and to make kids happier at the start of their day.

My Favorite Recipe Arena Oian

E-Z Brownies

2 cups sugar
 2/3 cup oil
 4 eggs
 Pinch of salt
 1 1/2 cups flour
 1/2 cup cocoa
 2 tsp. vanilla
 1 cup chopped nuts
 (optional)

Mix all ingredients thoroughly in a large bowl. Pour into a greased 9x13 pan and bake for 20 minutes at 350 degrees. Cool, cut, and enjoy!

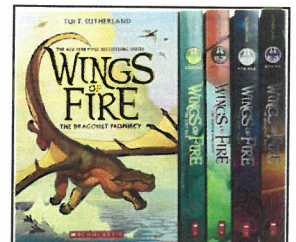
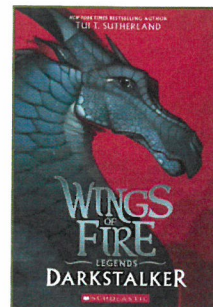
May Fun Fact Zoe Beall

“One of the earliest Mother’s Day celebrations was in Ancient Greece. The Greek would have spring celebrations of Rhea, the goddess of fertility, motherhood, and generation.”

*townandcountrymag.com

Book Recommendation Zoe Beall

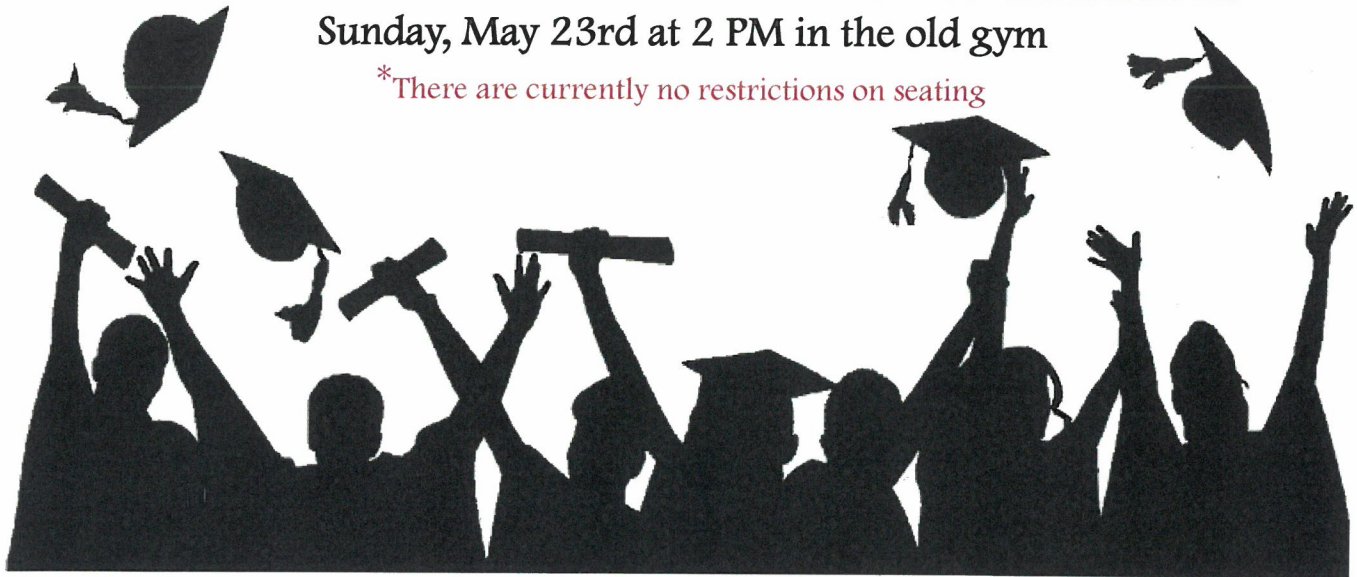
Do you ever want to sprout wings and fly away? Well, fly into this exciting series! *Wings of Fire* is filled with adventures among a group of dragons. Tui T. Sutherland’s ongoing novel series is great for those who love dragons, adventures, and reading! If you ever want to get into a good book series, I recommend *Wings of Fire* by Tui T. Sutherland.



~The Alexander Class Of 2021 Graduation~

Sunday, May 23rd at 2 PM in the old gym

*There are currently no restrictions on seating



DIY Summer Pest Remedies Arena Oian

Fly Trap Recipe

- 1 cup vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup stale fruit juice or alcohol

Mix together in a pitcher and pour into an old mayonnaise or pickle jar that has holes drilled in the lid large enough for a fly to fit through. Change out your traps when they become full and enjoy a fly-free summer!



Brandon Vigil Gets a Movie! Arena Oian

One of Alexander's very own eleventh grade students has landed a part in a movie.

Brandon Vigil of the junior class recently auditioned for, and secured, a part in the movie, "End of The Rope." The

film is about the last lynching to take place in North Dakota.

He heard about the movie audition from his dad who saw it on Facebook, and he auditioned that same day. Brandon is playing the role of a bul-

ly. Shooting for the movie starts this August.

Congratulations Brandon! Remember us when you're famous!

K9s visit Alex!



Pollinators!



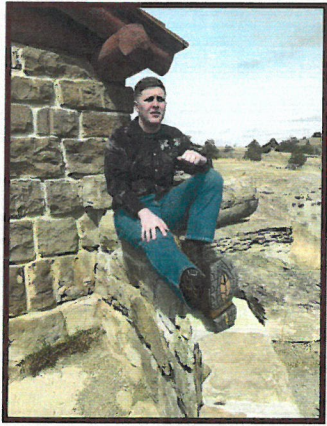
Alexander 3rd and 4th graders joined the McKenzie County chapter of *Pheasants Forever* in creating a pollinator habitat at Alexander's Lewis and Clark Trail Museum!



Summer Swim

Summer Swim lessons will be offered at the Fairview pool.

- Must possess individual or family pass
- Multiple sessions available
- First session: \$25; subsequent sessions: \$20
- Forms available on the Alex website
- Payment and completed form due to the Fairview pool May 28 (5pm-7pm) or May 29 (1pm-3pm)



Zechariah Albright

Biggest high school fail: Failing at flipping a tire

APS employee most connected with: Mrs. Rizzo because I have the most classes with her

Plans after high school: Joining the Navy and after, becoming a neurosurgeon

Advice to students in upcoming classes: Stay in school and don't do drugs

Funniest or happiest school

memory: Achieving the rank of Command Sergeant Major in the Junior Reserve Officer's Training Corps.

"When I left you, I was but a learner. Now, I am the master."—Darth Vader



David Brandenburg

Biggest high school fail: Breaking my collarbone on my first trip down the ski slope on a snowboard

APS employee most connected with: Mrs. Skurupey, because she pushed me to be a better student

Plans after high school: Go to Williston State College

Advice to students in upcoming classes: Have the best time in high school because you won't be able to do it again

Funniest or happiest school memory:

Winning the State Championship in football

"Improvise; Adapt; Overcome"—Bear Grylls



Tianna Dwyer

Biggest high school fail: Having a mental breakdown from a mouse climbing up my shirt

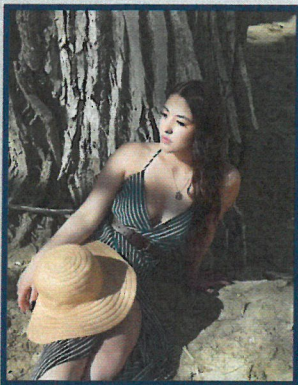
APS employee most connected with: Mr. Clark and Mrs. Hall, because I have always been able to talk to them and they have always been there for me.

Plans after high school: Attend Black Hill State University in exercise science. Then attend school for chiropractic

Advice to students in upcoming classes: Join as many clubs and activities as you can, that's where you'll meet lifelong friends

Funniest or happiest school memory: Won the battle between Jayden and I at the Turnquist Branding.

"You've got to have the heart of a lion and skin like a walrus." —Grandpa Tim



Kaileigh Johnson

Biggest high school fail: Being grounded all of high school

APS employee most connected with:

Miss. Jill, because she has great advice and is really funny

Advice to students in upcoming classes:

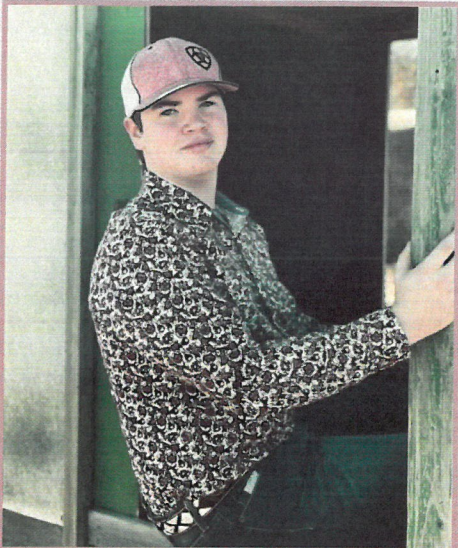
Don't make your teachers mad. You'll be fine.

Plans after high school: Moving to Bakersfield

Funniest or happiest school memory:

Walking to school with Angel and Arthur every morning

"Knowledge is provided, but only to those who need to know." —Kevin Gates



Drew LeBrun

Funniest or happiest school memory: Winning the Inspire Award.

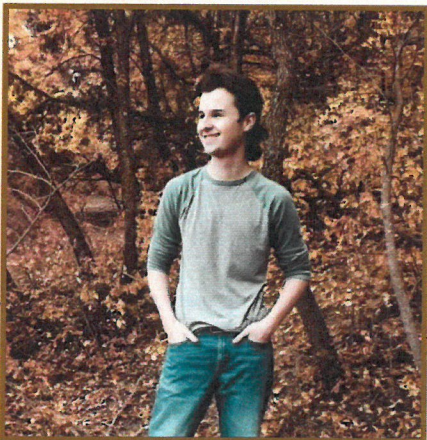
Biggest high school fail: Slipping and falling in the hallway.

APS employee most connected with: Mrs. White.

Advice to students in upcoming classes:
To respect your teachers and to behave during class.

Plans after high school: I plan on attending Williston State College to become an I.T or go into Cyber-Security.

"In the middle of every difficulty and challenge lies opportunity and a chance for self-growth."—Drew LeBrun ft. Albert Einstein



Bryce Luck

Biggest high school fail: getting a job, but never showing up.

APS employee most connected with: Mr. Clark, because he always checked up on how I was doing, and always stayed connected.

Advice to students in upcoming classes:
Do your work, senior year will go by so much faster by actually passing your classes.

Plans after high school: To become a welder

Funniest or happiest school memory: When Taytim and I dressed up in costumes and walked around the school all day with him.

"I should have done this sooner."—Bryce Luck



Bradyn Modine

Biggest high school fail: In the 9th grade I thought people got yeast infections from eating too much yeast products.

Funniest or happiest school memory: It was always fun to dominate in FTC at competitions. It was amazing to finally win a district game in basketball and win 6-Man State Championship in football. I was always happy when my teammates, coaches, peers, and teachers were happy.

Advice to students in upcoming classes:

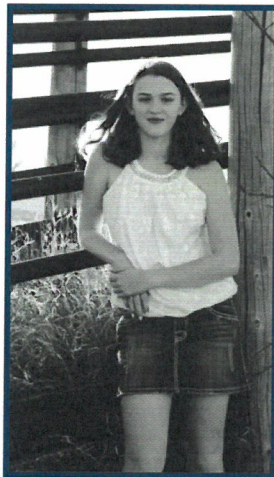
Do what you enjoy and do it well! Being happy and passionate about something is so important for yourself. Also, never give up. Start strong and finish stronger. A diploma is worth much more than a GED.

Plans after high school: I am going to AIT in Ft. Leonard Wood summer 2021, then to Williston State College for I.T. or Automation and Petroleum Engineering.

APS employee most connected

with: Mrs. White, Mr. Clark, Mrs. Hall, and Mrs. Skurupy because they were willing to talk and listen.

"If you can be good, try to be great; if you can't be great, just be good." —Grandpa Doug



Danielle Murphy

Biggest high school fail: Falling off a side walk.

APS employee most connected with: Mrs. Denowh, she is always reminding me that I can ask for help and she is always helping me.

Advice to students in upcoming classes:

Just be yourself, no matter what.

Plans after high school: Going back to Canada to learn photography.

Funniest or happiest school memory: Playing soccer in the rain.

"Leave Canada alone." —Danielle Murphy



Samantha Riggs

Biggest high school fail: I was swimming on a school trip and accidentally flashed my classmates on the way down the waterslide.

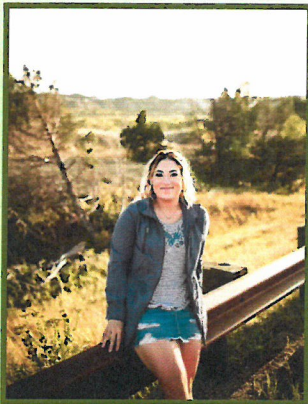
APS employee most connected with: Miss Jill, because she's a good listener and she has a great sense of humor.

Advice to students in upcoming classes:
Be nice to people.

Plans after high school: Go to college in Montana and major in Sociology and Political Science.

Funniest or happiest school memory: Earning a star at State Music Festival both freshman and sophomore year.

"No matter where life takes me, find me with a smile." —Mac Miller



Breanna Schooley

Biggest high school fail: My biggest high school fail is missing my last ever volleyball game from being quarantined the 4th time.

APS employee most connected with:
The APS employee I have connected with the most is Hankins because she makes an effort to make sure I smile and is always willing to talk.

Advice to students in upcoming classes:
I would tell upcoming students to make the most of every moment and do not wish the time away. The time truly does fly by.

Funniest or happiest school memory:
My funniest memory is walking down grand march cross-dressed with Taylor.

Plans after high school: After high school I plan to attend Williston State College generals and then Mayville for Early Childhood Development and then to open a daycare.

"Wanting to be someone else is a waste of who you are." —Kurt Cobain



Alex Sims

Biggest high school fail: The Drama play, *The Fruitcake*.

APS employee most connected with: Mrs. Huebner, because she is super nice and supportive.

Advice to students in upcoming classes: Don't try so hard to be liked or fit in. Hang out with people who make you happy. Don't feel obligated to hangout with people you don't want to be with.

Plans after high school: Attend Williston State to become a Sports and Rec Manager.

Funniest or happiest school memory: Prom, Job Fair at Williston State, and ganging up on Bradyn in class.

"Kindness is in our power, even when fondness is not." —Samuel Johnson



Corynna Turnquist

Biggest high school fail: Graduating with no idea how to pronounce the word "minimum."

APS employee most connected with: Mrs. Turnquist because she is my mom.

Advice to students in upcoming classes: What comes around, goes around.

Plans after high school: Attend the University of Mary to become a physical therapist.

Funniest or happiest school memory: Mrs. Monson chased me down the hallway to the gym to my dad who was coaching the wrestling team because I hid her dancing flower pot.

"I do remember, but sometimes when I try to remember, I forget." —Winnie the Pooh



Juli White

Biggest high school fail: Not avoiding Payden, David, and Bryce at the Big Mess, and getting ambushed by water balloons.

APS employee most connected with:

I connected with Mrs. Skurupey the most because she was my teacher before teaching our class and she knows more about how I learn best and would help me.

Plans after high school: To go to college in Williston.

Funniest or happiest school memory:

Winning the Inspire Award my Junior year in FTC.

Advice to students in upcoming classes:

Just keep pushing through, things get hard, you got this.

"Strength doesn't come from what you can do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you couldn't." —Eeyore



Brianna Yancey

Biggest high school fail: The parent teacher conference where my dad insulted one of my teachers without realizing it.

Funniest or happiest school memory:

I would say either making it to State Speech for the first time with Tayla in 8th grade, or Friendsgiving.

APS employee most connected with:

I think I connected with Mrs. Hankins the most because she was always kind and helped me through a lot.

Plans after high school: I plan to attend Southwestern Oregon Community College, majoring in Hospitality and Tourism Management.

Advice to students in upcoming classes:

"You're not here for a long time, you're here for a good time."

"For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction." —Sir Isaac Newton

CITY OF ALEXANDER

CITY WIDE CLEAN-UP DAYS

May 21st – June 7th, 2021



Dumpster location will be
on the South end of town
on Bruegger St.

If you have any questions, please
call City Hall at 701-828-3461



SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE:

Every year I think how fast the year has gone by and I am mindful of the saying that the days are long but the years fly by. The kids who were in preschool my first year as the Superintendent at APS will be entering the high school next year!

As we close out the 2020-2021 school year, let us reflect on the year and the many reasons I am thankful to be a part of this great Comet Family!

- The first few days of school after being shut down for over FOUR months. The excitement in the air was amazing! Friends reunited, staff reunited, teachers and students reunited....no words could describe the positive energy in the air.
- The heartache of the first quarantines was so sad and many tears were shed and fear started to seep throughout the hallways. Students held their breath when they saw the dreaded measuring tape or being called out of the classroom.
- The excitement of the holidays and very few quarantines!
- The mask mandate.....THE JOY OF THE END OF THE MASK MANDATE!
- The warm weather throughout the year and very few inside recesses!
- The success of exiting the building in less than one minute for a fire drill and only 45 seconds to reach a safe place for a tornado drill!
- Football move from 6 man to 9 man!
- No canceled extracurricular activities!
- 100% return to normal!
- Face to face school all year, no hybrid, no missed days, no cancellations!
- Mrs. Spildie receiving a clean bill of health and cancer in remission!
- Marriage, Engagements, Babies!
- The completion of the new and beautiful Vo-Ag Building nicknamed, Nettitopia!
- The good mornings, the smiles, the thousands of successes that occur daily!
- The goodbyes to staff dear to our hearts, we feel thankful that they were a part of our Comet family!

Last but not least:

- Congratulations and Good Luck to our Graduation Class of 2021!

Thank you to all of the staff for coming together and making this year a great year! Thank you to all of the parents and community members for all of the support throughout this unprecedented year! Thank you to all students: once again you have proven to be the best in the west, and the former motto of the Alexander School is correct. "Alex kids are #1!"

Enjoy the summer and see you August!