

# Connections

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER FOR GRAND TRAVERSE ACADEMY FAMILIES

## Dates to remember

**Friday & Saturday, May 12 & 13** – *Drama Club Production, 7:00 pm on Friday/2:00 pm on Saturday, Big Gym (see details below)*

**Tuesday, May 16** – *Spring Choir Concert, 7:00 pm, Big Gym (see details below)*

**Thursday, May 18** – *Spring Band Concert, 6:30 pm, Big Gym (see details below)*

**Friday, May 19** – *Young Explorers Music Informance, 11:00 am, Elementary Music Room*

## Drama Club presents play tonight, tomorrow

Secondary Drama Club members will present this



hilarious  
“whodunit”  
play  
tonight,  
**Friday, May 12 at 7:00 pm** and  
**tomorrow, Saturday,**

**May 13 at 2:00 pm in the Big Gym.** Admission is just \$3 at the door and the doors open 45 minutes prior to the performances. We hope to see you there!

## Save the dates: Band and choir performances scheduled

**Spring Choir Concert.** The Elementary, Mustang and Chamber Choirs will perform on **Tuesday, May 16 at 7:00 pm in the Big Gym.** Admission is free and the event is open to the public.

**Spring Band Concert.** Students in the Cadet Band, Concert Band, Varsity Band and Symphony Winds will play on **Thursday, May 18 at 6:30 pm in the Big Gym.**

The event will include the annual band awards during the high school performance. Admission is free and the event is open to the public.

## NHS elects officers

Congratulations to the following students, who were elected as officers of Grand Traverse Academy’s National Honor Society for the 2023-24 school year:

**President – Sam Larson**  
**Vice President – Alleah Dix**  
**Secretary – Jonah Novak**  
**Treasurer – Tristan Bembeneck**

National Honor Society membership is open by invitation to high school students in grades 10-12 who earned a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.0 the previous year. Once accepted, they are expected to maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA, attend meetings and participate in NHS volunteer activities in order to retain their membership.

## Freshmen participate in MiCareer Quest

GTA 9<sup>th</sup> graders took a trip to the MiCareerQuest career



readiness event at the Grand Traverse County Civic Center on

Thursday of this week. It was hosted by the Michigan Works! Association and allowed students to explore many different job opportunities in our area, including public service, construction, health sciences and more!



## Host home needed for foreign exchange student

Guy, a high school student from Spain, is excited for the opportunity to participate in foreign exchange program but needs a host home. He is active, sociable and family oriented and can't wait to experience school spirit! He enjoys cycling, going to the gym and hiking with his scouting group. Once in the US, he is interested in participating on a swim team and trying American football. He is close to his younger brother, so he hopes to have a host sibling during his stay. Guy is a good student, conscientious about his grades and is interested in medicine as a career. He also speaks four languages. If you are interested in hosting Guy or getting more information, please contact Mrs. VanHouzen at [vanhouzenm@mygta.us](mailto:vanhouzenm@mygta.us). Parents of both elementary and secondary students are welcome to host.



## 2024 Washington, DC trip in the works

GTA 8<sup>th</sup> graders (and their parents) who are interested



in touring our nation's capital and the Civil War battlefields in the spring of 2024 are invited [to follow this link](#) to view the full itinerary. This trip is offered to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class each year and we love to have as many students as possible take advantage of the opportunity! Questions may be directed to Mrs. VanHouzen at [vanhouzenm@mygta.us](mailto:vanhouzenm@mygta.us).

## Cherry Festival royalty announced

Congratulations to 1<sup>st</sup> graders **Joel Diephouse** and



**Emma Rasmussen**, who will represent GTA on our float in this year's National Cherry Festival parades. This year's Community Royale parade celebrates "75

Years of Junior Royalty," and each school has a theme from the past. Ours is Michigan Authors. Planning for our float is underway and volunteers are welcome to help with construction between June 13 and 30. Send your contact information to Stephanie Diephouse at [diephouses@mygta.us](mailto:diephouses@mygta.us) or (231) 649-8268.

## Instrument fittings planned

GTA students who are currently in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades are invited to learn to play a musical instrument by joining the Elementary Band for the 2023-24 school year. To help them prepare, middle elementary students will attend a special concert presented by 8<sup>th</sup> grade band students, where they'll see and listen to the various instruments available to them in our band program. On **May 26, 30 and 31** (during school hours) Mr. Floering and Mrs. Diephouse will provide "fittings" to help you and your child select one they are interested in playing and is well-suited for their success. Details and a permission slip are attached to this newsletter. Please complete and return the permission slip by **Friday, May 19** if they would like to participate.

## Credit Recovery Summer School available

High school students have the opportunity to recover credit for classes in which they earned less than a "C" for a final grade. Each of two, two-week sessions allow for recovery of one-half credit, for a total of one credit if both sessions are taken. Classes meet Monday-Thursday from 8:30 am-12:00 pm. The cost is \$175 per two-week session (see session dates on the form below). A completed [registration form](#), along with a \$100 deposit, is due by June 10, with the balance due on the first day of the summer school session.

## Summer tutors available

Each summer, some of our teachers are available to tutor students who may need a little extra help in a subject or two or don't want to lose ground over the summer. Fees and locations are to be arranged between parents and teachers. Be sure to watch this space, as more may be added as the end of the school year approaches.



**Ben Whipple** - [bwhips@gmail.com](mailto:bwhips@gmail.com)

GTA School Wide Guest Teacher  
Math (except calculus) for Grades 5-12  
English Language Arts for Grades 7-12

**Mason Thomas** - [thomasm@mygta.us](mailto:thomasm@mygta.us)

GTA Upper Elementary Teacher  
Math & Reading Tutoring for Grades K-6

**Elise Ballinger** - [ballingere@mygta.us](mailto:ballingere@mygta.us)

Certified Teacher/GTA Reading Interventionist  
Reading Tutoring for Grades K-4

## Preschool/Elementary Field Day coming!

Our Elementary Physical Education department is busy planning 2023 Field Day, scheduled for **June 6 and 7**. This fun outdoor event is one that our students look forward to! Attached is information about donation opportunities.

Grades	Date	Time
Preschool & Kindergarten	Tuesday, June 6	9:30-11:30 am
Grades 1 & 2	Wednesday, June 7	1:00-3:00 pm
Grades 3 & 4	Wednesday, June 7	9:30-11:30 am
Grades 5 & 6	Tuesday, June 6	1:00-3:00 pm

If you have time to spare on either of these days, a few volunteers are still needed (especially for Grades 5 & 6 on June 6 at 12:45 pm). Follow [this link](#) to choose a day and time to volunteer at Field Day (click on the tabs at the bottom of the form to choose a grade level). Please contact [Mrs. Kline](#) or [Mr. Dix](#) with any questions.

## School absences or late arrivals

If your child will be late for school or absent for the day, please notify the office by 8:30 am. Parents will be called to verify any unexcused absences after that time.

**Elementary 995-0665 / Secondary 932-6038**

## GTA offers online reporting tool

We are pleased to announce that Grand Traverse



**STOPit**

Academy has joined forces with STOPit Solutions to offer an online reporting tool designed to deter and mitigate bullying, cyber abuse and other at-risk behaviors and actions before they escalate. STOPit provides students and parents access to the STOPit mobile app to make anonymous reports designed to alert school administrators to issues of concern. Privacy of student data is a priority. We encourage all parents to read the attached flyer, view the STOPit training video and download the app with your family today. Questions may be directed to [Mrs. VanHouzen](#), [Mrs. Patrzik](#) or [Mrs. Floering](#).

## Coffee's on!

Mr. Thomas' Upper Elementary class has been selling coffee from the Leelanau Coffee Roasting Company to help fund their classroom activities, field trips and resources. The coffee comes in 12-oz. bags and is available in Regular and Decaffeinated, Whole Bean and Ground. **Orders are due on Friday, June 2** and will be delivered the following week. See the attached order form for details and to place your order. They thank you for your support!

## Last chance to make nominations for Simply the Best!

Nominations for the Record-Eagle's Simply the Best



2023 are underway. Grand Traverse Academy is in the running for Best School and several of our teachers have

been nominated for Best Teacher. If you are so inclined, we invite you to visit <https://www.record-eagle.com/siplythebest> and cast your votes in support of Grand Traverse Academy. Best School and Best Teacher can be found under the Children, Family & Education category. **Note: You may nominate an individual or organization once per day until May 14.** (If you submit at least 25 nominations, you might be one of three lucky winners to receive a \$100 Downtown



Traverse City gift certificate!) Voting for the top three nominees in each subcategory will run from May 22-July 30 and winners will be announced in September.

## STEM activities available for area youth

Newton's Road, a local nonprofit organization, offers a



NEWTON'S  
ROAD

multitude of resources for students interested in science, technology, engineering and math. Find

them [here](#) to learn about Stem experiences, careers and more, or check out their [events calendar](#) for activities in the Traverse City area that might appeal to your children.

### Ongoing events

**Med Club Muffin Sales (Secondary)** – Every Monday from 7:45-8:00 am, \$2.00 each for several varieties, Multi-Purpose Room

**Sophomore Class Bagel Sales** – Every Wednesday from 7:40-8:00 am, \$2.00 each for several varieties, Multipurpose Room 4 and the Intention Room (Mrs. VanHouzen's office)

**Elementary Pizza Days** – Every other Wednesday as follows: May 24 (order and pay by the preceding Monday using forms sent home on off weeks), \$1.50 per slice of pepperoni or cheese

**Secondary Pizza Days** – Every Thursday (order and pay by Tuesdays using forms provided in Advisory classrooms), \$1.50 per slice of cheese or pepperoni

**NHS Secondary Doughnut Sales** – Every Friday in Multipurpose Rooms 1 & 2, 7:40-8:00 am, \$2 each for several varieties

**Secondary Beverage Sales** – Monday-Thursday at Lunch in Bronze 1, \$1.50 each for Snapple fruit drinks

**Fill the Pantry Jeans Day** – Thursday, May 25 (\$2 per person to wear jeans with a uniform top)



Hello future 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade parents,

We would like to extend an invitation to your son/daughter to join elementary band for the 2023-2024 school year! All students in 5th and 6th grades have the opportunity to join band at GTA. To help your child prepare for this, middle elementary students will attend a special concert presented by the 8th grade band students. At this concert they will be able to see and listen to the different instruments that are available for students to play in our band program.

On May 26<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup> (during school hours) Mr. Floering and Mrs. Diephouse will be providing “fittings” to help you and your child select an instrument that they are interested in playing and that is also well suited for them to be successful. You will receive a letter with which instrument(s) best suit them along with options for purchasing or renting an instrument. Your child may already know what instrument they would like to play, but we recommend having a couple instruments in mind so that they can try a couple and choose the instrument that physically fits them the best. **Please return the attached permission slip to have your child participate in instrument fittings.**

We recommend families consider renting an instrument from Marshall Music to help ensure that students are able to learn to play with a quality functional instrument. Instrument rental costs range from \$30-\$85 a month, depending on the instrument. More information about Marshall Music’s rental program can be found on their website at [www.marshallmusic.com/rentals](http://www.marshallmusic.com/rentals). This program is rent-to-own, so each monthly payment is applied to the total cost of purchasing the instrument. If you decide to purchase a used instrument, it is wise to have it inspected by Marshall Music so that any repairs can be made before school starts.

Be aware that instruments that you find in “big box” stores and stores that are not music stores are not acceptable band instruments. In addition, any instrument that is green, blue, purple, red, or any other color other than natural metal or wood colors are frustrating for beginners because they were not designed to last. Also, if you find an instrument on ebay or the internet, please call or email one of us so we can help advise you on brands. Many of the inexpensive models on the internet advertise as real student instruments, however, they do not work for the students.

**Students must have a band instrument and Standard of Excellence Book 1 by Monday September 18, 2023 in order to participate in the 2023-2024 elementary band program.**

*Please consider your options for an instrument and financially plan for it. We have just a few school owned instruments available in cases of financial hardship. However, we encourage families to work with their children and find areas to cut back to make an instrument possible. When a child is willing to work or sacrifice for it, they will usually take the privilege more seriously and you’ll see great results!*

If you have any questions about the elementary band program, instrument fittings, or instrument rental options you may contact Mr. Floering or Mrs. Diephouse.

Musically yours,

Stephanie Diephouse, Elementary Band/Music  
(231) 932-6034 or [diephouses@mygta.us](mailto:diephouses@mygta.us)

Glenn Floering, Director of Bands  
(231) 932-6031 or [floeringg@mygta.us](mailto:floeringg@mygta.us)

**Please return by Friday May 19, 2023 to participate in the instrument fittings**

**Yes! We are interested in signing up for *Elementary Band* for the 2023-2024 school year!**

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*Student's First and Last Name*

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*Grade in the Fall*

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*Current Homeroom Teacher*

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*Parent's Name & Phone Number*

***Questions?***

***Please contact either Mrs. Diephouse or Mr. Floering***

**Stephanie Diephouse:**      diephouses@mygta.us (231) 932-6034

**Glenn Floering:**              floeringg@mygta.us (231) 932-6031



# GTA Field Day!



Dear Parent(s) or Guardian,

We have our dates for Field Day down! Every year, the students look forward to this day. Below is the scheduled event by grade level. We have attached the Donation and T-shirt form.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you would like to volunteer for Field Day as well!

<p>Who: Preschool &amp; Kindergarten</p> <p>Where: GTA North Field</p> <p>When: Tuesday, June 6</p> <p>9:30-11:30am</p>	<p>Who: 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</p> <p>Where: GTA North Field</p> <p>When: Wednesday, June 7</p> <p>1:00 – 3:00 pm</p>	<p>Who: 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Grade</p> <p>Where: GTA North Field</p> <p>When: Wednesday, June 7</p> <p>9:30 - 11:30 am</p>	<p>Who: 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Grade</p> <p>Where: GTA North Field</p> <p>When: Tuesday, June 6</p> <p>1:00-3:00pm</p>
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## Donation Form

Supplies &/or Donations needed: Please indicate how many on the blank space you plan to donate!  
(Items Due May 31)

\_\_\_\_\_ 15 Burlap Sacks \_\_\_\_\_ 100 Yellow Car Sponges \_\_\_\_\_ 1,000 Ice pops \_\_\_\_\_ 1,000 Water Balloons  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 10 5 gallon buckets, \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Junior Footballs \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Kiddie Pools \_\_\_\_\_ 20 18" PVC Traffic Cones  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_ Monetary Donation towards extra T-shirts or Supplies

## T-Shirt Order Form (Due May 10)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Qty.) T-shirt size for my student

Cost: **\$9.00 each** (Please circle shirt size.) If writing a check please make payable to: GTA

YS YM YL YXL AS AM AL AXL A2XL (\$2 more)



Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you again for your donations and support. We are looking forward to giving these kids all the fun they deserve! Mr. Dix & Mrs. Kline

Dear Parent/Guardian,

We are pleased to announce that our school has enrolled with STOPit, by STOPit Solutions

**STOPit** is an online reporting tool designed to deter and mitigate bullying, cyber abuse, and other inappropriate behaviors, consisting of an app and a back-end incident management system for school administrators.

Our students will have access to the STOPit mobile app, which has two simple but powerful features.

Specifically, the program educates students to:

- Recognize the signs of at-risk behaviors
- Take every sign and signal seriously
- Report it anonymously through STOPit App/Web or 24/7 Incident Response Center
- Submit photo or video evidence (App/Web Only)
- Alert designated administrators to issues and risks early, before they escalate

**No personal information is needed to use STOPit.** The only way personally identifiable information will be accessible through STOPit is if a requester voluntarily includes it within the content of a request or message.

Both our school and STOPit are committed to protecting the privacy of student data. STOPit is a signatory to the [Student Privacy Pledge](#), spearheaded by the Future of Privacy Forum and the Software & Information Industry Association. You may review STOPit's [Privacy Policy](#) for details, including more information on how anonymous reporting works.

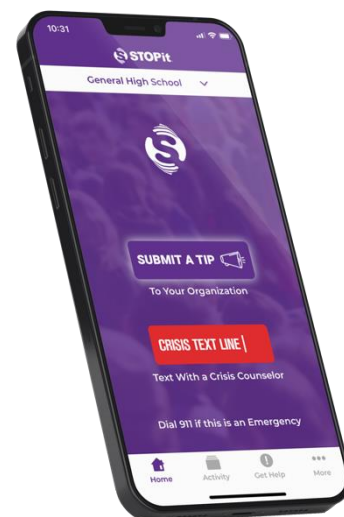
Students have the power to help put an end to harmful and inappropriate behavior they see online through social media and other means. They can use STOPit to reach out for help if they or a peer are facing a personal crisis or experiencing bullying, abuse, or are otherwise in need of assistance. Our goal with STOPit is to create safer, kinder, school communities both online and off.

We encourage you to download the STOPit app and search for your students' school using the directory. You can privately ask for help for your student, family, others you care about, or even acquaintances who appear to need help. For a video on how to use STOPit, go to: [Student Training Video](#).

Together, we can make sure everyone in our community gets what they need to thrive. Thank you!

Mindy VanHouzen

Dean of Students







Mr. Thomas' Upper Elementary class is selling coffee from the Leelanau Coffee Roasting Company to help fund their classroom activities, field trips, and resources this year! The coffee comes in 12-oz. bags and is available in Regular and Decaffeinated, Whole Bean and Ground. Orders are due on Friday, June 2nd and will be delivered the following week. Prices are \$13 for Regular and \$14 for Decaf. Thank you for your support!

	Whole Bean	Ground
Bakery Blend	_____	_____
Bakery Blend Decaf	_____	_____
GTA Blend	_____	_____
GTA Blend Decaf	_____	_____
French Roast	_____	_____
French Roast Decaf	_____	_____
Hazelnut	_____	_____
Hazelnut Decaf	_____	_____
Caramel & Pralines	_____	_____
Caramel & Pralines Decaf	_____	_____
Chocolate Cherry Festival	_____	_____
Chocolate Cherry Festival Decaf	_____	_____

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Student's Teacher \_\_\_\_\_