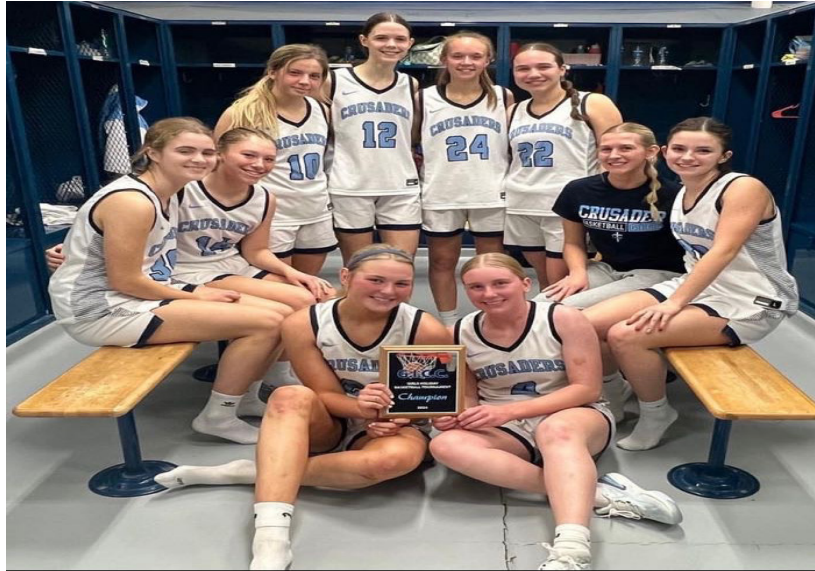


Girls Basketball Wins Holiday Tournament



A photo of the Girls basketball team posing with the plaque they earned when they won the Girls basketball Holiday Tournament. Photo courtesy of gicc.girlsbasketball on Instagram

by Julia Messere

The Crusader Girls basketball team won the Holiday Tournament on December 31, 2023. Basketball heavily relies on the athletes' ability to work together, and the Crusaders showcased their abilities at this game.

"My thoughts going into this tournament were positive. This year's team is so special in that our chemistry is unmatched. I think this is our strongest asset. That and we all can come together and are equally all a threat." O'Boyle mentioned.

The bond needed to play on a higher level is only obtainable through time and trust. The girls have been willing to rely on their teammates for the entire team's success, not just feel the win is dependent on themselves. Each tournament consists of challenges that the team,

as a whole, has to face. Most times, the challenges that are faced are different. The main challenge that the team faced in this tournament was a mental block. The team could not practice for a few days due to the moratorium. Typically, they practice every weekday but could not due to the moratorium. They were able to get in a few practices before, with open gyms.

"This tournament was different in that we had just been on Christmas break, and it seemed that we barely had any practice before we played," O'Boyle stated.

Despite this disadvantage, the Crusaders turned out victorious. Tournaments help give teams insight into their strengths and weaknesses compared to other teams in the surrounding areas. Tournaments are

vital for teams to continue improving and help them stay competitive and strong.

"Our strength during this tournament was moving the ball well against Minden, who were forcing us to play a zone offense, and soon our ball movement forced them into a different defense. Our weakness, however, was pushing through the mental portion because we convinced ourselves we were tired after coming off a couple of days break." O'Boyle declared.

The team was content with their performance and looked forward to continued success throughout the season.

Winter Ball Royalty

by Sheridan Puchar

With the start of the new semester, GICC's annual Winter Ball dance comes around. This year's dance was held on January 13th in the Schumann Gym. Every year the senior class votes on Winter Ball royalty candidates, five boys and five girls. The candidates for king at this year's dance were: Damian Glass (12), Isaac Henry (12), Jack Hulinsky (12), Victor Castellanos (12), and Nico Kiewald (12). The candidates for queen at this year's dance were: Carolyn Maser (12), Kate Novinski (12), Avery O'Boyle (12), Allison Haney (12), and Madison Schenider (12).

Once the court is chosen, a poll is sent out to the rest of the student body to decide on the king and queen. Once the votes are tallied up, the king and queen are crowned at the beginning of the dance. The 2024 Winter Ball king was Victor Castellanos and the queen was Allison Haney.

"I was surprised to find out I had won Winter Ball Queen. I really wasn't expecting to win," Haney stated. Castellanos shared that his reaction was similar,

"I was surprised but also thought it was pretty cool," Castellanos said.

There are many different pre-dance festivities that students take part in such as taking pictures and going out to eat. Castellanos and Haney were no exception to this tradition.

"[Victor and I] ate at Texas Roadhouse and we went with Morgan Schulte (12) and Nico Kiewald and it



A photo of Victor Castellanos (12) and Allison Haney (12) posing after they were awarded the titles of Winter Ball King and Queen.

was fun," Haney explained.

Many people have favorite songs they play at the dance or a favorite part of the night. As seniors, Castellanos and Haney have been through their fair share of dances.

"I enjoyed spending time with the

boys," Castellanos mentioned.

"I think all winter ball dances are pretty comparable so it's hard to pick a favorite one," Haney shared.

Exchange Student Travels the States

by Lexi Puncochar



their families over the break. Some go to the warm and tropical beaches of the Southern coast and others go to the Mountain-filled Midwest to enjoy cold weather activities. Foreign exchange student Joana Valencia (10) went on a trip to Las Vegas where she met with her family and got to experience more of the United States.

“I went to Las Vegas, Nevada to visit the city and we also went to the Grand Canyon to visit a little more of America.” Valencia states.

It had been about five months since Joana had first left Spain to attend school in America. Although she had made many friends and had a great host family, she still missed her home, so she was very excited to see her family again and speak her native language.

“It felt so good to be able to speak my language and be able to feel that

feeling of familiarity with my parents again. I missed them a lot and I think I was really lucky that they could come to visit me after being apart for so long.” Valencia expresses.

Las Vegas was a great trip for Valencia and her Family. She got to spend time with her parents while exploring a whole new place. Las Vegas has many different activities, types of food, and even has locations to learn about different cultures.

“Las Vegas was a great experience. It was a bit overwhelming because everything is so artificial that it shocked me, but it was also really impressive and it was worth the trip. We were there for 3 days, and that was more than enough.” Valencia explains.

Valencia tried to spend as much time as possible with her family by experiencing everything she could along side her family. Additionally, she was excited to introduce her family to all the new people in her.

“We spent Christmas with my host family and my parents got to know all the new people in my life and they got to visit Grand Island.” Valencia states.

Christmas break was a time students got to relax and hang out with their friends stress free. Many of the students here at GICC went on vacation with



BTS Enlists

by Harrison McClure

BTS finds themselves at the forefront of world-wide news as they are on hiatus due to a mandatory enlistment under South Korean law. For the U.S., mandatory enlistment hasn't been a requirement since the Vietnam war. Although, there is a huge difference between a draft and mandatory enlistment. Mandatory military involvement can have a large effect on the economy of a country. The required participation of all of the member of BTS means that fans will not be able to attend concerts and generate revenue for an extended period of time.

One of the biggest factors in economic wealth is the entertainment industry, which creates job opportunities for everybody in the community. The involvement of different fields that contribute to the music industry alone is staggering. Musical artists write the song, producers direct the production of a music project, and a sound engineer takes care of the equipment and records. All of these jobs are necessary for creating just one piece of music, but what you have to keep

in mind is that these occupations also exist in other entertainment genres.

Jobs aren't the only factor that makes the entertainment industry a pillar that supports the economy. According to HYBE, the owners of BTS, BTS has gained 1.32 trillion KRW (South Korea won) which is equivalent to 1 billion USD. All of this revenue came in only 6 months, making it one of the highest grossing pop group in less than a year.

However, these massive financial accomplishments would not be possible without the ARMY - the BTS fanbase. Much like how people who are fans of Taylor Swift are called Swifties, BTS fans are called ARMY. The BTS ARMY is comprised of millions of people from around the world, with 318,000 people having attended the latest BTS concert.

According to PINKVILLA, the BTS ARMY helped set a record accumulating over 50 million USD during his concert.

It is clear that BTS has not only effected the economy but also those around the world

like the BTS ARMY. The members of BTS regularly interact with their fans on Weverse. To say goodbye, one of the members of BTS on their last day said this to all of his fans.

"See you in the future.

Love you lots,"

R.M. (Rap Monster) stated.



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Holding Out till the End

by David Sambula-Monzalvo

The boy's wrestling season is winding down to an end. The exhausting conditioning, grueling practices, and unforgiving soreness will soon be finished, and the wrestlers will be getting a long break until next season. With the time of the winter sports season coming to an end, the athletes are thinking about how they did, whether they're new to the sport or have been doing it for a good part of their lives, a successful season is what everyone hopes for. For Spencer Wiens (11) it seems like he got a satisfying ending this year.

"Since the start of the season, I have made improvements in several different areas. Mostly though I think I've gotten better at [following]. Once I'm on top of that kid I don't let him go," Wiens explained.

It's Wien's second year of wrestling since starting as a sophomore, and it's been an enjoyable experience for the time he's been in it. He started wrestling with confidence in himself, slight nudges from the coach, and thinking that there was nothing to lose in trying something new. To him, there were only things to gain.

"The best part of wrestling is the shape you will be in. Great strength, endurance, and

speed," Wiens expressed.

Even with all the confidence you can muster, wrestling is still a sport that is extremely difficult to compete in. According to ESPN, wrestling is the fifth most difficult sport, and with good reason. Wrestlers have to keep track of their weight, work on their technique, explosiveness, and strength to be able to overpower their opponents.

"The hardest part of wrestling, I say, is the mental aspects. If you win or lose, it's all on you. There is no team to blame failures on. It's all about how hard you worked in practice," Wiens stated.

With such a hard sport, you have to prepare yourself before it's your time to get on the mat and go against your opponent. With no preparation, there is a high chance that you aren't

going to be able to perform to the best of your ability..

"Before my matches, I try to get up and get loose about 20 minutes before. I'll put my headphones on and start getting warmed up," Wiens shared.



Spencer Wiens (11)

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Any and all submissions must be signed to be considered for publication, and the editor reserves the right to edit or print any submissions.