

HILITES



**DECLARE THE GLORY
OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS**
Celebrating 75 Years

WINTER 2026



CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 2 Blood Drive
- 2 Music Booster Soup Supper @ 5:00-7:00 PM
- 11 Band Concert (SCHS, BCCS, LCS) @ 7:00 PM
- 17-20 Winterfest Week

MARCH

- 5-7 Musical *Seussical*

APRIL

- 17-18 Scrap Metal Drive
- 22 Orchestra Concert @ 7:00 PM
- 27 Blood Drive

MAY

- 1 Grandparents/Grandfriends Day
- 2 *Strong Foundations* 5K Run/Walk
- 3 Choir Concert (All Choirs) @ 2:00 PM
- 3 Band Concert @ 7:00 PM
- 6 Society Meeting @ 7:00 PM
- 21 Graduation @ 7:00 PM

JUNE

- 6 VanDyke and VanStee Memorial Golf Outing – Thornapple Pointe
- 29-30 Golf Trip Fundraiser – Payne’s Valley Resort

Please refer to the 2025-26 Events School Calendar on our website for more information.
www.schs.org

On the Cover: Sunset drone photo, courtesy of Marc VanderMaas

The South Christian HiLites publication is produced two times per year.

SCHS is an equal opportunity institution. SCHS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, sex, or physical/mental handicap in its educational programming and activities, including enrollment, employment, and contracting.

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P. 616.455.3210
E. office@schs.org



Friday & Saturday, April 17-18, 2026

Put your old scraps to good use!
Metals (steel, aluminum, copper, brass, etc.),
tired appliances (washing machines, dryers,
water heaters, etc.), worn-out farm equipment,
used car and equipment batteries, electric wiring,
stripped or unstripped copper wire, tools, old cars,
and more.

Proceeds will benefit Tuition Assistance.

ANNUAL SOCIETY MEETING

Wednesday, May 6, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

Please join us to vote for new Board members
and the proposed budget for 2026-2027.

In April, you may visit our website (schs.org) to
review the nominees and financials.

Save the Date

SOUTH CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

75th Anniversary GALA

10 • 24 • 26



FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS

1000 East Beltline Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525

More Details to Come Soon

DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

Celebrating 75 Years

WELCOME TO A SPECIAL EDITION OF THE HILITES!

This is an exciting year in the history of South Christian High School as we celebrate our 75th anniversary. While the school didn't open its doors until 1954, our story of obedience and stewardship traces back to 1951. That story, along with several others, are contained here for you to enjoy.

We have a number of exciting things in the works to celebrate this year, culminating in our 75th Anniversary Gala on October 24, 2026. I hope you'll save the date and join us in celebrating God's faithfulness that night.

As we celebrate, I also keep in mind the next 75 years. The faithful prayers and generosity of those before us serve as both an inspiration and an example of how to steward this place so that future generations can be equipped to live Christ-centered lives and serve God to their greatest potential. Thank you for the role you play in our mission.

In Christ,

Aaron Meckes

Head of School

BOARD UPDATES

God is good. The traditional response to that call in worship liturgy is "All the time, God is good." We know this to be true, yet it can be difficult to proclaim it wholeheartedly immediately after tragedies such as those that had taken place in our tight-knit community last summer. Pastor Chuck Swanson shared a powerful message at the Back-to-School Night of Worship, reminding us to embrace lament as we work through grief, give space to those grieving around us, and continue to be the incredibly supportive community that we are. There was much more included in his heartfelt message. It is such a blessing to see our (and the broader) community of believers come together to be the hands of Jesus while supporting each other, family, friends, faculty, and students.

God is faithful. In the midst of our grief, our community has a number of examples of God's continued faithfulness to celebrate as we started the new school year.

These include:

- The largest freshmen class in SCHS history at 231 students!

- A completed new addition that adds needed classrooms, brings the English and Bible departments together, provides our Educational Support Services team dedicated space, and creates a great gathering space for students. This addition was a matter of earnest prayer one year ago, and wasn't a certainty until late in the fall of 2024. Less than one year between praying for discernment and God's perfect timing to having everything ready by the start of school is an amazing testament to His faithfulness.
- Exceptional new faculty, staff, and board members to meet our growing enrollment and who will continue to help us further the mission of SCHS.

Please continue to pray for the South Christian community throughout the year. One large initiative this year is to review and renew our Strategic Plan. This will help us shape the next 3-5 years at SCHS as we work to fulfill our mission.

RYAN BENNINK
School Board President

GOD'S CANVAS AND CLAY: DRIVER'S ED AND FART SPRAY

When someone asks me what I do for a living, I usually get a pause or a slight intake of breath when I tell them I teach high school. People often imagine adolescents as extreme TikTok influencers or extras in a twenty-first century Grease production. Despite teen stereotypes, I've found that while adolescents can certainly be challenging, learning from them can also be a gift. One of the privileges of teaching a variety of grades at South is the opportunity to witness student growth over the course of a high school career. Lately, I've been reflecting on this development in one of my former students who recently graduated.

I first had Charlie as a freshman in Comp. 9. He was taking Driver's Training in the fall, and in order to make his road instruction on time, he needed to leave my seventh hour class about twenty minutes early every Wednesday for about six weeks. He would abruptly stand up from his seat, heft his backpack over his shoulder, shove his chair under the desk, and saunter out of my class—generally in the middle of what I viewed as a compelling element of writing instruction. His dramatic departures became such a production it was difficult to gain class attention after Charlie's release. At one point, I even emailed his mother asking if he could be a little more discreet while making his weekly exit.

When he was a sophomore, Charlie and I had another memorable interaction during chapel. From my balcony section, I could see him below in the front row of the auditorium. He would regularly kick his feet on the stage and rest them there during chapel. The stage is at least a foot higher than the first row of seats, and yet, Charlie sprawled out as if the auditorium seating was a home sectional where he was bingeing a Netflix series. During one guest speaker's talk, I walked all the way down to the first row in the auditorium and personally asked Charlie to remove his feet from the edge of the stage. (Never mind the fact that my mid-chapel discipline was probably far more disruptive to the speaker and our students than Charlie's relaxed posture.)

After three years of antics, I imagined Charlie was more than ready to graduate, so it surprised me when he signed up for AP English Literature. I never doubted Charlie's intelligence, yet I seriously wondered why a student so eager to leave my writing class and take the chapel posture of a bloated uncle on Thanksgiving afternoon would sign up for year of analyzing poetry and classic novels. Needless to say, I was skeptical. But here's where the delight of adolescent growth comes into play.

I'd been told by my colleagues that during Charlie's junior

year, he and his friends had been experiencing a spiritual renewal. They had begun a Bible Study, prayed regularly, and worked to hold each other accountable to their faith.

In the first weeks of his senior year in AP Lit, I could tell Charlie was maturing. He completed the summer reading assignment and willingly participated in class discussion. In September, he mentioned how he liked the "Canvas and Clay" song I'd used to demonstrate God's artistry within us. This was different from the distracted young man I'd met three years earlier. While I saw small examples of his growth (and old reminders of the personality I knew), the biggest revelation came when I got a call during class that my father was being rushed into open-heart surgery. Before I left for the hospital, I struggled to tell my students about my dad's diagnosis. It can be uncomfortable to watch someone get emotional; this is especially true for adolescents with grieving adults. My composure teetered while I explained why I'd be absent. The weight of my worry hung thickly in the room, and the students looked down at their desks, not knowing what to say.

In middle of this cavern of awkwardness, Charlie stood up, but not like he was leaving for Driver's Training. He faced his peers, then directed, "Let's gather around Mrs. Westra and pray for her right now." He asked the students to place their hands on me, and he even drew in the reluctant guys from the back of the room. At his call, this class of twenty adolescents encircled me, touching my head, my shoulders, and my arms while Charlie led them aloud in prayer for me. I don't recall the exact words he spoke that morning, but I distinctly remember the feeling of being lifted. Charlie prayed for my dad and his doctors and for God to give strength in a very scary situation. It's embarrassing to cry in front of students, but the tears that fell were a release. In my fifty years, I've distinctly felt the Holy Spirit's power just a handful of times. Charlie's prayer was one of those. In the midst of that praying, I felt a peaceful calm cover me like a soft blanket.

After that morning, I never saw Charlie the same way. Instead of viewing him with earthly eyes, I'd been given an eternal glimpse about how God is shaping him for good. Charlie is currently enrolled in a ministry training program called Impact 360, stationed in Pine Mountain, Georgia. While most of his peers went to college or entered the workforce, Charlie did something entirely different. When I asked what drove him to pursue the Impact 360 ministry, he explained that initially he was unsure about what to do after high school. As he prayed about it, Charlie reasoned, "The more I learn about who God is, the more I'm learning about who He wants me to be." Whether we're eighteen or

THANK YOU FOR YOUR YEARS OF SERVICE



40 YEARS

BRUCE HUTTENGA
Social Studies Teacher



30 YEARS

KENT WALSTRA
Science Teacher



20 YEARS

DIANNA KISNER
Athletic Trainer



20 YEARS

PATTY PERMODA
Bus Driver



20 YEARS

AMY SLOTSEMA
Technology Teacher



20 YEARS

MARIA VERMAAS
Physical Education Teacher



10 YEARS

CHRIS DEWEERD
Inclusive Education Teacher



10 YEARS

DAN OVERBEEK
Custodian



10 YEARS

JACKIE SELVIUS
Athletic Administrative Assistant

eighty, I guess that's what we're all in the process of doing: learning how God is shaping us.

Our God-designed transformations don't come instantly; they're a process. In his final day in my AP Lit. class, Charlie peppered one of his classmates with a fart spray whose smell was so foul it nearly made me puke. The entire class had to evacuate the room. It took awhile for that smell to vanish because it was so potent. Much like that powerful odor, the memories of Charlie's bumpy growth towards God's purpose linger and remind me of our opportunities to become what He's calling us to be. In that Pat Barrett song that Charlie liked, there's a line about God's design process: "I know nothing has been wasted, no failure or mistake. You're an artist and a potter, I'm the canvas and the clay." In the midst of Driver's Training, chapel disruptions, and fart spray, it might be hard to remember, but God is shaping each one of us for His purpose. He's regularly performing heart surgery, but it will likely take far longer than earning a high school diploma.

RACHEL WESTRA
English Teacher

IN MEMORIAM



MARK VANSTEE

5/27/1978 - 8/19/2025

Beloved Math and Social Studies Teacher; Golf Coach
Mark began his teaching career at South Christian High School in 2003. He coached freshman boys' basketball and girls' and boys' varsity golf. Over the years, Mark taught economics, social studies, and math and also served as the Dean of Students.

Faithfully FORWARD UPDATE

It was incredible to watch the new addition take shape over just nine months, and even more exciting to welcome 770 students into the building at the start of the school year. With this expansion, we can now comfortably accommodate 70 additional students in the new spaces. God is good!

South Christian is profoundly grateful for this community. We are thankful for the contractors who worked tirelessly to complete the project on schedule, the companies who generously provided gifts-in-kind, and each of you who sacrificially supported this campaign. Every contribution—large or small—has made a meaningful impact.

We are thrilled to share that year-end giving exceeded our expectations. The new addition is now fully paid for, and we are completely debt-free! We praise God for His abundant goodness to South Christian High School. Blessings to each of you for your prayers, generosity, and faithful support of the Faithfully Forward campaign. Your partnership is deeply appreciated.

SANDY DOBBS
Development Director



When you walk into the new addition, the first thing you'll notice is the jumbotron. What makes it truly special is who designed it. Violet Jansen, a 2025 graduate, created, fabricated, painted, and installed the jumbotron with creative assistance from JDH Engineering. She learned to weld in Mr. Klomp's Industrial Technology class, where her creativity and initiative quickly stood out.

According to Mr. Klomp, Violet "thinks outside of herself," a quality evident in the large community projects she has taken on over the past four years. Reflecting on his ten years of teaching, he shared, "I'll never have another student like her."



SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026

The South Suburban Christian Schools will again be hosting the *Strong Foundations* 5K Run/Walk and the 1K Fun Run for adults and kids.

The goal of this community event is to raise funds for the foundations of the five schools, which reduces the overall tuition cost for all students.

Sign-ups will be available on our website (www.schs.org) starting on January 24, 2026.

SAILOR IMPACT FUND

(formerly the Foundation/Restricted Fund)

If you're interested in supporting South Christian High School through a Sailor Impact Fund, here's how you can set it up:

MINIMUM GIFT:

A minimum initial gift of \$10,000 is required to establish a Sailor Impact Fund.

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

Once the fund is established, additional contributions of any amount may be made by anyone at any time.

FUNDING PERIOD:

You do not need to provide the full \$10,000 up front. The fund can be fully funded over a maximum period of five years.

DISTRIBUTIONS:

Distributions from the fund will begin once the \$10,000 minimum is reached.

This is a wonderful way to demonstrate your passion for a specific program or purpose at SCHS through an endowed gift!

For further details or assistance in setting up a Sailor Impact Fund, reach out to:

*Sandy Dobbs, Development Director
sdobbs@schs.org
 616-262-7205*

IN MEMORIAM



With the completion of the new addition, three Dawn Redwood trees and accompanying memorial gardens have been established in memory of student Tanner Newhouse, who passed away in March of 2024.



This summer brought the heartbreaking loss of student Andrew Swanson, whose love for soccer was well known. A memorial bench overlooking the soccer field now stands in his honor and loving memory.

Memorial Gifts
 Summer/Fall 2025

Everett Diemer
 Ernie Leep
 Roger Izenbaard
 Albertha Loomans

Thomas Potjer
 Jan Slot
 Andrew Swanson
 JoAnn Terpstra

Lee VandenBosch
 Saramae VanderArk
 Mark VanStee

DECLARE THE GLORY

75th anniversary



1950

Men of wisdom foresaw the need for a Christian high school between the area of Godwin Heights and Moline. It was a unanimous vote, and the Association tentatively approved the name "South Kent Christian High School."



1976

South Christian acquired the anchor from the U.S. Naval Ship, the USS Stockham.



2017

South Christian broke ground for a new high school on Kalamazoo Ave.

October 24, 2026

75th Gala

Sponsorship OPPORTUNITIES

NAVY SPONSOR

10 sponsorships available | \$5,000 each

- Preferred seating (based on sign-up date)
- Verbal recognition from the podium
- Thank-you recognition in the event program

GOLD SPONSOR

3 sponsorships available | \$25,000 each

- Underwrites the cost of event entertainment
- Reserved preferred seating
- Exclusive Meet & Greet with the entertainment
- Verbal recognition from the podium
- Thank-you recognition in the event program

WHITE SPONSOR

Table Underwriter | \$1,500 each

- Reserved table of 10 for you and your guests
- Written thank-you recognition in the event program

DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS:

"If we build it, they will come."

**Truly, God's "faithfulness continues from generation to generation."
(Psalm 119:90)**

The ten farmers looking at the fifteen-acre field of oats on 68th Street in 1951 had no idea that this sentiment would become popular 38 years later after the release of the film *Field of Dreams*; however, their belief in God's faithfulness continuing from generation to generation yielded a beautiful harvest. They built it, and now—75 years later—thousands of students have come to share in this legacy of faithfulness.

The dream began in the early 1950s with a community on the south side of Grand Rapids seeing a need for a Christian high school in the area. To fund the construction of a high school at 160 - 68th Street, the farmers sowed fifteen acres of oats while also planting a vision of a high school in which all teaching and learning were grounded in God's Word. The first school board dedicated the building in 1954, and 109 students were enrolled in the tenth and eleventh grades in that first year. The South Christian tradition of being anchored in God's Word had begun.

Generations of families have invested in this tradition over the years with their prayers, time, labor, and financial resources, building a school that aligns with their Christian beliefs and family values. In 1992, South Christian added ninth grade to the high school, and in 1999 we purchased another field—this time 130 acres on Kalamazoo Avenue—to faithfully steward a dream that continued to grow. The

Kalamazoo Avenue "Sports Park" – along with multiple additions, upgrades, and portable classrooms on the 68th Street campus—served our needs well until 2016, when we began to make plans for one campus on Kalamazoo Avenue. We broke ground for our current facility in 2017, we moved into our new home over Christmas break in 2018, and we welcomed students to these hallways in January 2019.

Our current school of 770 students and over 70 faculty and staff members, representing over 90 different area churches, remains committed to the dream of those farmers 75 years ago: equipping students to live Christ-centered lives and serve God to their greatest potential. Each day in our 50 classrooms and multiple common spaces, students explore how to live out their faith through a Christian worldview modeled by dedicated Christian teachers and mentors. Students learn to see the glory of God in everything from words to equations to hand-crafted projects to competitions and performances. They grieve together the brokenness caused by sin, and they rejoice together in the good news that Christ has redeemed all things. Finally, they are compelled to consider their role in the restoration of all things to their former glory and are challenged to live a life of service as an act of thanksgiving to our Creator. Seventy-five years later, thousands of South Christian graduates are living the dream of those visionary planters.

REBEKAH WIERENGA
Registrar

"If we build it, they will come."

*The whisper of the Holy Spirit 75 years ago.
The blessing of a strong tradition over the decades.
The ongoing challenge for today.
The continued hope for future generations.*

Join us in declaring the glory of God's faithfulness as we gather for our first-ever gala celebrating 75 years of South Christian!

October 24, 2026 | Frederik Meijer Gardens

The formal invitation to the 75th Anniversary Gala will be sent in July 2026.

Want to make sure you're on the guest list?
Scan the QR code to share your contact information.



FALL SPORTS RECAP: A SEASON OF EXCELLENCE

The Sailor Fall Sports teams experienced tremendous success this season. We are truly blessed with outstanding coaches and athletes who strive to serve God to their greatest potential while working extremely hard both on and off the field. Below is a recap of an incredible Fall Sports season at South Christian.

DAVID KOOL
Athletic Director



The **Boys Varsity Soccer** team captured the OK Gold Conference Championship, going undefeated in league play for the fourth straight season. The Sailors finished the year with an impressive 15-4-1 record under the leadership of Coach VandeKopple.

Both the **Boys and Girls Cross Country** teams claimed OK Gold Conference titles. The Girls team made history by winning the Regional Championship—only the second time in school history—and advanced to the State Meet, where they finished 4th overall in Division 2. This marked their sixth consecutive trip to the State Finals. On the Boys side, Thad VanderLaan and Ben Verlin qualified individually for the State Meet. Congratulations to Coach VanderKooi, her staff, and all the athletes on a fantastic season.

The **Equestrian** team wrapped up a strong season with a 4th place finish at Regionals. Their dedication, teamwork, and joy were evident throughout the year. Thank you to Coach VanderBand, her staff, and all the athletes for their countless hours and commitment.

Varsity Football battled through a challenging schedule and finished the regular season 4-5, earning a playoff berth. The Sailors traveled to Portland and fell by just one point, ending the season. The team played its best football late in the year—a true testament to the athletes and coaching staff. Congratulations to Coach Brown and his staff on a fun and competitive season.

The **Girls Varsity Golf** team won the OK Gold Conference for the second consecutive season and finished 2nd at Regionals at Pigeon Creek. They advanced to the Division 3

State Finals, where they placed 4th overall. Coach Cook was named Regional Coach of the Year. Congratulations to Coach Cook, his staff, and all our golfers on another outstanding season.

Our **Varsity Sideline Cheer** team had an amazing fall, playing a vital role in creating a positive and energetic game-day atmosphere. The team even debuted a dance routine at select home halftime performances, which was a highlight of the season. Thank you to Coach McGavin and all the athletes for their hard work and dedication.

The **Girls Swim & Dive** team enjoyed a very successful season, winning the Conference Championship. Five Sailors—Sophie Gaylord, Aliya VanHofwegen, Chloe Kerkstra, Caitlyn Morris, and Amelia McCann—qualified for the State Meet. Numerous personal records were set throughout the season. Thank you to Coach Pearson and the entire staff for their leadership and commitment.

Boys Varsity Tennis continued its strong tradition by winning the OK Gold Conference Championship for the second straight year. The Sailors finished 2nd at Regionals, qualifying for the State Finals, and ended the season ranked 6th overall in Division 3. Coach Stulp was named Regional Coach of the Year for the second consecutive season. Congratulations on a tremendous year.

Girls Varsity Volleyball capped off another great season by finishing undefeated in the OK Gold Conference and advancing to the District Finals. Congratulations to Coach VanderSchaaf, her staff, and all the athletes on a strong and successful season.

VanDyke & VanStee Memorial Golf Outing

Monday, June 15, 2026
@ Thornapple Pointe Golf Club

It is an honor to once again host the Rod VanDyke Memorial Golf Outing, now renamed the VanDyke & VanStee Memorial Golf Outing. This year's event will feature one morning flight only.

If you are interested in reserving a team or exploring sponsorship opportunities, please contact David Kool at dkool@schs.org. Additional details will be shared this spring.

SCHS Foundation Golf Trip Fundraiser

June 29-30, 2026
@Payne's Valley Resort,
Hollister, Missouri

South Christian is once again offering a Golf Trip Fundraiser, following the incredible success of last year's trip to Whistling Straits, which raised over \$180,000 for our Foundation.

This all-inclusive experience is limited in availability. If you are interested or have questions, please contact: Taylor Johnson at tjohnson@schs.org.

Sports Boosters Sporting Clay Shoot

Saturday, September 19, 2026
@ Caledonia Sportsman Club

Join us for our annual Sporting Clay Shoot this fall. More information regarding registration and sponsorships will be released in late summer or early fall.

FINE ARTS: A SEASON OF PERFORMANCE

Congratulations to the cast and crew of *Peter Pan and Wendy* for taking audiences on an unforgettable journey to Neverland! Filled with aerial acrobatics and adventure, this timeless tale sparked the imagination and reminded us that no matter what season of life we are in, God has a purpose for us there.



FINDING SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN ART

Recently, Drawing and Painting class students were invited to study Illuminated Letters and Manuscript pages from museum collections around the world. We learned about terminology and how these ancient documents were hand painted on vellum, which is dried, stretched and scraped calfskin, or parchment, the same process with sheep or goatskin. Some manuscripts were created for personal devotion, others were choir books for worship services, or missals, a book of prayers or the Gospels as readings for those services. Monks were the scribes and illustrators for this work, and until movable type, all books were made laboriously by hand in this fashion.

The students used mixed media for this work, they experimented with gouache paint, egg tempera paints mixed in class (composed of egg yolk and earth pigment) as well as watercolor and fine markers for this work.

The themes that students were to choose from to connect with their own spiritual growth were:

What ideals define you?

What is your identity pinned to?

How do you deal with anxiety that comes into your day?

How do you cultivate meaningful relationships?

How will you determine your life's purpose both now and in the future?

What matters beyond you?

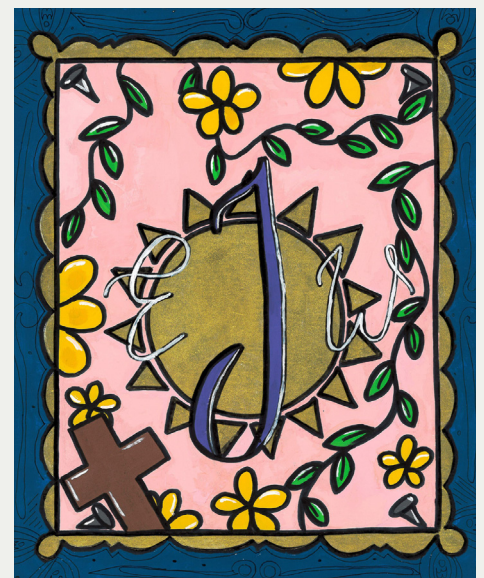
With the understanding that each of these young people are working through who they are today and who God is calling them to be, they were invited to write their artists' statements with authenticity, to embrace the reality that a genuine relationship with God is calling them into noticing their humanity, where they fall short, as well as the beauty of his faithfulness. As their teacher, I'm incredibly grateful for their willingness to lean into that.

ROBERTA VANHAITSMA

Art Teacher



Mrs. VanHaitsma's Drawing and Painting class had the opportunity to paint the windows at Chick-fil-A.



For this assignment, I thought pretty deeply about my character and who I am as a person. The driving question for this painting was, "What is your identity pinned to?" When I thought about that, the word that kept coming to my mind was "joy." I want to be remembered as a joyful person. Through the good and the bad, I try to keep the joy of the Lord in my life. Coincidentally, my name is Elizabeth Joy Wolthuis. It is a good reminder for me to be joyful in all circumstances and with all people. In my painting, I expressed this by putting my initials in the middle with a large "J" to stand for my middle name and the word "joy." Behind my initials, there is a large sun, some leaves, flowers, and a fun border that displays joy. I also included a cross and some nails to remind me about Jesus' sacrifice for me and why I have so much joy. The whole painting displays what I want my identity to be, and want to be remembered as.

Dear God, thank you for shaping me into the person I am today. I am forever thankful for your faithfulness and protection over my life. I thank you for sacrificing your son so that I might have joy all the days of my life. I pray that I would show that joy each and every day, to the people around me. Continue to shape me into a woman of strong faith who follows you faithfully. Use me in your world to bring others to you. Thank you for all you have done in my life. Amen.

LIZZIE WOLTHUIS
SCHS Senior, Class of 2026

ALUMNI UPDATES: CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS

1979

Brian Diemer ('79) was inducted into both the University of Michigan Athletics Hall of Honor and the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2025. A state title winner in the mile as a Sailor, he continued his academic and athletic career at U of M, where he was the 1983 NCAA national champion in the 3,000 meter steeplechase. After graduating, he went on to become a three-time Olympian, winning a bronze medal in the steeplechase at the 1984 games in Los Angeles.

Brian began a long and successful coaching career in 1986, when he began leading the men's cross country team at Calvin University. In 2006 he was named coach of the women's team as well. He guided his teams to 42 MIAA conference titles and four national championships before retiring from coaching in 2022.

Brian lives with his family in Caledonia and is a Co-Owner and V.P. of Everett's Landscape.

1992

In 2025, **Ben Handlogten ('92)**, the former NBA player was inducted into the Grand Rapids Sports Hall of Fame. After earning All-State honors as a Sailor, Ben went on to star at Western Michigan University, where he remains in the school's top-ten lists in career rebounds, blocks, steals, and field goal percentage.

Following his time at WMU, Ben began his pro basketball career as a member of the Grand Rapids Hoops. He then went on to play for teams in Turkey, Japan, Italy, and Greece before signing with the Utah Jazz of the NBA, playing two seasons at the highest level of the sport.

Ben lives with his family in Lake Norman, NC and is a Project Manager at Pfaff Molds. His son, Micah, plays college basketball for the Florida Gators and helped them win the NCAA title last season.

2004

Carlee Hoffman-Schwarz ('04) is a 2025 inductee into the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee Hall of Fame as a member of the 2004 U.S. women's wheelchair basketball team.

While at SCHS, Carlee played wheelchair basketball for the Junior Pacers, part of the Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports program. Her talent caught the eye of the U.S. national team, and she was selected to play for the U.S. women's wheelchair basketball team at the 2004 Paralympic Games in Athens. Carlee and her teammates made their mark in U.S. sports history as they won the country's first gold medal in the event in 16 years. Four years later in Beijing, Carlee helped Team USA repeat as gold medal winners, scoring 10 points in the final game against Germany.

Carlee lives with her family in Berlin, Germany, after a career as a Protection Manager of refugees from across the world including Ukraine, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq.

2006

David Kool ('06) was inducted into the Western Michigan University Athletics Hall of Fame this past fall. After winning two state championships with the Sailor basketball team and being named Michigan Mr. Basketball as a senior, David took his talents to Kalamazoo to play for the Broncos. During his collegiate career, David became WMU's all-time leading scorer with 2,122 points. He twice led the Mid-American Conference in points per game and also set conference records for highest career free throw percentage and career free throws made. His many accolades include 2010 MAC Player of the Year, 2007 MAC Freshman of the Year, and two-time First Team All-MAC.

David lives with his family in Gaines Township and has been the Athletic Director at SCHS since 2020.



ALUMNI BEACON: IN MEMORIAM

1950's

Ann (Lamberts, '56) Klaver passed away January 7, 2025.

Donna (DeVries, '56) Wands passed away October 28, 2025.

Beatrice (Morren, '57) Klunder passed away September 23, 2025.

1960's

Arvid Klein ('60) passed away October 31, 2025.

Hank Kapteyn ('61) passed away September 11, 2025.

Ruth (Apol, '62) Mulder passed away October 19, 2025.

Hilda (Reiffer, '62) Lowing passed away December 2, 2025.

Larry Reiffer ('63) passed away August 17, 2025.

Dorothy (DeRuiter, '65) Berkenpas passed away July 15, 2025.

JoAnn (Door, '65) Terpstra passed away August 18, 2025.

Thomas Hollemans ('66) passed away October 25, 2025.

Mary (Botting, '67) Haaksma passed away November 12, 2025.

Diane (Hoeksema, '68) Stults passed away November 3, 2025.

1970's

Peggy (Kooiker, '70) Birdsley passed away November 9, 2025.

Larry Brook ('70) passed away

December 5, 2025.

Janet (Herrema, '73) Slot passed away October 13, 2025.

Karen (Dykstra, '78) Kloosterman passed away July 15, 2025.

1980's

Theodore Geers ('81) passed away August 19, 2025.

Trent DeKam ('88) passed away September 27, 2025.

1990's

Brandon Workman ('95) passed away October 13, 2025.

Joshua Tiemeyer ('98) passed away October 20, 2025.



Stay Connected

Visit our Alumni page at www.schs.org/alumni/ or contact Kerri Holbrook at kholbrook@schs.org.

VETERANS DAY ASSEMBLY



SCHS held our annual Veterans Day Assembly to honor the brave men and women who have served in the United States Armed Forces. The assembly offered our students, staff, and community an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices made by those who have defended our nation's freedom.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all veterans—for your service, courage, and dedication.