

School District of Cameron
600 Wisconsin Avenue
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Cameron, WI 54822

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The Cometary

Fall 2023



Volume 20 Issue 1

Notes from Mr. Rykal

Greetings from the Principal

Hello Cameron Comet High School Families! We have had a great start to the school year, celebrating our academic and athletic achievements. I know there have been some grumblings as we address academic, attendance, and behavior expectations, but the students have done an excellent job of meeting those expectations. And we are looking forward to continuing our high levels of performance through the winter into next spring. As I learn more about the students and school here at Cameron, I am truly excited to have joined the Comet Community!

Thanksgiving Break

Students will not have school Monday, November 20 through Friday, November 24 for Thanksgiving Break. We hope everyone has a nice holiday and a safe hunt for deer or black Friday deals.

End of First Trimester

The final day of the first trimester is Friday, November 17. It is very important that students have all of their classwork completed and turned in before that day.

Second Trimester

The second trimester will begin on Monday, November 27. Students

should check their schedules over the break because everyone's Study Hall schedule will change. Other schedule changes will only be granted under extreme circumstances.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Conferences will take place on Thursday, November 2, from noon to 8 pm. Parents can schedule conferences if they wish, or they can drop by anytime. Conferences are an important opportunity for us to discuss student progress as well and share opportunities for future academics.

Veterans Day Ceremony

The high school and middle school will host a Veterans Day ceremony on Friday, November 10. More information will be posted on the district Facebook page.

Class Rings and Graduation Announcements

On Monday, October 16, members of the sophomore and senior classes met with a representative from Jostens to pick out and order class rings and graduation announcements. More ordering information can be found at jostens.com

Attendance

Here is some information to help

understand the Cameron School District Attendance Policy. We believe that a strong attendance record correlates to strong academic performance. In the case of a student's absence, it is important to consider our school policy, which follows State Statute. Students who miss school for any reason are marked absent for any classes they miss. According to Wisconsin State Statute 118.15 and 118.16, students are allowed 10 excused absences in the course of the school year. Excused absences include illness or medical appointments, parent approved travel, family emergency, or other pre-planned appointments. Any absences after the 10 excused will be considered unexcused unless caused by medical issues or other extenuating circumstances. Please call the office or provide a written note to ensure absences are excused. Text messages to your student will result in a phone call home. Unexcused absences will result in truancy. Habitual truancy happens when a student is unexcused for all or part of 5 days. If a student is habitually truant, communication will be made to parents and a conference will be scheduled. We hope to avoid referrals to the city and county by working with families to keep the student in class. We appreciate your support of our policy by talking with your student about attendance.

American Red Cross Blood Drive
November 15, 2023

In the High School Gym
Register Online
Walk-In's Welcome

New Faces

by Abigail Altizer & Nicole Kargus



Mark Rykal – High School Principal

"Hello, Cameron Comets! I am Mark Rykal, the new Cameron High School Principal. To begin, you may know my wife, Madeline, who is currently teaching kindergarten at Cameron Elementary School. We have four children: Charlotte (7th grade), Eleanor (5th grade), Oliver (1st grade), and Josephine (daycare). We spend a lot of time running to different activities with the kids, and I look forward to watching them participate in all Cameron Schools have to offer.

"My path to principal took quite a few turns. I graduated from Chetek High School in 1990, so I am from the area. My first career after high school was working for a restaurant company in Duluth, Minnesota. Deciding I wanted a more conventional lifestyle, I enrolled at UW-Green Bay, where I received my Bachelor's Degree in English Education. After 13 years as an English teacher in Chetek, I completed my Masters from UW-Superior and made the move to administration as the 7-12 Principal in Shell Lake. When the opportunity to join Cameron High School came about, I couldn't pass it up. I am excited to be joining the school and meeting the stu-

dents and staff, and I look forward to joining you all as a Cameron Comet!"



Chloe Wanink – High School Guidance Counselor

"Hi everyone! I'm excited to be a Cameron Comet again. I am back home living with my family. I graduated from Cameron High School in 2015, and I went on to play college basketball at Wofford College down in Spartanburg, South Carolina. I graduated in 2020 with degrees in both Psychology and Sociology. From there, I had the opportunity to be the Graduate Assistant for the University of Mary women's basketball team in Bismarck, North Dakota, while pursuing my master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. However, in April of 2022, I missed playing basketball. I had always dreamed of playing professional basketball overseas. I knew if I didn't try, I'd forever regret it. Luckily a team in Iceland took a chance on me. I had an absolute blast getting to explore the beautiful country that Iceland is. It allowed me to meet new people and try different foods while playing the sport I love. I am grateful to be back in Cameron as your

High School Counselor! It's an opportunity to give back to a school district and community that was great to me when I was a student here.

"As for outside of work and basketball, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, being outside, going to the movies, and reading. Some of my favorite activities from this summer have included taking our dog, Dixie, on walks, kayaking with my sister, seeing Taylor Swift in concert, and visiting my friends in Ohio and South Carolina. Also, if you have any great book recommendations, please send them my way! Go Comets!"



Emily Taylor - High School Business Education Teacher

"My name is Emily Taylor, I am very excited to start my journey here at Cameron High School. I grew up in New Auburn, WI just 20 miles away from Cameron. I was Valedictorian of my graduating class and from there I went on to go to UW - Stout where I earned my Business Education degree. I actually was able to wrap up my college career by student teaching with Mrs. Hopkins right here in

Summer Success

by Katie Shilts

Some of our very own Cameron Comets represented our school this summer, including state track competitors and FBLA national qualifiers.

Four Comet tracksters, along with two alternates, completed their 2023 season by competing in the 127th annual WIAA State Track and Field Meet on June 2-3 in La Crosse. They came away with two podium finishes, an impressive end to a great season. Lexi Kuffel placed sixth in the 400-meter dash, setting a new school record in the process. She was the first Cameron female athlete to make an individual podium in 24 years. Also placing sixth was the 800-meter relay consisting of Lexi Kuffel, Lauren Pearson, Maddie Severt, and Jordyn Lundequam. The relay

Gone Hunting

by Kennedy Ladehoff

For Isabella Harder, hunting and trapping is a lifestyle. It's a method for her family to sustain themselves, which allows them to only have to go to the store for artificial foods, such as cereal. Isabella has been hunting and trapping ever since she was a kid. Her experience has led her to be asked about applying to something known as the Conservation Congress.

She has already been responsible for things such as the kid's cave, which is activities for younger kids into hunting and trapping. She is also considering instructing for a women's trap camp. Because of this experience, Isabella was asked to apply to be a youth representative for the Conservation Congress. The representative position would be important not just for

team was supported by alternates Jami Folz and Jaden Jackson. To top it off, Lauren Pearson placed eighth in the long jump and competed in the high jump. Congratulations, track athletes, on a successful season!



Budding businesswomen. Jami Folz, Evie Martinson, Abigail Salmonson, Mrs. Cheryl Hopkins, Chloe Wall, and Sydney Leschisin attended the National Leadership Conference for FBLA in July.

After taking fourth place or higher at the FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) state conference in Green Bay in April, five FBLA members traveled to Atlanta to compete at the National Leadership Conference. Sydney Leschisin, Evie Martinson, Abigail Salmonson, Chloe Wall, and Jami Folz participated in events such as Publication Design, Broadcast Journalism, and Word Processing. Although no one placed in the top 10, it is an amazing accomplishment just to get there, and they had a great time! In addition to competing, they got to see the Coca-Cola Museum, MLK Jr. Memorial, National Museum of Civil Rights, and Atlanta's Olympic Park, to name a few. Congratulations future business leaders!



Youth hunter. Isabella successfully traps a raccoon. and trapping community. Isabella will do her best to ensure a better future for her community as a representative.

Barron County Career Fair

by Emma Somerville

What is the purpose of a career fair? Career fairs are a great opportunity for students to see potential career options, and gives them a chance to discuss what a specific job looks like from people with first hand experience in that field.



K-9 handler. Heather Cook, Lillian Hendrickson, and Jayce Allen talk with a law enforcement professional about the K-9 unit.

Cameron High School students were able to take advantage of attending the Barron County Career Fair. The junior class and career classes went September 21. The two career classes went in the morning, and the junior class went in the afternoon.

They had local businesses stationed throughout the fairgrounds. Companies included Thomas Precision, Mosaic, Northstar Bison, Rice Lake Weighing, and more. Many of them had fun activities – including ring toss and spin the wheel for a prize – to entice students to learn about what they had to offer.

Other professions such as fire-fighters, law enforcement, and paramedics were also there to inform kids about what they do on a daily basis. Northwoods Technical College was there teaching students more about their medical majors. They also had a dummy to demonstrate to students how to draw blood. Law enforcement



Future welder. Kierra Schuebel is welding at the Northwood Technical College interactive station.

representatives had drones to fly, and the Rice Lake Fire Department had a fire truck for kids to walk through.

Thanks to the Barron County Career Fair, students are given the opportunity to see what options they have as they think about their future.



Prepared for the future. The junior class is ready for their future career paths after visiting the Barron County Career Fair.

Cameron, and I am more than happy to be returning! Some of my hobbies include going to the beach and spending time with my family. I have a large family that just keeps growing, most recently I gained a second family when I got married this Summer. I am looking forward to continuing the exciting year I've had so far with everyone at Cameron!"



Dawn Buckels – High School Special Education Aide

"Hello! My name is Dawn Buckels.

"I am a mother of 3 grown children and have 5 grand children. My husband and I moved to Wisconsin from Southern California in 2018. What were we thinking!! Haha. Actually, with the exception of very long and cold winters, we love it here. I love spending time on the lake fishing and cruising. I have over 10 years experience working with teenagers as a case manager and addiction counselor. Working with kids fills my heart and gives me a great sense of purpose.

"I have learned so much working with our youth and I am grateful

for the opportunity to be in this position and continue learning and making a difference in the lives of others.

"I am very excited to join the Cameron Comets team and making this a great year! GO COM-ETS!"



Heather Cook – High School Special Education Aide

"My name is Heather Cook. I'm married to my husband Robert who owns his own livestock trucking company, and I have two girls, Reanna is 15 years old and Raina who is 14. Both of them attend Barron High School. We live on a farm near Barron where we raise beef cattle and steers. We also have three dogs. I enjoy spending my time outside whenever I can. My girls show dairy cattle at many shows throughout the summer which keeps us busy and away from home most weekends. I also enjoy bow hunting and bear hunting.

"I worked at Riverview Middle School for the past 4 years as a Paraprofessional and absolutely loved it.

"I'm looking forward to working in the Cameron School District. Thank you so much for this opportunity and I'm looking forward to working with each and every one of you!!"



Kari McDonald – High School Special Education Aide

"Hello, my name is Kari McDonald. I was born and raised in a little town called Tilden. I Graduated from Chippewa Falls High School in 1996. Later I attended Chippewa Valley Technical College and received an Associates Degree in Agri- Science Technician. I was at Walmart for 15 years when I decided to make a career change. I accepted a position at Riverview Middle School as a Paraprofessional and enjoyed every minute of it. I decided I needed to set myself up for the future and accepted a position at Cameron High School.

"In 2005 I married my husband, Mike McDonald. We now have two daughters, Ariella and Aalayah. We also have a family of animals. My family is my biggest hobby, I enjoy doing whatever I can with them. Golf is another hobby I've recently decided to pick up. I can't wait to start the new school year at Cameron High School."



Cathy Potaczek – High School Special Education Aide

"Hi, my name is Catherine Potaczek. I live just outside of Cameron with my husband, three children and a menagerie of animals. When I am not watching my children participating in their various sports and activities, I enjoy fishing, hunting, hiking and gardening. I have been working as a special education paraprofessional for over 8 years and I am excited to be working at Cameron High School."



Justice Groothusen – High School Biology – Long Term Sub

"Hello! My name is Justice Groothusen. I am 26 years old and I grew up in the Ladysmith area. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point where I played football for three seasons while also majoring in biology. I decided to get into the educational space shortly after graduating because I love the positive, im-

pactful relationships that you can form as a teacher. When I am not at work, I love to write and sing music, try cooking new things, playing video games, and record my podcast called Toasty Takes! I encourage you to check it out if you enjoy motivational/inspirational messages. I am big on having a positive attitude and helping out wherever I can, so if anyone ever needs anything, don't be afraid to ask! I am looking forward to working in such a welcoming school district and trying my best to have a positive impact on the school this year!"



Dennis Gunnink – Director of Special Education/ School Psychologist

"I am very excited for this opportunity to serve Cameron School District as Director of Special Education and School Psychologist! I grew up in southeastern Wisconsin with my parents and two brothers. I graduated from Delavan-Darien High School in 1988. I earned my Bachelor's Degree in Psychology and Biology and my Master's Degree in School Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. I've worked as a School Psychologist for 23 years, most recently for CESA 10. I served as psychologist for Cameron Middle and High Schools during the 2019-20 and 2020-2021 school years. In 2020-2021, I attended University

of Wisconsin-Eau Claire's Director of Special Education and Pupil Services (DSEPS) program and earned my certificate to practice as a DSEPS. I served in a dual role as Director of Special Education and School Psychologist for New Auburn School District from 2021-2023.

"My family and I moved to Rice Lake, WI in 2018. We consist of my wife, Sadie and our youngest son, Gabriel, age 12--our oldest two sons, Noah (25) and Matthew (22) live on their own but come to visit as often as they can. Our household includes Lewie (pug-terrier mix), Rosie (Boston terrier), Cashew (bearded dragon), Oakley (mustang), and Annie (mustang). We enjoy boating, fishing, hiking, traveling, and just hanging out together. As for myself, I like to read, hike, play guitar, camp, hunt, fish, and garden. Stop in anytime to say hello--most times you'll find me at Cameron Elementary!"



Lynda Lacina – HS/MS School Psychologist

"I Grew up in Chippewa Falls, WI and Graduated from University of WI, Eau Claire. I Live in Chippewa Falls with my husband, Michael, Dog Hunter, and Cat Poppy. My hobbies include reading, spending time outdoors, and going to estate and vintage sales."



Barbies and Kens. Cameron High School staff put on a fantastic show for the student body.

the Barbie and Ken fashion show, and the homecoming king and queen were announced; Tyson Lucas and Emma Anderson! And finally, the spirit stick was awarded to the Class of 2025, Cameron High School's current juniors.

That night, our football team played against Cumberland in stormy, rainy weather. The Cameron Gridiron group held a tailgate party in the high school commons to raise money for Cameron area scholarships. The Student Council had an alumni booth that handed out three prizes at halftime. Despite the weather, our team pulled through, winning 53-13 against the Cumberland Beavers.

Last but certainly not least, was the homecoming dance. Beginning at 7 o' clock students began showing up in their extravagant dresses and suits. Students danced and danced until 11.



King and Queen. Tyson Lucas and Emma Anderson were crowned king and queen.



Homecoming

by Caitlin Quarders&Kayla Schullo



School spirit! Students wore their finest Comet gear to show their school spirit on the Friday of the Homecoming game.

One of the most eventful weeks of the year has flown by! Cameron High School's Homecoming was action-packed to the brim with activities and energy all around.

On the first day of homecoming week, students could be seen sporting their favorite jerseys. Later in the day there was a Kahoot showdown—questions surrounded the lives' of our teachers and school history. Taking first place was Mr. Haughian's senior homeroom!

Tuesday was Salad Dressing Day: Seniors were Caesar (Rome); Juniors were Island (Hawaiian); Sophomores were house (dress comfy/lazy); Freshmen were ranch dressing (country clothes). Throughout the day, there were three jars in the office filled with

M&Ms, Starburst, and Hershey Kisses. Students guessed how many were in each jar, and the closest guess won the candy. Nicole Kargus (junior) won the M&Ms jar; Madison Gouine (junior) won the Hershey Kiss jar; Mad-die Severt (junior) and Kyra Schofield (sophomore) tied and had to split the Starburst jar. Later that night, Cameron volleyball also won their annual senior night. They played Ashland--winning after playing five sets. It was a riveting game with an enthusiastic student section.

Wednesday was our annual color day and powderpuff games. Each student dressed according to their grade; Senior: pink; Junior: black; Sophomore: green; Freshmen: white. The volleyball matches resulted in seniors on top, followed by juniors, sophomores, and freshman. Out on the field, juniors won followed by freshmen, seniors, and then sophomores.

Thursday's theme was Old vs. Young. Many students dressed in their finest onesies, or they grabbed their grandma's walker and (slowly) made their way to class. Our student council passed out ice cream sandwiches and bars at lunch! FBLA sold t-shirts for the football team's homecoming game. Beat the Beavers!

On Friday, everyone wore Cameron Comet gear to show their school spirit! In support of the football team some students wore their homecoming t-shirts from FBLA. The pep assembly was held at the end of the day where three games were played: Partner Obstacle Course, Hungry Hungry Hippos, and Musical Chairs. Later on, teachers strutted their stuff at



Yee-haw! Freshmen dressed in their finest country clothes to correlated with the "Ranch Dressing" theme.

Exchange Students at CHS

by Caitlin Quarders&Kayla Schullo

Three families in the Cameron School District are hosting students from other countries. Please help us welcome Sofia Diana, Bruno Palacios, and Emma Buda!

Sofia is from the gorgeous city of Naples, Italy where she lives with her parents and older brother, Alfredo. Sofia greatly enjoys sitting down for a slice of Italy's finest pizza while she takes in the scene around her, waiting for inspiration to strike. She then takes her Canon camera, and she skillfully captures the world around her. In the United States, Sofia is hosted by the Schofield family. Jamyne and Kyra are her host sisters, a senior and sophomore respectively. Sofia was extremely excited to be placed with the Schofields because they have two big dogs, Mika and Indy. Back in Italy, her family doesn't have any pets. Sofia is a junior at CHS, and she will be participating in dance team, Spanish Club, FFA, and FCCLA.

Bruno is from the fascinating city of Vizcaya in Basque Country, Spain. He lives with his parents and sister Jone. He enjoys walking



Exploring the lakes. Emma's host family took her to Winona to enjoy the lakefront. around his city with his friends—occasionally stopping for delicious meals along the way! Bruno also partakes in martial arts lessons, which have proven to be one of his passions. He decided to do the foreign exchange program after repeated encouragement from his parents. He recalls a lady from the organization that talked him into going to the United States as opposed to his original plan of Ireland. Bruno is hosted by the Gardener family. His host brother,



Welcome Sofia! The Schofields met Sofia with sparkly enthusiasm.

parents and sister Pauline. Pauline was recently in the foreign exchange program, which is why Emma decided to do it as well. She is an extremely athletic person and can often be found playing field hockey with her friends. When not playing field hockey, she is either in the gym or walking her dog, Fay. Emma is hosted by the Baures family. Her host parents, Ron and Cari, had two daughters that attended Cameron High School. She has decided to join the volleyball and basketball team.



Family party. Bruno was able to celebrate his grandfather's birthday before leaving for the states.

Cameron High School is very fortunate to able to host foreign students. Families in the community have been hosting students for more than 10 years! It provides great opportunities and experiences for everyone involved. If your family is interested in hosting a foreign student in the coming years please visit www.academy-ear.org or contact our local coordinator Steve Eichman at (715)541-2456.

Running Across Cameron

by Katie Shilts

Cameron’s cross country teams have high expectations this year. With a combination of experienced leadership, new talent, and a large turnout of good quality runners, they have set their sights high. The ultimate goal for both teams is state qualification.

Two seasons ago was the girls’ fifth year qualifying for state in a row. In addition to six returning runners, there are seven speedy freshmen joining the team. Varsity experience comes from senior Chloe Wall; juniors Lexi Kuffel, Maddie Severt, and Katie Shilts; and sophomores Anna Baribeau and Ava Lusson. Freshmen Inez Schmidt, Bridgette Mohns, Ashlynn Candler, Payten Severt, Mackenzie Cook, Abbie Olson, and Ashlyn LaBrie are all new to high

school cross country.

Similarly, the boys have seven returners -- senior Hayden Hince; juniors Carter Cherney, Chase Hauck, Ryker Ebert, and Wenzel Segebrecht; and sophomores Connor Carlson and Brett Mikolon -- and six newcomers (junior Treye Zimmerman; sophomores Preston Eldred and Jack Griffin; and freshmen Jaden Reed, Channing Erickson, and Henry Dahle). This is the best boys team Coach Dave Gerber has seen in all his years of coaching.

So far, the girls as a team have won five meets while the boys were on top at two. In addition, the Comets have claimed six individual race wins and have several athletes eyeing individual state qualification. Additionally, Inez



Front runner. *Sophomore Preston Eldred leads a pack of runners at the St. Croix Falls meet. He went on to win the race in a time of 18:57.*

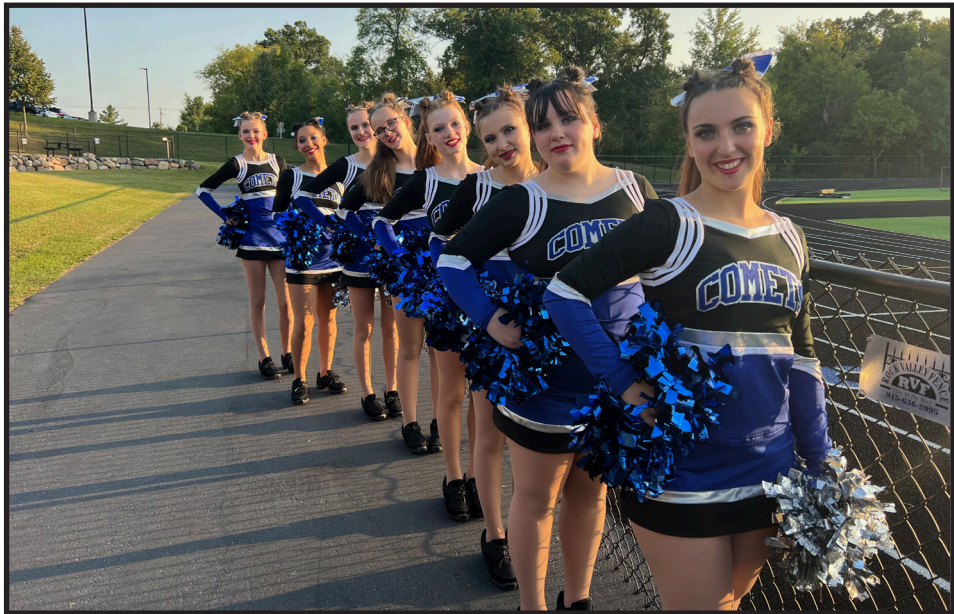
Schmidt, Lexi Kuffel, Bridgette Mohns, Jaden Reed, and Preston Eldred earned All-Conference Honors by placing in the top 15 at the conference meet.

The entire team has been rapidly improving, and will look to qualify for state on Saturday, October 21, at Whispering Pines Golf Course in Cadott.

Dancing with the Stars

by Jacob Meznarich

The Cameron dance team may be small, but it is not lacking in talent. Led by only one senior, Aubrie Valdez, this group of eight in the fall and nine in the winter puts on an entertaining show. In the fall you can find them at all football home games and in the winter at select basketball games and at competitions in Menomonie, UW-Eau Claire, River Falls, Prairie Farm, and WACPC Regionals. At the competitions, they plan to perform three dance routines, including pom, kick, and hip-hop. The students participating in dance include Aubrie Valdez, Janelle Barnes, Sofia Diana, Arabella Kringle, Ellie Gerber, Audrey Grady, Kia Plucar, Amelia Guider, and Alyseia Loew. New to the dance team are freshmen



Let’s dance. *The Cameron dance team gets ready to perform their routine at a home football game.*

Amelia Guider and Alyseia Loew and junior Sofia Diana. Sofia Diana hails from Italy and decided to join the dance team. According to the

dance coach, Melissa Longmire, she has an incredible memory for dance and is a perfect fit for the dance team.

Leave Everything, Regret Nothing

by Keara Butterfield

The Cameron volleyball team had a tough start to the season, but they persevered through it all. This year’s team has 31 hardworking players, including six seniors (Emma Anderson, Keara But-

terfield, Jami Folz, Sommer Pittman, Kallei Stovern, and Mykala Stovern). Coach Pumala says that her goals for the season are always to maximize the potential of all the players individually but also



The Final Set. *The six seniors say goodbye after winning their final conference game.*

as a team, and every year that changes. Every year the varsity girls have a theme, and this year they chose “Leave Everything, Regret Nothing” meaning the girls will leave everything they have on the court and have no regrets. When asked

how her team has been this year. Coach Pumala responded with, “So amazing, this has truly been one of my favorite years coaching varsity, they put team first.” The girls had one of the toughest schedules, in regular season games and post season. The Comets played Ladysmith in the first round of regionals at home and won. They moved on to the second round playing Barron but they came up short.

Wins and Losses	
9/12 @ Barron-	Loss
9/14 St Croix Falls-	Loss
9/19 Cumberland-	Win
9/21 @Northwestern-	Win
9/26 @Chetek-	Win
9/28 Hayward-	Win
10/3 @Spooner-	Loss
10/5 @Ladysmith-	Win
10/10 Ashland-	Win

Who Do They Play For

by Keara Butterfield

The Comet Football Team has fought very hard this year to become the best this town has seen in a while. Coach Roherty weighs in on the matter “We’re at the top of the mountain. This is the best football team I have seen in my 10 years of being here, led by strong leadership from the upperclassmen.” The boys have been showing this town who they are this year, with their 12 strong seniors, several of which have been playing the sport under Coach Roherty since 7th grade. This year their main focus of the season has been “Who Do We Play For?” Each week the boys are given a different person who they decide they play for. One week it was teachers, the boys went around giving their

Tough Team to Beat	
9/1 @Barron-	Win
9/8 Bloomer-	Win
9/15 @Northwestern-	Win
9/22 St.Croix Falls-	Loss
9/29 @Spooner-	Win
10/6 @ Chetek-	Win
10/13 Cumberland-	Win

jerseys to those teachers who’ve made an impact in their life. The boys came out on top this year, losing only one conference game to the St. Croix Falls Saints. Comet Football became the Heart of the North Conference Champs after winning their homecoming game against the Cumberland Beavers. The boys will play their first playoff game at home 10/20 against the Crandon Cardinals. This will be



Genius Plan. *Coach Roherty stands on the side giving intructions for the next play. Thank you 40 Days Images for the photos.*

the first time Cameron has had a playoff game on their home field, and this was no small feat. With the win against Crandon, the boys will play against the Cadott Hornets at home on October 27. Go Comets!