



# The Ferris State Torch

95 YEARS OF ILLUMINATING THE TRUTH

Big Rapids, Michigan

Summer Edition 2026

www.fsutorch.com

## Big Rapids farmers market starts up for the summer

Community members gathered for artisanal goods on Friday



Photo courtesy of City of Big Rapids

Members of the community come to the farmers market to peruse through various jams, jellies and flowers.

**Nolan Matthews**  
Co-Editor in Chief

People came from all around Big Rapids to the parking lot next to Bernie's Place for locally made goods of all kinds, from goat milk soap to cutting boards.

The first Big Rapids farmers' market of the season

was held on Friday, May 8, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., with vendors offering a variety of pastries, hot food, and other artisanal products.

Stone Column Farm is one of the vendors that took part in the market. They are based in Hersey, and their farm is based around goat milk products. The farm sells

a variety of different goat milk products, such as soap and lotion, while also offering beard oil, lip balms, and bath bombs. For Eva Ford of Stone Column Farm in Hersey, the farmers' market is a way to introduce new products to a brand-new customer base.

"Goat milk is much easier to digest than cow's milk,"

Ford said. "While also being higher in protein, most people who can't tolerate a lot of cow's milk can drink goat's milk. I always encourage people to do their own research, because I never want to convince anybody to try goat's milk. I always let the data speak for itself."

The farmers' market holds

many benefits for the community, with a mission of providing a showcase for locally made goods and fresh, locally grown produce. The market also participates in food assistance programs, which help community members bring home fresh produce, with the market accepting SNAP, and they participate

in the Double Up Food Bucks Program. This matches Bridge Card purchases of fresh produce dollar for dollar.

**CONT. ON PG. 5**

### News

WISE of Big Rapids is hosting its annual 5K walk and fundraising event. Money raised will go directly towards upkeep for the shelter, as well as putting on events for those who are staying there. **PG. 4**

### Culture

Summer is a great time to binge a new show and listen to your summer playlist. See the culture section for our personal recommendations. **PG. 6**

### Opinions

Learn how Harmony Goodman, Nolan Matthews, and Tate Zellman feel about stepping into new Torch roles for the upcoming academic year **PG. 8**

### Sports

With summer coming, many Ferris athletic teams are done for the year, see which student athlete made the most impact for each sport for the 2025-26 year. **PG. 11**

Contact us  
torch@ferris.edu  
231 591 5978

Visit our website  
www.fsutorch.com



Like us on Facebook  
Ferris State Torch



Subscribe to us on Youtube  
@theFSUTorch



Follow us on Instagram  
@fsutorch

# News

Gannon Thomas | News Editor | thomag17@ferris.edu

## Fun and sun in downtown Big Rapids Big Rapids annual Summerfest returns



Photo courtesy of Big Rapids Summerfest Facebook page

Thousands are expected to gather downtown for this year's annual Summerfest.

**BIG RAPIDS' BEST BUDS**




**DELIVERY & PICK-UP AVAILABLE**

**STUDENTS GET A FREE GIFT WEEKLY**

Monday - Saturday 10 am - 8 pm  
Sunday 11 am - 7 pm | 231-629-8048  
IGLOOCANNABIS.COM

AVAILABLE ON:  
weedmaps dutchie

**Gannon Thomas**  
News Editor

June 6, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Michigan Ave will be shut down between Pine and Linden streets for the Big Rapids annual Summerfest.

This year's Summerfest will feature a combination of vendors, live music, games, food, and even a car show. Summerfest is an annual event hosted by the Downtown Business Association of Big Rapids, aimed at attracting over 4,000 people to downtown for fun and festivities.

Chris Jane, Mecosta County local and coordinator of the Big Rapids Summerfest for the last 5 years, explained the magnitude of this year's festival.

"We're expecting the biggest Summerfest we've ever had," Jane said. "We've got over 50 arts and crafts vendors, plus foods and desserts."

Vendors attending the event will include a variety of local artists, small businesses, and even food trucks. The variety of events means fun for both college students and community members of all ages.

This year's event will feature cars from the Back to the Bricks car show the day before, a traveling car show making a stop in Big Rapids, as well as carnival and yard games, and even a hot dog-eating contest hosted nearby at Pocket Park.

The event will also have live music performances and a cash-prize cornhole tournament, creating a fun and festive environment for community members and students alike to enjoy downtown Big Rapids and the Summerfest festival.

This festival will be a chance for the Big Rapids community to come together to support local businesses while celebrating the start of

another summer.

Jane also explained that this event aims to bring more Ferris students downtown.

"I hope that the students will come and check out downtown a little bit more regularly," Jane stated. "It's just sort of a fun way for everybody to come together and celebrate that they made it through another school year, and that we've got a beautiful Michigan summer ahead of us."

Organizers stated that this event aims to connect the community and will help highlight what makes downtown Big Rapids unique.

"Every one of the downtown businesses has something great to offer," Jane said.

This festival is free to attend for all and will feature activities throughout the Big Rapids downtown area, allowing attendees to shop local, play games, and enjoy the warm summer weather.

# Editors Statement

Gannon Thomas shares plans for the 2026-27 Torch News section

## Michigan

**Nolan Matthews**  
*Co-Editor in Chief*

Flint- A man from Flint has been sentenced to at least 30 years in prison after killing his own groomsman on his wedding day. James Shirah, 24, was sentenced on Monday for the death of his friend, Terry Taylor Jr, whom he ran over with an SUV during an argument on August 30, 2024. After pleading no contest in April, Shirah was sentenced in connection with three felony charges: second-degree murder, operating with a suspended license, causing death, and failure to stop at a scene of an accident when at fault, resulting in death. Police said Taylor's killing stemmed from an argument between the newlyweds and the groomsman after the festivities at the pizzeria.

## National

**Nolan Matthews**  
*Co-Editor in Chief*

Texas- One person has been found dead near railroad tracks in San Antonio on Monday, and is believed to be connected to another six people who were found dead in a boxcar near Laredo. Laredo police responded to the scene after a Union Pacific employee reported a "trailer box car with the discovery of multiple casualties in the car" around 3 p.m. on Sunday. The seventh person is believed to have fallen off the train or been thrown out, which is why he was found in San Antonio, about 160 miles northeast of Laredo.

## Global

**Nolan Matthews**  
*Co-Editor in Chief*

Abuja, Nigeria- Nigeria's military on Tuesday denied a claim from a rights group that an airstrike killed 100 civilians in a market over the weekend. Attention has turned to the long-running fight against armed groups in the northern part of the country. Amnesty International announced in a statement on Monday that a military airstrike on Sunday hit a market in Tumfa in Zamfara state. Nigeria's military did confirm the airstrike, but said "No verifiable evidence of civilian casualties as being suggested in the media has been established."



Photo courtesy of Gannon Thomas

**Gannon Thomas is excited to start his second semester with the Torch, going from reporter to News Editor.**

**Gannon Thomas**  
*News Editor*

The Ferris State Torch is a newspaper published by students for students, this should be reflected in the News section. The Torch isn't just a paper; it's an opportunity for students to learn about each other and the community they live in.

The News section of the Ferris State Torch should be a resource for any reader to get a glimpse into important events and happenings both on campus and in the Big Rapids Community. The section should have stories that not only inform students about campus events but also make them want to get involved in campus life.

For a little bit about me, I'm Gannon Thomas, a Sophomore Journalism and Telecommunications major from Manistee, MI. I've always had a love for reading and writing, as well as an obsession with keeping up with current events. I spend a lot of my downtime reading non-fiction or researching absurd topics. I hope to pursue a career in journalism and one day become an anchor.

I've only been with the Torch for a single semester, so I am extremely grateful for a chance to step up and do more while also increasing the overall quality of each print. I hope to bring more community-driven headlines and focus on stories that impact Big Rapids, Ferris stu-

dents, and the surrounding communities.

In my short time, I have been so fortunate to work with such amazing and intelligent people who have made me realize how important even a smaller student-run publication like the Torch can be. The entire 2025-26 staff deserves a shoutout for being so welcoming. I am endlessly grateful for giving me such an amazing experience.

I believe the News section should not only celebrate campus life, but also ask important questions and report on issues that affect students directly. I believe the Torch has a responsibility to hold the university accountable through fair and ethical reporting while continuing

to serve as a reliable source of information for the Ferris community.

I want the News section to make students at Ferris feel connected. Whether covering campus events, student organizations, local issues, or university decisions, I hope to create a section that keeps students informed while encouraging them to engage more with campus and the Big Rapids community.

As your News Editor, I hope to make the Torch overall more engaging and entertaining while still providing informational and impactful articles.

Genuinely, thank YOU for reading the Torch!

# Steps for support

## WISE to host seventh annual 5k fundraiser



Photo courtesy of WISE

### Previous race contestants kick off 5k run in Northend Park.

**Harmony Goodman**  
Co-Editor in Chief

WISE will be hosting its seventh annual 5k walk and run fundraising event on May 30.

Check-in time will be at 8:30 a.m. with the race beginning at 9:15 a.m. The race will start at Northend Park, heading north on the Riverwalk and through the White Pine Trail. Maps will be provided to participants, with mapped out volunteer areas and two water stations.

The top three racers will receive prizes, and all participants, including virtual participants, will be entered into a drawing to receive a prize.

WISE Event committee member and Academic Advisor Sandra Worth spoke more about the importance of this annual 5k event and how it helps the WISE organization and the Mecosta community.

"WISE has two annual events to help raise money and awareness. In the time that I've been on the board, this 5k run and walk has been a part of it, as well as the golf outing that usually takes place in the summer," Worth said.

Funding raised from this event will go towards upkeep-

ing the shelter, with home goods and food. The money raised also helps WISE put on events for those who stay at the shelter. The rest of the funding will be used to provide services that are beyond the shelter, such as counseling.

"These events are more helpful than ever, because there's a little uncertainty with grants and funding, with how things in the government are going. The 5k event is a great way to promote awareness of our organization and [connect] more with the community," Worth said.

There is a virtual participation option for anyone who wants to participate and do so on their own time. Those who are participating virtually can keep track of their distance and report back on or before May 30. Virtual participants are encouraged to use tracking apps or personal devices to keep track of their distance.

WISE Event committee member and Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Religions, Dr. Sarah Lucas, spoke more on her own experience with the virtual race and how it can be more helpful and accessible.

"I did [virtual] in 2020, you

just report your run time, sort of like a log. If you ordered a shirt, then you'd get that shirt mailed to you and you can wear it when you do the race," Lucas said. "When my mom did it, she knew that she wasn't going to do the whole 5k all at once, but she did know that her distance would add up. She just ended up logging her combined time and distance the week preceding the race."

Participants can register to join up till the day of the event and race shirts will be first come first serve. Those who have already registered for the event prior to April 28 are guaranteed a race shirt upon participation. Registration fee is \$30 for adults, \$20 for students with their student ID and free for all children 10 and under.

For individuals who are not able to join the race but still want to help, can visit <https://wiseagainstviolence.org/>, where you can donate to help support the cause, or donate essential items from their item wishlist. If you would like to volunteer for this event, you can sign up on their webpage.

Any additional questions can be emailed to [donate@wiseagainstviolence.org](mailto:donate@wiseagainstviolence.org).



Photo courtesy of WISE

5k race route map for racers and volunteers.

# Culture

Grace Heethuis | Culture Editor | turnek29@ferris.edu

## Editor's parting statement

Goodbye - sort of!



Grace Heethuis  
Culture Editor

It is with a heavy heart that I have decided not to return as the culture editor for the Torch next year. While I'm so excited to graduate in December, I will unfortunately have to have a lot on my plate to get there. I have enjoyed this season so much, and it has been such an honor to hold this position. Culture should be a place where every voice is heard, and everyone feels safe between these pages. My hope for the next culture editor is to move forward with the same spirit, shaping the culture section to represent everyone at Ferris well. I hope it will always be what I have always viewed as the heart of our paper, for its diverse, energetic nature. While my time as the culture Editor has ended, I do plan to stay on staff as a freelance reporter, which means you will still see my articles at least once per month. It's not what I had hoped for, but as I step into my new role as a mother, I have to dial back on some things. My family will always come first, but the Torch has a special place in my heart. I am confident whoever is chosen to step into this role next will excel and keep the spirit of the section alive.

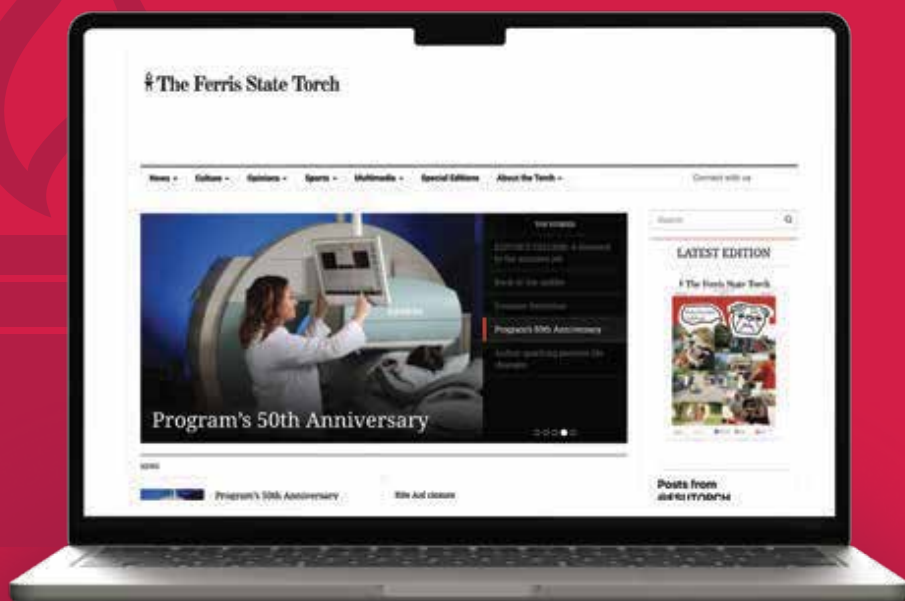
Photo by: Grace Heethuis | Culture Editor

Grace and Silas enjoying a relaxing and much needed break at Belle's Coffeehouse.

## Read The Torch Online



fsutorch.com



### BIG RAPIDS FARMERS MARKET CONT.

Administrative Assistant of Recreation Emma Walters spoke about the benefits for Ferris students who may be interested in checking them out.

"The farmers market has a lot to offer for Ferris students," Walters said. "The market is proud to partner with the Bulldog Pantry to offer coupons that can be used by students at the market for various food

items. The market is also a great place to connect with friends, take a break from studying, or find homemade tastes that students may be missing while they are away from home."

The farmers market has plenty of students showing up to enjoy the benefits, such as graphics media management junior Tanner Perkins, who attends the farmers market almost every week.

"I just think it is a great place to see the kinds of things that people are pro-

ducing locally," Perkins said. "Not to mention you can get higher quality stuff here. Anybody who hasn't gotten the chance to go should definitely check it out."

The farmers market will continue throughout the summer, on Fridays from May 8 until October 30 from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. Then the market will extend to Saturdays, starting on July 11th and going until September 26, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

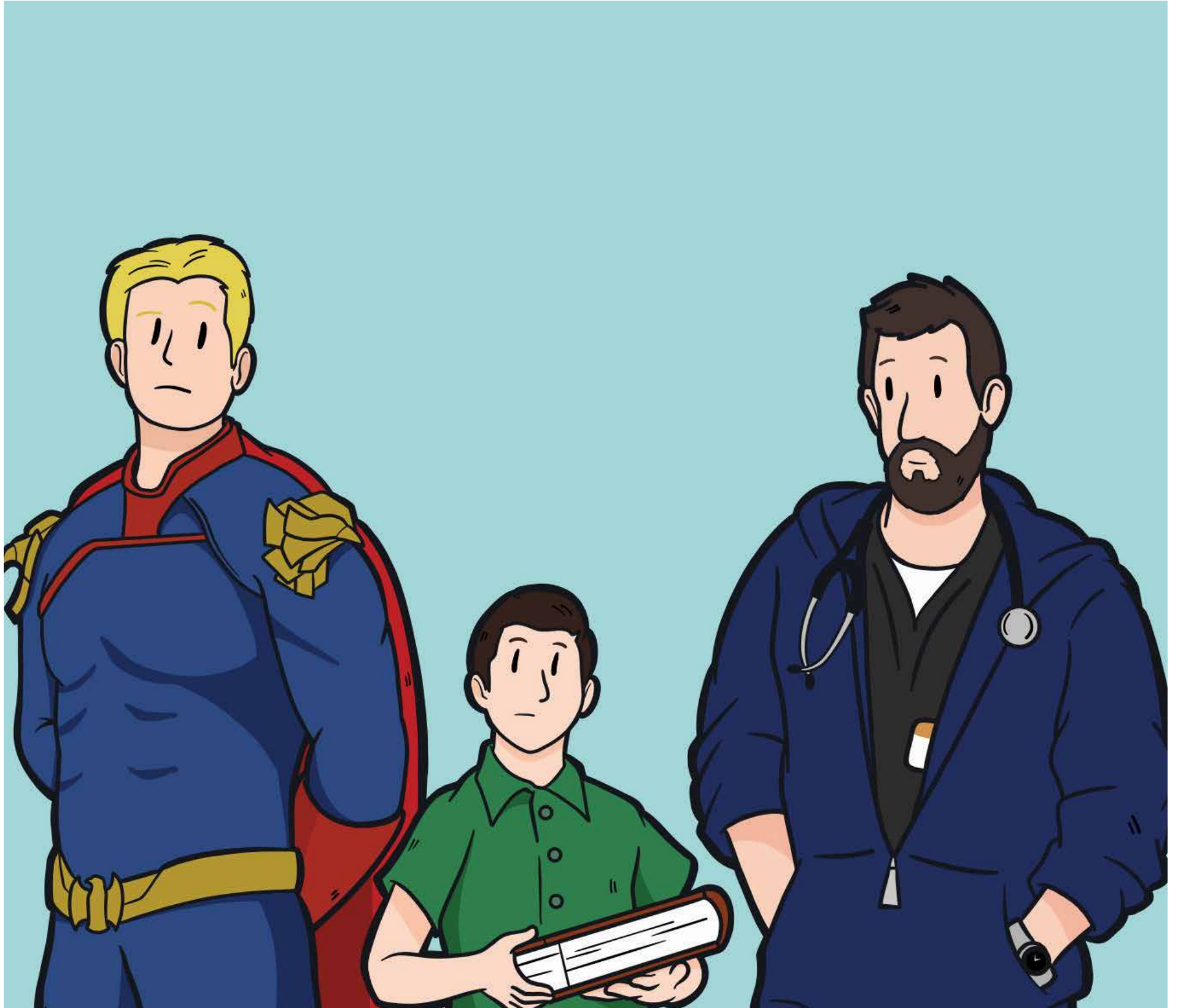
**RIVERSIDE CRAFTS**  
Sit & Paint Ceramics

114 W Upton Ave, Reed City, MI - Located Upstairs  
riversidecraft49677@gmail.com • 231-465-4086

Look for us on Facebook

# What to watch this summer

Recommendations for your summer binge



Graphic by: Lucas Gill | Web Editor

**Lucas Gill and  
Tate Zellman**  
Web Editor and  
Opinions Editor

For most students, the academic year has come to a close, so here are a few series currently streaming that we highly recommend watching while we all relax and recharge over the summer.

#### **The Pitt - HBO Max**

"The Pitt" is an American medical drama series created by R. Scott Gemmill, with John Wells and Noah Wyle as executive producers. The show follows an ensemble of characters that make up the emergency department staff at the fictional Pittsburgh Trauma Medical Center.

The show debuted on Jan. 9, 2025, to widespread critical acclaim, and its second season followed just a year

later, premiering on Jan. 8, 2026.

The series adopts a bold storytelling format, with each episode unfolding in real time over a single hour of one shift. The cast has to navigate the hardships of working in an underfunded, overcrowded ED while also facing their own internal struggles.

There's a lot to commend "The Pitt" for. The series showcases a variety of compelling performances, down-to-earth characters, tight pacing and excellent direction.

At the time of writing, "The Pitt" has already been renewed for a third season, making now the perfect time to start watching.

#### **Invincible - Amazon Prime Video**

"Invincible" is an adult animated superhero series created by Robert Kirkman

based on the comic book series of the same name, which he co-created with Cory Walker and Ryan Ottley.

The series debuted in March of 2021 and, as of writing, its fourth season wrapped up this past month.

"Invincible" centers around teenager Mark Greyson, the son of Earth's strongest superhero, Omni-Man, as he begins to develop powers of his own.

Four seasons later, and the show continues to be a breath of fresh air when it comes to superhero stories. "Invincible" has remained consistent in its gritty, nuanced narrative, which works well in the genre.

The series' storytelling has also been supported by phenomenally animated action sequences and a talented voice cast. "Invincible" has

proven itself to be a truly unique take on superhero narratives and I can't recommend it enough.

#### **The Boys - Amazon Prime Video**

"The Boys" is an adult superhero series created by Eric Kripke based on the comic book series of the same name by Garth Ennis and Darick Robertson.

The series debuted in July 2026 and in 2019 and the final episode of the fifth and final season is set to be released on May 20.

The group, under the same title as the show and led by Billy Butcher, works together to expose the dark nature of supes and take them down, particularly the strongest of them all, Homelander.

Now five seasons in, the show continues to expand the superhero genre by show-

ing that meeting your heroes may not be the experience you would expect.

The series dives deep into character arcs, including the realization of who characters think they're supposed to be, and is supported by highly cinematic action sequences with a very talented cast. The show is coming to an end, so now would be a great time to start watching if you're looking for a new series.

#### **Young Sheldon - Netflix**

"Young Sheldon" is an American sitcom series created by Chuck Lorre and Steven Molaro. It is a spin-off and prequel to "The Big Bang Theory". It is set from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s and follows the childhood of Sheldon Cooper, a gifted young prodigy growing up with his family in Medford, Texas.

The series has seven sea-

sons, and it aired from Sept. 25, 2017, to May 16, 2024.

Not only does the show explore the young life of Sheldon, but viewers also get to see the backstories and desires of his family members. Those include his twin sister, Missy; his older brother, Georgie (George Jr.); his mother, Mary; and his father, George Sr.

The series presents a storyline that balances comedic moments, heartwarming times when family is there and moments when hearts are broken. It also gets into the importance of having values and the transition from childhood to adolescence.

If you're a fan of "The Big Bang Theory," I highly recommend this series.

# Torch Tunes

A bulldog summer playlist

A

## BULLDOG SUMMER



Scan the Spotify code above to listen to our Torch summer playlist

Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Co-Editor in Chief

Follow Us On  
Social Media

@fsutorch

**Grace Heethuis**  
*Culture Editor*

Happy May, everyone! Summer has finally arrived, and students are finally enjoying a break before resuming in the fall. I know this has been a long-awaited little vacation for most students. Many have big summer plans such as traveling, lounging on the beach, spending time with family, and making memories with friends. In honor of that, I have crafted an upbeat playlist with songs to fit the vibe of anything you do this summer, from hiking in the woods to watching a sunset over the lake.

**Scared to Start by Michael Marcagi**

This song has a nostalgic, inspiring feel to it that is perfect for summer. It offers a romantic, daring blend of lyrics that makes you want to spend summer falling in love and adventuring.

**Home by Edith Whiskers**

To keep sort of the same feel as the last song, this one has a cozy, nostalgic feeling that makes you long for a better place. It always makes me dream of being snuggled up with my love, whispering in the dark.

**Belong Together by Mark Ambor**

This is one of those songs that makes you want to go out and spend time at the lake with your friends and family on a hot day. It is truly a joyful song and perfect for making the most of the warmer weather.

**Riptide by Vance Joy**

One of those songs we all remember singing loudly as kids and young teenagers in the middle of summer. It brings back memories of those days, allowing us to reminisce about being a kid again for a moment.

**Story of My Life by One Direction**

Another one of those absolutely timeless bangers that we all know and love. A little overplayed? Maybe. However, it never gets old and makes you think about how you will look back on yourself when you grow old and reminisce on your younger days.

**Hey, Soul Sister by Train**

I definitely have a thing for the songs that were so popular when we were younger. This song has always had a hippie vibe to me and is a sweet reminder that we all belong somewhere. Even if it doesn't seem like it, there are many others out there we are just destined to be friends with.

**I Lived by OneRepublic**

This song is inspiring for its depiction of a 15-year-old boy named Bryan Warnecke who lives with cystic fibrosis. Its inspiring themes of making the most of life despite struggles resonate with many students, especially in this season of life.

**Ophelia by the Lumineers**

This is a lighthearted song that is perfect for playing in the background while you do almost any fun summer activity. It makes you feel good and want to dance, and always reminds me of being in the car with the windows rolled down on a summer day.

**The Nights by Avicii**

Let's be honest, most of Avicii's songs are legendary. Here is yet another song about making the most of our lives, perfect for a summer filled with incredible memories.

**Castle on the Hill by Ed Sheeran**

This entire song feels like looking back on your childhood fondly. This one always makes me want to go for a drive with the music up loud. It's so nostalgic and perfect for a fun summer day.

Have a great summer, Bulldogs, and we will see you again in the fall!

# Opinions

Tate Zellman | Opinions Editor | zellmat@ferris.edu

The Ferris State Torch is published on 27 Wednesdays throughout the academic year. This student-run newspaper is printed by The Pioneer Group.

Our Location:  
Arts and Science Commons 1016  
820 Campus Drive  
Ferris State University  
Big Rapids, MI 49307

The Ferris State Torch welcomes comments on topics of interest to the general readership. Letters should not exceed 300 words in length and The Torch reserves the right to edit for length. Letters will not be edited for grammar, punctuation or spelling. The Torch will not print letters deemed to be libelous or obscene. All letters must be signed by their authors and include his or her phone number.

Unsigned editorials appearing on this page are the opinion of The Torch and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the university's administration, faculty or staff. Signed columns represent the opinion of the writer. Inquiries regarding editorial content should be directed to the Editor in Chief at (231) 591-5978.

To advertise with the Torch, contact Danette Doyle at the Pioneer Group at (231) 592-8359 or Danette.Doyle@hearst.com.

Student media retain the same rights, responsibilities, privileges and protections afforded by the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution and under applicable state laws.

The Torch and fsutorch.com, the student newspaper and its accompanying online version focused on Ferris State University, are public forums for student expression. Student editors have the authority and responsibility to make all content decisions without censorship or advanced approval for both the print and online editions of the student newspapers.

## Torch Staff

- Co-Editor in Chief**  
Nolan Matthews  
matthen4@ferris.edu
- Co-Editor in Chief**  
Harmony Goodman  
goodmah2@ferris.edu
- News Editor**  
Gannon Thomas
- Culture Editor**  
Grace Heethuis
- Sports Editor**  
Nolan Matthews
- Opinions Editor**  
Tate Zellman
- Multimedia Editor**  
Shaunti'ara Reynolds
- Advisor**  
Scott Kowalewski  
ScottKowalewski@ferris.edu
- Web Editor**  
Lucas Gill
- Managing Copy Editor**  
-
- Copy Editors**  
-
- News Reporters**  
-
- Freelance News Reporters**  
Bella Brazeau
- Culture Reporters**  
-
- Freelance Culture Reporters**  
-
- Sports Reporters**  
Devin Wardrop
- Freelance Sports Reporters**  
-
- Photographers**  
Clark Vance

# EDITOR'S COLUMN: Message from the editors

### Incoming co-editor-in-chiefs reflect on Torch values and goals for the upcoming year



Photo courtesy of Harmony Goodman

Editor-in-Chief Harmony pictured at the Starford Theatre Festival.

**Harmony Goodman**  
Co-Editor in Chief

It feels surreal to be writing my very first editor's column as editor-in-chief. I started at the Torch in 2022 as a culture reporter, but I never imagined the places this publication would take me. I am beyond grateful to be in this position; I wouldn't be here today without the support of the Torch.

There are many changes ahead, as the Torch continues to grow and best serve Ferris students, faculty and alumni. I know that while these changes will be an adjustment for all of us, they will also open exciting new doors and opportunities. We're pushing towards being a mainly online exclusive newspaper, a change that has been a long time coming. We recognize that it provides us with the ability to get articles and news out quicker, without having to wait for that weekly print date. This move also allows us the ability to cover more events and stories that would otherwise be considered outdated by Wednesday.

There are a lot of things happening in the world around us. Our job as Torch journalists is to provide honest and non-biased news that relates back to our Ferris community. We must use our voices to keep the integrity of journalism alive in an age where the majority of online content we see is AI. Meanwhile, there are journalists across our nation who are being arrested for covering topics such as protests and wars.

Without journalism, there is no awareness; no awareness means no accountability.

My goal at the Torch for the incoming academic year is to focus on giving our community a voice. Our goals and values as a publication have always been to inform the community, shed light on the truth and to do no harm.

I know our staff is more than capable of handling this new chapter ahead. We will continue to do our best to keep our community informed. I look forward to a great year ahead.

**Nolan Matthews**  
Co-Editor in Chief

I am elated to have this opportunity to write my first editor column as editor-in-chief. I began at the Torch in spring of 2023 as a freelance sports reporter, and since then, I haven't looked back, I would not have been in this position without my former EIC's in Dylan Rider and Blase Gapinski, as well my former sports editor Connor Grypma.

As Harmony mentioned, there are many changes ahead for the Torch, and we both know that we will only do what is best for current Ferris students, faculty, and alumni. These changes ahead are going to certainly

be an adjustment, as we will be making the change to becoming an online exclusive newspaper. This opens the door for more opportunities to get articles out sooner for the community. As a sports guy, this is a big opportunity for timely game previews and post game recaps.

Alongside these changes, we will be making a push to bolster our presence on social media. As our generation these days mainly get their news via social media, whether it be Instagram, X, Facebook or even TikTok, but we realize that we need to make a push to revitalize our social media presence. With this in mind, as Harmony mentioned above, our job at the Torch



Photo courtesy of Nolan Matthews

Editor-in-Chief Nolan spending time with friends at a Mexican restaurant.

is to provide the Ferris and Big Rapids community with bias-free journalism that impacts the Ferris community.

Journalism these days is becoming all the more important to make sure the world and people get the news, even if certain people are trying to prevent this,

journalism is a constitutional right, and we need to express that right.

My personal goal for the Torch this year is to bring the Torch into the 2020s, while making sure the community gets their non-biased news. Again, as Harmony said above, our goal at the Torch

has always been to inform the community, and shed light on the truth and to do no harm.

I am excited for what is to come this upcoming year, and I know that our staff will put out the best possible news, and articles that we can.

**SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR 4 YEARS!**

## A1 AUTO & TOY REPAIR

**15% OFF**  
STUDENTS

**20% OFF**  
MEDICAL,  
MILITARY & STATE

**\$550**  
**BRAKE SPECIAL**  
INCLUDES LABOR,  
ROTOR & LIFETIME  
WARRANTY ON PADS

(231) 629-8027

# Editor's Statement

## Tate Zellman shares plans for the opinions section for fall 2026

**Tate Zellman**  
Opinions Editor

It is an absolute honor to become editor for the opinions section. One of my goals is to keep the section remaining strong.

A little bit about me, my name is Tate Zellman. I'm a fifth-year senior English education major from Grand Haven, MI. I started my time with the Torch back in the fall of 2023. I joined the paper as a news reporter. Ever since then, I have truly enjoyed my experience working with the Torch and having the privilege of covering some amazing events and content.

What I hope to accomplish this year as the opinions editor is to make people have their voices heard. Anyone is fully capable of expressing their opinion. Having a few guest writers, I think, would be a great way to show people that stating your opinion is worth the read.

The guest writers can be students, but I think it would be very cool to also have faculty and staff share their opinions. The more voices we bring to the paper, the

more we will see that opinions are worth sharing.

Anyone can write their opinion, whether it's simple or empowering. Some of my favorite opinion pieces that I've written are that writing is my identity, and loving who I am as someone who was diagnosed with autism. While these opinions are very personal to me, I want people to see me for who I am. And I want to encourage my staff and any guest writers to do the same.

With how the journalism world is looking right now, having strong and cohesive opinion pieces is very important. One opinion can make a difference in people becoming more willing to come out of their shell and realize that someone else has the same opinions and values. It is essential that the Torch provides opinions that speak to other people, and I hope to accomplish that during my time as the section editor.

If you're reading this and you come across an opinion you would like to share, please don't hesitate to reach out. Know that your opinions hold value and are worthy.



Photo courtesy of Tate Zellman

Senior Tate Zellman is excited to begin his first year as opinion's editor and hopes to make the community's voices heard.

# The nightmare of modern life

## Why modern convenience isn't all that we dreamed it would be



Photo courtesy of Grace Heethuis

Younger Grace (far right) enjoying her childhood with her family in an era where she wasn't exhausted from modern life.

**Grace Heethuis**  
Culture Editor

I believe that in many ways, modern life is hurting us more than helping us. Young people today seem to have it so easy. I hear people all the time complaining about how easy we have it today—particularly when it comes to parenting.

At first glance, it might seem like they are right. We

have a world of knowledge at our fingertips, convenience everywhere we look, and we don't even have to walk up the stairs anymore, thanks to escalators. It doesn't even end there.

As far as parenting goes, we have thousands of books, can look up anything in a few seconds, and my favorite invention of modern parenthood—baby wraps and carriers, so I can have hands free

and can still do things.

We might have social media to run to for opinions from people across the world, but how do we know who to listen to, and is there even a right answer all the time? I don't believe there is. With social media comes immense pressure.

On top of having constant access to each other's lives, we face the trials that come with the addictiveness of so-

cial media platforms. Granted, we do make the choices when it comes to how many platforms we use and how often we use them. However, they are designed to be addictive, and we all know this.

Yet, we continue to scroll, becoming stuck in a loop of feeling depressed, scrolling to stave off the sadness and ultimately resorting to sadness. We scroll through 15-second videos that destroy our atten-

tion spans, then wonder why we can't even stay focused long enough to get through our day-to-day responsibilities. We stick our kids in front of screens instead of spending quality time with them and question their behavioral issues.

Modern "conveniences" don't actually make life any easier. Sure, there are a lot of great things about living in our current time. We can connect with family and friends from far away. There are astounding advances in medical technology and we have a million things to try to make life easier.

However, in the long run, I don't think these things make life easier. They make us lazier, harder to please and destroy our attention spans. We have sacrificed bearing discomfort for the sake of ease and efficiency.

In doing so, we have lost something crucial to our well-being: The willingness to be uncomfortable sometimes. This is an important part of character development that I believe we are losing to modern life. The truth is, we make so many things easier than we need to.

A little bit of hardship is good for people, and we should stop being so afraid of

being challenged. Being uncomfortable fosters growth. I'm not saying we should all live miserably, but the ease of modern life has undeniably made us weaker, physically and mentally.

I believe that we're all so much more exhausted sometimes than we're willing to admit. Not because everything is so hard, but because we've made life feel so easy that we are no longer cut out for the demands of a 40-hour work week, raising a family and the social pressure to make it look effortless.

We are living in an age of anxiety manufactured by the ease of modern life and it is slowly killing our sanity, at the very least. We work constantly, try to do more and more, and ultimately feel overworked and unfulfilled.

It's not easier because we don't have to put in so much physical effort. It's just more mentally draining. So no, regardless of how easy young people appear to have it, it's not all sunshine and rainbows.

Now, remember to go do a dopamine detox, get off of your phone, get out in the sun, eat clean, exercise and go have a real conversation with someone.

# Sports

Nolan Matthews | Co-Editor in Chief | matthen4@ferris.edu

## Editor's Statement

### Nolan Matthews shares plans for the sports section for 2026-27 year

**Nolan Matthews**  
Co-Editor in Chief

After spending the last year in the position of sports editor and being named Co-Editor-In-Chief earlier this

month, I will be looking to continue to grow our sports section. Sports at Ferris is always changing, and at the Torch, we have the role of getting the news for athletics out to our readers the best

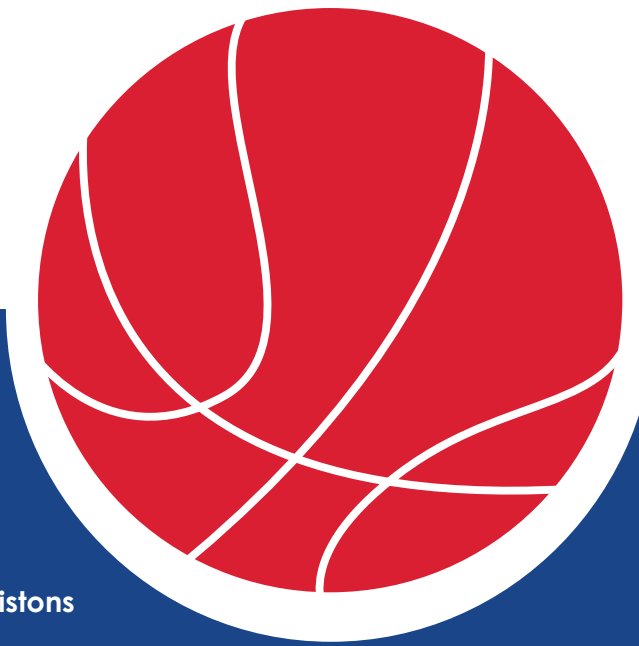
we can, without bias. Over the past year, I believe we did a great job of providing our readers with great previews, athlete features, and same-day reporting. I would like to continue

this, but adding in the aspect of the Big Rapids community. With feature stories focused on some athletes from not just Ferris, but from Big Rapids High School. With the changes forthcoming to

moving to online exclusively, I believe we can harp on same day reporting, with timely articles being posted after big matchups. I believe this past year was a success, but we're not

done just yet, we will continue to do what we do well, and strive to grow and develop.

## NBA finals Predictions



**Devin Wardrop**  
**San Antonio Spurs beat Detroit Pistons**

Both teams have a gauntlet to go through in their respective conferences. San Antonio has the Timberwolves in the second round which I think they can go through. Then, in the Western Conference Final is the Oklahoma City Thunder, who the Spurs beat 3-1 in the season series this year. Plus, with a healthy Wembanyama, the Spurs are always a team who can make a run. In the East, Detroit has been rolling behind Cade Cunningham. After a gritty first round versus Orlando, the Pistons have two more gritty series before the NBA Finals, but gritty is their brand of basketball. In the end, I think Wembanyama is too much for the Pistons and Jalen Duren to handle, so I have the Spurs beating the Pistons to win the NBA Finals, which would be a rematch from 2005.

**Blase Gapinski**  
**Oklahoma City Thunder beat Detroit Pistons**

OKC has proven once again to be an unstoppable force this season. They make the right moves offensively and they have plenty of talent on the defensive side of the ball. Not to mention, Shai Gilgeous Alexander is one of the greatest players in the league. Detroit may not make it out of the East, but this would be a dream finals matchup of mine.

**Tate Zellman**  
**San Antonio Spurs take down the New York Knicks**

The Spurs have been a very consistent team during their playoff run. Their backcourt continues to be impressive, and their bench has been stepping up in terms of scoring. Additionally, Victor Wembanyama continues to be a force to be reckon with. Even though the Knicks have been dominant, the Spurs are gonna surprise them and run away with the chip.

**Nolan Matthews**  
**Oklahoma City Thunder beat Detroit Pistons**

The Thunder are the one team that has just ran through the playoffs without a problem. With Shai Gilgeous-Alexander playing like he always does and Chet Holmgren playing like a defensive player of the year candidate and Ajay Mitchell stepping as the second scoring option. The Pistons are a squad that I think can give the Thunder fits taking the series to six games, but with Holmgren playing defense like he is, Jalen Duren will continue to struggle in the playoffs and there is only so much Cade Cunningham can do, even with Tobias Harris stepping up in the playoffs.

# Top athletes of the 2025-26 season

Who dominated across Ferris athletics this past year



Photo courtesy of Ferris State Athletics

**Kadyn Blanchard handles the ball against Grand Valley on March 8.**

**Nolan Matthews**  
Co-Editor in Chief

## Men's teams

### Football- Justin Payoute

Senior Justin Payoute was the standout defensive back on a Bulldogs defense that ranked first in the league in interceptions with 30. Payoute had a team-leading nine of those 30 interceptions, while having 72 total tackles, which was second on the team. Payoute also had four tackles for loss, one forced fumble, a fumble-return touchdown and an interception-return touchdown. While also securing the 2025 Cliff Harris Award as Division II top defensive player, GLIAC Defensive Back of the Year and earning First-Team All-GLIAC.

### Basketball- Mykel Bingham

In what was a transitional down season for Bulldogs basketball, senior forward Mykel Bingham was a bright spot on a 10-18 Ferris squad. This past season saw him averaging 13 points a game on 52.4%, while shooting 35% from beyond the arc. Bingham averaged a team-leading 8.7 rebounds per game, 2.1 assists and one steal per game. Bingham also secured First-Team All-GLIAC and a spot on the All-GLIAC Defensive Team.

### Hockey- Gavin Best

Senior forward Gavin Best

was the standout player for a Ferris hockey team that was in its first year under new head coach Brett Riley. Best was second on the team in goals with 12, while being first in assists with 14 and being the leader in points with 26. Best also scored a goal that won the game for the Bulldogs in a 3-2 upset victory over reigning national champion Western Michigan.

### Tennis- Kevin Kovacs

In what was a big season for Ferris tennis, junior Kevin Kovacs was the standout player for the Bulldogs team that won the GLIAC Tournament. Kovacs had a 16-5 singles record this season, which included a 4-1 record in GLIAC play, while posting a 14-4 doubles record on the season. Kovacs also won the 2026 GLIAC Athlete of the Year, which goes to the best individual player on the season in the GLIAC.

### Golf- Ben Miller

The sophomore from Paw Paw, Michigan, was a bright spot on the Ferris men's golf squad that made a run to the NCAA Midwest Regional Tournament and placed fifth. Miller had three top 20 finishes on the season, including placing eighth during the Midwest Regional.

### Track and Field- Lucas Seifferlein

Siefferlein was the top man for the Bulldogs this season, a season where

the Bulldogs placed sixth in the GLIAC championships. Seifferlein made a school record-setting run which was the 400 meter which he ran a 49.01. While also being a part of the 4x400 meter relay, which was run at 3:15.18, which comes in at second in Ferris history.

## Women's Teams

### Basketball- Kadyn Blanchard

In what was her sixth and final season with the Bulldogs, due to many injuries across her time here, senior guard Kadyn Blanchard's final season was one of her strongest. She helped her squad to a 26-7 record and a bid to the Midwest Region Quarterfinals. Blanchard averaged 16.9 points per game on 45.1% shooting, while shooting 33% from beyond three-point range. Blanchard also set the program record for most points in a career with 1,978, while also being named GLIAC Player of the Year, the first Bulldog to do so in 25 years.

### Volleyball- Gabby Piazza

In just her sophomore year, outside hitter Gabby Piazza had a strong season that saw her team go 27-8, win the GLIAC regular season championship and earn another bid in the NCAA Midwest Regionals and making a run to the national championships. Piazza had a team leading 466 kills on 1,236

attempts, which was good for a .218 kill percentage. Piazza also led the team in points with 518.5 and secured a spot on the First-Team All-GLIAC.

### Softball- Emma Gillard

Junior outfielder Emma Gillard had her breakout season in what was the Bulldogs' strongest season in years, finishing with a record of 37-20, which was the most wins in a season since 1999. Gillard had a .327 batting average, 11 extra base hits, nine home runs, while leading the team in RBIs with 54 and stolen bases with 19, while only being caught stealing twice.

### Soccer- Katherine Welch

Another strong season is in the books for the junior forward from Ada, forward Katherine Welch was a big part of her team that had another eight-win season. Welch led her team in goals

with six and points with 15, while being second on the squad in assists with three. Welch also earned a spot on the First-Team All-GLIAC for the second season in a row.

### Tennis- Madeline Peisley

Freshman Madeline Peisley had a big first season for the Bulldogs, who finished second in the GLIAC and earned a mid in the NCAA Midwest Regional. Peisley went 20-5 in singles play on the season, while going 6-1 in GLIAC play. In doubles play, Peisley went 13-11 and 5-2 in the GLIAC. Peisley's strong debut season helped her earn the 2026 GLIAC Freshman of the Year award, along with being named First-Team All-GLIAC.

### Golf- Kamryn Shannon

In her final season as a Bulldog, senior Kamryn Shannon put up another strong season in the crimson and gold. Shannon helped

her squad place first in the GLIAC Championships for the second time in four years, also winning it in 2023. While also making a run to the NCAA East Regionals, hoping to make a bid for the NCAA National Championships. Shannon had six top 15 finishes on the season, including a second-place finish in the UMSL Spring Invitational and a third-place finish in the ODU NC4K Classic.

### Track and Field- Whitney Farrell

Senior Whitney Farrell was arguably the top runner for the Bulldogs this season. Farrell had many strong runs on the season, including an all-time fourth-place run on the 3k with a 9:56.70 and 5K with a 17:16.73, 10th all-time in the 1500 running a 4:47.42 and setting the program record on the 3000 meter steeplechase with a 10:33.43.

Lee's  
AUTOWASH  
& SELF SERVE  
Locally owned & operated  
231-796-5314 14493 NORTHLAND DRIVE,  
BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307  
OPEN  
7 DAYS  
A  
WEEK!

# Catch up with the Bulldogs

What has each team done in their offseason



Photo by: Clark Vance | Torch Photographer

Bulldogs football comes out onto the field against Ashland in the second round of the 2025 playoffs.

**Devin Wardrop**  
Sports Reporter

With the 2025-26 season nearly over and the 2026-27 season coming right around the corner, it's time to look

at the teams and see where the Bulldogs could end up next year.

**Football**

The Ferris State football team won its fourth National Championship in five years,

and two separate back-to-back championship-winning seasons under head coach Tony Annese. The Bulldogs will look to three-peat and win five in six years, which has never been done at the

Division II level. To help with the quest, Ferris football announced 45 recruits on signing day back in February. 29 players came from Michigan, including athlete Luke Ahern from Rockford, who will join his brothers Zak and Ryan. Also from Rockford is linebacker Sam Cummings. Ferris State also continues its tradition of recruiting out of the Florida pipeline, bringing seven signees this year, including a pair of cornerbacks in Jaylon Ammons from Deerfield Beach and Bill Brown from Miramar. In total, the Bulldogs got 23 signees on offense, 17 on defense, with four others being able to play any position. With a strong recruiting class, as well as retaining key pieces from last season, Ferris State will be the team to beat in the fall.

**Basketball**

With a new head coach for the men and women, fresh off a trip to the NCAA playoffs, next year is looking bright. For the women, the 2025-26 season marked back-to-back years where they lost in the GLIAC Championship game, both to rival Grand Valley. After losing key players like guards Elle

Irwin, Kady Blanchard, and forward Mya Hiram, the team looked to the new recruiting class to help. Three players have committed to Ferris State. Jozelynn Begick, a guard from Freeland, Gracy Carrier, a guard from Chipewa Valley, and Shayler McIntyre, a forward from Garber.

As for the men following a 10-18 season, the hiring of Brooks Miller as the team's 15th head coach makes next season one to watch. Miller led Division III Trine University to the 2024 National Championship. Miller has already started to make additions to the roster, including transfer David Williams, a guard from Miles College. Players from the Grand Rapids area have also committed out of high school to Big Rapids, including Jovon Daniels from Hudsonville and Kyle Brown from Forrest Hills Northern.

**Hockey**

Following a season in which the team had a first-round exit in the CCHA Mason Cup, the Ferris State hockey team is looking to take the next step. After winning eight games in the 2025-26 season, the Bulldogs, coached by Brett Riley,

looked to the portal to try and bolster the team, where eight players transferred to Big Rapids, including Massachusetts transfer and 2022 seventh-round NHL draft pick by the Detroit Red Wings, forward Owen Mehlenbacher. In 32 games for the Minutemen, Mehlenbacher recorded nine points (3-6-9). Other transfers include a pair of forwards from Western Michigan in Zach Bade and Ryan Kusler.

**Volleyball**

Following a 27-win season that included a trip to the Division II National Championships, the Ferris State volleyball team looks to continue its deep playoff runs behind head coach Tia Brandel-Wilhelm. To help with that, the Bulldogs signed four recruits from the Midwest, including a pair from Illinois in middle hitter Rosie Krenz from Cheney and outside hitter Laney Snow from Wapella. With these recruits and players from the portal, the Bulldogs will look to make a run in the 2026 season.

**A-1 Auto Glass**

**YOUR LOCAL AUTO GLASS EXPERTS**

[a1glassrc.com](http://a1glassrc.com)

**2991 210 Street, Reed City, MI**  
**231-832-0092 • 800-777-6117**