



Turn to pages 4 and 5 to see what the Echo uncovered on student alcohol use.

the Echo)))

Read about 3 special productions on page 6: Thor: Ragnarok, The Justice League, and Illiana's Emma



Illiana Christian High School

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The "Participation Awards" pose after winning the costume awards.

Photo by Mrs. Deb Kamp

Illiana unites with rivals to dodge disease, disaster

Jordan Bivins
Reporter

On Friday, Illiana held it's annual dodgeball tournament. The event was sponsored by Go Club.

This year any money raised was donated to Peggy Barth, the aunt of graduate Jack Barth. Peggy needs \$60,000 for a stem cell transplant. She suffers from multiple sclerosis. The procedure will take place on April 3 in Mexico because the treatment is experimental and not yet approved in the United States.

"I was so excited," Barth said. "I never been to a dodgeball tournament. I feel very excited and very blessed."

28 teams participated in the tournament. Sophomore Eddie Spoelman of Seal Team Six explained that his team was made up of mostly his friends.

Graduates from last year's winning team were invited to play in the dodgeball tournament as special guests. Micah Hescott, John Eenigenburg, Andy Sons, Kyle Schaaf, and Erik Detmar were a part of that team, and they enjoyed returning for the tournament. When asked what team this year surprised them the most, the entire group said almost in unison, "The golf team."

Eenigenburg explained that he didn't expect the team to come out and play

as hard as it did.

Robert Sacatenco, a transfer student from Houston, Texas, was a spectator for the event. He said that he participated in similar events at his former school. He added, "The tournament was very exciting. I hope I can play in it next year."

The Trailer Park Boys won the Illiana dodgeball tournament. They will be attending the Trinity tournament along with Power Rangers Go, Seal Team Six, and Achilles Heel.

The Participation Awards, a group of junior and senior girls who spray painted themselves gold so that they appeared like trophies, won first place for best costume.

Students roll with mobile food pantry

Liz VanDrunen

Co-Feature Editor

On Nov. 8, ten students helped the Mobile Food Pantry run by Emmanuel CRC of Sauk Village, Il.

Illiana Go Club sponsor Sarah Johnson attends the church and the connection for Go Club to become involved in the food pantry. Before this school year, the food pantry served the community at three p.m. and most students were unable to help at that time. Now the pantry operates from four to six, allowing Go Club to bring students with them.

Johnson said, "Those of us with the privilege need to help others around us. Sauk

Village is in our backyards and we forget that there are problems there too."

Students contributed by checking people in, getting carts, and helping pack baskets.

Senior Maddie DeYoung was one of the students who volunteered.

DeYoung said, "Opportunities like this one definitely need to be grasped more by students, but I think they get brushed over; we could put up signs or posters to remind people or make more announcements about these opportunities."

The Mobile Food Pantry is now closed for the season and will reopen in March.



Photo by Cambrie Van Roekel

Junior Emma Groot helps a woman bring groceries to her car.

Hot lunch solution vexes some students

Jaden Denton
Reporter

The Parents in Education (PIE) board at Illiana has introduced a new form of ordering hot lunch. Students will now order online through Renweb instead of at the counter using a lunch card or cash.

The system is being changed in order to increase

accuracy in ordering food. On some days there would be so much excess food that it would go to waste. Other days there would be a shortage, and some students in Lunch B would be unable to receive hot lunch. PIE hopes that the new system will eliminate such problems.

Sophomores Ethan Verhagen and Amara Ude both liked the former system and

have elected not to order hot lunch.

"It was nice having a fallback so if you forget your lunch you can just go and get one at the kitchen," said Verhagen.

Ude also expressed dislike in the new system. She said, "It just seems more complicated, especially for families who haven't done it online before."

Senior Emily Montallvo had concerns about the new system too and found it annoying but said she does understand why they are doing it this way.

But Mrs. Kim VanRoekel, a former board member of PIE, said she understood the concern with the new system and said it will take a while to become popular.

"Just be patient," said VanRoekel. She said she believes it will save a lot of money and eliminate waste.

Teacher Tom Roozeboom said that everyone needs to see it from the others' perspective and that it will take a while to remember to order ahead.

"Everyone should just suck it up" said Roozeboom.

Weinstein's keys to sexual harassment: persistence, power, excuses

Disgraced movie mogul Harvey Weinstein has now founded Weinstein University, a school where he can take his considerable life experiences and boil them down to nuggets of wisdom that can help others

find their way to positions of power and prestige. The school boasts guest speakers like comedians Bill Cosby and Louis CK, Senator Al Franken, and Senate candidate Roy Moore.

The promotional material for the school suggests just a few of the lessons Weinstein and associates promise to pass along for your enlightenment and for the building of a better life.

1. Be persistent

Never take no for an answer. Weinstein never gave up until he got what he wanted. Once he found his prey, he pounced on her. No is not an option. Actress Ashley Judd said that "I said no, a lot of ways, a lot of times, and he always came back at me with some new ask."

Therefore, always be persistent. When you really want something, don't give up until you've got it.

2. Power is Key

Weinstein was a very important player in the industry for decades. Not only did he produce films, but he also dabbled in magazine publishing and political activism. He knew that because of his social and economic status, he could harass women with impunity.

With his power, Weinstein walked all over women in the industry. Moral of the story—might makes right!

3. "I'm going to therapy" ALWAYS beats a confession and apology

After being terminated from the board of the company he founded, Weinstein released an apology statement to The Times. In that statement, along with misquoting rapper Jay Z, he announced that he was going to take a leave of absence from his company (after already being terminated... how does that work?) to seek therapy.

Notice what he didn't do? No admission of guilt. No apology to those wronged. Either of these makes him look responsible. Instead, when victims speak up against him, he plays the victim. It is a familiar script, but oh so successful. We've seen it employed by numerous men, including Bill Cosby and, most recently, Roy Moore.

Turn the perpetrator into the victim. Get public opinion on your side! Declare that YOU are the one who needs therapy.



Lauren Curtis
Co-Arts Editor

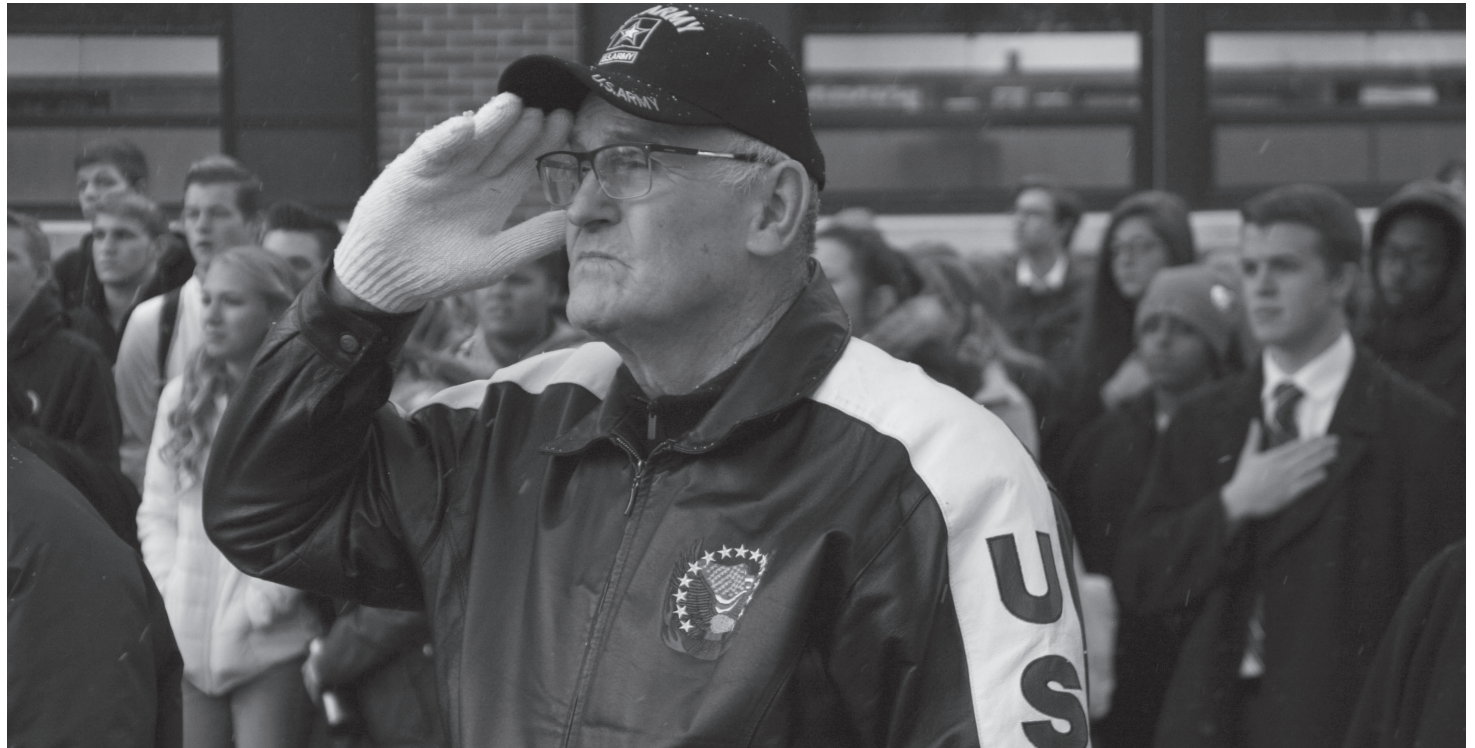


Photo by Jeff DeVries

A United States Army veteran salutes the American flag during morning devotions.

Veterans Day program honors those who served

Amber VanKalker
Reporter

On Friday, Nov. 10, the student body honored military veterans who have dedicated and sacrificed for our country. Junior Alex Wondaal led devotions for the community on the front lawn, and seniors Nick Deja and Nathan Devries, both Lansing police cadets, raised the flag as trumpeters senior Paul

Kamp and junior Elizabeth DeYoung played the national anthem.

Mrs. Hillegonds, whose brother serves in the military, said, "It's important to bring veterans to our school for students to have a face to someone who has fought... and it brings that reality to us."

Neil Venhuizen is a veteran of the Dutch Merchant Marines and the American military.

Originally from the Netherlands, Venhuizen grew up during World War II. His family helped with the Dutch Underground during the war. Hard winters and low rations made life difficult for those resisting the Nazis. As a young teen, Venhuizen stole firewood to keep resistance soldiers warm and eggs for soldiers to eat.

Venhuizen moved to America in 1955, and

shortly thereafter he joined the US army, serving in his new country that had come to the aid of his previous homeland.

Students like to see the veterans at this annual event, but veteran Ron Beishuizen said even more he likes coming to Illiana on Veterans day because he "likes to see the beautiful students and his fellow brothers in arms."

Praise crowd taco dinner raises over \$10,000

Haleigh Olthof
Co-News Editor

Praise Crowd Committee, assisted by Illiana parents, hosted a taco and ice cream bar fundraiser in the upper gym Nov. 11 between performances of Illiana's play.

The committee met its goal of raising \$10,000 to cover its costs for the year.

The money will be used to buy the food served before worship events on Friday nights as well as gifts for seniors at the end of the year, said Praise Crowd Committee member Taylor Huizenga. She said that guests' donations depended on the size of the family.

Although the suggested donation was \$10, Praise Crowd Committee member Grace Van Dam said many attendees gave \$20 bills or wrote checks for larger amounts.

Illiana parent Patty Swets organized most of the fundraiser, said Praise Crowd sponsor Mrs. Rachel Drost.

Drost said she is excited to anticipate seeing more students participate in Praise Crowd this year.



Photo courtesy of lyricopera.org

Elaborate props bring Wagner's German opera to life at the Lyric Opera in Chicago.

German students attend 5-hour opera

Beth Boonstra
Co-Editor in Chief

Three mini buses of German students went to the Lyric Opera House on Saturday, Nov. 18 to experience a five hour opera entirely in German and receive 100% as a German test grade.

This Wagner composed opera, Die Walküre, or The Valkyrie, featured a well known song, "The Ride

of the Valkyries." The story is based on Norse mythology.

The students were able to attend the nationally renowned opera company for only \$15 with aid from the PIE board as well as special student ticket prices.

"The five hours did not go by that fast," said senior Ben Fabrizius. "Wagner... takes time to explain things.... I enjoyed the last act

because there was some action."

Senior Karli Petrarca along with many other students had difficulty understanding the German singing and was thankful for the English supertitles.

"Some people had trouble staying awake," said Petrarca. "It was a strange story to say the least, but it was very cultural and an experience that I'll never forget."



Senior Jake Lyzenga (foreground) and Junior Ben Wiersema donate their blood in the dining room.

Photo by Jeff DeVries

Heartland event draws students, blood

Kylie Boss
Reporter

Around seventy people donated blood at the biannual Illiana blood drive on Nov. 14. Student Council has been organizing it for over four decades and does it, according to senior Student Council member Payton Smit, as one way to reach out to the community. Smit said, “Roughly seventy people volunteered, but a few people couldn’t give

for one reason or another.” That number is larger than last year, according to Ms. Karen Morgan, a Heartland Blood Center worker at the blood drive. Heartland aims to collect 50-150 pints of blood from a blood drive, said Morgan. The blood collected then goes to hospitals in the area and occasionally goes to the Red Cross if there is a disaster or special need of some kind.

Senior Carlee Faber volunteered because people who are less fortunate than her need blood. “[Donating blood feels] more like a personal relationship with others,” Faber said. “The experience was so worth it.” Faber encourages others to do the blood drive and urges people who are scared to just do it. “It’s only a little pinch,” Faber said.

Auction raises \$50,000 to support STEM, sports

Cassie Laninga
Co-Photo Editor

Illiana held its 3rd annual sports auction on Saturday, Nov. 18 from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tables and chairs were set up in the lower gym and free food, desserts, and drinks were given out at the concession stand. Mr. Darren DeBoer, one of the auction committee members, said that planning the auction is a year long process. “We started planning

this auction a week after last year’s auction,” said DeBoer. “It’s something you put together all year round.” The auction committee is made up of about 8 leaders, along with 25 adults who help out. Auction items are obtained through donations or bought with donated money. “We stored the items all over in hidden Illiana places,” said DeBoer. “They were locked up for 6 to 8 months.” This year’s auction raised about \$50,000, an

increase of nearly 20% over last year’s number. The proceeds go to the Athletics and STEM programs. The STEM program hopes to purchase a CNC Router, a computer-controlled cutting machine that can cut through various materials like wood and steel. Teacher Tom Knapper said it seemed like a good turnout. “Word just keeps getting out. It’s an athletic auction. People like sports,” said Knapper.

Moms pray for Illiana in times of plenty, need

Maddie Holesinger
Co-Editor in Chief

Moms in Prayer is a group of Illiana mothers that meets on the first, third, and fifth Monday of every month. The group meets at ICHS from nine to ten while school is in session, and they pray for the staff, students, volunteers, parents, school board and broader community.

The current group consists of five moms, some of whom have been praying together for the last fourteen years.

“I was invited by another mom,” said Mrs. Mary Boonstra, who has been in Moms In Prayer for about ten years. “I was a little bit skeptical because I have often found prayer meetings to be gossip meetings. However, Moms in Prayer was different. We don’t really share prayer requests with the other moms and discuss them. Instead, we pray our adoration and confession and thanks and supplication to God. It is in this way that we make known our prayer requests with the others in the group.”

Mrs. June Kamp, a mother of two Illiana students, said “We have never stopped praying for all our kids. We all see the critical need to pray.” She, along with Mrs. Chris Buiter, were involved with Moms

In Prayer before their kids were even students at Illiana. Buiter became a dedicated member when her oldest daughter, who is twenty years old, was in first grade. These moms have prayed through times of plenty and in times of need, and not only have they seen God’s blessings for others, but they have experienced it themselves. “God has blessed us,” said Kamp. “The Moms In Prayer group has not blessed us though we have come to be a blessing to each other, as praying moms.... God has answered many spoken and unspoken requests.” Kamp said that the Moms In Prayer group believes that God is continually at work, and that He “honors the prayers given in humility and with a thankful heart.” She also added that most of the moms in the group feel they are under spiritual attack from evil. “The devil does not want us to pray,” Kamp said. “Prayer is not for the faint-hearted, but for the faithful who trust in an amazing God.” “The greatest unleashed power is God himself,” Kamp added. “He is the one who sustains and guides this school and teachers and students. We need to come before him, to help us make this place, Illiana Christian High School, a godly place.”



Auctioneer Curtis Van Drunen acknowledges a bid in the gym.

Photo by Marie Limback

Nihao Club serves dumplings to raise funds to help Chinese school buy books



Nihao Club members pose before serving various flavors of dumplings to students.

Photo by Kelly Liu

Dominic Turkstra
Reporter

Nihao Club sold dumplings for lunch on Wednesday, Nov. 1. Proceeds from the sale of the dumplings went to a school in China that needed money for school books. Nihao Club offered various flavors of dumplings, including chicken and mushroom, pork and corn, and seafood.

Mr. Venhuizen said, “The pork and corn dumplings were the favorite of the flavors.” Sophomore Alexander Sanchez said that he ordered the pork and corn dumplings and that they were pretty good but a little soggy. Many dumplings went unsold, especially the chicken and mushroom dumplings and the seafood dumplings. But the majority of the kids that

ate the dumplings said they were good and were happy about where the money was going to. The amount earned from the dumplings was around \$200. Senior Max Men said he has yet to determine if he’ll send the money now, or use it to buy books for the school the next time he returns home to China.

Illiana students’ drinking mirrors national averages

According to an Echo survey, 33% of the senior class drinks alcohol regularly. To get a picture of student alcohol use, we contacted four 2017 graduates (one non-drinker and three drinkers) to hear their stories.

Ben, top 10 student

Maddie Holesinger
Co-Editor in Chief

Ben*, a varsity athlete who graduated from Illiana last year, had his first drink the summer before high school. Drinking became a norm for him his sophomore year.

His first experience drinking was at home. His parents were gone traveling, and his older brother had a party.

“We played drinking games and

everyone had a pretty good time,” said Ben. “I was with a bunch of older kids in college.”

While attending Illiana his house became a common party house. Ben was the first of his friends to drink, so while he did not feel pressure to drink from friends, being around it influenced him greatly.

Ben said, “I wouldn’t say that I pressured other kids intentionally, but I could understand if others say that I did just because I drank around them.”

The parties Ben went to were not confined to just one social group. Most times he would just tell his parents he was hanging out with friends. If he was spending the night, he would add that his friends were having a sleepover.

“The fewer details the better,” said Ben. “I have a feeling they [my parents] knew, but there was never a conversation. I think they disapproved, but they wanted me to make my own decisions and deal with any consequences.”

Throughout his four years at Illiana, Ben admits that he had driven while intoxicated and he had been in cars with drivers who were intoxicated.

“Drinking is wrong because it’s against the law,” said Ben. “However, I don’t think the act itself is inherently bad. If the law didn’t state that you can’t, I wouldn’t think drinking is morally wrong.”

“I drank because I enjoyed it. It was a good time and a nice way to socialize with others,” said Ben. “I regret drinking only because it excluded others. I don’t regret or feel bad about doing it. I think that the hurt caused was minimal and the enjoyment was not.”

Easter, though sober, witnessed ‘stupid stuff’

Grant Gibson
Co-Feature Editor

Isaiah Easter, a graduate of the class of 2017, while he attended Illiana, watched his friends go through the ups and downs of high school life just as he was. Those downs included the ever-present problem of alcohol.

Easter has been sober his whole life. Why? He has some personal reasons. His main reason, he said, was representing himself and his race as a “black individual in a highly-white community.”

“Anything that constitutes

as ‘wrong’ could be demonizing to my character,” he said, “and people could criticize it more heavily by just prejudice.”

Other reasons included his being a part of the 2016-2017 Illiana Chapel Committee, not feeling pressure to drink, and preferring to be in control of his body.

“I don’t find the simple activity of getting drunk appealing, especially with the aspect of losing control,” he said. “I do have a lot of problems with American culture, wanting to get drunk specifically, just because that’s dumb and it leads to a lot of stupid

stuff.” Easter’s witnessed his fair share of “stupid stuff” as well. Many of his classmates and even close friends have gotten drunk, but Easter made sure that he expressed his thoughts “openly and explicitly” without portraying himself as “this white knight trying to extend myself beyond this culture.”

Easter added, “For me it was very important that I was just informing them of reasoning and also limitations and smarts - being sensible - because a lot of times, high school people won’t do that.”

Bella, varsity athlete

Cate Peerbolte
Co-Feature Editor

Bella* began drinking alcohol the spring of her junior year at Illiana. She was first exposed to it by friends from another high school. Bella said, “They [her friends] just made it seem like it was fun. They never seemed to get in trouble with it, so I thought I could do it without getting in trouble and no one would really have to know about it.”

Bella also attended Illiana drinking parties; she said that she never felt any pressure to drink at Illiana but knew where to find it. She said that it

was mostly athletes who were there drinking, but a few “drama kids” were also in attendance. She said that chapel committee members were at the parties, but they didn’t drink.

Her parents never knew about her drinking – and they still don’t. Bella said that she would spend the night at a friend’s house if she was planning on drinking. Bella said, “Some of my friends weren’t happy with me. They definitely didn’t like it. But some of my other friendships grew through it.”

As a freshman, Bella never thought that she would drink because she was an athlete. As a senior, she didn’t see a problem with it.

“Drinking doesn’t bother me. I

think it is someone’s personal choice,” she said.

Bella said that she did drive once after drinking. “Before I drove, I made myself sober up, I made myself throw up, I ate a ton, and I drank a lot of water. I made sure I wouldn’t feel its effects.” (For the record, vomiting and eating will not change your blood alcohol level. Alcohol remains in your bloodstream until the liver has time to break it down.)

She added, “At times I regret it, like lately I have been, and then at other times I don’t. But then sometimes I will get sad or bored and want to have some fun, so I will drink.”

John, student council member

Maddie Holesinger
Co-Editor in Chief

John*, a graduate who was a member of student council and an Illiana varsity athlete, first experienced drinking as a junior. He drank with a bunch of friends in one of their basements before going out and TP-ing some girls’ houses. That was the beginning of what would become a trend his senior year.

“I drank to get drunk,” said John. “I hate the taste of alcohol, so I was either going to get blackout drunk or I wasn’t gon-

na drink. I wanted to go crazy.”

He started drinking more regularly his senior year because he stopped caring about school and was just ready to graduate and move on. While he loved most of his teachers at Illiana, he found that most of the people in his grade were fake.

“People would judge the students who started drinking their sophomore and junior year, but when senior year rolled around most of those people were the ones drinking too,” said John.

John explained that the parties included all kinds of people from school. Only one division mattered.

“If you drank, you were there,” said John. “If you didn’t,

you’d end up getting annoyed with all the drunk people and you would just leave.”

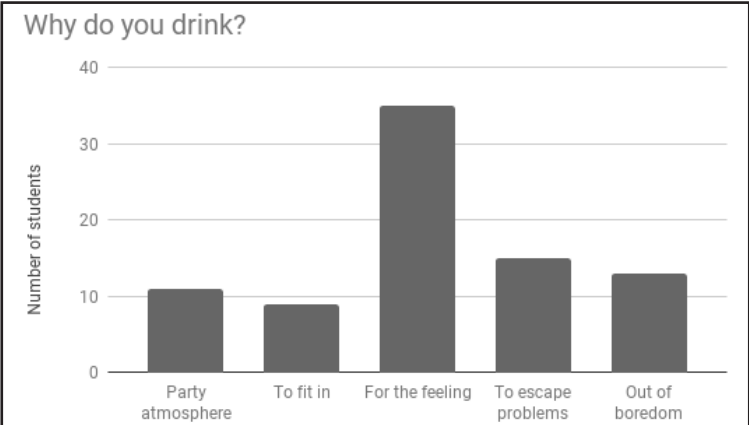
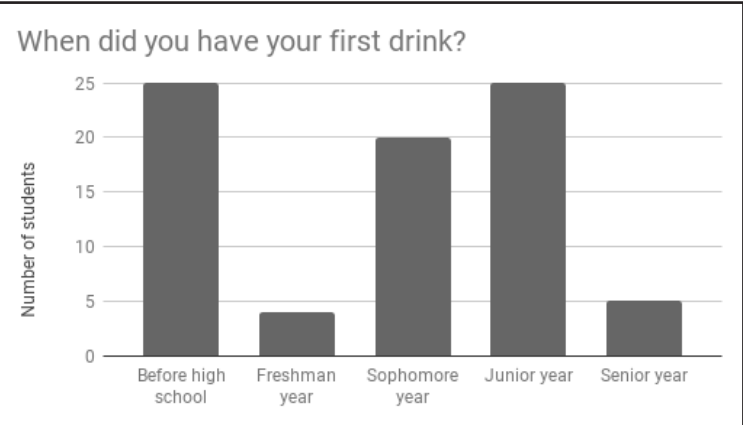
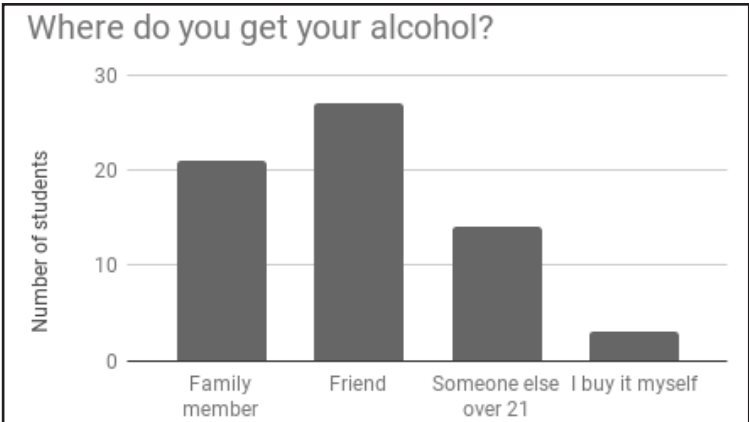
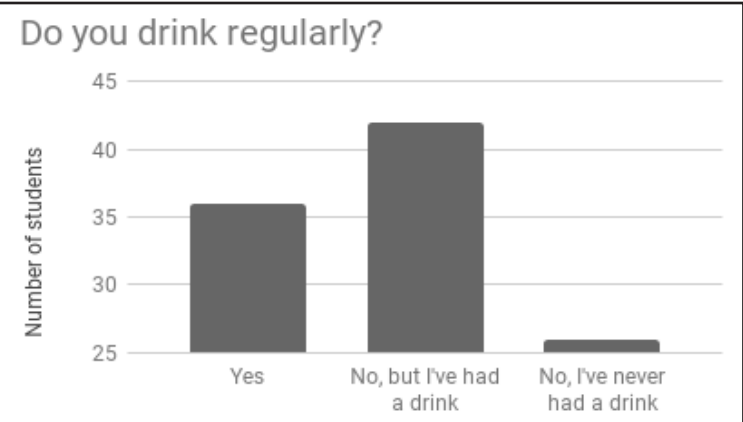
For John, parents were not really an issue. They trusted him when he said he was going out and no questions were asked. He thinks they were too busy watching over his younger brother who was the “naughty” one, so he was able to slip under the radar undetected.

While John’s relationship with his parents was never really affected by drinking, he did end up losing one of his best friends because of it. John also saw how drinking tore up a lot of dating relationships around him. In the end, he didn’t care.

“I don’t regret drinking at Illiana at all; I had fun, and made memories with my friends and that is all that really mattered,” John said.



*names have been changed on request of student



These charts depict the results of a recent Echo survey of the senior class. This survey was given in a multiple-choice format and all answers were anonymous. A total of one hundred and eight seniors out of one hundred and twenty-one seniors responded to this survey.

National Statistics on Underage Drinking

Riley Goodwin
Co-News Editor

- Top 10 reasons for drinking among underage drinkers include: peer pressure, increased independence, desire, stress.
- In 2015, 7.7 million young people ages 12-20 said they’ve drunk alcohol beyond “just a few sips” in the past month.
- In 2015, 33% of young people ages 12-20 said they’ve had a drink in the past month.
- In 2015, 18% of young people ages 12-20 said they’ve binge drunk in the past month.
- In 2015, 20% of young people ages 12-20 said they’ve ridden with a drunk driver in the past month.
- In 2015, 8% of young people ages 12-20 said they’ve driven drunk in the past month.
- By age 15, 33% of teens have had at least 1 drink.
- By age 18, 60% of teens have had at least 1 drink.
- There are an average of 4,300 deaths among underage youth from excessive drinking every year.
- Since 2010, there have been over 1,580 deaths from motor vehicle accidents involving underage drinkers.
- Since 2010, there have been at least 1,269 deaths from homicides involving underage drinkers.

How Illiana combats student usage of alcohol

Counselors, administrators discuss Illiana’s policy for students found drinking

Liz VanDrunen
Co-Feature Editor

“Kids in high school who are drinking normally don’t want to stop; that [desire to quit] usually comes down the road,” said guidance counselor Helen Bussema.

This month, the Echo staff decided to look at the effect that alcohol has on its students.

Vice principal AJ Turkstra said, “We encourage kids to be better than that and to not go down that road [drinking], which leads to all kinds of things we don’t want for them.”

Neil Zandstra, Illiana’s other guidance counselor, confirmed that he has had students who are drinking and want to

stop who have come to him because they felt the effects of peer pressure and they didn’t know how to get out of those situations. He said that most students begin drinking because they fall to peer pressure, but others drink to escape from their problems.

Bussema said, “They try it, they like, they keep doing it.”

According to Zandstra, in the past, the school has had people come in and talk about the dangers of drinking and driving, and they plan to again this year. There have also been chapels on this topic, and discussions in both science and health classes.

School policy states that students who are caught drinking by the school are required to go

to a minimum of three counseling sessions with a certified drug and alcohol therapist. Afterward the therapist lets the school know whether the student has an addition or not. If there is a problem, the student continues with therapy counseling.

“The program is only effective if the student wants to change, it can’t be forced on them,” said Bussema.

The school has seen success with this program in the past.

Zandstra said, “Students who had the intervention were able to stop their drinking before it could become a huge problem in their lives.”

Illiana’s policy for alcohol can be found in the parent-student handbook.

Turkstra said, “In some ways what kids do with alcohol is up to their parents, their parents should be watching that and monitoring it from home.”

Parent responses to their childrens’ drinking vary

From supplying their kids with alcohol to acting as designated driver to forbidding it altogether, parent responses are all over the map.

Haleigh Olthof
Co-News Editor

Cate Peerbolte
Co-Feature Editor

Many Illiana parents have different policies on their high

school student’s drinking. Some parents interviewed said their children rarely attended parties. Others were aware of their child attending parties but do not allow their child to consume alcohol.

In a survey of Illiana’s senior class, twelve percent said

that their parents were okay with them drinking. Twenty percent said their parents were not okay with it. Twenty-one percent said that their parents did not know that they drank alcohol; and forty-five percent of the seniors said they do not drink.

One Illiana parent said he makes alcohol available to his teenager, but the student “never uses it.” The student is not allowed to drink with friends at home. The student’s parents both said there would be a “severe” punishment if they found

that the student had been drinking at a party because the student drives to and from the parties. The parents sometimes call the parents of the person hosting a party ahead of time. The student has a curfew of 11 or 11:30 pm.

Another Illiana parent said she drives her son to the parties he attends. She said she talks with him about the dangers of underage drinking “all the time.” When her son hosted a party recently, she was home and checked on the teens throughout the party.

Another Illiana parent said her

rule on drinking is that it “better never happen.” She enforces this rule by staying up until her child comes home at an 11:30 curfew. She makes sure that she is home when her son or daughter has friends over and checks in on them.

Another Illiana parent’s rule on drinking was the law, none until 21 years old. She stays up until her child returns home and has a conversation with her child to check his breath. She also makes sure that alcohol is not accessible to him.



Thor, god of humor

Beth Boonstra

Co-Editor in Chief

All the way back to the comic books, one thing has always set Marvel's superhero stories apart: comedy. After years of action-comedy films, Marvel created its first full-out comedy: "Thor: Ragnarok." This movie had several fight scenes, but was much more intriguing as a comedy.

I would most definitely give this film a five-star rating as a comedy alone, but it has even more than simple jokes. This movie has many lessons to be learned about leadership as well as touching scenes about friendship, featuring several Marvel fan favorites. Despite his recent demise, Loki returns in this movie, and we are all happier for it. Banner-Hulk makes a surprise appearance after having disappeared from the last Avengers movie and helps to save Asgard. A much needed Marvel universe strong and defiant woman

also makes her debut in the Marvel universe. Valkyrie makes a memorable first impression by falling over drunk as she kills a dozen or so raiders. Because of her swagger, charm, and defiance, some have even called her

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Thor: Ragnarok

Rating: PG-13

Genre: Fantasy/ Sci-Fi

Running Time: 2h 10m

Released: Nov. 3, 2017

Starring: Chris Hemsworth

Cate Blanchett

Tom Hiddleston

Mark Ruffalo

Sakaar is a planet for all of the unwanted and forgotten, where Thor and the Hulk have a comedic and thrilling arena fight. After exchanging the advantage several times, this fight leaves many to still wonder who might have won, as it was promptly cut short.

Speaking of powerful women, the villain, Hela, daughter of Odin and goddess of Death, feeds on the power of Asgard, getting stronger every hour. My one criticism would be that she is a predictable villain, which I guess makes the villain the easiest to beat. She is just a cliché character, a witch of death.

From one liners, to awkward situations, "Thor: Ragnarok" is a lighthearted and good-natured film. It is appropriate and plentiful entertainment for friend hangouts, fun dates, and family nights (keeping in mind that it is PG-13). No matter the occasion, "Thor: Ragnarok" will keep you laughing far past the credits.

the female Han Solo. She gambles, drinks, and is a fallen Asgardian.

So where do we find all of these unexpected characters, you might ask.

DC superheroes unite against supergoat

Film proves more bush league than Justice League

Lauren Curtis

Co-Arts Editor

"Justice League" earned a measly \$39 million on its opening day.

I can see why.

Despite having an all star cast consisting of Gal Gadot, Ben Affleck, Henry Cavill, Jason Momoa and Ezra Miller, "Justice League" wasn't all it was cracked up to be. The movie lacked a compelling story and the muddiness of the action scenes takes away from the excitement.

The villain, Steppenwolf, the "new god", was nothing special. His character is ugly and resembles a goat that in no way is threatening or scary. His powers and weakness are very unclear. He could perhaps be the worst villain in all of history. He and his army of Parademons invade earth, looking for three Mother Boxes (boxes of power), so that he can take over the world (sound familiar?). The movie resembles "Suicide Squad" a bit; in both films poorly

developed characters join forces to stop a dull villain from annihilating the world.

Something that did spark as different from a lot of the previous DC Comic movies is humor. Director

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Justice League

Rating: PG-13

Genre: Fantasy/Sci-Fi

Running Time: 1h 59m

Released: Nov. 17, 2017

Starring: Ben Affleck

Gal Gadot

Henry Cavill

Jason Momoa

Ezra Miller

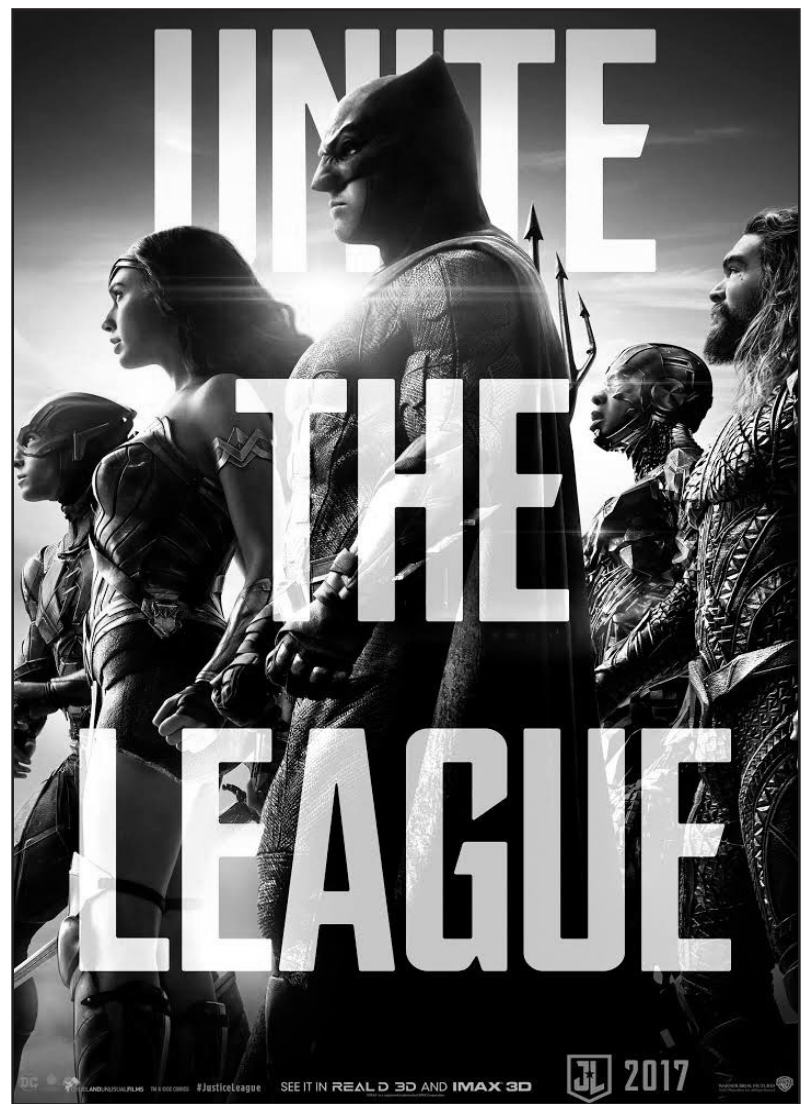
Zach Snyder stepped away from production after his daughter committed suicide and left in his place director Joss Whedon. These directors have very different styles. Because of this, the humor is inconsistent in nature.

Ezra Miller's Flash did help a lot with the humor aspect of the movie.

The action scenes were underwhelming. Besides Superman and Wonderwoman, none of the characters have special abilities. Without water, Aquaman is only good for stabbing things with his pitchfork, Batman is smart, but wouldn't last very long without his utility belt, Flash is only good for running civilians to safety and Cyborg is half computer (I think that speaks for itself). The special effects didn't help either. They looked very unpolished (even in IMAX) for a \$300 million budget.

Although "Justice League" is better than its predecessors "Suicide Squad" and "Batman vs. Superman," the movie is not a great superhero movie. "Wonder Woman" remains the sole DC Comics movie of the recent past that is at all compelling.

If you're a comic book fan, do yourself a favor. Skip this one and wait for the next Marvel Comic movie.



Comedy confuses some, delights others

Natalie Togtman

Co-Arts Editor

On Nov. 24, the ICHS Drama Department presented "Emma," a play based on the Jane Austen novel of the same name. The play is about a young woman named Emma, played by senior Stephanie VanDeel, who spends most of her time playing matchmaker for her friends, but never for herself.

As many as 92 students participated in the making of this play, whether on stage or behind the scenes.

Senior Tom Ericks, who played Mr. Knightley, said, "It was a great play for my senior

year. I was really glad that we got to do it. It had a very clever plot, and I liked seeing how it all came together."

The show did offer some challenges that the last few shows did not.

"Learning British accents and getting them to sound genuine was a challenge," said senior Valerie Swets, who played the snobbish Mrs. Elton. "Mine wasn't the greatest, but some of the others were actually pretty good."

Junior Hannah Last, who played Harriet Smith, said, "[Emma's] not slapstick. It's only funny if you understand the plot, so

it was really important that we portrayed our characters, that we understood our characters really well."

Still, some audience members did feel a bit lost. Junior Lily Armendariz said, "The play was not what I expected, but that was partly because I had no idea what 'Emma' was about, and that made it difficult to follow at some points."

Other audience members had little or no trouble. Elly Kamphuis, the daughter of Tech Director Jim Kamphuis, said she loved the play, and compared it to a movie from the Hallmark channel.



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Mr. Elton (junior Ben Wiersema) makes known his amorous and clearly unwelcomed feelings for Emma (senior Stephanie VanDeel).

Cross country races to finish, captures All-State honors

Kade Bouwer

Co-Sports Editor

The boys cross country team capped off an impressive season with a 17th place finish at the 2A state finals meet on Nov. 4.

Heavy rains bombarded the course for 36 hours straight before the race. Despite the course's poor condition, the team still had many of its runners get their personal bests.

Coach Jim Piaskowy said, "The times were definitely slower than if there were ideal conditions, but the guys ran faster than they have ever run which is a really shows they ran all out."

At the state meet senior Austin Ohm took 5th, while senior Derek VanProyen took 24th. Both qualified for All-State honors.

VanProyen said, "The team did well. We placed right where we thought we would be. We would have liked for better, but I think anybody would have. It is what it is."

Coach Kevin Haan said, "All the guys really improved. We had a cou-

ple of guys, especially Caleb Perez, who improved drastically right when we needed them to. We had a couple injuries and [Perez] just really stepped it up and cut two minutes off his time which is almost unheard of."

The girls cross country team's season ended at the Sectional meet where it took 7th, two places shy of qualifying for the 1A state finals meet. As an individual, however, Maddie DeYoung advanced. At the state meet she finished 93rd.

At the beginning of the season, the team was hopeful for a strong finish at state as a team, but as the season progressed the team was hampered by a plethora of injuries affecting many of its top runners.

"Given our talent before the injuries, we would have probably placed in the top ten in the state as a team," said Coach Deb Top. "Considering the scope of the injuries that we had this year, which I have never really had in my thirty years of coaching, they did well."



Photo by JP Peebolte

The boys cross country team celebrates finishing their final race.

Alex Wondaal

Co-Sports Editor

Coached by Grant Sikma and led by seniors Payton Smit, Josh Harris, Colin Flipse, and Evan Jones, the Vikings have high hopes for the season and are prepared to prove themselves at the Seneca Thanksgiving Tournament.

"I think we have a good chance at winning [the Seneca Tournament]," said Sikma.

To win the tournament the Vikings will need wins on Friday the 24th and Saturday the 25th.

Sikma said the keys

Boys Basketball

to winning the tournament and having a successful season in general will be strong defense and the use of the team's speed. "I think our quickness will be our strength... It's going to come down to tenacious defense; I want this group to be known for defense."

Sikma also said of the Seneca Tournament, "We'll make a lot of mistakes and that's where we want to make them and learn from them."

Point guard Colin Flipse added that the team's strengths is "high IQ of the game, great team chemistry, and various skill sets." Flipse said the team needs

to improve rebounding and take better shots.

"We're a team that wants it and that's a big thing," said Flipse.

Center Josh Harris said this year's team will hopefully make up for its smaller size with better shooters.

"Colin Flipse, Isaac Gibson, and Andrew Smits are all really good [shooters]," Harris said.

Harris stressed the need for patience with such a high tempo team. Harris said his personal goal and his team's goal was to make it down state.

"I think this team could do it," said Harris.

Girls Basketball

Alex Wondaal

Co-Sports Editor

With the graduation of the top basketball scorer in Illiana history and the appointment of Lisa Blocker to head coach, a new era has begun for the girls basketball team.

Blocker has coached for five years at Illiana. Her first year she coached freshman girls, the next two she coached JV, and last year she was the assistant coach at the varsity level. This year Blocker and former head coach Tom Knapper swapped positions.

With only three seniors, (one of whom is playing for Illiana for the first time), this year's team is quite young. Emma West and Lauren DeYoung are four year seniors. Bethany Junker is the third senior. She transferred to Illiana her junior year and was therefore not eligible to play last year.

Blocker said she is excited for her team to grow. "We're a young team but that means there's lots of potential," said Blocker. Blocker added that she is excited for the Christmas Lisle Tournament.

Knapper said he thinks a fe-

male coach might be better for building relationships with the team. "She's got a lot of strengths I don't have," said Knapper. Knapper added that one of his team's main strengths this year will be shooting from players such as Alli Murrin and Bethany Junker.

Forward Hayley Smit said the team has "a good mix of height and speedy guards."

Center Lauren DeYoung said the team's weaknesses that need to be improved were defensive speed and perfecting their plays on the offensive end.

Boys Wrestling

Jo Mulder

Co-Photo Editor

With old talent lost and fresh talent incoming, the wrestling team is looking forward with confidence at the season and is hoping to send wrestlers down state.

The team will miss graduates such as Jesse Ellis and Noah Rogan and the leadership that came from them, said senior Isaac Lyzenga.

However, according

to Coach Dean Bosman, many of the team members have potential this season. When asked how the season would go Bosman said, "The lack of experience of the team throws in a wild card on how the season will go."

The team will work on leg control rather than upper body, said Bosman; they spent too much time hitting the upper body last year. Another thing they are working on is controlling the intensity of their

moves so they don't lose control of their attack.

The team has put lots of time into conditioning in the form of activities such as ultimate football and frisbee. They also changed their diets, eating more but also healthier foods. Lyzenga added that they are practicing and conditioning, more and harder.

Junior Connor Robertson said, "I am looking forward to getting myself in shape and winning."

Male Athlete of the Month

Senior Austin Ohm, a four-year varsity cross country member, has had quite the year. Throughout the season he consistently finished in the top 3 at meets. He wrapped up his season on a hot streak with a first place finish in three straight races, the Metro Suburban Conference finals meet, the Regional meet, and the Sectional meet. At the 2A state finals meet he took fifth.

"Freshmen and sophomore year there was always that person you looked up to. This year I didn't have that on the team," said Ohm. "I had to think about Nick Fiene and Colin DeYoung, and how I had to set an example like they did for me."



Female Athlete of the Month

Senior Maddie DeYoung, four-year varsity member of girls cross country, was the only member of her team to make it down state. After finishing 14th at the Sectional meet, she pushed through in tough conditions to finish 93rd at the state finals meet.

"[The time] wasn't what I wanted, but it was still good," said DeYoung. "It was muddy, so most of the race I was focusing on not sliding."

Freshmen Mia Cruz said, "She gave me a lot of great advice and she is a really good senior role model."

Editorial

Count your blessings, not your possessions

Thanksgiving can be a problematic holiday. We are supposed to be thankful, but what does being thankful really entail?

For starters, thankfulness is not comparison. It should not be a byproduct of guilt or envy. Our thankfulness should not be dependent on how much better our stuff is compared to what our neighbors or classmates have nor should it be based on how much we have compared to what the person halfway across the world living in a third world country has.

Being grateful because we have new clothes, go to a private school, and have a rather luxurious life in contrast to the person living down the street whose family is just scraping by and whose life seems to be in shambles at the moment is more of a reflection of our shallowness. It reflects how we find identity in our stuff, so when we see people with less than us, we just assume that they wish they had what we have. This is arrogance.

Yet we often express that kind of arrogance, even masking it in a kind of phony spiri-

tual development. We go on mission trips and come back saying things like this: I was so amazed at these families in Mexico who have nothing compared to us yet are still so happy. The experience made me realize how deeply I've been blessed and that I should be more thankful.

On its surface, such a statement sounds like gratitude and spiritual growth, but think about the subtext here. Why are we amazed that people who have fewer material blessings can be still be happy? Most of us would feel offended if multi-millionaires or billionaires looked at us condescendingly and said, It is so amazing that you can lead happy and fulfilled lives with such little wealth. We'd consider the people talking to us like that insufferable, conceited jerks.

Furthermore, we have a

significant spiritual problem if the only way we can feel anything resembling gratitude is by comparing ourselves to people who have less. That would seem to imply that things get their worth only by being denied to someone else. So we end

“Our thankfulness should not be dependent on how much better our stuff is compared to what our neighbors or classmates have.”

up being thankful for having something others don't, or we are not thankful at all. Why be thankful for what everyone enjoys?

So drop the comparisons this Thanksgiving, and choose real Thanksgiving instead.

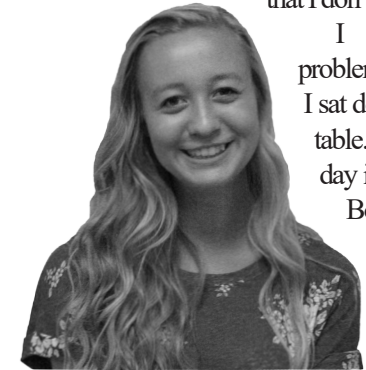
What would that look like? Well, thankfulness looks like giving back. It is using our God given talents

and abilities to bless other people's lives, but that is not necessarily through buying and giving. Thankfulness can be shown through forgiving others because you know that you have needed forgiveness too at some point. Giving of your time to tutor a student struggling in a subject that comes more easily to you or volunteering to help teach Sunday school at your church are ways to show your thankfulness to God for the talents He has blessed you with.

Thankfulness leads to praise. Psalm 103 is a good example of this. The passage talks about praising God, so we don't take for granted the blessings He has given us. It is in Him and because of what He has done for us that we should do all things, and that includes our demonstrations of thankfulness. He blesses us beyond measure. We need to take those blessings, with a heart filled with gratitude, and live our lives willing to share what God has already given to us, to use our gifts for His glory.

Rumor has it... I'm addicted to gossip

I have a confession to make. I have an addiction, something I do every day despite the fact that I know it's wrong. I have a gossip addiction. By no means would I consider myself a particularly gossipy person. That are plenty of people who gossip more than I do, but that doesn't mean that I don't have a problem.



Beth Boonstra
Co-Editor-in-Chief

I discovered this problem one day when I sat down at my lunch table. Just a regular day in the life of Beth Boonstra. Two of my best friends turned to me. “So what do you think?” I had been spacing out, so I asked

them what they were talking about. They shared a rumor about a girl who said she wanted to have sex with someone else. They all but called her whore. Then they repeated their question: “So what do you think about her?” I honestly didn't know what to say. Then — this may sound unreal — I said what was on my heart in that instant. It was one of those moments when you feel like you've floated up out of your body and you're just watching. I heard myself say the words: “She is a child of God.” My friends stopped and looked a little bit shocked. This was sad to see because they obviously expected me to join them in bashing her. Honestly, that's what I normally would have done.

I didn't really realize the importance of what I'd done until later that day. I found myself sitting next to that same girl. I actually struck up a conversation with her, a perfectly normal conversation. And she never once expressed a desire to have sex with anyone.

Illiana, we have a problem. We have a gossip problem. Everyone, myself included, has preconceived notions of who people are and what they're like. We've already heard all we need to hear about someone, so why would we need to actually hear from them. That girl drinks. He cheated on his girlfriend. And that entire friend group is so fake. That kind of gossip is never going to completely stop, if we make a conscious effort to minimize it, we can make Illiana a much better environment.

I'd be shocked to find out that Illiana students don't think they have a gossip problem. Most students know that they have a problem. They simply don't care or don't think that they can fix it, so they stop trying. But we can't just give up before we've even tried.

Most rumors aren't even true. But even if they are, who cares? Even true rumors don't tell us the whole truth about that person. Don't let that person become defined by that single thing. So what if they're mean; they're still a person. The excitement of sharing a juicy tidbit that no one else has heard, isn't worth the damage that it will cause. Gossip does damage. The words that are coming out of your mouth have power. Have you ever been gossiped about? From social media to bad-mouthing friends, remember the times that you have been hurt by gossip and don't inflict that pain on others. Gossip can ruin relationships.

I hope that you will have a moment like I did that will make you see your own gossip problem. I have taken up a challenge. I am trying to eliminate gossip from my life. I know I have already failed at it, but at least I catch myself when I am failing and I try to stop. I need God for this, day in and day out, because it isn't easy, but we are promised that as Christians things won't be easy.

At least that's the rumor I heard.



Ben Wiersema

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

The newspaper is a forum for expression; therefore, we encourage feedback or commentary. Please contact us at theillianaecho@gmail.com

the Echo)))

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