

Enjoy Illiana students' Fine Arts contributions on page 5

# the Echo)))

Read about Illiana's efforts to include special needs students on page 4



Illiana Christian High School

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## Students build walls, relationships at Pathway to Jesus School in D.R.

Cate Peerbolte  
Reporter

Natalie Togtman  
Reporter

On March 25 a group of twenty-two Illiana students and three staff members traveled to the Dominican Republic to serve at the Pathway to Jesus School.

The team left Illiana at 6:45 a.m. and took minibuses to O'Hare airport. From there they flew to New York City and had a short layover before flying into Santiago.

Senior Gina Novotny said, "I was a little nervous before leaving. It was my first time on a plane and my first time out of the country."

During the week, the team spent four days doing construction work and painting classrooms. Mrs.

Makowski, a chaperone, said, "The group worked alongside other local workers to build a wall around the school's new property. The wall will protect the kids while they play outside."

On Saturday the team painted murals that junior Beth Boonstra designed. The team also took a day to travel to the beach and go shopping.

Pathway to Jesus School was founded by Shelly Hernandez, an Illiana alumna. Hernandez, however, had to leave the Dominican Republic last year after being diagnosed with cancer. She and her children now live in Lynwood, and her children attend Illiana.

A highlight of this year's trip was accompanying the Hernandez family as they



Photo by Beth Boonstra

Senior Hanna VanderWoude paints a mural designed by junior Beth Boonstra in the sixth grade classroom.

returned home.

Mr. Boonstra said, "This year we got to bring Shelly back to her school. The community of students put on a program for her and welcomed her back even if it was just for this short amount of time... It was heartwarming to see the way that she was embraced and cared for."

Junior Sarah Hernandez, Shelly's daughter, said, "Back home we visited family and friends. It was great because we were able to pick up where we left off. It was hard to be back for such a short amount of time."

Sophomore Mickey Boss said, "This experience humbled me because I realized

how little Dominican kids have in comparison to me."

Novotny said, "Some of the strangest things on the trip were not being able to flush your toilet paper, finding a tarantula, and having cold showers. But overall it was a trip of a lifetime and I am very glad I was given the opportunity to go."



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Freshmen Andrew Witvoet and Max Wegner clear branches from a forest path.



Photo by Juliana Knot

Seniors Jack Barth and Eden Schipper clean out a greasy fridge.

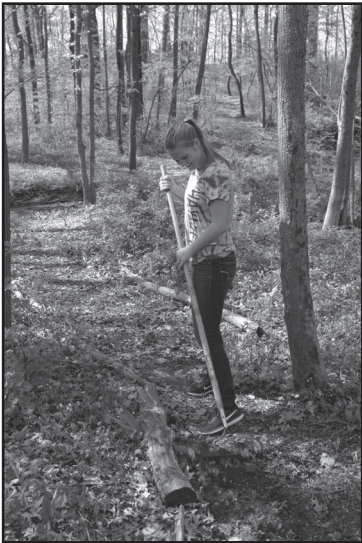


Photo by Jeff DeVries

Freshman Morgan Lindemulder rakes.

## Locally, globally, Illiana serves community for Go Day

Collette Bower  
Co-Editor in Chief

Juliana Knot  
Co-Editor in Chief

Illiana homerooms served at over fifteen Chicagoland organizations on April 26, 2017 for Go Day.

Every freshman homeroom went to Camp Manitouqua to serve, and every sophomore homeroom packed food at Feed My Starving Children, a food pantry for third world countries.

Freshman Max Wegner said that they pulled weeds, raked leaves, cleared paths, and more. He said the take away from his first Go Day was that a small thing for

one person can be a huge help for someone else.

Junior and senior homerooms got to choose where they volunteered, doing everything from sorting shoes to spending time with special needs adults.

Senior Eden Schipper, who cleaned at the Holland Home and visited with residents, said, "[The residents] were so happy and thankful that we there. It brought them a lot of joy."

Junior Jonhathan Lightfoot went to the Nation Food Bank of America with his homeroom, making bags for children that don't get much food on the weekends. Lightfoot said the bags "brighten the kids' days."

Teacher Brian Sylvester noted the influence that Go Day has on students. "It opens up options for ways to help in the area, so that they're more inclined to do so later. It also helps with homeroom bonding."

Senior Nick Tambrini echoed Sylvester saying, "My favorite thing about Go Day is you're helping the community, but also the sense of community because you get to go with your whole class, and other classes, to help people."

Lightfoot said, "I like that we are actually doing what we are telling people to do. In chapel they say go serve, and this is a day we actually get to see what that looks like."



# Mission trip: dream trip

Jesus calls us to go and make disciples of all nations in Matthew 28:19. The Dominican Republic mission trip is where I started to spread God's Word and tried to make disciples in another nation. Ten days may have seemed like a long time for some, but it wasn't

enough time for me. I loved every part of the trip and I hope that I will be able to return to Santiago so that I can further help Pathway to Jesus School.



**Hanna VanderWoode**  
Photo Editor

I just might have to learn more than "Hola, Gracias, or lo siento" first. The trip was a blessing for many people. It was a blessing

on the students and teachers who were able to go and it was a blessing on the people of Santiago. We were able to interact with each other even though there was a tough language barrier. I have grown so close with many of the people who went on the trip and some of the Illiana students even keep in touch with people from the Dominican. The work we did and the lives we impacted and the experience we had will stay in all of our memories for the rest of our lives.

Working with concrete and mortar is difficult. It is heavy, slippery and hard to transport, yet we did it. The first day, Monday, was difficult, but each day that passed the work got easier because we were getting used to manual labor, which some of the students, I think, had never done before in their lives, and we were getting closer to finishing. We worked on building the walls by hand for three days, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Thursday was a relaxing day. We drove about two hours in vans packed full of students and teachers to Cabaret to visit the beach. We got to lounge around or shop and then at the end of the day the teachers treated all of the students to amazing food from a restaurant on the beach.

Friday was one of the best days, we had all day to play fun games with the kids from the Pathway to Jesus school. I believe the kids thought that we knew Spanish, so they kept trying to speak to us, but only a few of the students from Illiana actually knew Spanish. I'm in German class and know little to no Spanish, so when one little girl repeatedly asked me if Beth Boonstra and I were sisters, "Son hermanas?" and I kept saying, "Está bien," it's okay. There was a lot of confusion. Nevertheless, we still got along with all of the children really well, not to mention we had translators from Santiago Christian School come in. They were a lot of help. The students from Santiago Christian School also came to help on our last day at the school, Saturday.

On Saturday we painted many murals, sketched out by Beth Boonstra and a few others who are artistically inclined, and we helped a little again with the manual labor of building the three walls. All of the painting that we did turned out well and I hope that the kids and teachers were pleased with the work we did. I know I was.

Another mesmerizing part of our trip was going to the Dominican church services. We attended three different churches while there, and they all varied and they were very different from our churches in America. One of the churches we attended had roosters crowing throughout the service.

This was a trip of my lifetime. We met new people, we crossed language barriers, we learned new skills and we grew closer to God. He was leading every single person on that trip and He protected us throughout it all. I would not have given this trip up for anything and I would give up a lot to go back.

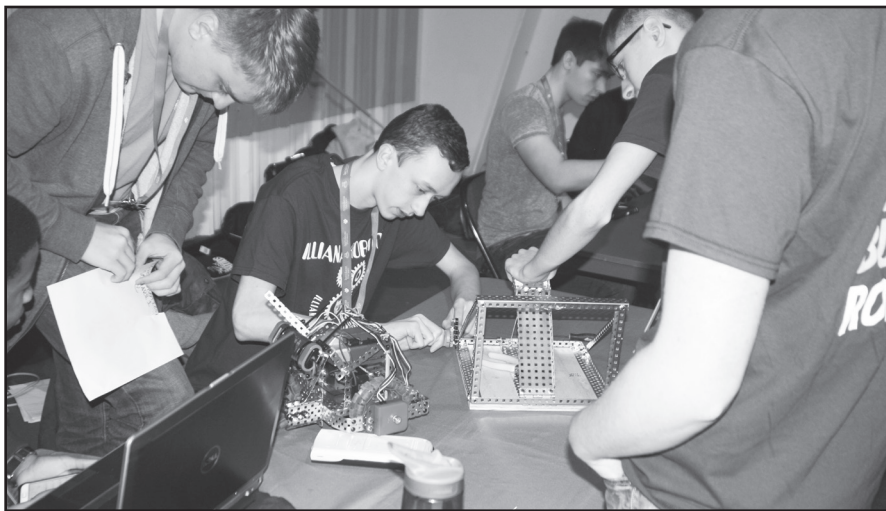


Photo courtesy of Jack Rudenga  
*One Illiana robotics team makes last minute adjustments to robot before the competition.*

## Sparks fly as robotics team races to first victory

**Beth Boonstra**

Co-News Editor

Saturday, April 8 Illiana students participated in the Southworks Engineering and Robotics Olympics at South

Suburban College.

Robotics teacher, Mr. Jack Rudenga said, "Of the five events Illiana took first in two of them." All the groups of students had good entries and put forth effort to prepare for the competition.

Sophomore Sam Boonstra said, "We've been preparing for this event in class, from the very beginning."

Rudenga said, "Each group of three students had to choose one of the events and could also do a second one.... We partnered with Kay Manufacturing who sent an engineer to meet with the groups to give them feedback about their designs and suggestions."

Sophomores Caleb Perez and Trent Kamp worked with Boonstra on two 'bots' for the competition. "We had a lot of fun just building the bots," Kamp said, "We took second

[for one event], but we probably would've done better if we hadn't made the bot the night before."

Perez and Kamp spoke of the strategy that the other team used: a bigger bot with larger scoops to grab the balls and place into the boxes. Their secret weapon, they said, was a speaker they put on top of the robot to make mooing sounds and intimidate the opposition. This group did better with their second bot, taking first in Sumo, a battle to push the opposing robot out of the ring. For these boys, the fun is in creating something new and problem-solving.

Rudenga added, "The student teams were very energetic about their designs and worked hard on their robot. I was very proud of how the students represented themselves and what they were able to accomplish."

# 7th Annual Pancake Pacer draws in funds for spring sports from 5K, breakfast

**Cassie Laninga**

Reporter

Illiana held its 7th annual Pancake Pacer from 7:30 to 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 22, raising thousands of dollars to help fund spring sports. A little fewer than 300 runners, including teachers, family members, and the Illiana community, showed up to run in the 5k race and eat at the pancake breakfast.

"Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and they all ran in the right direction. I was pretty

pleased," said athletic director Mr. Darren Deer. DeBoer gave lots of credit to his assistant, Ashley Kamstra, who organized the runners and ordered shirts.

Spring athletes helped run the Pacer, working jobs that ranged from helping with the breakfast to cheering on the runners.

"I liked seeing all the people from the Illiana community come around for an event like this. It was amazing," said sophomore Emma Groot, who helped refill the food containers. "God blessed us with a

wonderful day to run."

"I took tickets at the first shift in the morning," said junior Aerial Shaffer. "I liked getting to talk to people who came in for the breakfast."

Teacher Mr. Haan, who finished around 18th place, said, "I [pushed] the first baby stroller to pass the finish line, so I was happy about that. My wife Michelle was the first female finisher. She puts me to shame all the time."

As Michelle Haan won the first female spot, so Todd Bevan

captured the top spot among men. They both received a medal and gift card.

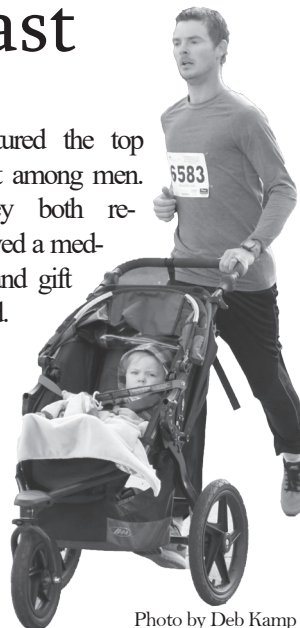


Photo by Deb Kamp

## Ten juniors to explore state government in Indianapolis, Springfield

**Maddie Holesinger**

Reporter

On the 27th and 28th of April, ten juniors who were recognized at last year's awards assembly will travel to Indiana and Illinois state capitals for a close up look at how state governments work.

These students went through an interview process and also wrote a mini essay in order to have the opportunity to go on this trip. While each of the students going to the capitals has slightly different reasons for wanting to go, all of these interests stem from the same root. They have a desire to learn about state government whether it is to expose them to where



Photo courtesy of legacypoint.net

The Springfield Capital Building is destination for the Close-Up trip.

they could be working someday, or so that they begin to understand what makes the state governments run smoothly.

"I hope to understand and better appreciate the importance of state government that is easily shoved out of the spotlight due to national government," said Jordan Miller.

As their trip gets closer, anticipation rises and the students exude excitement.

"I'm most excited to learn

more about my state itself," said Indiana resident Paul Kamp, who hope to someday work for the government in some way. "I feel that states often get overlooked, so I'm excited to see our state government's close-up. I like history too, especially when I have a connection to it. We'll be stopping at historical sites and battlefields in our states, I hope that gives me a greater appreciation for those historical moments."

When asked what he hopes the students will take away from Close-Up, Mr. Jeff White, the history teacher who leads this trip, said, "Well, it is a nice opportunity to have a field study of history along with politics. You never know what you are going to see [in the state legislature]. You only know that they are going to be in session, whereas the federal government runs on more of a tight schedule."



# Illiana students welcome their grandparents by walking them through afternoon classes

Tessa Buiter  
Reporter

To appreciate the grandparents of students, Illiana hosted Grandparents Day on April 26. Since introducing the day in 2006, ICHS has welcomed grandparents to get a taste of their grandchildren’s school lives. In 2006, grandparents arrived to nibble on ollie bollen and sip coffee. This year, approximately 250 grandparents came at noon for a lunch of croissants and chips in the upstairs gym where they could also view photography and drawings from this spring’s Fine Arts

Festival. Following lunch, grandparents went with their grandchildren to shortened 6th and 7th periods. Afterwards, Mr. Boonstra spoke in the chapel before the Jazz Band and Flute Choir played. The afternoon ended with a few giveaways to some lucky grandparents. Lyda Meyer, grandmother of senior Ashley Wiltjer, said her favorite part of the day is seeing all the people. The changes from her school years, she said, are the different views, such as emphasis on sports. “We are a sports family,” she said with a smile. Sophomore Jake De Young said he wanted to



Kaitlyn McGary enjoys being accompanied by her grandmother on Grandparent’s Day.

Photo by Jeff DeVries

show his grandmothers, Liz De Young and Ann Tiemens, the newer classes that they never had in high school. Tiemens said one of the changes from her years

to now is the building size. “It was much smaller then,” she said. Mrs. De Young said, “There were no computers; we didn’t even have calcu-

lators.” All three women spoke of their love for ICHS and the importance of the Christian education for their grandchildren.



Sophomore Ben Wiersma and junior Jonathan Lightfoot preform a Shia LeBeouf skit at Illiana’s Fine Arts Night.

# Students celebrate performance and visual arts at Fine Arts Night

Kendall Smith  
Reporter

On Tuesday night, April 18, the Fine Arts Committee hosted its annual Fine Arts recital in the dining room after the PIE board’s Evening for Illiana fundraising dinner. According to Mr. Jeff DeVries, one of the Fine Arts sponsors, the recital is a showcase for the talents of Illiana students. “God has gifted our students in so many ways,” DeVries said. “This night is really just a celebration of God’s goodness. It is a way of acknowledging people’s giftedness and of offering those gifts back to God in a sacrifice of praise.” Senior Sydney Shaffer, who played cello during the dinner portion of the evening, noted that paintings, drawings, photographs and other artwork “were beautifully dis-

played.” Senior Machaela Whitlock, both a member of the committee and a performer on her flute, said she enjoyed the “wide variety of performances.” A number of people were impressed by the abilities on display. Freshman Alicia Morris said “everyone had a lot of talent,” and senior Emma Mazrimas declared the night “a great showcase of talent at Illiana.” The night included two dances, vocal and instrumental performances, literary selections, drama, and short films. “The Shia LaBeouf skit was my favorite,” said senior Sarah Schoon. Junior Hannah Dykstra said, “Isaiah [Easter’s] dance was different and exciting; I’ve never seen anything like that in Fine Arts before.”

# Studio Art students explore modern art on field trip to Chicago, Illinois’ ‘epicenter’ of art

Jo Mulder  
Reporter

Students in the Studio Art classes took a trip downtown to visit two art-rich locations on April 6. To begin their day, they visited the Cultural Center of Chicago. The Cultural Center is housed in the former downtown public library building which was built in the late 1890s. The grand stone building attracts Chicagoans and tourists alike, hosting a variety of artistic attractions from theatre and films to art exhibits and chamber music performances. The students also enjoyed seeing the two Tiffany stained glass domes inside the building. According to Jim Kamphuis, Illiana’s art

teacher the building was architecturally beautiful. One exhibit showed a series of double doors from the demolished Malcolm X College in Chicago. The doors were painted to celebrate different ethnicities on each door. Junior Hannah Dykstra said that she was impacted by these doors. Another exhibit was called a comfort room. According to Kamphuis it was a dark room covered in fur and with a squishy floor and he said with a snicker it was “almost like being back in the womb.” The group’s second destination was the Museum of Contemporary Art which is home to many modern-day pieces of art that the students

has been focusing on in the previous weeks. “The students were given the chance to see pieces of work that people are currently working on,” said Kamphuis. “as opposed to the Art Institute which focuses on art that’s been around of hundreds of years.” Out of the entire museum, the exhibit that caught the group’s attention the most was about dancer and choreographer Merce Cunningham, who collaborated with several other artists throughout his lifetime. The exhibit included several videos of his choreography and also the props and costumes used in the videos being played. “Cunningham is the epicenter of 21st Century art,” said Kamphuis.

# Illiana teacher ventures into local politics, runs for trustee

Caleb Last  
Reporter

Jeff White, teacher of US Constitution at Illiana, put his bid in to be trustee for the town of Lansing on April 4th, but he lost despite a vigorous campaign. White said he ran for office because he “felt the nudge to get involved in the community as a Christian.” He ran hoping to help communication between the citizens of Lansing and their town government. A specific example White cited was church groups wanting to know where their help was

needed. White then went through the process of campaigning. Even for a local election, he had to attend a lot of campaign events. Some of the events White went to were meetings with pastors and groups of certain demographics, such as Hispanics, White said. A trustee, a position in towns or villages like Lansing, gives the go ahead to many projects. The trustees in a town government are the body which gives the final yes or no to an idea the town government has.



Photo courtesy of Jeff White  
White’s campaign poster  
Hence, trustees wield much power. White did not win the election, but he is glad he tried to do something as a Christian to get involved with his community.



# Preparing to move in new direction

## *Illiana welcomes Christian Learning Center and new ways to accommodate students with special needs*

Haleigh Olthof  
Reporter

Consultants from the Christian Learning Center (CLC) visited Illiana on Jan. 25 and 26 in order to assess Illiana's ability to accommodate students with special needs and to suggest ways to improve in this area.

After visiting classrooms and interviewing teachers, students, and parents, the CLC representatives advised having more staff devoted to students with special needs, said Illiana principal Peter Boonstra. On April 17, the school board approved the hiring of Heidi Teach to be Illiana's Director of Special Needs. This decision was made in light of current Support Services staff member Rose Medema's planned retirement. The board also hopes to hire someone to "assist students with what are called 'mild needs.'"

"[CLC is] trying to get us to move in a direction," said Boonstra. This might mean adding more staff gradually in the coming years.

The visitors also recommended being "more intentional about differentiating instruction," said Boonstra. This means that teachers should work to make every-day lessons "understandable for the variety of kids that are in a class."

This differentiated instruction could also include modified tests and class work, said Medema.

Boonstra also led a group of parents and teachers on a trip to Michigan on January 19. They visited North Point Christian School, a K-12 school that was "deeply committed to an inclusive program" with a "fully developed staff, serving a very broad spectrum of students and a variety of needs." This showed the group what Illiana might accomplish far into the future.

The group also visited Unity Christian High School, which serves about 600 students, including some with special needs. This school "was at much more of a beginning stage," according to Boonstra, and two years ago had a similar program

to what Illiana's is now. The group gained more practical knowledge from this visit, and the level of inclusion seemed more attainable.

"We could see ourselves getting to this point," said Boonstra of Unity.

Illiana is one of the lead-

ing Christian schools in the Chicagoland area with regards to special needs, Boonstra added, as other schools have geared more towards college prep.

"In the larger scope of things, [CLC is] envisioning that we would also be-

gin serving and welcoming a new group of students," said Boonstra. Illiana currently only serves students with mild disabilities, but as the school aims to serve these students better, it will also be preparing to serve students with moderate disabilities.



Teacher Rose Medema helps students revise their speeches in the Learning Center.

Photo by Andy Sons

# Lack of educational programs forces families apart

*Zander twins*

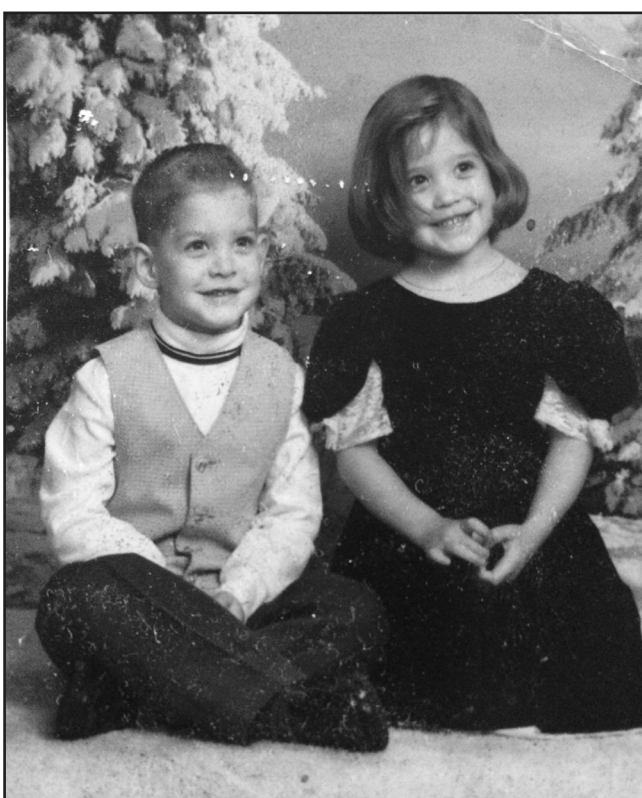
*example of siblings sent to different schools because of disability*

Emma Slings  
Reporter

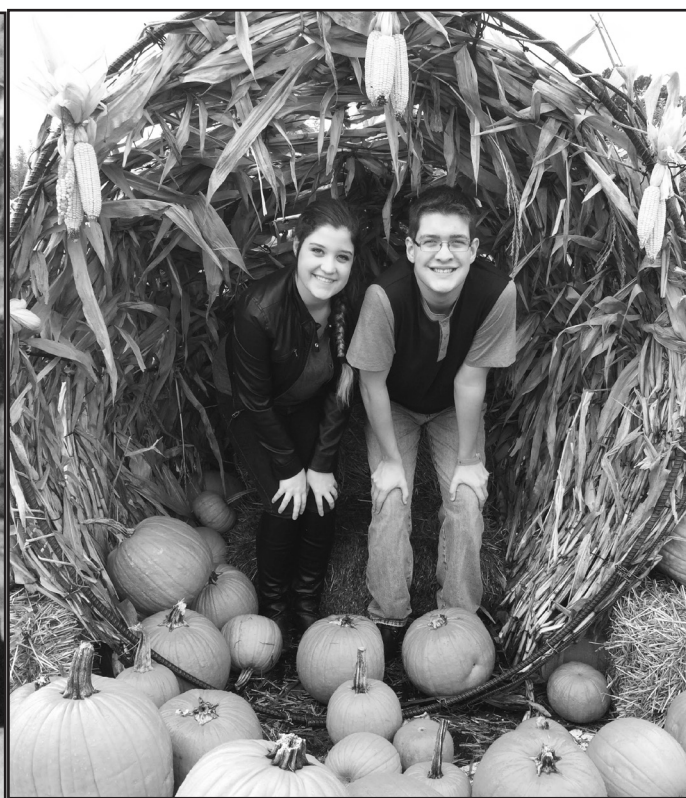
When a school doesn't provide the right facilities to work with people with special-needs, families are sometimes forced to split up and send their children to separate schools. This is the case with senior Danielle Zander and her twin brother Sean, who is autistic and higher-functioning on the spectrum.

Zander and her brother went to school together for pre-kindergarten, but since she was able to test out of it, the two have gone to separate schools ever since.

Zander and her brother's situation is a lot different



Danielle and Sean, age 3



Danielle and Sean, age 17

Photo courtesy of Danielle Zander

then what most twins go through. But Zander finds a positive aspect of living separate lives. Zander said, "It's kind of fun because we both have our own things; we're not mushed together like how twins a lot of the time are. Having to go to differ-

ent events with him exposes me and my family to different scenarios and different kids."

"I've always imagined scenarios where he would be going [to Illiana]. It would honestly be weird after being separated so long, but it

would be really nice to have him at the same school and attend the same activities," Zander said.

Zander and her family are involved with Sean's school, Harriet Tubman School, and program. She enjoys volunteering with

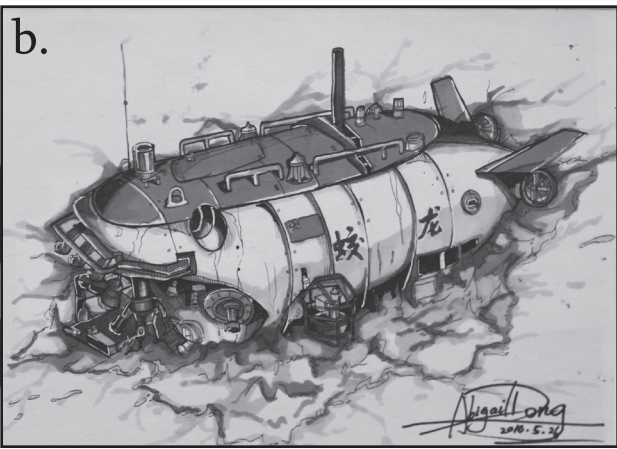
her brother's Special Olympics program and says it would be amazing if Illiana had the facilities and resources to teach and work with people who have special needs.

"We are called to help widows, children, and the disabled, so that's definitely something we should put the money into to train and expose people to," Zander said. "A lot of people aren't exposed to that... So I think that would be a good idea for Illiana to [get involved with]."

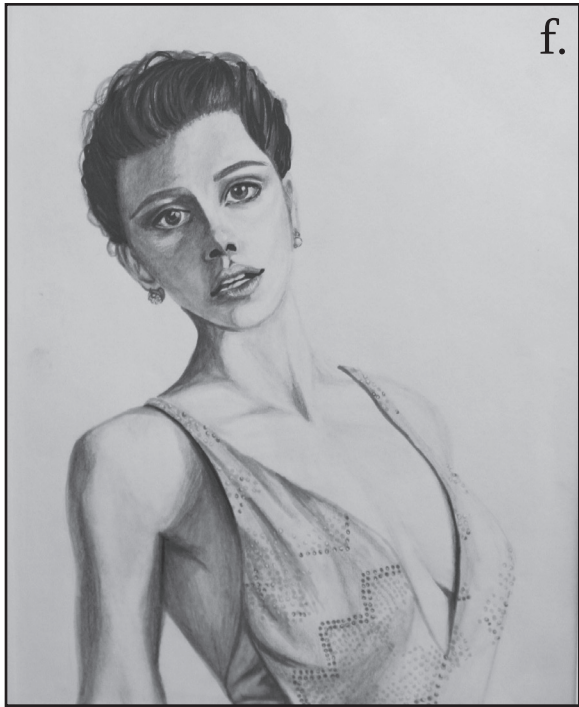
Zander would like people to know that people who have disabilities are not someone to be afraid of or to just shy away from.

"With disabilities, I want [others] to know that they are people too and they are just like you and me. They just have some issues sometimes."

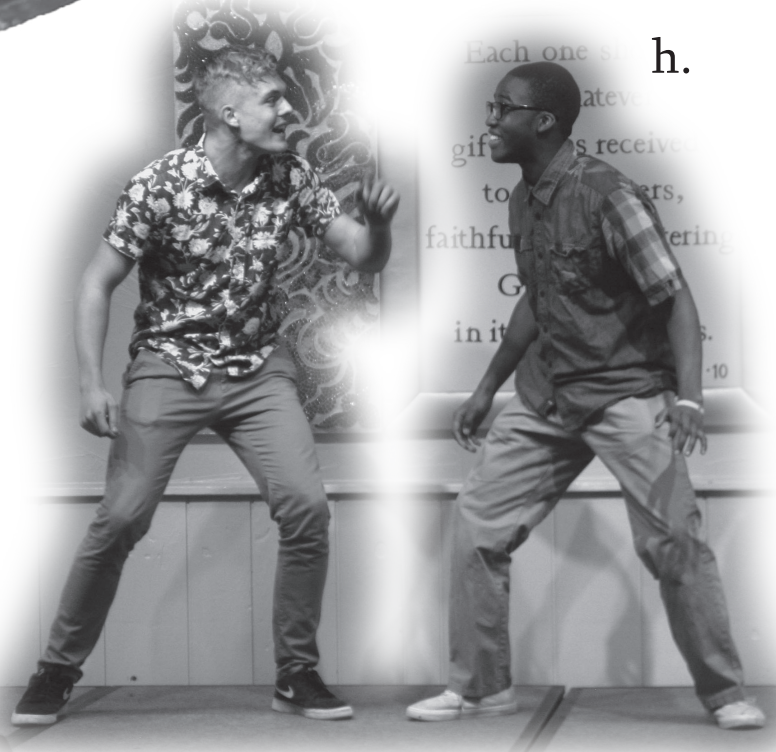
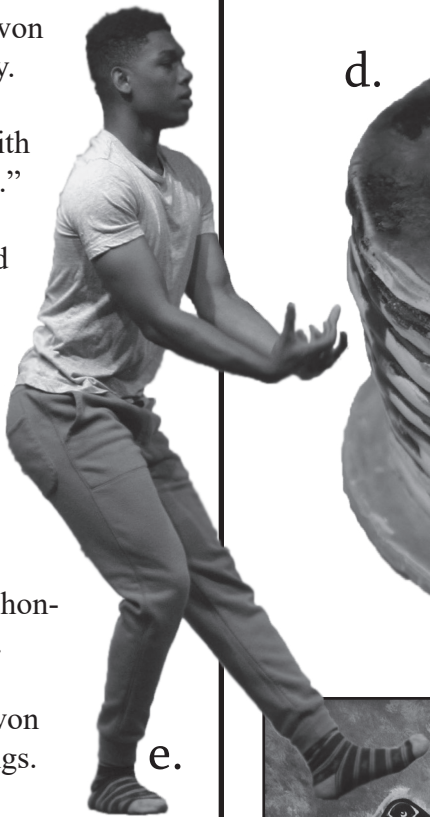




**Just See**  
*by Aerial Shaffer*      *2nd Place in Poetry*  
Why can't you just accept me?  
I am not them;  
They are not me.  
And we were never supposed to be.  
LOOK.  
SEE.  
Just see me.  
Look at me and see the beauty of me.  
Not the me you want me to be,  
But the me that I am, and always will be  
Because you can't change me.  
You tried and failed.  
I tried and failed.  
I am staying me.  
This is just how it has to be.  
Leave me or stick with me,  
But if you can't accept me as me,  
it is best you leave.  
Because I will no longer try to change me,  
For you or for me.



- a. "Demon's Crown" by Jo Huitsing won second place in the Sculpture category.
- b. Abigail Dong won Best of Show with this Color Drawing called "Untitled 1."
- c. "Over the Fence" photographed and edited by Tom Ericks won first place in Nature/Still-Life Photography.
- d. First place in the Ceramics category went to "Pancakes" created by Sarah Kuiper.
- e. Isaiah Easter performs his dance to the song "Have Mercy", receiving an honorable mention in the Dance category.
- f. "Untitled" by Stephanie Van Deel won first place in Black and White Drawings.
- g. Karli Petrarca created "Every Which Way," receiving first place in the Color Drawing category.
- h. Johnathan Lightfoot and Benjamin Wiersema enthusiastically perform "Shia LeBouf," the first place winning Drama performance.
- i. "Chim Chim Cher--ee" by Richard M. Sherm performed by flutists Amanda Ipema, Kayla Bivona, Machaela Whitlock, Valerie Swets, Issy Neibert and Allison Meyer won first place in the Instrumental Ensemble category.





# Soccer gets first win at Timothy

JP Peerbolte

Co-Sports Editor

The varsity girls soccer team has had a tough start to its season. The team's record is 2-5, but the girls are not letting the losses bring them down.

They encourage each other through both wins and losses. Their coaches, Chip Bevan and Kelsey Bevan, help to keep the team positive.

"They stress that the goal is post-season, and not neces-

sarily every little win or loss," said junior Emma West.

"Each game we are getting closer and closer to another win," said junior Tori Terpstra.

Last year the team made it to sectionals. The girls believe that the more difficult conference games they are playing now will help them post-season.

They are playing teams that are very well conditioned. Furthermore, playing on turf fields has been a challenge

because the game moves so much faster than on grass on which the Vikings are used to playing.

They are working on conditioning, passing, and formations to better compete with the tougher teams. "We're starting back at the basics," said senior Ashley Bonner.



Photo Courtesy of HR Imaging.

Senior Sydney Schaffer dribbles the ball during a game against Glenbard South.

# Eberly, Bouwer brothers lead team with impressive skill sets

Starting at early ages Eberly, Bouwer brothers bring experience to untested team

Grant Gibson

Reporter

Liz VanDrunen

Reporter

Illiana's varsity tennis teams is set to have a successful season with a few key players: senior Jason Eberly and sophomore duo Lawton Bouwer and Seth

Bouwer.

Eberly has been playing tennis for the last fourteen years, starting when he was four years old with the help of his father who coached him. In his past three tennis seasons, he's gone down state with partners Ben VanTil (freshman year) and Garrett Lytle (sophomore and junior year). In his last year at Illiana, however, Eberly is playing singles. He has won all three of the matches he's had.

The Bouwer boys are just two of three triplets, the third being Kade Bouwer, who is ranked right below them in tennis. Lawton and Seth have been playing tennis all their lives, but they really picked it up in



Photo courtesy of Hanna VanderWoude

Seniors Bo Hofstra and Kyle Schaaf pose for a picture.

## Hofstra and Schaaf lead baseball team

Alex Wondaal

Reporter

With the end of their high school baseball careers fast approaching, senior pitching duo Bo Hofstra and Kyle Schaaf are hoping to do some damage in the post-season.

Hofstra and Schaaf have been playing baseball since the ages of six and five respectively, and started playing together their freshman year at Illiana. Last summer they played together in a travel league where Hofstra said they grew as teammates.

"I look up to Bo as a Division I bound athlete. I see him as a goal I'd like to be," said Schaaf.

The team began its season with

a six and three record. Their record includes a comeback from an eight to zero deficit to Riverside Brookfield to capture a twelve to eleven win. Schaaf ended the game with a walk-off single which enabled junior Jared Trivette to score.

Schaaf said that the two main goals for the team were to see every player reach his highest potential and for the team to make it down state - surpassing last year's tough loss to Reed-Custer at Sectionals. Reed Custer went on to win the state championship.

Hofstra said that for the team to reach its goals, "the players need to hit in better situations and get more runs batted in."

Schaaf said that to reach its goals he personally needs to give

up fewer runs pitching and the team's overall batting needs to improve.

Hofstra verbally committed to Purdue Lafayette his sophomore year and signed a letter of intention in November of last year. He is hoping eventually to win the Big Ten Conference and make a run in the College World Series. Schaaf is hoping to play for either Purdue Northwest or Indiana Purdue Fort Wayne after graduation. Both players said they would miss playing as Vikings.

"I'll miss the community and support at Illiana," said Schaaf.

Hofstra said he would miss hitting every day and playing with old friends.



Photo Courtesy of HR Imaging.



## Boys track looks for future success

Kade Bouwer

Reporter

Boys track and field is doing well to start its season. The boys have pulled off a trio of fourth place finishes at Riverside-Brookfield Meet, Unity Christian Meet, and at the Metro Suburban Conference Indoor Meet.

Jim Piaskowy, the boys' coach, said, "We haven't been at full strength yet, so these next couple meets will really tell us where we are headed. We do have some good senior leadership. We have the top tier guys in the events. We just need that second score."

Senior hurdler and sprinter Isaiah Easter said, "Track is a pretty individual sport, and for all of us to be able to work together, help each other and grow together as a team is pretty big."

Piaskowy listed several goals for the season, including "sending several guys downstate in field events and track events this year and winning the Chicago Christian meet since we are the defending champs."



Photo courtesy of Dave Gibson

*Freshman Gillian Fiene takes third in the 3200 meter run at the Houseward Invitational at Unity Christian.*

## Girls track jumps, runs, throws, to victory

Kade Bouwer

Reporter

Girls track and field has come out of the blocks strong this season.

The girls have placed well in large meets, taking third place at the Riverside-Brookfield Meet and third at the Unity Christian Meet. They also took sixth at the Metro Suburban Conference

Indoor Meet.

Deb Top, coach of the girls team, said, "They have really been doing well. There have been lots of first places, school records broken, and personal bests achieved."

Senior Gabby Kreykes said, "We all get along very well. We all have a ton of fun. There is never a dull moment."

Freshmen Gillian Fiene

broke the school record for the mile and the two mile run and also went downstate for indoor track and field.

Top said, "We got placed in the larger division of the conference this year, but I would still like to go for a second or third place in the conference. I would also like to get as many people as many people to the state finals."

## Boys volleyball hits bumpy road

Luke Hillegonds

Co-Sports Editor

The boys varsity volleyball team is off to a 6-9 start to its season. Some of their struggle may be calendar-related.

Senior Jacob Miedema said, "We had a tough stretch where we went two weeks with only one practice. During that time we had about 9 games and we just weren't in a rhythm."

Senior Andrew Fabrizio said, "One of our strengths this year is hit-

ting because we have a couple of good hitters including Mark Hernandez and Garret VanderZee."

The team's schedule is slowing down in the next few weeks, and the team looks to get back in a rhythm.

Miedema added, "I think that we can make a pretty good run in the playoffs if we can stay healthy. I think we can win regionals if we get more practice time and use it efficiently."



Photo courtesy of Colleen VanderWoude

*Junior Jared VanderWoude goes up for a spike against Nazareth Academy.*

## Girls softball swinging their way out of rut

Jacob Thompson

Co-Sports Editor

The girls softball team is off to a solid start of 7-6 and has high expectations for the rest of the season. With a big win over Elmhurst the team is starting to hit their way out of beginning of the season struggles. They have high goals to win the regional championship at the end of the season.

"We have a great chance at making it deep in the post season," says Ace Pitcher Heather Wiltjer, a senior. "We have the team to do it, we mesh well and seem to get along very well as a team. Our lower part of the batting line is starting to hit well and get quality at bats."

Senior Chloe Baker also talks about how the teams hitting has been their biggest strength this season but also says at times their biggest enemy might just be themselves.

"We get down on ourselves very easily," says Baker. "As a team we have to control our emotions and allow ourselves to play the game consistent. If we can control the way we feel and learn to tame the way we feel we can start winning more games."

### Male Athlete of the Month

Senior Bo Hofstra has been playing baseball for as long as he can remember, and has been a part of the boys varsity baseball team for 3 years now. He recently signed to Purdue University, Lafayette to continue his pitching career. This season Bo is helping lead his team to an 8-5 winning record and has already thrown a no hitter this year against IC Catholic Prep winning the game 9-0 and throwing 10 strikeouts.

"It was awesome to be able to get the win and to have the opportunity to throw a no hitter," says Hofstra. "It's not too often you get the chance to throw a no hitter so I was excited afterward but most important we have to focus and look on the end of the season and post season."



### Female Athlete of the Month

Senior Heather Wiltjer has been playing varsity softball for 4 years now and is helping lead the team to a 7-6 start. Her stellar pitching has been a bedrock of the varsity team. Wiltjer has always loved playing softball and has recently signed with Olivet Nazarene University to continue her softball career.

Senior teammate Chloe Baker spoke about how Wiltjer is a good teammate and leader and that she works hard all the time. "She's always smiling, always has a positive attitude, and always complimenting teammates," said Baker.

"I really try and do my best at all times," says Wiltjer. "We are starting to mesh very well and play better as a team."





# Editorial

## To embrace special needs students, ICHS must stop patronizing them

Illiana is currently considering including special needs persons into the student body. Christian Learning Center, an inclusive education consulting firm, has visited to give feedback on how Illiana would need to improve to service these students. The school is seeking to look more like the body of Christ and provide Christian education to students who normally have to attend public high schools to receive the care they need.

These actions are commendable and show the school's commitment to bringing Christian education to the whole of God's people.

However, despite having good intentions, we often embrace a falsehood. Even advocates for greater inclusion often unwittingly tell a narrative in which "good people" have to show Christ's love to the disabled, and—unfortunately—that same narrative suggest that the disabled have nothing to offer to the broader Christian community.

One of the reasons for the narrative is that it is easy

to pity these young men and women. They face extraordinary difficulty. Some can't talk. Others can't walk. Some are confined to wheelchairs or diapers. They have to struggle to accomplish tasks that we do out of habit.

We take these facts and accept a narrative that these

“People with disabilities are not burdens, but gifted members of our community”

people are burdens, but burdens we are called to bear. Our pity becomes patronizing, and our love becomes pride. We begin to think that we are such a blessing to these poor, pathetic children.

Such a narrative celebrates caregivers and teachers and communities that serve disabled individuals, but it consistently treats the disabled as “the other,” as a group fundamentally flawed with no real gifts to contribute.

But what if the famil-

iar narrative is false? What if people with disabilities are not burdens, but gifted members of our community? These men and women are the handiwork of God. They have unique skills that although may not be quantifiable on a basketball scoreboard or on a standardized

test, are ultimately much richer.

As an editorial staff with many relationships to special needs individuals, we've seen firsthand the gifts they bring to the table.

One has his entire calendar committed to memory and can tell you what day of the week June 13th, 1984 falls on.

Another not only sings Christian music with all of his heart and soul, but can also tell you the song title, artist, and production year

by hearing only the first few chords.

Yet another has had the bravery to transfer schools, not just once, by on five separate occasions.

That's a list that mentions only a fraction of the talent the disabled community offers. Imagine how richly blessed our school would be with the whole?

As Illiana begins to think about offering classes to special needs students, the school should run away from thinking that we are some sort of martyrs. With that mentality, we look like Pharisees, imagining holiness where none exists. Instead, we should embrace these students with both love and humility, recognizing that their limitations do not negate their many gifts.

If Illiana wants to effectively educate and incorporate special needs people, we need to stop viewing them as necessary burdens. Only when this false narrative gets exposed and rejected can inclusion flourish.

And with eyes clear of pride, we'll finally see how their gifts and talents shine.

## Getting out of my problem puddles

Sticky, wet snow stuck to the bottom of my skis as I zipped down the mountain with my family. It was a warm week, and the snow on the top of the Rockies was melting, so a puddle, reminiscent of a pond, formed next to a lift half way down the mountain. We would fly down the mountain

but stop before the final drop that led to the pond. We looked for a moment, daring ourselves to push off the ledge, and then we kicked off, willing ourselves to pick up speed. Coats flapping in the wind, we would whisk across the surface, a trail of water splashing up in our wakes, each time, risking falling in.

Each day we returned to that spot. Each day, the sun was hot against the cool, mountain sky, and the puddle grew. It was just a matter of time before someone fell in.

The next time we rushed down the slope, I was the last to go down, and everyone was waiting, watching on the other end of the puddle. I pushed off slushing down the hill, but the snow was sticky against my skis, and I took too many turns. I hit the water. I flew for a millisecond, but like a bird trying to fly for the first time, I heavily thudded to the ground. My skis buried into the slush, and water invaded my boots, drenching my socks as I stood shin deep in the icy pool.

I had a choice: I could go fishing for my skis, or I could run from my embarrassment, begging my dad to get my skis for me.

Similarly, there are two ways to live: directly taking care of issues or letting them grow and fester, pulling others into the mess.

So often I let them grow. I mope, I make situations explode three times bigger, and then I drag others in too. And on the rare occasion when I do take care of my own problem, I do so grudgingly.

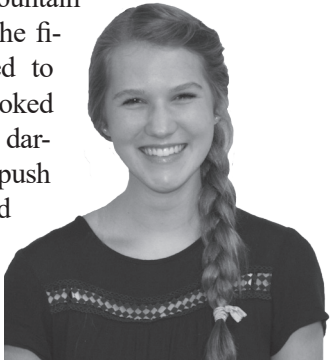
Goodness, I make such a mess out of the littlest things. But, as growing up does to most, it has made me much wiser. So, lately, instead of making the problems bigger, I'm trying to take care of the problem directly. If it's a fight with a friend, I need to talk to her about it instead of someone else. If I have an issue in a class, I should talk to the teacher about it instead of others.

I need to let go of my bitterness instead of dragging everyone else into my problem puddles because when I do that, it becomes a pettiness puddle. I need to solve the issue and then move on, getting out of the puddle. That might be the hardest part for me: letting the problem stay where it is, instead of carrying it out with me. I need to remove myself from the problem, leaving my bitterness in the puddle.

On that sunny sloshy day I went fishing for my skis.

I found my skis and splashed out of the puddle as the whole mountain jeered. I then made my way down the mountain, but it was a long way back. It was five runs and a slow lift away, and the whole way back icy water sloshed in between my toes.

Looking back, I didn't have many other options that day. But looking forward, it's a lot easier to deal with problems immediately than to find yourself pouting in wet ski boots with half a mountain between you and home.



Collette Bower  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

### the Echo

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Editorials, unless otherwise stated, have been written by an editor and reflect the opinion of the majority of the Echo staff. Opinions expressed are not necessarily that of the administration, faculty, or student organizations.

Letters to the editor can be submitted to the advisor or sent to the school. All letters must be signed and must not exceed 250 words. They will be printed provided there is enough room and content is not offensive to the general public. Names will not be withheld for doing so.

## Spring Scramble

Can you unscramble these words that appear in this issue of the Echo?

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. iceslap esdne      | These are the possible future students the feature is about.                              |
| 2. kpcsaeen           | This is the name of the clay sculpture by Sarah Kuiper.                                   |
| 3. uddple             | This is mentioned in a column.  |
| 4. isnent             | Jason Eberly plays this sport.  |
| 5. aindnocim eurpible | Students went on a mission trip here.   |
| 6. trgrndnpesaa       | These people visited Illiana and went with students to classes during 6th and 7th period. |
| 7. roccse             | This is a girls' spring sport.  |
| 8. inef srat          | The art page features pictures from this event.   |
| 9. og dya             | A story about this is on the front page.  |

### WORD BANK

pancakes, grandparents, soccer, Fine Arts, Tennis, Go Day, Dominican Republic, Special Needs

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