



But first, check  
out the selfies on  
pages 4 and 5.

# the Echo)))

Illiana Christian High School



Read about music  
through the decades on  
page 6.



Volume 70 Issue 6

February 29, 2016

Lansing, Illinois

## Sophomore Patton aims high at nationals

Mikerra Hall

Reporter

Sophomore Jake Patton accomplished something no other Illiana student has ever done. He competed in the Clay Pigeon Nationals in San Antonio, Texas last October.

Patton explained, “People shoot at regular tournaments all year. If you win enough of those tournaments, you will be chosen to be in the Nationals.”

Patton did not develop his skills overnight. He is an avid shooter who practiced year-round.

He first started shooting with a 12 gauge shotgun at age 5.

Explaining what the national competition is like, Patton said, “People shoot at targets flying through the air. The targets have different distances, directions, and speeds each time.”

He added, “The competitors shoot at a total of 300 clay pigeons over the course of four days. Whoever breaks the highest number out of 300 wins the Nationals.”

## Homecoming 2016 “Under the Sea”



Photo courtesy of HR Imaging

*On Friday February 5, seniors Joe Barrera and Hilary VanDrunen were crowned Mr. and Miss Illiana. The awards were presented by the former Mr. and Miss Illiana Frank Russell and Rachel Smits. The crowning was followed by a boys basketball game against Southland College Prep where the Vikings won, 96-49. For full coverage, turn to page 2.*

## Go Club sponsoring Toy Box Collection

Victoria Sonowo

Reporter

G.O. club has recently teamed up with the organization Toy Box Collection to assist them in collecting books and toys for children who do not have access to them.

Toy Box Collection was developed as a connection between families and businesses that have new or used toys/books to donate

and those children who are in need of educational books and toys. The group hopes to build unity within the community.

G.O. Club Sponsor, Mrs. Diane Bilyeu, said, “I saw a news broadcast on channel 9 over Christmas vacation that talked about this organization and I looked it up from there. It is a non-profit organization that helps other non-profits. They send books to St. Ju-

de’s Medical Hospital and to libraries in low-income areas. They give books to kids who wouldn’t know the ways to get books.”

This organization is able to accomplish its goal of touching a child through the gift of a toy/book by collecting and accepting new and gently used toys and books. These are then sorted in a warehouses and then redistributed to other non-profits who are able to

place these toys and books into the hands of the children.

“You’ve got three non-profits here,” Bilyeu added. “We’re a non-profit and we’re helping someone else and they’re helping yet other people. The fact is that it’s all about not doing it for any particular reason other than knowing it’s the right thing to do.”

In an email sent to all English Department teach-

ers, G.O. Club Sponsor Sara Johnson stated that G.O. Club plans to begin collecting books by the end of February by placing boxes in front of all the English classes in order to allow all students to donate their books and toys. If students donate 1,500 books and/or toys and half of the student body donates either a book and/or toy, Illiana students will receive an early dismissal on March 10.



# Supreme Court in hands of 2016 electorate

Antonin Scalia created controversy when he served as arguably the most conservative justice on the Supreme Court, but his death on February 13 might generate even more controversy than any of his previous rulings. His death splits the court evenly between conservatives and liberals. As of now, any case could result in a four-four tie.



**Juliana Knot**  
Co-editor in chief

President Obama has vowed to fill the seat, and Senator Mitch McConnell, leader of the Republican controlled Senate, has vowed to block his appointment. The job of appointing his successor will most likely fall to the next president. And it's likely that more appointments will follow. Three of Scalia's colleagues on the court are older than 77. They will most likely retire or die within the next four to eight years. Our next president could possibly decide four out of the nine justices of the Supreme Court.

And American voters decide our next president. Ultimately, voters are deciding the next generation of the Supreme Court. This past generation has spanned about forty years. They upheld Super Pac's rights to make unlimited donations to political campaigns, declared Obamacare constitutional, expanded conceal and carry gun rights, and tore down both the nation's and states' bans on gay marriage.

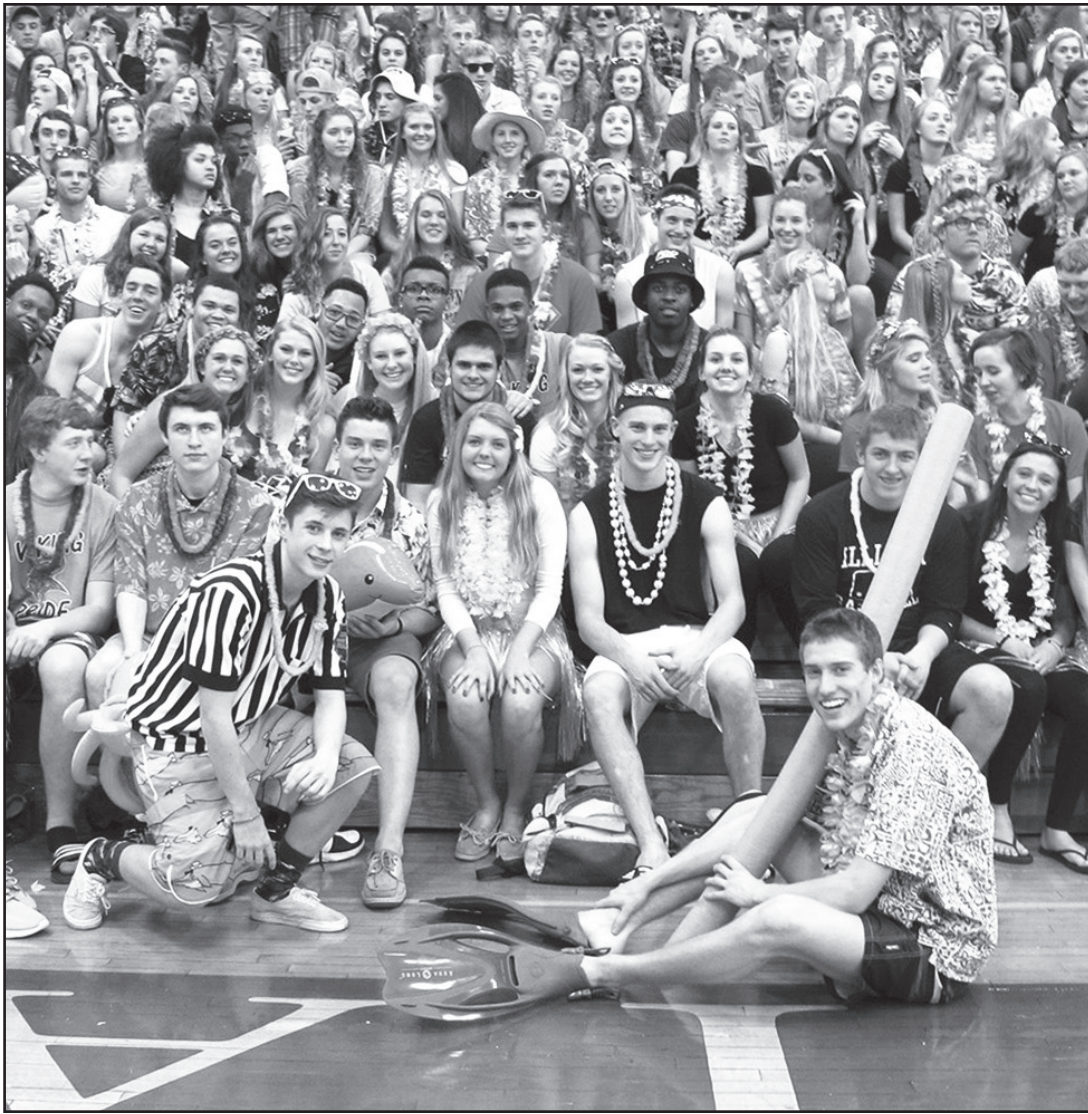
While these rulings are decided, more controversial cases are before the court in the wake of his death. The case of Whole Women's Health v. Cole could determine the fate of 75% of the abortion clinics in Texas. Foster vs. Chairman could condemn a Georgia trial as unconstitutional for excluding black people from the jury. Additionally, Zubik v. Burwell will decide whether Obamacare can force institutions to provide contraception to their female employees. More of these cases are yet to come.

These aren't the only cases being debated either. Matters like illegal immigration, unions, and affirmative action are waiting to be tried. Their verdicts will have lasting effects on this country, much longer than just one Supreme Court generation. The next court could dramatically reshape American policies. And the next president could dramatically reshape the next court.

This election season, voters should keep this in mind. Their vote now could possibly still be affecting American decision-making thirty years down the road. Half of the nation's highest court could be at stake.

I know I'm dealing in hypotheticals. The President and Senate could reach a bipartisan agreement over Scalia's replacement. The current elderly justices could all cling to both their jobs and lives with wrinkled hands. Either way, the possibility of the opposite is too realistic and significant for the country to assume otherwise.

With this in mind, American voters should consider the candidates at hand. Instead of relying on good rhetoric or promises, they should look at the candidate's record. If candidates can choose good policy, they can usually choose good people. This election would be significant if only four years were held in the balance. Now it could be thirty up for grabs.



*Loud crowd, decked out in Hawaiian gear, waits in anticipation for the game to finally start.* Photo by Deb Kamp

## Homecoming a splash

**Riley Goodwin**  
Reporter

On Sat. Feb. 6 Illiana Christian's homecoming dance took place in the lower gym from 8 p.m.-11 p.m.

The theme for homecoming this year was 'Under the Sea' which was selected by the homecoming club. This was the first

year Illiana had a homecoming club that worked on putting everything together.

Senior Jo Barrera, 2016's Mr. Illiana, recounted what it felt like when coming into the gym, before being crowned: "I wasn't focused on winning. It was just awesome to see all the students and alumni. I was honored to just be a part of it."

This year Student Council

sold 400 tickets to the dance the next night and raised a total of \$2,000.

Freshman and homecoming first-timer Lauren Rozendal said her favorite part about homecoming was getting all dressed up with her friends.

"Overall I think we had a very successful homecoming," said Mr. Bosman.

## Seeking 'global perspective' in Uganda

**JP Peerbolte**  
Reporter

This spring break 18 Illiana students, Miss Johnson, and Mr. Boonstra will be going to Uganda for a service trip. The group will be helping out at a Ugandan orphanage.

This trip is different from the usual trip to the Dominican Republic. Uganda is farther away than the Dominican Republic and the cost to travel to Uganda is considerably more. The cost for the Uganda Trip is about \$2000 per participant.

"Kids need to raise those funds from their friends, family, and churches," said Boonstra.

Along with the students raising money themselves, there will also be a spaghetti supper between performances of the mu-

sical on Saturday, March 12, to raise funds for the trip.

"The goal of the trip is to go there and help people," said Boonstra. The group will be painting and building while in Uganda.

Uganda is mostly a Christian country, so the group is not going to evangelize them, but to help them and understand them said Boonstra.

"From my perspective as a school administrator, the main reason we are going there is to actually help our kids. It's about really challenging the way they think and understand the world. Deepening their spiritual growth and trying to give our students a global perspective of the body of Christ," said Boonstra.

The group from Illiana will be hosted by Rick and Valerie Persenaire while in Uganda. The Persenaires have ties with Illi-



*Photo courtesy of sfbayview.com*

ana and Rick Persenaire is an Illiana graduate. They have a home in Uganda and part of the time the group of Illiana will be staying in their home.

The students going on the Uganda Trip will be collecting things to take

## Parents glad to chaperone annual dance

**Marissa Johnson**  
Reporter

For years, parent chaperones have sponsored the homecoming dance.

It doesn't take much to become a chaperone according to Terri Schaaf, who is on the homecoming dance committee. She has been doing it for years. Next year she plans to serve as chairperson over the whole committee.

Schaaf said, "I love when the kids come in all excited and dressed up, looking forward to seeing friends."

Michelle DeYoung has acted as a parent chaperone for three years. DeYoung said she enjoys the kids dancing and having fun. DeYoung added that each chaperone had his or her own job.

Brenda DeVries, also a longtime member of the committee, said, "I would say one of the funniest things [to happen at a homecoming dance] was when one of the parking lot chaperones found a pair of tux pants in the parking lot. We found out later from the Zandstras [the owners of Dunhill formalwear] the pants were from one of the court guys who lost them the night before."





A singing telegram group serenades senior, Emily Otte, during lunch. They sang “What Makes you Beautiful” by One Direction during lunch.

Photo by Collette Bouwer

## Dominican v. American schools

Lauren Curtis  
Reporter

Sarah and Mark Hernandez, natives of the Dominican Republic, began attending Illiana in January. In their time here, they’ve noted both similarities and differences with their school experience in the D.R.

“It’s crazy,” said Sarah. “There are no vending machines at school in the D.R.”

School events are also different in the two countries. Sarah added, “In the D.R. there is no such thing as homecoming, so when I got here I was like ‘what is that?’ because there is no such thing.”

The two schools also have different student bodies and different rules.

“In the D.R. kids can’t just dress however they want,” said Sarah. “You have to be put together, no messiness. Oh yeah, and you can’t dye your hair any unnatural colors.”

Her brother Mark added, “In the D.R. the school population is mostly Catholic, but here I heard only Christians are allowed in the school. Another big difference between the schools is phone use. My school in the D.R. is stricter than Illiana about the use of phones.”

“One thing I really love about Illiana is that everyone is more family-oriented,” said Sarah. “Tons of people are related to one another. Things are not like that in the D.R.”

“Yeah, I like the people here,” Mark added.

“They’re fun to be around.”

## Student council plays cupid

Beth Boonstra  
Reporter

Though several days before the actual holiday, Illiana was already buzzing with Valentine’s festivities on Thursday, Feb. 11. Mr. Ron Tuinstra was particularly surprised to get a singing telegram from his Honors Chemistry class with Prince and Malik Evans performing “Baby” by Justin Bieber. “That’s only

the second [singing telegram] I’ve ever gotten in all my years here,” Tuinstra said. “It was a kind of awkward and embarrassing, but I didn’t want to say no because they put a lot of work into it.” Tuinstra didn’t know the song but went along with it any ways.

Tuinstra was just one of many Illiana faculty and students that were serenaded or adorned with carnations and suckers. Approximately 220 student council gifts

were purchased, estimating a total of \$500. Mr. Dave Bosman said, “We thought about not doing them this year, but I’m glad we did. I really like the tradition.”

The Illiana Valentine’s tradition of singing telegrams started in 1995 when an Illiana teacher told Mrs. Rose Medema, a student council sponsor at the time, about another school that did singing telegrams. Mr. Lance Davids, who was a senior on student council

at the time, remembers organizing the singing telegrams. “It was pretty much the same as it is now,” said Davids.

Tuinstra was inspired to perform his own singing telegram with his class. He played the base while the students sang “I Can’t Help Falling in Love with You”. “We invaded Mr. White and Mr. Veldman’s classes,” Tuinstra said. “Maybe it will become a new tradition.”

## Math team beating odds

Despite tough competition, math team takes 6<sup>th</sup> out of 21

Cassie Iaconelli  
Reporter

The math team in the Lemont Tournament on Feb. 3 came in 6th place out of 21 schools, a very strong

showing in a field of large schools.

“I prepare my team by giving them old tests, and we have the answers as well. They do all the work step by step, and it helps them with their next competition,” says Mr. Lagerwey, the math team coach. “It let’s them know what they are up against.”

Like most competitors, the mathletes have individual strengths and weaknesses to contend with.

“I’m a pretty logical

person,” says sophomore Austin Clark, “so I can figure out a lot of algebra things, but geometry, which is what I’m doing right now, is my hardest event.”

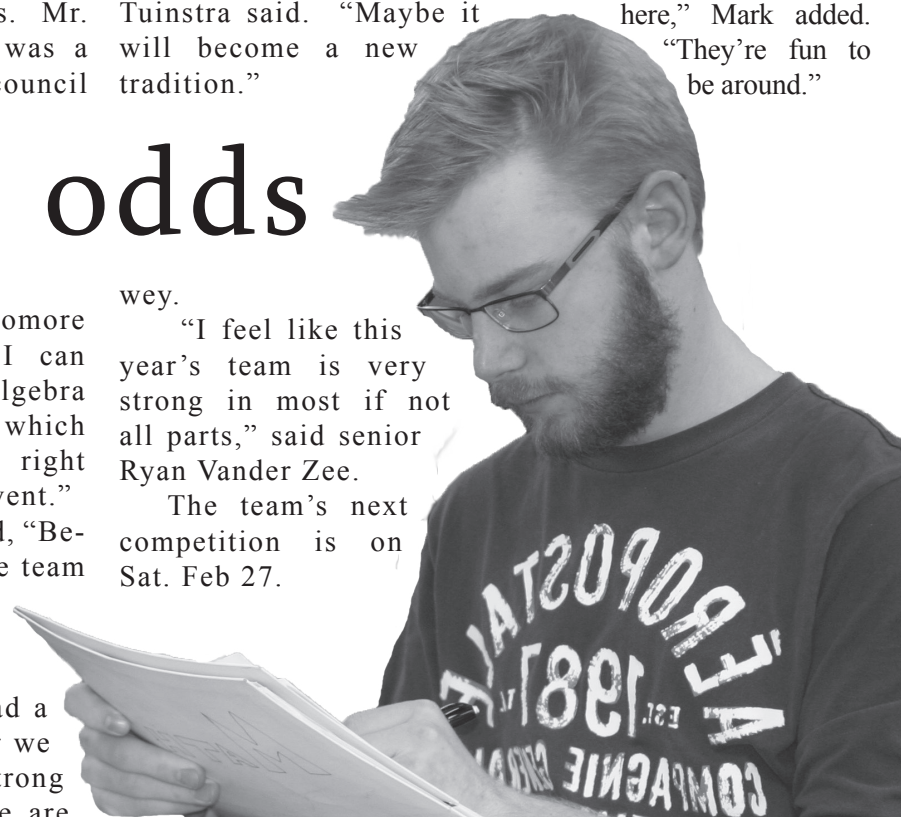
Sam Boonstra said, “Being a freshman on the team isn’t that bad..., but if we get down, others do help us out.”

“Last year, we had a good team. This year we also have a pretty strong team, and I think we are strong enough to win regionals,” said Mr. Lager-

wey.

“I feel like this year’s team is very strong in most if not all parts,” said senior Ryan Vander Zee.

The team’s next competition is on Sat. Feb 27.



Senior Cameron Zandstra works on math problems during math team practice after school.

Photo by Jeff DeVries



# Become light that people need to see

Have you ever sat on a park bench or swing and watched people? Not in a creepy way, but just sat back and watched as the world and the people in it just lived. Most of us would probably say no because no one has the time to do something like that. Everyone, including me, is always focused on the next step and what tomorrow holds for our own lives. But what about that friend who has been struggling with their parents' divorce, what about the stranger who doesn't know where they are sleeping tonight. Those people matter just as much as we do. So why don't we take the time and step away from our own lives to help someone else?



Elyse Dunham  
Co-feature Editor

I struggle so much with slowing down my own life and focusing more on others. My day consists of school, after school is homework, musical practice, and dance class. With all these commitments in my life, I never have time to set aside for others. That's just what we Americans are used to, never wanting to stop, always on the go. But to really become more like Christ, we have to take a few steps back and stop focusing on ourselves. Selfishness is something that has always been a part of human nature. Even back to the very beginning when Adam and Eve wanted to be like God. It's something that, every day, we struggle with and we have to fight against.

In Philippians 2:3-4 it says, "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." It's right here in the Word of God that we need to put focus on others rather than ourselves. But how do we put those words into actions? There are so many ways to be less selfish like volunteering or donating to charity but here are a few very simple ways to lead a less selfish life.

## Just listen.

Sometimes when a friend or family member is telling us about something that they're struggling with, we don't have to put our two cents in. Just let them talk because most of the time people just want to get something off of their chests and don't want to know what we would do in their situation.

## Be the bigger person.

If we are in a fight with someone or we are upset with them, let's not let it drive a wedge between us. Instead let's approach the person and talk out our problems. Instigate that conversation because if we keep it bottled inside, we won't ever forgive that person and we will never want to put them in front of ourselves.

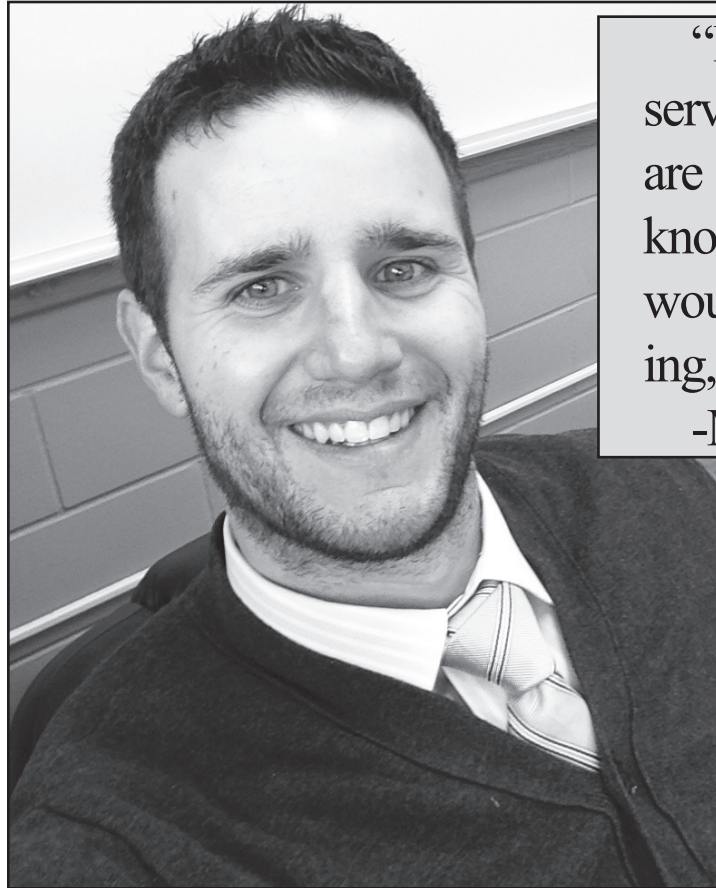
## Show appreciation.

So many times during the day we are shown kindness and most of us just brush it off like an everyday occurrence. But we shouldn't treat it like that because a lot of the world is selfish and inconsiderate. Those people who show us kindness and respect have pushed back their selfish needs. That is something that we should deeply appreciate.

Everyone has sin inside of them and one of those sins is selfishness. But I am urging us to be different and go against the flow. Be that person who stands out so much that people recognize it and want to know where your light came from and how you got it. And if you were ever asked what the source of your unselfish light is, you should always respond with Jesus, the true source of all that is giving and good.

# Making the world a

We asked several Illiana students and faculty how we can make the world a less selfish place and here are their responses.....and their selfies!



"If we really knew what we deserved, if we really knew who we are in comparison to the eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful, holy God, we would be more gracious, more loving, and more interested in others."

-Mr. DeBoer



"Don't think of your money as your own; remember it belongs to God and it's much easier to give something away if it's not yours."

-Mrs. Drost



"Worship the Creator, not the creation."

-Sydnee VanBeek



"We would be less self-centered if we would take a minute to put ourselves in someone else's shoes."

-Miss Mesman



# less selfie-driven place



“Do more volunteering.”

-Megan Kooyenga

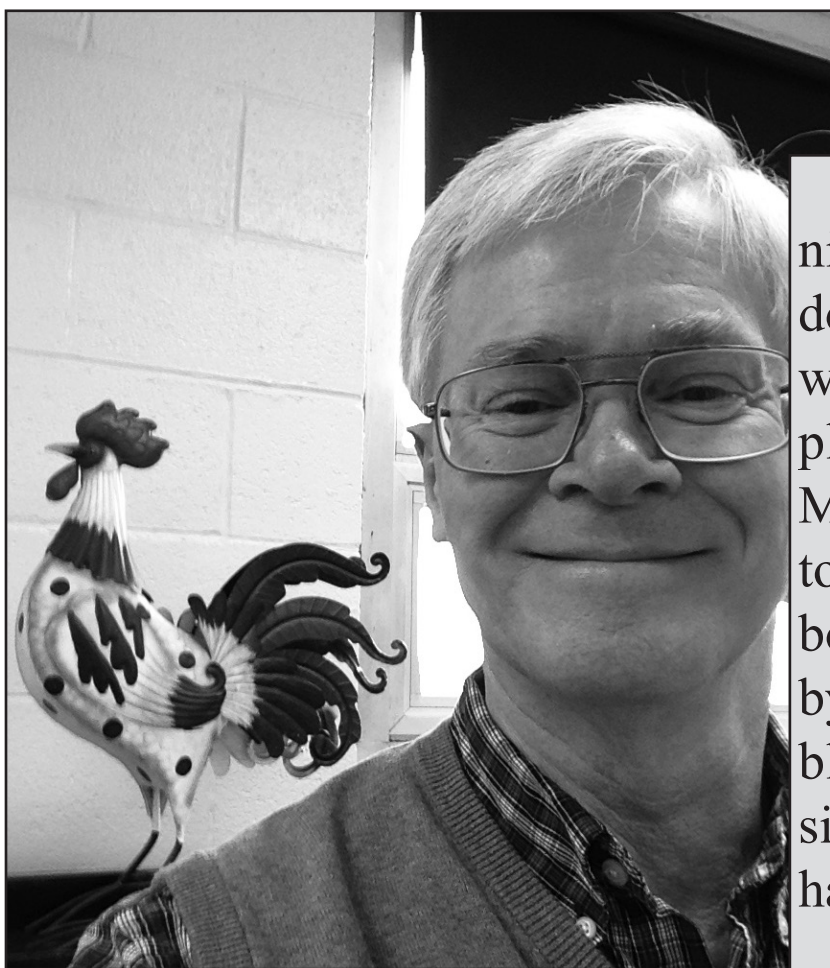
“Stop worrying about yourself, worry more about others.”

-Maria Powers



“Just stop thinking about yourself and focus more on others and what you can do for them.”

-Jack Davids



“Look for opportunities to perform random acts of kindness with a focus on people you don’t know. Make an effort to get to know all the neighbors on your block by first name. Donate blood on a regular basis; make it a lifetime habit.”

-Mr. Tuinstra

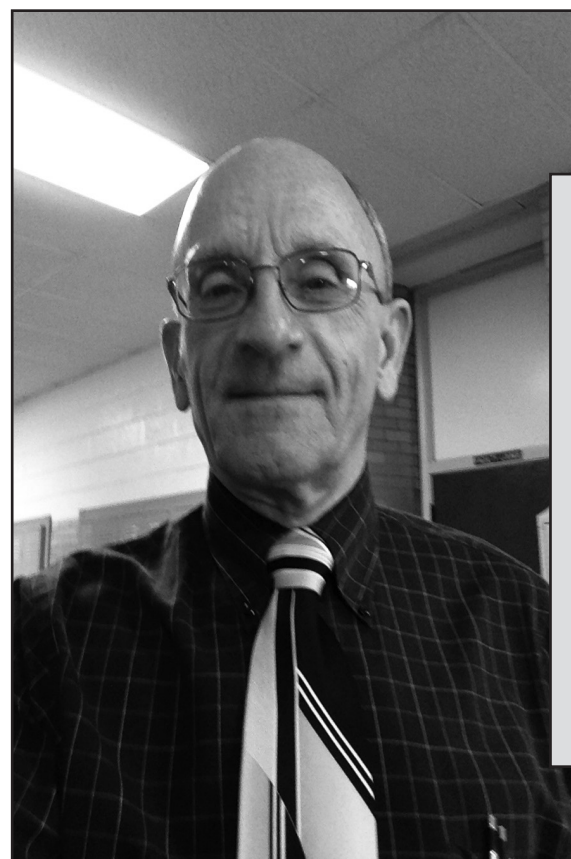


“Just share.”

-Jordan Bivins

“Share your time with others and do things for the love of God.”

-Kyle Church



“A quote from a best-selling book: ‘Me, me, me is dull, dull, dull.’”

-Mr. Veldman





From the ‘Swingin’ Sixties’ to the New Millennium, the past few decades have each brought their own specific style and vibe to popular of music. Whether it be encouraging the world that “All You Need is Love” or to “Shake It Off,” the music has kept its originality while still surprising us with fresh beats and distinct sounds. Let’s journey back through the years with some familiar faces.

Smart-dressed men with shaggy hair brought a new version of pop music to America in the 1960s. The Beatles, who headed up the “British Invasion,” are just one of the rock bands that got girls’ hearts

# 60's

racing in the 1960s. Others include The Rolling Stones and The Who. Rock began to diversify, reflecting the time of upheaval in fashion, attitudes, and society. Musicians wove a rebellious spirit throughout the decade.

*“I attended high school in the late 60’s. I listened to rock-everybody did; greatest decade ever of rock music. Favorite artists include The Beatles, Herman’s Hermits, Dave Clark Five, and Mamas&Papas.” -Mr. Veldman*

# 70's

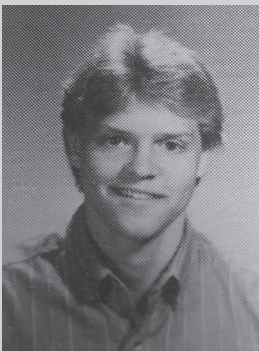
The 1970s reflected two streams. Southern rock like Lynyrd Skynyrd and Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young appealed to many, but as time marched on groovy tunes from the Bee Gees and Blondie eclipsed the rockers. Dance music was a major aspect of the seventies, and as for young people, going to dance clubs was a rite of passage: the Disco era was born.

*“I was in high school from 1968-1971. Anything Beatles was popular. I liked Simon & Garfunkel, James Taylor, Carole King, Carly Simon, Peter Paul & Mary, Elton John, and Cat Stevens.” -Mr. Rudenga*

Wham! Did that scare you? If that didn’t, the fingerless gloves and hoop earrings worn by the lead singer of the band sure would have. Wham! is just one of the many bands and artists who brought a new, heavily synthesized sound to the 1980s. Rap had a major breakthrough in the eighties with artists like Run-D.M.C. and LL Cool J topping the charts. As a decade where image was highly important and MTV ruled the airwaves, people were looking for a different type of music, a “new wave” so to speak.

# 80's

*“I was in high school from 1983-1987. I listened to Rock- Bruce Springsteen, U2, The Police, Journey, Van Halen, as well as some New Wave-Yaz, The B25’s, REM, The Clash, and pop-Michael Jackson, REO Speedwagon, and even a little rap- Run D.M.C. and Midnight Star- early Christian artists- Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith. My favorite song to this day is “I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For by U2”- great music!” -Mr. Zandstra*



# 90's

Hip-Hop, Pop, and Dance tracks continued to be big hits in the nineties, but joining them on the charts were new genres like Grunge and Rap. Oversized flannels and extra-long jeans were not the only thing worn out about this decade. Many people connected with grunge artists like Nirvana and Pearl Jam, but they also tuned-in to powerhouse singers like Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey. And who could forget the king of pop himself, Michael Jackson, who, by the end of the nineties, sold more than 750 million records worldwide. Nothing was

*“I was in high school from 1990-1994. Grunge had just come out so I owned Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, Stone Temple Pilots... all that Grunge movement hit me pretty fast. My brother was consumed with 70’s-classic rock- and that’s how I feel in love with the whole Grunge movement. My parents listened to folk so I grew up listening to Bob Dylan and Neil Young in that same era.” -Mr. Dykstra*



*“I went to high school from 2003-2007. My favorite artists were Queen, Michelle Branch, Kelly Clarkson, ABBA, Justin Timberlake, Britney Spears, Jars of Clay, and Handel. As far as songs go, my friends and I were obsessed with the movie “Step Up” when it came out, so we listened to those songs on repeat. However, the song we belted the most was “Breakaway” by Kelly Clarkson.” -Miss VanStee*

The 2000s brought with them both joy and suffering, and the music of this decade reflected that as well. Pop and Rap still topped charts, but with distinct differences that made them more relatable. Emo and Indie Rock also rose in popularity during this time with artists like Jimmy Eat World and Fall Out Boy singing head-bangers and banging the drums. Artists like Britney Spears and Beyonce rose in popularity as well. Also, country music hit the top of the charts and started its ever-increasing popularity with artists like Carrie Underwood. Music became modernized and forged a path into the 2010’s.

# 00's

ASK  
Vincent  
~~VICKY~~  
VIKING



## So you’ve been friendzoned

Dear Vincent Viking,

Since seventh grade, a boy has been totally crazy about me. We have been best friends for a long time and tell each other everything. We have been on and off for what seems like forever. Last fall, this boy and I started dating again. For the first time, I was ready for a serious relationship with him, but recently he put me in the friend zone, completely out of nowhere. What should I do? Should I pretend like I don’t care and act like it never happened? Should I still talk to him like my best friend? SOS!

Sincerely,  
Friendened and Frustrated

Dear Friendened and Frustrated,

Getting put in the friend-zone can be awkward especially if it is with someone who has been your best friend. Getting friend-zoned can feel more like getting shut-out.

Rejection hurts, and it is perfectly okay for you to be disappointed. The fact that you are disappointed only shows that you were interested. Rejection hurts because you know that you won’t be able to see you two together. You envisioned doing things you both love together and now you can only do them as friends.

The first thing you can do, which you probably have already done, is realize you are disappointed. Also, realize that being disappointed is normal and that you aren’t the only one in your position.

Just because this guy rejected you doesn’t mean that other guys will. There are lots of other guys out there who could be interested in you. If there aren’t any guys that are interested in you, then that is okay too. You don’t need a boyfriend in high school to be happy. As much as you want to call him yours, you have to realize that may not actually happen and keep things realistic from there on.

Next, be actual friends with him. Text him asking for homework help. Tell him your issues and your worries. Be an actual friend to him. However, you have to respect his boundaries. You can’t invade his privacy because everyone deserves privacy. You wouldn’t want him invading your boundaries so you shouldn’t invade his.

The best thing to do in this situation is to have honest communication. Ask him what he envisions for your future relationships and then respect the answer he might give you. You don’t have to agree with him rejecting you, but you still need to respect his wishes. You cannot try and force your way out of the friend-zone.

I hope this helped.  
Yours Truly,  
Vincent Viking

*Do you need advice? Contact Vicky at vickyvikingilliana@gmail.com or write a letter and turn it in to Mr. DeVries’s mailbox located in the office. Thank you!*



# Don't let others influnce you!

Freshman year I played soccer. The only reason I played was that I knew I would make the team. Sounds like a bad reason for joining a team, right? Well, that may not be the only reason. Several of my close friends joined the team too. We didn't win a single game that season, but it was one of the best sports seasons of my life.

Our team scored a whopping total of three goals the whole season; two of those were in the same game.

No matter the score our team (well the light-hearted players) always left the field smiling, either because we did something

hilarious on the field or our head coach Chip Bevan cracked a joke to lighten the mood.

I knew we stunk; everyone knew we stunk, but it was okay. Whether we were practicing in the sketchy Dalton indoor field or outside freezing in a mini blizzard, we had fun.

One of the biggest regrets of my high school career is dropping out of soccer. I was influenced by outside opinions like my dad's. He kept saying I would be great at throwing in track since I did well previously in middle school. I still remember him talking to my uncle while we were camping, not knowing I was listening, telling him that if I only threw in track I would be amazing. It kind of broke my heart because I loved playing soccer.

Another reason I quit was that I feared not making the soccer team again since the new freshmen looked pretty tough. I was scared of the embarrassment of not making the team.

When Miss Top and Mr. Fennema kept telling me to join track, I caved and joined.

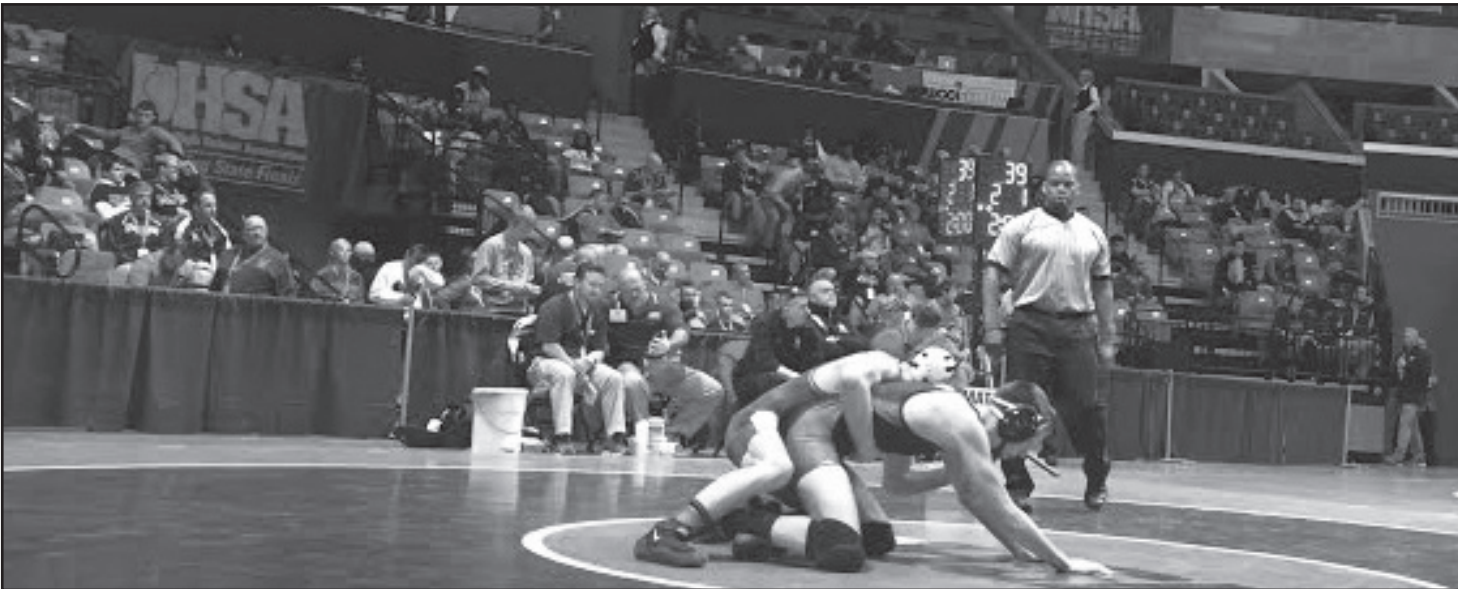
Though I made new friends during the track season, it didn't feel right. None of my close friends were on the team, so I always felt awkward. I still do and it is my third year. Plus I'm a senior. Though I am good at throwing and not so good at soccer, I still sometimes regret my choice.

Track is very different from any other sport. Certain people do certain events in the categories of running (long distance or sprints), jumping, and throwing. Throwing is the smallest of the three and the event with the fewest overlapping athletes. So if you're a thrower, you're most likely not doing anything other than throwing. That makes it very difficult to make friends with teammates outside of the throwers.

It also explains why I miss the soccer team. The unity of the soccer team made me feel included and not just someone who performs once a meet and then is forgotten until the roll call when leaving. The memories I have with the track team are special, but I still regret not going out for soccer again and letting others influence my decision.



Jennifer DeBoer  
Co-editor in chief



Ellis battles his opponent in an effort to pin him in the first round of the state tournament on Feb. 19.

Photo by Tyler Bosman

## Ellis struggles down state, loses first round

Luke Hillegonds  
Co-Sports Editor

Junior wrestler Jesse Ellis finished 2nd in sectionals and advanced down state. Sophomore Isaac Lyzenga, seniors Daniel Lyzenga, and Ben

DeYoung advanced down state as alternates meaning that if someone was disqualified or hurt, then they would wrestle in his spot.

Ellis went in expecting to place in state. He wanted to perform well since

he couldn't participate the year earlier. However, he lost his first match and failed to advance.

"I'm very upset that I didn't place in state," Ellis said. "I had a great year but just didn't finish the season how I wanted to."

The varsity wrestling team finished with a record of 5-12, but the poor record does not accurately portray the talent on the team. The boys have so few wrestlers that they forfeit several matches every single meet.

## Girls basketball wins regional championship



Photo by Jim Kamphuis

Junior Gabby Krekys shoots a floater.

Luke Hillegonds  
Co-Sports Editor

The varsity girls basketball team won regionals for the first time in 12 years.

The Vikings beat Noble Street College Prep 65-26 in the championship on Feb.11.

They girls advanced to sectionals but lost their first game 57-54 to St. Joseph on February 16.

They finished with an overall record of 21-8 and won their conference with a 12-0 record.

Junior Eden Schipper said, "We are really proud of the way we played all year. We placed first in

conference and that was super exciting."

Junior Deborah Smith said, "It was a tough loss at sectionals, but we tried to stay positive by looking back at our great season. It is the best season that varsity has had in a while, and we are just excited to see the varsity teams continue to improve."

## Boys basketball hopes to go deep in postseason

Co-Sports Editor

The boys basketball team finishes its season with a record of 20-6 and heads into post season looking to take the regional title 3 years in a row. The boys have high hopes for the remainder of their season and are hoping to go as deep into post season as possible.

"This regular season has been great," says Junior Bo Hofstra. "But we are hoping the post sea-

son is even greater. The team is just really pushing to get as far as we can into the post season."

Ethan Beezhold says that the amount of depth the team has is solid and it's going to be key in making it as far as they hope. Many of the members also give credit to this year's new coach Sikema.

The boys won their first game of regionals Tuesday Feb. 23 against Chicago Prep and are taking on rival Chicago Christian Friday, Feb. 26.



Photo by Jim Kamphuis

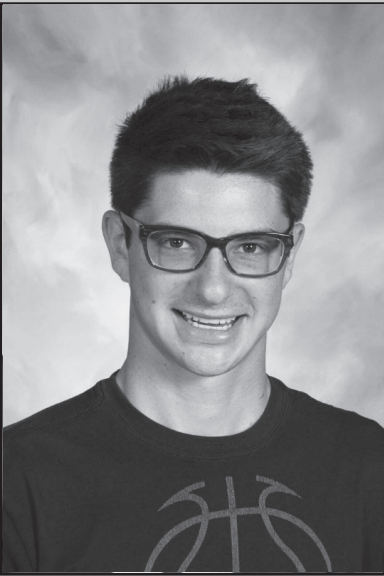
Senior Chandler Kimmel runs out of the huddle on January 15 against Chicago Christian.

### Male Athlete of the Month

Chandler Kimmel has had a spectacular season has a guard for the varsity basketball team. This is second year playing on varsity and his teammates look to him as a leader. He is averaging 12 points per game. However, his defensive performance is what has made him stand out.

Junior Sam Vree said about Kimmel's defense, "Every time we scout another team we find their primary scorer, and we put Chandler on him." He added, "He is always right on you no matter how hard you try to break from him."

Senior Jon Gibson said of Kimmel's defense, "I hate being guarded by him because he is just really annoying. He makes me really mad when he guards me."



### Female Athlete of the Month

Junior Laci Gibson has been doing cheer for 6 years, and has always enjoyed doing it. Starting her freshman year Laci quickly rose to be one of the most skillful cheerleaders on the team.

"Her leadership and good attitude is something the team counts on," says Junior Alex Guiliani.

Laci has led her team to many of their goals for the season including qualifying for ICCA and placing where they wanted to there.

"This year wasn't about winning," says Gibson. "But I think that's what made us so successful. I mean we are one big family. Half our squad was new this season but we all bonded really well and that's all you can ask for."



# Editorial

## Changing our attitude about those with special needs

A little boy named Bobby wanted to be an astronaut. Bobby liked to play soccer. Bobby's favorite color was red. He went to school every day. He was just like every other kid, except for one thing.

Bobby was born with autism, a complex developmental disorder that caused him to have trouble with social interaction at school. As a result, kids at school would point at Bobby and laugh. Some, seeing him in the hallways, would walk away. When he tried to engage people, some treated him like a baby or pitied him. Behind his back, some called him "retarded." When his family attended church, no one would sit by them. It seemed like no one loved him, and Bobby felt completely worthless.

We like to think this disrespect would never happen in the halls of Illiana, but sadly, it does. According to a nationwide survey, 40% of people with intellectual or developmental disabilities feel lonely at least half the time, and many report not having friends beyond their family and paid staff. We never stop to realize that we are part of the problem.

Everyone reacts differently when they encounter people with special needs. We ignore them. Pity them. Tease them. Rarely do we treat them as our equals, brothers and sisters made in the image of God.

Even when we want to behave better, many of us don't know how to interact with people with special needs, so we just ignore them. We need to learn another way.

One way to learn is to turn to those who have taught, cared for, and lived with children with special needs for more than 50 years—Elim Christian Services, an organization whose mission is to

people with special needs.

The first stage is Ignorance. We think that weaknesses and disabilities mean people have no potential. We think God can't use people with disabilities, or we don't know anyone with a disability and have no interest in getting to know them or being involved in their life.

The second stage is Pity. We feel sorry for the disabled. We are so blessed by God and

them and put in the time to pour into them.

The fourth stage is Friendship. In this stage we come to know those with disabilities. We realize that these people have value in God's sight, and also in ours. We know that our lives have been enriched by these interactions. We know God brings many different people into Illiana, including those with disabilities, and we all grow in friendship together.

The fifth, and final, stage is called Co-Laborers. In this stage we work to serve and praise God alongside people with disabilities. Together, we will encourage and equip each other to respond to God's call in our lives. We can all give and we can all receive.

Students of Illiana may find themselves in any of these stages, and that's okay so long as we move along on this journey, allowing our attitudes towards those with disabilities to evolve. God calls for us to see a need for change in our lives, and meet it. By changing our attitudes, we will see in a change in our actions.

Find the Bobby in your community. Bring him in and be his friend. Realize that he is just like you—made in the image of God and loved like crazy by his Maker. In the end, you might just discover that the life you enrich ends up being your own.

## "Rarely do we treat them as our equals, brothers and sisters made in the image of God."

"equip individuals with disabilities to achieve their highest God-given potential so they may live their lives glorifying Him." To help churches, families, and communities to embrace and include people with disabilities, Elim has identified five stages through which they must move.

The stages of Ignorance, Pity, Care, Friendship, and Co-Laborers guide us as we improve our attitudes towards

they are not. We are grateful we are not disabled, and those who are need our help to give them meaning. We don't see any meaning or purpose to their lives and feel bad about that.

The third stage is Care. We realize that like us, people with special needs are created by God in His image. In that alone, they have value. We hope that someone will put in the time to take care of them and show them God's love. In fact, we desire to form relationships with

## Packing away my stubbornness in a pink suitcase

I stomped out of the house, my pink suitcase with an "I love Grandma" sticker on the side dragging behind me. At age 5, I decided the time had come from me to leave. I was sick of the lack of punishment my brother, Lawton, received for him continual pestering.

I already stormed to the edge of the lawn when Lawton, only three, ran out, grabbed me by the arm and said he was going with me. He only wore a pair of athletic shorts, so I told him he'd have to bring a shirt and a suitcase with a change of clothes in it too. He raced in and out, but he only grabbed the shirt--no suitcase. That's when I decided staying home would be easier than getting Lawton packed.

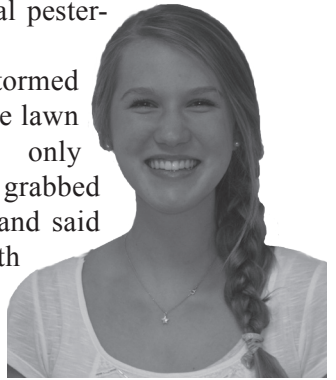
Lawton saved me from my own stubbornness that day. The agony of going back was almost unbearable, but at least then I could use Lawton as my excuse for coming back. I didn't want to face my mom when I got home. I had focused so much on my side of the story that I didn't even take into consideration her side of the story. I was only five, but, still, it was obvious that she was busy, running around the house, vacuuming, watching five kids, and trying to keep the peace. Then there was me, sitting there pulling on her arm whining about my brother pestering me. I literally packed my bags to avoid hearing my mom's side of the story.

If you're thinking this pig-headedness only relates to five years old, it doesn't. At school, friendships are ruined. In congress, nothing gets passed. At churches, arguments over petty things cause splits. Stubbornness is destructive and weakening; it does no good.

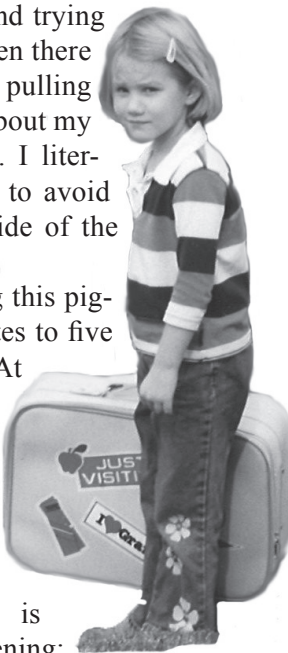
I thought I was being strong and to the point when I walked out that day, but I was being a coward. I stubbornly walked away from the problem without hearing the other side of the argument. I wasn't willing to even think of compromise. When friendships break, congressmen refuse to compromise, and churches split, they're running away from the problem instead of facing it. They're so stuck in their mindset they can't even think of compromise.

I'm thankful my brother ran after me that day. Without it, who knows how much more time I would've wasted before I finally changed my mindset. My mom has a picture of me storming out that day. I scowl at the camera and stand in a sassy slouch.

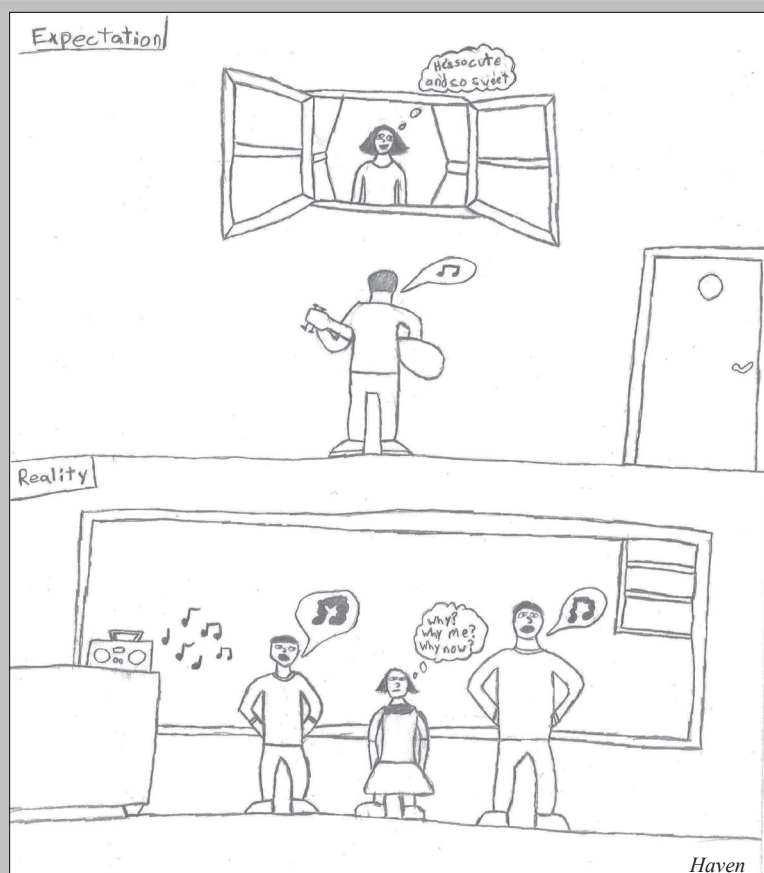
I look at that picture now and laugh, embarrassed, as I recall thinking that was going to be the last picture my mom would have of me. My mom knew better though. As she tried to hide her smirk, she knew my stubbornness was only temporary and soon I'd grow up.



**Collette Bouwer**  
News Editor



## Editorial Cartoon



Valentine's Day Singing Telegrams:  
Expectations vs. Reality

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

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