



Love is in the air at Illiana! Find out how your teachers and classmates fell in love (or out of luck) on page 6

Echo)))

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Read about black milestones and contributions in the arts on pages 4 and 5

Illiana Christian High School

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Forty nine Illiana students wait in the shadow of the Washinton Monument for Vice President Mike Pence to speak.

Photo by Cate Peerbolte

Go Club serves, feeds homeless at Night Ministries

Haleigh Olthof
Reporter

Go Club has partnered with Night Ministries, an organization that packs and distributes food to those who need it in nearby towns, for several years, and Jan. 26 was the first of a series of events with the organization scheduled by Go Club for the last Thursday of every month for the rest of the school year.

Led by teachers Ms. Johnson and Ms. Bilyeu, student volunteers pack food, usually soup and sandwiches, at Illiana before taking a bus to a location chosen by Night Ministries. In January, students traveled to the Back of the Yards, a neighborhood in Chicago to which Night Ministries sends a group every Thursday. From a small station set up on the sidewalk, the group handed out food for an hour to an hour and a half, said Johnson.

The January trip was junior Jordan Miller's first experience with Night Ministries, and he said he enjoyed it.

He was "surprised at the number of people" who didn't have a home or food, but he said he had fun talking to and joking with them. He said the experience made him grateful for what he has.

Johnson said that in addition to talking to the people they are serving, the group has been able to watch some of them grow.

"We've seen the same couple of boys there every time we've gone for the last few years, and it's been really cool to watch them grow up," said Johnson.

She said the scheduling for the coming months is partially due to the dates that Night Ministries had available. She added that having a set date every month makes it easier to inform students about the events.

ICHS marches for life with thousands

Students drove 14 hours through night to Washington D.C. to protest in 44th annual March for Life.

Kade Bouwer
Reporter

Forty-seven Illiana students took a stand against abortion on Friday, Jan. 27, by going to Washington D.C. to join with hundreds of thousands of other protesters in the largest pro-life rally in the world, The March

for Life.

Jeff White, Illiana teacher and Vice President of the Illiana Right to Life Committee, said, "[The March for Life] has a lot of energy. A lot of kids are certainly conscious of social justice issues, and this is certainly one of the largest social justice issues of our time."

Freshmen Sydney DeVries said, "I wanted to be a part of the Pro Life Movement. I have seen other people do it, and I wanted to make a change."

Senior Erik Detmar said, "[The rally] was really fun. It gets you more involved in what is going on."

The group left on Thursday night, Jan. 26, and it left Saturday night, Jan. 28.

"The crowds were amazing. It felt awesome to be a part of something so big," said Sophomore Ben Wiersema. "I felt like we were really

making a difference."

Some of the notable speakers at the March for Life were Vice President Mike Pence, Kellyanne Conway (Senior Counselor to Donald Trump), Benjamin Watson (NFL tight-end), and Karyme Lozano (Mexican telenovela star). Pence was the highest ranking official to ever speak at the event in person.

According to the Media Research Center, the March for Life's crowd size was comparable to that of the Woman's March.

Locker vandalism exposes racial tensions, need to learn empathy

Juliana Knot
Co-Editor in Chief

During Black History Month, Illiana has experienced several outbreaks of racist behavior. Early in the month, an Instagram account was set up that had several racially insensitive pictures showing members of the white supremacy group, the Ku Klux Klan. With help from Instagram, the administration was able to take the page down and discipline the students involved.

In addition to that, several posters on black students' lockers that

celebrated Black History Month were torn down over a period of about a week.

Senior Mikerra Hall, who had a poster that simply read "Black History Month," said, "Between sixth and seventh period, I came back from class, and I realized it was gone... It was humiliating."

Hall also said that the events made her feel "less-than" white students at Illiana.

Sophomore Morgan Bryant, who recently transferred to Illiana, also had a poster ripped in half on her locker. "I was shocked because I

thought this was a Christian school."

Miranda Wallace, mother of junior Jazmine Wallace, said "I was upset and hurt. It seemed like a few people with that hurtful mindset tainted Illiana's culture which we've come to love."

Several black students reported the vandalism to Vice Principal A.J. Turkstra, who made an announcement that such acts of vandalism would be punished under the school's racial harassment policy. Principal Peter Boonstra also met with both students and parents who wanted him to take a stand against the racial harassment. He said that he agreed with their sentiments and sent out an email to the Illiana community that explained the events, called them "unacceptable," and asked for the community's prayers. Several parents, unsatisfied with the email, wanted a stronger stance on racism from the administration.

LeTonya Rogers, mother of junior Brianna Rogers, said, "It needs to be known that there is zero tolerance for racism... Let the community know what [discipline] will happen if you do this and stick to it."

Stronger discipline was not the only suggested response to the racial tensions. Senior Isaiah Easter saw a need for Illiana to embrace more understanding of other cultures. He said, "We consider our Christ-like behavior just to be pity and sympathy instead of empathy and a true yearning to understand other people's emotions and experiences."

Wallace also hopes that Illiana's leadership will take on a stance that encourages love and showcases what she believes is the true spirit of Illiana. "We need to stand firm in the Christian faith and define the culture of Illiana," she said. "[Racism] cannot be the culture of Illiana."

Consider qualifications, not just religious background

On Feb. 7, 2017, Republican Betsy DeVos became the 11th United States Secretary of Education after Vice President Mike Pence made the tie-breaking vote for the controversial confirmation.

DeVos was born in Holland, Michigan, attended Holland Christian High School, graduated from Calvin College, and attends a Christian Reformed Church. If that sounds familiar, it should. How much more “Illiana” can a person be? This is a Christian woman involved in the government, involved in the lives of non-believers, and, most importantly, involved in the lives of children.

Thousands of people in America are not happy with her appointment and their reasonings are mainly because DeVos has never attended a public school, nor have her children. Her lack of experience in public education, they argue, makes her unable to act as a leader of that system. That seems like a viable argument.

In other circles, particularly ones like Illiana, DeVos’s appointment is greeted with excitement. After all, she’s one of us. Isn’t it refreshing to have a Christian (even a Reformed one!) in such a position of power and influence?

Refreshing? Maybe. A good idea? Well, that’s another matter.

Too often Christians see someone who is also a Christian and automatically think he or she’s a great candidate for just about any position they’re aiming for. But is that true? Think about this: You need open heart surgery and you can choose between two doctors. One is a run-of-the-mill doctor. He graduated in the middle of his class from a second-tier medical school and has been practicing as a surgeon for several years with a 60% success rate. He is a good Christian. The other doctor is a highly acclaimed cardiac surgeon who graduated at the top of his class from Harvard. He is a leading expert in open-heart surgery, and his patient success rate is 98%. He also happens to be an atheist.

My guess is that most of you would choose the atheist to do surgery, right? Faith matters, but ultimately you want a doctor who is proficient in his or her skills. By the same principles, just because DeVos is a Christian does not mean she is a good choice for Secretary of Education.

Some of us many support her for more personal reason. DeVos is a firm supporter of school choice which is a program that allows public education funds to be used for children in public, private, charter, or at-home schooling. Being Secretary of Education, DeVos is supposed to focus on the needs of public school children, considering the government is in control of their resources. Although school choice sounds great, she should not be draining public education funds to pay for the expenses of private school children. While DeVos has good intentions and a heart for children and their education, her means by which she is expressing this are not the best.



Photo by HR Imaging

Seniors Alex Gulliani, Maddie Maatman, Alyssa Murrin, Eric Detmar, and Jacob Thompson dance the night away at homecoming.

Homecoming festivities never end in Neverland

Emma Slings

Reporter

Natalie Togtman

Reporter

Illiana Christian held a “Journey to Neverland” homecoming

the first weekend in February with a school Pep Rally on Thursday, basketball games on Friday, and a homecoming dance Saturday night.

Thursday, Feb. 2, was the annual Pep Rally. The sophomore 3-point shooting team consisting

Students shoulder school, activities, even jobs

Alex Wondaal

Reporter

Liz VanDrunen

Reporter

With school, homework, and extracurricular activities, it’s difficult not to crumble under the busyness, let alone retain a job on top of it all.

Yet some students handle the time management issues. We talked to several of them about the nature of their jobs and how they maintain balance among the various demands on their time.

Senior Emily Koditek is currently working at Joann Fabrics in Homewood for around fifteen to twenty hours a week.

Koditek said, “It’s really hard

managing time with after school stuff, there’s a lot of moving things around in order it get it all to fit in one day. [When I play in the pit orchestra], I usually only end up making it to every other play practice.”

Koditek advises talking to your teachers and boss about scheduling.

Senior Holly Krajewski works with Senior Hannah Maurello at State Line Pizza in Dyer, Indiana. After working on the Spire and acting in the school plays and musicals she hustles to her job to answer phone calls and cook, anywhere from four to nine hours a week.

“My bosses are really nice,” Krajewski said. “They let me do homework when we’re not too

of Emily Poortenga, D.J. Gladney, and Bible teacher Mr. Mark Dykstra pulled through with a 3-2 win after tying 5-5 with the freshman team in the first round. The cheerleading squad and homecoming court pumped up jams to get the student body hyped for the next day’s basketball games.

Before the start of the Varsity game on Friday, Feb. 3, homecoming court was introduced on the basketball court. A spotlight was shone on each couple as they entered, causing them and the beautifully-painted backdrop of shimmering pixies in Neverland to shine. Members of the court glided through a decorated arbor and onto moon placemats where they listened to former Mr. and Miss Illiana, Joe Barrera and Hillary VanDrunen, give their speeches. After much anticipation, Andy Sons and Juliana Knot were crowned Mr. and Miss Illiana.

“When I found out I won, my first thought was, ‘Are you guys nuts? This is insane!’” said Sons.

Knot said, “My reaction to

busy.”

Maurello advises avoiding after school activities altogether.

Maurello said, “For anyone trying to balance work and school, really try to work ahead when you can and don’t push stuff off. You’ll hate yourself the night before something is due.”

Senior Everett Buiter works at Ace Hardware in Lansing between eighteen and twenty-four hours a week. After playing in the Wind Ensemble or the pit orchestra during the musical, he rushes to Ace to help customers and stock shelves.

Buiter’s advice for students with jobs is to “scale back on extracurricular activities and squeeze in homework wherever you can.”

When he isn’t at youth group or student council meetings, Junior

winning was immediately ‘Oh that’s my name’. Immediately Collette and all the other girls were standing up with open arms ready to hug me, so that was really nice of the girls to do.”

The high energy in Thursday’s Pep Rally carried into Varsity’s Loud Crowd Game against Riverside Brookfield. The Vikings started the game with intensity and managed to keep their pace throughout the game to eke out a 61-60 win.

The homecoming dance took place the next night, Saturday, Feb. 4 in the lower gym. Colorful streamers decorated railings and were strung from the ceiling. A painting of the symbolic clock tower from Disney’s Peter Pan joined the Neverland backdrop and covered a portion of the gym wall. Students from Illiana and other schools spent the night dancing, taking pictures in the photo booth, and enjoying friends.

“I loved being able to hang out and dance with all my friends,” said Sophomore Jessica Bell.

Jordan Miller works in the kitchen at the Chick-Fil-A in Merrillville.

Miller’s advice: use days off to “catch up with friends and catch up with chores.”

Senior Jack Barth gives half hour saxophone and clarinet lessons to Crown Point Christian and Calvary Academy students. He controls the busyness of teaching eight kids a week by keeping everything organized on his phone’s calendar.

Barth stresses the importance of finding an understanding boss or working for yourself, along with doing something you enjoy.

“Find something where you can build a relationship with your boss and be flexible,” Barth said. “Use a skill to find a job.”

Illiana says, “Nihao,” to new Chinese club

Grant Gibson

Reporter

The Ni Hao Club, although a late bloomer among second-semester clubs, will help Illiana students comprehend the vast Chinese culture with the help of its foreign exchange student teacher and founder.

Max Men, the founder of Ni Hao Club, said he was inspired to start and teach the club to help Illiana’s community better understand Chinese culture, such as food and language. The goal of the Ni Hao Club, he said, is to work together and cook together for the school, just as the Praise Crowd Board does.

Paul Kamp, who goes by the title “Ren Fei” (Flying Man in English) in Ni Hao Club, said, “Max had really taken initiative with this club. He’s very organized,

and a great leader. He teaches the club. So far, we’ve been learning names, but we’ll move on to basic phrases soon.”

Students in the club are choosing, understanding, and writing out Chinese names. Members also learned to use accents and how tone affects the meaning of what they say. Throughout the semester, they plan to sing a song for chapel, learn pronunciations, and more.

Seth Bouwer, “Kong Long” (Dinosaur in English), said that he not only wants to learn the Chinese language, but learn to use chopsticks.

Kamp said that he joined because he wanted to learn a little Chinese, specifically, “just small phrases to greet people, ask for directions, or order food.” He also said that his enjoyment of Spanish class influenced his decision.



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Senior Everett Buiter struggles through the crowd to try some of the Chinese food at the cook-off.

Kreykes breaks school scoring record

Cassie Laninga

Reporter

Gabrielle Kreykes received special recognition at the Feb. 2 pep rally for scoring over 2,000 points in her four year basketball career. Kreykes’s high scoring also helped the Vikings win regional finals on Thursday, Feb. 9, against Chicago Christian.

“I’m happy,” said Kreykes of scoring 2,000 points. “It was one of my goals when I was a freshman.”

Kreykes began playing basketball around third and fourth grade. She said what made her stick with it was the influences of her sister and dad.

“My sister played basketball in high school. I wanted to be like her. My dad was a coach,” said Kreykes.

Kreykes said she also plays basketball outside of the school setting,

mentioning that she “played on a couple different travel teams.”

According to a few of her teammates, Kreykes’s attitude and positivity shine through not only during a basketball game, but off the court as well.

“Gabby contributes to the team with a positive attitude,” said junior Kayla Fabrizio. “She shows great leadership skills and has great sportsmanship. She is serious on the court, but fun to be around off the court, and she gives encouragement to her teammates.”



Photo courtesy of Southtown Sports
Gabby Kreykes drives to the hoop against Chicago Christian on Feb. 9.

Senior Ashley Wiltjer said, “She never gives up and gives 100%. She makes everyone feel included.”

Students share struggles at Praise Crowd

Maddie Holesinger

Reporter

Kendall Smith

Reporter

After a smashing win at the homecoming basketball game on Feb. 3, athletes, nerds, administration, band geeks, and art lovers alike, crowded together in the chapel for Praise Crowd, where students were encouraged to break down barrier and unload burdens.

“At Praise Crowd you get to your real self. You open up, and people shift their focus off of themselves and onto how great our Lord and Savior is,” said Josh Boender, a senior.

Homecoming Praise Crowd was different than every other Praise Crowd of the year because Illiana alumni also came to worship, serving

as drummers, singers, guitarists, and pianist. Instead of the usual testimonies given by one or two students, cardboard testimonies brought in a lot of stories. Cardboard testimonies started four years ago, as a way to get everyone involved. Students wrote down their burden or struggle on one side of the board, and on the other side they wrote how they were set free from their burden or how they saw God working through their struggle.

Senior Avery Riemersma, a member of Praise Crowd Board who gave her testimony, said, “What impacted me the most is how everyone was around each other when they figured out their struggles. I liked how people talked after; they weren’t afraid to let anyone know who they were anymore. It was just out there.”

“I love all it,” said Lance Davids, Spiritual Director

Lights go dim with outage

How two squirrels cost school thousands

Beth Boonstra

Co-News Editor

Thursday Feb. 16, at the beginning of second period, the electrical transformer across the street from Illiana blew out, causing the electricity to drop to one third of the normal power. Despite the large scale effect that this shortage took, there was minimal disruption in the classrooms. The cause of the transformer shorting out turned out to be a squirrel that ended up fried.

“We were all in the middle of class,” said Junior Ashton Wilson dramatically, “when all of a sudden there was a pop and we thought maybe it was a gunshot and everyone screamed. Then we saw smoke so we thought maybe it was a firework. Then we realized the power was out.”

Junior Matthew Haak was in Honors Intel Rel third period and was unable to take notes or review properly. “It was a huge inconvenience,” he said, “especially since we were about to have a test.”

The Commonwealth Edison repairman sent immediately after Principal Peter Boonstra called to report the outage quickly fixed the shot trans-

former and identified the cause of the shortage: a squirrel.

According to Boonstra, the irony of this is that “several years ago the same transformer shorted out because a squirrel got in it.” That squirrel episode caused a lot of damage to the school’s electrical system, costing the school about \$5,000.

Thankfully, this squirrel episode caused much less damage than the last, amounting a maximum of one thousand dollars in repairs to the boiler.

Boonstra said, “When the transformer goes out, there’s really nothing that we can do, so in some ways it’s not our problem, but because of the sudden loss of power, it can cause electrical damage to the school.”

When the repairman had fixed the first transformer he came back into the school, only to find that the power was still off. Baffled, he went back outside to find that the electrical shock of the first transformer had cause the transformer on the next pole to also short out, so he fixed that one as well.

Although these squirrels’ reckless and perhaps suicidal behavior did cause damage to the school, Boonstra says he will not be pressing any [electrical] charges.



A group of senior boys serenade junior Emily Montalvo with a rendition of “My Girl.” Photo by Jeff DeVries

Down in numbers, singing telegram tradition rings in another Valentine’s Day

Josh Chancellor

Reporter

Tessa Buiter

Reporter

Wandering through Illiana’s halls on Tuesday, Feb. 14, a passerby may have felt love in the air and heard voices ringing from classrooms.

Again this year student council

scheduled singing telegrams, ordered flowers, and organized suckers to go to the correct homerooms. The little money that was raised goes to homecoming decorations, freshman and senior breakfasts, and spring and fall cookouts.

Singing telegrams are an ICHS tradition on Valentine’s Day. For over two decades, students have put together their own groups and found songs to sing for others who

purchase them. Songs this year ranged from Little Mermaid’s “Kiss the Girl” to Justin Bieber’s “Baby” to Stevie Wonder’s “I Just Called to Say I Love You.”

“You want to sing to people on Valentine’s Day!” said junior Christin Washington who sang in a group with friends and said she enjoyed it.

Art teacher Mr. Jim Kamphuis

said he doesn’t mind the interruptions to class, but he appreciates that teachers have the opportunity to say no to singing telegrams during certain class periods if they have tests.

Singing telegrams are meant to be fun, and most seem to like them, but they can be slightly awkward for those receiving the singing missives. As junior Tom Ericks said, “The look on their faces is priceless.”

“I thought they were fun,” said freshman Sydney DeVries, “as long as they’re not for me.”

Junior Austin Ohm said, “[Being sung to] was breathtaking. I think the telegrams bring great joy to students and should be continued.”

Math team captures its piece of π

Caleb Last

Reporter

Illiana’s Math team is going into regionals having already contested well in two competitions.

Junior Matthew Haak says these competitions have a wide range of schools competing in them and they have a very relaxed atmosphere.

At a competition in Lemont, Illinois the math team got seventh out of twenty-one teams, and at the Metro Suburban

Conference it captured third of seven math teams. Five schools in the metro suburban conference didn’t send math teams. The next competition will be on Saturday, Feb. 25th.

Haak personally competes in the individual competition for algebra two and the junior senior eight person team, and has subbed on the junior senior two person team when fellow teammates, seniors Jack Barth and Juliana Knot were unable to compete.

Lagerwey, who is the coach

of the math team, said that they have won regionals every year for the past ten years. He said that the thirty or so students on the team met every Tuesday and Thursday prior to competitions, and sometimes Lagerwey adds extra meetings to help the team prepare.

Barth says, “what’s cool about math team is you meet a lot of people, from all sorts of backgrounds. Math team is a ‘common denominator’ if you will. The math is challenging, and it more than math tests, it’s applying what you have learned.”

German teacher seeks Iron Man status

Jo Mulder

Reporter

Mr. Luke Fennema the German teacher at Illiana, will be running, biking and swimming in the Door County Triathlon in Wisconsin.

He and a group of high school friends put each other up to the challenge. Asked if he is ready, Fennema laughed and said he isn’t thrilled about the triathlon yet, due to lack of training, but a friend of his set up a training schedule for him, and he hopes that eventually he will be ready for the intense, half iron triath-

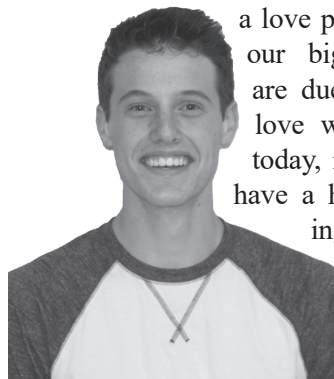
lon. In the meantime he is learning to pace himself in all of the events.

Fennema has been focusing on running for his training. He is also looking for a road bike, which is proving difficult because of his height. He laughed and suggested that if anyone knew of someone selling a used road bike for a tall person, they should let him know.

The half iron triathlon consists of a 1.2 mile swim, a 56.3 mile bike ride and a 13.1 mile run. It occurs on July 15 in the town of Egg Harbor, Wisconsin.

What's our problem?

What kind of problems do we have in the world today? Hate? Greed? Lust? Murder? Yeah, all of those are things we have a problem with in this world full of sin. However, what if I told you the real problem was a love problem? What if our biggest problems, are due to the lack of love we give? People today, myself included, have a hard time showing love and that's



Andy Sons
Co-Feature Editor

what causes all this hate.

I figured since its February and the month of love as many people call it, why not

talk about love? I then thought about what I was going to write. I can choose so many different directions to write about when it comes to love. Like, what really is love and how to show it? Or how do you know if you really love someone? That's when I realized the bigger picture, how our world doesn't know these answer's because we are consumed by sin.

We have a love problem, plain and simple. We don't obey one of God's biggest commandments. To "love your neighbor as yourself." That's hard! Although we can't keep running from it and saying that we love enough. Don't lie to yourself, you love the people that are easiest to love. You're best friends, your family, your boyfriend or girlfriend. Yeah it's pretty darn easy to love them but how about the guy or girl that did you wrong? Or the bully? Or the people that you think are below you? Your neighbor isn't whoever you want it to be. It's everybody, that's it, no arguments.

That's what we have so messed up. We think we can pick who are neighbors are. We think we can pick the ones that God is calling us to love. I don't know about you, but that just sounds insane to me. God made us all equal, he made us all in his image and he loves every single one of us. He loves just as we are supposed to. If we showed the love that God shows all of us, then maybe things would seem to go a little bit easier.

I know for a fact I'm not the easiest to love at times, ask my parents, yet God still shows me love by waking me up every day and filling my life with an abundant number of blessings. He loves me no matter what. He doesn't pick the ones that are easiest to love, like we do.

So just imagine a world where we all at least tried to be like that. Now I say at least try because we are faulty and we aren't God. But that's what I want to stress so much is that we need to at least try and show love to everybody. I'll admit, there will be days where it doesn't seem like I'm showing much love to everyone I encounter and I wish I could throw those days away. I'm ashamed of those days. But every day I do try to take God's example of loving us. I do try to take that love he has for me and try to love others with that same love. Because I think if we all tried our best to show (everyone we encounter) the same love God shows us, maybe this world would be a bit brighter. Or not. What would I know? Like I said, I'm only human.

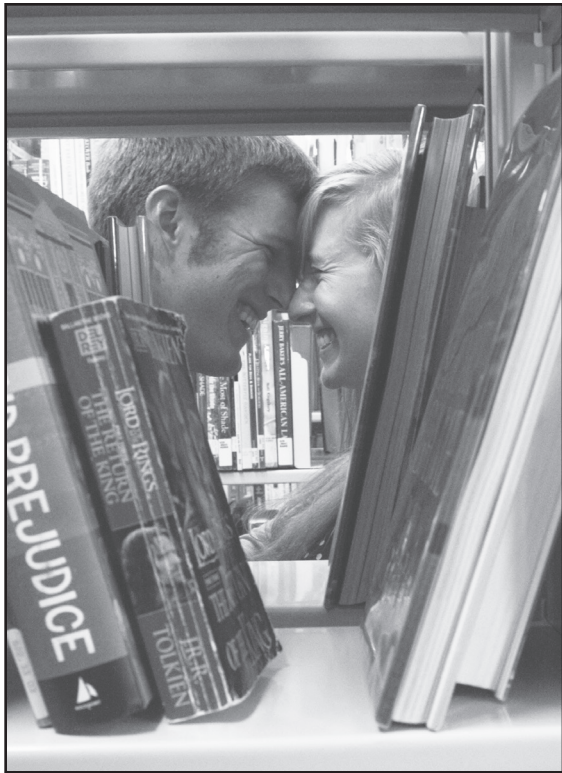


Photo courtesy of Emily Van Stee
One of Ms. Van Stee's engagement photos.

Hanna VanderWoude Photo Editor

As Valentine's Day rolled around and love was in the air the Echo staff decided to take a closer look into a few of ICHS teacher love stories. Throughout tears, sickness and surprises, these Illiana teacher's love stories prevailed.

To Mrs. Kelly Aardsma, McDonald's will forever have a special place in her heart, not because of the Big Mac's but because that's where she met the man to whom she's married today.

"He was such a little dork and my sister wanted me to date him, but I said, 'No he's too nerdy,' but then as I got to know him I fell in love with him way before he fell in love with me," said Aardsma.

After three and a half years of dating, her boyfriend finally popped the question.

"We went to a Bulls' game and I knew he was going to propose because my step dad was acting really weird and I thought 'If he puts this on the jumbotron I'm going to be so mad.'" However, Mr. Aardsma was not that cheesy and didn't use the jumbotron for his proposal. After the game they waited for a while but there was a father and his son running around so they left the gym and started walking around the small shops but he never stopped her so that he could ask and Aardsma was starting to get worried.

Aardsma said, "We finally get to the car and I sit down in the car and I'm looking out the win-

dow trying not to cry because I thought he was going to propose and he didn't and I already told all my friends a n d family that I was getting engaged tonight and I'm trying not to look at him but when I turned around he said 'Kelly I have a question for you,' and I started sobbing!" He then asked her if she would marry him and she said "yeah," it was exactly what she wanted because it was just the two of them.

Mr. Jeff DeVries' engagement story was also just the two of them in the car but the future Mrs. DeVries wasn't looking out the window because she was about to cry. No, she felt like she was about to puke!

One month after meeting in Germany and then opening the door for her DeVries knew he was "in loooove."

DeVries said, "I was quite certain that we were supposed to be together, but she took a little more convincing."

After a year and a half of dating DeVries proposed in a "horribly unromantic" way.

"I had a ring burning a hole in my pocket and I took her out for her birthday for dinner. She used to be horrible with

ach aches. Well, she had steak. By the time dinner was done we were going to take a nice walk along the lake, it was going to be moonlit and I was going to ask her to marry me and it was going to be very romantic," said DeVries. Instead of the night going perfectly, Mrs. DeVries felt sick and wanted to go back to her apartment and Mr. DeVries had to leave in three hours for a wedding in New York and he had the ring for too long and "There was no way I was leaving this night not engaged," he said, so in that moment he panicked.

"While she was in the passenger seat of my car in the parking lot of the restaurant literally leaning her seat back saying 'Oh I feel sick,' I turned to her and said 'Will you marry me?' She looked at me and I fumbled into the glove compartment and pulled out the ring and she said 'Yes of course' and it was nice but not romantic."

Sick - ness seems to run in our staff's marriage proposals. Miss Emily VanStee was home sick when her fiancé, Ty Hillegonds, proposed to her.

Van Stee said, "I met Ty on a blind date set up

four hours long and we talked the entire time."

Van Stee has a policy to never get dinner on the first date because if it's awkward then you're stuck and can't leave. She would rather go get coffee or tea, and that's exactly what they did. They went to 'Round the Clock and had tea with all the old people.

That was the first of many dates which led to many instances that Van Stee knew that Hillegonds was the man she wanted to marry.

"We were hanging out at my house, watching a movie, and when he left I heard an ambulance go off and I was like 'Oh my word I hope he's okay,' and that's when I knew I really cared about him," said Van Stee.

Hillegonds proposed to Van Stee the night before her birthday while she was sick at home in sweat pants and a sweat shirt watching Netflix. Hil-



Photo courtesy of Kelly Aardsma
Mr. & Mrs. Aardsma at their wedding.

egonds walked into her house in khakis, a nice shirt and a tie and had a present and flowers and a DQ ice cream cake.

"I kind of suspected he was going to propose to me on my birthday because he made dinner reservations and he never makes dinner reservations. We just go. I didn't even suspect it on this night because the box was too big for a ring. I put the flowers in a vase and ice cream cake in the fridge. I opened the first one and there was dark chocolate and another box. I opened the next one and there was a drink that I enjoy and then a smaller box. I started freaking out and I opened it and there was nothing in the box and I looked up and was down on one knee with the ring, and he asked me to marry him."



Photo courtesy of Jeff DeVries
Mr. & Mrs. DeVries in California a year after their wedding.

by Mrs. Trepton and his mom, Mrs. Hillegonds. It was

Best of both Worlds

Lagerweys, Piaskowys make work and marriage go down easy together

Elyse Dunham
Co-Feature Editor

Mary and Rob Lagerwey, and Carol and Jim Piaskowy have at least two things in common, the couples are both married and they both work at Illiana with their spouses. Both the Piaskowys and the Lagerweys said they enjoy the fact that they have someone to talk to about school and who can relate and under-

stand what they go through as a teacher. Mrs. Lagerwey said, “It is nice to have somebody who understands the work. It’s nice to have someone who is empathetic to your whole situation, where you don’t have to explain the whole background and having...someone who can counteract it and...help you see the other perspective.” But their stories didn’t start at Illiana. Both couples had beginnings and over-

came difficulties along the way. The Lagerweys met through Mrs. Lagerwey’s sister who was Mr. Lagerwey’s friend when Mrs. Lagerwey was a senior in high school. A few years later Mrs. Lagerwey had to fill in for her sister at work because she was having a baby. While she was working, Mr. and Mrs. Lagerwey spent a lot of time together and their relationship was forming. But when Mrs. Lagerwey moved to Japan to teach, it got a little harder. Mr. Lagerwey came to visit Mrs. Lagerwey and “by the end of that time we decided let’s make a go of this,” recalled Mr. Lagerwey. Once Mrs. Lagerwey came back from Japan she went for more schooling in Michigan, “We were having trouble being in the same state,” said Mrs. Lagerwey. Finally, once Mrs. Lagerwey moved back to New Jersey they got engaged in April and married in August. The Piaskowys didn’t have as much trouble staying in the same region. They met at Valparaiso University in their junior year. “He was helping new students in and he helped me and my parents move in,” said Mrs. Piaskowy. Mr. Piaskowy added, “We took the same art

class.” Doing the same thing every day together can seem to be repetitive but both these couples have found ways to keep life interesting. The Piaskowys do a lot of traveling to be with their kids who are scattered throughout the country. Mrs. Piaskowy said, “We’re always coming up with...fun things to do. We go for walks together, shopping, and we love to cook together.” Mrs. Lagerwey said, “We both like a balance of routine and spontaneity... so sometimes we have to counter balance each other.”

Love stories: Failures and Successes



Sophomore Grant Gibson: “It was the night before Valentine’s Day in seventh grade, and it was Ashley Pigatti’s second year at Crown Point Christian School. Around ten at night, we were texting. She went to sleep as I stayed awake to read our conversation. At two in the morning I was still up and decided to send a text asking her to be my valentine. I waited for thirty minutes for a response. Finally she responded with ‘Yes - as friends.’”

Senior Carla Lopez: “Well, we both met when we were six years old in kids’ church. When we were sixteen, Liam told me he liked me. I told him I did not like him; I liked someone else. I rejected him when he asked me to be his girlfriend. We both started seeking God individually and then we were ready for a relationship. We started dating on August 15, 2015. He was my first kiss and my first real boyfriend. He’s my best friend and I can’t wait to spend the rest of my life with him.” (Liam proposed to Carla last Christmas.)



Senior Ryan Koontz: “When I started dating Jill, I didn’t see it working out. I thought it was never going to happen. We went to the Illiana Bus Races for our first date; it was a good time. Afterwards Jill decided to go off-roading in her Honda Civic. That wasn’t a good idea. I came in like Superman and saved her with my truck.”

Junior Austin Ohm: “One time Sarah Kuiper and I went downtown Chicago. I took her to the art museum and afterwards we went out for lunch. Later we went to the Cheesecake Factory for dinner and took the train home. It was a great success.”



Sophomore Emily Poortenga: “I was eleven years old and I liked this boy; I thought he liked me but I wasn’t sure. We were at my house playing on the swing set. All of the sudden he took my hand and pulled me to the side of the garage. He began to talk about kissing. I was freaking out not knowing what was going on. He starting kissing me as I was having a mini panic attack.”

Senior Norman Standish: “In the second grade I brought valentines to my class. I only got one back.”



1st Blacks in History to...(in the Arts)

February is Black History Month, where we celebrate blacks in history who have overcome racial barriers. Usually, the same people such as Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks and Harriet Tubman, are celebrated each year. Other unacknowledged blacks have cleared the path for their people throughout history and also deserve recognition. Here are some African Americans that opened the gates for others in the arts.



www.vogue.com

1st Black painter to gain international acclaim

Bio: Henry Ossawa Tanner, creator of “Nicodemus Visiting Jesus”, was the first African American artist to gain recognition for his work on a world stage. Known for his landscapes and Biblical themes, Tanner’s work caught the eye of many, including Thomas Eakins. Tanner thanked his poor health early in his life for giving him the time to perfect his artistic skills. Before his time as a famous artist, he walked a fragile line between his whiteness and his blackness; in France, he worked to remove race from the his life.



www.artway.eu

1st Black American broadcast journalist

Bio: After applying for White-only jobs, Max Robinson, who had impressed the Portsmouth station manager, became the first African American broadcast journalist. At first, Robinson’s face was hidden behind a slide, but one night he removed the slide showing viewers he was black. Robinson lost his job the next day. Arriving in Washington in the ’60s, Robinson covered local and breaking news. He then made history in Washington as an anchor for WTOP in 1969. His coverage of race riots that broke out in the city and other reports earned him a pair of local Emmy Awards.



www.whosdatedwho.com

1st Black woman Grammy winner

Bio: Born into poverty in 1917, Ella Fitzgerald overcame her humble origins and became noticed for her impressive vocal and musical talents at the tender age of 17. By the 1930’s, she was touring with big names in the music industry and had made an impressive name for herself. She became the youngest member of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers in 1948, and over the expanse of her impressive 58-year long career sold over 40 million records and won thirteen Grammys. Fitzgerald died in 1986, but her music still lives on as a testament to the endurance of her talent and her impact on the genre and the industry.



www.pinterest.com

**TREND
REPORT**

NETFLIX

Kassidy Weemhoff

Co-Arts Editor

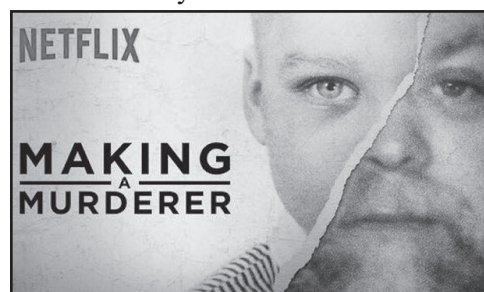
What’s red, white and viewed all over? The popular streaming service known as Netflix. Many people, ranging from young children to adults, have discovered the many wonders of Netflix. Binge-watching shows, skipping seasons and discovering new ways to find entertainment can all be possible with the click of a button and a few dollars a month.

Not only does this innovative streaming site draw viewers in with

network shows, but Netflix has also become famous for its original projects, too. In 2016, Netflix received 54 Emmy nominations, beating out every television network and coming in third after HBO and FX. If the Emmy nominations don’t prove it, a study by The Nielsen Company, which tracks media usage in American homes, found that 40% of all U.S. households who have TV or broadband internet subscribe to a video service like Netflix.

Netflix’s popularity is rapidly climbing, much of it due to the incredible productions of original

shows like “House of Cards” and “Stranger Things” along with movies and documentaries like “Making a Murderer.” Netflix draws loads of people to its virtual doors, providing an enjoyable, diverse experience tailored to every viewer’s taste.



www.netflix.com



www.netflix.com

Lauren Curtis

Co-Arts Editor

1st Black model to land on the cover of Vogue Magazine

Bio: Beverly Johnson born Oct.13, 1952, was the first African American model to appear on the cover of “Vogue.” Her boundary-breaking portrait, taken by Francesco Scavullo, redefined elegance and beauty. After starring on the cover, she got accepted to work at Ford Models, where they told her that she could not appear on major magazine covers due to her race. She then moved on, where she there prospered and became a champion civil rights activist for black models.



www.almay.com

1st Black actor to win an academy award

Bio: James Baskett, the first male African American to win an Academy Award, was born on February 16, 1904. After high school Baskett planned to study pharmacy, but was offered a part in a show in Chicago. Baskett is best remembered for his portrayal of Uncle Remus in Song of the South. Although the film was a success, Baskett met with heavy criticism from many in the African American community who felt that the film was filled harmful stereotypes. He was later rejected by the African American community.



www.google.com

1st Black woman to win Emmy for best actress in drama

Bio: Viola Davis, born August 11, 1965, has made history twice by being the first African American woman to win five Screen Actors Guild Awards and the first to win an Emmy for best actress in drama. After graduating from Juilliard, she began her career on stage in plays such as “Everybody’s Ruby.” From there, she began working on-screen in movies and tv-shows like “The Help,” “Suicide Squad,” “Fences,” and “How to get Away with Murder.”

She uses her talents and experiences in the industry to be an activist for women of color everywhere. The only thing that separates women of color from anyone else is opportunity,” she said as she accepted her Emmy.



Photo courtesy of Southtown Sports
Senior Gabby Kreykes goes up for a layup during the Sectional championship final on Thursday, February 16 at Lisle High School.

Lady Vikings find success in post season; fall in state qualifier

JP Peerbolte
Co-Sports Editor

With their hopes set on the state tournament, the Super-Sectional final game against St. Edward was a tough fought battle ending in a loss for the Lady Vikings, but the Super-Sectional loss did not undo the Viking’s remarkable season. They went 23-9 and were the first girls basketball team since 2004 to win a

sectional championship. “Together we make a great team,” said senior Alyssa Murrin. “We had great chemistry,” said senior Eden Schipper, “I have never had so much fun on a team and we played together well.” One of the games where the Lady Vikings team chemistry was most evident was during the regional championship game. They had lost to Chicago Christian by three points in overtime

earlier in the season. At the regional championship however, they defeated Chicago Christian by 42 points. “We didn’t want to be beat again, and we played some of the best defense we have ever played,” said Head Coach Tom Knapper, “They didn’t know how to react to it.” “We shut them down with our defense,” said Schipper. They saved that defense to surprise and defeat Peotone in the

Sectional Championship. The tougher conference play had a role in this team’s great postseason success. “We had a lot of good encouragement and everyone contributed to the team when they needed to,” said Murrin. “They were fun to be with and easy to coach,” said Knapper, “They really loved playing and working together as a team. They got along and wanted to play as a team.”

Flying
spectacularly:
cheer squad
improves
over time due
to hard work,
coaching

Kassidy Weemhoff
Co-Arts Editor

Cheerleading at ICHS has gone from average to spectacular in a matter of four years, from constantly dropping flyers in stunts to qualifying for ICCA State. Many factors contributed to the unexpected success According to Co-Captain Laci Gibson, a big key to having a cohesive squad is having girls who will try out again and recruiting new members who can adapt and learn skills quickly throughout the season. This was a big problem in 2013 when only few cheerleaders had stayed from the year before. The team was dysfunctional and the coaching style laid back, leading the squad to difficulty performing at a high level.

In 2014 a new coach, Carisa Beezhold, came in with a much more professional and stringent coaching style. It was hard to adapt at first according to Co-Captain Jessica DeYoung, but overall it improved the morale and skill of the squad. The team also brought in a tumbling coach and choreographer who built up their strengths and gave them routines which they were capable of mastering instead of making things too complicated. The next two years the team grew closer, stronger and more successful, placing no lower than third place in all competitions except for the first this year and qualifying for ICCA State last year. Not only do the girls on Illiana’s cheer squad perform successfully, but they have also become like a family. Gibson said, “This is a place where everyone accepts you for who you are. I can be open and honest with all of them. It is like our own little family.”

Boys basketball team looks on to post season

Jacob Thompson
Co-Sports Editor

The Illiana boys basketball team played the first round of regionals on Monday February 20 and notched a win over southland college prep. with a score of 75-53. They had finished out their regular

season with a winning record of 15-11 and a conference record of 6-6. Senior Erik Detmar says, “this season has been a great learning experience. We started off the season not playing our best ball but as the games went on we learned how to rely on each other and the wins started coming.”

The team hit a rough patch around the middle of January losing 5 in an 8 game stretch and going on a 3 game losing streak. Once the team had turned things around they notched a big win against Riverside Brookfield, which was the first time in Illiana history the Vikings had beaten the bulldogs.

Senior Bo Hofstra who has played varsity since his sophomore year says that he’s very hopeful for the rest of the post season. “I think we have a very good chance to find success in post season this year,” says Hofstra. “I am excited to see how things go, but this team is capable of playing at a very high level.”

Ellis, Lyzenga both pin 6th place at state



Photo courtesy of Varsity Views
Isaac Lyzenga wrestles against an opponent from Grant Park in a Dec. 14 home match.

Luke Hillegonds
Co-Sports Editor

Senior Jesse Ellis and Junior Isaac Lyzenga wrestled in the state tournament on February 16-18 at the University of Illinois in Champagne, Illinois and both Ellis and Lyzenga finished 6th place in state for 1A. On the road to state, both Ellis and Lyzenga won their regionals and their sectionals as well in weeks prior to state. Lyzenga said, “I had a big pin in the sectional final at Coal City and that

gave me confidence going into state. Basically, my whole family was there and it was fun to have all of them cheering me on down state. I was happy with how I did this year down state, but I’m not satisfied. I can’t wait to be back there next year.” Ellis said, “I had a great regional and sectional and it was fun to win both of them. I expected to finish higher down state and I had a tough loss in the quarterfinals down state and that was devastating.”

Editorial

Protecting life beyond the unborn

On January 27th, forty nine Illiana students and teachers marched to defend life in the nation's capital. They were advocating for the unborn, those who aren't considered human and whose lives are defined as disposable by American law. On the same day, President Donald Trump enacted his travel ban, barring the door to Middle Eastern refugees.

The executive order shuts down America's entire refugee admission system for 120 days, bans entry from seven Muslim-majority countries (Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen) for 90 days, and indefinitely freezes the Syrian refugee program. President Trump says that the ban is until the United States can establish a more rigorous vetting procedure for refugees as they pose a terror threat to the country.

For those 11 million Syrian refugees who "are on the run," according to Mercy Corps, this ban leaves them in between terrorist rebels that have raped, tortured, and beheaded civilians and a hostile government regime that has frequently used chemical weapons and barrel-bombs indiscriminately, often killing

more civilians than rebels. At best, life in Syria is hell.

Not only does this executive order leave millions stranded in terror, it in no way will cut back on Islamic extremist attacks. Nora Ellingsen, a five year veteran of the F.B.I's international counterterrorism investigations, sifted through multiple

This action will, however, strengthen the case of terrorist recruiters who prey on directionless people on the internet. As Republican senator Ben Sasse said, "If we send a signal to the Middle East that the U.S. sees all Muslims as jihadis, the terrorist recruiters win by telling kids that America is banning Muslims

Tim Keller and Max Lucado have opposed the ban.

Because we proclaim ourselves prolife, we should be the voice for these refugees who are in their own right voiceless. We should feel the same rage and heartache looking at a picture of a drowned Syrian child face-down on the Mediterranean shoreline as we do when we see an aborted child dismembered on an operating table.

By standing on a flimsy case of security, the refugee ban advocates for the pro-choice battle cry: our convenience is worth more than somebody else's life.

But as people who recognize the value inherent in every life from conception to natural death, who hold life to be one of the founding principles of our nation, who weep and grow angry at the reality of state-sponsored murder, we know that life is not a choice. We see God's handiwork in the DNA of both fetal children and Syrian orphans, and we feel the call of the Spirit to help them.

Illiana, let's be unabashedly and consistently pro-life. We need to defend the refugee alongside of the unborn.

"The refugee ban advocates for the pro-choice battle cry: our convenience is worth more than somebody else's life."

years' worth of terror-related arrests. Only two refugees have been arrested by the United States from the seven countries in the ban. A study done by the University of Chicago points to there being near zero threat of terrorist attack from refugees. It showed that homegrown Americans, radicalized by ISIS propaganda online, are the true threat to American security. So the ban creates no real gains in our national security.

and that this is America versus one religion."

Additionally, this executive order is a death sentence for Middle Eastern Christians. Although the order gives priority for refugees of religious minorities, it gives no practical way of sifting Muslims from Christians. Christians in countries like Iran are left to suffer imprisonment, torture, and death. For this reason, many prominent conservative evangelical pastors and writers like

Taking nothing for granted

"Chew your food thoroughly," was what Ethan B. Shelton told me and the rest of the church in Berrien Springs, Michigan on one of his last birthdays before he passed away at 110 years. That was his key to living a long life.

Shelton died at age 110, on March 19, 2014, as the 68th oldest person in the world.

Shelton lived a long life, active even in his last years. He played the ukulele accompanied by some family in front of the church the same day he gave us advice about chewing food, and it was quite impressive. He was still playing rounds of golf even in his last year. This man was 110, still chasing a golf ball around.

He also had a lot of family. Leader Publications says he had over 120 great, great-great, and great-great-great grandchildren when he died, and spending time with his family was his favorite thing of all.

What if Shelton was onto something, and the key to longevity really is as simple as chewing food well? It be wonderful if it really was as simple as that. Would chicken and mashed potatoes smoothie or chili puree become the new thing?

Health seems something that is impossible to achieve now days. We are always trying to crack the code. One week it's eating all protein, the next it's eating vegan, and the next it's making sure you eat an avocado each day.

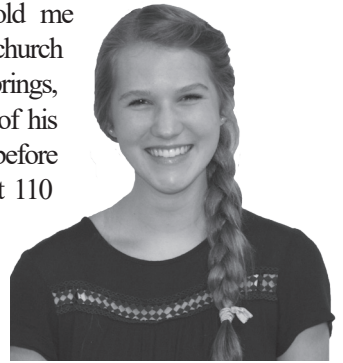
Good health is really the goal, isn't it? In these diets, we all are trying to figure out the key to keeping our bodies in tip-top shape to live a long, healthy life. We want to know how to prevent all illnesses from colds or cancer. And while there are some obvious things, sometimes life happens and even if someone did everything right, her health can be taken away anyways.

After I was sick for almost three weeks straight (at one point thinking I was on my death bed), I realized how much I took my health for granted. I thought my body could fight off anything, that I was invincible (feel free to laugh here). I took my health so much for granted that I forgot to take care of my body. I realized how often I ignore the miracle and blessing a healthy body is.

I wonder if Shelton ever forgot how amazing it is to have a fully functioning, healthy body. I wonder if that one birthday when Shelton spoke in front of the church he thought about that blessing. I like to think he did, but, regardless, I'm sure he had a better grasp on the miracle of life than I have ever had. Being 110 years old, he saw a lot of family born and a lot of family die. He saw life given and taken away. He saw healing. He saw sickness. He was born in 1903, there can't be much he hasn't seen. Maybe I'm assuming too much, but he had to have known what a miracle life is.

Right now, my heart is pumping without me even trying, and when I woke up this morning, my 37.2 trillion cells worked in beautiful harmony to get me out of bed. That is miraculous.

I never realized how precious health was until I lost it myself, and even now, only a week after thinking I was dying, I've already started forgetting how valuable health is. So, although I'm still a little under the weather, I'm counting my blessings. If chewing thoroughly means living a long life, maybe I'll give it a try, but for right now, I'm working appreciating the health I have now while I still have it.



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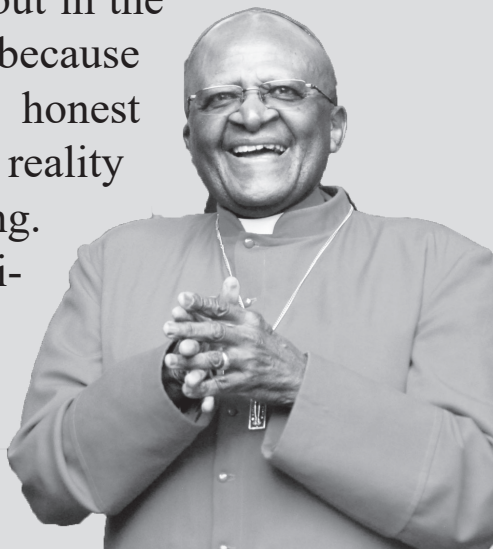
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Letters to the editor can be submitted to the advisor or sent to the school. All letters must be signed and must not exceed 250 words. They will be printed provided there is enough room and content is not offensive to the general public. Names will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

In the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu...

"Forgiving and being reconciled to our enemies or our loved ones is not about pretending that things are other than they are. It is not about patting one another on the back and turning a blind eye to the wrong. True reconciliation exposes the awfulness, the abuse, the hurt, the truth. It could even sometimes make things worse. It is a risky undertaking but in the end it is worthwhile, because in the end only an honest confrontation with reality can bring real healing. Superficial reconciliation can bring only superficial healing."

--Desmond Tutu



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