



Read about student struggles with pornography in our highly sexualized culture on p. 4 and 5.

# the Echo)))

Read about how the boys are looking towards the end of the season on p.7.



Illiana Christian High School

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Photo by Jeff DeVries

During 4th period, sophomores Caleb Perez, Trent Kamp, and Sam Boonstra work on securing a piece to their robot's frame.

## Robotics class engineers new possibilities for Illiana

*Illiana launches first STEM class, hoping to head in that direction*

Jo Mulder  
Reporter  
Alex Wondaal  
Reporter

This semester, Illiana is adding robotics to its electives. The class of fifteen students will study and build robots with kits made by VEX robotics.

The students enrolled in the class will build, program and study the en-

gineering of robots. One project in the class is a "clawbot," a small robot that will pick up and move various objects. Students will split into groups to build their "clawbots" from a kit. Students will also join in competitions available outside of Illiana's walls. One competition includes student's putting a robot into a complex box.

"We're hoping to do well in competitions," said Principal Peter Boonstra.

Lizzie Wenzel, a senior planning

on majoring in mechanical engineering, looks forward to competing with larger schools. She said, "We want to show that us little guys know what we're doing too."

A few years ago a vocational committee (made up of board members, staff members, and people from the community) met and established the idea. Last year Robotics Club was offered to students, but it was less complex and sophisticated. This year the program is graduating from Lego bots to VEX-bots. Robotics is considered a STEM (Science Tech Engineering Math) class, a popular course of study toward which ICHS is moving.

Computer teacher Jack Rudenga teaches the class in room 214. Rudenga said that he has had an interest in programing and that the class fits easiest with his schedule. Science teacher Brian Sylvester may teach the class with Rudenga in the future. A significant portion of the grades will be based on engineering notebooks kept by the students. Boonstra is hoping Robotics will be offered one semester every year. Early reviews show excitement from students.

"There are so many possibilities. We're given a box of parts and told to build something. There's no shortage of ideas," said Wenzel.

## Moms shower students, staff in prayer

Caleb Last  
Reporter

While few students see them at work, the Moms in Prayer group helps Illiana students by praying for them at school every other Monday morning.

Founding member June Kamp explained the purpose of the Moms in Prayer Group thus: "We pray for healing, for overcoming addictions and strongholds. We pray for the school to be filled with God's love, peace, and joy. We want each staff member and each student here to thrive."

The Moms in Prayer group began fourteen years ago, according to Kamp. In 2003 some of Lansing Christian's eighth-graders graduated from middle school. When they went to Illiana, Kamp and some of the other moms who had a prayer group at LCS began praying at Illiana.

Students can place prayer requests a box outside the guidance counselors' office. Kamp asks that if any students have any prayer requests or praises that they put them in the box.

Many of the students of Illiana, such as Senior Machaela Whitlock, appreciate what the Moms in Prayer group does. Whitlock said, "I like moms and I like prayer."

Sophomore Alex Wondaal said, "I think it's a great thing, and I think it should be advertised more."

Guidance counselor Neil Zandstra said, "They take time out of their busy lives to come in and pray for us... I respect them a lot."

*Breaking down racial barriers, students hope to build ...*

## Better Illiana Through Better Understanding

Haleigh Olthof  
Reporter

Better Illiana Through Better Understanding is a group of students, started by junior Aerial Shaffer, that held two meetings on Thursday, Jan. 26 in Mr. Dykstra's classroom in order to promote understanding between students of different races and back-

grounds.

Meetings occurred before and after school to provide flexible scheduling for potential attendees. After a brief introduction, the large group broke into small groups to converse and interact with people they might not have otherwise.

Shaffer said she started the group partially because she realized that she and

the people around her sometimes offended people of other races or backgrounds without meaning to.

She said one of her long term goals was to see new relationships form between students of different backgrounds instead of having "all the black kids here and all the feeder school kids here."

"As a Christian school,

we should do better than that," said Shaffer. She said she wants students to treat people who are different from them as Christ would.

Junior Zariah Cross said the group may schedule more meetings if the first event goes well, but they don't plan on weekly meetings.

"We're not trying to re-

ally become a club," said Shaffer. "It's more of getting the people together and helping people meet each other. We want to do it more than once."

Besides Shaffer and Cross, junior Lauren McClain, senior Sydney Shaffer, senior Melanie Van Til, senior Machaela Whitlock, and senior Brittani Molina contribute to the group.



# “We can do it”

In eighth grade, I got a Rosie the Riveter poster for my room. To me the words “We can do it!” meant that women can be just as smart and strong as men it shouldn’t be treated as inferiors. It wasn’t until freshman year that I discovered many of the injustices that women face. I began to voice my

opinions to classmates, advocating that women were equal to men. As such, I began to be labeled as a “feminist.”

I distinctly remember the first time that I mentioned this to my family nonchalantly at the dinner table, and I remember my older sister looking confused and saying, “You’re a what!?” Everyone in my family thought feminism was terrible and ungodly. Freshman me,

**Beth Boonstra**  
Co-News Editor

eager to defend myself, whipped out my phone, googled the definition of feminism, and read it aloud: “the advocacy of women’s rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes.”

“What’s wrong with that?” I said.

After a long pause, my sister finally said, “I guess it isn’t a bad thing, but it has bad connotations.” Since then I am adamant about fighting these connotations because I don’t want lies to corrupt a good thing like feminism, a simple issue of equality and justice.

A common misconception is that feminists are men-haters. I’m not saying no such exist, but I am saying they don’t understand the word equality, nor do they represent the vast majority of feminists. Female empowerment is about seeking equality, not wishing for men to become the inferiors instead. Too many conservatives conjure an image of bra-burning lesbian rebels when they think of feminists, but feminists can come from any walk of life. Feminists could be people like your grandma, your teacher, or the boy next door.

One of those walks of life is Christianity. Some people think Christians can’t be feminists because they think you can’t be a pro-life feminist. However, many agree these are separate issues. My sophomore year I went on the March for Life in D.C. and brought home a renewed passion for illegalizing abortion. To remind myself of this, I hung my march poster on my wall, next to Rosie. Since then I’ve gotten several odd looks when showing people my room. One man even laughed and said, “Wait, so you’re seriously pro-life and feminist? How does that work?”

Well, as a Christian, I favor all life. That is why I fight for the lives of unborn babies and why I fight for equality in sexes. I don’t want those children to come into a world that looks down on and limits them because of their gender.

Many think that feminism is pointless because women already have equality with men. However, according to a study conducted by Villanova University, “Women are still behind in many different ways; they continue to be paid less on average than men, many jobs are not friendly to mothers, and women continue to be responsible [double] the household work.”

According to the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, “In 2015, female full-time workers made only 80 cents for every dollar earned by men.”

Women have come far, but sexism still exists, often in our subconscious. History influences this. Historically men have been in positions of leadership, where women have been subordinates. From presidents to CEOs, pastors to breadwinners, scholars to generals, positions of authority have been given to men. Had women received the same opportunities, things would be different. But men still dominate roles of leadership. If a woman rises to a position of leadership, it’s likely that she had to work twice as hard and will only be half as respected because of the unconscious prejudice that women don’t belong in positions of authority. So when a woman tries to take charge and she is called “bossy” instead of “a leader,” maybe we should think about why that is. We still need feminism.

God created men and women to be different. But God did not create all women to be the same and all men to be the same. There’s nothing wrong with a woman wanting to be societally feminine but that isn’t her only option either. Women should be honored with the option of choosing. Feminism is about seeking equal treatment. Women are not any less skilled, important, valuable, or smart than men; therefore, they should not be treated as such. “We can do it, Illiana!”



*Sophomore Elizabeth DeYoung sets up her bridge that won 4th place in our region.*

Photo by JP Peerbolte

## Illiana bridges not falling down at regional competition

**Tessa Buiter**  
Reporter

Under honors physics teacher Mr. Arie VanEk’s guidance, students of that class along with a few chemistry students, built bridges for extra credit and in hopes of moving on to the re-

gional contest on Jan. 24.

With over a month of preparation, students followed bridge building rules put out by IIT (Illinois Institute of Technology), to compete for whose bridge would be most efficient. To find efficiency, the load the bridge holds in grams is divided by the mass

of the bridge (also in grams).

As long as students pieced the bridge together on their own, meaning, “They can’t hire out the project,” said Van Ek, they could use outside help for questions, including how it should be structured. He also offered assistance after school.



*Sophomore Haleigh Olthof, junior Beth Boonstra, and senior Juliana Knot display their certificates. Boonstra and Knot also won cash.*

Photo by Emily VanStee

## Young writers succeed at writing competition

**Grant Gibson**  
Reporter

Three minibuses of Illiana’s aspiring journalists, poets, and novelists competed at the Creative Writing Festival at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, but three Illiana students stood out in the end—junior Beth Boonstra, sophomore Haleigh Olthof, and senior Juliana Knot. Boonstra and Knot both placed third, Boonstra in expository essays, Knot in personal essays, while Olthof attained an honorable mention with her short story.

Although all three coincidentally write for this paper, they attended the contest for different reasons. Mr. Jeff DeVries had second- and third-year journalism students join the event to learn more about their specific writing style, but allowed first-year journalists to participate in any desired category if they wanted to attend.

Boonstra’s essay pictured violence in Chicago in light of 9/11; Knot’s told the story of a Vietnam veteran. Both ran in earlier issues of this year’s Echo.

The pair of reporters ex-

pressed mild unhappiness at first with the audience and judge, but, overall, they showed pride in their accomplishments.

“My judge didn’t seem too happy with it,” Knot said about the judge who didn’t think her story was all that personal.

The student audience seemed to enjoy the emotion Knot channeled into it, and Boonstra said that festival participants gave positive feedback despite their failure to realize it was a piece of journalism.

Olthof wrote a short story about different high school students from varying social groups ending up in the same club. Her different genre meant that she had a different judge than Boonstra and Knot.

“I was glad that [the judge] liked it. You never know if it’s any good going into it,” Olthof said.

Pleased with his students, DeVries congratulated the three, saying that all showed careful word choice, great imagery, and sensitive ear for rhythm.

## Basketball scores on service

**Maddie Holesinger**  
Reporter

The boys’ varsity basketball team, with help from By the Hand, ran a basketball clinic at Illiana Christian High School on Saturday, Jan. 14.

By the Hand is an organization committed to serving kids living in the inner city of Chicago who come from the most under-resourced, dangerous neighborhoods. By the Hand works with school principals to figure out which kids are most likely to flunk out, and from there, the organization, with the help of volunteers, works to get the students the help they need.

On Saturday, the basketball team’s purpose was to give of their time to serve kids who do not have the opportunity to be on a basketball team and who are not able to attend a school with as many opportunities as Illiana provides. These kids ended up being the source of much joy for the team. Players used words like fun, impactful, worthwhile, and joyous

to describe the service day in one word.

“I think [service] is important because we, as a varsity team, have a responsibility to lead by example,” said Ethan Beezhold, a senior on the team. “Right now, we have a theme called “Devoted” and it’s about something bigger than ourselves, so we are going to use the talents God has given us to bless others.”

The team ran all kinds of drills, played scrimmages, and just spent time talking and getting to know the kids. These kids, many of whom come from broken homes and have few respectable leaders to look up to in their lives, placed the varsity players on a pedestal, even thinking the boys belonged to a professional basketball team.

“It was hard to think about the fact that these kids have fun for one hour and then they have to go back home, where it is not easy,” said John Eenigenburg, a senior on the team. “Working with these kids has been a wakeup call that there’s more outside of Illiana.”



Photo courtesy of Grant Sikkema

*Junior Payton Smit goes up for a layup with his partner as Senior Sam Vree shows his partner the fundamentals of basketball.*



## Top’s homeroom comes out on top for Christmas service

Kendall Smith  
Reporter

Miss Top’s freshman homeroom won the “Go Club Does Christmas” competition in December and will receive a catered breakfast with ICHS principal, Mr. Peter Boonstra.

The competition between homerooms encouraged students to do good deeds like writing a friendly letter to someone or baking cookies for people.

“It was fun and exciting, yet competitive.” Miss Top said.

Students in her class baked cookies, sent letters through the mail to family members, and left encouraging notes on students’ cars out in the parking lot.

Freshman David Gomez said his favorite event along with most of the class was to send letters of encouragement to people they know. He sent a letter to his grandma who lives in Mexico.

“I feel like we did a good thing for the community,” said freshman Brennan Kelly.



Photo courtesy of Isaiah Easter

Isaiah Easter discusses funny and deep-rooted issues in the life of a typical high-schooler on his podcast ‘High School Might Suck.’

## Illiana Senior Isaiah Easter pioneers in world of audio-art with his podcast

Natalie Togtman  
Reporter

Senior Isaiah Easter does a podcast every Mon-

day entitled “High School Might Suck.” He has been recording the podcasts for about a year.

Easter said, “I really

started it because I wanted to have fun, and I enjoyed listening to podcasts done by interesting and creative people. I also enjoy doing creative things.”

In his podcast Easter talks about things such as “the day to day life of a teenager in high school, including teenagers’ relationships and all the pettiness that comes with that.”

“I really want to inspire people and help them grow,” said Easter.

In his podcast not only does Easter talk about things that have been on his mind, but he also gives advice to those who send in questions. Most of Easter’s audience is from the Illiana community.

“I have a few dedicated listeners,” said Easter.

When Easter started, his target audience was high school kids between the ages of 14-18. However, he would now like to expand his audience and reach people from the ages 14-22. You can find Easter’s podcast on the app soundcloud or through the podcast app on your iPhone.



Photo by Juliana Knot

## Illiana says, “Hallo,” to new foreign exchange student

Cassie Laninga  
Reporter

Josh Chancellor  
Reporter

For the second semester, Illiana welcomed a new foreign exchange student.

German exchange student, Carolina Brümmer, arrived in America on Wednesday, Jan. 11, after a turbulent flight. She comes from Hannover, Germany and stays with the Feikemas.

“My father met [Andrew’s] mother in college,” said Brümmer. At 15 years old, Brümmer attends Illiana as a junior because she skipped the fifth grade. She said her school back home is bigger and the students are louder.

“I like the way people treat each other here. You are really nice to each other,” said Brümmer. “There’s more school events too, like breakfasts and basketball games.”

Brümmer started learning English in third grade. She also spent 3 months in Spain and knows a little bit of Spanish.

“I liked it there, but it was harder to start because I only knew a few words of Spanish,” said Brümmer.

“I’m interested to go to Argentina, Brazil, and to India,” said Brümmer.

Brümmer said she would like to visit countries in South America and Asia.

So far since she has been in America, Brümmer visited Chicago and the Art Institute. Brümmer will be staying in the U.S. for about 5 and a half months. To keep in contact with her family, she uses Whatsapp. She also Skypes with them every two weeks. Brümmer voiced only one complaint about her experiences so far. She said, “It’s cold here,” then added with a smile, “but I like the people.”

# Introducing Homecoming Court

Kade Bouwer  
Reporter

To get to know our homecoming court, we asked them three questions:

#1 What are your plans after High School?

#2 If you could have a superpower, what would it be?

#3 What would you do for a Klondike Bar?

Gabby Kreykes  
#1: To attend St. Xavier University  
#2: Fly  
#3: I would ask for it

Christian Pelke  
#1: To go to Grand Valley State University for my first two years  
#2: Impervious to weather  
#3: Not much, I don’t really like them

Kyle Schaaf  
#1: I want to play college baseball and get an engineering degree  
#2: To fly.....it would be cool to be like a bird  
#3: Anything, except if it involves bear traps

Kayla VanderZee  
#1: Going to Indiana State University and majoring in Interior Architecture Design  
#2: Invisibility



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Back row, left to right: Andy Sons, Kyle Schaaf, Luke Hillegonds, Christian Pelke, Isaiah Easter:  
Front row, left to right: Eden Schipper, Juliana Knot, Gabby Kreykes, Kayla VanderZee, Collette Bouwer

#3: Not that much

Andy Sons  
#1: Right now I am thinking of going into Physical Therapy  
#2: Spiderman, HE’S SO COOL!!!!  
#3: Shove a toothpick under my toe and slam it against the door

Isaiah Easter  
#1: I plan to go to film school  
#2: Flying  
#3: Jump off a building

Juliana Knot  
#1: I plan to go to college and major in History and some sort of STEM field  
#2: Teleportation  
#3: Listen to jazz for an hour and a half

Eden Schipper  
#1: I for sure want to go to college, but I am still trying to figure out the rest of it  
#2: Fly

#3: I would wear Crocs

Collette Bouwer  
#1: I am leaning towards Calvin College, but nothing is for sure  
#2: Transforming into animals  
#3: I’d trade my collection of One Direction CD’s

Luke Hillegonds  
#1: I will be attending Bethel College  
#2: Super speed  
#3: I would burn down a taco truck



## Media helps permeate porn

Chances are if you're reading this, the word porn caught your attention, and why wouldn't it? It is so often mentioned that you can't help but know what it is. In each generation, porn becomes more and more of an "in" topic because of the basic influences we see every day. It's a societal issue that becomes a personal problem and then maybe even an addiction. Sex is constantly thrown at us in social media, movies, song lyrics and television, so for some



Lauren Curtis  
Co-Arts Editor

that makes it harder not look into it.

Here's a dare. Try scrolling on your timeline (whether it's Twitter, Instagram or Facebook) for 5 minutes. Count how many pornographic as suggestive photos/videos you see just in the 5 minutes. In that time, I saw four sexual GIFS and 3 nude photos of girls just on Twitter alone. The crazy part is, I follow none of those accounts. Porn (soft or hard) is put out on social media almost as often as women post photos of their babies.

For example, one of the most controversial movies of 2015 was "50 Shades of Grey."

Christian Grey (one of the main characters) seduced a good, young virgin into becoming his sex slave in return for luxury. The film glamorizes kinky sex and relationships that appear like a dressed up form of prostitution.

Another example of a movie from 2016 "Sausage Party." is essentially ninety minutes of raunchy jokes whose only message seems to be that "staying fresh" isn't everything and that they should just have fun with a "sausage party." These kinds of films seek to normalize promiscuity and recreational sex.

Sexual immorality isn't just shown in movies though. Today's song lyrics and videos contain all types of sexual images and words that makes promiscuity look more appealing. For example, in Ariana Grande's song "Dangerous Woman", she talks about how her lover makes her feel reckless and powerful, thus making her disregard all consequences. Another example is in Dj Khaled featuring Drake's song "For Free." He talks about how his skills in bed are too good to let women enjoy him for free. These artists give listeners a false view of how sex should be

Television is also saturated with sex. "Dating Naked" (shown on VH1) shows adults looking for love at an exotic location with a twist. All the dating happens without the clothes. This show is not only degrading to both sexes, but it is not how God intended life to be. Tamer on the surface but no less sexually charged are shows like "The Bachelor." In this show, women compete for a man's attention, and so much of that competition is clearly sexual in nature.

Society has certainly changed. What was once considered indecent or out of bounds now seems no big deal, and teenagers are following that radical lead. In this society, why is anyone surprised at young people's becoming interested in and finally addicted to pornography? Adults have set up a world that seems bent on addicting the next generation to sexual promiscuity.



# Out of the shadows

## One Illiana boy shares about his struggle to overcome his addiction to pornography

Kassidy Weemhoff  
Co-Arts Editor

"I was one of those people that made sure I covered it up. There was no way my parents were finding out, but that night I forgot to clear my search history."

And in February of his junior year, Joe's parents caught him.

"My dad got really mad at me for something-- I don't remember what because what happened after that was more traumatic-- he took my phone and found it in my search history."

Joe had been struggling with an addiction to pornography for a year and a half before his parents stepped in.

"It took me awhile to realize how much it affected me as a person and affected my personality and affected the way I treated people, and thought of people, and looked at people."

Unfortunately, this is not a rare case. According to covenanteyes.com, an internet accountability and filtering site created by Christian researchers "to equip people to protect themselves and their families from online dangers", 93% of boys are exposed to Internet porn before the age of 18 and 68% of young men view porn online at least once a week.

For Joe, his first exposure to pornography was while at

a friend's house. He and his friends viewed it as a group. He was 13 years old.

"I was a goody-goody, but it sparked my interest. It just grew from there."

When Joe got a cell phone, things got worse. First, he would fall into the temptation only once a week. After a year, it had escalated to multiple times a day. Joe says that pornography became part of his routine. Whenever he was

you know other guys do it."

Months passed before the incident in February. When his parents found out, Joe says he expected them to flip, but they had seen this before. As it turns out, Joe's older brother had dealt with the same problem. His parents had gone through it once before and were able to see it before it turned into an even bigger problem. They immediately sat him down and told him it had to be stopped and how they planned on stopping it.

"When my parents caught me, it was kind of a slap in the face...[Porn] changes you. It becomes a part of your life and you find yourself in a different mindset. It's like I was a different person because

alistic expectations towards women where you don't see them as relatable human beings anymore, you see them as objects... Porn, like any addiction can burn pathways in the brain where, like alcohol and other drugs, you can experience withdrawals. People need to start looking at it as seriously as other addictions."

In Joe's recovery process, the first thing his parents did was restrict access to electronics. They did not allow him to have any devices in his room and they would periodically check his phone. Joe also had to attend therapy for a few weeks. According to Joe, his parent's rules made it much easier to quit.

"Once I realized it and had help, it was easy to quit...I needed an absolute, and I had someone to keep me accountable... It just takes time."

It's been eight months clean, and Joe is proud of how far he's come, but he knows many teen guys still struggle. He suggests three things that could help others addicted to pornography.

"One, I think parents should not ignore it. Number two, everyone needs to talk about it honestly, be open about it. Third thing, do not rationalize it...realize it's a problem."

"It's like binge-eating. Have you ever gone into a binge-eating session where you just feel like crap. It's an awful day and you just eat a ton out of the cabinet? Yeah, it's like one of those...Except, it's so much worse than that because it grows into something that's way more damaging--it affects all aspects of your life and changes your perspective on the world."

“[Porn] changes you. . . It was hard for me to stop objectifying girls because it turned into me. It’s who I was.”

home alone or in his room, he would immediately pull his phone out. His phone was always there. It was so easily accessible that it went from a simple indulgence to a necessity in his life.

One thing that made it easy? Joe says that he and his friends would talk about it openly.

"We'd find ways around it for sure. It's just normal, I guess... I talked about it with my friends and I rationalized it. It makes it so easy when

everything I did, everything I thought about, everything I saw was way off from what it should have been. It was hard for me to stop objectifying girls because it turned into me. It's who I was."

According to one of Illiana's guidance counselors, Mr. Zandstra, pornography addiction puts teens in a very dark place of deception and sin. "It damages teens' relationships with each other and with God," Zandstra said. "Pornography creates unre-

# Counselors see growing pornography use among students

Emma Slings  
Reporter

According to a survey cited by Enough is Enough, a non-partisan organization that has been against internet pornongraphy since 1994, 32% of teens are intentionally accessing pornographic content online. Students who attend a Christian high school may believe that their student body is an exception, but Director of Spiritual Development Lance Davids and

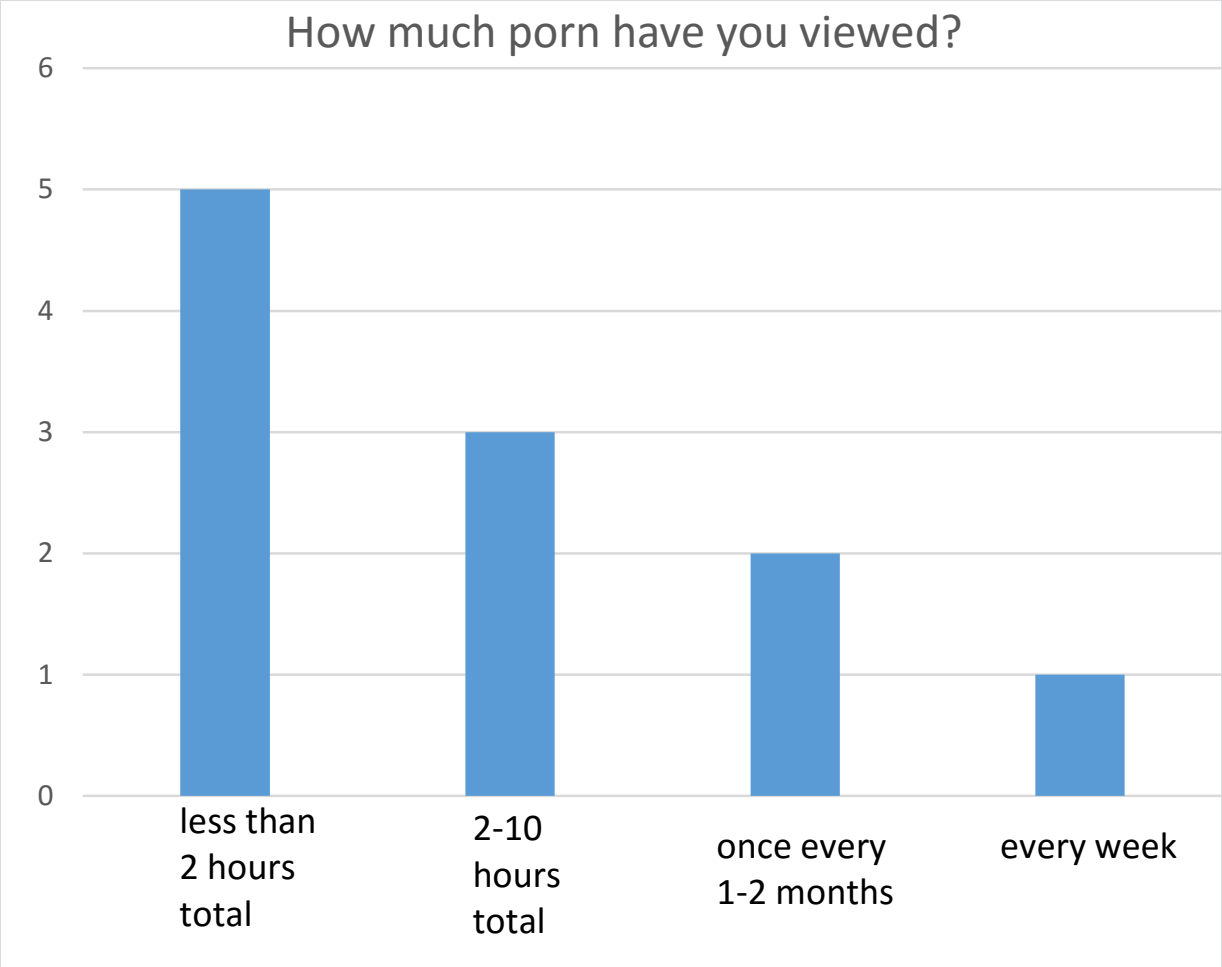
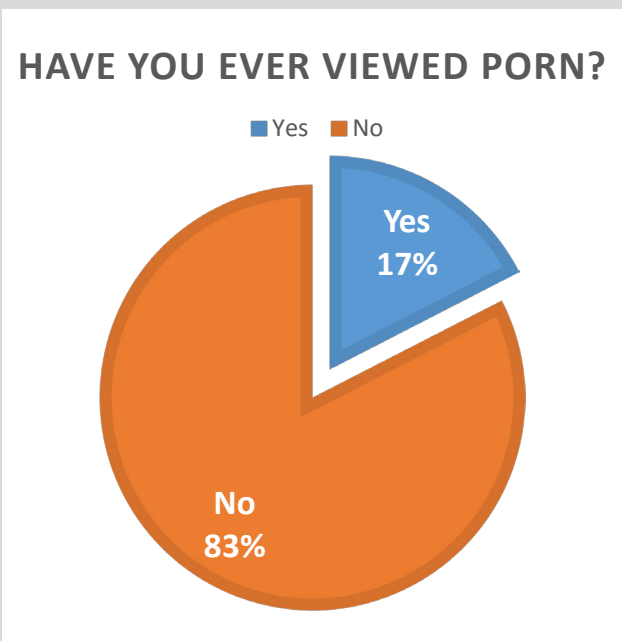
Guidance Counselor Helen Bussema believe that Illiana Christian is no exception to the statistics. “If not [the 32%], then maybe a little more,” Davids estimated. “[Pornography] is more common than we might think,” Bussema said. “There are a number of students who are not just using pornography, but also addicted to it.” A couple years ago, David’s held a silent survey in one of his classes and asked if people wrestled with [por-

nography]. Almost 75% of that class of boys admitted to struggling with it. “We do have a lot of guys that struggle with it,” Davids said, “but I have some girls that struggle with it as well.” Davids and Bussema have both seen more girls struggling with pornography over the years. “There’s an increase in the number of girls [using pornography]; however, it still doesn’t come anywhere close to the problem that it is for boys,” said

Bussema. Bussema believes that people’s struggle with pornography is increasing because they can access it more easily on devices such as cell phones. And in the case of high school students, parents aren’t always on the lookout for such a thing. But why is pornography considered a problem? First of all, Bussema said that from a Christian point of view, pornography disrespects the human body that is created in

God’s image. Secondly, “Scientists have found that the same brain processes that occurs in someone who’s addicted to alcohol or drugs occurs in people addicted to pornography,” Bussema said. The third problem Bussema cites is how relationships are affected. “For your partner to be viewing pornography is the equivalent of being unfaithful to them... It’s not just that it’s disrespectful. There’s also a trust factor that is broken.”

The Echo Staff surveyed 63 of the 65 freshmen boys at Illiana.



Pornography is not just a secular or teenage phenomenon. Statistics say...

- 79% men between the ages of 18 and 30 view pornography monthly
- Christian men are watching pornography at work at the same rate as the national average
- 33% of men between the ages of 18 and 30 either think that they are addicted or are unsure if they are addicted to pornography

Statistics courtesy of 2014 Barna Group survey



It's the time of year for hurried planning, fake tan and excited anticipation. Homecoming season is upon us. From picking out a dress to deciding on what to do after, we have you covered with options for all price ranges. The arts editors have compiled a list of things for you to do in this

# Handy Homecoming Guide

**\$** - On a budget

**\$\$** - Middle of the road

**\$\$\$** - Pulling out all the stops



Where to Find Your Dress:

**\$** If you're not wanting to spend a hefty amount on a dress this year, the best thing to do is borrow. Browse instagram and facebook to see if you can find a dress you like or ask a friend if they have one you can borrow.

**\$\$** Shops like Macy's and Windsor have a wide selection of elegant dresses that won't empty your pockets and will keep you feeling like a princess all night. Another good route to take is stopping by Ross's or T.J. Maxx to see if you can get lucky.

**\$\$\$** Many different specialty boutiques in our area hold a variety of name brand dresses

in different colors and styles. We recommend Debbie's Boutique (1828 Indianapolis Blvd, Whiting, IN), Peaches Boutique (5915 S. Archer Ave. Chicago, IL), Cinderella's Boutique (450 E 162nd St, South Holland, IL), and Bridal Solutions (450 E 162nd St, South Holland, IL).



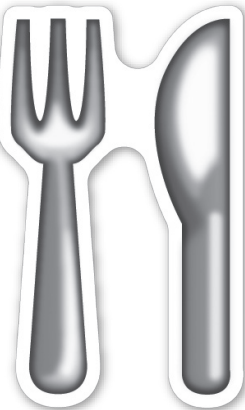
Where to Order Flowers:

**\$** It can be difficult to find flowers that don't cost an arm and a leg, but the best route to take if you're trying to save money on flowers is to make them yourself. Grocery stores like Strack & VanTil, Aldi, Costco and Whole Foods have a nice selection of flowers that you can mix and match yourself.

**\$\$** If you don't want to put in the work to make your own flowers, corsages are up to \$20 cheaper than buying a full out bouquet. There are multiple florists (mentioned below) that will be able to provide you with

beautiful corsages for a mediate price.

**\$\$\$** Shops like Monarch Florist (1686C US 41 Schererville, IN), Lansing Floral Shop & Greenhouse (3420 Ridge Rd Lansing, IL), Brumm's Bloomin' Barn (2540 45th St. Highland, IN) and Homewood Florist (18064 Martin Ave Homewood, IL) are perfect if you're looking to go all out on flowers this year. Florists create specialty bouquets based on your color and flower preference.



Where to Make Reservations:

**\$ Giordano's Pizza** Type: Pizza/Italian Location: 4800 Lincoln Hwy A, Matteson, IL, **Olive Garden** Type: Italian Location: Southlake Mall, 1900 Southlake Mall, Merrillville, IN or Landings, 16601 North Torrence Ave, Lansing, IL, **Grady's Grille** Type: Casual Modern Restaurant Location: 18147

Harwood Ave, Homewood, IL

**\$\$ Cafe Borgia** Type: Italian Location: 10018 Calumet Ave, Munster, IN, **Balagio's** Type: Italian Location: 17501 Dixie Highway, Homewood, IL, **House of Kobe** Type: Japanese Steakhouse Location: 1951 US-41, Schererville, IN or 8101 Broadway, Merrillville, IN

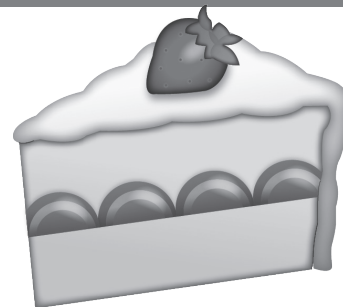
**\$\$\$ Little Italy** Type: Italian Location: 1155 Joliet St. Dyer, IN, **Venice Steakhouse** Type: Steakhouse Location: 275 Route 20, Dyer, IN



Where to Go After the Dance:

**\$** Looking for something fun to do for cheap after the dance? We suggest having a party and creating your own fun. Grab some snacks, put a few streamers up and you have yourself an easy, inexpensive night with friends.

**\$\$** After dancing the night away, you might find your stomach grumbling. The perfect solution? Going out for dessert. The prices range based on where you go. Restaurants in Chicago like the Grand Lux



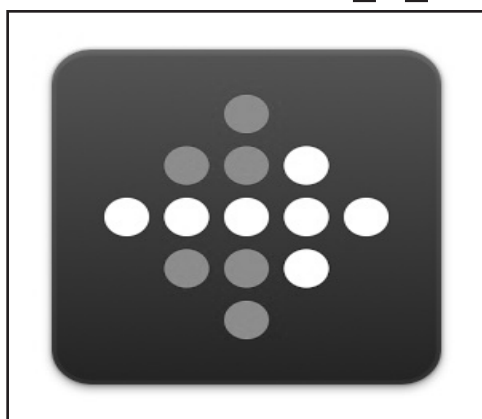
Cafe (600 N Michigan Avenue At Ontario, Chicago, IL) and Sugar Factory (600 N Michigan Avenue At Ontario, Chicago, IL) offer a plethora of decadent treats. If you're wanting to keep it local, Baker's Square (3545 Ridge Road Lansing, IL) is open to serve you scrumptious pies until midnight.

**\$\$\$** If you're still full of energy after the dance ends, it would be a great idea to check out different recreational activities. Places like Jak's Warehouse (221 US-41, Schererville, IN) and WhirlyBall (800 E Roosevelt Rd, Lombard, IL) are filled with things to keep you occupied for the rest of the night. Prices per person average \$15-\$20, but if you're willing to spend it, you'll have a spectacular night.



Lauren Curtis  
Co-Arts Editor

## FitBit App

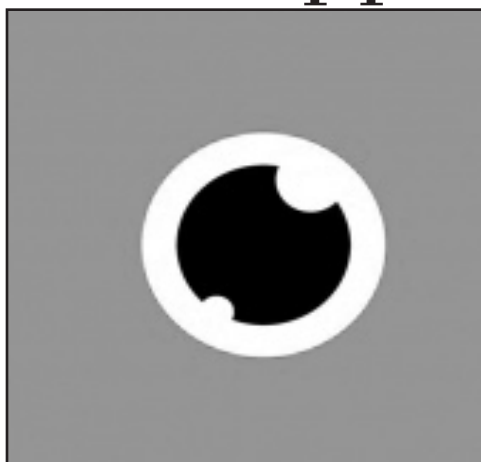


Live a healthier life with the Fitbit app. This app tracks activities, sleep and workouts. The fitbit app even gives you prerecorded workouts that you can watch on your phone. It tracks calories for you and recommends meal plans based on what you like and need. You can use the app on your phone alone or connect it to one of the Fitbit bands for on the go. This app shows you all the aspects of your life so you are able to stay healthy.

All photos are from the Apple Store

## Apps Going Viral

### Fam App



Ever wanted to talk to all your friends face-to-face while each of you are in the comfort of your own homes? Well now you can with the Fam app. Fam is a group video calling that works inside iMessage. Now you are able to catch up with friends without ever having to leave iMessage.

### Mario Run



Those days of playing Mario on your DS or DSI are over. Mario Run has now made it's way to Apple. A new kind of Mario game you can play with one hand. Mario constantly runs forward, while you tap to pull off stylish jumps and moves to collect coins and save Peach.

## 8 Balls Pool



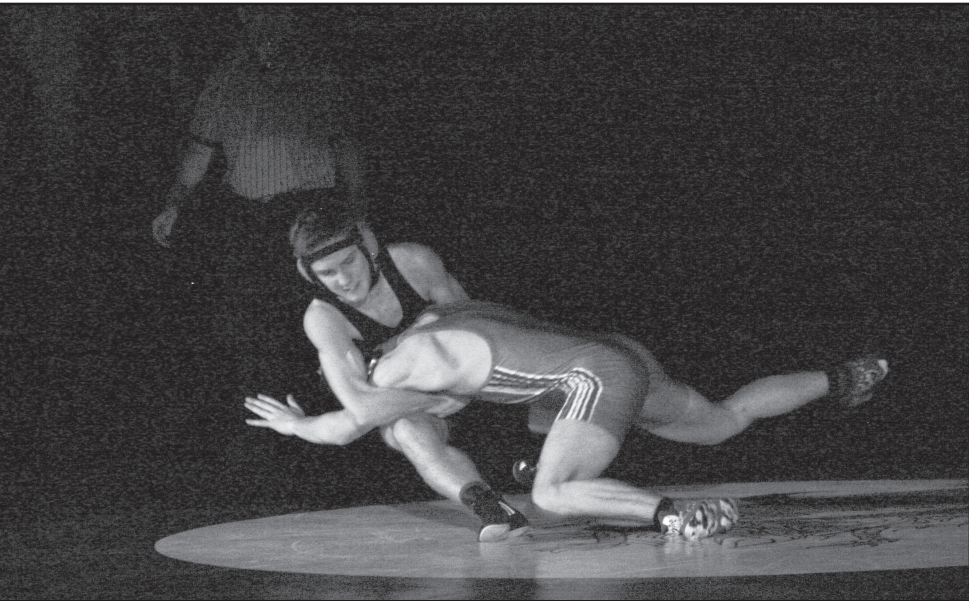
New to iMessage and also available on android, 8 ball pool is taking over the charts. This fun app allows players to play against their friends, while being able to text them! The objective of the game is to clear your balls off the table. The person that gets them off first wins. This app offers rare pool cues, so you can beat your friends in style.

## Dunkin' App

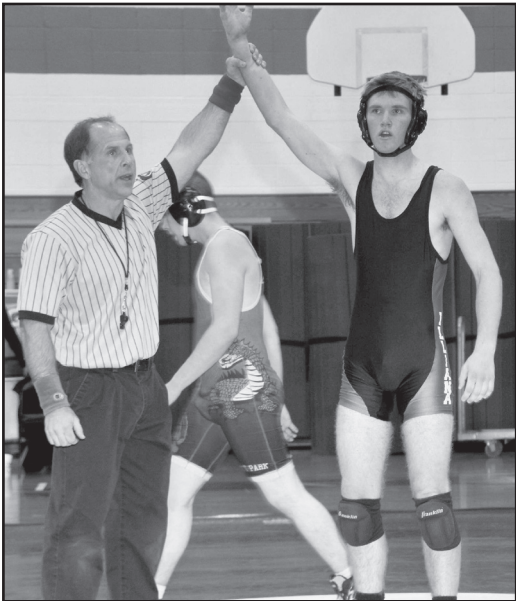


Coffee lovers now have everything to satisfy their needs with the Dunkin' Donuts app. Check points, order on-the-go or just get coupons for the next order. Everything you love in your pocket





Freshman James Klapak wrestles opponent, whom he later lost to at the last homemeet, Jan. 24. Photo courtesy of Jeff DeVries



Junior Ryan Disselkoe wins match. Photo courtesy of Jeff DeVries

# Lady Vikings pick up traction before conference games

Starting season with three losses, girls turn season around, boast record of 15-7

Cate Peerbolte Reporter

The girls varsity basketball team had a slow start to its season but have gained momentum going into conference games.

The season started with three consecutive losses. But the team bounced back with a five game winning streak.

Senior Hope VanProyen said, “It took us a couple games to understand how to work together and play off each other’s strengths.”

Head Coach Tom Knapper said, “We focus on where we’re going, not where we’ve been.”

After a loss to Glenbard South the Lady Vikings returned with a seven game winning streak.

Senior Gabby Kreykes said, “We take each game at a time, focusing on what we can do to improve.”

VanProyen added, “We came back by working harder as a team; everyone puts effort in. We take our practices seriously.”

Coach Knapper attributes the success to the team’s chemistry, solid defense, and hard work.

Knapper said, “The team has grown closer over the season and has been putting in hard work.”

Senior Deborah Smith said, “We gained confidence throughout the season, making it easier to work together as a team. We always focus on what is coming next, looking ahead we want to win conference and keep pushing as far as we can.”

The team now has a record of 15-7.

# Tough competition tests wrestling team

Luke Hillegonds Co-Sports Editor

The varsity wrestling team participated in the Unity Christian Tournament in Hudsonville, Michigan on January 14 and took 5th place

Senior Jesse Ellis took first in his weight class and Junior Isaac Lyzenga captured first as well.

Junior Isaac Lyzenga said, “I had a tough championship match but I ended up pinning the guy after I was down late in the match.”

Senior Noah Rogan took 4th and so did junior Jared VanderWoude which helped the team secure fifth place.

Senior Noah Rogan said about the tournament, “The teams we faced were pretty solid. Some of the guys we had to face were

really good.”

Senior Jesse Ellis said, “We had some close matches which was good for us. We were glad we didn’t drive two hours just to face some weak teams. It was good for us even though we didn’t do as well as we planned on.”

## Upcoming Events

GIRLS CHEERLEADING: Sectional Competition. - Saturday, January 28

BOYS BASKETBALL: Homecoming game vs. Riversidebrookfield. -Friday, Febuary 3

GIRLS BASKETBALL: Away game vs. Riversidebookfield -Thursday, Febuary 2

WRESTLING: Regional Tournament at Wilmington High School -Saturday, February 4

# Boys basketball looks to improve end of season

JP Peerbolte Co-Sports Editor

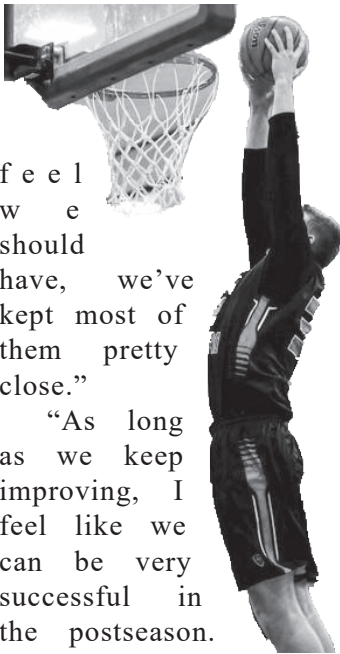
The boys varsity basketball team had a strong win against Elmwood Park on Friday, January 20. It was the first victory for the boys on a Friday night at home. The Vikings are currently 11-8, but to some their record seems to be even worse. Senior Bo Hofstra said, “The season hasn’t been going how we want to, but we are looking forward to the next five games.”

Conference play has been tougher this year due the different conference all Illiana sports are in. “There are a lot more challenging games, we don’t have any blow off games this season,” said senior Ethan Beezhold, “Even though we haven’t been winning games that we

feel we should have, we’ve kept most of them pretty close.”

“As long as we keep improving, I feel like we can be very successful in the postseason. What we are gaining from some of these tough losses is going to be helpful later on in the season,” said senior Eric Detmar.

Hofstra said, “I look forward to finishing the season strong, we want to go as far as possible.”



## Male Athlete of the Month

Senior Ethan Beezhold has been playing basketball for as long as he can remember. He started playing on a team in 5th grade with Illiana Elite and has been playing with Illiana guys ever since. “I love the competitive nature of basketball and I just have fallen in love with the sport.”

He likes to think of himself as the perfect balance in an offensive and defensive player.

Teammate Eric Detmar has high praises for Beezhold saying, “He always brings the energy and sets the tone for our team. He’s a tank. He shows us what it’s like to be a good teammate and how everyday you’ve got to bring everything you got.”



## Female Athlete of the Month

Senior Hope VanProyen is a starter on the girls’ varsity basketball team which has a record of 15-7. Hope has played a lot of minutes this year collecting rebounds and running the floor.

Teammate Senior Deborah Smith said, “She is a fast player and she scores a lot of points in the post even though she isn’t as tall as the other post players. She also brings a lot of energy on the defensive end.”

Senior Gabby Kreykes added about VanProyen, “She plays hard and she plays under control and that helps the team late in games when we need to keep a lead. She enjoys the game and I love playing with her.”



# Editorial

## Song “Closer” far away from healthy view of time

“We ain’t ever getting older!”

Shouted at parties. Blasted out of the car radio. Hummed to in the halls of school. Trapped inside heads.

The song “Closer” by The Chainsmokers instantaneously gained popularity when they released it in June last year, and it still hasn’t died.

The song is a dialogue between a broken up couple that run into each other four years after breaking up. On Genius.com, the writers commented on the line “we ain’t ever getting older.” They said it sums up the mood of the song and this couple reuniting. It’s like nothing has changed after all the time they’ve been apart. Along with that, one of the song writers, Alex Pall, says, “It also refers to the light heartedness of this period in our lives.”

Now, this song is really catchy. Listen to it once and it’ll stick. There is a reason it was not just the No. 1 song in the country but the longest running No.1 song in the country for 2016. In addition to the catchy tune, the meaning is a fun one.

Everyone can relate, because everyone ages. The

Atlantic says, “There’s no denying that the song’s meaning—a momentary pleasure can be bittersweet in its reminder of mortality—is authentically connecting with listeners.” When that line jumps out of the radio, the impulse is to turn it up and belt it out with one hand on the steering wheel and the other

couple is stuck in the past, not learning and growing from the past and the history of their relationship that resulted in their first break up. It’s like nothing changed.

It’s been four years, and they’re at the same place, making the same mistakes all over again. Neither of them grew at all.

“Every day, we make mistakes and time passes by. And every day, we have the marvelous opportunity to learn from them.”

holding an imaginary microphone. Teenage years are packed with fun, crazy, light-hearted memories. As teenagers, we taste freedom for the first time, but little responsibility is on our plates yet, and this song captures that.

While the song boasts a very strong appeal, it’s a lie. We are getting older. Everyone is getting older. At some point, we have to grow up and move on. The song says the

Instead of letting time win, they should’ve embraced change, realizing things are different. A lot happens in four years. It’s undeniable that things change over that long of a period. They are different people with hopefully new goals and dreams that they didn’t have four years ago. Nevertheless, they ignored those four years apart, and they went back to the same mindset and place they were

when they were still together. It was like they never got older.

Living in denial of getting older prevents healthy youth. Learning and growing from the past is a blessing, but living in the past squanders it. On the surface, getting older doesn’t boast nearly as strong an appeal as “we ain’t ever getting older” does. But new experiences and new wisdom lie out there waiting for those who seek. That’s a beautiful thing, but something only moving on and getting older allows.

Growth doesn’t occur just transitioning between childhood and adulthood. It’s a lifelong process. Every day, we make mistakes and time passes by. And every day, we have the marvelous opportunity to learn from them.

Take that opportunity, and learn. Grow. Become a better person each and every day, pushing to stop the repetitive cycle of the same mistakes.

Be aware of those mistakes, and strive to change them. Don’t live in denial, shouting “We ain’t ever getting older.” Instead, accept time and change with open arms.

## Politics distorts violence, ignores victims

Chicago is all too familiar with three things: violence, politics, and the ugly cross-section of the two. Both sides of the aisle have and continue to use tragedies to advance their agenda.

Some local examples:

Four African-Americans recently kidnapped and tortured a white special needs man while streaming it on Facebook Live. Their weapon of choice was not a gun but rather duct tape, toilet bowl water, and a knife. One of the attackers



Juliana Knot  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

had the audacity to complain that she was not getting enough feedback from her social media friends while the handicapped man sat writhing and moaning in pain in the background. Former speaker of the House Republican Newt Gingrich pounced on the story, arguing that if races had been reversed, the attack would have been immediately called a hate crime.

Additionally, in October of 2014, an African-American teenage boy, Laquan McDonald, who also struggled with various mental health issues was carrying a knife in a trucking yard. The police were called to restrain him. An officer shot him sixteen times, fourteen of those shots were while McDonald lay unmoving on the ground. This video of the attack was released by the city long after it occurred online. McDonald died because of the officer’s extreme and unnecessary force. Democrat Rev. Jesse Jackson called for “a shake-up” of the entire Chicago police department and used the tragedy to slam State’s Attorney Anita Alvarez, helping pave the way for his candidate, Kim Foxx.

What’s disturbing is that both men had little to say about the other event. All Gingrich said about Laquan McDonald is that Chicago’s Democratic mayor should step down. Rev. Jesse Jackson was silent about the kidnapping.

Both tragedies involved race relations, the recent election, and social media. Sadly, politicians on both sides changed their volume drastically, depending on whether or not they found the issue benefitted their cause. With remarkable haste, they ignored both of the victims, using them as weapons to lunge at the throat of their opponents.

As victims become mere pawns, one thing is clear. When politicians can’t reconcile their narrative with the next tragedy, they ignore the tragedy or focus only on the aspect that they can use.

Newt Gingrich will not address the reality that a cop was guilty in the murder of a black teen. Rev. Jesse Jackson will not recognize that four young black adults targeted a man because he was white and special needs. Those facts aren’t convenient for either politician.

And Chicago, the city that held both tragedies, turned away and looked down. It knows politicians and violence. It knows how the former twists and manipulates the latter. It knows that the victims of violence will get swept aside by loud rhetoric.

The city of weary shoulders has seen this all before.

### the Echo

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JP Peerbolte

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Jeff DeVries

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

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

## January Wordsearch

Y W F C M L M Y R A U N A J W  
J P R A I S E C R O W D E O P  
U G U K Z M O A I Q H O E O S  
R I X E B W H B K M F Q N N Z  
T E X G M L C E L Y I L W S E  
X R S G E U E O I C R B N J B  
B E U O R X U D E E A O B W F  
D F L O L D M D C S I R O E Q  
J X F T C U C U K H Z R I F C  
J O C R S O T E L Z E A K C N  
R S O G F E T I D O D E M M Q  
M W I F D B R B O Q J Y R Y Q  
D Z E J A R N W T N G W X K G  
P E K L C Z V T B W S E Q T N  
O A L B X S Y N D M M N E J T

### WORD BANK

basketball, cheer, court, Echo, iced coffee, January, leaky roof, Loud Crowd, New Year, Praise Crowd, resolutions, snow, wrestle

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