



Drama department rocks house with in-person performance

Sophia Thompson

Sports Editor

Illiana's Drama Department performed "Schoolhouse Rock Live!" on March 4, 5, and 6 after Lake County moved into a yellow zone, allowing larger groups to gather. The cast wore special clear face covering that allowed the audience to see faces, while following COVID safety guidelines.

The cast and directors chose "Schoolhouse Rock Live!" because they felt that with the different scenes and revue type of story, they would be able to keep socially distant and have fewer performers on stage at a time.

Senior Jenna O'Brien, one of the leads in the musical said, "The main thing we changed was the spacing on stage and the see-through masks. The masks weren't ideal, but after a while they were worth using. It was amazing to see everyone's faces and see expressions again."

Sophomore Kevin Truong said, "I think the musical was great. I had so much fun working with my friends. I was also really happy for the seniors since it was



Illiana actors sing *Victim of Gravity* during in-person performance.

Photo by Jim Kamphuis

their last performance, and they were able to perform it in front of an audience."

The senior performers were happy to be able to perform their

last Illiana performance in person as opposed to a live stream, or radio cast, which they did with the fall play, "It's a Wonderful life."

"I couldn't have asked for

a better last performance in the midst of a pandemic. It was truly an unreal experience that all of us were so grateful for," added O'Brien."

AP students recognized in 'Letters About Literature' competition

Aubrey Porter

Reporter

This past February, 6 of Mr. Jeff DeVries's AP English were recognized for their letters about an impactful book they have read for the Indiana State Library's "Letters About Literature" contest. In these letters, the students discussed the book they chose and how it affected them.

Illiana has participated in this competition for the past four years. The first year the contest ran through the Illinois Library of Congress, and since the school's move to Indiana, the Indiana State Library has taken it over.

Mr. DeVries assigns this to his senior students because he believes that "it opens them up to a different type of writing," as well as an opportunity to think and reflect on the power that a book can have on one's life.

Out of 30 students that entered, two students, Rachel Bulterma and Jake VanderZee, received honorable mentions, joining 2nd place winner Olivia Tambrini in the top ten. Three

other students, Valerie Disselkoen, Emma Olthoff, and Olivia Yonkman, also received recognition from the state. All of these students will have their letters published in an anthology put out by the Indiana State Library.

Tambrini chose the book "John, Paul, George, and Ben," a children's book that she had read growing up. In her letter she wrote about the book's retelling of history in a comedic way which brought her comfort, creating lasting memories of her childhood, and which helped stir in her a love for history.

After receiving notice of her letter placing second, she sent it to the author of the book, Lane Smith. He later responded with love and appreciation for Tambrini's letter, impacting her even more than the book already had.

"I'm so blessed to have the opportunity to showcase my writing and share my love for the literature that has shaped me," Tambrini said. "I can't wait to share this book with my own family one day."



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Liv Tambrini shows her signed copy of "John, Paul, George, and Ben."

Davids fills new 'Head of School' position

Aubrey Porter

Reporter

This past winter the school board made a unanimous decision to create a new position called the "Head of School," which will be filled by Mr. Lance Davids.

According to principal Mr. Peter Boonstra, Davids has increasingly shown skill as an administrator and a leader in the 22 years they have been working alongside each other. Boonstra has also been looking for an assistant principal after Mr. Turkstra left. Furthermore, Boonstra plans to retire eventually, so it seemed like an apt time for the board to place Davids in a position where he feels comfortable to take over when this time comes.

Boonstra notes that we shouldn't necessarily think of this as simply "changing seats," but to think of it as "a look at administration in a different way." He defines the Head of School position as someone who spends a bulk of time working on relationships in the community. This is not necessarily what Boonstra's main focus as principal has been, nor an area which he currently has adequate time to address. Building relationships is a strength for Davids, and the new position gives him time to work on it.

Davids sees this opportunity as a way to create an improved culture at Illiana Christian. Some of his roles as Head of School will be to oversee finances, "lead the leaders," work intimately with churches, and get out into the community as a whole. He feels that this position's main course of action is to lead the school in all of these areas.

"I'm excited for the challenge," he said. "Most importantly I think I will really be able to help kids grow both academically and spiritually in their journey through Illiana."

Acting out Christ-like love, compassion in day-to-day life

As high school students we experience a lot of stress not only in school, but in our social and personal lives. We are constantly going through changes in classes, friends, and routines. Being surrounded by people who encourage and support us can make those experiences much easier and more fluid.

However, as a senior, I have come to realize that high school students are not encouraging, nice people most of the time.



Sophie Thompson

Sports Editor

I think that teenagers tend to be crabby because we are all navigating these big changes in our lives and our natural response is to be defensive and mean to make ourselves look cooler or better than everyone else. We are casually cruel to each other. We judge people, make fun of people, and tend to tear each other down. Whether that be in a group chat that consistently is bashing people behind their backs saying awful things or ignoring someone because the “popular” kids deemed them “weird.”

I recently saw a post on social media from a girl who had a classmate commit suicide from Newport Harbour High School in California February 2018. She was posting about how when fellow students heard the news over the announcements that morning, the school went silent. Even though she went to a pretty big school and not everyone knew this girl personally, all were mourning the loss of their peer.

In this student’s suicide note, he wrote about how stressful school was and how he lonely and isolated he felt. It made me think about how we here at school affect each other. No one at that school was probably expecting this student to kill himself, but I’m sure that students there were feeling some kind of guilt for not being more observant and seeing the signs. It made me think of Illiana and how I would feel if that tragedy were to happen here. It made me more observant of my classmates. I would never want to hear of any of our classmates killing themselves because they felt alone, but it all starts in the way we treat each other. We all are struggling with something in our lives, whether it’s public or private. Why aren’t we more eager to help each other and encourage each other? I love to think about what the school days would be like if we all uplifted and supported each other.

I don’t think anyone here wants to hear the news over morning announcements that someone felt so alone and hurt that he or she felt the need to end everything. It would affect so many more people that they would think. So stop texting in group chats, breaking people down and hurting each other’s feelings. Stop ignoring that person who so badly is begging to be heard and to feel love. Instead, be honored that someone who might feel so completely alone is going to you trying to find a friend and build a relationship. You might be their last resort.



Senior Kylie Wegner looks on calmly as she donates blood through Veristii Blood Center for Illiana’s blood drive.

Photo by Jeff DeVries

Illiana blood drive not in “vein”: raises 37 units of blood

Olivia Oostema

Co-Editor in Chief

Student Council hosted the annual Illiana blood drive on Tuesday, March 16.

Thirty-one people donated, and thirty-seven units of blood were collected. All the blood donated was sent to area hospitals which are struggling due to dampened numbers of blood donors.

Student Council sponsor Sharon Praveen said that many are leery of donating blood during the pandemic.

However, she said the company is careful about it, and they “do it the right way.”

Junior Isabella VanderWoude donated for the first time because “it’s an easy way to help people.” She said that her mom has always donated blood, and she’s following her example.

Before the blood drive, Student Council contacted Versiti Blood Center, made posters, created a sign-up Google Form, and met with Missions Coordinator Sara Johnson to coordinate offering donors a half-hour of

service time as incentive to increase student participation.

Praveen said that in the fall, the incentive to donate was the antibody test. The company still offers the test; however, it’s less of a novelty because it has become more available. She added that the half-hour of service given to students who donate blood “fits the requirements [of service]: it matches the time it takes to donate, and it helps people.”

Student Council sponsor Kelly Aardsma said the event went well and students

were “happy to help the community.”

The blood drive was limited to students and staff as a coronavirus precaution.

However, not everyone was able to give blood as intended. Senior James VanDrunen, who intended to give blood, was unable to as he fainted before he was able to donate. Though he feels Illiana handled the situation well as they called the paramedics after he hit his head, VanDrunen may have been turned off of donating blood because “I don’t like passing out.” said VanDrunen.

Pulled Pork Party pulls through

Hailey Ross

Reporter

On Saturday, March 6, Illiana hosted a pulled pork fundraiser for the spring mission trips to Atlanta and to West Virginia that a few Illiana students will be taking over spring break.

The students who are going on the mission trips volunteered at this event. Some of their responsibilities included washing dishes, cutting and serving cake, chopping bell peppers and drying lettuce.

This year’s event was a different experience then the past two years because of COVID. For example, the the tables were kept small and more of the food was pre-packaged.

“The pulled pork was great, as usual,” said senior Rachel Bultema. “And it was neat that they served us Illiana Farms lettuce too.



Photo courtesy of Sara Johnson

Students and sponsors going on mission trips work together to help prepare for the pulled pork party.

I loved the opportunity for community it provided between musical performances.”

“It was nice not to be in a rush, but I miss the people,” said Junior Citlali Sanchez.

Ms. Sara Johnson, who was in charge of the event, was happy with the turnout.

“It was a shining success,” said Johnson. “It was the crowning event to our mission trip fundraising.”

Spring Supper raises money

Madie Ceponis

News Editor

Illiana hosted the Parents In Education (PIE) annual Spring Supper on Saturday, March 20. It was a take-home catered event, delivering Walt’s fried chicken, Jimboo’s potatoes, rolls, and cake pops. Some Chamber Singers and students from the spring musical delivered the dinner with a song.

This year, Illiana fed 312 people from Lowell to Gary, raising \$11,255.

The funds went towards the ‘Excellence in Education’ fund, which allows teachers to buy classroom items that tuition does not cover such as science and p.e. equipment and computers for others.

One of the seven women of the PIE Board, Tricia Groot, said, “We want to thank everyone who participated from the students, teachers, and families who ordered to the companies that donated the food and those companies that donated money to cover the extra costs of the dinner. We couldn’t have done it without them all!”

Goin’ back to middle school!

Some Illiana promotion techniques take new forms to be COVID-19 safe. Creativity, ingenuity, and the re-working of some old tactics have helped Illiana to recruit new students from feeder schools, including filming a new Illiana promotional video.



Photo courtesy of Illiana's Facebook page

Illiana seniors Leah Davids, Emma Olthoff, Kylie Wegner, Jenna O'Brien, and Justin VanDrunen visit Crown Point Christian to talk about Illiana, sharing their experiences and the school's opportunities.

Illiana admissions and students visit feeder schools

Sophia Thompson
Sports Editor

Illiana’s admissions office has begun again to go back to feeder schools with current Illiana students to speak with potential students from schools like Highland Christian, Lansing Christian, and Crown Point Christian.

Illiana was unable to go into feeder schools earlier

this year because of COVID restrictions, but as we have seen Indiana loosen those restrictions, Admissions Director Marie Limback decided that it is safe for our students to visit the schools.

Limback said, “It’s really good we’re able to visit the feeder schools again. I am hoping to see more enrollment and impact these students.”

Senior Justin Van-

Drunen, a Crown Point Christian alumnus, went to his old school to tell the current middle schoolers more about Illiana. “It was cool to go back and see all of the younger students who I remember from when I was in school there still. It made me feel a little old. I was also excited to share my experience at Illiana to encourage other students to come here next year.”



Photo courtesy of Highland Christian School's Facebook page

Junior Ryan Smith, sophomore Danielle Rancifer, and freshman Janna vanBelle pay a visit to Highland Christian School with Mrs. Marie Limback to talk about Illiana.

Promoting Illiana: updated video gives new way to tour school

Gracie Jania
Reporter

Mrs. Jenna Dutton set up video tours to cover the grounds of Illiana to show incoming students and feeder schools Illiana’s facilities and physical layout.

Dutton organized these videos to be recorded with “Real Video Production Co.,” a company that Illiana uses to make most of its videos. This involved covering rooms and parts of Illiana’s campus, such as the ARC, music and art rooms, Illiana Farms, and the Commons.

“With COVID we have had to learn how to create new and exciting ideas to show off our building, and we thought a virtual tour would make for a great experience!” Dutton said.

Many schools now have video tours, and now Illiana is creating an opportunity for families to see the school easily and virtually. With COVID, visiting schools in person has become more cumbersome, but besides this issue, families that do not live in the area will now be able to see the campus without having to leave their home.

However, those still interested in an in person tour at Illiana can contact Mrs. Marie Limback to organize a visit.

Dutton said she hopes to get this video out to “as many people as possible,” including those at feeder schools. This video will be available for access on Illiana’s social media platforms and website beginning in April.



Photo courtesy of Highland Christian's Facebook page

Illiana basketball players share info about Illiana’s girls’ basketball program at Highland Christian School.

Hindsight is 2020: looking back at hectic, horrible, and hopeful happenings that shaped the year

Twenty-twenty was... well, a memorable year, to say the least. A lot happened, and it can be hard to remember all of it. From the good to the bad to the ugly, there's plenty to talk about that happened in and around 2020. Although some might want to forget the year ever happened, there's a lot to be learned from the events that took place. For old time's sake, let's take a look at the past year's highs and lows.

August 2020: Beirut explosion
An explosion caused by un-safely stored ammonium ni-trate blew up a port in Bei-rut, Lebanon leaving 300,000 people homeless and causing an estimated \$10-15 billion dollars in damage. After the explosion, the country issued a two-week state of emergency. At least 210 people died and 7,500 people were injured.



Photo courtesy of Fire Magazine

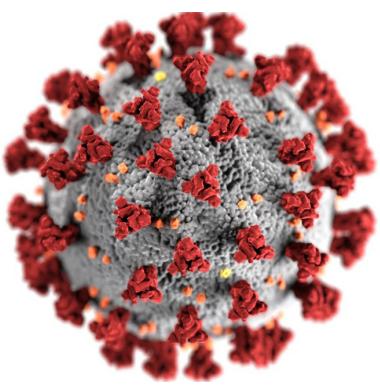


Photo courtesy of Ideas.org



Photo courtesy of CNBC



Photo courtesy of Canberra Times

November 2019-March 2020: Australian bushfires
The Australian bushfires started near the end of 2019 and continued until the end of March 2020. Research by the Nature Climate Change journal found that 21% of Australia's forests burned in the 2019-2020 season. An estimated 445 people died in the fires, and others died indirectly.

September 2020: California wildfires
In California, fires started in the beginning of September and continued until Decem-ber. According to Fire.ca.gov, over 4 million acres of forest burned and 33 people died.



Photo courtesy of Galvanize.com

March 2021: Stock market correction
In response to the pandemic, the stock market dropped over 20% but rebounded within months.



Photo courtesy of University of Minnesota CIDRAP

March 2020: WHO declares coronavirus pandemic
When the coronavirus first was discovered in Wuhan, China, it was not big news in the United States. Once a few people in the U.S. contracted the virus, a bit of a panic hit. Soon, mass cancellations and school closures and lockdowns rocked the nation. Around the same time, people stocked up on toilet paper, canned goods, and the hand sanitizer. People since have struggled to adjust to the "new normal" of mask-wearing and social distancing. As of March 9 of this year, 527,000 people have died from the coronavirus in the U.S. and 2.6 million have died worldwide.



Photo courtesy of Fortune.com

December 2019: First Donald Trump impeachment trials
In December of 2019, Trump was impeached for asking Ukraine to investigate Hunter Biden (son of then-former Vice President Joe Biden) over tax affairs and dealings with Ukraine and China, according to BBC.

January 2021: Second Donald Trump impeachment trials
Early in 2021, he was impeached a second time after being charged with inciting insurrection after Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol. Five died in the riot, including police officer Brian Sicknick, according to NPR.



Photo courtesy of The Conversation.com

May 2020: George Floyd killed and Black Lives Matter protests begin
Peaceful as well as violent protests surrounded the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and other Black victims of police brutality. Protests began in Minneapolis, where Floyd was killed, and spread across the U.S. and the world. The Washington Post credits Black Lives Matter protests with focusing "the world's attention on racial inequities, structural racism and implicit bias."

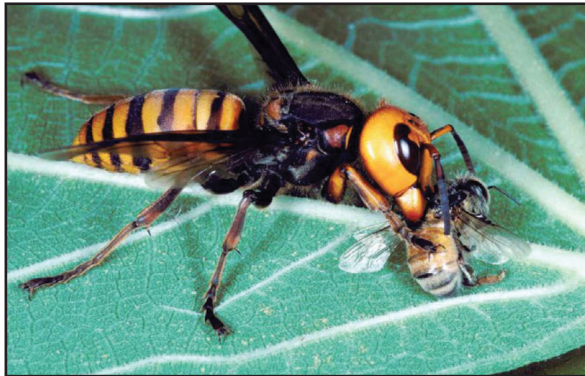


Photo courtesy of Agrilife.edu

December 2019: Murder hornets found in America
'Murder hornets' arrived in the U.S. likely by a cargo ship from Asia. They were first sighted in December 2019, but the first nest in the United States was found in Washington in October 2020. Murder hornets can decimate entire bee populations. Because of the panic over murder hornets, people in the area were killing native bees.

2020 Celebrity Obituaries:

- Chadwick Boseman
- Kobe Bryant and daughter Gigi
- Sean Connery
- Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg
- Alex Trebek
- Eddie VanHalen

2020 was...

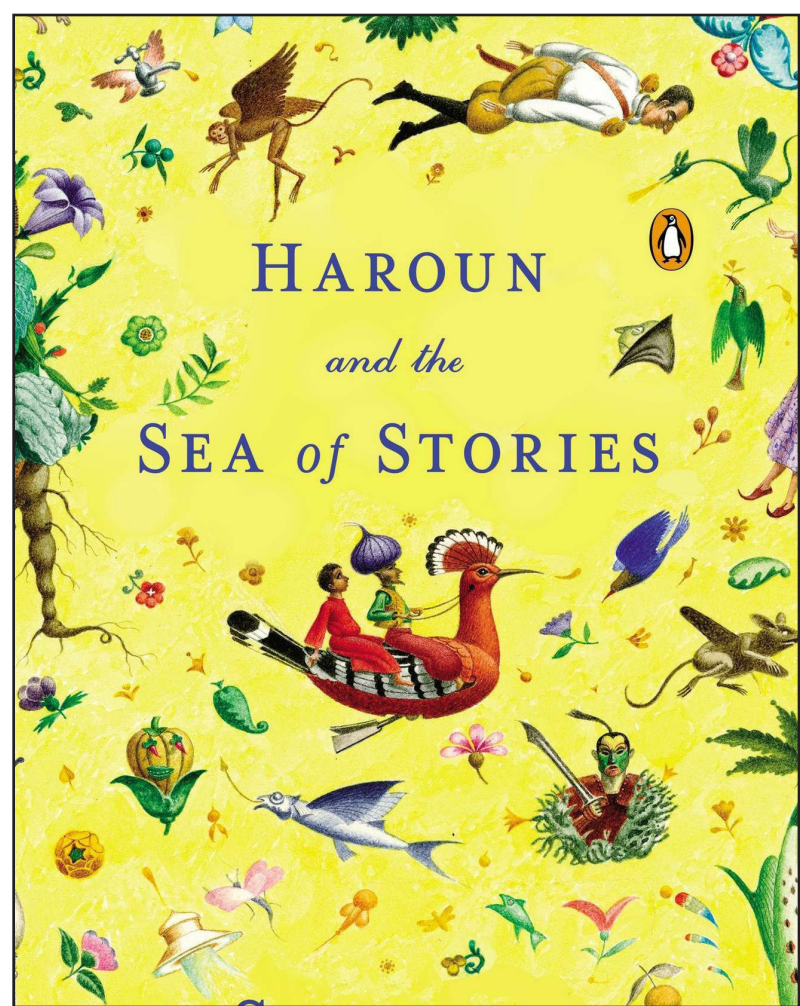
"International Year of Plant Health" to raise awareness about how protecting plants can help in fights to end hunger, reduce poverty, and protect the environment (United Nations).

"Year of the Nurse and Midwife" due to the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth, the woman who founded modern nursing (World Health Organization).

The "worst year in terms of climate change" triggering fires in Australia and California as well as extreme tropical cyclone activity (Geospatial World).

Springtime is wonderful, but may be a nightmare for those with allergies. What else is there to do while everyone is outside frolicking? Reading is always an option! Here are some

Echo Book Recommendations:



Haroun and the Sea of Stories

Olivia Oostema
Arts Editor

“There was once, in the country of Alifbay, a sad city, the saddest of cities, a city so ruinously sad that it had forgotten its name... And in the depths of the city, beyond an old zone of ruined buildings that look like broken hearts, there lived a happy young fellow by name of Haroun, the only child of the storyteller Rashid Khalifa...”

Salman Rushdie’s *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is a fantastical page turner with elements influenced by Indian-folklore. Clever, creative, and a relatively quick read, the novel follows Haroun, the son of a famous storyteller suffering from storyteller’s block, as he seeks to find the source of his father’s problems. His quest ultimately

by *Salman Rushdie*

leads him to the legendary Sea of Stories which he must save from the evil Khattam-Shud.

The story includes symbolism and themes about how language is power and how we should look beyond the physical world for truth. One character asks, “Africa, have you seen it? No? Then is it truly there?...And the past, did it happen? And the future, will it come? Believe in your own eyes and you’ll get into a lot of trouble.”

The tale revolves around family, friendship, sacrifice, and perseverance in the face of adversity. I initially picked up the book after my sister read it for a college course, and I enjoyed the story’s playful language and quick pace.

“Dumplin’”, a love story of all kinds for all ages

by *Jennifer Niven*

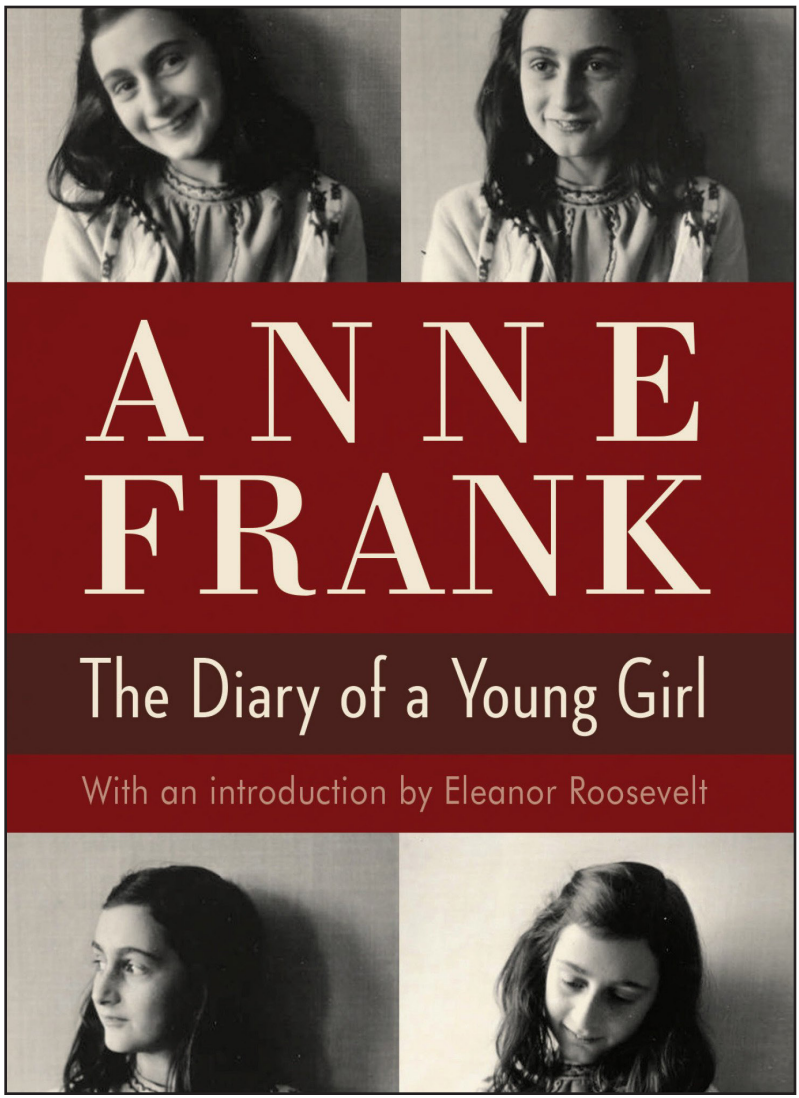
Rachel Bultema
Feature Editor

From her beauty pageant queen mom to her immense love for Dolly Parton, Willowdean Dickson is anything but average. *Dumplin’* by Julie Murphy is a story of grief, self-image, and self-discovery. Growing up with a pageant-winner mom, Willowdean has felt anything but a pageant winner. She’s felt more connected to her aunt, but she passed

away a few months ago. Will faces insecurities and jealousies in her relationships: her long-time friendship with Ellen Dryver and budding relationship with Bo Larson. Will must rethink where “true beauty” comes from, especially after entering into the town’s beauty pageants with three other outsiders from her school. Will learns to see more than what shows up in the mirror as not everyone is as they appear, especially herself. Willowdean finds a

way for her love of Dolly Parton to connect her with others, even as she grieves her aunt. *Dumplin’* is not just for the romantic, but also about platonic, familial, and self-love. But don’t worry; *Dumplin’* is full of romance too. *Dumplin’* is a story about love, heartache, and self-discovery. It’s a bit cheesy, but a bit of cheese has never killed anybody.

Though, for those who don’t have the time to read a novel right now, the Netflix adaptation is available!



The Diary of Anne Frank

by *Anne Frank*

Rachel Bultema
Feature Editor

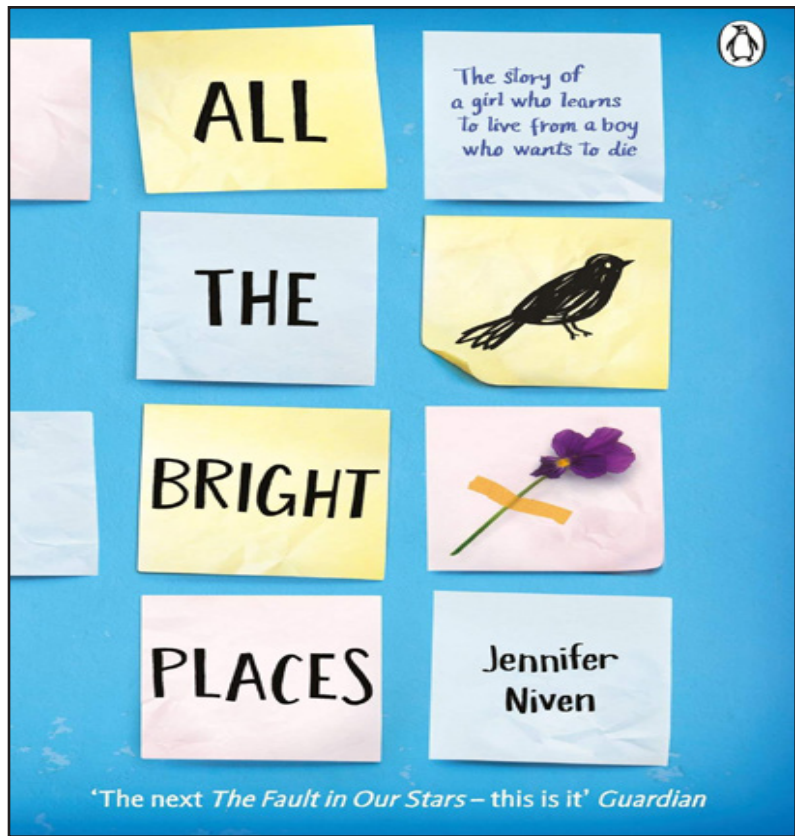
It is necessary to acknowledge history so that humanity doesn’t repeat it. Anne Frank had to live through the Holocaust as a child, crammed into a tiny space with her family and another. The *Diary of Anne Frank* shares her experience with the world. She should have been outside with friends learning about the world, but was instead barely seeing a view of the street. The story is not fictitious, nor is it a biography, but rather an autobiography. It reveals not what historians thought it was like to live through the time, but what it was truly like for one young girl in Amsterdam. The diary builds empathy and will ignite a fire inside the reader. It inspires the reader to fight against oppressive governments and against injustices.

Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story

Madie Ceronis
News Editor

“Gifted hands: the Ben Carson” records how Carson moved from a broken home to being one of the nation’s leading pediatric neurosurgeons in Carson’s own voice. His mother helped him through his early struggles by encouraging him, stabilizing him, and believing in him despite receiving bad grades. He read voraciously to learn everything he could.

His crowning achievement was the first successful separation of conjoined twins, a first in medical history.



All the Bright Places

Gracie Jania
Reporter

Some books entertain. Some inform. A select few change your life. Such is *All the Bright Places*, which focused on mental illnesses, such as grieving over a lost loved one, feeling depressed, or going through other disorders, that can affect a person’s life. The book opened my eyes to seeing how illnesses like these can burden people and make them feel unwelcome or outcast, which made me want to share this story with other people.

All the Bright Places was about two teenagers facing different problems: Theodore Finch and Violet Markey. Finch suffers throughout the book with depression, and Violet mourns the loss of her close older

sister, Eleanor. The book covers the suicidal thoughts the two of them face while also educating readers on the subject as well. Overall, it helped me understand how mental illness can lead to serious problems like that.

My favorite part about this book had to be the memorable characters. Their journey is an emotional rollercoaster, even for those who have already read it. I also enjoyed the colorful vocabulary since it challenged me to understand words I wasn’t already familiar with.

My only complaint about *All the Bright Places* is that it turned me into a blubbering baby while I was reading it. On a road trip. With mascara running down my face. And no Kleenex.

This is a fantastic book by Jennifer Niven, and I rate it 9/10.

Records

VanEssen sets career point record, junior varsity best season in school history

Hailey Ross

Reporter

The 2020-2021 basketball season was one to break records at Illiana. Senior Logan VanEssen now owns the new record for most career points of any basketball player in school history and the junior varsity boys team captured the best season record of any JV team in school history.

At the end of February, in a game against River Forest High School, VanEssen passed the 1,500 point

mark, thereby securing the school record for most career points. He ended the year with 1556 points scored in his three years playing varsity ball.

"It was an accomplishment and something to be excited about," said VanEssen. "My brothers and I, since we were little, have played and worked out all year round. We practiced a every week."

Coach Tom Roozeboom has coached Van Essen the last three years, and he spoke high praise for his guard. "Logan is amazing. It has been a treat watching

him grow over his years here at Illiana. I am excited to see what he does in the future. I think he has a really promising career ahead of him."

The junior varsity team also hit a new mark, finishing the year with a win over River Forest and a final record of 19-2, the most winning season ever for a junior varsity boys basketball team.

"The boys have a lot to be proud of," said Coach Jeff White.

"It was a crazy," said sophomore Easton Olthoff. "Illiana has been around a

long time, and to think that we had the record number of wins is crazy."

"Our team played exceptionally well this season," White added. "I am proud to say that I had the opportunity to coach them. I look forward to seeing what their careers lead to in the future. Both here at Illiana and past high school."

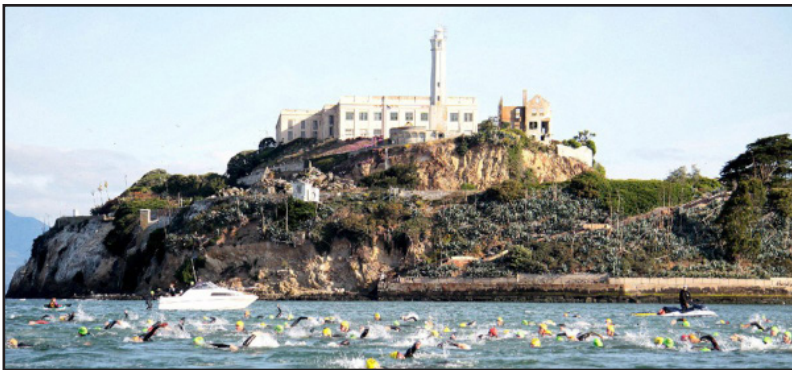


Photo of contestants swimming during the Escape from Alcatraz triathlon with Alcatraz in the background.

Alcatraz gives Davids new challenge

Hailey Ross

Reporter

Last year Director of Spiritual Development Lance Davids entered into the Escape from Alcatraz mini-triathlon. The challenge includes a 1.5-mile swim across San Francisco Bay, a 20-mile bike and 8-mile run.

Due to COVID, the event was cancelled, but not one to be deterred, Davids will be trying to do it again on Aug. 13.

"It was disappointing because of the work that went into it and I love challenges," said Davids. "However, it was understandable because everything got cancelled last year."

The three legs of the triathlon

present a series of challenges to Davids, but the swim from the island to the mainland is his foremost concern.

"The biggest challenge for me is the swim. I have biked a lot, done 75 miles in mountains in a day, and I have run a marathon. However, swimming is not as easy—especially in San Francisco Bay."

Davids said that he looks forward to trying something different, and that the difficulty is part of what makes it enjoyable.

"I find it to be a mental challenge, but it is always good to challenge yourself," Davids added. "My previous biking and running got me in. I am looking forward to trying something new as I take the challenge to 'Escape from Alcatraz.'"

Varsity bows out in sectional semifinals

Madie Ceponis

News Editor

The Illiana basketball season of 2020-2021 has come to an end. The varsity finished the season with a record of 17-7, the junior varsity at 19-2, and the freshman at 13-3.

The Varsity team closed its season in exciting fashion, winning the sectional opener 73-53 against Lake Station on March 4. Senior Logan Van Essen led the team with 28 points, and following him was Junior Ian Van Beek with 18. But in the sectional semifinals, the Vikings

fell to Bowman Academy 47-52.

Senior Justin Van Drunen said of that final game, "We battled and put ourselves in the best situation we could have to win the game, so we can't look back with regret that we played our hearts out. I know that I can walk away from basketball proud of leaving a stamp of leadership and a work ethic."

The junior varsity team closed the season with a record of 19-2 which is now the best winning percentage of any Illiana JV boys team in history. They ended the season with a victory of 56-48 against River Forest.

Sophomore Noah Kieft said of

the game, "The energy on our team was incredible; we played very collectively as a whole team and we left everything we had on that court."

The Freshman team will be leaving the season 13-3. Their final game was a win against Chesterton with a score of 38-33. Freshman Isaac VanderWoude led the team with 12 points and freshman Isaac Sherwood trailed him with 9.

Freshman Zach Hart commented on the game, "It was a close game which ended us in winning, we all worked together to score and looked for the best shot every time."



Photo courtesy of Jeff DeVries

Senior Leighton Foster drives the ball up the court at a home game Dec. 17 against Washington High School.

Senior athletes battle with injuries

COVID-19 proves not to be the only challenge spring athletes have to face this spring

Gracie Jania

Reporter

Jenna O’Brien, Jacob VanderZee, and Fletcher Bandstra are three seniors who have undergone injuries that affected their performance in playing sports. Some of these injuries have lasted a few months, while others have been longer-term.

Jenna O’Brien was the first to encounter one of these injuries. Eight years ago, she was diagnosed with a slipped capital femoral epiphysis, a condition she was born with, but that manifested itself later in life. In the fall of 2013, a screw was put in each of her hips and she was enrolled in physical therapy. Two years later, when doc-

tors removed the screws, they discovered a labrum tear in O’Brien’s left hip and her hip flexor released in her right hip. This resulted in the doctors shaving both of her hip bones to make their fit more comfortable.

This meant giving up softball for two years due to the therapy and healing time. “To this day, I still don’t have the flexibility I wish I did and I still have pain from time to time,” said O’Brien.

Fletcher Bandstra is another senior who has experienced an injury during a sport. While playing baseball, he swung the bat, catching his cleat in the turf of the field. This resulted in his knee caving in, and turned out to be a torn me-

niscus. The recovery time after the incident meant that Fletcher would have to stop playing baseball for a while to focus on getting better.

“This affected me pretty hard because I planned on not playing basketball this year to focus on baseball,” Bandstra said, “but I wasn’t able to do the workouts or play baseball in general for [several] months.”

Jacob VanderZee also went through a tough break during his soccer season. While running shoulder-to-shoulder with an opposing team member during a game, his leg planted into the ground wrong, and he felt a rip in the center of his knee. “I immediately went to the ground and felt an excruciating pain through my entire knee,” VanderZee

said.

VanderZee had torn his meniscus and anterior cruciate ligament, and sprained his medial collateral and lateral collateral ligaments. These ligaments are found in the knee and help stabilize the joint.

As a result of the surgery, VanderZee lost his senior wrestling and volleyball seasons.

VanderZee said, “I’m still not cleared to play contact sports until the end of May, but my leg strength and endurance is significantly less than it used to be.”

The seniors also experienced a sense of loss when unable to participate in their favorite sports.

Bandstra said, “It was tough seeing everyone be able to play sports and do the workouts, but I came to realize that it is what it is

and started focusing on my rehab.”

“It was pretty difficult to see the rest of my friends playing sports while I was sitting at home unable to participate,” said VanderZee, “but it was reassuring for me to remember that God has a plan for the entire injury.”

O’Brien said, “One minute I would be fine and the next I couldn’t understand why this happened to me. I finally accepted the fact that it happened and from then on I was completely changed... I didn’t want my surgeries to define me and certainly didn’t want them to beat me, so I beat them instead.”

“To anyone who faces an injury during sports, I would encourage them to keep their hope and faith in God. It’s a good time to pick up new hobbies and learn new skills,” said VanderZee.

Freshmen athletes making varsity-sized impact on Illiana sports teams

Sophia Thompson

Sports Editor

This year Illiana has seen many freshman athletes, both boys and girls, making a large impact on our athletic program. Over the past couple of years, Illiana’s athletic program has struggled. There aren’t many students who are participating in sports, and with the move to the new building into Indiana and trying to get into a conference here, there has been a lack of games and matches for our teams to play in. However, this year has been different. Illiana has seen a lot of freshman athletes playing on varsity teams.

One sport we’ve seen a great freshman influence on is the varsity boys

soccer team that played in the fall. The team had 4 freshmen that played from the beginning of the season along with one other freshman that was pulled up for the postseason. The first four freshmen- Zach Davids, Chase Poortenga, Josh Turkstra, and Zander Weemhoff- started every single game, and in the playoffs when they lost senior Jake VanderZee to injury, freshman Nolan Flipse joined them in the starting lineup. Senior Ben Ritzema said, “I think Illiana’s soccer program has some great years ahead of them. These freshmen have a great future ahead of them, and are showing amazing teamwork.”

Another Illiana sport that has a lot of great freshman talent coming

in is baseball. There are a number of freshmen boys who participate on outside travel teams like Aaron Gouwens. He plays for the Dirtbags, a travel team that plays around Indiana. He is also looking forward to playing for Illiana’s program this year.

“I am excited to see what Illiana’s baseball program has to offer. I’ve heard great things about it. I am also excited to meet more people and have fun playing with them,” said Gouwens. Another freshman who plays exceptionally well is Isaac Vanderwoude. Vanderwoude plays for the Indiana Bulls Black team. He is an above average pitcher with a velocity of 73mph.

Illiana softball is also looking forward to hav-



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Freshman Zander Weemhoff races opponent to the ball at one of their fall games this past season.

ing more freshman influence this year. There are a lot of freshman girls trying out who play on travel teams around the country. Four freshman

girls actively playing on the varsity team this year at Illiana. They are Maya Wondaal, Mikayla Derks, Avery Martin, and Libby Kreykes.

Upcoming athletic events:

- April 7 home varsity baseball game against Hobart High School
- April 8 home varsity baseball game against Wheeler High School
- April 6 home varsity boys volleyball game against CRU Blazers
- April 19 home varsity boys volleyball game against North Central High School
- April 5 home varsity softball game against Hebron High School
- April 14 home varsity softball game against LaCrosse High School
- April 7 home varsity girls tennis game against Wheeler High School
- April 12 home varsity girls tennis game against Whiting High School
- April 20 home varsity track meet
- May 8 home varsity track meet

Editorial

Keeping promises out of love for others

Pinky promises didn’t originate on the school playground. Though sources differ on the true origin, all agree that their creators did not intend for them to be broken. Of course, this ought to hold true for all promises made by the Lord and others.

Nowadays, people throw promises around like senior citizens throw bread to ducks. That is to say, promises are made quickly with little thought.

Whether it be in relationships (“I promise I’ll love you forever”), friendships (“I promise I’m not upset”), or in paternal relationships (“I promise I won’t be upset if you just tell me”), promises are quite common.

We are made in the image of God. He has made promises and kept every single one of them. Therefore, we should make our promises with the intention of being equally faithful to our word.

If we make promises, we should make them in-

tentionally or not at all. Enlightenment philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau said, “Those that are most slow in making a promise are the most faithful in the performance of it.”

Using the phrase

Love, the driving force, is apparent through the actions of putting thought into a promise, thinking about why we made it, and fulfilling the promise out of love.

“I promise” flippantly causes it to lose its luster. Its hold begins to slip and our promises become less meaningful. As Rousseau said, if we are careful in making our promises, we will be more likely to carry them to fruition.

So, how do we make certain that we hold our promises in high esteem?

Psychologytoday.com has a few questions

we can ask ourselves before making a promise. Author of “Broadcasting Happiness: The Science of Igniting and Sustaining Positive Change” Michelle Gielan recommends asking ourselves, “What is my motivation

behind this promise?” This question helps us clarify our intentions before making a promise. If we know why we are doing or want to do something, we are more likely to carry it out.

Gielan recommends we ask ourselves, “Am I being realistic?” Sometimes promises represent wishful thinking. Making a promise because we wish we could keep it,

when we know full well we can’t is a mistake that sets us up for failure. Promisesbehavioralhealth.com tells us that we should make sure, before we make a promise that we can deliver on it.

Gielan also recommends that we consider what the consequences would be if we were to break the promise. Perhaps it would result in a break-up, loss of a job, or loss of a friendship. Keeping the consequences at the front of our mind can help motivate us to keep our promises.

Promisesbehavioralhealth.com says that promises are an affirmation of love. The old adage goes “actions speak louder than words.” The action of following through on promises speaks louder than the simple action of making the promise. Love, the driving force, is apparent through the actions of putting thought into a promise, thinking about why we made it, and fulfilling the promise out of love. When we keep our

Fighting perfectionism by finding forgiveness

I am a perfectionist with an adequate memory. This combination means that I expect perfection from myself and others and hold intense grudges when they fail to execute.

My perfectionism is a bit of a blessing and a curse. It pushes me to do everything better than the best of my ability. It forces me to tune into the details because, as the idiom goes, that’s where the devil is.

Disappointingly, not everyone thinks the way I do. My perfectionism often causes tunnel vision; I will forget how the world around me functions and how I

ought to, just to focus entirely on my goals. Apparently, not everyone focuses all their energy into their work until burnout. It both drives me and exhausts me.

I didn’t notice a problem with my methodology until recently. If I’m honest, I thought my perfectionism was a good thing. My craving for perfection causes me to succeed academically, be passionate about my interests, and be a good employee. But it also causes me to be a bad friend.

Relationships and friendships are not projects. Relationships are built with living people possessing complex thoughts and emotions and living in a world of complicated webs of connection and responsibility. I cannot perfect my interpersonal relationships because they are moving targets incapable of perfecting.

I don’t like making mistakes. I know that nobody particularly enjoys them, but I hate acknowledging my fallibility. I have a hard time forgiving myself for making errors and have an even harder time forgiving others for making them.

Expecting perfection in relationships of any sort leads to nothing but headache and frustration. Perfection on this side of Heaven is unattainable. Therefore, I need to cut my loved ones some slack when they forget something or make a mistake.

I’ve held grudges for as long as I can recall. It’s truly exhausting to remember and know the ways people have hurt me. Holding grudges, especially against the people I love with so much of my heart, places far too heavy of a burden on my shoulders. I’m not that strong.

Removing expectations for perfection in our relationships allows for freedom to grow and eliminates grudges we hold against each other.

The weight can be taken off of my shoulders, and anyone else’s who shares my struggle. Forgiveness is terrifying and hard, but possible.

After all, we are created in the image of a God who has forgiven every mistake with hardly second thought. If God can forgive all of humanity’s sins, I think I can forgive a few mess-ups.

For him, it took the sacrifice of his one and only son. For us, it may be a bit easier. We can start by apologizing and saying, “I love you, mistakes and all.” We can go from there.



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

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

Enjoy an Echo-themed word search!

S	I	E	H	R	L	N	U	P	O	N	R	E	T
P	S	B	L	O	O	D	D	R	I	V	E	D	R
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I	I	L	O	I	H	P	N	S	E	R	V	G	A
N	N	A	S	O	C	R	E	L	C	A	E	N	T
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BLOOD DRIVE
VACCINATION
SPRING SUPPER
BEIRUT
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