

Loud Crowd, Praise Crowd team up for first time on girls’ game

Kyla Bennett
Reporter

Friday evening, Nov. 12, Illiana students’ and families gathered for the first ever girls basketball, Loud Crowd, and Praise Crowd on the same night.

Ms. Erinn Behn, head of the Loud Crowd committee, and Mr. Darren DeBoer, the athletic director, felt the need to incorporate a loud crowd at the game to be supportive to the Illiana girls’ team. It has been several years since there has been a loud crowd for female sports.

“It was a lot of fun and the turnout was great,” said Behn.

Mrs. Rachel Drost and Mr. Lance Davids, sponsors of the Praise Crowd committee, usually host Praise Crowd gatherings after boys’ basketball games, hoping to attract a number of students who are already at school for the game. This time, however, they decided to lend their drawing power to the girls athletics program, and so, like Loud Crowd committee, they chose to have the event after the girls game. The result? For the first time ever, the girls basketball team experienced the synergy of being supported by Loud Crowd and Praise Crowd on the same night.

“We wanted it to be really special,” said Rachel VanderZee, a senior at Illiana and member of the Praise Crowd committee.

Both Praise Crowd and Loud Crowd committee members expressed an interest in doing such a night for the girls again in the future. Unfortunately, there are no more Friday night games for girls’ basketball this season, but Illiana is definitely looking to have more in the years ahead.



Veterans who attended the event pose for a picture in the commons.

Photo courtesy of Illiana Facebook page

Illiana honors veterans, veteran shares story

Danielle Rancifer
Reporter

Thursday, Nov. 11, Illiana hosted its annual Veterans Day celebration. The day consisted of the folding of flags, playing of national songs, and a speech from a veteran.

History teacher Mr. Jeff White helped to conduct the opening ceremonies, which occurred in the main gym, having been moved inside because of rain. Afterwards, the veterans enjoyed a breakfast with food

prepared by students in the food and nutrition class and a chapel dedicated to veterans, including a brief talk by pastor and veteran John Rogers.

Illiana’s first art teacher Bill Westerhof, a Vietnam veteran in attendance, shared his story about his time of service and how it affected his life.

He was drafted after college and was sent to fight in Vietnam during the year 1966. “[I had] a lot of anxiety,” he said. “Vietnam was building up at the time.”

For most of his time there, he worked as a radio operator, working in an office underground passing messages along.

Things turned for him in 1968, after he joined the marines who found themselves under siege in the North.

“A hole in the ground a couple feet deep, that was home,” he said. Time passed, he added, in “a balance between boredom and terror.”

After two years in Vietnam, Westerhof signed up for college, and in October of 1968

he departed from the service. Adjustment to civilian life was straightforward for him, but said he is sure that other soldiers must have had to face a lot of hardships.

Westerhof said, “Vietnam was a part of the cold war. We believed we were helping to stop communism, we were even worried about killing fields there, which never happened.”

At one point, he added that his perspective on the war has changed over time: “Now I find myself asking, was it needed?”



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Dial painters played by Priya Sen, Bella VanderWoude, and Danielle Rancifer recount the funeral of a coworker.

‘Radium Girls’ proves success

Citlali Sanchez
Reporter

The Illiana Drama Department presented its annual fall play on November 4-6. The name of the play was “Radium Girls.” The play examined the American obsession with health

and wealth as a radium company seeks to bury the truth that it is killing its own workers with radium poisoning.

Rehearsals officially started on August 23 when the cast met with director Jeff DeVries. Set designer Jim Kamphuis and property manager Emily Hill-

egonds began work a short time later with the sets and props crews to prepare for the performances.

Freshman Adia Falvey, who played a reporter in the play, said that DeVries helped prepare the cast by giving them tips on how to improve their acting skills,

which helped put everything together.

Performance days are always stressful for those involved in the play. Senior Thijs vanBelle, who took on the role of student director, said one of his main worries was about how everything would come together in the end. Junior Maddie Ritzema, who was on the props crew, said that one of the things that worried her the most was not having enough practices.

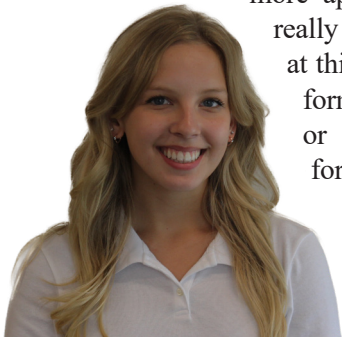
Despite the worries of the cast and crews, the show received a lot of positive feedback from those who went to see it. Grace Goodfellow, who went to see the play, said that her favorite part of the play was the transitions from scene to scene. “It felt like watching a movie,” she said.

Mrs. Rachel DeVries, who attended the play, said, “It was fun to see how the story was set and how the era of the 1920’s was portrayed.”

For those who are thinking about joining the Drama Department, senior Colin DeVries said he highly recommends joining not only because it’s fun, but also because of the people you meet.

Enhancing outlook on life through daily appreciation

Romanticizing your life is a game changer. Disclaimer: It doesn't require having a love interest or being in a relationship. By definition the idea of romanticizing something means to describe something in an idealistic way, or to make something seem more appealing than it really is. I like to look at this definition as a form of optimism or appreciation for the things going on in your life. In the following paragraphs are some inspiring ways to romanticize and enhance your outlook on life.



Grace Jania
News Editor

Taking a look at your life and giving yourself purpose very day is a gateway to achieving your goals and making them count. Waking up and being excited to start the day is so much more productive and accommodating to your plans and goals than beginning with complaints and bitter thoughts.

Enjoying every moment is so important, especially today in the constantly changing world. Make every memory a good one; don't dwell on what isn't going on and instead pay attention to what is happening around you, and enjoy it. Maybe your sports team is losing the big game, but all your friends and peers are there cheering you on. Don't let the moment pass you up! Your life isn't always going to play out like a movie or tv show, so when things aren't going exactly the way you want them to, it's easy to be discouraged. But when a feeling of contentment hits, you are able to enjoy and appreciate what is happening.

Live everyday like it's your last. This is so important for every aspect of life, and when a "bad day" gets to us --it occasionally finds a way-- the whole mood is brought down and all of a sudden, any minor inconvenience is a contributing factor to the "badness" of the day. That stops with a change in attitude, and it's only up to you. Choosing to feel grateful for everything you have, every person you know, and every interaction you have can turn that awful day into an opportunity. So what if you don't have-- a cool car? a new phone? a boyfriend? a popular group of friends? Your mood is what you want it to be; using excuses about what you don't have will only bring it down.

It is so important to enjoy your own company. In other words, love yourself. Become your own best friend. Just as you would want your best friend to love you, support you, and build you up, you have to learn to become that way for yourself. Friends and relationships come and go, but you will always have yourself, and the sooner you start to learn to appreciate your personality and the things that make you unique, the easier it will become for you in the future. Others will see your stability and admire it.

In a vast amount of Hollywood movies, the end result tends to work out, and as much as we want to believe it, our lives won't always be like that. But looking at what we're blessed with will continue to assist us in cherishing what we have instead of what we lack, shifting our perspectives on our lives to be more valued and appreciated.

Praise Crowd opens basketball season with "Finding Faith" theme

Olivia Oostema
Editor-in-Chief

From flipping pancakes to acting as spiritual leaders at worship nights, the Praise Crowd committee puts on numerous events and works behind the scenes to build community at Illiana.

Though best known for events before and after school, the group actually does most of their work during club period. During this time, students plan the logistics of events as well as the message they want to communicate through speakers and songs. Head of School and former Director of Spiritual Development Lance Davids often speaks at events and students on Praise Crowd volunteer to lead devotions and share testimonies.

In a vote, Praise Crowd selected the theme "Finding Faith," a play on the movie Finding Nemo. The theme was chosen

after students saw others struggling to discover their faith. The theme verse from Hebrews 11 aims to answer questions like 'How are we confident? What do we hope for? What is our assurance-- even if we don't see

it?' said Rachel Drost, who runs Praise Crowd alongside Davids. Students plan to draw from characters in Finding Nemo to highlight various aspects of the theme.

In order to lead other students well, the group works to

"grow [their own] passion for God and people," said Drost. "The committee is student-driven... and committed to being servant leaders every day. We want everyone to know they're valued, they're welcome, and they belong. It's what we're all about."

Upcoming worship nights are scheduled after the basketball games on Dec. 3 and 17. A breakfast is scheduled for the 16th.



Members of the Praise Crowd committee and students sing worship songs at Praise Crowd.

Photo by Dani Rancier

Spring mission trip destinations offer variety of serving opportunities

Aubrey Porter
Feature Editor

The spring break mission trips this year are vastly different from each other, each focusing on a different aspect of service, but all sharing the goal to serve God's people in every way that Illiana Christian knows how.

Missions Director Sara Johnson put together the three trips to three different cities that were offered. To apply, students had to submit a permis-

sion slip and answer several self-reflective questions on their applications. The locations of the trips include Sauk Village, Illinois; Los Angeles, California; and Yaeger, West Virginia.

The Sauk Village trip will engage students in activities such as school service, prison outreach, painting murals, and planting a garden. The trip offers a local missions opportunity for students who may not want to leave home on a plane or a bus.

"I am stoked for this

trip because of the proximity as well as the variety," Johnson said. "You can easily visit a few months after you get back and check on the garden you planted or look at the mural you painted."

The Los Angeles trip will include working with people who struggle with homelessness and addiction recovery. Although challenging, "it is an opportunity to humanize these [people who are often demonized in our society]," Johnson said.

The Yaeger trip, a repeat trip for Illiana, will focus on helping people who struggle with poverty and addiction. Last year the team helped in the Zera House, a refuge for sex trafficking victims. They also worked on cleaning out an abandoned school, clearing water out of basements, and many other projects that will likely be similar to the ones included on the next visit.

A question that Johnson got on a trip last year is one that many ask themselves: "Why are we doing this work for people who can do it themselves?"

"Because we can," Johnson said. "We need to become a society where we don't serve for a reward in return, but simply serve because we are able to."

SHIELD groups practice serving in community

Citlali Sanchez
Reporter

Student Life Director Janna Van Essen has planned two service projects for SHIELD groups this fall: making thank you posters for veterans and Christmas cards for residents at Park Place.

On Monday, Nov. 8, SHIELD groups made posters and cards for the veterans that would be in attendance for the Veterans Day celebration on Thursday, Nov. 11. Van Essen said that her desire for the veterans to know how appreciated they are by Illiana prompted the idea. Van Essen added

that she wanted there to be a "connection between the students and the older generation." Junior Haley Mannino, who made a big poster, said, "I was proud to make someone feel happy and appreciated for their sacrifice."

Another service project still coming will be the creation of Christmas cards for the residents at Park Place. Since Illiana already has been developing connections with Park Place (broadcasting last year's play for residents, choirs having sung for residents, and frequent service hours being fulfilled by chalking the walks there)



SHIELD groups make posters to celebrate Veterans Day.

Photo by Jeff DeVries

Van Essen thought it would be nice for students to wish the residents a happy Christmas.

"This is a great way for the students to connect with the community outside of Illiana," Van Essen said.

In the near future,

Van Essen is contemplating plans for other small service projects, but these projects are not yet set in stone. Van Essen added, "Some of the projects that we have in mind include partnering with hospitals and feeder schools."

Annual auction raises funds to support athletics department

Cameron Evers
Reporter

The annual Illiana Christian High School Sports Auction took place Saturday, Nov. 20 starting with a silent auction at 5 followed by a live auction at 5:30. The auctions help raise money for the Illiana sports department and for things such as uniforms, team projects, payment for staff and officials, and other costs associated with athletics. The food at the event, however, is all free. People who eat are encouraged to give a free will offering. The money raised in those offerings goes to the Illiana Missions team. This year, the live auction was both in person

and online meaning people who weren't able to attend could still place bids on all live auction items that were being sold. Organized by the Athletic Director's office, the auction relies on a range of volunteers for things to run smoothly. Athletes from every winter sports team, including basketball, wrestling, and cheer, got involved in helping work the event. They helped set up before the night started, make food in the kitchen, distribute food, show off the auction items being sold, help people bring items to their cars, and clean up afterward. Athletic Director Daren DeBoer said that getting the sports teams involved "gives them a great level of



People attend the live auction bidding on items as varied as Kate Spade purses to chicken tamales to home smokers. Photo by Laura Jania

appreciation and the people like to see the students who they are supporting." Many Illiana families and alumni look forward to the auction every year. DeBoer added, "It's a great opportunity to give and it's a social event where you can see people you went to school with or played on sports teams with."



Senior Jessica Bailes gives blood during 4th period. Photo by Jeff DeVries

Blood drive surpasses goal, collects from 28 donors

Hailey Ross
Arts Editor

Illiana's student body and staff donated 31 units of blood on Thursday, Nov. 18, during the Student Council sponsored blood drive, surpassing the goal of 29 units set before the drive. Versati, the organization that collected the blood, was happy to receive it, according to Christy Bradford, the onsite coordinator at the blood drive. She added, "The high schoolers are really fun" to work with as well. "It's been a pretty good turnout," said senior Brady Vroom, a student council member helping out. 36 students and teach-

ers signed up to donate. "It's cool being able to help out people in need," said senior Isabella VanderWoude, who donated blood, "especially since I have a universal blood type." Junior Kayla Bosman said, "It's cool to know that my blood is going to a good place and that I might be saving a life." The student council, in order to entice students to donate, offered all students who donated a half an hour of service time they could put toward earning their exam voucher. "It went very well, a successful blood drive," said Mrs. Sharon Praveen, one of the student council sponsors.

Taco Dinner earns money for Praise Crowd events

Lucas VanderWoude
Reporter

The Praise Crowd committee held a taco dinner on Nov. 6 that raised money for Praise Crowd events and offered a delicious meal for adults and students alike. The dinner was held in the commons of the school, and the food was served by members of the Praise Crowd committee in a cafeteria line. The event started at 4:00 p.m. and ended at 7:00. Occurring between the afternoon and evening performances of the fall play Radium Girls, the event offered a convenient dinner for members of the cast and crew and audience members who want-

ed to stay for another production. The event raised around \$15,000 for Praise Crowd, which met the goal that they were hoping for. "It was a wonderful event," said Praise Crowd sponsor Lance Davids. "We were truly blessed." Davids also explained the choice of menu. "It's very easy to make tacos for a lot of people," Davids said. "Also, no one else does it. Other schools hold pancake breakfasts or spaghetti suppers, but not taco dinners." Adults and students alike were pleased by the dinner. "I especially liked the way the tables were set up," said Janna Van Belle, a sophomore.

Pathway to Jesus school in DR sponsored by homerooms

Kyla Bennett
Reporter

This school year, Illiana has partnered with Pathway to Jesus School as alumnus Shelley Hernandez and Principal Peter Boonstra have asked each homeroom to sponsor the cost (\$420) of one child attending Pathway to Jesus for the coming year. Pathway to Jesus is a Christian school in Santiago, Dominican Republic, and parts of the building have been erected and painted by students and faculty of Illiana Christian

who have worked there on numerous mission trips. The purpose of this school is to give children in poverty a Christian education. "This [sponsorship program] keeps us in touch with Pathway to Jesus," said Principal Peter Boonstra. "Illiana, myself and others, have taken teams to the Dominican Republic during break to serve those at Pathway to Jesus." Churches and other Christian schools have also served on mission trips for Pathway to Jesus as well. Pathway to Jesus was founded by Illiana alumnus

Shelley Hernandez. It started in an abandoned building in Santiago, Dominican Republic when over 20 years ago, Hernandez felt called to serve and create a safe place for unprivileged children in Santiago. This way children had the opportunity to receive a Christian education. The school starts at kindergarten and goes through 6th grade. Pathway to Jesus now has 7 classrooms, bathrooms, a cafeteria, and multiple offices. There are about 250 students enrolled. Hernandez, who had to return to the US for health reasons, now runs the Pathway to Jesus school remotely and is planning on adding another building to house a preschool.

One for the books

ICHS alumnus, P.E. teacher Erinn Behn becomes first female coach to assist in storied history of boys varsity basketball program

Cameron Evers

Reporter

That sound of shattering glass? That was Erinn Behn who recently became Illiana Christian High School's first ever female coach in the boys varsity basketball program. Behn was a college athlete at Taylor University where she played basketball all four years.

After serving as an assistant coach in the girls varsity program for several years, the PE teacher now takes the reins as the assistant coach of the boys' varsity basketball program at Illiana. While working in the PE department with head coach Tom Roozeboom, he mentioned that Behn should really consider applying as the assistant coach because she would be a "great addition." Roozeboom said she "knows the game" and "it doesn't matter [if it's] guys or girls, it's about basketball."

Behn says this position "wasn't on my radar" at first, but nonetheless she was "happy for a good challenge." Her application was accepted and shortly after, she took on this new opportunity. She has been coaching basketball for six years and is excited to begin coaching this squad.

Behn has been around the game of basketball for many years, as a player and as a coach, but this new position will be different from many other roles she has had to take. She says the people around her have been very encouraging and she is excited to work with this "solid group of players" who have "skill and experience."

Behn hopes to bring a fresh perspective to the team and to use her love of analyzing film to give good and specific feedback to her players. Junior Kevin Corcoran, who plays a guard on the team, said that Behn brings a "different side to basketball" and helps the team play strategically and not just follow the "X's and

O's of the game."

Behn says she has felt very respected by the team, and she hopes to set a good example as a "Christian mentor" to her players. She said she doesn't feel pressure from the community as she steps into this new role, despite being the first female in her position, but instead, she feels more of a "personal pressure" to try to "add value and encourage" her team and to overall "coach the best [she] possibly can."

Junior Cody Dejong, a forward, said it might take a little bit of getting used to having a female coach, but Behn has great "knowledge of the game" and "brings another eye" to the court.

"She has knowledge and energy," Roozeboom said, "and she wants the team to succeed."



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Women making inroads in men's sports

Aubrey Porter

Feature Editor

The absence of female coaches in male athletics is a conundrum that exists nationwide. Males are most commonly associated as coaches for teams of all genders, no matter the sport. Female coaches, most often associated with female sports, are rarely found as coaches for male teams, which is why it makes the news when a woman is appointed to coach a high level male-dominated sport, such as basketball.

Some examples can be found today. Take Tamara Moore, for example. Moore is a former WNBA guard, and is currently the only woman to be coaching

a collegiate men's basketball team, Mesabi Range College in Minnesota.

Another example can be found in the recent past. Nancy Lieberman, basketball hall of famer, became in 2009 the first woman to coach a professional men's basketball team, the Dallas Mavericks.

According to NBA.com, 15 women in total have served in the assistant coach position in NBA history.

Becky Hammon, the second female assistant coach and first full time female assistant coach for the NBA, made history when she was the first woman to ever act as head coach in an NBA game after taking over for Gregg Popovich, head coach for the San Antonio Spurs, after

he was ejected for the second half of a game in 2020.

More women coaches lead female sports teams, but barely more than men. For example, just a little over 60% of women's NCAA basketball teams are coached by women, according to the Heratin Bulletin. The rest are coached by men.

The disparity between the number of male and female coaches likely come from a variety of sources. Keyleigh N. Wallick of Gettysburg College argues that "the underrepresentation of women in coaching positions within all sports is caused by societal perceptions of sports and gender, homologous reproduction theory, and networking and access discrimination." In other words, past practice

and traditions make conditions very difficult for women who wish to coach.

Still, many female athletes who hope to coach argue that such conventional

thinking isn't always logical.

"Basketball is a genderless sport," said Hammon. "The ball has no difference whether a man's holding it or a woman's holding it."



Photo courtesy of Ny Daily News

Coach Becky Hammon on the Spurs' sideline instructs her players.

Putting the “green” in green and white

Aubrey Porter

Feature Editor

Being sustainable can include many things. Using reusable products, conserving energy, and recycling are just a few ways that people can change their homes, businesses, and schools to make an effort to be more sustainable in their everyday lives. At Illiana Christian, the different aspects of the school work in different ways to be sustainable.

Where we’re doing well: For lunch, students are

reminded every month to pre-order their lunches. Previously at the Lansing campus, no one pre-ordered, a failure that resulted in a good deal of waste. A food pantry would come and pick up hundreds of items, but anything perishable would be thrown away. Mrs Schaaf, the coordinator of all things hot lunch, said that pre-ordering lunches is “incredibly helpful, avoids over-purchasing, and ensures that little to no waste will be produced from leftovers.”

The server staff also cooks its own meat for lunch-

es like barbeque sandwiches and walking tacos, and whatever is left over is frozen and used for future lunches.

As another step to be more sustainable, the lunch program has at least a few times made salads using lettuce greens grown by Illiana students in the science department’s hydroponics setup. Using locally sourced food like this reduces waste and the need for fossil fuels in transporting food from farm to table.

Technological aspects of the school focus around energy conservation. For example, each set of lights in each classroom and area of the school are movement censored and on a timer, shutting off after a certain amount of time.

Where we have room to grow:

Although Illiana is currently doing all of these things right now, there are some things that could be implemented in the future that could make our school more “green.”

Solar Panels:

The construction of Illiana’s building is ideal for solar panels. The roof, spacious and flat, has plenty of room for these panels to be installed and easily concealed from plain sight. With the amount of space and panels that could be installed, extra energy



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Plastic cups, lids, and wrappers are common in Common Grounds and the lunch program, representing an area for potential growth in sustainability.

may even be able to be sold back into the power grid, and the money could be put towards other “green” projects.

More reusables:

Plastic is currently an essential at Common Grounds. From plastic cups, lids and straws, to the individually packaged parfaits and plastic wrapped forks, a fraction of the plastic being used could easily be cut down if more people brought reusable items that could be refilled and used again and again.

Carol VanDrunen, Common Grounds coordinator, said that they try to recycle as much as they can. The problem is that the paper products need to be clean, and the plastic products that people

purchase more often than not end up in the trash, due to the lack of recycling accessibility.

A more accessible recycling system:

There are so many trash cans around the building, but no recycling bins are available for use.

According to head janitor Duane Kamstra, due to COVID, the recycling system has become extremely costly, and tons of recyclables end up in landfills due to backups and inefficiencies in the recycling process. In essence, having recycling bins around the school would be costly and inefficient, but after COVID, Illiana hopes to push the recycling program forward, Kamstra added.



Photo by Jeff DeVries

Preorders for hot lunch have helped to reduce waste in the program.

Implementing green habits into everyday life

Eat less meat!



Photo courtesy of masterclass.com

Risks like deforestation, gas emissions, and excessive water usage are all apart of what comes with consuming meat. Since it is a main food group for many, it can seem hard to cut it completely out of your diet. Even taking a few days off can start a new habit, promote green living, and even be a good conversation starter!

Shop locally!



Photo courtesy of milwalkeemag.com

Shopping at local vendors, markets, or businesses can benefit both you, the location your buying from, and the environment. By shopping local you are creating local jobs, keeping local businesses running, protecting land and wildlife, getting fresher produce, and so much more.

Buy secondhand items!



Photo courtesy of visitgolden.com

Shopping at thrift stores, going to garage sales, and even purchasing items off of websites like Facebook Marketplace or Craigslist are a few ways you can shop second hand. By reducing air pollution and waste, buying pre-loved things is budget friendly and often the items are just as good as if you bought them brand new.

Ride your bike!



Photo courtesy of stocksy.com

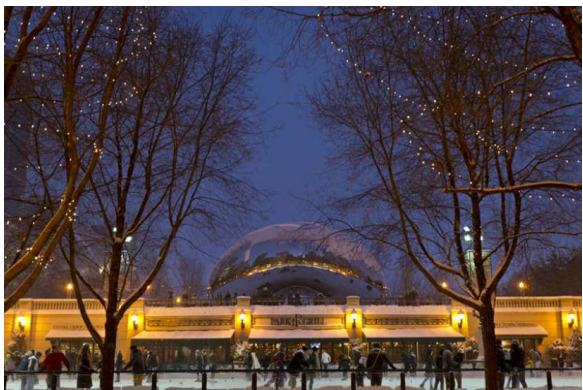
Riding your bike is a great way to stay in shape, have fun, and help the environment all in one. Using a bicycle as transportation when possible reduces the same vehicle emissions and smog released into the air that a car produces.

Fun ways to celebrate this holiday season



www.qantas.com

The **Christkindlmarket** is back: Visit one of the most authentic traditional German holiday markets in Chicago at Daley Plaza starting Nov. 19 and going through Dec. 24. Enjoy vendors, food, shopping, and activities for the whole family.



Enjoy skating with a winter view of Chicago: **McCormick Tribune skating rink in Millen-nium Park** is open from Nov. 19 till March 6. Admission is free, but tickets are required and can be reserved online. Skate rentals are also available.

Think of extending the invitation and **bring-ing different people to church**. Thanksgiving and Christmas aren't too far away. Sometimes all a person needs to go to church is a gentle push in the right direction. There's no better time than the pres-ent, and using it could be the best Christmas gift!



http://media.bizj.us/

The **Walnut Room at Macy's** on State and Washington in Chicago is well worth a visit. The Walnut room features a holiday menu for its guests who dine around its famous large christmas tree.



www.merrillvillefloristandtearoom.com

Check out the **Mer-rillville Florist & Tea Room**. Consisting of beau-tifully decorated, themed rooms and topped with Christmas decorations,

the tea room provides an assortment of snacks and, of course, lots of different flavors of teas. Stop in for a brunch get-together or tea session.

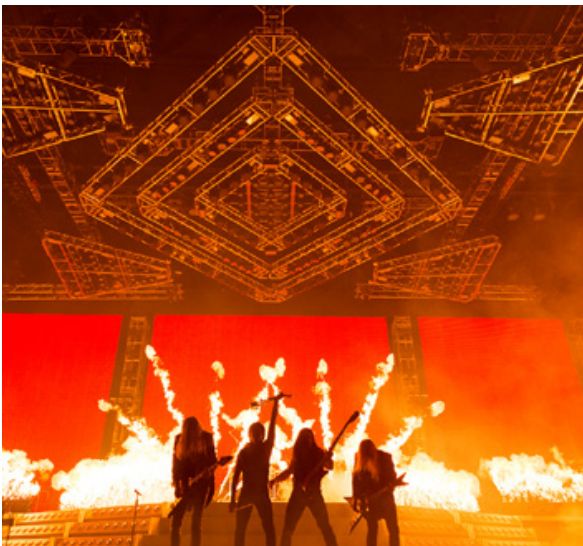


www.musingsofamuse.com

Stop by **Bath & Body Works** for fall and winter scents. With the holiday season right around the corner, new scented candles are all the rage. A house smelling like pumpkin spice and hot chocolate is totally in and worth cel-ebrating. Check for coupons in the mail ahead of time!

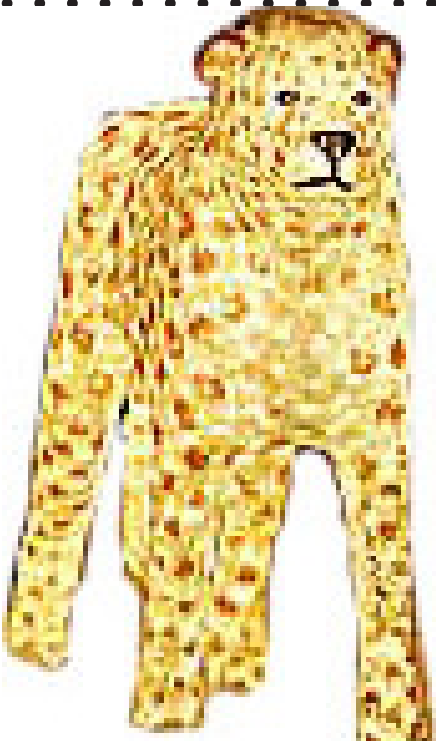
Find a church near you or other drop off locations collecting donations for **Toys for Tots or Operation Christmas Child**, and go shopping for toys to do-nate or items to include in a box!

Enjoy caroling, figure skating perfor-mances, and the lighting of the Central Park Plaza Christmas tree at the **Valparaiso Winter Fest** on Saturday, Nov. 27 at 5 pm. Admission to the park is free. Skating on the rink costs \$7, but in support of Small Business Saturday (7-10 pm) the \$7 admission fee will also cover skate rental if you provide with a receipt from a downtown Valparaiso business.



www.logolynx.com,

Head to the Allstate Arena in Rosemont to see a rock and roll take on Christmas with the **Trans-Siberian Orchestra's** performance of "Christmas Eve and Other Stories." Shows begin at 3 pm and 8 pm on Thursday December 23.



live.staticflickr.com, /i.pining.com, http

ZooLights at Lincoln Park Zoo starts on Nov. 20 and runs on most days through Jan. 2. The free zoo boasts a sensory-friendly exhibit, an impressive 18-foot holiday tree, and a whole lot of lights.

Goodfellow brings home gold

Lucas VanderWoude

Reporter

Grace Goodfellow, a senior at Illiana, has shown her proficiency in the martial art of karate by winning gold at the World Kickboxing Commission (WKC) in Florida.

Goodfellow has been practicing and refining her karate skills for about 10 years. She started in 2nd grade when she was 8 years old. She trains at Beecher Community Hall with her coach Juan Hernandez on every day except Wednesday all year round. Goodfellow started participating in the WKC tournaments 4 years ago.

The specific tournament that Goodfellow belongs to starts in June and ends in November. The qualifying rounds are in June. If an athlete qualifies for their country, they have the whole summer to prepare for the tournament, which is in October.

Competing against athletes from ten different countries in the two Americas, Goodfellow won a gold medal, 2 silver medals, and a bronze medal at the WKC in Orlando, Florida this year. She won the gold in extreme forms, the silver in kenpo forms and extreme weapons, and the bronze in creative forms.

Kenpo forms are traditional forms that have been passed down historically. “No one is going to be doing any splits, flips or spinning kicks in kenpo forms. It’s all very basic,” said Goodfellow. Creative and extreme forms are improvised by the competitor, which means there is a lot more room for creativity and uniqueness.

Goodfellow enjoys doing karate year round. “It’s taught me a lot about myself and brought me out of my comfort zone,” she said. “I’m a lot more comfortable going in front of people because of how the sport is set up. I’m also not as nervous talking in front of people anymore.”



Photo by Beth Goodfellow
Grace Goodfellow wins gold at WKC in Orlando, Florida and poses with fellow winners as they hold the American flag.

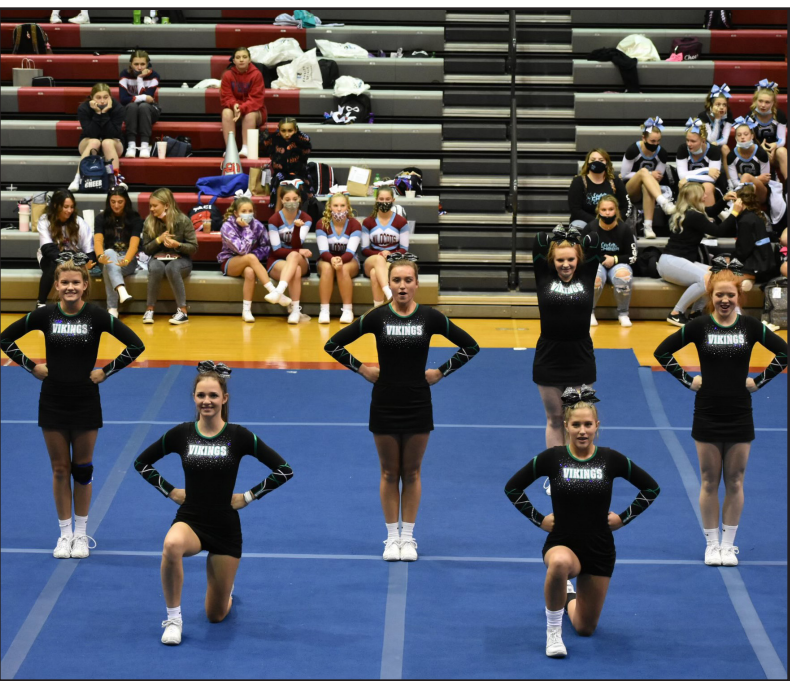


Photo courtesy of Reese Jansma
Competition cheerleaders strike a pose as they perform their routine at New Castle High School, Indiana for the state competition.

Cheer finishes 6th at state, ends strong season

Danielle Rancifer

Reporter

Saturday, Nov. 6, the Illiana competitive cheer team traveled to New Castle high school, in New Castle, Indiana, for the annual state cheer competition.

The competition team consists of nine cheerleaders, coming from an assortment of grades, and the two coaches, Carisa Beezhold and Marsha VanDrunen.

After finishing 6th out of 14th in the state qualifiers, the competition team completed

their routine at state and took 6th place out of eight teams.

Senior Taylor Olthof, who has been on the team since her freshman year, detailed how the competition, events, and routines played out.

She stated “Everything hit besides two stunts; the team gained new/more advanced tumbling skills.” She attributed the mistakes made during the routine to “a fluke accident.”

This season was especially significant to Olthof, due to it being her final year on illiana’s competitive team. She said, “One of the most amazing parts was the way my teammates supported me knowing it was my last time, just knowing that we did our best.”

Despite the disappointing end to the tournament, Olthof was able to point out some especially positive attributes from the cheer season. She said, “I would say even though I didn’t win at the end of the day, I know that I cheer for more than a trophy, and the family I gained through [cheer] is more important to me.”

In the past years the competitive cheer teams record at state has been 4th in 2018, 6th in 2019, and 4th in 2020.

Season of rebuilding for wrestling team

Jessica Bergfors

Sports Editor

Wrestling season has begun, and the coaches and players have a positive outlook for the future.

With a little over 20 wrestlers, the team includes a large group of both fresh-

man and females. After a large percentage of players graduated last year, this year is one of rebuilding for the team, said Coach Dave Deboer.

“We have a few very talented seniors that will compete very well and a lot of new wrestlers that I am looking forward to watching develop,” said Deboer.

Deboer added that many of the new wrestlers are learning a new sport and new skills, but they are a hard working group that learns quickly.

Senior Ben Bruinsma said, “I think we’re going to have a good time, not only at meets, but the bus rides are going to be fun. We got a good team.”



Photo Courtesy of Jill Rozendal
Freshman Tayceon Parkman grapples with his opponent from Highland High School on Nov. 17.

Boys basketball prepares for year with ‘lots of dunks’

Grace Jania

News Editor

The boys’ varsity basketball team has been practicing for its first game on Nov. 23 against Kouts. With twelve players on the team, the coaches have been trying to find a beneficial and effective place for each member to play.

Coach Tom Roozeboom said that aside from being successful on the court, he wants the boys to learn how to serve and “be leaders in a program,” by setting a good example for the boys on the JV and freshman teams. He said the team hopes to get far in its conference and move on to sectionals and regionals.

Junior player Mason Post said that he wants to get closer with his teammates, and warns the Loud Crowd to “be ready to see lots of dunks.”



Photo by Natalie Scott
Junior Varsity plays against Lake Station Edison High School.

Girl’s basketball powers through tough start to season

Hailey Ross

Arts Editor

The girls basketball team has struggled in the beginning of the season, dropping its first three games to Morgan Township, Wheeler, and Hanover Central.

“I think that we played well and our defense is good,” said senior captain Natalie Scott. “It’s just the fact of getting to know each other [the style of play] and getting the ball in the hoop.”

Head coach Lisa Blocker is not sounding any alarms yet as the season is so young.

Blocker said, “My favorite thing is to watch a player finally understand an aspect of the game--when things ‘click.’ Development takes time and practice. To see an athlete get rewarded from hard work, that is a coach’s desire.”

Editorial

The not-so-glamorous Christmas story: finding joy in spite of troubles

The holiday season has descended upon us, and with loosened coronavirus restrictions, people are in a flurry of excitement. They're thrilled to plan family get-togethers, join the hustle and bustle of holiday shopping, give and receive Christmas presents, and share delicious food.

But for all the holiday spirit out there, there's an equal amount of holiday dread. Especially after the past couple of years, the excitement of the season seems lost for some of us. Maybe we're apprehensive about the festivities spreading the virus, we're facing our first Christmas with a loved one absent, or we just feel discontent with the world we live in. For a season about hope, it's all too common to feel hopeless.

It's hard to stay afloat when drowning in a sea of fake smiles around the dinner table and senseless Hallmark-esque responses. We sense the division and derision below the surface. We find Santa's plastered smile mocking and popular Christmas music nauseating. We feel pressure to find perfect gifts, prepare perfect food, and be perfectly content when all we want to do is cocoon ourselves in a blan-

ket, away from holiday-induced stress and despair. These emotions can make the holidays perfectly miserable and the most wonderful time of the year awful.

Here's a story for any of you in this boat: A man and woman

this world are nothing new. Even when He was just a baby, Jesus had already dealt with a great number of the terrible things that plague our world.

The story of Christmas isn't about everything being perfect. It's not about having our stockings

pain of our condition to save us. He did then, and He does today.

In the words of a beloved advent hymn, although we mourn in lonely exile, we know the Son of God will appear. He cheers us by drawing nigh. He disperses the gloomy clouds of night and puts death's dark shadows to flight. He closes the path to misery and opens wide our heavenly home. We are given victory over the grave-- rejoice! The song shows vivid images of a broken world longing for Jesus and shares a theme beyond carols about sheep and stars: God was, is, and will be with us. He's Emmanuel.

Although we still may feel hopeless about the condition of the world this holiday season, we can remember that Jesus brought Himself down into this messy world for us, He lived and died in the mess for us, and He continues to be with us as we go through this mess. For whatever reason, our world is in a sorry state that He hasn't fixed yet, but we know things won't be this way forever. And that's one thing we can find hope in this season.

Christmas isn't a picture-perfect greeting card, and neither is life.

were travelling because of a government mandate. All of the hotels were full, so they made a place for themselves with animals. (Poverty.) The woman gave birth in the cold and dark. (Pain.) The baby was laid in a manger, wrapped in pieces of cloth. The family had to flee the country because a King was plotting to kill the baby. (Hatred.) The King ended up killing other baby boys. (Bloodlust.) This not-so eloquent retelling of Jesus's birth reminds us that problems and ugliness in

perfectly in a line or baking a pie so the crust crumbles just right. It's about a birth--not the most glamorous thing in the world. The story doesn't hide that life can be a mess. In fact, it shows readers plainly that life has always been a struggle. During the past years we've all seen it firsthand. Christmas isn't a picture-perfect greeting card, and neither is life.

But, the Christmas story is not only about a birth--it's about love. God lovingly descended into the messiness and

Tips for dealing with stress in healthy ways

Dealing with your overall mental health can be a difficult thing to do, especially for teenagers. Teens go through a lot, and many deal with just feeling overwhelmed and anxious. These feelings can affect teens in major ways, and they can feel helpless and burned out. It's important that students know they are not alone in these emotions, and that there are healthy ways to cope.

High school students are some of the most overwhelmed, emotional, and stressed out people I've ever met. So much pressure is put on these young people, and they don't know how to deal with it in a healthy way. Many things can lead to feeling overwhelmed or anxious.

Teens try to balance homework, school, friends, and family, all while trying to maintain a social life. There are some students who go from school for seven hours a day, to practice for 3 hours, then try to complete all their homework while trying not to fall asleep at their desk. Other teens have jobs where they work after school for several hours, and they often don't have time to complete their homework.

Then, you throw the social aspect into the mix. Teenagers need to have a social life in order to grow. A lot of teens are in romantic relationships, which also require a great deal of effort and time. Others have family commitments to honor every week. Some want to hang out with friends who they don't see every day at school.

Teens want to have fun with their friends or partners, and make memories with them, and that's completely understandable. They should be able to do these things! However, it can be hard to balance relationships, plus school, plus a job, plus homework, plus... you get the idea.

So, how should teens deal with the stress of all these things in a healthy way? Here are a few ideas that help me stay mentally balanced and healthy:

1. Have a dance party alone in your room, or with friends, or with your pet.
2. Write down your emotions in a private journal; I promise it's better than posting it all to social media.
3. Create a playlist of songs that make you feel better, and uplift you.
4. Exercise or play a sport for fun.
5. Watch your comfort shows or movies.
6. Talk to someone, literally anyone. It can be your mom, your dog, your best friend, a counselor.
7. If you're able, drive around and listen to music, either alone or with someone.
8. Have a self-care night.
9. Eat your favorite meal, or go to your favorite restaurant.
10. Clean or organize your room.
11. Paint or draw something.
12. Hang out with friends.
13. When you feel overwhelmed, let all your emotions out and cry! Listen to sad songs or watch a sad movie and just let the tears flow.

All of these ways and more are how teens can deal with the stress of high school and life. Always remember you are not alone with these emotions, and many people are going through the same.



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Grace Jania

Feature

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Arts

Hailey Ross

Sports

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Advisor

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.

Match each editor to their favorite Christmas movie:

1. Olivia Oostema

2. Gracie Jania

3. Aubrey Porter

4. Hailey Ross

5. Jessica Bergfors

6. Mr. DeVries



A. The Mistle-Tones

B. Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer

C. National Lampoons Christmas Vacation

D. Elf

E. A Christmas Story

F. Also Elf



Answers: 1.B, 2.F, 3.C, 4.A, 5.D, 6.E

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