

## Through ISSMA, Midwest Band Festival Musicians compete, showcase talent

Olivia Oostema  
Editor-in-Chief

Illiana students competed at the ISSMA competition on Saturday, Feb. 12.

ISSMA (Indiana State School Music Association) is a program that allows students across the state to perform and receive constructive feedback.

Three sophomores from the orchestra participated individually, including LauraLynn Corrales and Nolan Bouwman on violin and Elliot Vander Griend on viola. The orchestra as a whole performed "Hoe-down" by Aaron Copland.

Corrales, who received a gold medal for her performance said, "I am very pleased with my ISSMA performance, and I am proud of all the improvements I have made from last year's performance to this year's." She added that ISMA is a program that challenges musicians "to work and focus on a goal" while helping them build confidence.

Out of the bands, only freshman Brandon DeYoung competed

as a soloist on alto saxophone.

The Wind Ensemble, which sometimes submits a group piece for ISSMA, opted to participate in another event instead. The team will compete in a Class II competition at the Midwest Band Festival in Lemont on Saturday, Feb. 26.

According to Band Director Rachel Monroe, the team will compete "against the best bands in the Midwest." The band will play "The Light Eternal" and "Chester" in hopes of taking top placement.



Photo courtesy of The Pilot News



Students roll out their cookie dough for a cooking class.

Photo courtesy of Illiana Facebook

## School offers vocational education options

Grace Jania  
News Editor

Illiana offers a variety of vocational classes to help prepare students for professions that may not require them to attend college. Some of these classes include Fashion and Design, Intro to Interior Design, Child Development, and Nutrition and Wellness, all of which are taught by Mrs. Karie Roeda.

Roeda described these classes as an introduction to problem solving and basic skills.

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woodworking, small engines, and electronics classes, all taught by Mr. Brent Vermeulen, but due to the lack of space for the programs at the new campus, the school dropped the courses, replacing them with an investment in Project Lead the Way, a STEM curriculum which Principal Peter Boonstra described as having an "engineering focus."

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"I am looking forward to my future classroom," Roeda said. "When my classroom is complete, I would love to teach a World Foods class and

have different levels of Food and Nutrition classes. These classes would give students advanced skills in the kitchen that would help tremendously in a culinary environment."

Boonstra said, "I think we should also recognize that while vocational education is one of the things we want to expand, it probably can't be done thoroughly in any but a few vocations [due to cost and lack of specialized equipment]."

Though Vermeulen's woodworking, welding, and electronics classes aren't offered anymore, Vermeulen said that the school hopes to offer similar courses in the future.

## IMPACT honors Black history

Citlali Sanchez  
Reporter

IMPACT club has sponsored a number of initiatives to celebrate Black History Month at school during February.

IMPACT's goal for Illiana is to get community members to work together to break through barriers like race, ability, and social cliques that can separate us.

Throughout this month, IMPACT has used homeroom announcements, posters, and the television screens around the building to highlight African Americans who have contributed to history. They have also shared stories of important events such as Juneteenth, a newly introduced holiday that commemorates the news about the emancipation of African-American slaves reaching Texas.

"We [IMPACT] want to show that not all African Americans have a bad effect on people," said sophomore Des-



Photo by Olivia Oostema

A poster made by students details the life of writer Zora Neale Hurston.

tiny Palmer, "and that there are leaders that have made a positive impact in history."

IMPACT members said they want to expand students' knowledge about Black history and those who have contributed to it. They want students at Illiana to become more socially aware of the inequality

that exists in our country, and to care more about addressing it. And they want Illiana to do better in breaking social stereotypes that have labeled people of color historically.

Heidi Teach, an IMPACT sponsor, said, "Understanding others' history helps us to better understand each other."



Photo courtesy of Illiana Facebook

The robotics team poses with their robot at a competition.

## Robotics team works to improve

Citlali Sanchez  
Reporter

Illiana's Robotics Team has had its ups and downs this year. On Feb. 12, the team had its last chance to qualify for state at Crown Point High School. While they did not qualify, they had their best performance yet.

Brent Vermeulen, the robotics coach along with Jack Rudenga, said that in earlier competitions this year, the junior/senior team always made it to the elimination rounds, but never won. The team has encountered many great competitors and have even beaten some of them, but they will need to improve further if they want to qualify.

"We need to be determined to win as a team as well as focus on our strengths and weaknesses," said junior Blake Stasny.

The team has done well in all the competitions and has improved their robot. However, one important competition was canceled due to Covid and that was the Friday Night League, which would have taken place every Friday during January and February. The competition would be held at Portage where local teams could use the competition as a way to prepare them for the upcoming tournaments. This includes making changes to their robots in terms of coding or adding new mechanical features.



## Analyzing time management to avoid stress, complaining

Imagine you're sitting with friends at break. People take turns complaining about tests, extracurriculars, and a lack of sleep. When you boil down interactions among high schoolers, it's a common scene. People need to release stress, and venting is one way to do that. It can be good, therapeutic even. It's another thing when it becomes a recurring, habitual thing. When it's the main thing you do.



**Olivia Oostema**  
Editor-in-Chief

"That teacher gave too much homework, so I didn't get to sleep until one. Of course, I didn't start until eleven."

"Really? I couldn't finish it because I had to work on biology, then English, then algebra...."

Why do we do this? We stay up too late, overwork, waste time; complain about it; and wonder why we feel miserable about school.

The root of the problem is not homework or extracurriculars. It's poor time management habits: either in trying to do too much or wasting time doing nothing. Students from both groups acknowledge this fact, yet they don't fix the problem.

High school shouldn't be a time to set yourself up with bad stress management habits or a poor sleeping schedule. There are many things which are out of our control, but we can take better control of the way we deal with what is. Setting up a schedule for the week and putting aside time for what's important can make life less stressful. Limiting our extracurriculars can allow us time to accomplish what we need to and take time to rest.

Maybe it's time for all of us to assess what we put on our plates: working at Wendy's, doing AP chemistry homework, watching three hours of YouTube each night, being a cheerleader. If you can't handle it all, don't feel guilty for removing activities from your schedule. There are only so many hours in a day, and if your to-do list is overwhelming each of these days, it's time to make a change.

I concede that outside forces place more on certain individuals than others. Having to care for siblings or deal with parents who expect the world from you is tough. In these situations, change isn't as easy. Talk to a friend, teacher, or a counselor if you're struggling because of something outside of your control.

For most of us, however, we're the ones who need to assess and address the habits and patterns that we complain about so often.

## Middle school band festival welcomes band students from variety of feeder schools

**Grace Jania**  
News Editor

Illiana hosted the middle school band festival on Feb. 8, welcoming about 100 participants from a variety of schools.

Bands from feeder schools Crown Point Christian and Highland Christian took part in

performing, while schools like Calvin and Lansing planned to wait to join until the next festival while they take time to rebuild their band programs due to Covid.

Before the main concert in the gym at 7pm, the bands got together for sectionals, full rehearsals, and a time of team-

building in small groups settings. They also had snacks, dinner, and desserts.

"I thought it was a great experience for everyone involved because we were able to help the middle school students with any difficult spots in the music, which actually helped us as well," said junior mem-

ber of the wind ensemble Ellie Kamphuis.

"This festival is such a fun way to get a taste of what band is like at the high school level," said Illiana band director Mrs. Rachel Monroe. "It helps give the younger kids vision for what is possible and to meet real musicians who were once in their middle school shoes."

Monroe added, "Each school performed on their own and sounded fantastic, and the Wind Ensemble gave a very moving performance of some of our competition pieces. The combined bands at the end were powerful, even if it wasn't 100% perfect. That's the beauty of music---it's a joyful sound to God; mistakes and all!"



*The combined band displays its skills within a wide range of grade levels.*

Photo courtesy of Illiana's Facebook page

## Illiana has first combined snow day, e-learning day

**Hailey Ross**  
Arts Editor

This year is different for Illiana when it comes to snowdays. It's the first year in Illiana history that, as well as having a regular snow day, Illiana had their first ever inclement weather E-learning day.

"A lot goes into snow days," said Lance Davids. "We talk to our staff and other schools to make sure we aren't just in the dark."

Students did not have school on Wednesday, Feb. 2. No buses were run, and all extracurricular

activities were canceled. With Thursday, Feb. 3 still being questioned at the time, students were advised to bring all their school equipment needed if there was to be an E-learning snow day.

"Students should bring home...any material that might be needed for an E-learning day on Thursday," said Peter Boonstra. Then Feb. 3 was an E-learning day when students did their work and went to Zoom classes.

"There seems to be a positive reaction to it; I enjoyed my snow day" said Camille VanLatén a senior.



Photo courtesy of Illiana's Facebook page  
*Marc and Caleb Rozendal help their elderly neighbors during their snow day.*

## Vocational classes offered now, possible additions to be made to curriculum in future

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News Editor

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# Life after court: Q-and-A with Mr. & Miss Illiana

Danielle Rancifer  
Reporter

## Adam Gibson

Q: How do you feel about winning?  
A: **Honestly it does feel good; nothing really changed at school. I'm still the same guy.**  
Q: What does having the title of Mr. Illiana mean to you?  
A: **I guess I represent my class more, and I'm held to a pretty good standard I'd say.**  
Q: As rep of Illiana what do you love?  
A: **I like walking in the halls and that everyone says hi to each other. With the pep rally there's more of a school spirit sense, which is nice. Everyone is funny, and everyone wants to do stuff especially in the newer classes like EDD, and hydroponics stuff with Sylvester and Vermeulen. It's really cool to see kids want to do stuff and see my classmates want to do stuff.**  
Q: How would you describe Illiana?

A: **It's fun, pretty welcoming. Teachers want to know you and they will help you; they won't turn you away.**  
Q: What do you think is something we can do at Illiana to improve?  
A: **I don't know. I think we're pretty blessed here. I think there's a lot to be grateful for before we can pick on things to change.**  
Q: What are things you enjoy doing most at Illiana?  
A: **Sports is number one; number two, advanced gym; three, have fun with my friends, laugh a lot, and make fun of each other; and four, say hi to Correy.**  
Q: What is something your classmates might not know about you?  
A: **I used to be able to pull out my belly button but now I can't.**  
Q: Is there anything you would like to add?  
A: **I'm thankful that Illiana has taught me how to act and had my back and that I can go to teachers and friends when I need to.**

## Madison Derks

Q: How do you feel about winning?  
A: **I think it's really cool, and I think it's such an honor to represent the senior class.**  
Q: What does being Ms. Illiana mean to you?  
A: **I think it means that people look up to me and like who I am.**  
Q: What do you like about this community?  
A: **I like that it's a small community and everyone is super encouraging and the teachers are super easy to talk to.**  
Q: If you could, what would you do to improve Illiana?  
A: **I would say, there are a lot of exclusive groups, so maybe people should reach out and talk to people who are not like them.**  
Q: How would you describe Illiana?  
A: **I would describe it as a community that is striving to be more Christ-like and a loving community in general.**  
Q: What are some of your favorite things to do at Illiana?  
A: **My favorite things to do at Illiana would be sports. I really enjoy being part of a sports team and going to loud crowd games.**  
Q: What is something that your classmates might not know about you?  
A: **My thumbs move when I write, and my eyebrows move when I talk.**



Adam Gibson and Madison Derks pose for a picture after winning the titles of Mr. and Miss Illiana. Photo courtesy of Illiana's Facebook page

# Preparing, not planning, for possible additions to building onto campus

Lucas VanderWoude  
Reporter

The school administration has started meeting with an architect to discuss plans for expanding the building due to the possibility of increased enrollment in Illiana's future.  
The current building is designed to accommodate 500 students, and current projections suggest Illiana will pass that mark in two school years. The projected number of students at Illiana next school year is 463, so there is no immediate urgency to build.  
In early discussions, the administration has focused on reviewing spaces that were part of the original building plan for Illiana's current

campus, but were not built.  
"We are looking into spaces for several programs including Student Services, vocational education, worship/drama/music performance, and, of course, classrooms," said Peter Boonstra, the school principal. "It is possible that some existing spaces might be reassigned to other uses. We hope to complete what we set out to build ten years ago, but we also are being very careful to revise and update that vision based on what we have learned by 'living in' the existing beautiful campus."  
"As of now, there is no plan to fundraise or start building," said Lance Davids, the Head of School. "We are just preparing so that if the need arises, we are prepared."

# Transfer students share their stories of joining Illiana's community

Cameron Evers  
Reporter

Transferring schools may seem very scary to some people. Having to adjust academically, socially, and mentally may seem daunting and nerve-racking. For others, however, it may be just the fresh start they are looking for. An opportunity to take different classes, meet new people, and try something new all sounds exciting.  
Illiana Christian High school had a handful of students transfer after the first quarter. Jumping into the middle of a school year may bring some challenges, but the students I talked to seemed to be handling it

positively.  
Emma Tameling is a freshman who previously attended Covenant Christian High School in DeMotte. She said "[Illiana] is bigger than my old school." This may shock some because Illiana is a relatively small school, but Covenant Christian has roughly 300-400 kids enrolled whereas Illiana has around 400-500. She also mentioned that Illiana was more challenging academically and offered more homework than her previous school, but she said that she "feels like [she's] learning a lot more." The hardest part of transferring that she mentioned was "figuring out where classes are," but overall "there are really nice people and good teachers."  
DerShawn Moore is another transfer student coming to us from Thornton Fractional South High School in Lansing. TF South is a public high school with roughly 1,700-1,800 students, nearly quadrupling Illiana's enrollment.  
Moore said, "The biggest difference is that kids are not as disrespectful towards each other...and there are no fights." He said the hardest part for him has been "getting used to the work and getting to know new kids." Moore also noted that "the food is a lot better here and the kids are nicer and the teachers have been cool too."

# Mrs. Janna VanEssen uses her position to help new students feel included

Danielle Rancifer  
Reporter

Mrs. Janna VanEssen is Illiana's first Director of Student Life, a role created this school year.  
VanEssen started in the

summer of 2021. Head of School Lance Davids, she explained, created the role after the two of them had talks about "areas in community-building that were left untapped, where we [Illiana] were good at but not great at".

Her job description consists of working with Davids, Principal Peter Boonstra, and Director of Admissions Jenna Dutton to create a new positive and engaging culture for students.  
Since starting her position at Illiana, VanEssen has created a plethora of different events to make eighth graders, freshmen, and transfer students feel more included in the Illiana community. She has done things like Shield groups, Bible studies, Freshman retreat, and a signifi-

cant number of events designed to already start making eighth graders feel plugged in at Illiana. She also helps with major student social events such as homecoming and prom.  
VanEssen said one main goal of her job was to try to help focus on the "average person because everyone is going through something, we just don't know about it. The more connected we can be, the less alone we feel."  
VanEssen has been, still is,

and will be an Illiana parent, with one seventh grade boy at Crown Point Christain, two boys who are currently juniors in Illiana, and one boy already graduated from Illiana in 2021.  
VanEssen also empashizes, "I think education is so important, but beyond that spiritual growth with things like Bible study are also important, it is something that you aren't graded on, just a place you can come to talk, and somewhere you can choose to be engaged."



# Difference-makers at ICHS

## Sanyah Samson

Aubrey Porter

Feature Editor

Sanyah Sampson, Spire staff editor, Impact leader, and overall difference maker, is a student who, according to many, makes Illiana Christian a better place. Mr. Jim Kamphuis, Spire sponsor and one of Sampson’s mentors, said that Sanyah is terrific at getting people involved, an incredible collaborator, and an astounding leader. “She likes to joke with you,” Kamphuis said, “but it never feels threatening or exclusive. It’s always done with love.” Mrs. Melanie Benes, a guidance counselor who has Sampson as an assistant and who works with her on Impact Club, said that one of

her favorite things about Sanyah is her willingness to include people. “She doesn’t just stick with people she knows, and is always ready to give you a hug, is willing to listen to you when you need it, and is extremely approachable,” Benes said.

“Even though she pretends to have a tough exterior,” Benes said, “she has a big mushy heart in there.” Sampson is a leader in the school, and is always open to help, whether it’s amongst students or the staff. Sampson said that

her goal everyday is to improve at least one person’s day. “Even if it’s just smiling and waving at them or telling them how gorgeous they look,” Sampson said, “I just want to put a smile on someone’s face just for a moment.”



Samson puts in her two cents as Katherine makes her edits on the SPIRE.

## Emma DeBoer

Olivia Oostema

Editor-in-Chief

Senior Emma DeBoer stands on a scaffold, using small brushstrokes to apply green paint onto periaktoi. She’s creating a town backdrop for the spring musical My Fair Lady. Described as “the most dedicated sets painter” by art teacher Jim Kamphuis, DeBoer works tirelessly to ensure the sets are completed and looking their best before drama productions. According to Kamphuis, DeBoer particularly excels “at including others and delegating tasks”

and “she makes everyone on the crew feel needed and capable.” Fellow sets painter Camille VanLaten said of DeBoer, “She is there everyday after school until five. [Junior year] she couldn’t get a voucher because of all the work she was doing with sets painting.” VanLaten added that DeBoer “works really hard to get everything done [while doing] a fantastic job painting and keeping everyone excited to be there.” Junior sets painter Mia VanProoyen said that Emma loves being in the drama department, from props to painting, and works hard in everything she does. Kamphuis said he doesn’t know what he’s going to do without her

## Hannah Sliekers

Hailey Ross

Arts Editor

Hannah Sliekers, a senior, has quite a reputation on her hands, according to her friends/classmates because she’s involved in music, drama, and academics, her classmates and teachers identify different qualities that set her apart. “She is really smart and kind,” said senior Danielle Bonnnema. “She will help you no matter what.” “Hannah always knows what to say and what to do. She is very kind and understanding,” said Jenny Bee-

dle, a junior. “She never pushes anyone and knows when to take charge” “Hannah is also not afraid to make friends and make everyone feel welcomed. Hannah was my first new friend coming to Illiana, and she was so welcoming,” said senior Camille VanLaten. “I would describe Hannah as a servant leader with a tender heart who loves others well every day,” said Mrs. Monroe. Also Hannah, in her curricular activities She keeps up that energy in band. “I love Hannah. She is so sweet and extremely talented. She balances her classes with the play, musical, and band,” said Kelly Stegenga, a junior.

## Grace Goodfellow

Aubrey Porter

Feature Editor

Senior Grace Goodfellow, SHIELD group leader and mentor to Illiana students, is another student who both staff and students see as a difference maker around campus. Mrs. Janna VanEssen, Student Life Coordinator and planner of SHIELD groups, said she sees Good-

fellow’s interactions with students as a blessing too. “She is always willing to help,” VanEssen said. “She isn’t afraid to reach out to those who are left out or hurting, and I am so thankful for her. Illiana is blessed to have her as a student leader.” Senior Rachel VanderZee, peer and friend of Goodfellow, said that she believes Grace makes a difference because she is simply kind to everyone, whether you’re best friends with

her or hardly friends at all. “She embodies what it means to be a Christian because she doesn’t care what others think, and stays positive and loving no matter what happens,” VanderZee said. Goodfellow said her good attitude is her way of showing others her faith and confidence in God. “I deserve absolutely nothing from anyone, yet everywhere I look there are beautiful blessings,” Goodfellow said, “and that brings me so much joy.”



Grace Goodfellow (in green) and her posse pose for a photo while enjoying the freshman retreat this past September



# Taking ‘school’ outside of school

## Career Oppurtunity Program

Lucas VanderWoude

Reporter

Illiana has a good way for juniors and seniors to figure out what their future career will be: C.O.P appointments. The Career Opportunities Program (C.O.P.) allows Illiana juniors and seniors to fully investigate careers up close and personal, which gives them more information about the career and thus allows them to decide if they want to pursue that career. “It gives them a hands-on approach or allows them to learn more about it from the contact,” said Mrs. Gibson, who runs the program and schedules C.O.P. appointments. “They learn what kind of schooling and what kinds of classes

that their job requires.” Juniors and seniors who want to schedule a C.O.P. appointment have to discuss it with their guidance counselors early in the year. Then they have to fill out an application that lists their different interests. Finally, they meet with volunteers who help them pick careers to investigate based on their interests. “We have a good database of people we’ve used over the years,” said Gibson. “We have a great Illiana community of wonderful alumni and parents who are willing to meet with our students. We also get a lot of referrals; someone knows someone who has this type of job.” C.O.P. appointments have gotten a lot of positive feedback from students. “I really enjoyed my appointment,” said Ashley

Kaczmarzewski, a junior who went on a cosmetolo-

gy-focused appointment at Tricoci University of Beauty Culture in Highland, IN. “Everyone there was so nice and they included me in

everything they did. They taught me how to bleach hair and they even styled my own hair. Overall it was an amazing experience!”



Mrs. Amy Gibson works hard to assign COP appointments to students trying to figure out their career.

## Senior Service

Kyla Bennett

Reporter

For 25 years Illiana has given students the opportunity to participate in Senior Service, an elective Bible class where seniors get to serve in elementary schools with students or nursing homes and independent living facilities with elderly people. Run by Mr. Zandstra, one of Illiana’s school counselors, the senior service bible class lets students put into practice Christian virtues such as compassion and service. Students learn how to show care, how to teach them, how to befriend, and how to be a Christian example. They also get a feel of what it’s like to work in careers that deal with children or the elderly “Senior service has impacted our students and the people with whom they work with,” said Mr. Zandstra. This year, students had the opportunity to serve at Crown Point Christian School and Park Place of St. John. Every few weeks the students involved must



Senior Jillian Hoeksema works with students at Crown Point Christian during her third and fourth periods of Senior Service.

write a journal entry about the service they did. For senior service, each student must have two free periods, which is usually the 3rd and 4th period. Jillian Hoeksma, a senior at Illiana, goes to Crown Point Christian School to serve. “Sometimes I work with the kids, and other times I make copies for the teacher and grade the students’ work,” said Hoeksema. Six

other students are involved in senior service this semester. Other students participating in senior service feel that this is an awesome way to serve others, especially because the appointment is already set up by the school. Though the students are serving, these service hours do not count toward exam vouchers since they occur as part of the school curriculum.

## Career Exploration Opportunity

Cameron Evers

Reporter

For Illiana students who are more interested in going into the trades post-high school, a new program called Career Exploration gives such students a hands-on opportunity to get off campus and explore different career paths via work experience. Students in the program move their learning off campus after lunch. Daily, by their own transportation, the go individually to their job sites where hands-on experience allows them to see if the job might be a fitting career choice for their future. The job placements include visiting a mechanic, construction site, greenhouses, electric companies, and more. Kathy Sliemers, the coordinator of the Career Exploration program, said, “Some companies may even be looking to hire, and some students may come out with a job.” Working with new companies can help stu-

dents find the right fit for them and even be exposed to companies in this field. Sliemers added, this program can help with “building connections and trying something new... it can also help narrow down fields of interest.” Students who are interested in this program can meet with their counselor and confirm that they have enough credits to participate. This class takes up two class periods every day, and every semester, a new job placement is given to the participants. Students also receive an evaluation from the company they work for which is factored into their grade along with other small classwork. Senior Eddie Lagestee, a participant of this program, is currently placed at a Maday’s Greenhouse in Crete. He spoke highly of the new program and he recommends it to other students. Lagestee said, “I like getting to leave school and visit a place that shows what their work is like, and basically it helps to see if I want it as a future job.”



# Rom-com stars show suprisingly good chemistry, film still falls flat

Grace Jania  
News Editor

“Marry Me,” a romcom starring Jennifer Lopez and Owen Wilson, and directed by Kat Coiro, came out in theaters Feb. 11, just in time to celebrate Valentine’s Day. Since the film’s 3 ½ minute trailer summed up the entire movie, it was not very difficult to keep up with the plot. Pop star Kat Valdez, played by Lopez, planned to get married to fellow musician Bastian in front of a stadium full of people attending her wedding concert. When she finds out just a few seconds before going onstage to take her vows that her husband-to-be cheated on her, she chooses an audience member, Charlie, a single father and math teacher played by Wilson, to marry instead.



Owen Wilson and Jennifer Lopez surprise with an unexpected but natural flair in “Marry Me.” The movie follows their journey after the ceremony and how it affected their very different lives. Overall, the movie’s theme of romance was perfect for the upcoming Valentine’s Day, and it would make for a cute watch with friends or a significant other. However, while watching the film I felt that the plot was a bit too contrived and leaned too heavily on working in the use of modern technology. The constant use of social media made the film feel like it

was trying too hard to be in touch with what is currently hot. Perhaps a better use of Coiro’s energy would have been trying to figure out how to make the characters more relatable and emotionally connected to the audience. Even more disappointing perhaps were J-Lo’s vocals on the entire soundtrack. She sounded too polished, too auto-tuned. The music lacked a heart, the very thing you need in a love story. I did like Lopez and Wilson as a couple, though; they were a pair that I wouldn’t have expected to see together, and their on-screen chemistry pleasantly surprised me. Though not a great movie, I would still recommend this movie to anyone who enjoys a cheesy romcom once in a while, especially for Valentine’s Day.

# Song-filled films celebrate Black achievement


Sparkle	Motown
<p>A talented young woman is torn between her dreams and her family in this musical. Sparkle (Jordin Sparks) has a wonderful voice and a skill at songwriting, but she is afraid to go public. This is mostly because her mother Emma had a horrible experience as an entertain-</p>	<p>Motown is a documentary of mixed performances, interviews, and reenactments to celebrate the Funk Brothers, the 1960s soul hitmakers. As the musicians behind the Temptations, the Four Tops, and others, the “brothers” were hugely successful. Over a fourteen year period they were the heartbeat of every hit from Motown’s Detroit era. By the end of their phenomenal run, this unheralded group of musicians had played more number one hits than the Beach Boys, the Rolling Stones, Elvis, and the Beatles combined - which makes them the greatest hit machine in the history of popular music, says imdb.com.</p>



Cinderella slaves under the watch of her cruel stepmother and step sisters Calliope and Minerva until her Fairy Godmother sees and helps change Cinderella’s

Dreamgirls “Dreamgirls” is the story of three black singers - Deena, Lorrell, and Effie - who began as a group called the Dreamettes. They start as three talented, close friends and gradually sharpen their act and rename themselves “The Dreams”. Little do they know of the hard, competitive world of show business. When ambitious manager Curtis Taylor Jr. spots the act at a talent show, he offers them the chance of a lifetime: to be backup singers for a national star Taylor. But the real question is ‘Will the group last?’

Once on This Island



According to broadwayinchicago.com, Once on This Island is winner of the 2018 Tony Award for Best Re-

Ti Moune, a peasant girl, rescues a wealthy boy, Daniel, from the other side of the island, with whom she falls in love. Unbeknownst to Ti Moune, the pompous gods who preside over the island make a bet with one another over which is stronger, love or death, the stakes being Ti Moune’s life, according to mtishows.

Cinderella life. After being made up for the ball, Cinderella falls in love with the handsome Prince Christopher whose parents, King Maximilian and Queen Constantina, are anxious for him to find a suitable bride . When Cinderella has to leave in a hurry, she leaves a glass slipper and that is how the prince finds her.



# Girolimon prepares for All State Cheer competitions starting in the fall

Jessica Bergfors

Sports Editor

Junior Audrey Girolimon will begin competing in competitions individually starting in the fall for the Indiana All State Cheer Team and trying out for the state competition. Girolimon said there’s no guarantee that she will make the team, but she is ready to work hard to reach this goal.

The All State Cheer team is made up of 12 members who compete individually at competitions before state. To make the team, athletes must send a video of themselves competing, and judges pick the top twelve. Those twelve then

create a routine together, showing off their skills at the Indiana state competition.

Girolimon has been cheering since seventh grade, and was previously a competitive gymnast. She said she wanted a change from gymnastics, so she turned to cheer, and it is the best decision she has made. She is grateful for having coaches and a team who have supported and cheered her on, she said.

“I’m excited to tap into something new that I have never done before, and I think it will be a good challenge for me,” Girolimon said. “I think it will push me to be a better cheerleader and challenge me to further my tumbling and make my jumps better.”



Photo courtesy of Audrey Girolimon

*Girolimon poses with the second place trophy that the Illiana Competitive cheer team won this year at the Indiana state fair*

# Girl's record doesn't reflect their hard work this season

Hailey Ross

Arts Editor

The girls basketball team’s season has come to an end. The team finished with a record of 5 wins and 15 losses.

“The Lady vikings had a great season,” said Coach Lisa Blocker. “Although our record doesn’t reflect our hard work and improvement, we made huge strides in bettering our team and growing individual talent.”

The girls also expressed how much joy they experienced playing the sport. Junior Bayleigh VanderZee said, “I liked making a lot of friends and playing with the girls.”

Natalie Scott, the only senior on the team, echoed her sentiment: “I just wanted to say thanks to all the girls on the team. I had a fun time playing basketball with them.”

“I am very proud of my girls this year,” said Blocker. “They were determined to be better players daily and that’s all a coach could ask for.”



Photo courtesy of Illiana Facebook

*Boys basketball shows off their unique jerseys for the military/ first responders appreciation night.*

# With a record of 20-2, boys basketball continues to show out and perform their best for this season

Aubrey Porter

Feature Editor

The Illiana varsity boys basketball team, going 20-2, has had a fantastic season, according to head coach Tom Roozeboom. “We have had a lot of hard working guys who continue to play as a team,” Roozeboom said. “We are not finished yet, there is much more work to be done, and I’m looking forward to what the rest of this season and our post season has in store for these guys.”

One of senior Adam Gibson’s favorite memories this season was winning the winter tournament for the second year in a row. Junior Mason Post, on the other hand, said he most enjoyed bonding with the team, going over to each other’s houses, and hanging out before and after games.

Gibson added that at the beginning of the season, they needed to step up to fill in the roles of the past seniors by bringing energy, passion, and leadership, and this season, he said, they’ve done just that.

# Wrestling has strong finish to season, places high in state tournaments

Olivia Oostema

Editor-in-Chief

Wrestlers finish their season competing in various tournaments.

“The team finished the season strong” despite being in the toughest sectional tournament, according to Coach Dean Bosman.

The team had various accomplishments at their tournaments. Senior Alex Bosman took first in conference and qualified for the regional tournament. Junior Caleb Rozendal also placed high at the conference tournament. In New Prairie, freshman Josh Rozendal took second in his pool. At

the regional tourney, freshman David Antunez was an alternate for after placing fifth at the sectional.

Senior Alex Bosman said that the combination of “young talent [and] veteran experience made the season full of fun, great memories, and new friendships.”

“[Everyone on] the team performed well and gained some valuable experience,” said Coach Bosman.

He added that he’d like to thank seniors for showing how to be “dedicated and tough-minded without forgetting how to show compassion to those that need it.” He said that their “remarkable leadership... made for a great season.”

## Male Athlete of the Month



February’s official athlete of the month is senior varsity basketball player Adam Walters.

As a new student to the school, Walters played one season of basketball at Illiana. Coach Tom Roozeboom described him as having “meshed well with the team and leaving a lasting impact on our program....”

“[Walters] continues to work hard every day which enables him to lead by example,” Roozeboom added. “Adam is caring, supportive, and genuine on and off the court.”



# Editorial

## Seniors, persevere second semester

Dear Seniors,

You have come so far! You are halfway through your senior year and seven eighths of the way through your high school career. Next year at this time some of you will be in college, some in the workforce, some in the military, and some will be in their gap year. No matter what you plan to do in the future, though, we want to remind you to stay persistent now. Don't give up. Whether it's keeping your grades up, getting more involved in the school community, continuing to make new friends, or trying more new things, don't underestimate what you could make of these last three months.

In response, some of you may say "Who cares? I just want to get through school so I can \_\_\_\_." Make money, go to school, move out of the house, you fill in the blank. In rebuttal we say, these are the times of your life you are going to look back on ten years from now. When that time comes, will you be happy with how you spent your time?

Will you be satisfied with what you put your energy into? Those friends you surround yourself with right now, will you look back and think they were a good influence on you? Will you be able to say that you made a positive influence in the lives of others? What you pour

do something that matters with our time in the future, we waste the gift of today, and once today is gone, we don't get it back. Putting off meaningfully living to the future just might squander the only opportunity we ever get. Don't put too much

future. Feeling like you have to have everything figured out right this second is common, but the possibility of change should put your mind at ease. There are still so many things about yourself that you don't know yet, new things you could try that you might enjoy, traits about yourself that would be useful for a job, and new connections you might make.

At the end of the day, just remember that no matter who you are or what you're going through, God is in control of your life. No amount of uncertainty you have for your future can change what he has in store for it; all He asks for is your trust. So, take the time He has given you now and live out this verse found in Proverbs, which we found fitting for this time :

"Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you.

Ponder the path of your feet; then all your ways will be sure" (Proverbs 4:25-26).

With love,  
Echo Editorial Staff

Don't underestimate what you could make of these last three months.

into your life shapes who you are as a person, and that didn't end once first semester exams did on January 14.

Furthermore, the only life we have, the only life we are guaranteed, is the one we are living right now. Today is the day to explore, discover, learn, and grow. Today is the day to laugh and cry, to love and serve. If we live our lives thinking we'll

pressure on yourself, however. Although a lot of opportunities can come out of the next few months, they don't determine the rest of your life. If you are feeling uncertain on what you want to do with your life, you are not alone. Even in the first year of college, many students are undecided on their major and some who have selected one end up changing it in the

## Accepting who you are despite others' expectations

It seems like in today's society, girls can never be enough. If you play sports and mainly hang out with boys, you're classified as a "tomboy". If you like to shop, then you're high maintenance. Do you like football? Well, that's only for boys. If you like makeup and fashion, you're classified as a girl who tries too hard. But if you don't wear makeup or nice outfits, you don't try hard enough. Your body has to be thin and small, but not too thin to where you can see your bones, and there still have to be some curves, but not too many curves. Don't eat too much, go on a diet and order a salad! Well, now you look too thin, eat some more, put some meat on those bones!



Jessica Bergfors  
Sports Editor

At such a young age, it feels like these pressures and so many more are being weighed on girl's shoulders. Society nit picks every little thing a woman does, and this can ruin a girl's confidence. It's like that scene in Mean Girls where the girls are in front of the mirror pointing out what they hate about themselves. "My hips are huge!" "Oh please, I hate my calves." "At least you guys can wear halters. I've got man shoulders." All of these insecurities are only noticed by them, but they think everyone sees it too.

It's hard to ignore these expectations that have been engraved into our heads since we were so young. Social media like Pinterest, Instagram, and Tik Tok, have raised the standards, and continue to create unrealistic expectations. You have to workout daily, dress trendy, have perfect skin, and always look put together. How are girls supposed to ignore these expectations and stop comparing themselves to others?

1 Peter 3:3-4 says, "Your beauty should not come from outward adornments, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight." In the Lord's eyes, our physical appearance doesn't matter. Instead, our hearts are what truly matters. It's important for not only girls, but everyone, to remember that society does not get to decide what is beautiful and perfect, or what is acceptable and not acceptable. Learning to accept that you are one of a kind, and that you are incredible in your own skin, is something that everyone should grow to learn and love, no matter how hard it may be or how long it will take.

the

Echo

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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.

## Happy spring, Vikings!

R	A	I	N	S
B	R	I	N	G
F	R	E	S	H
G	R	E	E	N

Image inspired by Wordle

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